

20
November
2020

dnh brief



DEUTSCH-NEPALISCHE
HILFSGEMEINSCHAFT
DNH
GERMAN-NEPALESE
HELP ASSOCIATION

40 Jahre Hilfe in Nepal

NAMASTE

नमस्ते

Dear Members and Friends of the GNHA,

The annals of the Corona pandemic are still being written, here in Germany and all over the world, including Nepal.

We have asked our member, Sabine Pretsch, who runs the trekking agency "Temba's Nepal Trek" together with her Nepalese partner Temba, and who also organises our project trips, to summarise her observations and experiences in this regard. Sabine had left for Nepal in March shortly before the lockdown and did not return to Germany until October. Her report on the consequences for tourism reflects the ups and downs, and the sometimes confused and poorly communicated decisions made by the government. She is unable to give a prognosis as to when "normal" travel to Nepal and trekking tours are possible again.

For the first time in 40 years of the GNHA's founding, our Nepal Bazaar cannot take place at the end of November - due to corona. We are extremely sorry as the bazaar is for many people a fixed date in the pre-Christmas period, a welcome meeting place and a shopping opportunity. Many visitors stock up on consumer goods like tea, etc. for the whole year. The company Tudi Billo, which has been supplying our bazaar with products from Nepal for several years, is offering some consumer goods online, so that a supply can be guaranteed. Maybe some people have already been wondering why an "external" company was involved in the bazaar at all. The background and the history of this long-lasting relationship between the GNHA and Tudi Billo are highlighted in an article by Uwe Luck.

The transparency of an association and the associated financial flows are factors which, if carried out carefully and professionally, strengthen the trust in the organisation and thus make project work possible in the first place. The GNHA has earned this trust through decades of commitment, its accounts have never been objected to, and we are very fortunate that our funds have never been misappropriated in Nepal or disappeared in dubious channels. This is the merit of our extremely responsible and loyal staff in Nepal, which cannot be recognised highly enough. Our treasurer Sabine Spiegl provides insights into this somewhat dull, yet essential profession.

The effects of corona on our project work are dramatic. Nevertheless, the team in Nepal is trying to carry out our projects as far as possible and as permitted by the authorities. Elke Schnauffer provides a brief overview of the unscheduled funds we are spending on corona measures.

It remains our wish and hope, that you and we all get through this difficult time in good health, and that corona will not become a permanent topic in the 'GNHA brief'.

All the best and kindest regards,
Yours



Andreas Falk
President

Nepal and its people during the Corona crisis

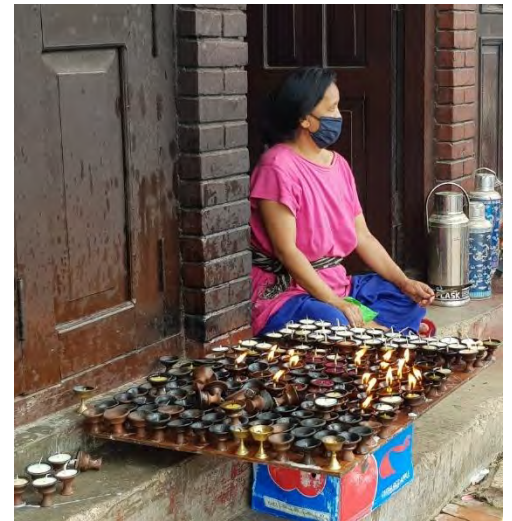
by Sabine Pretsch, 24.10.2020

Latest news

In October and November the two festivals, Dashain and Tihar, always take place in Nepal, each of them lasting several days. These are the most important holidays for the Hindus, and many people living in the Kathmandu valley travel to their home villages during this time, where they celebrate extensively and in high spirits. But how does the corona virus affect the people and their rites that are part of the celebrations? There is a great deal of uncertainty and opinions differ. Some of the older people ask the younger ones not to attend this year's celebrations, and to refrain from the ceremonies and blessings.

And then, on the other hand, there are also people who do not want to miss the traditional Hindu festivals, and so you see photos with fully loaded buses again and again.

During Dashain and Tihar, schools and authorities are closed and life takes place in private, so that in the high season of trekking and mountain climbing, which in the past, took place at the same time, it was sometimes not easy to get the necessary permits in time. This year with the corona pandemic which has also taken a grip on Nepal, it is questionable as to whether tourists will come to Nepal at all; according to official reports, more foreigners left than arrived in September.



Ad hoc decisions without any strategy

Already on 24th March, 2020, when only three cases of corona were counted in the country, one of which has already recovered, the first strict nationwide lockdown took place. With the exception of some systemically relevant areas, everything was locked down and extended seven times until 14th June, 2020. It was not clear to the "locked-in" population and the suffering sectors of the economy as to what strategy would be pursued, and how the pandemic would be dealt with after opening. The pressure from the public led to loosening on 15th June, with the provision that safety and hygiene rules must be respected and mouth and nose protection must be worn.

As if out of the blue, the complete lifting of the lockdown was ordered on 21st July, 2020. Hotels and restaurants were allowed to reopen on 30th July, 2020 in compliance with hygiene and safety measures, and trekking tours and mountain climbing were allowed again in compliance with safety concepts. The tourism industry was requested to take bookings for the autumn. Without any knowledge of the then valid entry and quarantine regulations, it was subsequently impossible for companies to accept or maintain their existing autumn bookings.

In press reports, virologists and health specialists complained that, as experts, they were not being consulted by the government, and that the time saved by the four-month standstill was not being used to take the necessary precautions for the continuing fight against the pandemic: - effective contact tracing of positively tested persons, the setting up of isolation facilities for positively tested persons, and the increase in PPE protective clothing for medical staff, etc..

It was mainly the return of migrant workers working abroad that led to an exponential increase in the number of cases of infection. The announcement that 5,000 quarantine beds would be kept available did not materialise. Positively tested persons without symptoms were sent back home, regardless of the often cramped living conditions in multiple-family homes, where isolation of the sick is virtually impossible.

The decision on curfews has been sent to the local administrative authorities. Since August, due to the increasing number of infected people, more and more districts and larger cities have ordered people to "stay at home".

International and domestic air traffic was suspended and a resumption was postponed several times. Now, after five months of closure, commercial air traffic has been possible again since 1st September, 2020. Currently, scheduled flights are arriving in addition to charter flights. However, these are mainly transports to bring back Nepalese migrant workers living abroad and now stranded there as a result of the corona crisis. Diplomats and staff of international organisations are also allowed to enter Nepal. In addition to registering with the Covid Crisis Management Center, travellers from this group of people must present a negative PCR test not older than 72 hours and then undergo a seven-day hotel quarantine or 14-day self-isolation.

Since 20th September, 2020 it has once again become possible to move around the country without any restriction. Initially, local buses could only take half of the passengers. With the beginning of the festival period, this provision was abolished and the buses can now run fully occupied. Passengers need a face shield to get on and travel in the bus.

Travel regulations

The announcements of the reopening of the country for trekking tourists and mountaineers were also confusing. Since 17th October, 2020 tourists have been allowed to pursue their activities under a variety of new entry regulations. However, the new entry regulations have met with a great deal of criticism in the tourism industry. Unlike mountaineers, who generally have more time at hand, trekking tourists usually have a limited holiday period.

They have to apply for a visa in their home country. If this is not possible, the supervising Nepalese travel or trekking agency has to coordinate an entry approval process before the arrival of the travellers. The following documents are necessary for this application procedure:- passport, flight details, description of the trekking route, booking confirmation of a room for the required hotel quarantine and a list of the names of the accompanying guides and porters. In addition to the visa already issued or the visa recommendation letter, the following documents have to be presented upon entry:- negative PCR test, not older than 72 hours, hotel



Deserted street in Patan

booking for the 7-day quarantine period, a health insurance covering Covid-19 disease with an amount insured of USD 5,000. The latter provision has now been annulled.

Upon their arrival in Nepal, the new arrivals have to go into a 7-day hotel quarantine. A PCR test will be needed on the fifth day of quarantine. If the result is negative, there is nothing to prevent them from continuing their journey to the trekking area. If the PCR test is positive, the quarantine must be continued until it can be lifted by presenting a negative test result.

Currently, with the exception of the Manaslu area, the Annapurna base camp region and the Ghandruk area, all the trekking routes are open and accessible with a negative PCR test not older than 72 hours.

When applying for a trekking or mountain-climbing permit, each Nepalese staff member must also present proof of insurance cover for NPR 100,000 against the Covid-19 disease. Furthermore, it is

mandatory to observe the hygiene and protection measures applicable in Nepal during trekking and mountain climbing.

In the coming months, we shall have to observe whether, in addition to a prince from Bahrain and a sheikh from Qatar, normal mortal holidaymakers also set off on their journey, and hope that usable information will be available by the spring season. The many months without any income hit everybody working in the tourism industry hard - as everywhere else in the world. But it is not only this industry that is hard-hit; there are many vulnerable members of society, some of whom are hit even harder.



Kathmandu

The vulnerable in the system

Not only day labourers and low earners are the vulnerable ones in the system. Sick people, children, schoolchildren, returning guest workers, small businesses and many more are also affected. In order to prevent the spread of the corona virus, schools, universities and other educational institutions were ordered to close on 19th March, 2020. Only a few schools in remote areas (including MGML schools of the GNHA) resumed school attendance in early September. Public schools in the larger cities in particular, offer online lessons and school lessons on the television and radio. It is obvious that due to a lack of resources, many of those with a hunger for education cannot benefit from this. In connection with the pandemic, the Head of UNICEF, Henrietta Fore, speaks of a global education emergency, the effects of which will be felt in society and the economy for decades to come.

The situation for Nepalese migrant workers stranded abroad is precarious. The corona curfews imposed in the respective countries often result in the loss of their jobs and expired residence permits. Without any income, they cannot afford the costs of the longed-for flight home. For months they have to vegetate on the spot in catastrophic conditions and often run into debt again on being able to take advantage of the return-flight measures organised by the government.

The loss of earnings of the numerous day labourers is threatening their existence. Basic needs could no longer be satisfied over long periods of time. These people fear starvation rather than infection with the corona virus. On the positive side, however, local organisations as well as private individuals provide day labourers and their families and other needy people with freshly cooked hot meals every day.



carrier without work – the situation seems hopeless

Covid 19 stigma & other fears

A lack of information and false news have created a climate of stigmatisation of the currently sick and suspected Covid-19 virus carriers. Not only people who have been tested as positive and patients who have recovered, but also doctors, nurses and other health workers who are in the front line of the battle for the lives of others and for the common good, are at the mercy of this stigmatisation.

The high hospital costs that would have to be paid in the event of a severe course of Covid-19, unsettle and

frighten the people. Very few people have a health insurance that covers medical and hospital costs. Without the support of the family or the village community, the treatment costs cannot be managed.

Prospects

The unfortunate aspect of this pandemic is that it is not possible to make reliable forecasts. The many abrupt and insufficiently communicated rule changes by the government of Nepal in the course of the last 6 months have confused people, led to irrational behaviour and generally caused a loss of confidence. We are currently in the midst of a historically unique period worldwide. Whether we as individuals, nations and as humanity face all the drawbacks brought to light by the pandemic with insight and maturity, and whether we shall be able to correct them in the long term, can probably only be determined with a time lag of several years. However, the pandemic can be seen as a test that raises fundamental questions about social behaviour and the prevailing socio-economic system in Nepal in general.



Prayer flags, Kalinchowk

Stay Informed

Information from our members about the situation in Nepal can also be found at

- <https://nepal-spirit.de> (from Sabine Pretsch)
- Andrees de Ruiter's Facebook group „[Nepal friends of Andrees](#)“

Corona Measures taken by the GNHA

by Elke Schnauffer

The GNHA has planned and already initiated the following additional relief measures in the context of the Corona pandemic:

For 116 schools with a total of 5,600 pupils, face masks, disinfectants and thermometers worth EUR 42,000 have been planned, and for the most part already distributed, to supplement the school budget for resuming and ensuring school operations..

As regards the face masks, 25,000 fabric masks, 23,000 of which were children's size, were produced in the sewing workshop of Children Nepal.

In addition, we have provided the cooperative Suryamukhi at Children Nepal with a special fund of 7,000 EUR. This total amount is available to the members to help alleviate the emergency situations and food shortages caused by the pandemic..

Thanks to a generous donation in kind, we received 20,000 medical masks which we passed on to the Poor People's Dispensary at Bir Hospital. The GNHA paid for the transport costs for these masks.



The GNHA Nepal Bazaar

by Uwe Luck

The main GNHA Nepal Bazaar, which we unfortunately cannot celebrate this year, took place for the first time in 1981 in Stuttgart Castle on the occasion of Margot Busak's 70th birthday. The entrepreneur had already founded the GNHA in 1979 with like-minded friends. As the Honorary Consul of Nepal, it was also her aim to promote the Nepalese economy and the sale of Nepalese products. She sought the support of Andreas Falk, former DED development aid worker, who enriched the bazaar through his contacts with Nepalese artisans whom he had previously invited to Germany for a sales show. The bazaar was successful and became an annually recurring institution in the basement rooms of the company of Busak & Luyken.

When an export boom for the Nepalese Tibetan carpets became apparent, Mrs. Busak was asked by her friends in a Nepalese family to support their sons in setting up a carpet production, which she generously also did. Andreas Falk and his Tibetan partners became active in the organisational, creative, ecological and social orientation of the production and marketing. Again, it was Andreas who introduced us to Mrs. Busak.



My wife Tudi Billo and I had, after a longer stay in Nepal where I had been working as a DED Nepal Representative and Development Project Consultant, started to import children's clothes and handicrafts after our return in 1981, in order to support the so varied and artistic handicrafts and also to maintain the contact to our beloved second home.

We started with children's clothes, designed by Tudi, made of the beautiful hand-woven cotton fabrics which were available in a rich variety at that time. There were still handlooms in many households in the Kathmandu valley, whose clattering could be heard while walking through the narrow streets of

Kathmandu and Bhaktapur and also in the villages. We also had the opportunity to support Nepalese traders in their first participations in trade fairs in Berlin and Frankfurt. Thus the range of products expanded. A highlight of the early years were the paper products from the UNICEF-supported paper factory in Bhaktapur. In the course of time, the Lokta paper range designed by Tudi developed to become our main focus.

The two-day Nepal Bazaar of the GNHA with lectures, food and drink and, of course, an abundant range of goods, was moved to the canteen of the Busak company (now the company Trelleborg). For the GNHA's Office Manager, the unforgotten Doris Keppeler, who unfortunately passed away far too early, the preparation, organisation and finalisation of the event were, so to speak, days involving a tremendous effort. She was supported by a host of loyal and dedicated friends, some of whom are still involved in the bazaar today. To buy the goods, Doris, Heide Rolfs, Erika Belz and Susan Theissen and others took turns in travelling to Nepal at their own expense. Doris' circle of friends was engaged in unpacking, sorting, labelling and storing the articles. The bazaar grew continuously, and at some point the office reached its limits, especially also with regard to the storage of the leftover goods over the year and the tied up capital. Therefore the GNHA Board asked us, the company Tudi Billo, to take over the provision of the goods for the bazaar, including the financing and the risk. Since then we have been supplying the bazaar with our products and with the range of goods requested by the GNHA. 20% of the turnover goes as a donation to the GNHA's projects.

The continuing success of the bazaar supports Nepalese producers and traders. We buy mainly from organisations such as Dhukuti, Children Nepal/Suryamukhi Handicrafts, Mahaguthi and Sana Hastakala, but also from small family businesses which have the advantage that hardly any administration costs occur. Most of the paper products come from a Fair Trade company.

The Board of the GNHA, the Office that still manages the incredibly complex organisational management of the bazaar, and we believe that after many years of successfully running the bazaar, our cooperation has proved its worth. Hopefully then again next year, and we are now already looking forward to welcoming all our friends, visitors and customers - both male and female.

Finally an anecdote:- when I once forgot to take my mobile phone to the bazaar, Doris gave me hers and experienced the bazaar for the first time in a relaxing way, because nobody could call her.



Wide range of teas at the bazaar

Transparency creates trust

by Sabine Spiegel



Where does my donation go to? Does my money reach the needy? - This is certainly the most important question for donors.

Since there are no standard publication requirements for non-profit associations in Germany, many associations can be audited by independent organisations such as the DZI (German Central Institute - donation seal) or the ITZ (Initiative Transparente Zivilgesellschaft).

The GNHA has opted for certification by the ITZ. The ITZ was founded in 2010 by Transparency International Deutschland e.V.. The aim of the ITZ is to make the work of an association comprehensible to the public and donors, thus strengthening trust and credibility. To achieve this, ten criteria defined by the ITZ must be met. These criteria include the association's statutes, the names of the decision-makers, the source of funds, the use of funds and the staff structure. The most important criterion is the publication of an Annual Report which provides comprehensive information on the current work and progress of the GNHA's project work. The use of funds for the individual projects as well as the balance sheet of the last completed financial year can also be found here. The GNHA has posted the required information in the ten points on its website, and now, after verification by the ITZ, it is allowed to use the logo on the website.

For compiling all this information, time-consuming preparatory work is necessary. Of particular note here is the workflow from the preparation of the budget to the finished annual financial statement, that is to be presented here.

The proposal for the budget, valid for one Nepalese fiscal year, is initially prepared by the GNHA Team in Kathmandu. For all the projects, the expected demand is determined in detail, from rubbers to building school toilets, and recorded in the budget proposal. The budget proposal is then reviewed, processed and approved by the GNHA Board. The approved budget is then submitted by the GNHA Team to the control body responsible for the NGOs, the SWC (Social Welfare Council) and other authorities concerned. According to Nepalese regulations, current project expenditures may only deviate relatively slightly from the budget. All the payment transactions are recorded by our local accountant using accounting software. They are made almost exclusively by bank transfer or cheque. This ensures that all payment flows can be easily tracked. Cash payments are reduced to the absolute minimum.



GNHA Team planning the budget in Juli 2019

The GNHA accounts are independently and continuously audited by an officially approved auditor. The results of the financial audits and progress reports are presented to the SWC, the Nepalese tax authorities and the technical authorities on site. In addition, a social audit is required once a year, in which representatives of the SWC and the local committees, as well as the local project managers and project beneficiaries participate. On this occasion, our Country Representative, Kedar Tamang, presents in detail the planned and achieved project goals together with the corresponding expenditures and is available for further questions and explanations. The Social Audit thus serves the purpose of publicly examining all the processes involved in carrying out a project activity, addressing difficulties and creating transparency.



Monthly account statements and balance sheets are sent from Nepal to the GNHA Office in a timely manner. At the GNHA Office in Stuttgart the accounting is carefully processed, and the payments are checked and forwarded to our German tax consultant. The merging of the Nepalese accounting with the German accounting is done in close cooperation with the Team in Nepal and is very time-consuming, especially when preparing the annual accounts.

Particularly the differing dates of the financial years in Nepal (16th July - 15th July) and Germany (1st January - 31st December) are a challenge and have to be taken into account accordingly in the annual accounts.

All the account statements and summary balance sheets from Nepal are evaluated for the project management in the GNHA Office in Stuttgart and flow into the balance sheet. The annual financial statement of the GNHA is prepared in the form of a balance sheet by our tax consultant Adjuvaris and submitted to the responsible tax office. In addition, the accounting is examined by an auditor. Finally, the annual accounts can then be published on the GNHA's website.



Dr. Richard Storkenmaier (left) and Andreas Falk in the budget meeting 2020 – corona conform in the workshop of Spiegl company

We would like to express our thanks

To all of you - for your loyal and reliable accompaniment and support.

Our special thanks go to Dr. Matthias Heitz, who donated 20,000 medical masks for the use in our projects in Nepal.

We are also very grateful to Angela Baumann, who has enriched our Nepal calendars with appropriate aphorisms for over 25 years. Unfortunately she passed away in July.



Thanks for your donation

On our own behalf

DNH Bazaar

Unfortunately this year our popular Nepal bazaar has to be cancelled.

However, we are very pleased to welcome you online at www.nepalbasar.de. Here you can order our most popular bazaar products.

Please do not forget to write "DNH" in the Company field on the order form. This means that 20% of the purchase value will be donated to DNH.

We would like to thank our partner, the Tudi Billo OHG, who furnished this store for you and hope you enjoy browsing.

You can also order the Nepal coffee of our coffee supplier online at www.moreofcoffee.de.

DNH Calendar

You can order our beautiful Nepal Calendar 2021 as wall and mini table calendar on our website (www.dnh-stuttgart.org).



If you want to save shipping costs and live nearby, you can also order the calendar from our office in Stuttgart-Vaihingen/Möhringen. Please make sure to call in advance (phone 0711/4596-488).

GNHA Membership Subscriptions:

Please remember to transfer your membership subscription 2020

Subscription for individual members: EUR 24,- per year

Subscription for family members: EUR 36,- per year

If you want to give us a SEPA mandate, you can download the form on our website under Downloads.

Dates and News

See details on our homepage, in facebook or on our Instagram account:

Homepage: www.dnh-stuttgart.org

Facebook: [www.fb.com/Deutsch-Nepalische-Hilfsgemeinschaft-117494788313902](https://www.facebook.com/Deutsch-Nepalische-Hilfsgemeinschaft-117494788313902)

Instagram: [dnh_stuttgart](https://www.instagram.com/dnh_stuttgart)

GNHA contact address:

Deutsch-Nepalische Hilfsgemeinschaft e.V. Schulze-Delitzsch-Straße 22, 70565 Stuttgart

Tel.: +49 (0)711 45 96-488,

Fax: +49 (0)711 99 77-96 58

Mail: buero@dnh-stuttgart.org

Bank Account for donations:: Commerzbank Stuttgart

IBAN: DE 03 6008 0000 0182 4971 00, BIC: DRESDEFF600

The GNHA is a recognised, non-profit organisation. Donations are tax-deductible. Donation receipts are issued at the end of the year, but also beforehand upon special request. Last Notice of Exemption 18.06.2019

