

**Nepali transcript:**

यहाँ मणिकृष्ण प्रधान नेपालको काभ्रेपलान्चोक जिल्ला<sup>1</sup>मा पर्ने आफ्नो गाउँका सामाजिक समस्याका बारेमा बयान गर्दैछन्।

सनिता: अनि पढे लेखेको चाहि कतिको छ नि गाउँमा? स्कूलहरु छ र?

मणिकृष्ण: अहिल्यै तिर स्कूलहरु बने थिए, मैले पढ्दा खेरि चाहि थिएन। मैले जम्मा पाँचसम्म मात्र पढे थिए, त्यो पनि सरकारी स्कूलमा मात्र। English हरु त केहि आउँदैन थियो।

सनिता: अहिल्यै चाहिँ सरकारी स्कूल छ कि प्राइभेट स्कूल छ नि?

मणिकृष्ण: अहिल्यै प्राइभेट चाहिँ खुल्या छैन। एक ठाउँ मात्र छ। त्यो पनि तीन घन्टा त्यहीँ पहिरो बाटो नाघेर जानुपर्छ। नत्र अन्त छैन। सरकारी नै हो। +2<sup>2</sup> सम्म छ।

सनिता: स्वास्थ्य सेवा छ कि?

मणिकृष्ण: स्वास्थ्य सेवा नि टाढै छ। त्यहीँ पनि तीन घन्टाको बाटो हिँड्नुपर्छ।

सनिता: ठुलै छ कि?

मणिकृष्ण: ठुलो छैन सानो सानो स्वास्थ्य चौकी जस्तो।

सनिता: अनि गाउँको मान्छेहरु चाहिँ कतिको जान्छन् स्वास्थ्य चौकीमा?

मणिकृष्ण: कमै हुन्छ। उनीहरुको ऊ पुग्दैन।

सनिता: आम्दानी?

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<sup>1</sup> नेपालको जिल्ला भनेको अमेरिकाको county जस्तै हो। जिल्ला भनेको administrative region हो। नेपालका ७५ जिल्लामध्य काभ्रेपलान्चोक पनि एउटा जिल्ला हो।

<sup>2</sup> +2 is short for 10+2. In Nepal, high school is up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. After finishing their 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students study for another 2 years, after which they can advance to Bachelor's degree. Hence the term 10+2.

मणिकृष्णः आम्दानी भन्नाले जनचेतनामुलकहरु पनि त्यहाँ पुग्या हुँदैन, हैन। कमै छ। अनि कसै कसैले भने मात्रै। धेरैजसो चाहिँ त्यहाँ धामीझाँक्रिको विश्वास गर्छन्। त्यसै कारणले गर्दाखेरि कमै हुन्छ। अनि मान्छे मरिसकेपछि hospital लानुपर्ने रेछ भन्ने हुन्छ। धेरैजसोले। ...पहिलाको भन्दा त धेरै बुझिसके तर शहरमा भन्दा चाहिँ १० पर्सेन्तले जत्ति मात्र बुझेछन जस्तो लाग्छ।

सनिता: अरु के के सामाजिक समस्याहरु छन् त? तराई<sup>3</sup>तिर चाहिँ मान्छेहरुले दाइजो<sup>4</sup> दिने, दाइजो प्रथा...

मणिकृष्णः ए, तेस्तोमा त हाम्रो छैन। दाइजोहरुमा त तेस्तो छैन। अनि त्यो साधारण हो। अब जस्तै केटाकेटी मनपरायो भने हैन, बोलायो टिका<sup>5</sup> लगाइदिन्छ। केहि दिनुपर्ने, लिनुपर्ने केहि छैन। पहिलापहिला चाहिँ हल्का अब कसैले मनपरायो लग्यो, भगाएर लग्यो भने चाहिँ पैसा ठग्यो भन्थ्यो हैन। अहिले चाहिँ तेस्तो छैन। मनपरायो भागेर गयो भने पनि ठिकै छ हैन, मनपराएर अब बोलायो भने पनि टिका लगाइदिन्छ, राम्रैसित भोजहरु गर्दिन्छ।

सनिता: जातपात<sup>6</sup>को पनि?

मणिकृष्णः जातपातको त्यत्ति खासै फरक छैन अहिले।

सनिता: (हाँस्टै) शहरमा भन्दा राम्रो रे छ।

मणिकृष्णः अब हाम्रो उतातिर चाहिँ कोहि मान्छे मन पराउँछन् भनेर कुरा चलायो भने त्यही मान्छेलाई बोलाउछन् अनि पठाइ दिन्छन्, बस्। त्यति केहि दिनुपर्ने पनि छैन, यति चाहिँन्छ भन्ने पनि छैन। त्यस्तो दिनैपछि भन्ने पनि छैन। आफ्नो विश।

सनिता: अनि गाउँघरमा बालविवाह समस्या छ कि?

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<sup>3</sup> Geographically, Terai is the southern part of Nepal.

<sup>4</sup> *Daijo* or dowry in southern Nepal (Terai) consists of cash and other expensive gifts (e.g. land, cars, etc.) that a bride's family is socially obligated to pay to her groom's family.

<sup>5</sup> *Tikaa*, in Hindu practices, is made of uncooked rice grains, vermilion powder, and water (or any adhesive food like banana). When *tikaa* is placed on one's forehead, it usually signifies an auspicious event.

<sup>6</sup> *Jaat paat* means caste in Hindu societies, like most of Nepal and India. The caste system was historically organized based upon one's occupation. There is often pressure and personal preference to marry within one's one caste.

मणिकृष्णः त्यस्तो त अहिले छैन। पहिलातिर त हुन्थ्यो होला सायद, अहिले त धेरै जना....  
(लजाएर हाँस्टै)

**English translation:**

Here, Manikrishna Pradhan is explaining the social [issues] of his village which lies in the Kavrepalanchok district<sup>7</sup> of Nepal.

Sanita: So, how many in your village are literate? You have schools?

Manikrishna: Nowadays, there are schools. When I was studying, there were none. I have studied only till the fifth grade, that too, in a public school. I knew no English.

Sanita: Nowadays, you have public school or private school?

Manikrishna: Private schools have not opened [nearby]. There is one private school but it is three hours away. One has to walk through an area damaged by landslide to get there. Otherwise, there is no other private school. There is a public school in the village that runs classes up to +2.<sup>8</sup>

Sanita: [Are] there health services?

Manikrishna: Health services [are] far away, too. You also have to walk three hours to get there.

Sanita: Is it big?

Manikrishna: No, it's not big. It is like a small clinic.

Sanita: So, how many in the village go to the clinic?

Manikrishna: Few. They don't have enough....

Sanita: Income?

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<sup>7</sup> A district in Nepal is the U.S. equivalent of county. A district is an administrative region. Of the 75 districts in Nepal, Kavrepalanchok is one.

<sup>8</sup> +2 is short for 10+2. In Nepal, high school is up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. After finishing their 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students study for another 2 years, after which they can advance to Bachelor's degree. Hence the term 10+2.

Manikrishna: Income...I mean the villagers don't have knowledge about their health. So, there are few [visitors to the clinic]. Many believe in shamanic healers. That is why there are only a few [visitors to the clinic]. Then, once a person dies, then only, they regret and say that they should have taken the ill person to the hospital. Compared to the old days, the villagers are more aware about their health but compared to the modern-day urban residents, I think only 10% of the villagers have understood it.

Sanita: What other social problems are there? [For example,] in Terai<sup>9</sup>, people offer dowries, the dowry system<sup>10</sup>...

Manikrishna: Oh, no, we don't have anything like that. We don't have the dowry system and that is normal. Now, if a boy and a girl like each other, the villagers ask them to come together and they put the *tikaa*<sup>11</sup> [on their foreheads]. There is no exchange of gifts or dowries. Now, back in the old days, if someone liked another person and ran away, then they had to pay a bride price. These days, it isn't like that anymore. If a couple likes each other and they run away, it is ok. If they like each other and let the other villagers know, they are offered the *tikaa* [on their foreheads] and a wedding reception is held in their honor.

Sanita: What about *jaat paat*<sup>12</sup>?

Manikrishna: *Jaat paat* is not a big issue these days.

Sanita: (*laughing*) Sounds like it's better than it is in the cities.

Manikrishna: Now, in my village, if someone tells he/she likes someone else, the villagers will ask the related people to come together, they get the couple married, and send them [home]. That's it! There is no obligation to give any dowry. Just depends upon the wish of the couple.

Sanita: Does your village have child marriage problem, then?

Manikrishna: No. Maybe it used to happen in the past. These days, most people... (*laughs a bit*)

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<sup>9</sup> Geographically, Terai is the southern part of Nepal.

<sup>10</sup> Dowry in southern Nepal consists of cash and other expensive gifts (e.g. land, cars, etc.) that a bride's family is socially obligated to pay to her groom's family.

<sup>11</sup> *Tikaa*, in Hindu practices, is made of uncooked rice grains, vermilion powder, and water (or any adhesive food like banana). When *tikaa* is placed on one's forehead, it usually signifies an auspicious event.

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