

# NEPAL



*Sandwiched between China and India* <sup>1</sup>

# Flag, coat of arms and the Everest



# Nepal: Country

- A landlocked country in South Asia
- Never been colonized
- Population: 27 million
- Capital: Kathmandu
- Nepal is South Asia's third poorest country, this according to a recent World Bank report, with 33.9 per cent of the population living under the extreme poverty line of US\$ 1.25 per day. According to Nepali economist Bishombhar Pyakurel, in the 1990s, Nepal was at the bottom of the poverty ranking in South Asia.
- Highest peak in the world: MT Everest
- Birth place of Lord Buddha

# Nepal: People

- Western influence through
  - Media
  - Tourism

Two major groups of people

- Indo-Aryan
- Tibeto-Burman

# Cultural Diversity

- Nepali Culture is diverse in itself. So the assumption on language = culture is misleading
- It is complex to understand the diversity based on caste, religion, economic and social status for those not accustomed to diversity.



# Languages of Nepal

- The number of individual languages listed for Nepal is 122.
- Of these, 120 are living and 2 are extinct. Of the living languages, 7 are institutional, 21 are developing, 29 are vigorous, 55 are in trouble, and 8 are dying.
- Nepali is the official language

क	ख	ग	घ	ङ
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
त	थ	द	ध	न
प	फ	ब	भ	म
य	र	ल	व	स
ष	श	ह		
क्ष	त्र	ज्ञ		

# GREETINGS AND POPULAR EXPRESSIONS

The word *Namaste* is a common expression. It is used for greetings such as "hello," "good morning," and "good night."

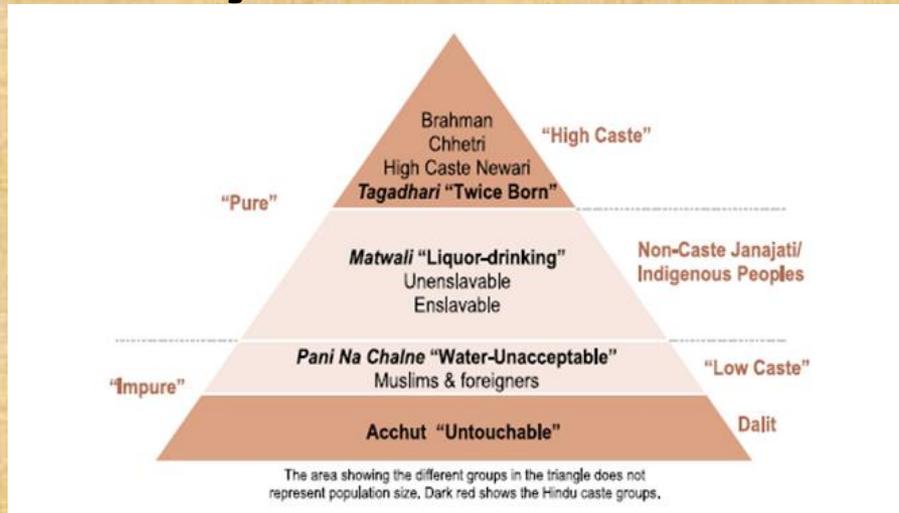
*Namaskaar* is another form of greeting and is mostly used on formal occasions.

The fundamental role of rice in Nepalese culture is evident in the language. Daal bhaat is *khaanaa*, "food," and a common Nepalese greeting is "*Bhaat khaayo?*" meaning literally, "Have you eaten rice?"



# Social Structure

- **Caste System**



- Last names reflect what your caste is
- **Impact:** have to be aware of differences when dealing with the population. It might not be explicit.

# Calling by

- Showing physical affection openly in public is restricted
- Inter caste marriage are acceptable in the diaspora however, the Brahmins still look for their own caste
- Calling people by names like Dad, Mum, Sister, Brother, Uncle is very common. For example, you say '*Amaa*' (Mother) or Buba (Dad) to your friend's parents but never call them by their names.

# Staple Food

- Nepalese main course of meal known as Dal-Bhat-Tarkari traditionally which is perfect combination of carbohydrate, protein, vitamin, mineral, and fat. The real wholesome Dal-Bhat-Tarkari is being eaten all over Nepal generally and it is habitual way of twice a day.
- Two main meals
- No breakfast



# Religion/Festivals

- Majority population are Hindus and followed by by Buddhists. Muslims and Christians are the minority.
- Dashain, Tihar are main festivals of Hindus
- Lhochhar: Buddhists
- Christmas
- Festivals are important for family get-together and social cohesion



# Emigration

- Emigration from Nepal started after the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-15, with soldiers ('Ghurkhas') recruited into the British Indian army. There are still more than 50,000 Nepalese in the Indian army and 3,500 in the British army. More recently, the Nepalese have been migrating to Southeast Asia, Far East Asia, and the Middle East for semi-skilled and unskilled jobs. India remains the main destination (49-57%), as there are more than 1.3 million Nepalese working in India, and more than 3 million in total working abroad. Remittance contributes as much as 13% of the total GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of Nepal.

# Migration to the West

- Began in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Not many people are able to migrate to the West as it requires qualifications and experience under economic categories or skilled worker categories
- There is a trend to come to the west in a student status and later on apply to immigrate.
- Some people migrated under refugee status due to Civil War (1996-2006)

# Main reasons of Migration

- Political instability
- Civil war for ten years
- Less opportunities for professionals in comparison to most other developed countries
- People were able to afford
- Unemployment rate: World Bank has suggested that more than 40 percent of the population is unemployed.
- Children's future stand out to be on the top of the most people who migrate to developed countries

# Nepalis in Canada

- Various sources assume that there are about 20,000 nepalis in Canada including Bhutanese refugees whose ethic origin is Nepali
- Half of the population is in Ontario and the second largest is in BC
- **Nepalis** in London are approximately 100, mostly came as students, economic immigrants and/or Highly skilled workers.
- What is relevant in this talk is the fact: Nepali population in London do not normally seek settlement assistance available for Newcomers.
- Therefore, projects are targeted towards Nepali speaking Bhutanese not Nepalis in London.

# Post-migrational challenges

- A gradual disintegration of the community spirit as the young generation tends to be individualistic
- Majority of the population is working in mostly skilled jobs
- People who have migrated based on skills and education acquired in Nepal have a hard time to find jobs which is a reason for discouragement.
- Change is a big struggle
- Factions based on caste and geographical location one come from and job are apparent
- Most people are able to access necessary services

# Nepali Associations

- **Nepalese Canadian Association of Ottawa**
- **NRNA NCC-Canada | Non- Resident Nepalis National Association**
- **Association of Nepalese in Quebec**
- **The Nepalese Canadian Society of Edmonton**
- **Nepal Cultural Society of British Columbia**

# Integration is Mutual

- Relationship building is **mutual**: “Indispensability of the other”
- Change cannot be imposed but allowing it to emerge after a realization in the target population
- General assumptions are misleading most of the times
- We are looking for simple solutions to complicated issues
- Not an enemy to be conquered: Aggressive Integration