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NEWSLETTER 2008



Winter Course in Kathmandu

Last December the Tapriza School started the pilot project of teaching ten students in Kathmandu during the winter months. In Nepal the state school exams necessary to attend Class 10 are held in spring. This date is unfortunate for the mountain regions as the schools are closed during the winter months due to the cold weather. Therefore the students cannot prepare for the exams adequately. To solve this problem the Tapriza School had to find a solution together with the parents so that the students will be well prepared for the exams in springtime. It was decided to

organise extra classes for the students in Kathmandu. The parents considered it important that their children get familiar with the capital of Nepal, and good teachers are easier to find there. The winter course in Kathmandu is mutually financed by the parents and the Tapriza Verein.

Jenny Bentley of the Tapriza office in Switzerland was in Kathmandu when the winter school started. In the following reports she describes the first impressions and experiences of the students.

Due to the continuous and valuable support of Marietta Kind (Switzerland) and Catherine Inman (USA) we, 10 students of class 10, have got the chance to study in Kathmandu in winter season this year. When we arrived in Kathmandu, we realised a new experience. (Kamsung Lama, Class 10, Tapriza School)

The first days in Kathmandu

The trip to Kathmandu is exiting, but also strenuous. The ten students of Class 9 fly with the helicopter from Dunai to Surkhet in the company of two teachers from the Tapriza School. Then they all climb into a minibus and continue in direction of Kathmandu on bumpy roads. Travel sickness, a tire puncture and a road blockage due to an

accident delay the journey, so that it is late in the evening of the next day, when the exhausted group arrives in the Tapriza office in Kathmandu. The students carry their luggage onto the spacious terrace. Some are amazed by the sight of the city sprawled out below them, pointing into the distance and discussing in quiet and excited vo-

ices. Others sit silently on their bags and thankfully accept the tea and biscuits handed to them. One of the students smiles feebly and says, I don't like this place – can't we go back home again? The rooms rented for the winter school lay in the east of Kathmandu, another thirty minutes by taxi from the Taprizza office. The students and teachers are too tired to attempt the last part of their journey, so we decide to cook a meal here and the students roll up and sleep on the floor of the small office. Well-rested and with new energy they move to the rented rooms, and the new school routine slowly starts gaining form. The Taprizza School has rented five rooms in a nice house in a quiet area in the Northeast of Kathmandu. There is a kitchen,

With great support from Taprizza Verein NGO Switzerland our school planned an educational excursion. The main objectives were to get more and more knowledge of the natural beauties, cultural customs and usages, religion and tradition of our nation Nepal (...). The aim of our educational excursion was not limited to textbooks but was to see, feel, watch and touch directly the historical and archaeological places of Nepal.

(Chime Baigy, Class 10, Taprizza School)

a classroom, a bed- and study-room for the boys and the girls separately and a bedroom for the cook and the hostel ward. One teacher from the Taprizza School and three teachers from Kathmandu give lessons to the students and thereby concentrate on the most difficult subjects of the exams such as mathematics and science. In-between the lessons the students are engaged with solving their homework as well as studying for their exams individually. Additionally, excursions to the different historical cities in the surrounding area (for example Bhaktapur) and museums are planned.

The Excursion to the Cable Car and to Gorkha



In the second week of the winter school a trip to the historical town of Gorkha as well as the first and until today only cable car of Nepal is organised. The students are anticipating their first ride in a gondola so that neither the exhausting drive in the minibus and the consequential travel sickness, nor the hours of waiting in a queue in front of the cable car station can take an edge off their good mood. As it is finally our turn, most of the students rush into the small cabins, their faces glowing with excitement. Some though hesitate, feeling afraid of the swinging gondolas. When we reach the top of the mountain,

the students are smiling happily and cannot wait to get back in the cabins for the ride down.

I experienced different feelings while on the cable car which I had never felt before in my life.

(Kamsung Lama, Class 10, Taprizza School)

The next morning we climb up the steep stairs to the old royal palace of Gorkha. The old brick building with the windows and doors traditionally carved from dark wood majestically lies on the hill top with a magnificent view of the snow-capped mountains of the Himalayan ranges. Our group enters the palace compound and listens to the explanations of the different rooms and important sites. Afterwards we return to present-day Gorkha. Unfortunately we cannot visit the museum, because it is closed due to maintenance for the next few months. The excursion combined excitement and learning successfully and will remain an unforgettable experience for the students of the winter school.

During those two days educational excursion we have gained more knowledge about cultural heritage and meaningful and important places of our country Nepal. We thought it was the sources of getting knowledge and it inspired us.

(Chima Baigy, Class 10, Taprizza School)

With best wishes for the new year
Jenny Bentley, Marietta Kind & Taprizza Team