

Gaijatra Festival in Bhaktapur

Nepali transcript:

सनिता: अनि गाईजात्रा¹को बारेमा केही भानिदेऊ न।

करिश्मा: गाईजात्राको बारेमागाईजात्रा चाहिँ उपत्यका माध्यममा मनाइन्छ, होइन, उपत्यकामा मनाइन्छ। यो चाहिँ काठमाडौँ², भक्तपुर, ललितपुर³, त्यो तीन ठाउँमध्ये एकदम धेरै रमाइलो हुने चाहिँ, भक्तपुर लाग्छ मलाई चाहिँ किनकि म भक्तपुरमा बस्ने हुनाले।

सनिता: अनि कति दिनसम्म मनाइन्छ यो जात्रा?

करिश्मा: यो जात्रा ...आठ दिन।

सनिता: आठ दिन? भक्तपुर⁴मा मात्र कि काठमाडौँमा

करिश्मा: काठमाडौँतिर पनि मनाइन्छ।

सनिता: काठमाडौँतिर पनि आठ दिन?

करिश्मा: होइन, sorry, wrong भयो। यहाँ यहाँ भक्तपुरमा मात्रै आठ दिन मनाइन्छ यो।

सनिता: अँ। अरु ठाउँमा चाहिँ....

करिश्मा: अरु ठाउँमा चाहिँ एक दिन ...

सनिता: एक दिन? अनि गाईजात्रा चाहिँ किन मनाइन्छ त?

करिश्मा: गाईजात्रा चाहिँ किन मनाइन्छ भने यो... पहिला, मल्लकाल⁵मा प्रताप ...प्रताप⁶ मल्ल भन्ने राजा हुनुहुन्थ्यो। वहाँकोवहाँको छोरा बिल्ने बेलामा वहाँको

¹ Name of festival.

² Capital of Nepal, located in the valley.

³ Name of city in the valley.

⁴ Name of city in the valley.

पत्नीले ठूलो शोक लिनुभएको थियो। अनि त्यो शोक लिएको देखेर राजालाई दुख लाग्यो। अनि वहाँले गाईजात्रा निकाल्ने निधो गर्नुभयो। अनि गाईजात्रा निकाल्ने निधो गर्नुभएर गाईजात्रा निकाल्नुभयो। गाईजात्रा निकलिसकेपछि आफ्नो टोल-छिमेकको मान्छेहरूले, सबैले, अब आफ्नो-अफ्नो ...

सनिता: घरबाट ...

करिश्मा: घरबाट निकाल्नुभयो होइन, मरेको मान्छेहरूको तस्विरहरू राखेर निकाल्नुभयो, होइन, अनि, वहाँहरूले निकाल्नुभएको थियो, र रानीलाई देखाउनुभयो, 'ल हेर, हाम्रो छोरा मात्र मरेको होइन, सबैको आफ्नो tensionको बाट ... आफ्नो-आफ्नो घरबाट पनि मरेको छ... हेर' भनेर चित्त बुझाउनु ...चित्त बुझाउनुभएको थियो।

सनिता: त्यो बाहेक केही धार्मिक कारणहरू छन् कि गाईजात्रा मनाउने

करिश्मा: छ....धार्मिक कारणहरू। के-के हुन्?

सनिता: त्यो भन्नुस्।

करिश्मा: (*laughing*) त्यो चाहिँ, अब, वेद⁷, वेद भन्ने, अब, त्यो धार्मिकको नाम हो, होइन। अनि त्यो वेद भन्ने चाहिँ, अब... मान्छेहरू, मरेको मान्छेहरू छिटै स्वर्ग पुगोस् भनेर वैतरणी⁸ भन्ने खोलामा गाईको पुच्छर समातेर टहर ...टहरिन्छ। अनि स्वर्गमा पुग्छ भन्ने मानिएको छ।

सनिता: हजुर।

करिश्मा: अनि ...मान्यता छ। अनि त्यसरी नै अब यो चाहिँ चार प्रकारको हुन्छ त्यसरी लाने पनि ...

सनिता: के लाने?

करिश्मा: गाई ...गाई लाने। एउटा त अबसाँचिकै-को गाई लगिन्छ।

⁵ The time period when the kings with the Malla surname ruled the valley.

⁶ Name of the king.

⁷ Name of person.

⁸ Name of river.

सनिता: जिँउदै?

करिश्मा: जिँउदै। अर्को, केटा मान्छे मर्ने बेला मात्रको गाई बनाइन्छ। त्यो पनि लगिन्छ।
अनि अर्को ...अर्को चाहिँ के.... किसानहरूको घरबाट चाहिँ, होइन, बच्चाहरू, आफ्नो
बच्चाहरू छैन भने एउटा ...बास ...बासको रथमा गाईको photoहरू राखेर, सिंह
राखेर पठाइन्छ। अर्को चाहिँबच्चाहरूलाई नै त्यही ... गाईको मुर्तित्यो ...

सनिता: के चाहिँको रुप बनाएर ...

करिश्मा: अँ, रुप बनाएर पठाइने गरिन्छ।

सनिता: अनि गाईलाई चाहिँ कता लगिन्छ, पठाएर के गरिन्छ?

करिश्मा: पठाएर ? सहर-बजारमा घुमाइन्छ। अनि, अबहेर्ने मान्छेहरूलाई नि रमाइलो
हुन्छ। यो चाहिँ नेवारी⁹ जातिमा मात्रै चलिआएको पाइन्छ।

सनिता: अरु ...नेपालको अरु जातिहरू चाहिँ ...

करिश्मा: अरु जातिले खास मनाएको मलाई अहिलेसम्म थाहा छैन।

सनिता: अनि अब ...गाई मात्र लान्छन् कि गाई सँग परिवार नै जाने हो कि, के-के गर्छन्
त गाईजात्रामा?

करिश्मा: गाईजात्रामा ... गाई ...गाईजस्तो बनाएरगाई छ भने गाईसँग जान्छ, होइन।
गाई छैन भने यदि ...बासको त्यो बनाएरटोल-छिमेकको मान्छेहरू, आफ्नो
परिवार, सबैजना ...

सनिता: गाईसँगै ...

करिश्मा: गाईसँगै जान्छ।

सनिता: अँ। अरु के-के हुन्छ त गाईजात्रामा?

⁹ Name of a caste in Nepal.

करिश्मा: गाईजात्रामा नाच-गान हुन्छ। अनि अब बाहिरबाट आएको मान्छेहरूलाई नि हेर्नको लागि उत्सव एउटा नाच पनि हुन्छ यहाँ। एकदमयो अरु दुईटा जिल्लाहरूमध्ये चाहिँ, यहाँ चाहिँ, एकदम राम्रो नाच हुन्छ।

सनिता: नाच चाहिँ कस्तो हुन्छ त?

करिश्मा: नाच चाहिँ ...अब नाच चाहिँ कस्तो हुन्छ भने घ्यानतान -घिन्चिंग¹⁰ भन्ने एउटा नाच हुन्छ। त्यसमा चाहिँ दुई line हुन्छ। दुई lineमा, अब, एउटा-एउटा लठ्ठी बोकेको हुन्छ। गीत अनुसार त्यो लठ्ठीको...हिसाबले नाचिन्छ।

सनिता: यो चाहिँ भक्तपुरमा मात्र नाचिन्छ कि

करिश्मा: भक्त ...भक्तपुरमा मात्रै

सनिता: हजुर। यसको त हामीसँग video छ, होइन।

करिश्मा: अँ, video छ।

सनिता: अनि त्यो बाहेक अरु के-के नाच हुन्छन् त गाईजात्रामा ?

करिश्मा: गाईजात्रामालाखे¹¹ नाच, अनिमलाई यति त मात्र थाहा छ त्यसको बारेमा।

सनिता: लाखे नाचको बारेमा केही भन ...

करिश्मा: लाखे नाच चाहिँ, केटा मान्छे नै हुन्छ त्यसमा ... त्यसमा चाहिँ, कम्मरमा गहना लगाएर, अनि रातो चोलो¹², अनि सारी, अनि कपाल झिन्ग्रिन्न पारेर नाचिन्छ।

English translation:

Sanita: Now, say something about Gaijatra¹³.

¹⁰ Name of the dance.

¹¹ Name of dance.

¹² A type of Nepali blouse.

¹³ Name of festival.

Karishma: About Gaijatra... Gaijatra is celebrated in the valley medium, *hoina*¹⁴, celebrated in the valley. This, like, Kathmandu¹⁵, Bhaktapur¹⁶ and Lalitpur¹⁷, between these three place(s), the most fun is, like, in Bhaktapur, is what I feel because I live in Bhaktapur...

Sanita: And how many days is this *jatra*¹⁸ celebrated?

Karishma: This *jatra*... eight days.

Sanita: Eight days? Only in Bhaktapur or in Kathmandu...

Karishma: It is also celebrated in Kathmandu.

Sanita: Eight days even in Kathmandu?

Karishma: No, sorry, that was wrong. Here... here, in Bhaktapur only, it is celebrated eight days.

Sanita: Yeah. In other places, like...

Karishma: In other places, like one day...

Sanita: One day? And why is Gaijatra celebrated?

Karishma: The reason why Gaijatra is celebrated is this: before, in the time of Mallas¹⁹, Pratap²⁰... there was a king called Pratap Malla. His...when his son died, his wife was very depressed. And seeing that she was depressed, the king was sad. And he made a decision to organize Gaijatra. And by deciding to organize Gaijatra, he organized Gaijatra. After organizing Gaijatra, one's neighborhood's people, all of them, now, own...

Sanita: From homes...

Karishma: From homes, *hoina*...organized it, they organized by bringing the dead people's photographs, *hoina*, and, he [the king] organized it, and showed it to the queen. By saying, 'Here, look, our son is not the only one who died, everyone's own tension... from everyone's own home too, people have died... look,' he consoled... he had consoled her.

¹⁴ The actual meaning of '*Hoina*' is 'no'. However, in this case it is used as a filler word, asking for confirmation or just making sure that the listener is following what the speaker is saying. For example, in English, the word 'Right?' is used to confirm something.

¹⁵ Capital of Nepal, located in the valley.

¹⁶ Name of city in the valley.

¹⁷ Name of city in the valley.

¹⁸ *Jatra* in Nepal is a festival where religious chariots are driven in the city. Gaijatra is one such *jatra*.

¹⁹ The time period when the kings with the Malla surname ruled the valley.

²⁰ Name of the king.

Sanita: Other than that, are there any religious reasons or, to celebrate Gaijatra?

Karishma: There are... religious regions. What are they?

Sanita: Say them.

Karishma: (*laughing*). That is, now Bed²¹, Bed is, now, that religious person's name, *hoina*. And that person named Bed, like... people, so dead people could reach Heaven fast, swam in Baitarani River by holding on to a cow's tail. And it was believed that people would reach Heaven.

Sanita: *Hajur*²².

Karishma: And... that is the belief. And, in that way, now... there is, like, four types, the ways in which to take...

Sanita: Take what?

Karishma: Cow... take cows. One is, now...real cow is taken.

Sanita: Alive?

Karishma: Alive. Another, another cow is taken when only a male dies. That is taken too. And another... another is, like what... from the homes of farmers, like, children, if they don't have their own children then one... bamboo... in a chariot of bamboos, by putting a picture of a cow, by putting its horns, it is sent. Another, like... to children, that... the statue of a cow... that...

Sanita: What, by creating the form...

Karishma: Yes, by making the form, they are sent.

Sanita: And where is the cow taken, what is done by sending it?

Karishma: By sending? They are made to roam around the city-markets. And, now... it is fun for the people watching. This, like, is found to only continue in the Newari caste.

Sanita: Others... in the other castes of Nepal, like...

²¹ Name of person.

²² '*Hajur*', is a term that essentially means 'you' but in a formal way. Nepali language has degrees of respect in it and the term '*hajur*' decrees the highest degree of respect. In this context is used to say 'yes' in a formal way. It may also be used as a response to someone's question or to ask a speaker to repeat something they just said in a formal way.

Karishma: Till now, I don't know about other castes actually celebrating.

Sanita: And now... do they only take cows or does the family go with the cow, or what is done in Gaijatra?

Karishma: In Gaijatra, cow... by making like cows... if there is a cow, people go with the cow, *hoina*. If there is no cow, if ... by forming that [chariot] of bamboo... the people from the neighborhood, own family, all of them...

Sanita: With the cow...

Karishma: They go with the cow.

Sanita: Yes. What are the other things that happen in Gaijatra?

Karishma: In Gaijatra. there is singing and dancing. And now, for people who have come from outside to watch... festival... there is one dance that happens here. The most...this is, between the other districts... here, like, a very good dance performance happens.

Sanita: How is the dance?

Karishma: The dance, like, now... how the dance is, there is a dance called Ghyantan-Ghinching. In that, there are two lines. In the two lines, now, one stick is carried. According to the song, that stick... accordingly, the dance is done.

Sanita: This like, is only danced in Bhaktapur or...?

Karishma: Bhakta... in Bhaktapur only...

Sanita: *Hajur*. We have a video of this, *hoina*.

Karishma: Yes, there is a video.

Sanita: And other than that, what are the other dances that happen on Gaijatra?

Karishma: On Gaijatra... *Laakhe* dance, and... I just know this much about that.

Sanita: Say something about the *Laakhe* dance.

Karishma: *Laakhe* dance, like, there is a male in that... in that, like, by wearing jewelry in the waist, and red blouse, and *sari*, and by messing up the hair, it is danced.

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