

The Daily Bridge

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SACYN Leads Call for Regional Youth Unity

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Pokhara, May 17 (The Daily Bridge) – Flags waved with the air thick with enthusiasm and cheers, like rivers flowing carefree and full of energy. Youth from six nations of South Asia, Myanmar and the UK came together as one under the aegis of the Third South Asian Christian Youth Conference that began here today.

In the lap of the high Himalayas, the Christian youth from various denominations across South Asia, including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan, joined together in praise as they led their ethnically dressed contingents into the conference hall, heralding the third chapter of what is set to become the greatest book on youth fellowship in the region.

Music, pomp and exquisitely distinct traditional dance from Nepal provided the ideal fillip for the youth as the conference organised by the South Asian Christian Youth Network (SACYN) was declared open in the pristinely located Fulbari Resort.

As nearly 250 youngsters cheered in unison, their representatives held hands and poured water into a large vessel symbolising the divine unity shared by them that seemed to surpass any physical boundaries human hands could ever set up.

When youth leaders set free their floating lamps into the vessel, the spark reflected bright in the eyes of every young representative that had

the power to burn away any differences created in the past. Cross the Bridge – the theme of the conference seemed apt as voices and hands converged like a mighty river engulfing and enriching all those that came in its path.



The start just set the pace for what was to follow. Fr. Ebenezer Joseph from Sri Lanka highlighted the various chasms that have prevented the South Asians from reaching out to each other and that have fuelled distrust in the region. He called on the youth to play a major role in reconciling their own societies, and subsequently the region, by helping create bridges over troubled waters that flowed through the nations and threatened with a flood of hatred.

Following Fr. Joseph's lead, Vinod Victor from India also underlined the need to create bridges in our lives, explaining the phenomenon of

'incarnation', through which Lord Jesus bridged the gap between man and God, the real and the unreal, the immortal and the mortal, the abstract and the flesh. Drawing similarities between Zachaeus in the Bible and today's typical youth, said the youngsters needed to rise above the quest for worldly luxuries and pleasures and aim for the higher goal of becoming one with a God who gave up his seat on the right hand of the Father to come and die for our sins on earth.

The *Gupshup* sessions that followed helped the youth from different nations interact and thus paved the way for friendships that could last for a lifetime.

Workshops dealing with topics as varied as addiction, drama and the Hindu neighbour among others helped the youth achieve a wider understanding of the issues that create distance and the ones that could be the very bridges that we need to cross over.

Dr. K.B. Rokaya from Nepal provided an insight into the challenges faced by the Nepal of today while Sudipta Singh from India provided a larger view into the situations that South Asia finds itself in.

Post dinner, the revelries began as the youth literally let their hair down singing, dancing and letting loose the shackles that history had imposed on them. They performed action songs, sang traditional songs and danced with their new friends in Christ.

Jai Masih!

Bumping Along to Pokhara

Daud Isar John (Pakistan)

Pokhara, May 17 (The Daily Bridge) – As we landed at the Kathmandu airport, it took us almost half an hour to get our luggage together and gather all of our delegates. We made a beeline towards the exit, to be greeted by a group of youngsters holding placards with “SACYN” written on it. The greeting goes, “Jai Masih,” meaning, Hail the Messiah. The arriving gentlemen were honoured with a Nepali *topi* and the ladies with a maroon scarf. I was particularly excited to see the local volunteers talking to us in Urdu, which according to them is Hindi picked up from the Bollywood movies.

We loaded up in two vans and headed towards Patan, one of the three royal cities in the Kathmandu Valley, to meet our hosts at the Koinonia Patan Church. Once there, we joined the youth for Bible study and worship. We stayed the night in Patan, and learned that our hosts are not only hospitable and courteous, but they were also punctual. But the fact that the streets were deserted after 10 in the night gave a hard blow to me, a night bird.

The following day, the bus ride to Pokhara took us six and a half hours along a serpentine road, bordered by lush green fields on the one side and a steep valley on the other. We left the urban sites of Kathmandu for the rural Nepal. After a couple of short breaks we finally made it to Pokhara. The downtown city resembled Patan.



Another five minutes and I finally set my eyes on the Fulbari Resort, perched on the edge of Seti River gorge and where traditional Newari architecture offsets majestic panoramas. The most elegant was the entrance. Everyone went crazy with their cameras. I made my way to the lobby to find a fully self-contained property with every conceivable amenity. Extensive gardens and ponds with ducks quacking away and a massive infinity pool, which seemed to drop into the river gorge itself, enhanced its grandeur. I branched off to explore the grounds but the expedition was shortened due to lack of sleep and hunger.

I was perched by the golden monkey when more youth arrived and shared their stories of broken buses and bumpy roads; being one of those who got here in 12 long hours from Kathmandu, I extended my sympathies to them.

Heard on the Street

“I don’t mind the sessions, what I mind is having to attend them.”

-A delegate at the conference

It is You

“Our generation of Church leaders, despite limited successes, has failed in being the ideal church, as it ought to be. A change is possible and that change is you”. Mr S u d i p t a singh, one of the most loud church leaders of South Asia urged the participants of the conference.



Come..! Contribute...

**Don't hesitate....
Don't Keep it for tomorrow
Just grab your opportunity...**

**This space is for you....
Bring in your news...
Thoughts.....
Memories.... Snaps.... Expec-
tations..... Fun.... and
Many more.....**

key in your
entries and fly in
to
anilalmjose@gmail.com

Catch up on the Lingo

Jai Masih - Victory to the Lord
Gupsup - Chit Chat

EXPOSURE VISITS

Smile....

You are on Candid Camera

Exposure Group 1:
Pokhara Aged Shelter
Jyothi Vocational Training Center

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Octave
- B. Koinonia
- C. Republic of Youth

Exposure Group 2:

Muslim Mosque
Monastery

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Everest
- B. Polaris
- C. Foundation

Exposure Group 3:

Bindhabaseni Temple
Asal Chhimekee Nepal

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Aqua
- B. Mahindra Bridge
- C. Passa

Exposure Group 4:

Happy Home Tibetan Children
Indreni Ministry

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Catapult Xens
- B. Crusades
- C. Shalom

Exposure Group 5:

Street Boys Program
Rural Community Visit

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Paradise
- B. Prism
- C. The Bridge Maker

Exposure Group 6:

Green Pastures Hospital
Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Grace
- B. Pokhara Gi Charo
- C. Eagles



Phil Chacha in Action

Exposure Group 7:

Child and Women
Empowerment Society

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. Rainbow
- B. Faron
- C. Shlama

Exposure Group 8:

Community Support Group
Prithvi Narayan Campus

Name of *gupshup* groups

- A. One In Christ
- B. Exodus

Slip of the Toungue

Somebody kept insisting that they saw Pill chacha relishing Piss curry and when probed further it was found that it was just a pronunciation issue. It was Phil enjoying Fish.



Memories of the Opening Day



Milkman sets the crowd laughing



South Asian societies in the clutches

of Capitalism has become like the milkman who claimed I do not add water to the milk I only add milk to the water said Dr. Rokaya while explaining the three major challenges of the South Asian contexts.



Bikini - an imagery that kept lingering

Bikini conceals just enough but surely does conceal the most crucial. This became in the point of theologising



in three of the four presentations today. The lesser the cloth the costlier the dress. This was the discussion point among a few participants yesterday.

Casino or Sanjay?- A Tough choice for youth..!

The Casino kept tempting many young people inviting them to a world of gambling but Sanjay kept inviting them for a world of pure Christian entertainment. The youth were in a dilemma and Sanjay kept insisting his co-host was a married man.



The High Costs Helps Temptation Calm Down

High costs for drinking water, coffee, tea and for that matter any drink kept the youth away from the counters and bars of the hotel during non meal times. They could not imagine shelling out 200 rupees for one cup of tea which in their local contexts was available for as low as two rupees.



Jeroen Krabbe sets the Youth stunned

The film clipping from Jesus directed by Roger Young was a major attraction in the Bible Study led by Vinod Victor. Young people cut easily put faces to the tempter that was devouring their lives. Jeroen plays the Devil in the movie.

