

Issue No. 1598

Date: 4 Chaitra 2081 / 17 March 2025

<p><u>Today's Programme:</u></p> <p>Regular Weekly Meeting with the RCP's 'Vocational Award Ceremony'</p>	<p><u>Congratulatory Events</u></p> <p><u>Birthdays:</u> Nil</p> <p><u>Wedding Anniversaries:</u> Nil</p>
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Minutes of Meeting No. 1942

Date: 26 Falgun 2081 / 10 March 2025

- President Rtn. Preeti Khemka called the RCP's Meeting No. 1942 to order with 15 seconds of 'Silent Invocation' for world peace, health, and happiness.
- Guests welcomed by the President: Guest speaker Dr. Bhupendra Devkota; Rtn. Ewerhard Engels from RC Tegensee, Germany; Rotaract President Aman Shrestha and one Rotaract from the Rotaract Club of Patan.
- The last meeting minutes of the RCP were reviewed and adopted.
- Happy News Contribution Pledges:
 - Rtn. Sandhya Regmi – for 'Happy Birthday' in absentia (ha.ba.).
 - Rtn. Siba B. and Mithila Rajbhandary – for 'Happy Wedding Anniversary' in absentia (ha.ba.).
 - Rtn. Ewerhard Engels – for 'Happy Landing' from Germany (Rs. 500).
 - Rtn. Lochan Gyawali – for rain after five months (Rs. 500).
 - Rtn. Pushkar M. Shakya – for earlier ha.ba, 'Happy Landing' from Bangkok, and today's talk prog. (Rs. 1,000).
 - Rtn. Piyush B. Bajracharya – for 'Happy Landing' from Bangkok, and earlier ha.ba. (Rs. 1,000).
 - Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht – for participating in the President Elects Learning Seminar (PELS) (Rs. 500).
 - Rtn. Prakash R. Regmi – for the talk programme by his college friend today, and participation in a Regional Cardiology Conference in Birgunj (Rs. 500).
 - Rtn. Preeti Khemka – for 'Happy Landing' from Prayagraj/Goa, India (Rs. 500).
- Rotary Information:
 - President Elect Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht briefed on the highlights of the PELS held during 7-8 March 2025 in Birgunj. He found the PELS of this year very interesting and useful particularly the networking of 15 President Elects who made the trip jointly and opened the possibilities of collaboration in the coming Rotary Year. He also informed the PELS participants on RCP's flagship projects and advocated for collaboration in joint projects.
 - Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal informed of the possibility of doing a 'Tree Plantation' activity at Mahendragram School next year as was done this year.
 - President Rtn. Preeti Khemka confirmed the 'Vocational Award Ceremony' being held next Monday, 17 March 2025 as planned earlier.
- Salutation: By Rtn. Ganga R. Gautam – RC Gyor, Hungary; Chartered: 1932; & Members: 19. District: 9010, Clubs: 75 & Members: 1371.
- Before the adjournment of the meeting, Secretary Rtn. Ganga R. Gautam announced: happy news contributions of Rs. 4,500 to the sunshine funds and Rs. 5,000 for the operational funds of the RCP; meeting attendance of 4 guests, 18 members, 1 spouse, 2 Rotaracts, and 13 make-ups.

Summary of Talk Programme by Dr. Bhupendra Devkota on the use of Mercury and its Exposure in Nepal's Gold-Plating of Sculptures

President Rtn. Preeti Khemka welcomed Dr. Bhupendra Devkota and Rtn. Prakash R. Regmi introduced him. Dr. Devkota got his Doctorate from Germany and is a renowned chemical management specialist on environment toxicology. He has more than 35 years of work experience in chemical management, pesticide disposal and management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Nepal. Dr. Devkota has worked as an Expert and Team leader in various projects of Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture, and is currently the Principal Investigator of a research on mercury exposure of workers in gold-plating workshops, jointly conducted by Ministry of Forests and Environment and UNEP, Bangkok, with the support of Japanese Government. Dr. Devkota is the Founder Principal of College of Applied Sciences-Nepal, which is running MSc degree courses on environmental sciences since 2005.

Dr. Devkota used his power point presentation made at the International Conference on Mercury as Global Pollutant Forum in July 2024 in Cape Town to talk about this interesting subject (The power point presentation has been shared electronically).

Nepal is producing and exporting a large quantity of gold-plated sculptures (Murtis) with the approval of the Department of Archaeology. Dr. Devkota's leadership in regulating and mitigating the impact of mercury usage on the craftsmen/workers of this industry as well as on the environment has been exemplary. Dr. Devkota explained the entire process of gold-plating from importation of mercury, production of sculptures and polishing till the final completion of the products.

Dr. Devkota explained the gold-plating technologies and different levels of exposure for human health. He gave the statistics of a total mercury release of 19,615 Kg/y (6,790 Kg/y in different source categories with 12,825 Kg/y in gold plating sector alone), which is remarkably high. The exposure has several health impacts, specifically involuntary movement of hands and legs on workers of this sector. He has been working to minimize the exposure by awareness-raising, use of protective gears, training, installation of Mercury Capture System (MCS – a locally manufactured machine) and the implementation of a Code of Practice developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests and Environment and the Federation of Handicraft Associations Nepal (FHAN). These efforts have been supported by the Nepalese and Japanese governments and UNEP.

Following an extensive Questions/Answers session, Rtn. Bishwa B. Sharma gave a 'Vote of Thanks' on behalf of the RCP to Dr. Bhupendra Devkota for his excellent briefing on this important subject that is not very much known to the RCP family. President Rtn. Khemka concluded the session adding her own words of thanks to Dr. Devkota and presenting him with a 'Token of Appreciation' from the RCP.



May the Laugh Bug Bite You 😄😄😄😄😄

A child asked his father, "How were people born?" So his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on."

The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like we are now."

The child ran back to his father and said, "You lied to me!" His father replied, "No, your mom was talking about her side of the family."