

Nepali transcript:

यहाँ अंतरवार्ताकर्ता ८० वर्ष नाघेका गोविन्दसँग उहाँको पढाइ र मलेरीया निवारणको कामको बारेमा कुरा गर्दैछन्।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि स्कूल जानुभा¹ छ?

गोविन्द: गा² थियो। स्कूल त पहिले तेहाथुममा, धनकुटा district³ तेहाथुममा 'सिंहवाहिनी पाठशाला'⁴मा गा थियो पहिले।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: त्यो शहरमा हैन?

गोविन्द: गाँउमा, विमट ठाँउमा।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि शहरमा कहिले सर्नुभएको त?

गोविन्द: ६ वर्षको उमेरमा त्यहाँ थियो। त्यहाँबाट ९६, ९५⁵ सालमा, ६ वर्षको उमेरमा फेरि फर्क्यो⁶ थियो यहाँ। फर्कदा चाहिँने अनि चाहिँने घरैमा पढेर अनि यसपछि अ...दइ, चार क्लासमा 'दरबार स्कूल'⁷मा भर्ना भयो क्यारे।

¹ The speaker does not say the full word 'जानुभएको /janubha-eko', but rather only pronounces half of it as 'जानुभा/janubha-a'. It's like shortening 'want to' to 'wanna' in English. The prefix '-एको/eko' is often shortened to '-या/ya' in colloquial Nepali. In formal Nepali writing, this would be considered an error.

² Again, the speaker does not say the full word 'गएको /ga-eko', but rather only pronounces half of it as 'गा /ga-a'.

³ A 'district', referred to as 'जिल्ला/Jilla' in Nepali, is an administrative region. Districts in Nepal are comparable to counties in the U.S. 'धनकुटा/Dhankuta' is one of the 75 districts in Nepal.

⁴ Name of a school. 'पाठशाला/Pathashalas' are traditional boarding schools in Nepal and India run by religious and spiritual leaders and/or priests. They are similar to monasteries. Very few Pathashalas exist today.

⁵ This is a reference to year 1996 and 1995 in Bikram Sambat, the official calendar of Nepal. For example, when we refer to a year as 92 in the west, we automatically understand it as being 1992, the same is true for the Nepali calendar.

⁶ 'फर्कको/furk-eko' is shortened to 'फर्क्या/furk-ya'

⁷ The oldest government school in Kathmandu.

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए, हजुर⁸।

गोविन्द: ५ क्लासमा राख्नुहुन्छ भनेको थियो तर ४ क्लासमा, म सक्दिन भनेर ४ क्लासमा बस्या⁹।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि¹⁰..

गोविन्द: अनि त्यहाँबाट पढ्दा पढ्दै पढ्दा पढ्दै एस.एल.सी¹¹ पास भयो। त्यसपछि चाहिँ त्रि-चन्द्र कलेज जोड्न गर्यो। त्रि-चन्द्र कलेजमा चार वर्ष त्यो गरेर साइन्समा B.Sc. पास गर्यो। त्यहाँबाट चाहिँने डाक्टर पढ्ने इच्छा थियो, दिएनन्। B.Sc. पढ्दा¹²ले M.Sc. पढ्नुपर्छ, परोफेसर बन्नुपर्छ भन्यो। मलाइ त्यो परोफेसर त्यो पढाउने काममै मन पर्दैन त्यो। त्यहाँबाट भागेर जागिर खाएर, हेटौडा¹³मा मलेरीयाको जागिर खायो। entomologist भएर लामखुट्टाको काम गर्नलाइ एक महिना जागिर खाएर, डिल्ली गएर तालिम लियो ६ महिनालाइ। त्यहाँबाट आएर चाहिँ मलेरीयामा काम गर्यो हेटौडामा बसेर। हेटौडामा घरै थिएन त्यसबेला। पालमा बसेर काम गर्नु पर्थ्यो, जङ्गल थियो। राती चाहिँने चितुवा आएरसँगै १० फिट उता पालमा परखालमा सुतिरहन्थ्यो चितुवा। आफू निसकन नसक्ने, राति भएपछि, बिहान मात्र निस्कन पर्ने, अ त्यस्तो जङ्गल जस्तै ठाँउ थियो। अब मलेरीयै- मलेरीया भएको कोहि पनि न काममा..बस्या मान्छेहरू मलेरीया.. सबैलाइ मलेरीया लाग्थ्यो। अ चितवन¹⁴ नै मलेरीयाको

⁸ 'हजुर /hajur', in this context, is used to acknowledge what the interviewee is saying in a respectful way and also shows that the interviewer is listening and following whatever they are saying. In other cases, it can be used to address someone older, to ask a speaker to repeat something they just said in a formal way or as a positive response to someone's question, acknowledging that a speaker is right.

⁹ 'बसेको/bus-eko' is shortened to 'बस्या/bus-ya'.

¹⁰ Words like 'चाहिँ /Chahi', 'अनि/Ani', 'न/Na' are 'निपात/Nipat' which are space filler words that appear frequently in Nepali. They tend to take on different meanings or no meaning at all based on the context and tone of voice when they are used. Especially in Nepali language spoken outside of the capital, 'निपात/Nipat' are everywhere. One can often guess people's origins based on the 'निपात/Nipat' they use.

¹¹ 'एस.एल.सी /SLC stands for School Leaving Certificate. It is a nation-wide examination organized by the Government of Nepal that all students in Grade 10 have to clear before they can officially graduate from school. All education beyond grade 10 is referred to as college. The term 'high school' came into use only recently.

¹² 'पढ्नेको/padh-eko' is shortened to 'पढ्दा/padh-ya'.

¹³ 'हेटौडा/Hetauda' is another district in Nepal.

¹⁴ 'चितवन/Chitwan' is a district next to Hetauda.

खानी थियो। चितवन नैमा काम गर्ने हैन, मलेरीया निवारण गर्ने भनेर। अ त्यसैमा काम गर्दा गर्दै दुइ वर्ष पछि यहाँ चाहिँने मलेरीया eradication भन्ने खोल्थो।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि पहिला र अहिले मलेरीया कतिको...

गोविन्द: अहिले त मलेरीया छँदै छैन भने भ¹⁵। अहिले ९ जिल्लामा अलि-अलि छ।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि हजुर अहिले रिटायर भइसक्नु भयो कि अझ काम गर्दै...

गोविन्द: कहाँ हुन्छ! रिटायर भएकै २० वर्ष भइसक्यो।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि यो २० वर्ष के गर्नुभयो?

गोविन्द: राम नाम जपेर बस्या¹⁶ छ।

English translation:

Here the interviewer is talking to eighty-year-old Govinda about his studies and his work in malaria eradication.

Interviewer: So did you go to school?

Govinda: I went to school. First I went to a school in Terathum, in Dhankuta district¹⁷: Singhavahini Pathashala¹⁸.

Interviewer: That is not in a city?

Govinda: In a village! In a [very] remote place.

Interviewer: Then when did you move to the city?

¹⁵ 'भयो/bhayo' is shortened to 'भ/bha'.

¹⁶ 'बसेको/bas-eko' is shortened to 'बस्या/bas-ya'.

¹⁷ A 'district', referred to as 'जिल्ला/Jilla' in Nepali, is an administrative region. Districts in Nepal are comparable to counties in the U.S. 'धनकुटा/Dhankuta' is one of the 75 districts in Nepal.

¹⁸ Name of a school. 'पाठशाला/Pathashalas' are traditional boarding schools in Nepal and India run by religious and spiritual leaders and/or priests. They are similar to monasteries. Very few Pathashalas exist today.

Govinda: I was there till I was six. I returned here [to Kathmandu] around year 96, 95,¹⁹ when I was six. After I returned, I continued to study at home. Then I was admitted to Durbar School²⁰ for class two...four I think.

Interviewer: Ah, *hajur*²¹.

Govinda: They said they could put me in class five but I stayed in class four because I thought I could not do [well in] class five.

Interviewer: *Ani*²²...

Govinda: And then, while studying at [Durbar School], I passed SLC²³. After that I joined Tri-Chandra College. After four years in Tri-Chandra College, I passed B.Sc. in Science. From there, I wanted to study [for a] Doctorate, but they did not allow. They said after B.Sc. you have to do M.Sc. and become a professor. I did not like a professor's work. So I ran away from there and found a job in Hetauda²⁴. I got a job in malaria [eradication]. I worked in that job for a month and then went to Delhi for a six month training to become an entomologist working with mosquitoes. After coming back from [Delhi], I stayed in Hetauda and worked for malaria [eradication]. At that time there weren't houses in Hetauda. It was a jungle, we used to live and work in tents. At night, cheetahs would come and sleep on the walls, about ten feet away from the tents. So we could not go out once night fell. You could only go out in the morning. It was a jungle-like place. Well, there was malaria—malaria [spreading] everywhere... no one at work... everyone living there had malaria. Chitwan²⁵ was a malaria mine. And we used to work in Chitwan to eradicate malaria. About two years after we started working, the malaria eradication [program] was opened here.

¹⁹ This is a reference to year 1996 and 1995 in Bikram Sambat, the official calendar of Nepal. For example, when we refer to a year as 92 in the west, we automatically understand it as being 1992, the same is true for the Nepali calendar.

²⁰ The oldest government school in Kathmandu.

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²⁴ 'हेटौडा/Hetauda' is another district in Nepal.

²⁵ 'चितवन/Chitwan' is a district next to Hetauda.

Interviewer: How [is] malaria now [compared to] before...?

Govinda: Now you can almost say that there is no malaria. There is a little but in nine districts.

Interviewer: And have you retired now or are you still working...?

Govinda: Oh no way! It's been twenty years since I retired.

Interviewer: So what did you do in these twenty years?

Govinda: I have been living chanting the name of Lord Ram.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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