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Browsing through the newspapers
**The Status of Sanitation
in Nepal**



Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH)
(A Collection of Sanitation Articles)

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Browsing Through the Newspapers

The Status of Sanitation in Nepal

Series II

A Collection of Sanitation Articles

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Foreword

In Nepal, every year 15,000 children die due to waterborne diseases and poor sanitation which means 288 children die just during the celebration period of National Sanitation week.

Sanitation coverage in Nepal lags far behind drinking water coverage. The latest national data reveals that national sanitation coverage is 39% compared to drinking water coverage of 82%. To note, sanitation coverage is neither equal across the country, nor is it associated with water coverage. The sanitation gap is far greater in the Tarai districts. Over half the people living in the Tarai have access to drinking water but not to sanitation. The status of latrines constructed in the past is in the poor conditions challenging its sustainability. In order to achieve Millennium Development Target (MDT), approximately 14,000 latrines need to be constructed every month till 2015. The estimated resource gap for sanitation is USD 6 million per year. The national target is even ambitious for having universal coverage by 2017 which has even more implications on resources.

Media coverage on sanitation and hygiene issues were very low, in fact almost non-existent but NEWAH's initiation to build partnerships with media two years back has really made a positive impact. Journalists were involved in understanding the sanitation issue and its link with human development and the urgency required to address it. Such engagement provided a high level of awareness and commitment among media persons which subsequently contributed towards the increased coverage of sanitation related materials in the media.

Nonetheless, to strengthen the partnership with the media, The Nepal WASH group has and will continue activities to engage and educate media persons on issues of sanitation, support them to produce interesting material and inspire them to cover these issues. Apart from this, updating journalists on upcoming water and sanitation issues, interaction to collect their views and feedback will be conducted more frequently to take the agenda of sanitation at a higher political level.

In line with this, Nepal Water of Health (NEWAH) has established a Feature Service Program in 2004 together with Sancharika Samuha, a group of women media professionals concerned by the lack of gender perspectives on sanitation issues in the media. In addition to this, the collaboration with Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) and Sancharika Samuha led to a media campaign in Chitwan district last year for the period of two months. As a result, the campaign has enabled to bring some flaming issues on media on incidents of residents living around the Chitwan National Park that had suffering from wild animal attacks, either being killed or handicapped while going to the jungle to defecate due to lack of latrines at home. Likewise, news on increasing pollution in the Narayani river and its effects that led towards further realization of the issue and to support the initiative of achieving total sanitation in Chitwan district by 2009, are worth mentioning.

This booklet contains compilations of articles published on various newspapers through Sancharika Feature Service including those published during Chitwan Media Campaign. In order to increase a readership, the articles have also been translated into English. I thank Sancharika Samuha and NEFEJ for this outcome and request readers to send your valuable suggestions and feedback to improve our efforts in addressing this important issue of sanitation.



Umesh Pandey
Director

Acknowledgement

Much of the inspiration for this publication has been received from the journalists who were participated in the Media Campaigns that NEWAH has been conducting every year since 2004. NEWAH appreciates for their innovative efforts to the media campaigns in revealing out sanitation and hygiene issues. Thus, I would specially like to convey my gratitude to all the journalists from various media who have contributed with their valuable efforts.

I would like to thank to NEWAH's staff Soniya Thapa, Advocacy Officer for compilation, selection, editing and proof reading of English articles. Likewise, Bharat Adhikari, Communication Officer for entire text designing, layout and editing of Nepali articles. Thanks to Keshav Bahadur Bista, Administrative Officer for supporting us in typing and proof reading of Nepali articles.

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Last but not the least, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to WaterAid Nepal for the funding support to WASH Campaign and in making this publication possible.

We hope this publication would be helpful to provide useful information regarding sanitation issues based on the ground realities.



Ratan Budhathoki

Manager

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Women in search of public latrine with privacy

Nirjala Kaskhapati

Dhanmaya Magar entered the capital recently, being forced to migrate from Maoist-infested Rolpa to Kathmandu due to the daily incidents of clashes in her village. She lives in a rented room and now runs a small shop on a capital street for her livelihood. She has to go to latrine at least thrice daily, which has now become a major problem for her. She cannot visit the public latrine in her neighborhood, since it means spending as much as Rs 15 everyday, which is quite a big sum for a woman like her. Now she relieves herself in an open space nearby – not out of choice but out of compulsion.

In the same fashion, lots of youths in Kathmandu do not use public latrines. Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) has leased all the public latrines to private parties and every user has to pay Rs 2 or Rs 3 each time. How can a woman in this patriarchal society where she does not have access to family property, pay Rs 15 to Rs 16 each day?

Kathmandu, being the capital, is the most densely populated city. On the one hand, the opportunities and facilities attract people and on the other, people's migration to the capital has increased after the conflict started, resulting in a polluted city from every angle. The population of Kathmandu has grown drastically from 1.6 million but there are only 33 public latrines for them.

Though some of the public latrines under the over-head bridges are in good condition, most others are in a bad shape. The passers-by have to cover their nose due to obnoxious odour. Lack of security and privacy are other problems for women as both men's and women's latrines are made in the same building. Most of the public latrines do not have doors and anybody can enter any room. "Without help of an attendant outside, it is difficult for women even to urinate in public latrines," a woman says. There are only two public latrines around Ratnapark, the heart of the city. Even those seem to have been built primarily for men, with women being provided small space. For six urinals for men, there are only three for women.

Chief of Urban Environment Section at KMC, Rabin Man Shrestha discloses that the KMC is constructing 22 more latrines in the capital in next six months; some could be in the same old places and others in new places. But sadly there is no plan to have separate and secured latrines for women. Besides those on the road, either traveling or earning their livelihood, working women do not fare better either as many of the offices, be it government or private, do not have separate latrines for men and women.

Even urinals meant for justices in the Supreme Court had provisions for males alone until Silu Singh arrived there as the first woman justice. When latrines were constructed the management never thought that even women could also be justices. Similarly, many of the offices have only one latrine for both men and women. Many of the government offices and schools are running with the mentality of the Supreme Court and it is yet to change. The decision-makers must think over it. So, the women resist the call of nature for long time, just like they do while traveling in buses. Moreover, some women avoid drinking water to save themselves from going to the latrines frequently and their bladder remains dry for a long time.

Neurologist Dr Rhishi Kumari Kafle said that blocking urine in the bladder for a long time could cause infection in the urine itself, which might result in pain in lower abdomen, waist, problem in kidney, stones, fever and so on. "These problems are more frequent in women than in men. It becomes very difficult to treat them if not taken care in time," Dr Kafle cautions.

Sancharika Lekhmala, July 2004

Girls suffer due to lack of latrine

Sangeeta Rijal

The place is just half an hour walk from the Prithivi Highway and just 40 kilometers west of the capital city, Kathmandu. But ironically, people of the region are unaware of proper sanitation.

Leave alone the local households, even school children are denied basic latrine facility. Take for example, Panchakanaya Primary School of Bhumesthan Village Development Committee, Karki Danda.

The students of the school are compelled to use the nearby jungle and alley as latrine. Boys do not have much difficulty in answering the call of nature but girls really go through various social, physical and psychological problems when they have to use open space as latrines.

However, it is not that the school does not have latrine. But the only latrine built by Water Aid more than a decade ago remains closed all the time. "We open this latrine only when some important guests arrive in our school," says Ram Hari Subedi, headmaster of the school, sheepishly.

The girls of the school always go through inferiority complex whenever they go to alley and jungle to relieve themselves. Their shame and agony increases when they discover boys watching them relieving in the open.

The problem doubles during their menstruation period. "It is not as usual days. During our period, we have to go to latrine time and again. So I avoid school during my menstrual period," says Sunita, a class five student. Sunita is not alone. Many of the girls who go through menstrual period do not attend school during those four to five days in a month. What adds to their problem is that they cannot change pads in an open space.

However, it is not just the village schools where the girls do not have even as basic a need as a secure latrine. Many girls from city schools share the fate. Many of the schools in cities have a latrine but it lacks maintenance. Those schools, which have one or two latrines, lack water supply and sanitation. Consequently girls again go through tough time. Many schools do not have lock and light in the latrine.

Sumnima Dalakoti, a class ten student of Kankali Secondary School at Bayara, Chitwan says that she also does not go to school during her menstruation period. Though there are a few latrines in her school, they are of no use since they remain dirty all the time. Besides, there are no lights.

She gets more disturbed with the filthy words written on the walls of the latrine. "Due to objectionable sketches and writings on the walls, my mood is spoiled for the entire day and I can't concentrate in my class," Dalakoti complains.

Girls also reveal that many of them are compelled to control their urge to relieve themselves at times. Some of them have to queue for long, waiting for their turn to come. When the urge becomes intolerable, a few of them daringly go to the boy's latrine, which becomes difficult and embarrassing at times. "One has to have guts to use boys' latrine," says Asmita Sharma, a class seven student of Little Star Secondary School in Kathmandu. "We also suffer though boys' teasing," Sharma adds.

Nearly two months back, one of the dailies reported that two girls dropped out of their school due to lack of latrine in their school. The example is good enough to bring out

the plight of the girl students and lack of due response of the concerned authorities. Laxmi Paudyal, regional co-ordinator of Nepal Water for Health, who has been visiting various schools, says, "Majority of the schools lack latrine facility. Even if there is the facility, the school administration is not gender sensitive."

"Most of the schools have common latrine for girls and boys. But many of the girls cannot use latrine since they are very much sensitive and feel embarrassed to use such latrines," she adds.

Her study also indicates that despite constructing big buildings, school authorities do not plan for secure latrines for girls. And the hard reality is that in many of the school-teachers and students share the same latrine. According to Poudyal, due to common latrine, girls are compelled to use alleys and different corners outside the school area.

"The plan for separate latrines for girls should be incorporated in the overall construction of school building," she suggests.

Similarly child psychologist, Dr. Nandita Sharma says that girls who lack latrine facility while growing up lose their confidence. "Such girls can't express themselves in front of mass," she said. "Compared to guys, girls need more privacy."

"There can be another danger," warns Sharma. "The girls may develop fear of boys and may forever be shy in front of them."

The issue seems simple but it is connected with the identity of women. Educated people have knowledge about the possible health hazards that would result from open latrines, but how many of them are aware of the social and psychological problems caused to girls by lack of secure latrine?

"Silent Suffering," a research conducted by Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre also mentions that girl child faces various problems due to lack of latrine.

If girls have to drop out of their school just for lack of proper latrine, it would increase the dropout rates of girls from schools, impacting the goal of universal primary education. The government's concerns should be drawn towards this issue to meet the goal of minimizing dropout rates.

Sancharika Lekhmala, August 2004

Unisex latrine hampers women's participation

Sharad Adhikari

Following a gruelling five months of military training in the combat squad of the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA), an exuberant Rita Thapa (name changed) arrived at RNA's headquarters. She was brimming with energy and bubbling with enthusiasm. But when she had to relieve herself she couldn't find a ladies only latrine. So she had no choice but to go to the men's latrine, her heart filled with shame and tension. Thus her very first day in office left her disheartened. During training she had not encountered such a problem because all the trainees were women and there was a separate, temporary latrine.

This problem has not in any way dented her courage to enter the battlefield carrying a gun, but it remains an unpleasant experience. Thanks to strict military discipline, she can neither tell her problem to anyone nor complain about it to her seniors. This is the first time women have been recruited in the army's infantry. Women recruits in the Army Headquarters, Military Police and Military Band do the same work as men do. In accordance with the government's policy to ensure at least five percent representations of women in the army, at least 40 women will be recruited as lieutenant in the near future.

Female soldiers like Rita have undergone rigorous training just as men do. The around 200 women who have entered the infantry did not receive any special treatment during the course of the five-month training. They displayed all the qualities that a soldier should possess, made no compromises. But, ironically, the moment their office duty began, they had to "compromise" on the issue of latrine. Says Rita, "After inducting women into the army, they should be provided due facilities. Things such as these that may seem trivial will help increase women's attraction for the army."

Army authorities, however, say that physical facilities for female soldiers will be gradually upgraded as per the need. Pointing out that opening the army to women is in itself a historical step, RNA Spokesman Brig-Gen Rajendra Thapa says, "Women have just entered the army. Physical facilities for them will be gradually increased." RNA Headquarters has been employing women administrators and technicians since much earlier.

It is not only the army that has just started to recruit female soldiers which lacks a separate "latrine for women. Even the police, which have been recruiting women for years, lack that basic facility. Policewomen are suffering because of the lack of a separate latrine at the Police Headquarters and other police offices under it. Even though women have reached high positions in the police force, the Police Headquarters is yet to realise the need for a separate latrine for women.

The Nepali police force has around 3000 women. Besides lower-ranked technical staff, there are two women Superintendent of Police (SP) in the force. The Police Headquarters alone has at least 100 policewomen. "A separate latrine is one of our basic needs," says a woman assistant sub-inspector at the headquarters. She says that women and men of all ranks use the same latrine. On top of that, there are not adequate latrine, with the result that they have to wait for hours to use the latrine. And, at times, when men do not close the door while using the latrine, women suddenly

entering it feel terribly ashamed. The sight of a policeman standing in front of a urinal or sitting on a commode is humiliating for policewomen.

Not only the police and the army, many government offices, which have a sizeable number of women employees and which is frequented by ordinary women, do not have separate latrines for women. Gender activist Dr. Arjoo Deuba thinks that government offices lack gender friendly environment. Revealing that women have to share the latrine with men in several ministries, Dr. Deuba says, "The government should arrange comfortable latrine for women. That is the foremost need of women employees."

The grand four-storey building of the Finance Ministry inside Singha Durbar, where it moved only last year, lacks a separate latrine for low ranking women employees. The building that was built last year has on average three latrines on each floor, but not a single one exclusively for women. The compulsion to use the latrine also used by men not only makes women feel ashamed and humiliated, but also makes them vulnerable to sexual offences. "In such a situation the chances of sexual offence are high," says Dr. Deuba.

SP Parvati Thapa suggests that there should be a separate latrine for policewomen right from the training phase. She is confident that women's latrine will become a reality in time, as reforms in the police force unfold. "Problem indicates need. It inspires people to find solutions."

The condition of the latrine reflects not only a nation's level of development, but also the state of its civilisation. So, it is highly shocking that the Finance Ministry, which is the national economy's watchdog and is regularly in touch with foreigners, cannot arrange a separate latrine for women. This shows the condition of all government offices and administrative units. "The bosses should know that there are women employees too and hence there ought to be infrastructure such as separate latrine for them," says Bhagirathi Palikhe, an officer at the Finance Ministry since many years. "If the presence of women in civil service is to be increased, then the government should pay attention to expanding such basic facilities for them." She accuses those in the top echelons of being narrow-minded, thus obstructing positive change. Even government offices such as land reforms office and district administration office, and courts - places where visitor pressure is very high - are devoid of "women's only" latrine.

The anatomy of women calls for a latrine different from that used by men. Government apathy to such a basic need of women makes it clear that the state's oft-repeated commitment to ensuring equal participation of women is confined to mere rhetoric. In this case, womenfolk's need should be met on the basis of equity rather than equality.

Sancharika Lekhmala, September 2004

Latrines change lives of women

Bharat Adhikari

"The more than 400 residents of this village defecate in the open. If a person defecates on average 250 grams of feces, in one day 109 kilos and in a year about 400 quintals of feces are accumulated in empty areas." Addressing a gathering at Karkidanda's *chautari* (informal gathering) nine months ago, Mangaldas Duwal, senior technician of Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) was estimating the amount of human feces discharged in the open and the practice's harmful effects on human health and environment. "One gram of feces can contain ten million viruses, one million bacteria and 100 stomach worm eggs. What would happen to us if only a tiny particle of such feces were to enter our stomach through any means?" An elderly man listening to the lecture said, making a face, "Oh, I have eaten so much shit."

A campaign to build a latrine in every house of Karkidanda of Bhumisthan VDC-8 of Dhading district is underway as part of a community-led "complete sanitation" program, assisted by NEWAH. Thirteen years ago, a drinking water project, under the assistance of WATERAID Nepal, was introduced in the village. The 12 waterspouts built back then and four more that were added later continue giving water. However, in a village considered to have the best drinking water system, not a single house had a latrine until last year. Less than a year after work began to make the village a completely sanitized area, 46 of its 65 houses have latrines built without subsidies. Latrines are being built in the remaining houses at top speed. The target was to have a latrine in every house of Karkidanda by September 21, says Duwal. According to him, after all houses have a latrine, a board declaring the village to be completely sanitary will be put up at the gateway of the village.

Duwal has found women to be more active than men in the campaign to make the village completely sanitary. Most of the village men go to Simle for work during the day. Those who don't have work also do not stay at home. Duwal says local women are in charge of explaining to villagers that building latrines with the money that would otherwise be spent on treatment of a disease would keep the disease itself at bay.

"Without the help of women this campaign would have crashed midway," says Duwal. Sunkeshari, resident of the village, is testimony to the fact that women are more concerned about the village's sanitary condition. Although she makes a living from sewing, she did menial work so that with the wages it fetched she could buy a sack of cement, ceramic pan and three kilos of iron rods. At a cost of Rs 2500 – including construction materials and wages – her latrine was built. She is glad she is using a latrine, and has felt an improvement in her social standing.

So how did the villagers, especially women, who never felt the need of latrine, become attracted in such a short period toward building latrines without any subsidy? All thanks to an unusual campaign, says Duwal. "We visited the places where they defecated and fixed yellow flags onto heaps of shit. Seeing flags all around them, the villagers realized that heaps of shit littered the entire village haphazardly, and became frightened. Then one day we discussed about how much shit is accumulated in the open areas of the village and their effects on health. After being continuously told about the importance of latrine and hygiene, people ultimately wanted to build and use latrines." Such type of discussions on human excreta, an issue that people are generally loath to talk about, gave rise to revulsion among them and inspired them to

build latrines, contends Duwal. It was even easier to get the support of the village women for the proposal to build latrines, he adds. According to Duwal, two women health activists are conducting health-related awareness programs in Karkidanda so that community members, particularly women, acquire and maintain sanitary habits.

Most of the organizations currently working in the sanitation sector in Nepal provide economic support for making latrines. But the concept of complete sanitation that has been introduced in the village does not encourage subsidies. It is based on the experience that people don't feel obliged to maintain latrines built with subsidies, and such latrines are not used in the long run. "People have caught a habit of expecting subsidy in everything. But it is wrong; building latrine doesn't need subsidy," says health activist Amrita Upreti.

In the Nepali month of Asar last year (June-July 2003), 57-year-old Dev Kumari Thapa fell off a slope of a homestead while going to defecate, and broke a leg. She incurred more than Rs 10,000 in expenses for her treatment. "Four strong latrines could have been built with the money spent for my treatment," says Thapa, pointing out the importance of the latrine.

"When we didn't have latrine, even during the day the prospect of having to defecate at night filled me with dread. As someone had to accompany the person in the family who felt the need to defecate at night, other's sleep would also be disturbed. Now we are able to sleep peacefully at night," says Thulimaya, who has just built a latrine. Women faced more difficulties defecating than men did. It was not that easy to find inconspicuous places to relieve oneself, and snakes and wild animals were a deterrent to venturing far afield. Those difficult days are over, now that there is a latrine nearby, says Thulimaya. Besides latrine construction, locals of Karkidanda are also paying attention to other aspects of hygiene. Says health activist Upreti, "People wear clean clothes even if they are old. The practice of washing hands before cooking and eating, and after defecation, is growing."

Sancharika Lekhmala, October 2004

Answering the call of nature: Women suffer again

Madhu Rai

"Before it used to be difficult, now I have got used to it," says Manju Bhandari of Biratnagar-5, Ekrahi about her experience of defecating in the open. Having used a latrine at her parents' home, Bhandari faced great discomfort at her new home after marriage. Her neighbor Rama Bhattarai also agrees that it is more embarrassing for women than for men to answer the call of nature in the open. "We can defecate in comfort only if we wake up earlier than men," says Bhattarai.

Like Bhandari and Bhattarai, Pushpa Bhandari, a teacher at Janaki English School, also does the act outside the latrine. Her experience is no different from the duo's. While defecating in the open can be taken as a normal practice among communities of Terai origin in city areas of Biratnagar sub-metropolitan city, the majority of the residents of Ward No. 5, some five kilometers west of the city, are forced to adopt it because they lack latrine.

Lest they should defecate during the day, newly wed women are given just a little food, says Jaleshwori Yadav of the ward. "Not only the daughter-in-law, the son-in-law also faces difficulties," adds Ramdevi Rajbanshi. Though adults use the open areas by the bamboo thicket and the canal of Ekrahi, kids and sick people defecate near their houses or on the road. "We know that this kind of undisciplined defecation causes diseases but we have no other option," says Daisydevi Yadav.

The majority of the people, however, are ignorant about the hazards of the practice. Children and women have suffered most due to the absence of latrines. Many women of communities that do not have latrines defecate either early in the morning or after dusk.

In this wait for dawn and darkness most women start suffering from diseases related with organs associated with the defecation process. Ignorance and illiteracy are disrupting a normal bodily process. Communities that do not fully grasp the importance of latrines also do not take seriously the problems faced by women. The practice puts women at risk of sexual misconduct or, worse, rape. The physical and psychological trauma they undergo in that eventuality is beyond imagination.

A Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation study under its five-year work plan, conducted in 1999, attributed the lack of enthusiasm in building latrines to people simply not realizing the need of latrines.

Thus residents of most wards of Biratnagar sub-metropolitan city are deprived of the minimum basic facility they are entitled to. To be sure, the municipality every year gives hundreds of thousand of rupees to the wards for physical development and works. But the priority accorded by the municipality to physical works over social development has resulted in lack of awareness about the need to use latrines among the residents of underdeveloped and developed wards like Ward No. 5.

Former Ward Chairman Balakram Chowdhari is one such individual who is making an effort to solve the daily problem faced by the people of Ward No. 5. He says the municipality this year has allocated Rs 1.5 million for development and construction works in his ward that would benefit its 7,500 residents. As all the wards were obliged to continue last year's proposed programs, they could not provide financial assistance

to the residents to build latrines, says Chowdhari. Since the municipality did not provide any direct support for social development activities, Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), an NGO, introduced a sanitation program in the village last year.

NEWAH, which has been conducting a health program in Ekrahi since last year, has also started a program that encourages building latrines in the last few months. It has pledged partial assistance in construction of latrines by 219 households of the ward. Every household can get the assistance by submitting a minimum of Rs 500 to Rs 800 initially, says Sushila Rai, health teacher with NEWAH. Rai points out that despite her organization's offer, the families of the ward do not seem interested in building latrines due to poverty and lack of education,.

Likewise, a NEWAH study done in 2003 showed every morning 10.7 million people in Nepal sit under the open sky in villages and towns to answer the call of nature. A gram of human feces could contain 10 million viruses, 1 million bacteria, 12,000 parasites and 100 eggs of stomach worms, according to an UNICEF study done in 2000. Furthermore, 80 percent of diseases in underdeveloped and developing countries are caused by poor sanitation. The government, however, has not been able to implement its policy of educating people about the basics of hygiene and environmental education.

Sancharika Lekhmala, November 2004

Even drivers don't pull over at places convenient for female passengers

Amika Rajthala

She is a female officer of Woman Development Division and as someone working for development and empowerment of women, she has to travel to different districts. Moreover, her husband's as well as parental home being in Kathmandu, she has to travel long distances. But as far as possible she does not travel during the day. The reason: drivers of buses in long routes pull over at an open place for passengers to answer the call of nature. Says the government officer, "Men can urinate at open places by simply turning their backs but we feel embarrassed to do the same. At night, though, there isn't much problem if we go a little further from the place where the vehicles are parked. That is why I avoid traveling on long distance buses during the day as far as possible." However, with night buses far and between these days due to worsening security situation, there is no respite.

Working for the Dalit Women's Association, Kala Swarnakar, a resident of Dang district, also says it is really embarrassing to urinate when drivers pull over by an open area. As far as possible she tries to use the latrines of hotels where they eat but the latrines are not always adequate. So she reduces the amount of food and water she eats and drinks while traveling long distances. She still remembers an instance where, unable to bear the heat, she drank more than the usual quantity of water, and had to suffer.

Likewise, Sajana, who works for Step, an NGO, and hails from Achham, says drivers ignore requests by women to park the vehicle at a place convenient for the latter. Even Dipak Khadka, a bus driver along Kathmandu-Pokhara route, acknowledges that long distance bus drivers and operators should pay special attention to the comfort and security of passengers, especially women. However, he argues that he stops the bus when the conductor tells him to do so, but does not know whether the passenger who made the request was a man or a woman. He also adds that requests by women cannot be rejected in jest.

In addition to the lack of public latrines along long distance routes, female passengers' ordeal is compounded by hours-long traffic jams caused by security checks. But driver Khadka says in lighter vein, "These days you don't have to stop the bus anywhere for passengers to urinate. Security personnel have made latrines at every security check points and passengers use them."

Makeshift latrines made by security forces using tents and fenced by grass and wood have provided some relief to some passengers besides protecting the locality from foul smell. Although security personnel have made separate latrines for men and women, the majority of woman passengers say they do not use them. Advocate Basanti Shrestha, whose profession takes her to different districts frequently, says she has never used such kind of latrines and has also not seen any woman entering them, either. She thinks that women are reluctant to use such makeshift latrines because they are unable to ensure their privacy.

Similarly, Swarnakar adds that going to the latrine while the bus is stationed carries

the risk of missing the vehicle; on the other hand, it is not possible to carry one's luggage for security checks while going to the latrine. She points out the need for comfortable latrines for women at regular intervals, adding that drivers too should stop their vehicles only where proper latrines are available.

In some places drivers pull over in front of hotels with which they have prior arrangement for free food for bus staffers. In such cases, no matter how filthy the latrines are, women are left with no option other than to use them.

The fact that women do use a properly built latrine at the security checkpoint in Nepalgunj indicates that they generally avoid the makeshift tent- latrines made by security personnel due to embarrassment, points out Regional manager of Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) Saraswati Khanal. She suggests that latrines for passengers should be such that many can use them at a time, and that they are in a safe and secure location.

Between 1991-1994 NEWAH built seven public latrines to provide relief to long distance travelers. Some of the latrines built in Damauli, Dhulikhel, Khairnital, Abukhaireni, Dulegaunda, Saurahachowk and Pokhara-Baglung bus-parks are functioning properly while some are in need of reconstruction. The latrine in Dhulikhel was damaged during road construction.

With financial assistance from WATERAID, an INGO, NEWAH, in cooperation with Kathmandu Metropolitan City, has completed a study on public latrine management in the city while its Biratnagar regional office is conducting a study on public latrines.

Thus public latrines should be built along the way so that women can avoid such conditions. That women do not use latrines made by security personnel proves that they cannot urinate/defecate just about anywhere, and that they require privacy. And male passengers' use of latrines of security personnel also points to the need of secure latrines for women as well.

Experts feel that since hygiene is a symbol of civilization and so necessary for good health, local residents should push for latrine construction with the help of local bodies, as filth and stench affect not passengers but locals.

Sancharika Lekhmala, December 2004

No latrines for physically challenged

Sangeeta Rijal

Sushma Shivakoti, who has been using wheelchair because of the rib problems that originated from typhoid during her childhood, came to Kathmandu a year ago. It is compulsion rather than desire that brought her to Kathmandu. Just recently, she started using the crutches. But that has not solved her problems completely. Apart from the difficulty in travelling in Kathmandu, she could not use the latrine properly.

Using latrines when she was studying in Grade Four in her village at Sunkhani-2 in Dolakha district was a big problem. Her new school does not pose such problems. At Khagendra Navajivan Centre, there is a door in the latrine that facilitates her to take her wheelchair inside. However, there was no such facility at Saraswoti Bidhya Mandir, the school she left one year ago. "With the help of my sister and friends, I used the school's latrine only in times of emergency. That too, after resting my hands on the floor, which was already wet with urine," she says.

In a soft voice, she recalls her past: "Many a time I slipped on the latrine floor that was covered with grime. Many a time, I could not answer the nature's call on time. I went to the latrine only upon returning home," she says.

She still vividly remembers the days when she did not go to school, as she was not in a position to use the latrine there. In the rainy days, she could not go to the latrine that was made up of mud even with the help of her friends.

Shivakoti, who has been living at a rehabilitation center for the disabled at Chuchepati (Kathmandu), says enthusiastically: "At my new school, the wheelchair can enter the latrine. I have not encountered any incident where my crutches fell down in the latrine."

Binita Khadka has a bitter experience as well. "I did not go to my first school whenever I had my period," says Khadka. "There was no latrine suitable to my needs." But there was a latrine for her at Shree Ram High School at Kokalpur. She lost the mobility of her limbs to polio at the age of one year and a half. She now uses the crutches.

Normally she did not drink water at high school because she was ashamed of using latrine freely. But the problem followed her to college as well. The lock of the latrine was placed so high that she could not reach it. She had an unpleasant experience of making her friend stand outside the latrine as she urinated on the latrine floor.

She grew up, as she climbed the ladder of education. Still, Binita has not been able to use the latrine that meets her need. Although her school has separate latrines for men and women, there is not a single one suitable for the physically challenged people. "I cannot bend my legs. But there is no commode suitable to my needs," she says.

Central Member of the National Federation of the Disabled Binita says: "Kathmandu is the capital city. Here we do not have special latrines. How can there be one elsewhere?"

At R R College, it is not possible to take wheel chairs into the latrines. Are there any latrines for the physically challenged people at the capital's schools? Even if one manages to find one, there will be one problem or another," says Binita. Either the lock or the tap could have been placed in unreachable places, she further says. "In some places, we will have to climb the stairs to go to the latrine. For people like us it is extremely difficult to climb the stairs to use the latrine."

The woe of Sanumaiya Gurung of Lele, Lalitpur, who uses wheel chair, is no different from that of the physically challenged women. Her job requires her to travel frequently to and from Kathmandu and Lalitpur Municipalities. "There are many latrines in the city. But I cannot go to any latrine without the help of my friends," she says.

"The wheel chair could not go inside. Most of the latrines are on high platforms. In case the wheel chair manages to enter the latrine, there will be no room to turn it or to close the door," she adds. "Then there will be no option but to keep the door open."

A research conducted by Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), a non-governmental organisation, in April this year says 90 percent of the non-governmental organisations and government offices do not have latrines for the physically challenged people. The research covered 51 organisations and offices, including government offices, hospitals and educational institutions. But President of Nepal Disabled Society Rupmagat Neupane does not agree with the findings of the research. "No latrines have been constructed for the physically challenged people," he says. In the absence of special latrines, wheelchair-bound students do not go to school.

They have not been able to enjoy the freedom of mobility as there are no latrines even in public places. Only a few women venture outside their houses, and when they do, they do not drink water in public places fearing a visit to the latrine. According to Engineer Farag Kayastha, who is associated with the government's residence and urban development department, there are plans to build special latrines in the buildings that are undergoing construction, and that are related to the health sector. Kayastha claims that such latrines will be reconstructed in the next fiscal year at old government offices such as the Land Revenue Office and the Chief District Office where many people come.

Co-ordinator of the newly formed taskforce Access of the Disabled to Drinking Water and Hygiene Rupmagat Neupane says: "National and international organisations must stop building physical infrastructure as requested. The schools must stop saying that they have not built such latrines because there are not any physically handicapped student there," he says. The government's goal to provide drinking water and latrines for all by 2017 cannot be achieved by deceiving the disabled. "If we are ignored, even the Education for All by 2015 slogan will turn out to be an empty promise."

Birendra Raj Pokharel, President of the National Federation of the Disabled, says the height of the tap from the floor should not be more than 3 ft. The perimeter of the latrines pan should be 18 inches at the maximum, and the height of the stairs leading up to the latrine should not be more than nine inches. There should be a bar on a path to the latrines so that they can walk by holding the bar. There should also be another bar near the latrines pan or commode.

According to the Census of 2058 BS, 0.46 percent of the country's total population are disabled. Of them, the physically challenged people are 39 percent, and more than 50 percent of them are women. Going by the World Health Organisation estimates, there are about 2.5 million disabled in Nepal, more than half of them women. It also says 10 percent of the people in developing countries are disabled.

Sancharika Lekhmala, July 2005

They cannot drink to their hearts' content

Kamala Parajuli

Gita Chaudhary, 50, of Koteshwor has two daughters. She is heavily pregnant. She started a vegetable business in Koteshwor a year ago. From morning to evening, she is busy selling vegetables on the pavement. "I do not drink water from morning to evening," she says. "I cannot go to the proper latrine on time. So it is better not to drink water at all. I used to control urination this way, but these days it is very difficult," she says. "When one is pregnant, she needs to go to latrine frequently. It is difficult to hold back oneself and one needs to do work as well," Gita says uncomfortably. "My husband sells vegetables on a cycle the whole day, but his earnings alone do not provide us with meals. Therefore, I am working despite the extreme pain," she adds.

Her two daughters were born in a village. There she did not have such problems. Whenever she had to urinate, she used to go to the field. But in Kathmandu, people are walking around in all the places. She could not urinate on the street. There is no public latrine nearby, she says. Her rented room is very far away. That is why she goes to the latrine before setting off for work in the morning and drinks less water. I try my best to resist the nature's call in the afternoon. But if I push myself too much, I begin to lose control over it. But because of shame, I cannot urinate in public. In front of us, men turn backwards and urinate on the road. How easy it is for them! It is indeed a luck to be a man!

Gita is eight-month pregnant. But so far, she has not visited a hospital. She says: "Sometimes my private part gets an itch and it scalds when I urinate. But I am ashamed to go to a doctor."

Like Gita, other women hawkers confront such problems. Phulmaya Tamang, who sells vegetable alongside Gita, is also pregnant. Her pregnancy is more than eight months old. Phulkumari says: "In this condition, it is very difficult to sell vegetables on the pavement. Sometimes it is the sun; sometimes it is the rain; sometimes it is the city police. One had to run here and there carrying vegetables. Furthermore, I had to resist the nature's call. Three months ago, when I had urinary problems, I went to Maternity Hospital for a check-up. The doctor told me to drink a lot of water. But there is a constraint. The doctor also told me not to use dirty latrines. It is said that if a pregnant woman suffers from such problems, it will affect the child. The more one drinks water, the more one urinates. But there is no latrine to go to in short intervals. There are people everywhere. Where can one go? There is not even a dirty latrines. How can one find a clean one? It would be a great thing if one manages to escape public notice and finds space to squat [to urinate]. But who will make an arrangement? Only women have to confront problems where there are no latrines. Men can stand anywhere."

Kumari Magar, who lives in Shankhamul, had been visiting Maternity Hospital since she got pregnant. She knows the importance of latrine. The 22-year-old woman, who hails from Makwanpur, has been living in a rented apartment near Sukumbasi Tole of Sankhamul for the past four years. She had a miscarriage when she was pregnant for four months. But this time, she is cautious, and has been visiting the doctor regularly. She says: "My private part used to have an itch. Urination became painful. And I used

to have white discharge. This happened for a long time, and ultimately it affected the womb. After the problem worsened, I took medicine as well. May be, this adversely affected the baby inside. Then I went to Maternity Hospital for a check-up. The doctor said I had a urine infection because I did not use clean and proper latrine. Then he prescribed a medicine."

Talking about pregnant women's need for frequent latrine visits, senior gynecologist Dr Bholu Rijal says: "Pregnant women need to urinate more than normal women. This is because of the change in their hormone. Furthermore, the uterus gets loosened because there is a baby inside. The uterus presses the urine bladder. That is why, they need to urinate frequently."

He says: "Many pregnant women come with urinary problems. Most women have infection in their urinary bladders. This affects the baby inside the womb. Every time, pregnant women come for a check-up, their urine is tested. Based on the report, medicine and counseling are given."

Senior gynecologist Dr Kasturi Malla, who sees, listens to such problems of women and treats hundreds of them every day at Maternity Hospital in Thapathali says: "Problems related to urine are common among more than 80 percent Nepalese women. And the majority of them come with urine infection. The more one urinates, the better it is for the health. The more one drinks water, the easier it will be to urinate. But if one does not release the urine regularly, the urine clots, yellows and it will be difficult to discharge it. Infection of this type could affect the baby inside the womb."

She further says: "Women's reproductive organ is open, and less secure than that of men. They have to squat to empty their bowels or to urinate. They have a high chance of infection. The virus spreads easily in urinary bladder and uterus. This will ultimately infect the kidney. This could result in premature childbirth, low weight or stunted babies and sometimes miscarriage."

According to Dr Malla, "The root cause of the problem is mismanaged latrines and lack of access to latrines on time. In many cases, forceful delay in urination leads to this problem. This problem is found more among the women who do not urinate on time."

A study done by Nepal Water for Health three years ago says there are 33 public latrines in Kathmandu Metropolitan City's 15 wards. Of them, four latrines are not usable. Because of lack of water, others are also unhygienic.

Sancharika Lekhmala, August 2005

Women are taming male alcoholics

Bharat Prasad Bhatta

Dumre Ekantachowk village in Urlabari Village Development Committee (VDC) of Morang district consists of 70 families/households of different castes. It is a settlement formed after 2047 B.S. Although it is touched by the Mahendra Highway, this village is deprived of development opportunities. Until as recently as a year ago, this settlement was infamous for being unmanaged and dirty. Not a single house had a latrine. However, the hygiene program launched last year has resulted in a latrine in every house in the settlement. Its houses, compounds and roads are clean. Garbage is disposed of at a specific place. Every Thursday all the members of the settlement assemble and clean the empty spaces and roads. Families that do not participate in the cleaning program are fined five rupees. At the facilitation of Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), an NGO, the villagers have started a campaign to make their community completely clean. At the initiative of women, people were persuaded to give up their habit of defecating in the open.

Because of the women's effort, a board has been placed beside the main road to the village, which reads: "No one in this village defecates in the open." It is the first community in Nepal to be declared one that is hygienically conscious. After the cleanliness campaign started, the villagers have begun to embrace basic hygienic habits. "We have just declared our village a place where people do not defecate in the open. Realizing that other kinds of dirty habits must also be removed, we have also started an anti-alcohol campaign," says Sharmila Rai, a local resident. Inspired by the idea, they formed an 11-member women's group under the leadership of Kamala Bhattarai.

The very men, who used to get drunk and grab their wives' hair, hold their own ears with their hands and squat and stand alternately as a punishment for such misdeeds. Those who in an inebriated state inflict physical and mental torture on their family members, create disturbance in the village and pick up fights with others have to apologize before everyone and promise not to do that again. Furthermore, those whose offences are of a more serious nature have to go round the village on their knees and pay a fine of fifty-one rupees. Fed up with the misbehavior of drunkards, women of the village have enforced a regulation that has been abided by strictly; the community has become peaceful and disciplined in a short time.

"We started this campaign to end the physical and mental torture committed against women and children," says Kamala Bhattarai. "Women, who worked all day long without a break, could not even sleep in peace due to the atrocities of alcoholic husbands. Children were forced to be fearful and stay away from their own parents. There is no way of estimating the health and financial losses caused by alcohol consumption. After it became too much, we made this regulation to ban alcohol consumption and introduced penalty and fine," says Bhattarai.

To carry the campaign forward, the women of Dumre Ekantachowk have formed an 11-member committee. The women-only committee keeps an eye on alcoholics, and punishes and fines those who consume alcohol. They say the campaign was launched primarily in view of the mental and physical torture inflicted on women and children, misuse of family income and health problems. They took up the cudgels after people from other communities came to the village to consume alcohol and turned it into a village of drunkards, says Sharmila Rai.

According to Arjun Rai, chairman of the community environmental cleanliness committee formed to conduct the cleanliness program, the women's group has played an important role not only in keeping homes, country yards and roads clean, but also in keeping the community disciplined. "In the past the children used to drive away those who defecated in the open by whistling. Now women tame those who consume alcohol. People have begun to give up alcohol consumption due to fear of being humiliated in public. This has created an environment that is conducive of making the community completely clean," says Arjun Rai.

Chairwoman of the women's committee Kamala Bhattarai says she learnt through the cleanliness program that there are many other aspects of the community that need to be reformed. "In the past women used to think it was their duty to bear the injustices of their alcoholic husbands. Now the achievement in the area of cleanliness has instilled in them a confidence that they can achieve anything if they work together. That's why when we got together, we succeeded in eradicating the habit of alcoholism, something more dirty than feces." she says. Karna Bahadur Bishwakarma, a local resident, says his eyes were opened by the campaign initiated by the women. "Alcohol ruins health, heart and economic condition. On top of that one would be punished in front of everyone, which is another reason why I stopped drinking," he says. He even does not hesitate to admit that he had a change of heart only after facing the action of the women's group no less than three times. His son Dhan Bahadur Bishwakarma, 16, is elated that the anti-alcohol campaign has weaned his father off his bad habit. "In the past, when my father drank and did not bother about household affairs, I had to work in the field and collect grass and wood instead of going to school. Now I can hopefully go to school," he says optimistically. Likewise, Sita Puri, who spent many a sleepless night because of the ruckus created by her father who came home drunk, is now assured that she will not have to suffer again, thanks to the effort of the women.

The awareness that has dawned on the community has also resulted in visible signs of economic improvement of the women. While they used to buy vegetables from the market, women have now started to sell vegetables themselves. After NEWAH provided training in maintaining homesteads, Harkamaya Rai, a local resident, has made vegetable farming a source of income. Many households of the community have taken to vegetable farming, and the trend is on the rise.

Sancharika Lekhmala, September 2005

Cleanliness Campaign for Health in Chitwan

Chintamani Poudel

Latrine in each house and its proper use. Accessibility of drinking water and total sanitation. Will Chitwan be a model district by 2009? It has been extremely difficult for governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the field of drinking water and sanitation. It has been more of a problem to those who line their pockets by just using rhetoric. Even after being received budget to construct latrines in remote areas, they freely distribute materials but do not construct latrines. The practice of using already constructed latrines as a godwon has made things more difficult.

The compulsion to cover one-hour distance for fetching water despite having a tap nozzle right in front of one's house exposes the so-called development. This has compelled health workers, who are raising public awareness, to think about their work and outcome in order to weed out the bad behaviour of urinating and defecating outside the latrine.

After finding out that that first and foremost necessity of health is sanitation, an international conference was held in South Africa's Johannesburg with a commitment to accomplishing the target of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Nepal also signed it. The millennium development target is to reduce down the number of people without access of sanitation facilities to half by 2015 and the government of Nepal committed in providing all Nepalese with these facilities by 2017.

Governmental and non-governmental organizations in Chitwan have announced that they will make Chitwan the first well-sanitized district of Nepal by 2009. With the objective of making Chitwan a model district six years before the government timeframe, the UNICEF is running mobile revolving fund and various programmes in 22 VDCs, and the Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme in four VDCs, under the auspices of the District Development Committee.

Nepal Red Cross Society has been in the forefront of water and sanitation as well as school sanitation campaign in five VDCs.

Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) has informed that it is promoting its programmes in three VDCs whereas Chitwan's two municipalities are campaigning to make a model municipality in terms of sanitation. Besides, VDCs are running a campaign on their own budget. The Royal Chitwan National Park's central management committee is undertaking a programme for its consumers. The Drinking Water and Sanitation Division is expanding its services in rural areas, and the Drinking Water Supply Corporation in urban areas. Apart from that, various non-governmental organizations and the District Education Office have also incorporated the 2009 objective into their subject matter.

Small city drinking water and sanitation projects that are being run in Ratna-nagar Municipality and Parsabazaar of Khaireni VDC for assisting the campaign of making Chitwan a clean and model district cannot be underestimated. These projects have been giving grants to the poor families of their distribution area for latrine construction, along with drinking water supply. Yet, landless squatters have not been able to utilize the facility no matter how much they desire to do so.

In spite of all these efforts, it is still hard to determine whether the possibility of making Chitwan a clean and model district will ever materialise. Those involved in this field opine that everyone should accelerate their work in order to fulfill commitment.

President of Nepal Red Cross Society, Chitwan branch, Hari Prasad Neupane says that youths should be appointed for this campaign as they play an important role in achieving any goal. "If we proceed the programme under the direct leadership of the community, then we may reach the goal. This has also been proved by the school-centred cleanliness campaign." He tells that the school cleanliness campaign was successful as it was based on child-approach. Neupane says that like children, women (mothers) who carry the main responsibility of household cleanliness should also be sensitised.

Rudra Khadka, Chitwan representative of the UNICEF Nepal says that although the campaign has moved forward from schools, problems has risen due to the inability of the VDCs to share the financial burden.

There is a provision that 33% of school cleanliness must be funded by the concerned VDCs or municipalities, 33% by the local community and another 33% by the UNICEF. Khadka says that the district cannot attain the goal if it proceeds at this rate.

Although the commitment to announce the total sanitation model district by 2009 A.D has already been made, no data on houses without latrines are available. The sanitation revolving fund has already been set up in 18 VDCs out of 36 VDCs in the district. A poverty indicator list is not yet prepared. As a result, loans cannot be distributed.

In order to accomplish the commitment made in 2005, drinking water facility should be added in 319 households every month and 341 latrines should be added and used properly each month. As per the population census of 2000, Chitwan, which consists of 36 VDCs and two municipalities, is home to 472,000 people and 87,000 households.

Binod Prakash Singh, a local development officer of the Village Development Committee, Chitwan, says that the aim cannot be attained by a single organisation and that the present growth rate will not help reach the goal. He further adds: "It is quite challenging to make Chitwan a clean model district at the current rate. It is high time the people in the sanitation field rethink seriously about this." He further says that a separate programme focusing on landless squatters should be launched.

Annapurna Post, May 28, 2005

Public latrines of Pulchowk awaiting thorough scrubbing

Suman Gaire

Among the public latrines of Bharatpur Municipality (Chitwan), the most crowded one is at Naranyangadh Pulchowk, which is in need of cleanliness. In 2045 BS (Nepali year), Bharatpur Municipality rented land from Shyam Bahadur Pant, a local resident and constructed public latrine that lacks adequate cleanliness and proper management. Latrine users are required to pay one rupee if they want to urinate and two rupees to defecate. Nevertheless, flies are swarming the latrines every day. Mostly bus passengers from the east and west use the latrines at Pulchowk. However, after shifting the latrines from Pulchowk to Paras Bus Park, the number of users has declined.

Bharatpur Municipality has hired Lal Bahadur Shrestha, a local resident, as the "watchman" for the cleanliness of public latrines located in the Narayani River belt. Shrestha, who has been cleaning and taking care of latrines for the last seven years, has not received any monthly salary. "The municipality doesn't give salary. I take whatever I collect from levy," he says. "The latrines are in a very bad condition. The leaking roof makes it impossible to use the latrines during the rainy season," he adds.

"Bharatpur Municipality has not provided the necessary chemical (phenol) for cleaning latrines," Shrestha complains. In a reply to a query of reporters, he says: "Forget phenol, even soaps for washing hands are not given by the municipality." Latrines are polluted due to lack of cleansing stuff such as harpic and phenol. I flush the latrine daily, but still it stinks. The levy amount is barely enough. How to buy disinfectants? Shrestha questions.

Gents' latrine remains open whereas ladies latrines are locked. But why is the ladies' latrine locked? "Urchins started to enter the latrine along with girls. They used to drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes and tobacco there. So I locked it. When ladies come, I unlock the latrine," he replies.

Programme officer of Bharatpur Municipality Shiva Dutta Bhattarai says that the municipality pays Rs 4000 every month for latrine operation and maintenance. In Bharatpur city areas, there are public latrines at different places such as Pulchowk, Pokhara Bus Park, vegetable markets, Paras Bus Park and Lila Chowk.

Given the objective of declaring Chitwan "Model District in achieving total sanitation by 2009," observers say the municipality should give top priority to sanitation.

Bargikrit Rastriya Dainik, June 8, 2005

People of Chandibhanjyang actively involved in sanitation programmes

Pabitra Dhakal

Keeping all the domestic works aside the people of Chandibhanjyang are involved in cleanliness of their houses and villages. After the emergence of various epidemics due to solid waste and dirty water, these people are participating in cleanliness programme in order to protect them from it.

It takes one-hour-and-a-half walk from the main road to reach the most remote village of Chitwan. There were no dearth of drinking water problems nearly four years ago. Villagers used to become ill many times due to improper disposal of excreta. But now there is a drinking water tap and a latrine in each and every household. According to Bharat Malla (Thakuri), a local resident of Chandibhanjyang, because of the joint effort of SaproS Nepal and local villagers, latrine and drinking water facilities are now available. He says that the local villagers no longer need to walk three to four hours just to fetch water.

He adds that on account of multiple exposures to various diseases due to poverty, and lack of education and awareness, the people are finally participating in sanitation programmes. "There was a compulsion of rushing towards the bushes for defecation with the doodle-doo of a cock early in the morning. Also, there was a fear of being seen by others if one went for defecation after sunrise. Various problems such as injuries and fractures in case one fell down and snakebites posed threats while defecating in the bushes in the thick of darkness. At last, we got relief from these problems," he says happily. Bharat Malla is not only a hardworking farmer but also a good social worker. He makes the locals aware of the importance of keeping their villages, courtyards and lanes clean. Today, Chandibhanjyang is seen as a clean and beautiful place, thanks to his leadership.

The people of Chandibhanjyang-6, Kalikhola, who migrated from the hill areas of Chandibhanjyang, are dwelling in small houses on roadsides. They have also constructed latrines.

Bhupendra Praja, a resident of Kalikhola-6, is a social worker. In his village also, latrine construction was undertaken at the initiative of local villagers. Praja says that not only personal latrines but public latrines for travellers are also constructed in his village by using private resources. The villagers of that community confess that the work of public latrine construction has been possible with the help of funds collected by playing Deusi and Bhailo (festival songs) and from the contribution of locals.

Praja says that the random stoppage of vehicles for the sake of passengers, who want to defecate and urinate, has given rise to various diseases in the village. As a result, the villagers felt the need for public latrines and constructed them.

"For any work, we Nepalese have the habit of depending on others. Therefore, the Nepalese are always lagging behind. If one accomplishes the work on his own, then there is no need to depend on others," he says.

Like Bhupendra Praja and Bharat Malla, if every Nepalese gives serious attention to the cleanliness of their villages, couldn't this beautiful Nepal become more beautiful?

Pardarshi Rastriya Dainik, June 7, 2005

Money and awareness problems greater than bear fear

Ramesh Kumar Paudel

Different organisations and government agencies are trying their best to declare Chitwan totally sanitized district by 2009 A.D. If the inhabitants of Amiliya and Shitalpur are not given timely attention, the campaign that started with the slogan "Let's visit Chitwan in 2009 A.D." will be unsuccessful.

Amiliya village is located in Gardi Village Development Committee, Ward No. 1, of Madi. It is known as a remote village of remote Madi. The Riyu River flows peacefully in front of the village. The kitchen gardens of villagers adjoin the internationally popular Royal Chitwan National Park. With the onset of rainy season, Amiliya becomes a virtual island, Pe:due to the swelling river. Nevertheless, there is always a fear of being attacked by wild animals such as tiger, bear and rhinoceros.

Juthimaya B.K., who is nearly 60 years old, was wounded by a rhinoceros eight years ago. The wound on her right leg has not healed. The rhinoceros attacked her when she went to jungle early in the morning to defecate. Still, she fears of being attacked by animals. However, her habit of using jungle for defecation purpose has not changed.

"Why should we spend money to construct latrine because there is already a huge jungle nearby? This is the common feeling," says Rabin Shrestha, a 24-year-old local resident. The Amiliya community, which once had 300 households, was first settled 21 years ago. Many migrated to other places due to fear of flood and wild animals. Now there are only 65 households, but all are without latrines.

"Temporary latrines cannot be constructed because mice dig and bury them barely two days after construction," says Shukra Bahadur Shrestha of Amiliya.

Janasewa Abhiyan, a non- governmental organisation of Amiliya, had constructed three public latrines two years ago. But it was a waste because no one used them, says Lal Bahadur B.K., chairperson of Gardi Village Development Committee.

The Dalit community is the largest in the village. On the one side, this community lacks awareness about latrines. On the other side, poverty poses a big problem. Moreover, the river in front of their houses and the jungle behind have fulfilled their necessity even though they have to put their lives at risk to use this facility.

The condition of Shitalpur village, Ward No. 4, of Baghauda Village Development Committee in the Madi valley, which neighbors Gardi, is no different. Chhengura Mahato lost his nose after a bear attacked him when he was out in the open to defecate. These days, Chhengura, who lost his nose, does not go to the jungle for defecation. Instead of constructing a latrine, he is practising a trick to control his bowels as long as possible so that he can avoid animal attacks. If he cannot control his bowels for long, he goes to a field with his friend for defecation. A small pit will be dug, and it will be buried after defecation. Wife of Man Bahadur B.K, a resident of Chhengura village, was killed by a tiger when she was in the jungle to empty her bowels. Even after losing his wife, he has not felt the need for constructing a latrine. He goes to the river below his house, instead of going to the jungle, to avert animal attacks.

Man Bahadur's village, Shitalpur, is one-hour walk from the Basantpur Market, which is the centre of Madi. His house also adjoins the forest. Like the inhabitants of Gardi, nearly 60 households of Amiliya live in fear of wild animals throughout the year.

"I have constructed a concrete latrine after people started to be killed by wild animals." In this way, Durga Bahadur Bhujel of Shitalpur has emitted some inspiration in the village. Sita Bhujel also constructed a concrete latrine. After seeing these two houses with the new construction, its neighbour Buddhi Bahadur Chhetri is also planning to construct a latrine.

Chandramani Mahato, a teacher of Madi, Baruwā says: "First, there is financial difficulty. Second, the importance of latrine is also not known. That is why latrines are not constructed."

He also points out that it is not difficult to construct latrines if people are made aware that wild animals threaten their lives, and that the construction of latrines saves medical expenses even if one survives the attack. Well-managed latrines also prevent different types of communicable diseases.

Wealthy people of Madi had not also made latrines in their houses. Only after their guests went around in search of latrines that they felt the need for latrines and started the construction.

Six latrines must be constructed in every ward of the municipality and Village Development Committees each month in order to make latrines available in each and every house in Chitwan by 2009. This may not be difficult in accessible areas of the district, but latrine construction is not that easy in villages such as Amiliya and Shitalpur. Those working for governmental and non-governmental organisations and the community, who are aware of the needs, must know that most of the awareness generating programmes and facility should be launched in such areas.

Chitwan Post, June 29, 2005

Narayani riverbank becoming public latrines

Srijana Aryal

The Narayani River, which is important from the religious, historical and tourist points of view, has become a latrine to the people living near its bank. The river is getting polluted every day because the people use this place to urinate and defecate.

It is dawn. Sukmaya Gurung carries water in a plastic Coca-Cola bottle and moves towards the Narayani bank. She squats behind a stone because the riverside is located near a market place. Except Sukmaya's husband Surya Bahadur, the riverbank is a place for defecation for their six daughters. They know that there is a public latrine, but they are compelled to do so due to lack of money. She asks: "Even if there is enough money to pay for a public latrine, where are we supposed to go when it gets closed at night?"

Not only Sukmaya's family, Ram Kumar Manandhar's family that runs a hotel on the riverbank does not have a latrine as well. His 12-year-old daughter Rajani says: "We don't have a latrine in our home. Where else should we go, instead of Narayani?"

The Diyalo club has a public latrine. The inhabitants of that area complain that they cannot use the public latrine when the need arises because it opens late in the morning and closes early in the evening. People tend to go to latrine at the same time. Some say that they stopped using the public latrine as they had to wait in queue for long. Shanti B.K., wife of Tikaram, complains: "One who enters the latrine takes hours. I was sick and tired of waiting and finally stopped using it."

Each family is charged Rs 30 per month for using public latrine. A watchman of a public latrine in Lilachowk says that for daily defecation there is a provision of paying Rs 2 only. The latrine that has been running since 2015 B.S. has seven cells. Watchman Sukbahadur Kumal adds that the number of latrine users is quite less in comparison to previous years. It has declined noticeably. He feels that there is an increase in the number of people who defecate on the bank and a decrease in the number of latrine users due to lack of management by the municipality to prohibit the people from using the riverside as open latrine. Additionally, one must also pay in public latrine. "The payment of previous seven months is not yet cleared. If we ask for the money, then they stop coming," he laments.

Among the 80 houses located on the bank, only 18 houses have latrine. Except a couple of house owners, all members defecate and urinate on the bank.

Resham Lal Kuwar, chairman of the Narayani Kinar Tol Sudhar Samitee (Community Development Committee of the Narayani Bank), feels sorry about the state of the Narayani River. Squatters are doing whatever they feel like in the name of squatters. He says: "Mostly the tenants of the Tarai origin use the riverbank for excretion."

The chairman says that after the construction of the public latrine the riverside became clean, but tenants started polluting it again, and house owners followed suit.

Sanumaya Pariyar has been living in the slums for the past five years. People used to go to public latrine by paying money. She stopped using public latrine after everyone started using the riverbank, which is free. She says: "When everyone started going to

the riverbank, why should only our family pay the money for public latrine? Therefore, we also don't use the latrine."

An officer with the Social Welfare Department of Bharatpur Municipality informs that staffs are appointed for controlling defecation, urination and other pollution along the riverbank during office hours, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. He has felt that the problem cannot be solved just by threatening the people or using sticks.

Additional problems have surfaced due to the practice of defecation in the open air among the Tarai tenants. Sulav Nepali, who has just finished his S.L.C. exams from Bhanu Secondary School, has been living in a rented place at Lilachowk. He too rushes to the riverbank to empty his bowels due to a lack of latrine in his landlord's house. He says: "What to do? We have to rush to the riverbank even though we know it causes pollution. We have to use it anyway for defecation."

Not only Sulav, even Nanda Lal Gupta of Sarlahi district goes to the bank for defecation. He complains that he is compelled to go to the riverbank for defecation due to improper management of latrine by landlords.

Bharatpur municipality is making efforts to reduce and ultimately to eliminate the river pollution, but its lone effort cannot solve the problem. The municipality officer believes that local bodies, inhabitants, civil societies, various organisations and their representatives have to unite in order to work out this problem.

Pardashi Rastriya Dainik, June 9, 2005

No latrine, Juthimaya in pain for seven years

Ekal Silwal

Madi, Chitwan: Juthimaya Bishwakarma, 72, was seriously injured seven years ago. Still her right leg's deep wound looks fresh. She could have prevented this wound by constructing a latrine in her house. But now she cannot afford this. She is spending a lot on treating her wound.

Juthimaya, for whom every footstep is a pain, cannot travel long distance from her house. She lives in the habitat of wild animals of the Royal Chitwan National Park in "Amiliya Island." The river is very difficult to cross during the rainy season. She has an experience of going outside the island by being carried on someone's back. She lives alone in a dilapidated hut and takes meal once a day. She was injured by a rhino seven years ago. The one-horned rhino that came out from the national park gave her a blow on her right shank breaking it into two pieces when she was among the bushes to defecate early in the morning.

Widow Juthimaya started her treatment by keeping her only asset-five-hectare land—as collateral to obtain loan amounting Rs 10,000. She also sold her two young goats at Rs 2000. She was admitted in Bharatpur Hospital for a month. The wound has not healed despite spending all the money.

After selling off her ornaments such as ear and nose rings, she continued her treatment with the help of loans. Although she has spent more than Rs 25,000 in seven years, the old wound continues to trouble her. She eats Dhindoroti in the morning and sleeps empty stomach at night. This is her daily routine.

Juthimaya, who said that she used to sleep empty stomach at night after the rhino attack because she was afraid of going out for defecation, now reveals that she cannot afford to feed herself more than once a day. She earns her living by working for her neighbours. When she does not manage to get even a meal, villagers feed her.

Saccharum and Spontaneum, the thickest of tall grasses behind her house, provide her with space for defecation. She roams around the bushes and a stream because of a lack of latrine. It still haunts her whenever she recalls an incident when the rhino, which had attacked her earlier, attacked her again in her house.

The story of Juthimaya is not strange to the 60 households of the Amiliya community of Gardi-1. There is not a single latrine in the village. Still the rivers and the jungle of the national park act as open latrines.

No one gives advice to make latrines because there is no awareness.

"Now six public latrines, three of them constructed by the Janasewa Campaign and the rest constructed by us, are also not in use," says Former Ward Chairperson of Amiliya Lal Bahadur B.K. "Again other Juthimayas with similar tales will come up if no one initiates to keep the village clean."

Bargikrit Rastriya Dainik, June 29, 2005

On the road to model district

Ramesh Kumar Paudel

Hari Prasad Upreti of Mahadevtar, Ward-6 of Piple Village Development Committee, never forgets the embarrassing incident of not being able to show a VIP to a latrine when he asked for it.

He recalls circa 2055 B.S. A minister was going to visit Narayangadh from Hetauda. District leaders had gathered near the Lothar River, the boundary of Chitwan, in order to welcome the minister. Among those who had gathered there, a gentleman from Ratnanagar wanted to pee. He shared his problem with Hari, who was also a former teacher. However, there was no latrine in the entire village. Hari Prasad directed him towards the Lothar river. But the gentleman was not used to urinating or defecating out in the open air. He replied: "It's o.k. I'll withstand and urinate as soon as I find a latrine." But he also asked in an accusing tone: "What is the condition of your village?"

Now, the story of the village of Hari Prasad, who had to be ashamed, is different. These days, it is very difficult to find a house without a latrine. Latrine construction began after villagers started becoming aware of its importance, organisations started showing interest in it and women and children started keeping an eye on it.

Gopal Prasad Pathak of Piple was elected Chairperson of the Village Development Committee in the local election of 2054 B.S. Unfortunately, even his house lacked a latrine until then. According to the story told by villagers, leaders such as Kashinath Adhikari and Modnath Prasith urinated by hiding behind the bushes and simple plastic fences.

Chairperson Pathak also constructed a latrine when he constructed a new house by dismantling the old house in 2057 B.S. He was the first person to construct a latrine at Mahadevtar. Others followed suit.

Hari Prasad Upreti, who is also Vice Chairperson of the Parebashwari community forest, says: "Many haven't constructed a latrine due to lack of awareness." The need for a latrine was fulfilled by the northern forest, eastern and southern river and fields in the centre.

Even his family used to rush to the upper neighboring forest for defecation and urination. One had to cross the highway to reach the forest. After children grew up, he was afraid of possible occurrence of accidents while crossing the road. So, he constructed a concrete latrine in 2057 B.S. Latrines were constructed at a quick rate. A Drinking Water and Sanitation (DWS) programme was started by the Social Development and Research Centre at Gaidakot in Mahadevtar last year. According to a survey done by the Centre, out of 159 households, only 40 did not have latrines. That means there was such a vast development in the village that did not have a single latrine five years ago. Out of these 40 houses, seven have constructed latrines. The remaining 33 houses will construct latrines within a year.

There is a different glow in the face of Sanumaya Chepang of Mahadevtar. Last year, she shut the mouth of those who used to humiliate by saying: "How could a backward Chepang construct a latrine." Nearly six years ago, all villagers were like Sanumaya. With the rising tide of awareness in her village, Sanumaya showed that the Chepangs do not lack behind when it comes to latrine construction.

The Local Progressive Female Saving Group has been conducting a door-to-door

campaign to raise awareness for cleanliness in villages. According to Chandra Pathak, a member of 35-women group, a monitoring of every house, starting from kitchen gardens and kitchens to roadways, is carried out on 15th of every month. People maintaining the cleanliness of their houses are praised, while those who do not maintain them are made aware of their responsibility. The presence or absence of a latrine is the most important thing in this probe.

Chandra says: "Asking them to construct latrines is not enough. One should also be able to make them understand its importance. Then only they become encouraged to construct latrines." Eighty percent of the communicable diseases are reduced in humans if there is no foul smell in front of the house. For this, latrine is very important. People are made to understand its importance in various ways, she adds. Also, the people who deliberately did not make latrine although they knew its importance were made to participate in latrine construction using different tactics by social workers.

"One pledged to construct a latrine after one feels embarrassed when a visitor asks for a non-existent latrine to urinate, just when the same visitor has praised him well after visiting his house." This is how Laxmi Kandel of Gaidakot, who is associated with a project of the Social Development and Research Centre, express his experience. He also tells that the campaign for making children aware and exert pressuring on their parents to construct latrines in their houses was also launched.

Hari Prasad knows well that asking someone to make latrines is not possible without explaining their importance. Nearly three years ago, the community forest had decided to construct a latrine to a consumers' group. However, nobody asked for money to make latrines, says Hari Prasad. The community forest had a scheme in place to provide money for making latrines, but there was no programme to explain the importance of latrines.

There is a rise in awareness among those who did not construct latrines due to lack of knowledge. There are people who are unable to construct latrines due to the lack of money despite being aware of their value. The organisation, which is running a drinking water and sanitation programme, has provided Rs 2000 to each families of Mahadevtar, who do not have cash to construct latrines. This loaned money must be returned in installment within three months. For latrine construction, an additional Rs 3000 is to be spent, says Chandra Pathak. Except Rs 2000, an individual has to bear all extra expenditures.

The UNICEF has informed that one gram of faeces of an unhealthy man may contain 10 million (1 Core) virus, 1 million (10 lakh) bacteria, 12000 protozoan and 100 eggs of worms that cause disease. There is also another condition that each day 17 million Nepalese (1 Crore 70 lakh) defecate in open places. According to the UNICEF's data, negligence related with cleanliness is the cause of the death of 33,000 people every year.

That is why the necessity of latrines is felt in order to control such a high death rate. According to the Environmental Sanitation Augmentation's five-year work plan (1999 AD), 66 percent of the households have not constructed latrines because they have not understood its need. 28 percent of the community is not able to construct latrines due to lack of land and capital.

At Mahadevtar, too, five Chepang families cannot afford to make latrines. Chandra has promised to construct latrines in all the houses of her village by the end of Chaitra 2062 BS by managing the fund.

According to the decision of different organizations working in sanitation, health and drinking water, preparations for announcing Chitwan a totally sanitized district by 2009 AD are on. This looks true, when one sees the excitement and dedication of the inhabitants of Mahadevtar. Additional 5167 houses are in need of sanitary facilities, in the context of making it a totally clean district.

On a whole, this number appears to be high. But this aim can be fully accomplished if six latrines are constructed every month in every ward of 36 VDCs and two municipalities of Chitwan. At Mahadevtar, a sanitary campaign work is getting successful with the dedication of leaders, community's awareness, including those in a campaign, who are not in a condition to construct latrines by collecting funds. Why is this not possible to replicate in other places as well?

The World Summit Convention for long-term development held in Johannesburg of South Africa in 2002 has made a Millennium Development Goal to reduce the sanitary deprived population to half by 2015.

Nepal has set the target of providing all people with sanitation facilities by the end of 2017.

Chitwan Post Daily, June 13, 2005

Tragedy prods villagers to construct latrines

Ekal Silwal

Seventy-year-old Chudamani Bhusal of Megghauli-4, Jitpur, has constructed latrines only after being aware that managed latrines not only protect people from diseases but also save lives. His wife Kaushila died in the age of sixty because there was no latrine in her house. Nor was there any awareness of its importance in his family.

The Bhusal family regrets after knowing that the construction of a latrine seven years ago would have saved Kaushila's life. Kaushila did not lose her life due to the garbage spread around her house and the ensuing disease. She was killed on Mangsir 16 in 2055 BS in the morning when a rhino of the Royal National Park in Chitwan gave her a blow. Due to lack of latrine in her house, a rhino blow her and killed.

How is her death related to latrine? Kaushila's eldest son Bishnu Bhusal says: "That day my mother had gone out of the house early morning at six to empty her bowels. The rhino that came out of the Royal Park pounced on her. When she was running towards her home, it started hitting her with its horn and pushing her down. After she arrived in front of our house, it killed her by stamping on her stomach."

Bishnu and his father Chudamani just did not stay idle watching the scene. "When we looked around upon hearing her screams, we saw that a rhino was chasing her. The father and the son had gone out to rescue her. The rhino also lifted and threw my son three times and bit me on my right leg. The rhino frequently stamped and finally killed her before we lost our spirits," says Chudamani in a sad tone.

The habit of defecating out in the open air was terribly costly. Chudamani lost his wife for ever. Now he also has to shoulder the responsibility of rearing, caring and giving safety to his six daughters and four sons. Following the tragedy, he started looking for other preventive measures.

After that incident he felt that the location of the house, which was in an isolated place, made it insecure from rhinos. Then he shifted to a densely populated area, 300 meters to the west. His new house was better built than the previous one. Now there were neighbours who would help him in times of trouble. Yet they could not get rid of the old fear. Reason: Most of the villagers were habituated to defecating on the edges of the road and open fields in the morning.

The knowledge that easy and accessible latrines are more necessary than strong buildings enlightened the Bhusal family. "What if only the houses were clean and safe? It was so difficult to walk this way due to bad smell of unmanaged excreta lying here and there." The son of Kaushila told pointing at the road in front of their house: "Then we constructed a latrine though it is temporary."

After having a latrine that was constructed by digging a pit and surrounding it with sacs, the Bhusal family not only feels safe from communicable diseases but also feels safe from rhinos. Pondering for a moment, he says: "It is said that no one dies before his/her time comes. Nevertheless, how can rhino kill, if people stop using canal edge and field as latrines?"

Seeing growing awareness in the victim's family, one of the non-governmental organizations also arrived in Megghauli with a sanitation program. After paying Rs 800 to Clinic Nepal, the Bhusal family received six rings, two covers, one pan, two-meter long plastic pipe and basic construction facility-all free of cost.

That latrine constructed with an additional self-expense of two sacks of cement and three masons has proved to be a safety guard of life. Similar latrines have also been constructed in other houses of the village.

Importance of awareness in environment sanitation

Ganashekhar Sharma

Although people know that "health is wealth", they are not manifestly aware of the importance of health and environment sanitation. The higher the population rate, the higher will be the environment pollution in urban areas. We think that picking up our own garbage will tarnish our prestige. That is why we have not been able to build on the concept of cleaning up the dirt of others.

Various organizations, VDCs, municipality and individuals, among others, have made efforts at environment cleanliness of 36 VDCs and two municipalities of Chitwan.

The late Kishore Chandra Dhungana, who was a social worker, has become an example for the Praja (Chepang) community of hillside Chitwan. He donated nearly 30 hectares of land to build a school building, distributed educational materials such as books and copies and provided free food and lodging to those students who come there to study. He had even given Rs 500 per family in order to help them construct latrines. He had set the base for raising awareness of tree plantation for environment cleanliness and of giving attention to sanitation in order to prevent the spread of diseases. These days, his nephew Dilip Dhungana looks after school management. And from time to time, he conducts various sanitation and plantation programs, including sewage and drainage systems.

Out of 14 wards of Bharatpur, one, two, three, four, seven and ten wards are provided with containers for the collection of solid wastes. The Tole Sudhar Samitis (development committees) of various wards have distributed buckets for disposal of waste and have mobilised municipality's carts for garbage collection. The litters thus collected are dumped on the main market of Narayangadh and from there it is loaded on to a tractor and finally thrown into the jungle of Ramnagar. As the municipality has only one tractor, it makes about three trips per day. The solid waste remain uncollected for hours on the busy roads of the city, and half of the solid waste gets scattered when street children and others search for plastics and discarded materials. This has led to environment pollution.

Permanent methods of waste disposal and well managed dumping sites should be made because disposing of the garbage in the jungle of Ramnagar will create environment pollution, including health hazards of wild animals.

Among the solid wastes, plastics are such materials which do not decay faster and smell bad. Keeping this in mind, various organizations such as the Lions Club, Nari Abhyudaya Kendra, the Nari Ekata Kendra (women unity centre), the Aama Shamuha (mothers' group), the Aadarsha Nari Bikash Kendra (ideal women development centre) and so on have conducted Suhiro Karyakram (needle program). As a result, plastics are collected from houses and the money thus collected from them is spent on the welfare of physically challenged and helpless children. Such praiseworthy work has received aid. The cart with the slogan "Keep Environment Clean, Serve The Helpless" written on it is taken to each house. Various helping programs are implemented with the fund collected after selling plastics.

Due to a lack of public latrines, new visitors who come to the market enter narrow

alleys to urinate and defecate. This has led to roadside pollution. The majority of people say there should be public latrines and water supply at public places to solve this problem.

Along with the consumers of community forests, various people from various sectors have been involved in security maintenance, conservation of forest areas and afforestation.

Forest is the natural habitat of wild animals. If the jungle is not conserved well, valuable animals such as elephant, rhino, tiger, bear, deer, peacock, parrots and hornbill will become extinct. The environment will be adversely affected.

Forests also prevent natural calamities and provide adequate oxygen required to mankind. Conserving forest areas prevents excessive rainfall, flood, landslides, drought and soil erosion as well.

Although the tourist area of Sauraha Chitwan has made attempts to clean forest areas in order to attract tourists, they are far from satisfactory. Though His Majesty's Government has allocated 50 percent revenue from the tourism sector as grant, forest development and wildlife conservation works are not up to the mark.

Even though Sauraha's tourism development fund has given money, from Rs 7.5 million to Rs 10 million for the programme, it has been found out that the money is spent on meetings, allowances, and food and beverage. As a result, cleanliness of roadside towards Sauraha area, and the conservation of trees on roadsides are not monitored by any body.

If only the dwellers protect and preserve the trees in front of their houses, trees can grow up well and healthy. The authorities concerned have not given attention even to a wire net in a public place.

Although different organizations are involved in cleanliness, there are not more than two wells between the houses of the Tharu community. The community is seen using the well water for drinking, bathing, and washing dishes and clothes. The used water flows back to the same well. But no one is bothered. It has been found out that the Tharu children are less conscious of hygiene in many respects.

They use all unnecessary firewood for "sacrificial fire." They are not aware of afforestation. They do not know that the future generation will have scarcity of firewood and that the natural habitat of wild animals will be destroyed.

Weekly Chitwan, June 11, 2005

Construct latrines or fall prey to wild animals

Ekal Silwal

Man Bahadur B.K., who had migrated from Ghandruk (Kaski) in the year 2036 BS, to Baghanda-4 Sitalpur of Madi, had constructed a house but not a latrine. After 10 years following the house construction, his wife died due to tuberculosis. Then Purnakala B.K. came in his life as a second wife. On Jestha 20, 2058 BS, a tiger killed Purnakala when she went to jungle behind the house to empty her bowels early in the morning.

Man Bahadur later found her body that was half-eaten by the tiger in the forest at around 4 pm. After passing a solitary life of about three years and a half, he married again for the third time in Poush 2061 BS. After the death of his second wife, he has changed the place for defecation. Instead of going to forest of the west he now goes to the Ghusari River in the east. Yet he has not constructed a latrine in his house.

"There isn't enough income for food. How can a latrine be made? After the tiger ate my wife, we stopped going to the jungle behind the house and started going to the river in front of the house," says Man Bahadur, pointing at the Ghusari River.

His neighbour Chengura Mahato does not have nose and left eye. If people ask about his nose, after looking at the dark cave-like hole instead of a nose, he answers quickly: "The bear scratched it." He went to a place that was inhabited by bears early in the morning, and was thus scratched. In Falgun 2055 BS, 63-year-old Chengura and his 25-year-old-son Dhan Raj had gone for defecation in a river below their house. The couple of bears that were languishing at night on the riverside near a forest pounced on them. The son, who was carrying a stick, was able to chase away the pouncing bear and to save his father from another bear's attack. Unfortunately, the bear had already plucked the father's nose and left eye. Chengura who cannot smell from the nose, cannot also see things clearly. His right eyesight is also getting weak.

Answering a query whether he would not have to face wild animals' attack, if there had been a latrine in the house, he says: "We could have constructed a latrine if there was money. If our time comes, we will have to die anyway. Otherwise, nothing will happen even if we live together with the wild animals in the forest. Chengura says: "I don't go to the riverside until it is a clear morning. In case of gastro-intestinal disorders at night, I use the field below the house for defecation and cover it with mud."

Purnakala and Chengura, who had unpleasant encounters with wild animals, are not the only ones who do not have latrines in their houses. Only six of around 150 houses in Sitalpur village have latrines. Durga Bahadur Bujel is among those who have given attention to sanitation and safety by constructing latrines. He constructed a concrete latrine in front of his house a year ago.

Bujel says: "It was scary to live here after tigers killed people who went out to defecate. We did not have the ready cash (to construct a latrine). Until last year, we used the field in front of our house for defecation. We stopped going to the jungle after dusk. At long last, we managed to construct a latrine by saving money little by little."

After Durga Bahadur and Sita constructed the latrine, their neighbour Buddhi Bahadur Chettri has also started constructing a latrine in his house. School students have also visited this village many times to give advice on latrine construction. "Every time, villagers just say 'yes' for the sake of saying something. Now six latrines have been constructed. Others can also learn the comfort and safety one can derive from a latrine," says Bujel. Bujel, who is familiar with the dual importance of latrines, asks: "How can one become a victim of wild animals if every house has a latrine"?

Increase in economic status, thanks to Chepangs' effort

Shanta Adhikari

These days Chepangs, who used to live in caves and depend on wild roots and bulbs, are involved in sanitation work. They are widely known as an indigenous community, off the coast of development opportunities. Chepangs, who constitute a major portion of the total population of four VDCs of Chitwan in hill areas, have started various practices such as construction of modern latrine and safe disposal of household waste.

After the government launched the Tourism Program for Poverty Alleviation (TRPAP), interest in sanitation has increased profoundly. Fifty-three percent of the total population of Shaktikhor, Siddhi, Korak, and Kaulae VDCs, where TRPAP is implemented, belong to the Chepang community.

Since the implementation of TRPAP, 76 people of Siddhi VDC have constructed private latrines. Out of these, 40 houses are of Chepangs. In Shaktikhor VDC, including six houses of Chepang, 62 households have constructed private latrines. Likewise, in Kaulae VDC, including 36 houses of Chepang, 80 people have constructed latrines in their houses.

Advisor to the TRPAP Ramhari Devkota says in the process of latrine construction, four people of the VDCs were trained for latrine construction and those who have completed the training are hired for constructing other latrines at Rs 200 per day. Apart from these, he gives material support worth Rs 1850 for latrine construction.

Likewise, garbage collection centres have been established in 10 different places, from Hukdi of Dhading to Shaktikhor of Chitwan. Former Chairperson of Shaktikhor VDC Gopiman Shrestha says garbage collection and disposal have been made easier due to the establishment of these centres. Additionally, health improvement and forest conservation programs are also implemented in four remote hill areas of Chitwan where the majority of inhabitants are Chepangs. In order to make forest conservation programmes effective, training was given to 16 people, four from each VDC, for construction of smokeless chulo (stove) and the program has been providing Rs 100 per chulo as donation after completing the training.

According to former Chairperson of Kaulae VDC Ghambir Bahadur Rana, smokeless chulo consumes less firewood when compared to other cooking stoves. It is good from the health point of view. This approach has also backed up forest conservation.

Local Development Officer of the District Development Committee (Chitwan) Binod Prakash Singh says that he has taken sanitation activities as a priority. He says sanitation campaign will soon be given priority in those VDCs where TRPAP and the Decentralization Action for Children and Women (DACAW) program have been conducted by the District Development Committee, Chitwan, in support of UNICEF.

President of Nepal Red cross Society, Chitwan Branch, Hari Prasad Neupane says that the sanitation program conducted in every region of Chitwan district through schools or the Junior Red Cross circle is effective. In order to make Chitwan the first Model District of Nepal on sanitation by 2009 and to achieve the target of governmental and non-governmental organizations working in this district, 319 households should be facilitated with safe drinking water and 341 latrines should be constructed at homes.

Gorkhapatra Dainik, June 21, 2005

सत्ययासले चेपाङ जातिको आर्थिकस्तर बढ्यो

ज्ञान्ता अधिकारी

आँडारमा बस्ने, जङ्गली कन्दमुल खाने आदिवासी जातिका रूपमा परिचित विकासका अवसरबाट पछाडि परेका चेपाङहरू हिजोआज सरसफाइ कार्यमा जुटेका छन् । चितवनका चारवटा पहाडी गाउँ विकास समितिमा चेपाङ जातिको बाहुल्य रहेको छ । सो ठाउँका चेपाङहरू आधुनिक शौचालय बनाउने, घरको फोहोर सुरक्षित रूपमा विसर्जन गर्ने कार्यमा अभ्यास गर्न थालेका छन् ।

श्री ५ को सरकारको ग्रामीण गरीबी निवारणका लागि पर्यटन कार्यक्रम (टीआरपीएपी) लागू भएपछि सो क्षेत्रका बासिन्दामा सरसफाइप्रति आकर्षण बढेको हो । टीआरपीएपी लागू भएका शक्तिखोर, सिद्धि, कोराक र कायले गाविसको कुल जनसङ्ख्यामध्ये ५३ प्रतिशत चेपाङ जाति बसोबास गर्छन् । टीआरपीएपी लागू भएपछि हालसम्म सिद्धि गाविसका ७६ जनाले निजी चर्पी बनाएका छन् । तीमध्ये ४० घर चेपाङसहित ६२ घरधुरीले निजी चर्पी बनाएका छन् । त्यसैगरी, काउले गाविसका ३६ घर चेपाङसहित ८० जनाले निजी शौचालयको निर्माण गरिसकेका छन् ।

ग्रामीण गरीबी निवारणका लागि पर्यटन कार्यक्रम चितवनका सल्लाहकार रामहरि देवकोटा शौचालय निर्माण गर्ने क्रममा गाविसका चारजनालाई शौचालय बनाउन तालिम दिने गरेको र तालिम पाएकाहरूले दिनको दुई सय रूपैयाँ ज्याला लिने गरी गाविसमा अन्य चर्पी बनाउन लगाइएको बताउनुहुन्छ । त्यसबाहेक १८ सय ५० रूपैयाँ बराबरको सामान आफूले सहयोग गर्ने गरेको उहाँ बताउनुहुन्छ ।

यस्तै, धादिङको हुक्दीदेखि चितवनको शक्तिखोरसम्मको सो क्षेत्रका १० स्थानमा फोहोर संकलन केन्द्र स्थापना गरिएको छ । ती केन्द्रहरूका कारण फोहोर संकलन र नष्ट गर्न सहजता आएको कुरा शक्तिखोर गाउँ समितिका पूर्वअध्यक्ष गोपीमान श्रेष्ठ बताउनुहुन्छ ।

त्यसबाहेक टीआरपीएपीले कार्य थालनी गरेका चितवनका दुर्गम चार पहाडी चेपाङ बासिन्दाको बाहुल्य रहेका ती गाविसहरूमा स्वास्थ्य सुधार र वन निरीक्षणका कार्यक्रमहरू पनि सञ्चालित छन् । वन संरक्षणको कार्यक्रमलाई प्रभावकारी बनाउन सुधारिएको चुलो बनाउन एक गाविसका चारजनाको दरले १६ जनालाई तालिम दिइएको र तालिमपछि कार्यक्रमको तर्फबाट प्रतिचुला एक सय रूपैयाँ अनुदान दिने गरिएको छ । सुधारिएको चुलाबाट अन्य अवस्थामा भन्दा आधा दाउरा वचन हुने र धुवाँ बाहिर जाने भएकाले स्वास्थ्य पनि राम्रो भएको, जंगलका संरक्षणमा सहयोग मिलेको काउले गाविसका पूर्वअध्यक्ष गम्भीरवहादुर राना बताउनुहुन्छ ।

जिल्ला विकास समिति चितवनका स्थानीय विकास अधिकारी विनोदप्रकाश सिंह सरसफाइ अभियानलाई आफूले प्रार्थमिकता साथ लिएका बताउनुहुन्छ । युनिसेफको सहयोगमा जिविस चितवनले सञ्चालित गर्दै आएको महिला, बालबालिका विकेन्द्रित (डकाउ) कार्यक्रमअन्तर्गत र टीआरपीएपी कार्यक्रम लागू भएका गाविसहरूमा सरसफाइ अभियानलाई प्रार्थमिकतासाथ लागू गर्न लागिएको सिंह बताउनुहुन्छ ।

चितवन जिल्लाको सम्पूर्ण क्षेत्रमा हाल नेपाल रेडक्रस सोसाइटी चितवन शाखाका सभापति हरिप्रसाद न्यौपाने विद्यालयमार्फत अथवा जुनियर रेडक्रस सर्कलद्वारा चलाइएको सरसफाइ कार्यक्रम प्रभावकारी भएको बताउनुहुन्छ । सन् २००९ सम्ममा जिल्लालाई सरसफाइयुक्त नेपालको पहिलो जिल्ला बनाउन यहाँ सरकारी र गैरसरकारी संस्थाहरूले उपलब्धि हासिल गर्ने जिल्लामा प्रत्येक महिना ३१९ घरधुरीका लागि खानेपानी सुविधा विस्तार गर्दै जानुपर्ने हुन्छ भने मासिक ३४१ घर परिवारमा शौचालय थप गर्दै जानुपर्ने हुन्छ ।

गोरखापत्र, २०६२ असार ०

चर्पी बनाए सुखमा नत्र बाघभालुको सुखमा

एकल सिलवाल

कास्कीको घान्द्रुकबाट बसाई सरेका मनबहादुर विकले २०३६ सालमा माडीको बघौडा-४, शीतलपुरमा घर बनाए तर चर्पी बनाएनन् । त्यसको १० वर्षपछि क्षयरोग लागेर उनकी श्रीमतीको ज्यान गयो । मानबहादुरको पूर्णकला विकलाई दोस्रो श्रीमती बनाएर ल्याए । सधै घरपछाडिको वनमा दिसा गर्न जाने पूर्णकलालाई २०५८ सालको जेठ २० गते एकाबिहानै बाघले शिकार बनायो ।

उनलाई जिउँदो फेला पार्न नसकेका माबहादुरले दिउँसो चार वजेतिर बाघले खाएर बाँकी राखेको आधा शरीर वनमा भेट्टाए । साढे तीन वर्षको एकलो जीवनपछि २०६१ पुसदेखि उनले तेस्री श्रीमती भित्र्याएका छन् । माहिली श्रीमती मारिएपछि मनबहादुरले दिसा गर्न जाने दिशाचाहिँ बदलेका छन् । उनी अहिले पश्चिमतर्फको जङ्गलको सट्टा पूर्व घुसरी खोलामा जाने गर्छन् तर घरमा चर्पी अझै पनि बनेको छैन ।

“खान पुग्ने कमाइ छैन, कसरी चर्पी बनाउने ? वरू बूढीलाई बाघले खाएपछाडिको जङ्गल जान छाडेर अगाडिपट्टिको खोलातिर भर्ने गरेका छौं” आगोमा फलाम राखेर आरनका पंखा घुमाइरहेका मनबहादुरले घरअगाडीको घुसरी खोलातिर हेर्दै भने । उनका छिमेकी छेङगुरा महताको नाक र देब्रे आँखा छैन । “किन यस्तो भएको ?” नाकको ठाउँमा ओडारजस्तो अँध्यारो खोपो देखेपछि साँघ्ने जांकोहीलाई उनी फयाट्ट जवाफ दिइहाल्छन्- “भालुले चिथोःन्यो ।”

भालु भएको ठाउँमा एकाबिहानै दिसा गर्न जानु उनी चिथोरिनुको कारण थियो । ०५५ फागुन महिनाको एक दिन त्यतिवेला ६३ वर्ष पुगेका छेङगुरा २५ वर्षका छोरा धनराजसँगै घरमुनिको खोलामा दिसा गर्न गएका थिए । जङ्गलमै ढेपिएको त्यो खोला बास बसेका दुई भालुले बाबुछोरालाई नै अलग-अलग भन्टिए । लट्ठी लिएका छोराले आफूमाथिको भालु भगाई बाबुलाई अर्को भालुको पञ्जाबाट उम्काउन त सफल भए तर भालुले बाबुको बायाँ आँखा र नाक निकालिसकेको थियो ।

छेङगुरा नाकबाट गन्ध नपाउने मात्र होइन, बाँकी रहेको दाँया आँखाबाट पनि देख्न नसक्ने हुँदै गएका छन् । ‘घरमा चर्पी भए बाघभालुको सुखमा पर्नुपर्ने थिएन नि’ भनी सोध्दा उनको जवाफ हुन्छ- ‘पैसा भए पो चर्पी बनाउनु, काल आएको दिन यसै पनि मर्नुपर्छ, नआएसम्म वनमा बाघभालुसँगै बसे पनि केही हुँदैन ।’ तर भालुको सुखमा परेर उम्किएपछि भने उनी राति र बिहान सबैरे खोलामा दिसा गर्न जान छाडेका छन् । ‘खोलामा छायाड्ड उज्यालो नभई जान्ने, राति पेट बिग्रिँदा आँगनमुनिकै स्वतमा बस्छु छेङगुरा भन्छन् ।

चर्पी नभएर बाघभालुको सुखमा परेका पूर्णकला र छेङगुराको घरमा मात्र होइन, शीतलपुर गाउँका फर्नेड डेढ सय घरमध्ये छवटामा मात्र चर्पी बनेको त्यसरी चर्पी बनाएर सरसफाइ र सुरक्षामा ध्यान दिनेमा दुर्गाबहादुर भुजेल पनि एक हुन् । उनले एक वर्षअघि घरको अधिल्लर पक्की चर्पी बनाएको थिए । ‘दिसा गर्न गएको मान्छेलाई नै बाघले खाइदिएपछि चर्पी नबनाइ यहाँ बस्नै डर लाग्यो, भन्नेबित्तिकै पैसा भएन, रात परेपछि जङ्गल नजाने र घरअगाडिको वारीमै दिसा गर्ने गर्दै पोहोरसम्म कटायौं । अलिअलि पैसा जम्मा गरेपछि चर्पी बनिहाल्यो’ उनी भन्छन् ।

दुर्गाबहादुर र सीताले आ-आफ्नो घरमा चर्पी बनाएपछि उनीहरूकै सिको गरेर अहिले छिमेकी बुद्धिवहादुर क्षेत्रीले पनि चर्पी बनाउन शुरु गरेका छन् । यो गाउँमा स्कूलका विद्यार्थीहरू पनि धेरै पटक आएर सबैलाई चर्पी बनाउन सल्लाह दिई जाने गरेका छन् । ‘गाउँलेले हरेक पटक हुन्छ, हुन्छ भनेर टारिदिन्छन् । अहिले त छ वटा चर्पी बनिसेकेको छ, चर्पी हुनेले पाएको सुख र सुरक्षाबाट अरूले पनि सिक्नेछन्’, चर्पी दाहोरो महन्व बुभेका दुर्गाबहादुर प्रश्न गर्छन्- ‘सबै घरमा चर्पी भएपछि को पछ बाघभालुको सुखमा ?’

यहाँ विभिन्न सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता समूहबाट वनजङ्गल सुरक्षा र स्वाली जमिनमा वृक्षरोपण गरी प्राकृतिक सौन्दर्य जोगाइराख्न विभिन्न समूहका व्यक्तिहरू लागि परेका छन् ।

जङ्गली जनावरहरूको वन नै मुख्य वासस्थान भएकाले वन जोगाउन नसकिएको खण्डमा जङ्गलका हात्ती, गैंडा, बाघ, भालु, हरिण, चित्तल, मयुर, सुगा, मैना, धनेश, नीलगाई आदि अमूल्य जनावरहरू क्रमशः लोप हुँदै जानेछन् भने वातावरणीय संरचनामा समेत खलबल आउनेछ ।

यसबाहेक मानिसहरूलाई चाहिने अक्सिजन दिने वनले प्राकृतिक विपत्ति समेत रोक्दछ । अतिवृष्टि, अनावृष्टि, खण्डवृष्टि आदि वनक्षेत्र सुरक्षा गर्नाले नै जोगाउन सकिन्छ भने पानीका मुहानहरू सुक्नबाट र बाढी, पहिरो, भू-क्षय हुनबाट समेत वनले जोगाउँछ ।

चितवनका पर्यटकीय क्षेत्र सौराहामा पर्यटकहरूको मन लोभ्याई पर्यटन व्यवसाय विस्तार वनजङ्गल सफा राख्ने कार्य गरे पनि सन्तोषजनक कार्य नभएको देखिएको छ । श्री ५ को सरकारले पर्यटकबाट आउने आम्दानीको ५० प्रतिशत सहयोगस्वरूप प्रदान गरेको भए पनि वनजङ्गलमा सुधार तथा वन्यजन्तुको संरक्षणमा उल्लेखनीय कार्य हुन सकेको छैन ।

सौराहा क्षेत्रको पर्यटन विकास कोषबाट ७५ लाखदेखि एक करोडसम्म कार्यक्रमलाई सहयोग गरे पनि उक्त संस्थाको सकम बैठक, भत्ता र खानपानमै बढी खर्च हुने गरेको बुझिएको छ । जसले गर्दा सौराहा क्षेत्रतर्फ जाने बाटोघाटोको सफाइ, बाटोछेउमा रोपिएका संरक्षण आदिमा कुनै क्षेत्रबाट पनि दृष्टि पुग्न सकेको छैन ।

उक्त क्षेत्रमा आ-आफ्ना घरअगाडिमा रूखहरू सुसक्षा गरे मात्र पनि हुर्कन सक्ने तथा स्थानीय क्लबले लगाएको तार जालीसमेत असुरक्षित रहेकोमा कुनै निकायले ध्यान दिएको देखिदैन ।

सरसफाइमा विभिन्न संघसंस्था लागि रहे पनि थारू बस्तीहरूमा धेरै घरको बीचमा प्राय एक, दुई इनार हुने र त्यसैमा कोही नुहाउने, भाँडा माप्ने तथा कपडा धुने गरिरहेको देखिन्छ । त्यही पानी इनारभित्र पसिरहेको र त्यही पानी पिउनलाई समेत उपयोग गरेको देखिन्छ भने इनारको सरसफाइमा ध्यान दिएको देखिदैन ।

मानिसहरूले धुनी बालेर दाउरा अनावश्यक तरिकाले खर्च गर्दछन् तर उनीहरूलाई वृक्षरोपण गर्नुपर्दछ, हामीले वृक्षरोपण नगरे भोलिका सन्तानले दाउरा बाल्न पाउँदैनन् र जङ्गली जनावरहरू चिडियाखानामा मात्र देख्नेछन् भन्ने ख्याल छैन ।

साप्ताहिक चितवन, २०६२ जेठ २६

वातावरण सफाइमा जनचेतना महत्त्वपूर्ण

गणेशेखर शर्मा

'स्वास्थ्य नै धन हो' तर पनि मानिसहरू आफू स्वस्थ हुन र वातावरण सफा सुगंध राख्नमा त्यति लागिपरेको देखिदैन । शहरी क्षेत्रमा जति जनसंख्याको चाप वृद्धि भयो त्यति नै फोहोर मैला र वातावरण प्रदूषित हुनजान्छ । हामी आफूले गरेको फोहोर उठाउन त प्रतिष्ठामा आँच आएको सम्झन्छौं भने अर्काले गरेको फोहोर सफा गर्ने बानी हामीमा आइसकेको छैन ।

त्यसैले चितवनका ३६ वटा गाउँ विकास समिति र २ वटा नगरपालिकाहरूमा वातावरण सफा राख्न विभिन्न संघ, संस्था, व्यक्ति, गा.वि.स., नगरपालिका आदिबाट सरसफाइमा सक्दो प्रयास गरिएको छ ।

चितवनको पहाडी क्षेत्रमा रहेका प्रजा (चेपाङ) हरूका लागि एउटा उदाहरणीय कार्य गर्नुभएका समाजसेवी स्वर्गीय किशोरचन्द्र ढुंगानाले आफ्नो २५/३० विघा जग्गाको सम्पत्ति सुम्पेर विद्यालय खोली, पढ्न आउने विद्यार्थीको कापी, किताब दिई निशुल्क खान र बस्नको समेत सुविधा उपलब्ध गराउनुभएको थियो । उहाँले सो क्षेत्रका थारू बस्तीमा शौचालय निर्माण गर्न प्रतिपरिवार पाँच सय रूपैयाँ बाँड्नु भएको थियो । वातावरण सफा राख्न वृक्षरोपण गर्न सिकाउने तथा सरसफाइमा ध्यान दिए हतपति बिरामी परिदेन भन्ने कुराको चेतना फैलाउने कार्यको जग बसाल्नु भएको थियो । हाल उहाँका भतिजा दिलीप ढुंगानाले विद्यालय सञ्चालन व्यवस्था मिलाउँदै आउनुभएको छ भने ढल निकासतर्फ पहल गरिरहनुभएको बुझिएको छ ।

भरतपुरका १४ वडामध्ये १, २, ३, ४, ७ र १० नं. वडाहरूमा फोहोर संकलन गर्ने कन्टेनरहरूको व्यवस्था गरिएको, विभिन्न वडाहरूमा टोलसुधार समितिले वाल्टिनहरू वितरण गरी फोहोर संकलन गर्ने र घण्टी बजाउँदै नगरपालिकाको ठेलामा लैजाने व्यवस्था गरिएका छ । सो फोहोर नारायणगढको मुख्य बजारमा नै लगेर जम्मा गर्ने गरिन्छ र त्यहाँबाट ट्रयाक्टरमा उठाई रामनगरको जङ्गलमा फाल्ने गरिएको छ । फोहोर एकै पटकमा दुई-तीन ट्रिप जम्मा हुने र नगरपालिकाको एउटा मात्र ट्रयाक्टर भएकाले फोहोर लामो समयसम्म व्यस्त शहरको चोकमै रहने, त्यहाँ सडक बालबालिकाहरू र अन्य व्यक्तिहरूले प्लाष्टिक र अन्य वस्तुहरू खोज्ने भएकाले आधा बाटोसम्म फोहोर फैलिने गरेको प्रत्यक्षदर्शीहरू बताउँछन् । जसले गर्दा वातावरण दुर्गन्धित हुने गरेको छ ।

फोहोर लगेर रामनगरको जङ्गलमा मिल्काउने गर्नाले त्यहाँको वातावरण एकटैमै दूषित रहने र जङ्गली जनावरहरूको स्वास्थ्यमा समेत गम्भीर समस्या उत्पन्न हुने देखिएकाले यसको व्यवस्थित "डम्पिङ साइट" बनाई स्थायी समाधानको उपाय अपनाउनु पर्ने देखिन्छ ।

फोहोरजन्य वस्तुमा प्लाष्टिक एउटा यस्तो वस्तु हो जुन चाँडै सडेर पनि जाँदैन र यसभित्र परेको फोहोर अझ दुर्गन्धित हुन्छ । त्यसै कुरालाई मध्यनजर राख्दै यहाँमा लायन्स क्लबहरू, नारी अभ्युदय केन्द्र, नारी एकता केन्द्र, आमा समाज, आदर्श नारी विकास केन्द्र आदिबाट "सुइरो कार्यक्रम" सञ्चालन भएको छ । जसले गर्दा प्लाष्टिकहरू घरघरै संकलन गरिन्छ र त्यसबाट आएको पैसाले अपाङ्ग तथा असहाय बालबालिकाहरूको सेवामा खर्च गरिन्छ । त्यस सद्बाहनीय कार्यलाई सर्वोत्तरबाट सहयोग प्राप्त भएको बुझिएको छ । "वातावरण सफा राखी, असहायलाई सेवा गरौं" भन्ने लेखिएको ठेला घरघरमा घुमाउने र प्लाष्टिक संकलन गरी बेची आएको पैसाले सहयोग कार्यक्रमहरू सञ्चालन गरिएको छ ।

सार्वजनिक शौचालयहरूको अभावमा बजारमा आएका नयाँ व्यक्तिहरू साघुरा बाटाहरूभित्र पसी पिसाब फेर्ने तथा होंटलमा गएर चिया, नास्ता खाएर मात्र पिसाब फेर्नुपर्ने बाध्यता रहेकाले पनि बाटोघाटो दुर्गन्ध भइरहेको देखिएको छ । यसका लागि पायक पर्ने ठाउँहरूमा सार्वजनिक शौचालय र पानीको व्यवस्था हुनुपर्ने आमधारणा रहेको छ ।

ज्यान गएपछि जाग्यो चर्पी बनाउने चेतना

एकल सिलवाल

व्यवस्थित चर्पीले रोग लाग्नबाट मात्र होइन, ज्याने जानबाट समेत जोगाउँदा रहेछ भन्ने चेतना आए मेघौली-४, जीतपुरका ७० वर्षीय चूडामणि भुषालले घरसँगै चर्पी बनाएका छन् । परिवारमा यो चेतना भित्रिनुअघि उनकी श्रीमती कौशिलाले चर्पीके कारण ६० वर्षको उमेरमा ज्यान गुमाएकी थिइन् ।

सात वर्षअघि चर्पी बनाएको भए कौशिला बाँच्ने रहिछन् भन्ने थाहा आएपछि भुषाल परिवार अहिले पश्चातापमा छ । वृद्धावस्थामा पुगेकी कौशिलाले चर्पी नहुँदा घरवारिपरि फैलिएको फोहोरबाट रोग लागेर संसार छाड्नुपरेको भने होइन । खुल्ला ठाउँमा दिसा गर्न बसिरहेको अवस्थामा शाही चितवन राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्जबाट आएको गैडाले हानेर उनी २०५५ साल मंसिर १६ गते मारिएकी थिइन् ।

चर्पीसँग उनको मृत्यु कसरी गौंसिएको छ त ? कौशिलाका जेठा छोरा विष्णु भुषाल भन्छन्- “त्यसदिन बिहान ६ बजे नै उठेर आमा घरनजिकैको नहरमा दिसा गर्न जानुभएका थियो । निकुञ्जबाट वाली चर्न आएको गैडाले उहाँलाई देखेर भ्रमिष्टएछ । दिसा गर्न छाडी उठेर घरतिर भाग्दाभाग्दै सिङले हान्ने र पछार्ने गर्न थाल्यो । आँगनअगाडि आइपुगेपछि पेटमा कुल्चिएर मारिदियो ।”

त्यो दृश्य विष्णु र उनका बाबु चूडामणिले हेरेर मात्रै बसेका भने थिएनन् । “बूढी चिच्याएको सुनेर हेर्दा गैडाले लस्केरहेको देख्यो । सहायता दिन हामी बाबुछोरा नै गएका थियौं । छोरालाई पनि गैडाले तीन पटकसम्म उचालेर फ्याँकिदियो र मेरो दायाँ खुट्टामा दाहा गाडिदियो । हामीले बचाउन खाँदामा खोज्दा बूढीलाई कुल्ची-कुल्ची मारेर गैडा भाग्यो” कौशिलाका श्रीमान् चूडामणिले दुस्खत मुद्रामा सुनाए ।

चर्पी नबनाई खुला ठाउँमा दिसा गर्ने बानीले वृद्ध चूडामणिलाई एकआपसको सहारा बनेकी श्रीमती सधैंका लागि गुमाउनु मात्र परेन, टुहुरा भएका छ वटी छोरी र चार छोराहरूलाई मायाममता र सुरक्षा दिने जिम्मा पनि उनीमाथि नै आइपुग्यो । परिवारका अरू सदस्यले पनि श्रीमतीकै परिणति भागनुपर्ने पो हो कि भन्ने त्रासले उनले बचावका उपायहरू खोज्न थाले :

त्यस घटनापछि घर एकान्तमा भएर नै गैडाबाट असुरक्षित हुनुपरेको ठानी उनले ३ सय मिटर पश्चिमको बाक्ला बस्तीमा घर सारे । नयाँ घर पुरानोभन्दा पक्की थियो, संकट पर्दा मद्दत गर्ने छिमेकीहरू पनि थिए । त्यति भएर पनि पुरानो त्रास पन्छिएन । कारण, प्रायः सबै गाउँलेले बिहान दिसा गर्न सडकको डिल र खुला खेत नै प्रयोग गर्थे ।

गैडाबाट जागिन बलियो घरभन्दा सजिलो चर्पी चाहिने रहेछ भन्ने कुराको महशुस भुषाल परिवारले गर्‍यो । “घर मात्र सफा र सुरक्षित भएर कं गर्नु जथाभावी दिसापिसाबले गन्हाएर यो बाटो हिँड्ने नसक्ने थियो” घरअगाडिको सडकतिर देखाउँदै स्वर्गीय कौशिलाका छोरा विष्णु भुषालले भने “अनि हामीले कच्ची भए पनि एउटा चर्पी घरमै बनायौं ।”

खाल्डो खनेर बोसाले बारेको चर्पीमा दिसा गर्न थालेपछि भुषाल परिवारलाई रोगव्याधि फैलने खतराबाट मात्र होइन, गैडाबाट पनि सुरक्षित महसुस हुन थाल्यो । “काल नआई कोही मान्छे मर्दैन भन्छन् तर पुरानो घरमा चर्पी बनाएको भए हाम्रो आमा अहिलेसम्म बाँचिरहनुहुने थियो, नहरको डिल र बारीमा दिसा गर्न नगएपछि गैडाले कसरी मार्न पाउँथ्यो र ?” एकैछिन धोरिएर विष्णुले भने ।

पीडित परिवारमा जागेको त्यो चेतनासँगै मेघौलीमा सरसफाइ कार्यक्रम लिएर क्विन्टिन नेपाल नामक गैरसरकारी संस्था पुग्यो । उक्त संस्थाले प्रत्येक परिवारलाई ८ सय रूपैयाँमा छ वटा रिड, दुई वटा ढकन, एउटा प्यान, दुई मिटर प्लास्टिकको पाइप र चर्पीको जग निःशुल्क बनाइदिने सुविधा दियो । त्यसमा दुई बोरा सिमेन्ट र तीन जना मिस्त्रीको खर्च आफैले थप गरी बनाएको चर्पी पीडित परिवारलाई अहिले जीवनको सुरक्षा कवच भएको छ । गाउँका अरू घरमा पनि त्यस्तै चर्पी बनेका छन् ।

नेपाल समाचारपत्र, २०६२ जेठ २०

भान्सासम्म सरसफाइ भएनभएको हेरिन्छ । सफा राख्नेलाई स्याबासी दिइन्छ, नराख्नेलाई सजग बनाइन्छ । यो अनुगमनमा चर्पी भए नभएको हेर्नु त भन्नु अनिवार्य छ ।

चन्द्रा भन्छिन् “चर्पी बनाउन मात्र भनेर हुँदैन, चर्पीको महत्व पनि बुझाउन सक्नुपर्दछ । महत्व बुझे चर्पी बनाउने उत्साह आफैँ जागदोरहेछ । घर आँगनमा दुर्गन्ध भएन भने मान्छेलाई सरुवा रोगहरू लाग्न ८० प्रतिशत कम हुन्छ । मान्छेलाई यही कुरा विभिन्न तरिकाले बुझाएर चर्पीको महत्व दर्शाउने गरेका छौं ।” त्यसो त बुझेर बुझपचाएका मान्छेलाई मर्ममाथि नै प्रहार गरेर चर्पी बनाउने काममा लगाउन सामाजिक कार्यकर्ताहरूले पनि अनेक जुक्ति लगाउनु पर्‍यो ।

चर्पीको महत्व नदर्शाई त्यसै ‘लौ बनाऊ’ भनेर मात्र पनि हुँदा रहेनछ भन्ने अनुभव हरिप्रसादको पनि छ । उपभोक्ता भेलामै सामुदायिक वनले चर्पी बनाउन निर्णय गरेको थियो दुई-तीन वर्ष अघि । तर ‘म चर्पी बनाउँछु पैसा लेऊ’ भनेर कोही नआएको उनी बताउँछन् । सामुदायिक वनसँग चर्पी बनाउनका लागि पैसा उपलब्ध गराउने योजना त थियो तर चर्पीको महत्व दर्शाउने कुनै कार्यक्रम थिएनन् ।

पैसा भएर पनि महत्व नबुझेर चर्पी नबनाउनेहरूमा जागरण आएको छ । तर जागरण भएपनि पैसा नभएर चर्पी नबनाउनेहरू पनि छन् । पैसाको अभाव भएका महादेवटारका घर परिवारका लागि चर्पी बनाउन खानेपानी तथा सरसफाइ योजना सञ्चालन गरेको संस्थाले प्रतिघर दुई हजार रूपैयाँ दिने गरेको छ । यो रकम किस्ताबन्दीका रूपमा तीन महिनाभित्र फिर्ता गर्नुपर्दछ । चर्पी बनाउन यो रकमका साथै थप तीन हजार रूपैयाँ स्वर्च हुने चन्द्रा पाठकको भनाइ छ ।

अस्वस्थ मानिसको एक ग्राम दिसामा रोगका १ करोड भार्डरस, १० लाख व्याक्टोरिया, १२ हजार परजीवी र जुकाका एक सय वटा फुल हुन सक्ने जानकारी युनिसफले गराएको छ । सरसफाइ सम्बन्धमा हुने यस्ता खाले वेवास्ताका कारण प्रत्येक वर्ष नेपालमा ३३ हजार मानिस भाडापरखालाजन्य रोगका कारण मर्ने युनिसफकै तथ्याङ्क छ ।

त्यसैले पनि यति ठूलो संख्यामा हुने मृत्यु रोक्न चर्पीको आवश्यकता देखिएको हो । वातावरणीय सरसफाइ प्रवर्द्धन पञ्चवर्षीय कार्य योजना (सन् १९९९) मा उल्लेख भएअनुसार ६६ प्रतिशत घरधुरीले आवश्यकता नै नबुझेर चर्पी नबनाएका हुन् । २८ प्रतिशत यस्तो समुदाय छ, जसले भूमि र पुँजीको अभावमा चर्पी बनाउन पाएको छैन । महादेवटारमा पनि ५ घर यस्तै चेपाङ परिवार छन् जसलाई चर्पी बनाउने स्वर्च जुटाउन ज्यादै नै धौ धौ पर्ने देखिएको छ । तिनका लागि अनुदानको व्यवस्था गरेर भए पनि आफ्नो गाउँका सबै घरमा ६२ साल चैत मसान्तभित्र चर्पी बनाइसक्ने प्रण चन्द्राको छ ।

राष्ट्रिय सरसफाइ कार्य सञ्चालन समितिका आह्वानमा स्वास्थ्य, सरसफाइ तथा खानेपानीसम्बन्धी काम गर्ने विभिन्न संघ संस्थाको निर्णयवमोजिम सन् २००९ सम्ममा चितवन जिल्लालाई पूर्ण रूपमा सरसफाइयुक्त जिल्ला घोषणा गन गयारी भइरहेको छ । महादेवटारवासीको उत्साह र तत्परता हेर्दा चितवनमा यो कुरो पूरा हुने देखिन्छ । त्यतिबेलासम्म पूर्ण सरसफाइयुक्त जिल्ला बनाउन थप ५ हजार १६७ घरमा सरसफाइ सुविधा पुऱ्याउनु पर्ने आवश्यकता छ ।

समग्रमा हेर्दा यो संख्या धेरै लाग्दछ । तर चितवनका ३६ गा.वि.स. र दुवै नगरपालिका सबै वडामा प्रति महिना ६ वटा चर्पी बनेमा यो लक्ष्य पूरा हुन्छ । महादेवटारको जस्तो अगुवाहरूको तत्परता, समुदायको जागरूकता र नसक्नेहरूलाई सहयोग जुटाई लिएर सरसफाइ अभियानमा समेट्ने कार्यले जुन सफलता प्राप्त हुदै छ त्यसलाई अन्यत्र पनि किन अवसर नदिने ? खानेपानी तथा सरसफाइ क्षेत्रमा निर्दिष्ट गरिएको राष्ट्रिय तथा सहस्राब्दी विकास लक्ष्य हासिल गर्न समुदायमा हुने यस्ता कार्यले ठूलो सहयोग पुऱ्याउँछ । सन् २००२ मा दक्षिण अफ्रिकाको जोहानसबर्गमा सम्पन्न दिगो विकासका लागि विश्व शिखर सम्मेलनले सन् २०१५ सम्म सरसफाइबाट वञ्चित विश्वको जनसख्यालाई आधा कम गर्ने सहस्राब्दी विकास लक्ष्य राखेको छ । नेपालले सन् २०१७ सम्ममा सरसफाइमा शतप्रतिशत जनताको पहुँच पुऱ्याउने लक्ष्य निर्धारण गरेको छ ।

लाजमर्दो अवस्थाबाट उठेर

नमूना बन्ने तरस्वरमा

रमेशकुमार पौडेल

चर्पी देखाइदिन नसक्दा एक जना "ठूला" मान्छेका अगाडि लाजमर्दो हुनु परेको घटना पूर्वी चितवनको महादेवटारका हरिप्रसाद उप्रेती कहिल्यै बिसर्देनन् ।

उनी सम्भन्धन् - त्यस्तै ५४/५५ साल तिरको कुरा होला, हेटौँडाबाट एकजना मन्त्री नारायणगढ आउँदै हुनुहुन्थ्यो, चितवनको सीमा लोथर खोलामै मन्त्रीलाई स्वागत गर्न पिप्लेमा जिल्लाका नेताहरूको भीड लागेको थियो । स्वागतका लागि जम्मा भएकामध्ये रत्ननगरका एक जना सज्जनलाई पिसाबले च्यापेछ । विद्यालयका शिक्षकसमेत रहेका हरिलाई ती सज्जनले आफ्नो मर्का बिसाएछन् । त्यतिबेला गाउँमै चर्पी थिएन । हरिले उनलाई नजिकैको लोथर खोला देखाइदिए । तर खुला ठाउँमा दिसापिसाब गर्ने ती सज्जनका बानी नै रहेनछ । उनले 'भैगो खपेर वसुँला वरू चर्पी जहाँ देखिन्छ, त्यहाँ पिसाब फेरौला' मात्र भनेनन्, 'के हो तिम्रो गाउँको यस्तो अवस्था ?' भनेर हरिप्रसादलाई हप्काए पनि ।

यसरी लज्जित हुन परेको हरिप्रसादको गाउँको कथा भने अचेल फरक छ । त्यहाँ चर्पी नभएको घर भेट्दाउन मुस्किल पर्दछ । गाउँलेले कुरा बुझ्दै आएपछि, संघ संस्थाले चासां देखाएपछि र महिला र बालबालिकाले निगरानी राख्न थालेपछि घरसँगै चर्पी पनि देखिन थालेका छन् ।

पिप्लेका गोपाल पाठक ५४ सालको स्थानीय निर्वाचनमा गाउँ विकास समितिको अध्यक्षमा विजयी भएका थिए । तर त्यतिबेलासम्म उनैको घरमा चर्पी थिएन । त्यतिखेर केन्द्रबाट आउने काशीनाथ अधिकारी, मोदनाथ प्रश्रित आदि नेताहरूले भयाङ्क र प्लाष्टिकको सामान्य बारको छेल परेर पिसाब फेर्ने गरेको कथा गाउँलेहरू सुनाउँछन् । पाठकले २०५७ सालमा पुरानो घर भत्काएर नयाँ बनाउँदा चर्पी पनि बनाए । महादेवटारमा चर्पी बनाउने पहिले व्यक्ति उनी नै भए । अगुवाको सिको गर्दै गाउँमा चर्पी बन्न थाले । स्थानीय परेवाश्वरी सामुदायिक वनका उपाध्यक्ष पनि रहेका हरिप्रसाद उप्रेतीका अनुसार चर्पीको महत्त्व नबुझेर नै धेरैले नबनाएका हुन् । उत्तरमा रहेको वन, पूर्व र दक्षिणतिरका खोला तथा वीचमा रहेको खेतका फाँटले मानिसहरूलाई चर्पीको आवश्यकता नै परेन ।

उनका परिवारका सदस्यहरू पनि दिसापिसाब लाग्यो कि घर माथिको वनतर्फ दौडने गर्थे । जङ्गल जान राजमार्ग पार गर्नु पथर्यो । साना केटाकेटीहरू बाटो काट्दा दुर्घटना हुन सक्ने भयले ५७ सालमै उनले पनि पक्की चर्पी बनाए । एकपछि अर्को गर्दै चर्पी बनाउने कामले गति लियो । महादेवटारमा गतवर्षको जेठदेखि नवलपरासी, गैँडाकोटको सामाजिक विकास तथा अनुसन्धान केन्द्रले स्वानेपानी र सरसफाइ आयोजना सञ्चालन गरेको छ । केन्द्रले गरेको सर्वेक्षणअनुसार महादेवटारका कुल १५९ घरधुरीमध्ये ४० वटामात्र चर्पी बनिन बाँकी छ । अर्थात् पाँच वर्षअघि कुनै पनि घरमा चर्पी नहुने गाउँमा यति ठूलो प्रगति भएछ । ती ४० मध्ये ७ वटा घरले चर्पी बनाइसके । बाँकी रहेका ३३ घरले यही वर्षाभित्र बनाइसक्ने बाचा गरेका छन् ।

महादेवटारकी सानुमाया चेपाङको अनुहारमा अहिले छुट्टै चमक छ । घरमा चर्पी नहुँदा चेपाङले के वनाउँथ्यो चर्पी भनेर छेडछाड गर्नेहरूको मुखमा गतवर्ष उनले चर्पी बनाएर बुझो लगाइदिएकी छिन् । त्यसो त पाँच-छ वर्ष अघि सबै गाउँले सानुमायाकै स्तरमा थिए । तर बढ्दो चेतनाको गतिलाई बेलैमा समातेर सानुमायाले चेपाङहरू पनि परिवर्तनप्रति सजग छन् भन्नेकुरा देखाइदिइन् ।

गाउँमा सरसफाइप्रति चेतना जगाउन स्थानीय प्रगतिशील महिला बचत समूहले घरदैलो अभियान चलाउने गरेको छ । ३५ जना महिलाहरू रहेको समूहकी सदस्य चन्द्रा पाठकका अनुसार प्रत्येक महिनाको १५ गते घरघरमा सरसफाइ अनुगमन हुन्छ । घरको आँगनदेखि करेसावारी, बाटोघाटो र

चर्पीको अभावले घाइते भएकी जुठीमाया सात वर्षदेखि सस्त

एकल सिलवाल

७२ वर्षीया जुठीमाया विश्वकर्मा सात वर्षदेखि सस्त घाइते छन् । उनको दायौं गांडामा लागेको गहिरो घाउ ०५५ माघदेखि अहिलेसम्म पनि आलै देखिन्छ । यो घाउलाई उनले घरमा चर्पी बनाएर रोकथाम गर्न सकिथन् तर अहिले जति उपचारको पछि दगुरेपनि पैसा मात्रै सकिन्छ, घाउ बलिभन छोड्दैन ।

प्याल्ल पानी बगिरहेको घाउतिर हेरेर नाक खुम्च्याउँदै पाइला चाल्ने जुठीमाया घरपरबाट टाढा जान सकिदैनन् । जङ्गली जनवारको वासस्थान शाही चितवन राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज र वर्षादिमा तर्न नसकिने रियू नदीबीचको टापु अमिलियामा उनी बस्छन् । कहिलेकाहीँ अरूको काँधमा बोकिएर यो टापुवाहिर निस्कने गरेको अनुभव उनीसँग छ ।

जीर्ण छाप्राेमा सधैं एक छाक मात्र खाएर एकलै बस्ने जुठीमायालाई सात वर्ष अघि गैडाले हानेर घाइते बनाएको हो । बिहानै उठेर पश्चिमतर्फको खोलामा दिसा गर्न गएकी ती वृद्धालाई निकुञ्जबाट निस्किएको एकसिङ्ग गैडाले दायौं पिडौंला दुई चिरा बनाएर फर्काइदियो ।

विधवा जुठीमायाले सम्पत्तिको नाममा बाँकी रहेको पाँच कट्टा जग्गा १० हजार रुपियाँमा बन्धकी राखेर घाउको उपचार सुरु गरिन् । गाँठमा हुकिदै गरेका दुई वटा बोका पनि दुई हजारमा बेचिन् । भरतपुर अस्पतालमा एक महिनासम्म भर्ना भएर बसिन् । पैसा जति सकियो तर घाउ निको भएन ।

कानको मारवाडी र नाकको बुलाकी पनि सिध्याएपछि ऋण खोजेर आफ्नो उपचारमा लगानी गर्दै गइन् । सात वर्षको बीचमा २५ हजार रुपियाँभन्दा बढी खर्च खन्याइसक्दा पनि जुठीमायालाई उही घाउले पिरोलिरहेको छ । अनिकालले धेरैको घरभित्र उनी विहान ढिङारोटी बनाएर खान्छिन् र बेलुका भोकै सुत्छिन्, एक दिन हाँडन सधैं ।

गैडाले हानेर सस्त घाइते बनाएपछि विहान चाँडै दिसा लाग्ने डरले बेलुका भोकै सुत्ने गरेको बताउने जुठीमाया अहिले भने अन्न नभएर पनि एक दिनमा एक पटकभन्दा अघाउन नसकेको खुलस्त पाछिन् ।

घरमा चर्पी नभएर दिसा गर्ने बेलामा खोलाखालसी चहार्नुपर्दा आजीवन घाइते बनेकी जुठीमायाको शौच गर्ने थलो भने अहिले पनि घरपछाडिको काँसधारी नै हो । पहिलेजस्तो धेरै टाढा नजानु मात्र ज्यान बचाउने उपाय हो उनका लागि । तर पहिले हानेकै गैडाले पछि पनि एक दिन घरमै आएर भस्मिएको घटना सम्भन्दा अहिले पनि भस्किन्छन् ।

चर्पीको अभावसँग गाँसिएको जुठीमायाको घायल जीवन चितवनको गर्दी-१ मा पर्ने अमिलिया बस्तीका ६० घरपरिवारका लागि असामान्य हाँडन । गाउँका कुनै पनि घरमा अहिलेसम्म चर्पी नबनेको सुन्नेलाई भने आश्चर्य लाग्नसक्छ । अर्भैसम्म बस्तीका खोल्साहरू र निकुञ्जको जङ्गल नै यहाँका खुला चर्पी बनेका छन् ।

“यहाँ चेतनाको कमीले चर्पी बनाउन कोही मान्दैनन् । जनसेवा अभियान नामको संस्थाले बनाइदिएका तीनवटा चर्पीमा हामीले अरू तीनबाट थपेर छ वटा सार्वजनिक चर्पी पुर्याएका थियौं तिनको पनि अहिले उपयोग भएको छैन”, अमिलियाका पूर्व वडाअध्यक्ष लालबहादुर विक भन्छन् ।

गाउँ सफा राख्न कोही नतम्सने हो भने यहाँ फेरि अर्को जुठीमाया देखा पर्नेछन् ।

वर्गीकृत राष्ट्रिय दैनिक, २०६२ असार १५

नदी किनारमा दिसा पिसाबदेखि लिएर अन्य प्रदूषण रोक्नका लागि बिहान १० बजेदेखि बेलुका ५ बजेसम्म कर्मचारी स्वटाएको कुरा भरतपुर नगरपालिका समाज कल्याण शाखाका एक अधिकृतले बताए । दिसा बस्न लागेकालाई लड्नी लिएर मात्र चौकीदारले हटाएर समस्या समाधान नहुने उनलाई लागेको छ ।

भानु माध्यमिक विद्यालयबाट प्रवेशिका परीक्षा दिई बसेका सुलभ नेपाली लीलाचोकमा डेरामा बस्दै आएका छन् । घरबेटी कहाँ शौचालयको राम्रो व्यवस्था नभएकाले उनी पनि शौचालयका लागि नदी किनारमा नै दौडने गर्छन् । उनी भन्छन् “के गर्ने घरबेटीले कचकच गर्छन्, प्रदूषण हुने थाहा भएपनि नदी किनारमै दौडनुपर्छ ।”

सुलभ मात्र होइन सर्लाही घर बताउने नन्दलाल गुप्ता पनि नगरवन नजिकको बगरमा सधैं दिसा बस्न जाने गर्छन् । घर साहुले शौचालयको राम्रो बन्दावस्त नगरेको हुँदा नारायणी किनार जानु परेको उनको गुनासो छ ।

भरतपुर नगरपालिकाले नदीमा बगरको प्रदूषण हटाउने प्रयास गरिराखेको छ, तर नगरपालिकाको मात्र प्रयासले समस्याको समाधान हुँदैन । यसका लागि स्थानीय बासिन्दा, नागरिक समाज, विभिन्न संघ संस्थाका प्रतिनिधि मिलेर अधि बढ्नुपर्ने धारणा नगरपालिकाका अधिकृतको रहेको छ ।

पारदर्शी राष्ट्रिय दैनिक, २०१२ जेठ २७

शौचालय बन्दैछ नारायणी नदी किनार

सुजना अर्याल

धार्मिक ऐतिहासिक र पर्यटकीय दृष्टिकोणले महत्वपूर्ण मानिएको नारायणी नदी किनार नदीको छेउछाउमा बस्ने मानिसहरूका लागि सार्वजनिक शौचालयसरह भएको छ । त्यहाँका बासिन्दाहरूले नदी किनारमा दिसा पिसाव गर्नाले नदी दिनप्रतिदिन फोहोर हुँदै गएको छ ।

मिरमिर उज्यालो भडरहेको थियो, सुकमाया गुरुङ प्लाष्टिकको बोतलमा पानी लिएर नारायणी किनारतिर लाग्तिन् । वगरको ढुङ्गाको छेल पारि दुःकुक बसिन् । उनका श्रीमान् सूर्यवहादुर बाहेक उनीहरूका छ जना छोरीहरूलाई दिसा लागे जाने ठाउँ त्यही किनार हो । सार्वजनिक शौचालय भएको उनीलाई थाहा छ तर पैसाको अभावमा नदीको किनार धाउनु परेको उनी बताउँछिन् । “पैसा भएपनि रातको समयमा शौचालय बन्द हुन्छ अनि कहाँ जानु ?” उनी प्रश्न गर्छिन् ।

सुकमायाको परिवार मात्र होइन, नदी किनारमा होटेल चलाएर बस्ने रामकुमार मानन्धरको घरमा पनि शौचालय छैन । उनका १२ वर्षीया छोरी रजनी प्रश्न गर्छिन् “हाम्रो घरमा शौचालय छैन अनि कहाँ जाने त नारायणी नगए ?”

स्थानीय दियालो क्लबमा सार्वजनिक शौचालय छ । विहान ढिलो खुल्ने र बेलुका छिटो बन्द हुने कारणले सार्वजनिक शौचालयहरूको आवश्यकता अनुसार प्रयोग गर्न नपाएको गुनासो त्यहाँका बासिन्दाहरूको छ । प्रायः धेरैको शौचालय जाने समय एउटै हुन्छ । धेरै समय कुर्नु परेकाले पनि कतिपयले शौचालय प्रयोग गर्न छाडेको बताए । “एउटा भित्र पस्यो कि घण्टौं लगाईदिन्छ । कुर्दा-कुर्दा हैरान भएकाले अहिले त्यहाँ जाने छाडें । स्थानीय बासिन्दा शान्ति विक गुनासो गर्छिन् ।

सार्वजनिक शौचालय प्रयोग गरेवापत प्रत्येक परिवारले मासिक ३० रूपैयाँ तिर्नुपर्छ । तर दिनहुँ तिनले दिसा गरे दुई रूपैयाँ तिर पुग्ने व्यवस्था भएको लीलाचोकमा रहेको सार्वजनिक शौचालयका कुरुवा सुकवहादुर कुमालले बताए ।

२०१५ सालदेखि सञ्चालन हुँदै आएको सो शौचालयमा सात कोठा छन् । पहिलेको तुलनामा अहिले सो शौचालय प्रयोग गर्नेहरूको संख्यामा निकै कमी आएको बताउँछन् कुरुवा कुमाल । विहानदेखि दिसापिसाव नदी किनारमा गर्न नदिने चौकीदारले अहिले नगरपालिकाले व्यवस्था नमिलाएको नदी किनारमा दिसा गर्नेको संख्या बढेको र शौचालय प्रयोग गर्नेको संख्यामा कमी आएको हुनसक्ने कुरुवा कुमाललाई लागेको छ । “त्यनिमात्र होइन, सार्वजनिक शौचालयमा पैसा तिर्नुपर्छ, सात-आठ महिना अघिदेखिको पैसा बाँकी छ, माग्यो भने आउने छाड्छन्” कुमालले गुनासो गरे ।

नारायणी किनारमा रहेका ८० घरधुरीमध्ये जम्मा १८ घरहरूमा मात्र शौचालयको व्यवस्था छ र बाँकी घरमा एकाध घरमूलीबाहेक अधिकांश सदस्यहरू नारायणी नदी किनारमा नै दिसा पिसाव गर्न जाने गर्छन् ।

नारायणी किनार टोल सुधार समितिका अध्यक्ष रेशमलाल कुँवरलाई नदी प्रदूषित बन्दै गएकोमा दुःख लागेको छ । तर सुकुम्वासीको नाउँमा सुकुम्वासीहरूले रजाई चलाएको गुनासो उनको छ ।

सार्वजनिक शौचालयको व्यवस्था भएपछि नदी किनार सफा भएको तर डेरामा बस्नेहरूले प्रदूषित बनाउँदै गएको किनारामा घर भएकाहरू पनि जान थालेको बताउँछन् अध्यक्ष कुँवर ।

सानुमाया परिवार पनि सुकुम्वासी टोलमा बस्न थालेको पाँच वर्ष भयो । पहिले पैसा तिरिने सार्वजनिक शौचालय प्रयोग गर्ने गर्थे तर पैसा नतिरी सबैले नदी किनारमा जान थालेपछि उनी पनि सार्वजनिक शौचालय जान छोडिन् । उनी भन्छिन् “सबै नदी किनारमा नै जान थाले, हाम्रो परिवारमात्र पैसा तिरिने के जानु, हामी पनि जानौं अहिले ।”

जनवारको आक्रमणबाट बच्न उनी पनि अँध्यारोमा जङ्गल पस्नुको साटो घर मुनिको खोलामा जाने गरेका छन् ।

माडीको केन्द्रबिन्दु वसन्तपुर बजारबाट हिँडेको लगभग एक घण्टापछि पुगिन्छ मानबहादुरको गाउँ शीतलपुरमा । उनको घरपनि जङ्गल सीमासँगै जोडिएको छ । त्यहाँका ६०/६१ घरधुरी गर्दीको अमेलियाका बासिन्दा जस्तै वर्षेभरि जङ्गली जनवारको त्रासमा बस्दछन् ।

“जङ्गली जनवारको आक्रमण गरेर मान्छेनै मारिन थालेपछि मैले भने पक्की चर्पी बनाएको छु ।” शीतलपुरका दुर्गाबहादुर भुजेलको कार्यले भने गाउँमा केही आशाको संकेत देखाएको छ । उनीसँगै सीता भुजेलको पनि पक्की चर्पी बनाइन् । यी दुई घरले बनाएपछि अर्का छिमेकी बुद्धिबहादुर क्षेत्री पनि चर्पी बनाउने सुरसारमा छन् ।

माडी वरूवाका शिक्षक चन्द्रमणि महताको कथन छ “एक त आर्थिक अभाव छ, अर्कातर्फ चर्पीको महत्त्व पनि थाहा छैन त्यसैले नबनेका हुन् ।” तर जङ्गली जनवारले आक्रमण गरेपछि ज्यानै खतरा र बाँचेमा पनि उपचारमा लाग्ने खर्च चर्पी बनाए हट्छ भन्ने कुरा बुझाउन सके चर्पी बन्न गाह्रो नहुने ठम्याई उनको छ । यति मात्रै होइन व्यवस्थित चर्पी हुने हो भने धेरै प्रकारका सुरूवा रोगहरूले सताउने सम्भावना पनि रहँदैन ।

माडीका अन्य धनी व्यक्तिहरूले पनि सुरूमा चर्पी बनाएका थिएनन् । बाहिरबाट जाने पाहुनाले खोजेपछि उनीहरूले पनि चर्पीको आवश्यकता महशुस गरे, अनि बनाउन थाले ।

चितवनमा सन् २००९ सम्म घर-घरमा चर्पी हुनका लागि प्रत्येक महिना जिल्लाका सबै गाविस र नगरपालिकाका प्रत्येक वडामा ६ वटा चर्पी बनाउनु पर्ने हुन्छ । जिल्लाका सुगम क्षेत्रमा यो कुरा त्यति असहज नहोला, तर माडी जस्तो विकट क्षेत्रका अमेलिया र शीतलपुर जस्तो गाउँमा भने सजिलै बन्न सक्ने अवस्था देखिएन । सहूलियत र चेतना अभिवृद्धिका कार्यक्रमहरू यस्ता क्षेत्रमा बढी गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकता सरकारी तथा गैरसरकारी संस्था र समुदायका सचेत व्यक्तिले महसुस गर्नपर्ने हुन्छ ।

चितवन पोष्ट, २०६२ असार १५

बाघ भालुको त्रासभन्दा धन र ज्ञानको अभाव ठूलो

रमेशकुमार पौडेल

सन् २००९ सम्म चितवनलाई पूर्णरूपमा सरसफाइयुक्त जिल्ला घोषणा गर्न विभिन्न संघ संस्था र सरकारी निकायहरू लागिपरेका छन् । तर अभाव र अज्ञानतामा बाँचिरहेका जिल्लाको विकट क्षेत्र माडीको ओलिया र शीतलपुरका बासिन्दानर्फ समयमै ध्यान नपुऱ्याउने हो भने “सन् दुई हजार नौ चितवन हेर्न जाऔं” भन्ने नारासहित सुरु भएको यो अभियान “हाती आयो, हाती आयो फुस्सा” भने जस्तै हुन बेर लाग्दैन ।

माडीको गर्दी गाविस वडा नं. १ मा पर्दछ अमेलिया गाउँ । विकट माडीको पनि विकट गाउँ भनेर यसलाई चिनाइन्छ । अगाडि सर्लक्क रीठ खोला बगेको छ । गाउँलेको घरको करसावारी विश्व प्रसिद्ध शाही चितवन राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्जसँग जोडिएको छ । वर्षातु सुरुभएपछि खोला उर्तेर अमेलिया टापुमा परिणत हुन्छ । बाघ, भालु, गैंडा जस्ता जङ्गली जनावरको आक्रमणमा पर्ने त्रास सधैं रहन्छ । अन्दाजी ६० वर्षीया जुठीमाया वि.क.को दाहिने खुट्टामा आठ वर्ष अघि गैंडाले हानेर भएको घाउ अझ निको भएको छैन । एका बिहानै दिसा गर्न जङ्गल छेउ पुग्दा उनलाई गैंडाले आक्रमण गरेको थियो । फेरि पनि जनावरको आक्रमणमा परिने त्रास उनको मनबाट हटेको छैन, तर दिसा गर्न जङ्गल छिर्ने बानी पनि छुटेको छैन ।

“यत्रो जङ्गल भएपछि कंका लागि खर्च गरेर चर्पी बनाउने भन्ने भावना गाउँलेमा छ ।” स्थानीय रविन श्रेष्ठ सुनाउँछन् । २१ सालदेखि बस्ती बसेको अमेलियामा एक पटक तीनसय घरधुरी थिए । बाढी र जनावरको पिरोलाले गर्दा धेरैजसो अन्यत्र बसाइँ सरे । यतिवेला ६५ घरधुरी त्यहाँ छन् । तर चर्पी भने कसैको घरमा छैन ।

“बनाए पनि मुसाले माटो खोलेर एक दुई दिनमै पुरिदिन्छ, त्यसैले कच्ची भए पनि चर्पी बनाउन नसकिएको हो ।” अमेलियाका शुकुवहादुर श्रेष्ठ भन्छन् ।

जनसेवा अभियान नामक गैरसरकारी संस्थाले दुई वर्ष अघि गाउँमा तीनवटा सार्वजनिक शौचालय बनाइ दिएको थियो । तर त्यो बनाउन मात्र भयो कसैले प्रयोग गरेन भन्दछन् गर्दी गाउँ विकास समिति वडा नं. १ का पूर्व वडाध्यक्ष लालबहादुर वि.क. ।

समुदायमा एकातिर चर्पी कंका लागि बनाउने भन्ने चेतनाको अभाव छ भने अर्कातिर गरीबी पनि समस्या बनेको छ । घर अगाडिको खोला र घर पछाडिको निकुञ्जको वनले चर्पीको आवश्यकता पूरा गरिदिएको छ । भले यो सुविधा प्रयोग गर्दा ज्यानकै बाजी लगाउन किन नपरास् ।

गर्दीसँग जोडिएको माडी उपत्यकाको अर्को गाउँ विकास समिति बघौडाको वडा नं. ४ शीतलपुर गाउँको अवस्था पनि योभन्दा भिन्न छैन । दिसा बस्न जाँदा सोही ठाउँमा छेडगुरा महतोलाई भालुले आक्रमण गरेर नाकै लगादियो । नाक गुमाएका छेडगुरा अचेल अँध्यारो भयो भने मात्र दिसा गर्न जङ्गल पस्दैनन् । चर्पी बनाउनुको साटो जनावरको आक्रमणबाट जोगिन राती सकसम्म दिसा रोकेर राख्न जुक्ति अपनाएका छन् उनले । सकिँदै सकिँएन भने साथी लिएर खेतमा गई सानो खाल्डो खनी पुरेर हिँड्ने उपाय पनि उनी अवलम्बन गर्दछन् ।

छेडगुराकै गाउँका मानबहादुर वि.क.की श्रीमती दिसा गर्न जङ्गल पस्दा बाघको आक्रमणमा मारिइन् । उनले पनि चर्पी बनाउने आवश्यकता अझै लानेको छैनन्, जबकि श्रीमतीको अभाव महसूस गरी भर्खरमात्र दोस्रो विवाह गरेका छन् ।

सरसफाइमा जुटेका छन् चण्डीभञ्ज्याङवासीहरू

पवित्रा ढकाल

आफ्ना सबै काम घन्दाहरूलाई छोडेर भएपनि चण्डीभञ्ज्याङका मानिसहरू यतिबेला आफ्नो गाउँघरको सरसफाइ कार्यमा जुटेका छन् । फोहोरमैला र फोहोरपानीको कारण गाउँमा विभिन्न किसिमका महामारी फैलन थालेपछि त्यसबाट बच्न उनीहरू सो कार्यमा जुटेका हुन् ।

चण्डीभञ्ज्याङ चितवन जिल्लाको अति दुर्गम गाउँ हो । यहाँ पुग्न सडकबाट डेढ घण्टा हिँड्नुपर्दछ । यस गाउँमा तीन चार वर्ष अघिसम्म स्वानेपानीको अभाव हुनुका साथै गाउँलेहरूले जथाभावी दिसापिसाब गर्नाले त्यस गाउँका मानिसहरू धेरैचोटि रोगको शिकार बनेका थिए । अहिले त्यही गाउँमा स्वानेपानीको सुविधा पुग्नुका साथै घर घरमा शौचालय पनि निर्माण गरिएको छ । सप्रोस नेपाल र गाउँलेहरूको संयुक्त प्रयासमा शौचालय र स्वानेपानीको सुविधा पुगेको चण्डीभञ्ज्याङ-८ निवासी भरत मल्ल ठकुरी बताउँछन् । उनका अनुसार तीन चार घण्टाको बाटो हिंडेर पानी लिन जानुपर्ने वाध्यताबाट गाउँलेहरू मुक्त भएका छन् ।

गरीबी अशिक्षा र जनचेतनाको अभावका कारण पहिले धेरैचोटि रोगको शिकार बन्नुपर्दाको पीडाले नै आफूहरू सरसफाइ कार्यमा जुटेका उनको भनाइ छ । “पहिले विहान भालेको डाकसँगै दिसा गर्न भाडीतिर दौडनुपथ्यो, उज्याला भएपछि पुग्दा अरूले देख्ला भन्ने डर हुन्थ्यो । राति नै भाडितिर दिसापिसाब गर्न जाँदा कहिले लडेर चोटपटक लाग्ने त कहिले विषालु सर्पले टाँकर बिरामी हुने समस्या थियो, अहिले भने यस्ता समस्याबाट छुटकारा पाएका छौं” उनले भने । भरत मल्ल एक पौरस्वी कृषक मात्र नभई सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता पनि हुन् । उनी गाउँघर, आँगन, चाँक र गल्लीहरू सफा राख्न गाउँलेहरूलाई सचेत बनाउँदै हिँड्छन् । उनका नेतृत्वले गर्दा नै चण्डीभञ्ज्याङ सफा र रमाइलो भएको हो ।

चण्डीभञ्ज्याङको पास्वाबाट बसाई सरी सडक छेउछाउबाट ससाना घर बनाई बसेका चण्डीभञ्ज्याङ-६ कालीखोलाबाट मानिसहरूले पनि आ-आफ्नो हैसियतअनुसार शौचालय बनाउने काम गरेका छन् । कालीखोला-६ निवासी भुपेन्द्र प्रजा सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता हुन् । उनको गाउँमा पनि गाउँलेहरूकै सक्रियतामा शौचालय बनाउने काम भएको छ । यस गाउँमा व्यक्तिगत मात्र नभई यात्रुहरूका लागि सार्वजनिक शौचालय समेत निजी स्रोतबाट निर्माण गरेको उनी बताउँछन् । गाउँलेहरू मिली देउसी भैला खेली उठाएको पैसा र गाउँलेको श्रमदानबाट नै उक्त सार्वजनिक शौचालय निर्माण गरेको त्यहाँका बासिन्दाहरू स्वीकार्छन् ।

सवारी साधनहरू जथाभावी रोक्यो यात्रुहरूले दिसापिसाब गरिदिनाले गाउँमा विभिन्न किसिमका रोगहरूले मानिसहरूलाई आक्रमण गरेपछि गाउँलेहरू आफैँ सचेत भई सार्वजनिक शौचालय निर्माण गरेको प्रजाले बताए । उनी भन्छन् “जुनसुकै कामका लागि पनि अर्काको भर पर्ने गर्नाले नै हामी नेपालीहरू पछाडि परेको हो, त्यसैले आफूले गर्न सक्ने काम आफैँले गर्नु भन्ने अर्काको मुख ताक्नु पर्दैन ।”

साँच्चै भुपेन्द्र प्रजा र भरत मल्लले जस्तै हरेक नेपालीहरूले आ-आफ्नो गाउँघरको सरसफाइमा ध्यान दिने हो भने सुन्दर नेपाल अझ सुन्दर हुन्थ्यो कि ?

पारदर्शी राष्ट्रिय दैनिक, २०६२ जेठ २५

पुलचोकको सार्वजनिक शौचालय सफाइको पर्याइमा

सुमन गैरे

भरतपुर नगरपालिका क्षेत्रभित्र रहेको सार्वजनिक शौचालयमध्ये सबैभन्दा बढी भीड लाग्ने नारायणगढ, पुलचोकस्थित सार्वजनिक शौचालय सरसफाइको पर्याइमा रहेको छ ।

स्थानीय श्यामबहादुर पन्तको जग्गा भाडामा लिएर २०४५ सालमा भरतपुर नगरपालिकाले निर्माण गरेको सो शौचालय उचित सरसफाइ र व्यवस्थापनको अभावले दुर्गन्धित भएको छ ।

भन्-भन् भिङ्गा भन्किरहेको सो शौचालयमा पिसाब फेर्दा एक रूपैयाँ र दिसा गर्दा दुई रूपैयाँ तिर्नुपर्छ । पूर्व-पश्चिमबाट आएका गाडीहरू रोकिने पुलचोकमा रहेको शौचालयमा प्रायः जसो बसका यात्रुहरू जानै गर्दछन् । अहिले बसहरू पारस बसपार्कमा रोकिने थालेपछि सो शौचालय प्रयोग गर्नेको संख्या घटेको छ ।

नारायणी नदी किनारमा रहेको उक्त शौचालयको सरसफाइका लागि भरतपुर नगरपालिकाले स्थानीय लालबहादुर श्रेष्ठलाई चौकीदारको रूपमा खटाएको छ । विगत सात वर्षदेखि शौचालयको सरसफाइ र रेखदेख गर्दै आएका श्रेष्ठले मासिक तलब पाउँदैनन् । “नगरपालिकाले तलब दिदैन, जति पैसा उठ्छ त्यति लिन्छु” उनले भने । शौचालय जीर्ण अवस्थामा छ, वर्षातमा पानी चुहेर दिसा-पिसाब गर्न नसकिने चौकीदार श्रेष्ठको गुनासो छ ।

भरतपुर नगरपालिकाले उक्त शौचालय सरसफाइका लागि आवश्यक कमिकल (फिनेल) उपलब्ध नगराएको चौकीदार श्रेष्ठको थप गुनासो छ । “फिनेलको के कुरा गर्ने हात धुने साबुन त दिदैन नगरपालिकाले ।” श्रेष्ठले यो सम्वाददाताको जिज्ञासामा भने ।

शौचालयमा राख्ने हरपेक्स-फिनेल जस्ता कमिकलको अभावमा सो शौचालय दुर्गन्धित भएको छ । “पानी त दिन-दिनै हाल्छ, हरपेक नभएपछि दुर्गन्ध आडरहन्छ । जम्मा भएको रकम घर स्वर्च चलाउन ठिक्क हुन्छ, कसरी किन्ने औषधी ?” चौकीदार श्रेष्ठले प्रश्न गरे ।

पुरुषको शौचालय खुल्ला र महिलाको शौचालयमा ताला लागेको हुन्छ । किन महिला शौचालयमा ताला लगाएको ? भन्ने जिज्ञासामा चौकीदार श्रेष्ठ भने “आवारा केटाहरूले केटी लिएर शौचालय जान थाले, मदिना संवन् गर्न र चुरोट-विँडी सल्काउन थाले र बन्द गरेको हुँ, महिलाहरू आएपछि ताला खोलीदिन्छु ।”

नगरपालिकाले सो शौचालय सञ्चालन गर्नका लागि मासिक चार हजार भाडा तिरेको भरतपुर नगरपालिकाका कार्यकारी अधिकृत शिवदत्त भट्टराईले बताउनु भयो । भरतपुर नगरक्षेत्रभित्र पुलचोक, पोखरा बसपार्क, सब्जीमण्डी, पारस बसपार्क र लीलाचोकमा सार्वजनिक शौचालय सञ्चालित छन् । सन् २००९ सम्म चितवनलाई सरसफाइमा नमूना जिल्ला घोषणा गर्ने अवधारणा सार्वजनिक भएको सन्दर्भमा भरतपुर नगरपालिकाले नगरको सरसफाइमा विशेष ध्यान दिनुपर्ने पर्यवक्षकहरूको राय छ ।

वर्गीकृत राष्ट्रिय दैनिक, २०६२ जेठ २६

बताउनुहुन्छ । 'प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा समुदायको अगुवाइमा कार्यक्रम अगाडि बढाइयो भने लक्ष्यमा पुगिएला, विद्यालय केन्द्रित सरसफाइ अभियानले यो कुराको पुष्टि गरेको छ ।' उहाँले विद्यालय सरसफाइ अभियान बच्चाबाट बच्चामा सूचना पठाउने अवधारणा भएकोले सफल भएको बताउनुभयो । बच्चालाई जस्तै घरको मुख्य सरसफाइको दायित्व भएका महिला (आमा) लाई यस विषयमा समेत सचेत गराउनुपर्ने न्यौपाने बताउनुहुन्छ ।

युनिसेफ नेपालका चितवन प्रतिनिधि रूद्र खड्का विद्यालयबाट अभियानलाई अगाडि बढाइएको भए पनि सम्बन्धित गाविसले बेहोनुपर्ने आर्थिक भार वहन गर्न नसकेकोले समस्या आएको बताउनुहुन्छ । उहाँको भनाइ छ, 'वर्तमान दरले सन् २००९ मा चितवनलाई सरसफाइयुक्त नमूना जिल्ला बनाउने कुरा चुनौतीपूर्ण छ । यसका लागि सरसफाइ क्षेत्रमा लागेकाहरूले फेरि एकपटक निधार खुम्च्याएर सोच्ने बेला आएको छ ।' उहाँको गरीब तथा भूमिहीन सुकुम्बासीलाई लक्षित गरेर छुट्टै कार्यक्रम ल्याउनुपर्ने पनि बताउनुभयो ।

विद्यालयको सरसफाइको ३३ प्रतिशत सम्बन्धित गाविस वा नगरपालिकाले, ३३ प्रतिशत स्थानीय जनसमुदायले र ३३ प्रतिशत युनिसेफले उपलब्ध गराउने प्रावधान छ । सरसफाइ अभियान यही अवस्थामा मात्र सञ्चालन हुँदै गयो भने चितवनले लक्षित सफलता हासिल गर्न नसक्ने खड्का बताउनुहुन्छ ।

सन् २००९ मा सरसफाइयुक्त नमूना जिल्ला घोषणा गर्ने प्रतिबद्धता व्यक्त गरिसकिएको भए पनि जिल्लामा हालसम्म कति घरधुरी शौचालयविहीन छन् भन्ने तथ्याङ्क पाइँदैन । जिल्लाका ३६ गाविसमध्ये १८ गाविसमा सरसफाइ चक्रकोष स्थापना गरिसकिएको भए पनि गरीबीको सूचकाङ्क तयार नभएकाले ऋण प्रवाह हुन सकेको छैन ।

गएको भदौमा गरिएको यो घोषणालाई सन् २००९ सम्म पूरा गर्न जिल्लामा प्रतिमहिना तीन सय १९ घरधुरीलाई स्वानेपानी सुविधा थप गर्दै जानुपर्नेछ भने प्रत्येक महिना तीन सय ४१ चर्पी थप गर्दै त्यसको समुचित प्रयोग गर्दै जानुपर्छ । ३६ गाविस र दुई नगरपालिका रहेको चितवनमा सन् २००० को जनगणनाअनुसार चार लाख ७२ हजार जनसंख्या र ८७ हजार घरधुरी रहेका छन् ।

जिल्ला विकास समिति चितवनका स्थानीय विकास अधिकारी विनोदप्रकाश सिंह एउटा मात्र संस्थाले गर्छु भनेर यो लक्ष्य पूरा गर्न नसकिने धारणा राख्दै वर्तमान वृद्धिदरले लक्ष्यमा पुग्न नसकिने बताउनुहुन्छ । उहाँको भनाइ छ, "वर्तमान दरले सन् २००९ मा चितवनलाई सरसफाइयुक्त नमूना जिल्ला बनाउने कुरा चुनौतीपूर्ण छ । यसका लागि सरसफाइ क्षेत्रमा लागेकाहरूले फेरि एकपटक निधार खुम्च्याएर साच्चेबेला आएको छ ।"

उहाँले गरीब तथा भूमिहीन सुकुम्बासीलाई लक्षित गरेर छुट्टै कार्यक्रम ल्याउनुपर्ने पनि बताउनुभयो ।

अन्वपूर्ण पोष्ट, २०६२ जेठ १५

चितवनमा स्वास्थ्यका लागि सरसफाइ अभियान

चिन्तामणि पौडेल

घरघरमा चर्पी तिनको समुचित प्रयोग । खानेपानीको सहज उपलब्धता पूर्ण सरसफाइ । सन् २००९ मा चितवन बन्ला नमूना जिल्ला ? यो प्रश्नको उत्तर दिन अहिले चितवन जिल्लामा खानेपानी र सरसफाइको क्षेत्रमा काम गर्ने सम्पूर्ण गैरसरकारी संघसंस्था, सरकारी निकायलाई हम्महम्म परेको छ । कागजमा काम देखाएर पोल्टी भनेहरूलाई भन्ने समस्या परेको छ । दुर्गम ठाउँमा चर्पी नबन्ने, बनेका चर्पीलाई पनि गोदामका रूपमा प्रयोग गर्ने प्रवृत्तिले गर्दा भन्ने गाढो परेको छ । घरअगाडि नै धाराको टुटी भएर पनि पानी लिन एक घण्टा टाढा जानुपर्ने अवस्था देखावटी विकासले यथार्थलाई छर्लङ्ग्याएको छ । सार्वजनिक शौचालय नजिकै गएर पनि शौचालयभन्दा बाहिर दिसापिसाव गर्ने प्रवृत्तिलाई निर्मूल पार्ने स्वास्थ्य क्षेत्रमा काम गर्नेदेखि जनचेतनामूलक कामगर्ने संघसंस्थालाई पनि एकपटक आफ्नो काम र त्यसको उपादेयताका विषयमा सोच्नुपर्ने बनाएको छ ।

स्वास्थ्यका लागि पहिले आवश्यकता सरसफाइ भएको ठहर गरी सन् २०१५ सम्म सहस्राब्दी विकास लक्ष्य पूरा गर्ने सन् २००२ को दक्षिण अफ्रिकाको जोहानेसबर्गमा सम्पन्न विश्वशिखर सम्मेलनमा नेपालले पनि हस्ताक्षर गरेको छ । सन् २०१५ सम्म सरसफाइको क्षेत्रमा सुविधविहीनको संख्या आधा घटाउने र २०१७ मा सम्पूर्ण नेपालीलाई सरसफाइको सुविधा दिने प्रतिबद्धता सरकारले गरेको छ ।

नेपालको पहिले सरसफाइयुक्त जिल्ला बनाउने घोषणा गरेका छन् । सरकारी लक्ष्यभन्दा छ वर्ष पहिले नमूना जिल्ला बनाउने चितवनमा काम गर्ने संस्थाहरूको उक्त संकल्पमा जिल्ला विकास समितिको मानहतमा युनिसेफले २२ वटा गाविस र ग्रामीण गरीबी निवारण कार्यक्रमले चारवटा गाविसमा सरसफाइ घुम्ती चक्रकोष एवं विविध कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गर्दैआएको छ । नेपाल रेडक्रस सोसाइटीले पाँचवटा गाविसमा खानेपानी र सरसफाइ तथा विद्यालय सफाइ अभियानको अगुवाइ गर्दै आएको छ ।

नेपाल स्वास्थ्यको लागि पानी (नेवा) ले तीनवटा गाविसमा आफ्नो कार्यक्रमलाई जोडतोडले अगाडि बढाएको जनाएको छ भने चितवनका दुवै नगरपालिकाहरू आफ्नै पहलमा सरसफाइतर्फ नगरपालिकालाई नमूना बनाउने अभियानमा छन् । त्यसबाहेक गाविसहरूले आफ्नै बजेटमा, शाही चितवन राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्जको मध्यवर्ती व्यवस्थापन समितिले आफ्ना उपभोक्ताहरूलाई, खानेपानी तथा सरसफाइ डिभिजन कार्यालयले ग्रामीण क्षेत्रमा र खानेपानी संस्थानले सहरी क्षेत्रमा आफ्नो सेवालाई अगाडि बढाएर सरसफाइ अभियानलाई टेवा दिएका छन् । त्यसबाहेक विभिन्न गैरसरकारी संघसंस्थाहरू, जिल्ला शिक्षा कार्यालयले पनि आफ्नो प्रतिष्ठनको विषय २००९ को लक्ष्यलाई बताएका छन् ।

चितवन सरसफाइयुक्त नमूना जिल्ला बनाउने अभियानमा सघाउ पुऱ्याउने काममा रत्ननगर नगरपालिका क्षेत्र र स्वैरहनी गाविसको पर्सबजार क्षेत्रमा सञ्चालित साना सहरी खानेपानी तथा सरसफाइ आयोजनाको भूमिका पनि कम आँकन मिल्दैन । यी आयोजनाहरूले आफ्नो वितरण क्षेत्रभित्रका गरीब परिवारलाई खानेपानी सुविधासँगै शौचालय निर्माण अनुदान दिँदै आएका छन् । तर पनि भूमिहीन सुकुम्बासी परिवारले भने चाहेर पनि त्यो सुविधा उपयोग गर्न पाएका छैनन् । यति हुँदाहुँदै पनि सन् २००९ मा चितवनलाई सरसफाइयुक्त नमूना जिल्ला बनाउन सकिने हो वा हाँडन अहिले किटानी गर्न सकिने अवस्था भने छैन । यो सामूहिक प्रतिबद्धतालाई पूरा गर्न सबैले आफ्नो कामलाई बढी रफ्तारमा अगाडि बढाउनुपर्ने धारणा यस क्षेत्रमा लागूकाहरूको छ ।

नेपाल रेडक्रस सोसाइटी चितवन शाखाका सभापति हरिप्रसाद न्यौपाने जुनसुकै लक्ष्य प्राप्तिका लागि पनि युवावर्गको महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका हुने भएकाले यो अभियानमा पनि युवावर्गलाई परिचालन गर्नुपर्ने

गरेका छन् । महिलाहरू मात्र रहेको सो समितिले मादकपदार्थ सेवन गर्नेहरूको निगरानी गरी कसैले खाएको पाइएमा उसलाई दण्ड र जरिवाना गर्ने गर्दछन् । खासगरी मादकपदार्थको सेवनबाट महिला तथा बालबालिकामार्फत गरिने मानसिक र शारीरिक यातना, परिवारको आम्दानीको स्रोतको दुरुपयोग र स्वास्थ्यसम्बन्धी समस्यालाई ध्यान राखेर यो अभियानको थालनी गरिएको उनीहरू बताउँछन् । अन्य समुदायका मानिसहरूसमेत यहाँ आएर मादकपदार्थ खाएपछि गाउँ नै मादकपदार्थ खानेहरूको जमघट हुने थलोका रूपमा चिनिने थालेपछि समुदायलाई मादक पदार्थमुक्त बनाउन जुमुराएको स्थानीय शर्मिला राई बताउँछन् ।

सरसफाइ कार्यक्रम सञ्चालनका लागि गठन भएको सामुदायिक वातावरण सरसफाइ समितिका अध्यक्ष अर्जुन राईका अनुसार महिला समूहले घर, आँगन, बाटाघाटा सफा राख्ने मात्र नभई समुदायलाई अनुशासित राख्न पनि ठूलो भूमिका निर्वाह गरिरहेको छ । “पहिले-पहिले खुल्ला ठाउँमा दिसा गर्नेलाई कंटाकंटीले सिट्टी बजाएर भगाउँथे, आज मादकपदार्थ सेवन गर्नेलाई महिलाहरूले तह लगाउँछन् । सावजनिक रूपमा वेडज्जत हुने डरले मानिसहरूमा मादकपदार्थको लत छुट्न थालेको छ । यसबाट समुदायलाई पूर्ण सरसफाइयुक्त बनाउन निर्धारण गरिएका आधारहरूसमेत पूरा हुने वातावरण सिर्जना भएको छ,” उनी भन्छन् ।

सरसफाइ कार्यक्रमबाट समुदायमा सुधार गर्नुपर्ने ठाउँ अरू पनि रहेछन् भन्ने कुरा सिकेको अनुभव महिला समितिकी अध्यक्ष कमला भट्टराईको छ । “पहिले-पहिले जँड्याहा लाग्नेको अत्याचार सहनुलाई महिलाहरूले आफ्नो कर्म सम्बन्धे भने सरसफाइ क्षेत्रमा हासिल गरेको उपलब्धिले हामीले मिलेर काम गरेको खण्डमा जे पनि गर्न सकिनेरहेछ भन्ने आत्मविश्वास थपिदियो । यसैले गर्दा महिलाहरूलाई सङ्गठित गरेर दिसाभन्दा फोहोर कुरा अर्थात् जँड्याहा बानी हटाउन हामीले सफलता पायौं,” उनी भन्छन् । महिलाहरूले सुरु गरेको यो अभियानले गर्दा आफ्ना आँखा खुलेका स्थानीय कर्णबहादुर वि.क. बताउँछन् । “जाँडरक्सीले तन, धन र मन त विग्रिने नै भयो, सबैका अगाडि सजाय भोग्नुपर्दा वेडज्जत पनि हुने भएकाले मैले त खान नै छाडिदिँएँ,” उनी भन्छन् । तीनपटक महिला समूहको कारवाहीमा परेर आफूमा यो सुद्धि पलाएको कुरा स्वीकार गर्न भने उनी हिचक्याउँदैनन् । मादकपदार्थ विरोधी अभियान सुरु भएपछि आफ्ना बुवाको कूलत छुटेकोमा १६ वर्षीय धनबहादुर विश्वकर्मा ज्यादै खुशी देखिन्छन् । “पहिले-पहिले बुवाले जाँडरक्सी खाएर घर-व्यवहारको मतलब नगरेपछि आफूले स्कूलको साटो मेलापात र घाँसदाउरा गर्नुपर्थ्यो, अब त स्कूल जान पाइएला कि ?” भविष्यप्रति आशावादी हुँदै उनी भन्छन् । बुवाले रक्सी खाएर घर आई हाँहल्ला गरेर कति रात न सुत्ने नपाएको बताउने सीता पुरी आमाहरूको प्रयासले गर्दा अब त्यस्ता दिन भोग्नु नपर्ने भयो भनेर ढक्क छिन् ।

समुदायमा आएको चेतनाले गर्दा यहाँका महिलाको आर्थिक स्थितिमा समेत सुधारका संकेतहरू देखापरेका छन् । पहिले-पहिले बजारको तरकारी किनेर खाने यहाँका मानिसहरू आजभोलि भने आफैं तरकारी बेच्न थालेका छन् । नेवाले करेसावारीसम्बन्धी तालिम दिएपछि स्थानीय बासिन्दा हकमाया राईले तरकारी खनीलाई आम्दानीको स्रोत बनाएकी छिन् । समुदायका धेरैजसो घरमा तरकारी उब्जाउने चलन बढेको छ ।

सञ्चारिका लेखमाता, सेप्टेम्बर २००५

जँड्याहा लोग्नेमान्छे तह लगाउँदैछन् उनीहरू

भरतप्रसाद भट्ट

मोरङ जिल्लाको उर्लावारी गाउँ विकास समिति अन्तर्गतको डुम्रे एकताचोक गाउँमा विभिन्न जातजातिका ७० घरपरिवारको बसोबास रहेको छ । डुम्रे एकताचोक २०४७ सालपछि बसेको बस्ती हो । महेंद्र राजमार्गसँग जोडिएको भए पनि यो गाउँ विकासका अवसरहरूबाट वञ्चित छ । यो ठाउँ वर्ष दिनअधिसम्म पनि अव्यवस्थित र फोहोर समुदायका रूपमा चिनिन्थ्यो । यहाँका कुनै घरमा पनि चर्पी थिएनन् । तर, गत वर्षदेखि यहाँ सुरु भएको सरसफाइ अभियानले गर्दा आज यहाँका प्रत्येक घरमा चर्पी बनेको छ । प्रत्येक परिवारमा चर्पीको प्रयोग हुन थालेको छ । यहाँका घरआँगन, बाटाघाटा सफा छन् । फोहोर निरिचत स्थानमा फालिन्छ । प्रत्येक बिहीबार समुदायका सबै मानिस भेला भएर बाटोघाटो तथा चोक सफा गर्दछन् । बाटो तथा टोल सरसफाइ कार्यक्रममा सहभागी नहुने घरलाई उनीहरू पाँच रूपैयाँ जरिवाना गर्दछन् ।

नेपाल स्वास्थ्यको लागि पानीको सहजीकरणमा यहाँका गाउँलेले आफ्नै पहलमा समुदायलाई पूर्ण सरसफाइयुक्त बनाउने अभियान सुरु गरेका हुन् । यसअन्तर्गत महिलाले अग्रसरतामा समुदायमा खुल्ला ठाउँमा दिसा गर्ने बानी त्याग्न लगाइयो । यहाँका महिलाले चर्पीमा दिसा गर्ने, साबुनपानीले हात धुने, घर वरपर सफा राख्ने कार्यमा अग्रसरता लिएका हुन् ।

महिलाहरूको यो प्रयासले गर्दा आज गाउँ पस्ने मूलबाटाको छेउमा 'यस गाउँमा कसैले पनि खुल्ला रूपमा दिसा गर्दैनन्' भनेर लेखिएको बोर्ड टाँगिएको छ । नेपालमै पहिलेपटक सरसफाइयुक्त समुदायका रूपमा घोषित यहाँका गाउँलेहरूले सरसफाइ अभियान सुरु भएपछि सरसफाइसम्बन्धी आधारभूत आनीबानीलाई अँगाल्न थाले । "भर्खर मात्र गाउँलाई खुल्ला रूपले दिसा नगर्ने भनी घोषणा भएको हाम्रो गाउँमा दिसा मात्रै होइन, अरू खालका फोहोर पनि बढाउनुपर्छ भन्ने महसुस गरेर हामीले मादकपदार्थविरোধी अभियान सुरु गरेका हौं," स्थानीय वासिन्दा शर्मिला राई भन्छिन् । यसै साँचाबाट प्रेरित भएर नै उनीहरूले कमला भट्टराईको अध्यक्षतामा ११ सदस्यीय महिला समूहको गठन गरे ।

पहिले-पहिले रक्सीले मानेर श्रीमतीको चुल्ठो समाउने लोग्नेमान्छेहरू आजभोलि त्यस्तो काम गरेमा उल्टै आफ्नै कान समातेर उठबस गर्न बाध्य हुन्छन् । नसाले मानेको सुरमा परिवारका सदस्यलाई शारीरिक वा मानसिक रूपमा पीडा दिन, गाउँटोलमा होहल्ला गर्ने, अरूसँग भैभगडा र कुटपिट गर्नेले आइन्दा यस्तो काम नगर्ने बाचा गरी सबैका सामुन्ने माफी माग्नेपर्ने हुन्छ । त्यतिमात्र होइन, ठूलो उपद्रो मच्चाउनेहरूले त घुँडाले टेकेर गाउँ घुमी ५१ रूपैयाँ जरिवानासमेत तिर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ । मोरङ जिल्लाको उर्लावारी गाविस अन्तर्गतको डुम्रे एकताचोक गाउँमा जँड्याहाहरूको व्यवहारका कारण आजित भएका महिलाहरूले मादकपदार्थको सेवन नियन्त्रणका लागि यस्तो नियम बनाएका हुन् । नियमको कडाइसाथ पालना गरिएकाले उनीहरूको समुदाय छोटै समयमा शान्त र अनुशासित भएको छ ।

"महिला र बालबालिकामार्फत हुने शारीरिक तथा मानसिक यातनाको अन्त्य गर्न हामीले यो काम सुरु गरेका हौं" डुम्रे एकताचोककी कमला भट्टराई भन्छिन् । "दिनभरि एकछिन्न फुसंद नपाई काम गर्ने महिलाहरू मादकपदार्थ सेवन गर्ने पुरुषहरूको ज्यादातीका कारण थाकेको शरीर लिएर आनन्दसँग सुत्न पनि नपाउने अवस्था थियो । कंटाकंटीहरू आफ्नै अभिभावकसँग डराएर बस्न बाध्य थिए । मादकपदार्थबाट हुने स्वास्थ्य र आर्थिक नोक्सानीको कुनै हिसाब थिएन । अनि भएपछि हामीले मादकपदार्थको सेवन बन्द गर्नका लागि नियम बनाएर दण्ड र जरिवानाको व्यवस्था गर्‍यो," उनी थप्छिन् ।

यस अभियानलाई अघि बढाउनका लागि डुम्रे एकताचोकका महिलाहरूले ११ सदस्यीय समिति गठन

मैले डाक्टरको औषधि पनि खाएँ । त्यसैले होला मेरो पेटको बच्चा पनि बिग्रियो । त्यसपछि म प्रसूतिगृहमा जचाउन आएँ । डाक्टरले फोहोर पाइखानाको प्रयोग र सफाइ नभएर यस्तो भएको हो, पिसाबमा किटाणु संक्रमण भइसकेका छन् भनेर औषधि लेखिदिनुभयो ।”

गर्भवती महिलालाई चाँडो-चाँडो पिसाब लाग्ने कारणबारे वरिष्ठ स्त्रीरोग विशेषज्ञ डा. भोला रिजाल भन्नुहुन्छ, “गर्भवतीहरूलाई सामान्य अवस्थामा भन्दा अलि चाँडो-चाँडो पिसाब लाग्छ । यो गर्भावस्थामा गर्भवतीको शरीरमा हुने हार्मोनको परिवर्तनको कारणले हो । साथै पाठेघरमा बच्चा रहेको हुनाले पाठेघर खुकुलिन्छ । पाठेघरले पिसाबथैलीलाई थिचेको हुन्छ र त्यसले गर्दा पनि चाँडो-चाँडो पिसाब लागिरहन्छ ।”

उहाँ भन्नुहुन्छ, “गर्भावस्थाका धेरैजसो महिला पिसाबकै समस्या लिएर आउँछन् । धेरैजसो महिलाको पिसाबथैली र पिसाबबाहिनी नलीमा संक्रमण भएको हुन्छ । त्यसले गर्दा पाठेघरमा रहेको बच्चालाई समेत असर गरिरहेको हुन्छ । त्यसले गर्दा गर्भावतीहरू प्रत्येकपटक जँचाउन आउँदा उनीहरूको पिसाब परीक्षण गरिन्छ । त्यसका आधारमा आवश्यक औषधि र परामर्श दिइन्छ ।”

दिनहुँ सयौं महिलाका यस्तै समस्या देख्दै, सुन्दै र उपचार गर्दै आउनुभएको प्रसूतिगृह थापाथलीकी निर्देशक, वरिष्ठ स्त्रीरोग विशेषज्ञ डा. कस्तुरी मल्ल भन्नुहुन्छ, “पिसाबसम्बन्धी समस्या नेपालका ८० प्रतिशतभन्दा धेरै महिलाको समस्या हो । स्त्रीरोगसँग सम्बन्धित भएर आएका अधिकांश महिलाको समस्याको आरम्भ पिसाब र योनीमा किटाणुको संक्रमणबाट भएको पाइन्छ । धेरै पिसाब लाग्नु त स्वास्थ्यका लागि राम्रो कुरा हो । जति धेरै पानी पिइन्छ त्यति पिसाब बन्न सजिलो हुन्छ । बरू नियमित पिसाब नगर्दा या रोकेर बस्दाचाहिँ पिसाबथैलीमा पिसाब जम्न सक्छ, पहेलिन्छ र किटाणु संक्रमणसमेत हुन सक्छ । यस्तो संक्रमणले गर्भको शिशुलाई संक्रमण हुने खतरा पनि हुन सक्छ ।”

उहाँ भन्नुहुन्छ, “महिलाको प्रजनन अङ्ग खुल्ला र पुरुषको तुलनामा असुरक्षित हुन्छ । दिसापिसाब गर्न बस्दा पनि टुक्रुक बस्नुपर्छ । यस्तो अवस्थामा शौचालयमा रहेका किटाणुहरू तत्काल महिलाको योनाङ्ग र पिसाबबाहिनी नलीमा संक्रमित हुन्छन् । यसरी पिसाबथैली र पाठेघरसम्म सजिलै किटाणु फैलन्छन् । संक्रमित किटाणुको प्रभावले बिस्तारै किडनी र पाठेघरमा असर गर्न थाल्छ । यसको कारण गर्भमा रहेको बच्चा फस्टाउन नसक्ने, कम तौल हुने, समय नपुगी जन्मने र कहिलेकाहीँ गर्भपतन हुनेसमेत खतरा रहन्छ ।”

डा. मल्लका अनुसार “यो सबै समस्याको जड अव्यवस्थित शौचालय र भनेको समयमा शौचालय जान नपाउनु नै हो । । कतिपय अवस्थामा पिसाब रोकेर बस्ने गर्दा पनि यस्तो हुन्छ । यो समस्या बढी पिसाब रोकेर बस्ने महिलामा पाइएको कुरा उहाँ बताउनुहुन्छ । नेपाल स्वास्थ्यका लागि पानी (नेवा) ले तीन वर्षअघि गरेको अध्ययनले काठमाडौँ महानगरपालिकाका १५ वटा वडामा ३३ वटा सार्वजनिक शौचालय रहेको देखाएको छ । तीमध्ये चारवटा शौचालय प्रयोग गर्ने नसकिने अवस्थामा रहेका र चालू अवस्थामा रहेका अधिकांश शौचालय पनि पानीको अभावमा सरसफाइका हिसाबले ज्यादै दयनीय रहेका देखाएका छन् ।

सञ्चारिका लेखमाला, अगष्ट २००५

प्यास मेटिन्जेल पानी खान पाउँदै नन् उनीहरू

कमला पराजुली

कोटेश्वरकी ५० वर्षीया गीता चौधरीका दुई छोरी छन् । आज हो कि भोलि भइसकेको छ उनको अर्को बच्चा पाउने दिन पनि । एक वर्षअघि कोटेश्वरमा तरकारी व्यवसाय सुरु गरेकी हुन् उनले । बिहानदेखि साँभसम्म फुटपाथमै तरकारी बेच्न व्यस्त हुन्छिन् उनी । 'बिहानदेखि साँभसम्म पानी नै खान्ने', उनी भन्छिन् । 'भनेको समयमा र भनेजस्तो ठाउँमा शौचालय जान पाउँदैन, त्यसैले बरू पानी नै नखायो आनन्द । तर यसरी नै अरूबेला थगेकै थिएँ तर आजभोलि त एकदमै अप्ठ्यारो हुन थालेको छ', उनी भन्छिन् । 'पेटमा बच्चा भएको बेला त चाँडो पिसाब लाग्छ । के गर्ने खान पनि निकै गाह्रो हुन्छ, काम नगरी पनि भएँ' असजिलो मान्दै गीता बताउँछिन् । मेरो लाग्ने पनि दिनभरि साइकलमा राखेर तरकारी बेच्नुहुन्छ तर उहाँले कमाएको पैसाले मात्र पनि खान पुग्दैन । त्यसैले धेरै नै कष्ट सहेरै भए पनि मैले काम गरिराखेकै छु- गीता भन्छिन् । मेरो दुईवटी छोरी गाउँमै जन्मे । त्यहाँ त मलाई त्यस्तो अप्ठ्यारो पनि परेन । जतिबेला पिसाब लाग्छ, त्यति नै बेला कतै बारीमा बस्दा पनि भइहाल्थ्यो । तर यहाँ त जताततै मान्छे हिँडेरहेका हुन्छन् । सडकमा पनि बस्न मिल्दैन । यता नजिकतिर सार्वजनिक शौचालय पनि छैनन् । बस्ने डेरा पनि धेरै टाढा छ । त्यहीकारण त बिहानै घरबाट हिँड्दा शौचालय गयो, बिहानैदेखि पानी पनि कम खाँयो आनन्दै- उनी भन्छिन् । त्यसमा पनि दिउँसाँ पिसाब लागेको बेला पनि भरसक रोकेर नै बस्छु । तर धेरैबेर रोक्नो भने पनि पेट दुखेर पिसाब चुहिन खाँज्छ । तर लाजले बाहिर पनि बस्न सकिदैन, हाँसे नजिक कंटा मान्छेहरू भने बाटोमा पछाडि फर्केर पिसाब फेर्छन् । कति सजिलो छ है उनीहरूलाई, कंटा मान्छे हुनु भनेको पनि भाग्य नै रहन्छ ।

गीता अहिले ८ महिनाकी गर्भवती छन् । तर अहिलेसम्म उनी जँचाउन अस्पताल पनि गएकी छैनन् । उनी भन्छिन्, "मलाई बेला-बेलामा यौनाङ्ग चिलाउँछ र पिसाब फेर्दा पोल्छ पनि । तर डाक्टरकहाँ जान लाज लाग्छ ।" गीतालाई जस्तै फुटपाथमा तरकारी बेच्ने अन्य महिलालाई पनि यस्ता समस्याले पिरोल्ने गरेका छ । गीतासँगै कोटेश्वरमै तरकारी बेच्ने सिन्धुपाल्चोककी फूलकुमारी तामाङ पनि गर्भवती छन् । उनको गर्भ आठ महिना कटिसकेको छ । फूलकुमारी भन्छिन्, "यस्तो बेलामा फुटपाथमा व्यापार गर्न निकै मुस्कल हुँदोरहेछ । कहिले घाम, कहिले पानी, कहिले नगर प्रहरी । तरकारी बोकेर यता र उता कूदिरहनुपर्छ । अफ बेलाबेलामा पिसाब लागेर भुत्ककै हुन्छ । तीन महिनाअगाडि पिसाब पोल्ने प्रसूतिगृहमा जँचाएँ । डाक्टरले पानी धेरै पिउनु भनेका थिए । तर आफ्नो बाध्यता भने यस्तो छ । फोहोर शौचालय पनि प्रयोग नगर्नु भनेको छ । गर्भवती अवस्थामा पटक-पटक यस्तो भयो भने पेटको बच्चालाई पनि असर गर्छ अरे । पानी जति धेरै पियो त्यति धेरै पिसाब लाग्छ । तर, छिनछिनमा पिसाब फेर्न जान पाइखाना नै छैन । जताततै मान्छे नै मान्छे कहाँ जानु ? फोहोर पाइखाना त नभएको ठाउँमा अफ सफा कहाँ पाउनु ? यसो मान्छे छलेर बस्ने ठाउँसम्म पाए पनि ठूलो कुरा हुन्थ्यो । तर यो कसले व्यवस्था गरिदिने र ? पाइखानाको समस्या त आइमाईमान्छेलाई मात्रै हुन्छ, लाग्ने मान्छेलाई त जहाँ उभिए पनि हुने ।"

उता आफू गर्भवती भएदेखि प्रत्येक महिना थापाथलीस्थित प्रसूतिगृहमा जँचाउन आउने गरेकी शंखमूलकी कुमारी मगरले भने शौचालयको महत्व बुझेकी छन् । मकवानपुर घर भएकी २२ वर्षीया कुमारी चार वर्षदेखि शंखमूल सुकुम्बासी टोलनजिकै डेरा गरी बस्छिन् । यसअघि उनको चार महिनाको गर्भ तृहिया । यसपटक भने डरले सुरुदेखि नै उनी बेला-बेलामा डाक्टरकहाँ जँचाउन थालेकी छन् । उनी भन्छिन्, "मलाई धेरैजसो यौनाङ्ग चिलाउने, पिसाब पोल्ने र सेतो पानी जाने हुन्थ्यो । धेरै समयसम्म त्यस्तो भइरहँदा त्यसले भित्रैसम्म निककै नै असर गरेछ । निककै दुख्न, पोल्न र चिलाउन थालेपछि

उनका अनुसार कहीं चुकूल माथि हुन्छ त कहीं धारा माथि हुन्छ । 'कतिपय ठाउँमा त सिँडी चढेरै मात्र जान सकिन्छ तर हामी जस्ताका लागि सिँडी चढेर शौचालय प्रयोग गर्नु अति नै कठिन कार्य हो ।'

लेले ललितपुर निवासी हिवीलचियर प्रयोगकर्ता सानुमैया गुरूडका समस्या पनि अन्य अपाङ्ग महिलाहरूका भन्दा कम छैन । आफ्नो कामको सिलसिलामा काठमाडौं र ललितपुर नगरपालिका आहोरदाहोर गरिराख्ने सानुमैया भन्छन्, 'शहरमा थुप्रै शौचालय छन् तर कुनै पनि शौचालयमा म साथीको सहयोगविना जान सकिदैन ।' उनी भन्छन्, 'हिवल चियर जाँदैन, कतिपय शौचालय अग्लो ठाउँमा हुन्छ, कथकदाघित हिवल चियर पसिने हाल्यो भने पनि न त्यहाँ त्यो घुमाउने ठाउँ हुन्छ न त ढोका नै लगाउन मिल्छ ।' 'कहिलेकाहीँ शौचालय पसियो भने पनि ढोका खुले राखेर गर्नुपर्छ ।' उनी थप्छन् ।

हालै नेवालै गरेको एक अध्ययनले पनि काठमाडौंमा रहेका विभिन्न संघसंस्था, सरकारी कार्यालयमध्ये ९० प्रतिशतमा शारीरिक रूपमा अपाङ्गहरूका लागि सुहाउँदो शौचालय नभएका देखाएका छ ।

सरकारी कार्यालय, अस्पताल, शैक्षिक क्षेत्रलगायतका ५१ संस्थामा गरिएको उक्त अध्ययनको नथ्याङ्कसँग नेपाल अपाङ्ग सामाजिक अध्ययन रूक्मागत न्यौपाने भने अर्कै सहमत छैनन् । 'शारीरिक रूपमा अपाङ्ग व्यक्तिहरूलाई ध्यानमा राखेर शौचालय निर्माण भएकै छैनन्,' उनी भन्छन् । त्यसमाथि पनि शैक्षिक संस्थाहरूमा त्यस्ता सर्वसुलभ खालका शौचालय नभएका कारण हिवल चियर प्रयोगकर्ता बालबालिका विद्यालय नै जाँदैनन् ।

विद्यालयमा मात्र नभई अन्य सार्वजनिक स्थलहरूमा समेत त्यस्ता शौचालय नभएका कारण उनीहरूले हिँडडुलको स्वतन्त्रता समेत उपभोग गर्न पाएका छैनन् । महिलाहरू जो कमै मात्र बाहिर निस्कन्छन् तिनीहरू पनि शौचालय जानुपर्ने डरले बाहिर रहँदा पनि पानीसमेत पिउँदैनन् । श्री ५ को सरकार आवास तथा शहरी विकास विभागका इन्जिनियर फराग कायस्थका अनुसार हाल निर्माणाधीन रहेका स्वास्थ्यसम्बन्धी भवनमा प्याम र सहज खालको शौचालय बनाउने व्यवस्था रहेको छ । त्यसै धेरै जनताको आवातजावत हुने पुराना सरकारी कार्यालयहरूमा आउँदो आर्थिक वर्षमा यस्ता शौचालय पुनर्निर्माण गर्ने योजना रहेको दावी कायस्थको छ ।

हालै गठित अपाङ्गहरूको स्वानेपानी तथा सरसफाइमा पहुँच नामक कार्यदलको संयोजक न्यौपाने भन्छन्, 'राष्ट्रिय तथा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय संघसंस्थाले समूहले चाहेअनुसारको मात्र भौतिक पूर्वाधारहरूको निर्माण गर्न छाड्नुपर्छ ।' विद्यालयहरूले हाम्रो विद्यालयमा त्यस्ता विद्यार्थी छैनन् त्यसैले त्यस्ता शौचालय बनाएका छैनौं भन्ने छाड्नुपर्छ' उनको दावी छ । सरकारको सन् २०१७ सम्म सबैका लागि स्वानेपानी तथा शौचालयको रणनीति पनि अपाङ्ग व्यक्तिहरूलाई छलेर प्राप्त हुन्छ । 'त्यसरी नै हाम्रो बेवास्ता गर्ने हो भने सन् २०१५ सम्ममा सबैका लागि शिक्षा भन्ने नारा पनि खोक्रो साबित हुन्छ ।'

राष्ट्रिय अपाङ्ग महासंघ नेपालका अध्यक्ष वीरेन्द्रराज पोखरेलका अनुसार शौचालयमा प्यानको परिधि अधिकतम १८ इन्चको हुनुपर्छ भने शौचालय जाने सिँडीको उचाइ ९ इन्चभन्दा बढी हुनुहुँदैन । शौचालयभित्र जाने बाटोमा बार हुनुपर्छ जसले गर्दा उनीहरूलाई समातेर भित्र जान सजिलो होस् । शौचालयको प्यान अथवा कमाँटको वरपर पनि समाउने बार हुनुपर्छ ।

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०५८ का अनुसार नेपालमा कुल जनसंख्याको ०.४६ प्रतिशत अपाङ्ग छन् । त्यसमध्ये शारीरिक रूपमा अपाङ्ग भएका मात्र ३९ प्रतिशत छन् । जसमध्ये महिलाहरूको संख्या आधाभन्दा बढी छ । तर, यदि हामीले विश्व स्वास्थ्य सङ्गठनको मान्यताअनुसार हेर्ने हो भने नेपालमा २४ देखि २५ लाखको हाराहारीमा अपाङ्ग छन् र त्यसमा पनि आधाभन्दा बढी महिला छन् । विश्व स्वास्थ्य सङ्गठनका अनुसार विकासशील मूलुकमा कुल जनसंख्याको १० प्रतिशत अपाङ्ग हुन्छन् ।

सञ्चारिका लेखनाला, जुलाई २००५

कतै छैनन् उनीहरूका लागि शौचालय

संगीता रिजाल

सानै उमेरमा टाइफाइडका कारण उब्जेको करंगको समस्याको कारणले हिबल चियरको प्रयोग गर्दै आएको सुष्मा सिवाकांटी एक वर्ष अगाडिदेखि काठमाडौं आएको हुन् । रहरभन्दा पनि बाध्यताले काठमाडौं भित्रिएकी सिवाकांटीले हालसालै मात्र हिबल चियर छाडी वैशाखीको प्रयोग गर्न थालेकी छन् । तर, काठमाडौंमा यत्रतत्र घुम्दा आउने अन्य समस्याहरू त छँदैछन्, उता राम्रोसँग शौचालय प्रयोग गर्न पनि पाउँदैनन् उनी ।

आफ्नो गाउँ सुनखानी-२, दोलखामा कक्षा ४ सम्मको अध्ययन गर्दा शौचालयको ठूलो समस्या थियो सुष्मालाई । हालको विद्यालयमा त्यो अभाव भने छैन । तर, विद्यालयमा आफू सुहाउँदो भौतिक संरचना नभएकै कारण काठमाडौं आएको सुष्मासँग विगतको तीता अनुभव भने छ । हाल खगेन्द्र नवजीवन केन्द्रमा त उनको 'हिबल चियर' लैजान मिल्ने ढोका भएको शौचालय छ, तर उनले एक वर्ष अगाडिसम्म अध्ययन गरेको सरस्वती विद्या मन्दिरमा भने त्यो वातावरण थिएन । 'बहिनी वा साथीको सहयोगमा अति नै आवश्यक परेको बेला मात्र मैले त्यस विद्यालयको शौचालय प्रयोग गरेँ, त्यो पनि सबैको पिसावमा हात टेकेर ।' विगत सम्झदै उनी भन्छिन्, 'काई जमेको उक्त शौचालयमा कयौंपटक चिप्लेर लडेकी पनि छु । धेरैपटक सकी-नसकी दिसापिसाव रोकेर घर फर्कन्थे ।'

आफ्नो पहुँचभन्दा बाहिरको शौचालयका कारण दिनभरिमा धेरैपटक शौचालय प्रयोग गर्न नसकेकै कारण कतिपटक विद्यालय नै नगएको अनुभव पनि सुष्मासँग ताजा नै छ । माटोले निर्मित उक्त शौचालयमा पानी परेको बेलामा त भन्नु अरुको सहयोगमा समेत उनी जान नसकेको बताउँछिन् । विगत एक वर्षदेखि अपाङ्ग पुनर्स्थापना केन्द्र चुच्चेपाटीमा बस्दै आएको सुष्मा भन्छिन्, 'मेरो हालको विद्यालयको शौचालयमा त हिबल चियर पनि छिर्छ, मेरो वैशाखी त चिप्लेको घटना नै छैन ।'

यसै तीता अनुभव विनीता खड्काको पनि छ । 'महिनावारी भएको बेलामा प्रायः विद्यालय नै गइएन,' खड्का भन्छिन्, 'म जान सक्ने शौचालय सो विद्यालयमा थिएन ।' विनिताले प्रार्थमिक तहको अध्ययन गरेको विद्यालयमा शौचालय नै थिएन । तर, माध्यमिक तहको अध्ययन पूरा गरेको श्रीराम माध्यमिक विद्यालय काँहलपुरमा भने शौचालय थियो । डेढ वर्षकै हुँदा पोलियोको कारण खुट्टाको क्रियाशीलता गुमाएकी खड्का हाल वैशाखीको प्रयोग गर्छिन् । माध्यमिक तहसम्म पुग्दा यौवनावस्थाका कारण जथाभावी खुला रूपमा शौचालयको प्रयोग गर्न नसक्दा खड्का प्रायः विद्यालयमा पानी पिउँदैनथिइन् । विद्यालयको पीडासँगै उच्चमाध्यमिक तहको शिक्षा हासिल गर्न क्याम्पस भर्ना भएकी खड्काको पीडाले त्यहाँ पनि शान्ति पाएन । माथि चुकुल भएका कारण भुइँमा नै पिसाब गर्न पनि शौचालयको बाहिर साथीलाई उभ्याइराख्नुपर्ने तीता अनुभव पनि विनितासँग अभै ताजा छ ।

उमेर बढ्दै गयो र सँगसँगै पढाइको स्तर पनि । तर, हाल उच्चमाध्यमिक स्तरको पढाइसम्म आउँदा पनि विनिताले शौचालयको सुलभ प्रयोग गर्न पाएको छैनन् । उनका क्याम्पसमा महिला र पुरुष भनेर छुट्टाछुट्टै शौचालय त छ तर तीमध्ये कुनै पनि शौचालय शारीरिक रूपमा अपाङ्ग भएका व्यक्ति सुहाउँदा छैनन् । विद्यालय जाँदा कयौंपटक जाने नपर हुन्थ्यो भन्ने अनुभव सँगाल्दै हुर्केकी विनिताको पीडाले हाल उच्चमाध्यमिक तहमा आउँदासमेत राहत पाएको छैन । 'मेरो खुट्टा दाबेर बस्न मिल्दैन तर मेरो क्याम्पसमा मिल्ने खालको कमाँट छैन ।

राष्ट्रिय अपाङ्ग महासंघकी केन्द्रीय सदस्य विनिता भन्छिन्, 'काठमाडौं राजधानी शहर हो, यहीं त हामीलाई सुलभ शौचालय छैन अन्यत्र भन्नु कसरी हुन सक्छ ? जहाँसुकैको कुरा गर्नुसु, आर.आर. क्याम्पसमा हिबल चियर नै जाँदैन । त्यति मात्र होइन, राजधानीको कुनचाहिँ विद्यालयमा अपाङ्गहरूको पहुँच पुग्ने शौचालय छन् र ?' उनी भन्छिन्, 'कतै भेटिएछ भने पनि केही न केही अप्ठेरा हुन्छन् ।'

यस्तै कला स्वर्णकार सुरक्षा जाँचका लागि गाडी रोकिएको समयमा सौचालय गडरहँदा एकातिर गाडी छुट्ने डर, अर्कातिर सुरक्षा जाँचका लागि आफूसँग भएका पोकापन्तरा बाँकेरकसरी सौच जाने भन्नुहुन्छ । उहाँ करिब-करिब खुल्ला अवस्थामै रहेको सौचालय प्रयोग गर्दा बाहिरबाट देखिने डरले आफूले कहिल्यै पनि यस्ता सौचालय प्रयोग नगरेको बताउनुहुन्छ । यद्यपि उहाँ महिलाहरूका लागि ठाउँ-ठाउँमा सुविधाजनक सौचालयको व्यवस्था हुनुपर्ने बताउनुहुन्छ । साथै गाडीचालकले पनि सौचालय परिसरमा मात्र सौचका लागि गाडी रोक्नुपर्ने उहाँ बताउनुहुन्छ ।

केही ठाउँमा सवारीचालकले आफूले चिनेको होटलअगाडि लगेर गाडी रोक्छन् । यसरी गाडी रोकिएका होटलका सौचालयमा जस्तासुकै (फोहोर भए पनि) अवस्थामा पनि सौच गर्नुपर्ने अहिलेको बाध्यात्मक अवस्थाका अन्त गर्न सार्वजनिक सौचालयको व्यवस्था ठाउँठाउँमा हुन जरूरी छ । महिलाहरूले सुरक्षाकर्मीले बनाएका सौचालय प्रयोग नगर्नुले उनीहरू जस्तासुकै ठाउँमा सौच गर्न सक्दैनन् भन्ने प्रमाणित हुन्छ । यसका लागि उनीहरू गुप्त ठाउँ नै चाहन्छन् भन्ने जनाउँछ । साथै पुरुष यात्रु सुरक्षाकर्मीको सौचालयमा जानुले महिलाका लागि पनि ठाउँठाउँमा सुरक्षित किसिमको सौचालयको व्यवस्था गर्नुपर्छ भन्ने कुराको बोध भने गराएको छ ।

नेपाल स्वास्थ्यको लागि पानी (नेवा) की क्षेत्रीय व्यवस्थापक सरस्वती खनाल नेपालगञ्ज शमशेरगञ्जको सुरक्षाकर्मी जाँचपोष्टमा पक्कीखालकै सौचालय बनाइएको र उक्त सौचालय महिलाले पनि उत्तिकै प्रयोग गर्ने गरेको उल्लेख गर्दै अति हुँदाको अवस्थाबाहेक सुरक्षाकर्मीले निर्माण गरेको पालको सौचालय महिलाले लाजकै कारण पनि प्रयोग गर्न नसक्ने बताउनुहुन्छ । साथै उहाँ यात्रुहरूका लागि सौचालय बनाउँदा अलि धेरैजनालाई पुग्ने, सामान्यतः कसैले नदेख्ने सुरक्षित ठाउँमा हुनुपर्ने विचार व्यक्त गर्नुहुन्छ ।

हुन त सन् १९९१ देखि १९९४ को अवधिसम्ममा नेवाले लामो दूरीका यात्रुलाई ध्यानमा राखेर सातवटा सार्वजनिक सौचालयको निर्माण गरेको थियो । दमौली, धुलिखेल, खैरेनीटार, आबुखैरेनी, दुलेगौडा, सौराहाचोक तथा पोखरा-बाग्लुङ बसपार्कमा निर्माण गरिएका सार्वजनिक सौचालयहरू केही राम्रै सञ्चालनमा आएका छन् भने केही पुनर्निर्माण गर्नुपर्ने अवस्थामा पुगेका छन् । धुलिखेलको सौचालय भने बाटा निर्माण गर्ने क्रममा भत्काइएको छ । नेवाका क्षेत्रीय व्यवस्थापक सरस्वती खनालका अनुसार उल्लेखित सौचालयहरू जनसाधारण तथा यात्रुमा सर्भ गरेर भने निर्माण गरिएको थिएन । र, तत्कालै यस्ताखालका सौचालय निर्माण गर्ने योजना पनि नेवाको रहेको छैन ।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय गैरसरकारी संस्था वाटरएडको आर्थिक सहयोगमा नेवाले काठमाडौँ महानगरपालिकासँग मिलेर यहाँका सार्वजनिक सौचालय व्यवस्थापन कार्यको अध्ययन पूरा गरेको छ भने विराटनगर क्षेत्रीय कार्यालयले पनि सार्वजनिक सौचालयको सम्बन्धमा अध्ययन गरिरहेको छ ।

सरसफाई सभ्यताको परिचायक हो । फोहोर दुर्गन्धको असर यात्रुलाई हाँडन स्थानीय व्यक्तिलाई नै पर्ने गर्छ । यही कारणले पनि आफ्ना क्षेत्र सफा राख्न स्थानीय व्यक्तिहरूले स्थानीय निकायको सहयोगमा सौचालय निर्माण प्रक्रियालाई अगाडि बढाउनुपर्छ ।

सार्वजनिक बसको यात्रा गर्ने महिलाहरूले सौच तथा पिसाब गर्न पाउँदैन भनेर बसको यात्रा नै गर्न छोड्ने भने महिलाहरूको आवत-जावत गर्ने क्षमतामै ह्रास आउँछ । त्यसैले महिलाहरूको आवागमन बढाउन पनि उनीहरूलाई सजिलो हुन ठाउँमा बस रोक्नु आवश्यक छ । सम्भव भएसम्म त्यस्ता सार्वजनिक बाटामा सौचालयको व्यवस्था हुनु जरूरी छ ।

सञ्चारिका लेखनाला, डिसेम्बर २००४

चालक पनि महिलालाई सजिलो हुने ठाउँ हेर्दैनन्

अमिका रायथला

महिला विकास शाखा, महात्तरीकी एक अधिकृत लामो दूरीको बस यात्रा गर्दा प्रायः दिनको समयमा गर्नुहुन्छ । जिल्लाको महिला विकास तथा सशक्तीकरणको काम गर्दै आउनुभएको कारणले उहाँलाई विभिन्न जिल्लाहरूको भ्रमण गर्नुपर्छ । उहाँको घर तथा माइतीसमेत काठमाडौंमै भएको कारणले लामो दूरीका बसमा यात्रा गरिरहनुपर्ने उहाँको बाध्यता हो । लामो दूरीको बसमा यात्रा जतिसुकै बेला किन गर्न नपरोस् तर उहाँ दिउँसाँको यात्रा सकेसम्म गर्नुहुन्छ । कारण हो, लामो दूरीको गाडी चलाउने सवारीचालकहरूले सौच गर्नका लागि खुल्ला ठाउँमा गाडी रोक्छन् । उहाँ भन्नुहुन्छ- 'केटा मान्छेहरू पो खुल्ला ठाउँमा पनि पछाडि फर्किएर पिसाब फेर्छन् तर हामीलाई त्यसो गर्दा अप्ठ्यारो पर्छ । तर रातको समयमा गाडी रोक्नेका ठाउँबाट अलि पर जाने हो भने खासै समस्या पर्दैन, त्यसैले म दिनको समयमा लामो दूरीको बसमा सकेसम्म यात्रा नै गर्दिनँ ।' तर, आजभोलि त रात्रिबस त्यति नचल्ने हुँदा अप्ठ्यारो परेको छ ।

ठाड घर भई हाल दलित महिला संघमा कार्यरत कला स्वर्णकार पनि लामो यात्राका क्रममा सवारीचालकले खुल्ला ठाउँमा बस रोक्दा पिसाब फेर्न निकै अप्ठ्यारो परेको बताउनुहुन्छ । सकेसम्म उहाँ स्वाने-पिउने होटेलकै सौचालय प्रयोग गर्ने प्रयास गर्नुहुन्छ तर कतिपय अवस्थामा होटेलकै सौचालय मात्र पर्याप्त नहुने उहाँको अनुभव छ । उहाँ यात्राका क्रममा आफ्नो स्वाने-पिउने नियमित प्रक्रियामै कटौती गर्नुहुन्छ । तर, एकपटक गर्मी सहन नसकेर अलि बढि पानी पिउँदा आफूलाई निकै अप्ठ्यारो परेको उहाँले बिर्सनुभएको छैन ।

यस्तै अछाम घर भई हाल स्टेप नामक गैरसरकारी संस्थामा कार्यरत सजना पनि महिलाहरूले उनीहरूलाई पायक पर्ने ठाउँमा गाडी रोक्न अनुरोध गर्दा चालकहरूले वास्ता नगर्ने प्रवृत्ति रहेको बताउनुहुन्छ । तर, हाल काठमाडौंबाट पोखराका लागि बस चलाउँदै आएका सवारीचालक दीपक खड्का लामो रूटको यातायात सञ्चालक तथा चालकहरूले यात्रुको सुविधा र सुरक्षाका विशेष ध्यान पुऱ्याउनुपर्ने बताउँछन् । तथापि उनी पिसाब फेर्न गाडी रोक्न कन्डक्टरद्वारा भनिए पनि महिलाले अनुरोध गरेको हो वा पुरुषले गरेको हो भन्ने कुरा आफूलाई थाहा नहुने तर्क अगाडि सार्छन् । साथै उनी महिलाको अनुरोधलाई जिस्किएर नकार्न नमिल्ने बताउँछन् ।

ठाउँ-ठाउँमा सार्वजनिक सौचालयको अभावमा महिलाहरूका लागि लामो दूरीको यात्रा कष्टकर त छ नै त्यसमाथि अहिले सुरक्षा जाँचको कारण गाडीहरू घन्टौंसम्म जाम हुँदा यात्रुहरू गन्तव्यमा ढिला पुग्ने र यसले गर्दा महिलाहरूले भन्ने सौचालयको समस्या भोग्ने गरेका छन् । हुन त सवारीचालक खड्का उट्टाको पारामा भन्छन्- 'अहिले त भन्नु पिसाब फेराउन बस कहीं पनि रोक्नैपर्दैन, सुरक्षा जाँच गर्ने हरेक ठाउँमा सुरक्षाकर्मीले सौचालय बनाएका छन्, त्यहीँ जान्छन् ।'

अहिले केही मात्रामा भए पनि पाल तथा घाँस-दाउराले वारंर सुरक्षाकर्मीले बनाएको सौचालयले स्थानीय क्षेत्रलाई दुर्गन्धित हुनबाट बचाउनुका साथै केही यात्रुहरूलाई राहत पुऱ्याएको छ । हुन त सुरक्षाकर्मीहरूले महिला र पुरुषका लागि छुट्टाछुट्टै सौचालय बनाएका छन् तर अधिकांश महिला यात्रुहरू आफूले उक्त सौचालय प्रयोग नगर्ने गरेको बताउँछन् । आफ्नो कामको सिलसिलामा समयसमयमा जिल्लाहरूको भ्रमण गरिरहनुहुने अधिवक्ता वसन्ती श्रेष्ठ आफूले यस्ता प्रकारको सौचालयको प्रयोग नगरेको र कुनै पनि महिला यस्ता सौचालयमा पसेको पनि आफूले नदेखेको बताउनुहुन्छ । उहाँ यस्ता अस्थायी खालका सौचालय पारदर्शी भएका कारण महिलाहरू जान नमान्ने बनाउनुहुन्छ ।

बताउनुहुन्छ । चर्पी निर्माणका लागि आफ्नो संस्थाले यस्तो सहयोग उपलब्ध गराउँदै आए पनि गरिबी र अशिक्षाका कारण वडाका सबै घरपरिवारले भने चर्पी निर्माणकार्यलाई त्यति महत्त्व नदीएको शिक्षका राई बताउनुहुन्छ ।

यसरी सहज र स्वाभाविकरूपमा मलमूत्र त्याग्न नपाएका महिलाहरू आज कहिले उज्यालाको पर्खाइमा कहिले अँध्यारोको पर्खाइमा जीवन धानिरहेका हुन्छन् । यस्तै यसरी शौच बस्दाका लागि अँध्यारो र उज्यालाको पर्खाइमा बस्ने बहुसंख्यक महिलाहरूलाई मलमूत्रजन्य रोगले सताउने गर्दछ । स्वाभाविक र सहजरूपमा मलमूत्र त्याग्ने प्राकृतिक नियमलाई आज मानिसको अज्ञानता र अशिक्षाले चुनौती दिएको छ । यस्तै खुला ठाउँमा शौच बस्दा महिलाले भोग्नुपरेको दैनिक समस्यालाई चर्पीको महत्त्व नबुझ्ने समुदायले त्यति गम्भीरताका साथ लिएको देखिँदैन ।

महिलाले भोग्नुपरेको यस्तो समस्या दैनिकीसँग गाँसिएको हुन्छ । एउटी महिला वा बालिकाले खुला ठाउँमा शौच बस्दा यौन दुर्व्यवहारको सिकार वा बलात्कृत हुँदा उसले भोग्नुपरेको शारीरिक र मानसिक पीडा अकल्पनीय हुन्छ ।

चर्पीको सुविधाबाट बञ्चित घरपरिवार र समुदायले यस्ता कुरालाई महसुस गरेको पाइँदैन । यस्ता समुदायमा मानिसहरूले चर्पी नबनाउनुको मुख्य कारण चर्पीको आवश्यकता महसुस नगर्नु हो भन्ने पञ्चवर्षीय कार्ययोजना स्वानेपानी तथा ढल निकास विभागले सन् १९९९ मा गरेको एउटा अध्ययनले देखाएको छ ।

यस्तै नेपाल स्वास्थ्यका लागि नेवाले सन् २००३ मा गरेको एउटा अध्ययनअनुसार नेपालमा हरेक बिहान १ करोड ७० लाख मानिस गाउँ तथा शहरका खुला ठाउँमा शौच बस्ने गर्दछन् । मानिसको एक ग्राम दिसामा रोगका एक करोड भाइरस, १० लाख ब्याक्टरिया, १२ हजार परजीवी र जुकाका सयवटा फूल हुन सक्छन् भन्ने युनिसेफले सन् २००० मा गरेको अध्ययनले देखाएको छ । यस्तै अल्पविकसित र विकासशील देशहरूमा ८० प्रतिशत रोगहरू सरसफाइको कमीले लाग्ने गर्दछ । सरसफाइ र वातावरणसम्बन्धी आधारभूत शिक्षाबाट बञ्चित यस्ता मानिसहरूलाई जागरूक बनाउने नीति राज्यले बनाए पनि लागू हुन सकेको छैन ।

सञ्चारिक लेखमाला, नोभेम्बर २००४

पुरुषलाई भन्दा महिलालाई गाह्रो

मधु राई

पहिले-पहिले गाह्रो हुन्थ्या अहिले बानी परिसके, विराटनगर-५ इक्राही निवासी मञ्जु भण्डारी खुला ठाउँमा शौच बस्दाको आफ्नो अनुभव यसरी सुनाउँछिन् । माइतीमा चर्पी प्रयोग गर्दै आएकी भण्डारीलाई विहृपछि घरमा धेरै असहज परिस्थितिको सामना गर्नुपन्थ्यो । भण्डारी मात्र हांडन छिमकी रमा भट्टराई पनि पुरुषलाई भन्दा महिलालाई खुला ठाउँमा शौच बस्न गाह्रो हुने बताउँछिन् । पुरुषहरूभन्दा चाँडै उठ्न सके मात्र राम्ररी शौच बस्न पाइन्छ, भट्टराई थप्छिन् ।

भण्डारी र भट्टराईजस्तै जानकी इंग्लिस स्कुलकी शिक्षिका पुष्पा भण्डारी पनि खुला ठाउँमै शौच बस्ने गर्छिन् । उनको पीडा र अनुभव पनि उनीहरूको भन्दा भिन्न छैन । यसरी विराटनगर उपमहानगरपालिकाको नगरक्षेत्र वरिपरि मधेसीमूलका समुदायमा खुला ठाउँमा शौच बस्ने संस्कार सामान्य देखिए पनि नगरक्षेत्रभन्दा ५ किलोमिटर पश्चिमको वडा नं. ५ का बहुसंख्यक नेपालीहरू चर्पीको सुविधाबाट वञ्चित छन् ।

यस्तै दिउँसाँतिर शौच बस्नुपर्ला भन्ने डरले नयाँ दुलहीलाई थोरै खानेकुरा दिने प्रचलन आफ्नो वडामा रहेको जलेश्वरी यादव बताउँछिन् । 'नयाँ दुलहीलाई मात्र कहाँ हो र ज्वाइँलाई समेत गाह्रो हुन्छ, रामदेवी राजवंशी थप्छिन् । इक्राहीको बाँसघारी र नहरलाई ठूलाले खुला शौचालयका रूपमा प्रयोग गर्दै आए तापनि स-साना कंटाकंटी र बिरामीहरू घरनजिकै वा बाटोमै शौच बस्ने गर्दछन् । 'जथाभावी शौच बस्दा रोगव्याधिले सताउँछ भन्ने हामीलाई थाहा छ तर हामी बाध्य छौं, डेजीदेवी यादव भन्छिन् ।

यसरी जथाभावी शौच भन्दा रोगव्याधी लाग्ने कुरा यादवजस्ता सीमित व्यक्तिलाई सामान्य थाहा भए पनि दिसा-पिसाबले निम्त्याउन सक्ने क्षतिका बारेमा बहुसंख्यक मानिस अनभिज्ञ छन् । यस्तै साथीसंगी र समाजमा यो घटनाले चर्चा पाएपछि बालिकाको अध्ययन नै छुट्या । यसरी चर्पीको सुविधाबाट वञ्चित वर्गमध्ये महिला र बालबालिकाहरू बढी पीडित हुनुपर्को छ । कतिपय चर्पी नभएको समुदायका महिलाहरू सवैरे वा बेलुकी भएपछि मात्र बाहिर शौच बस्ने गर्दछन् ।

यसरी नगरवासीले पाउनुपर्ने न्यूनतम आधारभूत आवश्यकताबाट विराटनगर उपमहानगरपालिकाका अधिकांश वडावासी वञ्चित छन् । त्यसो त नगरपालिकाले हरेक वर्ष नगरक्षेत्रका वडाहरूलाई भौतिक विकास निर्माणका लागि लाखौं रूपैयाँ दिने गरेको छ । तर, सामाजिक विकासलाई भन्दा भौतिक विकास निर्माण कार्यलाई प्राथमिकता दिने नगरपालिकाको नीति र कार्यक्रमका कारण आज वडा नं. ५ जस्ता अविकसित र अल्पविकसित वडाका वडावासीहरूमा चर्पी प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ भन्ने चेतनाको विकास हुन सकेको छैन ।

यस्तै वडा नं. ५ का वडावासीले भोग्नुपर्को दैनिक समस्यालाई समाधान गर्न पूर्व वडाध्यक्ष बालकराम चौधरी पनि प्रयासरत हुनुहुन्छ । चौधरी यस वर्ष नगरपालिकाले आफ्नो वडाका करिब ७ हजार ५ सय वडावासीका लागि विकास निर्माण कार्यका लागि रु. १५ लाख बजेट छुट्याएको बताउँछन् । गत वर्षका प्रस्तावित कार्यक्रमलाई नै सबै वडाले निरन्तरता दिनुपर्ने प्रावधान रहेकाले चाहेर पनि वडाले वडावासीलाई चर्पी निर्माणका लागि आर्थिक सहयोग गर्न नसकेको चौधरी बताउँछन् । त्यस्तै नगरपालिकाले वडाका लागि भनेर सामाजिक विकास कार्यमा प्रत्यक्ष सहयोग नगरेर गत वर्ष नेवा भन्ने गैरसरकारी संस्थाबाट सरसफाइसम्बन्धी कार्यक्रम ल्याएको छ ।

गत वर्षदेखि इक्राहीमा स्वास्थ्यसम्बन्धी कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गर्दै आएको गैरसरकारी संस्था नेपाल स्वास्थ्यको लागि पानी नैवाले केही महिनायता चर्पी कार्यक्रम सुरु गरेको छ । नैवाले वडाका २ सय १९ घरपरिवारलाई चर्पी बनाउन आंशिक सहयोग गर्ने कार्यक्रम अधि सारको छ । प्रतिघरपरिवारले न्यूनतम रु. ५ देखि ८ सय वृभाई सहयोग प्राप्त गर्नसक्ने नेवाकी स्वास्थ्य शिक्षिका सुशीला राई

मानिसले, विशेषगरि महिलाहरूले दिगो रूपमा यस्ता आनीबानी अपनाउनु भन्ने उद्देश्यले कार्कीडाँडामा दुईजना महिला स्वास्थ्य उत्प्रेरकले स्वास्थ्यसम्बन्धी चेतनशील कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गरिरहेका छन् । हाल नेपालमा सरसफाइ क्षेत्रमा कार्यरत धेरैजसो संस्थाले चर्पी निर्माणका लागि आर्थिक सहयोग उपलब्ध गराउने गरेका छन् । तर, पूर्ण सरसफाइको यस अवधारणाले सहूलियतलाई प्रोत्साहन गर्दैन । सहूलियतबाट चर्पी बनाएपछि त्यसको माया हुँदैन र दिगो प्रयोग पनि हुँदैन भन्ने अनुभवका आधारमा यो पद्धति विश्वास राख्दछ । 'हरक कुरामा सहूलियत खाँजे मानिसका बानी परिसकेको छ । तर, यो सही कुरा होइन, चर्पी बनाउन सहूलियत चाहिँदैन ।' स्वास्थ्य उत्प्रेरक अमृता उप्रेती भन्छिन् ।

गत वर्ष असारमा दिसा गर्न गएका बेला ५७ वर्षीया देवकुमारी थापा बारीको कान्छाबाट लडिन् र खुट्टो भाँच्यो । उनको उपचारमा दस हजारभन्दा बढी खर्च लाग्यो । "चारवटा पक्की चर्पी बन्ने पैसा खर्च गरेर निको भएँ ।" चर्पीको महत्वलाई रकमसँग तुलना गर्दै उनी भन्छिन् ।

"चर्पी नहुँदा राति दिसा लाग्छ कि भनेर दिउँसैदेखि डर लाग्थ्यो । घरका एकजनालाई दिसा लाग्यो भने अर्को साथी गइदिनेपनि भएकाले अरूको समेत निद्रा बिग्रन्थ्यो । अहिले त रातभरि दुक्कसँग निदाउन पाइएको छ ।" भर्खरै चर्पी बनाएर प्रयोग गर्न थालेकी ठूलीमाया भन्छिन् । चर्पी नहुँदा पुरुषका तुलनामा महिलालाई दिसा गर्न जान बढी मुस्किल थियो । जतासुकै छलिनै ठाउँ नपाइने, रातिराति टाढा जान सर्प र जंगली जनावरको डर हुन्थ्यो । घरनजिकै चर्पी बनेपछि ती दुःखका दिन सकिए । ठूलीमाया भन्छिन् । हाल कार्कीडाँडामा चर्पी निर्माण मात्र नभई सरसफाइका अन्य पक्षमा पनि मानिसहरूका ध्यान जान थालेको छ । स्वास्थ्य उत्प्रेरक उप्रेती भन्छिन्, "मानिसहरू पुरानै भए पनि सफा लुगा लगाउँछन् । खाना पकाउनु र खानुअघि, दिसा धोएपछि हात धुने चलन पनि बढेको छ ।"

सञ्चारिका लेखमाला, अक्टोबर २००४

चर्पीले बदलेको महिलाको जीवन

भरत अधिकारी

“यो गाउँका चार सयभन्दा बढी मानिस सधैं खुल्ला ठाउँमा दिसा गर्छन् । एकजनाले औसतमा दिनहुँ २ सय ५० ग्रामका दरले दिसा गर्छ भने गाउँको खुल्ला ठाउँमा एक दिनमा १ सय ९ किलो र एक वर्षमा करिब चार सय क्विन्टल दिसा थुप्रिन्छ ।” नौ महिनाअघि कार्कीडाँडाको चौतारीमा भेला भएका मानिससमक्ष मंगलदास दुवाल खुल्ला ठाउँमा गरिने दिसा-पिसाब र त्यसबाट मानव स्वास्थ्य र वातावरणमा पर्ने असरको अनुमान लगाउँदै थिए । “एक ग्राम दिसामा विभिन्न रोगका १ करोड भाइरस, १० लाख ब्याक्टेरिया र जुकाका एक सयवटा फुल हुनसक्छन् । यस्तो दिसाको एउटा मात्र कण पनि विभिन्न माध्यमबाट हाम्रो पेटमा पर्यो भने हामीलाई के असर पर्ला ?” उनको कुरा सुनिरहेका एकजना वृद्धले मुख बिगाउँ भने “हत्तैरी, गुहु घेरै खाइएछ ।”

घादिङ जिल्लाको भूमिस्थान गाउँ विकास समिति- ८ कार्कीडाँडामा नेपाल स्वास्थ्यको लागि पानी (नेवा) को सहजीकरणमा सञ्चालन भएको समुदायको अगुवाइमा सञ्चालित पूर्णसरसफाइ कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत घेरैपिच्छे चर्पी बनाउने अभियान सुरु भएको छ । १३ वर्षअघि ‘वाटरएड’ नेपालको सहयोगमा यो गाउँमा स्वानेपानी आयोजनाको निर्माण भएको थियो । त्यतिखेर बनेका १२ वटा र पछि थपिएका चारवटा धारामा अहिलेसम्म राम्ररी पानी आइरहेको छ । तर, स्वानेपानी व्यवस्थापनमा उत्कृष्ट ठहरिए पनि यस गाउँमा गत वर्षसम्म कुनै पनि घरमा चर्पी भने थिएनन् । गाउँलाई पूर्णसरसफाइ क्षेत्र बनाउन काम थालनी भएको एक वर्ष नपुग्दै गाउँका ६५ घरमध्ये ४६ वटा घरमा बिना कुनै सहूलियत चर्पी बनिइसकेका छन् । बाँकी घरमा पनि चर्पी निर्माणको काम घमाघम भइरहेको छ । यही असोज ५ गतेसम्ममा कार्कीडाँडाका सबै घरमा चर्पी निर्माण गरिसक्ने लक्ष्य राखिएको कुरा नेवाका वरिष्ठ प्राविधिक मंगलदास दुवाल बताउँछन् । उनका अनुसार सबै घरमा चर्पी बनेपछि गाउँको प्रवेश बिन्दुमा गाउँ पूर्ण सरसफाइयुक्त भएको घोषणासहितको बोर्ड टाँयाइनेछ ।

गाउँलाई पूर्ण सरसफाइयुक्त बनाउने काममा पुरुषहरूको तुलनामा महिलाहरू बढी सक्रिय भएको अनुभव मंगलदास दुवालको छ । यहाँका घेरैजसो पुरुष दिउँसो कामका लागि सिम्ले जान्छन् । काम नभएकाहरू पनि घरमा बस्दैनन् । रोगको उपचारमा लाग्ने खर्चले चर्पी बनाएमा रोग नै लाग्दैन भन्ने कुरा गाउँलेलाई बुझाउने काम यहाँका महिलाले नै गरेको कुरा उनी बताउँछन् । “महिलाको साथ नपाएको भए यो अभियान बीचमै तुहिन थियो ।” उनको कथन छ ।

यस गाउँकी सुनकशरीले सरसफाइको चासो महिलालाई नै बढी छ भन्ने कुराको पुष्टि गरेकी छिन् । लुगा सिलाएर गुजारा गर्ने उनले ज्यालादारी काम गरेर कमाएको पैसाले एक बोरा सिमेन्ट, सेरामिक प्यान र तीन किलो फलामे छड किनिन् । सामान र ज्यालासहित २५ सय रूपैयाँमा उनको चर्पी तयार भयो । अहिले चर्पी प्रयोग गर्न पाएकोमा उनी खुसी छिन् र समाजमा शिर पनि उचो भएको महसुस गरेकी छिन् ।

चर्पीको आवश्यकता नै महसुस नगरेका मानिसहरू, विशेषतः महिलाहरू छोटो अवधिमा कसरी बिनासहूलियत चर्पी बनाउन अप्ठेरो भए त ? दुवाल भन्छन्, “हामी उनीहरूसँगै दिसा बस्ने ठाउँ हुल्यौं र दिसाका थुप्रामा पहेंला भण्डा गाड्यौं । पाखैभरि ठडिएका भण्डा देखेर उनीहरूले गाउँभरि अव्यवस्थित दिसाको डंगुर रहेछ भन्ने कुरा थाहा पाएर डराए । त्यसपछि हामीले एक दिनमा खुल्ला ठाउँमा कति दिसा थुप्रिन्छ र त्यसले स्वास्थ्यमा कस्तो असर पुऱ्याउँछ भन्ने छलफल गर्यौं । चर्पी र सरसफाइको महत्व बुझाउने काम निरन्तर रूपमा गरेपछि मानिसलाई भित्रैदेखि चर्पी बनाउन र त्यसको प्रयोग गर्न जागृत गरायो ।” सामान्यतया मानिसहरूले चर्चा गर्न नरूचाउने दिसा-पिसाबको कुरा यस रूपमा गर्दा उनीहरूमा उत्पन्न हुने घृणाभावले नै चर्पी बनाउन प्रेरित गरेको र त्यसमा पनि महिलाहरूलाई चर्पी बनाउने कुरामा सजिलै सहमत गराउन सकिएको उनको बुझाइ छ । दुवालका भनाइमा, समुदायका

जानका लागि घन्टौं कुर्नुपर्छ । अझ कहिलेकाहीं त पुरुष प्रहरीहरूले ढाकें बन्द भगरी शौचालय प्रयोग गरिदिँदा स्वाट्ट पस्ने महिलाहरूलाई निकै अप्ठ्यारो पर्छ । 'युरिनल मा' उभिइरहेको वा कमाँटमा बसिरहेका पुरुष प्रहरीलाई देख्दा उनीहरू लाजले भुत्कुक् हुने मात्र होइन, अपमानितसमेत महसुस गर्छन् ।

सेना र प्रहरीमात्र होइन, थुप्रै महिला कर्मचारी काम गर्ने र विभिन्न काम लिएर सर्वसाधारण महिला जानुपर्ने सरकारी कार्यालयहरूमा समेत छुट्टै शौचालयको व्यवस्था छैन । सरकारी कार्यालयहरूमा 'जेन्डर फ्रेंडली' वातावरण नभएको महिलावादी नेता डा. आरजु देउवाको पनि राय छ । कतिपय मन्त्रालयमा समेत महिलाहरूले पुरुषले नै प्रयोग गर्ने शौचालय प्रयोग गरिरहनुपर्नेको अनुभव सुनाउँदै डा. देउवा भन्छन्- 'सरकारले महिलाका लागि सहज र सुविधाजनक शौचालयको व्यवस्था गर्नुपर्छ । महिला कर्मचारीका लागि त्यो पनि पहिलो अनिवार्य आवश्यकता हो ।'

गत वर्षमात्र सिंहदरबारभित्रै सरकाे अर्थ मन्त्रालयको भव्य चारतले महलमा समेत उच्च अधिकृतलाई बाहेक तल्ला तहका महिला कर्मचारीका लागि छुट्टै शौचालयको व्यवस्था छैन । गत वर्षमात्रै बनाइएको अर्थ मन्त्रालयको भवनमा प्रायः प्रत्येक तलामा ३ वटा शौचालय छन् तर महिलाका लागि भनेर एउटा पनि छुट्टयाइएको छैन । एउटै शौचालय प्रयोग गर्नुपर्ने बाध्यताले लाज्जत र अपमानित हुनेमात्र होइन, कहिलेकाहीं यौन दुर्व्यवहारको सामनासमेत गर्नुपर्छ । 'यस्तो अवस्थामा यौन दुर्व्यवहारको सम्भावना निकै हुन्छ,' डा. देउवा भन्छन् ।

प्रहरीका आधारभूत तालिमकै बेलादेखि महिला प्रहरीका लागि छुट्टै शौचालय प्रबन्ध गर्नुपर्ने प्रहरी उपरीक्षक पार्वती थापाको सुझाव छ । प्रहरी संगठनको क्रमिक सुधार गर्दै लैजाने क्रममा महिला शौचालयको समेत व्यवस्था हुने उनको विश्वास छ । 'समस्याले आवश्यकता देखाउँछ । त्यसैले समस्या समाधानका लागि प्रयत्न गर्न प्रेरित गर्छ,' उनी भन्छन् ।

शौचालयको अवस्थाले कुनै पनि देशको विकासमात्र होइन, सभ्यताको स्तरसमेत भल्काउँछ । तर, सिङ्गै मुलुकको अर्थव्यवस्था हाँक्ने र यसक्रममा विदेशीहरूसँग पनि बारवार सम्बन्ध भइरहने अर्थ मन्त्रालयमै महिलाका लागि छुट्टै शौचालयको प्रबन्ध नहुनु कम आश्चर्यजनक होइन । यसले देशकै सरकारी कार्यालयहरू र प्रशासनिक इकाइहरूको अवस्था भल्काउँछ । 'महिलाहरू पनि जागिर खान आउँछन् र उनीहरूका लागि आवश्यक पर्ने शौचालयजस्ता पूर्वाधारको व्यवस्था हुनुपर्छ भनेर हाकिमसाबहरूलाई थाहा हुनुपर्ने हो' अर्थ मन्त्रालयमै लामो समयदेखि कार्यरत शाखा अधिकृत भागीरथि पालिखे भन्छन्, 'महिलालाई सरकारी सेवामा बढाउँदै लैजाने हो भने उनीहरूका लागि यस्ता न्यूनतम आवश्यकताका सुविधा विस्तारमा पनि सरकारले ध्यान दिनुपर्छ ।' उनले माथिल्लो तहमा रहेकाहरूको मानसिकता नै संकीर्ण भएकाले यसमा परिवर्तन हुन नसकेको आरोपसमेत लगाइन् । अरू त अरू, सर्वसाधारणको चाप निक्कै हुने सरकारी कार्यालयजस्तै मालपोत, जिल्ला प्रशासन र अदालतमा समेत छुट्टै महिला शौचालयको व्यवस्था छैन ।

महिलाहरूको शारीरिक अवस्थाअनुसार पुरुषले प्रयोग गर्नेभन्दा फरक शौचालय चाहिन्छ । सरकारी सेवामा महिलालाई समान सहभागिता गराउने गुड्डी सरकारले जति नै हाँके पनि यस्ता सामान्य आवश्यकताहरूको पूर्तिमै ध्यान नदिएको अवस्थाले देखाउँछ- सरकारी प्रतिवद्धता खाली बोलीमा मात्र सीमित छ । लैंगिक दृष्टिकोणमा महिलाका लागि समानता नभएर समताको सिद्धान्तमा आधारित भएर उनीहरूका आवश्यकता पूरा हुनुपर्छ ।

सञ्चारिका लेखमाला, सेप्टेम्बर २००४

कार्यालयमै दुर्व्यवहार सहन बाध्य छन् महिला

हरद अधिकारी

शाही नेपाली सेनाको लडाकु दस्तामा प्रवेश गरी पाँचमहिने कठोर सैन्य तालिम सकेर रीता थापा (परिवर्तित नाम) उत्साही हुँदै सैनिक मुख्यालयस्थित कार्यालय पुगिन् । त्यहाँ पुग्दा उनमा अटेसमटेस जांस र जाँगर थियो । धेरै जिज्ञासा र खुल्लुली पनि । कार्यालयमा जब उनलाई शौचालय जानुपर्‍यो, जाने ठाउँ कतै भेटिनन् । त्यहाँ महिलाका लागि भनेर छुट्टै शौचालय थिएन । पुरुषका लागि व्यवस्था गरिएको शौचालयमा बाध्य भएर उनी जान त गइन् तर मन लाज र तनावले भरियो । यसरी कार्यालय गएको पहिलो दिनमै उनको मन खल्लो भयो । तालिमका बेला महिला समूहमात्र भएको र अस्थायी शौचालयको व्यवस्था भएकाले उनले यो समस्या त्यहाँ भने व्यहोर्नुपरेको थिएन ।

यो समस्याले बन्दुक बाकेर मैदानमा उत्रने उनको साहस र जाशमा त कुनै कमी आएको छैन तर केही खिन्नताको अनुभव भने उनले गरिरहेकी छिन् । सामान्यजस्ता लाग्ने यो समस्या उनी कडा सैनिक अनुशासनका कारण न त कसैलाई सुनाउन सकिछन् न त यसबारे आफूभन्दा माथिका सैनिक अधिकारीसँग गुनासो नै पोस्न सकिछन् । सेनामा इनफेन्ट्री (लडाकु दस्ता) तर्फ महिला सिपाही लिइएको यो पहिलोपटक हो । सैनिक मुख्यालय, सैनिक प्रहरी गुल्म र सैनिक ब्यान्डमा नयाँ भर्ना भएका महिलाले पुरुषसरह नै कामको जिम्मा पाएका छन् । सेनामा कम्तीमा ५ प्रतिशत महिला सहभागी गराउने सरकारको नीति अनुसार अब केही दिनमै कम्तीमा ४० जना महिला सैनिक अधिकृत (लप्टन) मा समेत भर्ना लिइँदैछ ।

तालिम अवधिमा पुरुष सिपाहीले जस्तै कठोर श्रम गर्नुपर्‍यो, रीताजस्ता महिला सिपाहीहरूले पनि । सेनाको लडाकु दस्तामा प्रवेश गरेका भन्डै २ सय महिलाले पाँच महिना लामो कठोर सैनिक तालिम अवधिमा कुनै 'कम्प्रोमाइज' गरेनन् । उनीहरूले सिपाहीका लागि आवश्यक पर्ने जस्तोसुकै क्षमता र गुण प्रदर्शन गरे । बरू कार्यालय सुरु गरेपछि शौचालयका लागि 'कम्प्रोमाइज' गर्नुपरेको तीतो अनुभव रीताजस्तै हरेकले गरेका छन् । रीता भन्छिन्- 'सेनामा महिलालाई सहभागी गराइसकेपछि उनीहरूको शारीरिक आवश्यकताअनुसारको सुविधा दिनुपर्छ । भिनामसिनाजस्ता लाग्ने यस्ता कुराको समाधानले सेनामा महिलाको आकर्षण बढाउन सहयोग पुग्छ ।'

सेनाका जिम्मेवार अधिकारीहरू भने महिला सिपाहीहरूका लागि आवश्यकताअनुसार भौतिक सुविधा बढाउँदै लगिने बताउँछन् । सेनामा महिलाको सहभागिता गराउनु नै ऐतिहासिक कदम भएको बताउँदै सैनिक प्रवक्ता सहायक रथी राजेन्द्र थापा भन्छन्- 'भर्खर त महिलालाई सैनिक सेवामा प्रवेश गराइएको छ । उनीहरूका लागि आवश्यकताअनुसार भौतिक सुविधा थपिँदै लगिने छ ।' सैनिक मुख्यालयमा निजामती र प्राविधिकतर्फ महिला कर्मचारी भने पहिलेदेखि नै कार्यरत थिए ।

भर्खरै मात्र महिला सिपाहीलाई भर्ना लिइएको सेनामा मात्र होइन, वर्षौंदेखि महिला काम गर्दै आएको प्रहरीमा समेत छुट्टै शौचालयको व्यवस्था छैन । प्रहरी प्रधान कार्यालय र उसका मातहतमा रहेका प्रहरी कार्यालयहरूमा छुट्टै शौचालयको व्यवस्था नहुँदा महिलाहरूले समस्या व्यहोर्नु परिरहेको छ । छुट्टै शौचालय आवश्यक पर्छ भन्ने महसुस अहिलेसम्म प्रहरी प्रधान कार्यालयले गर्न सकेको छैन । जब कि प्रहरी सेवामा महिलाहरू नै निर्णायक तहमा पुगिसकेका छन् ।

प्रहरीमा भन्डै ३ हजारजति महिला सहभागिता छ । प्राविधिक सेवाबाहेक नै पनि दुईजना महिला प्रहरी उपरीक्षक पदमा पुगिसकेका छन् । प्रहरी प्रधान कार्यालयमै कम्तीमा १ सय महिला प्रहरी कार्यरत छन् । 'छुट्टै शौचालय हाम्रो आधारभूत आवश्यकतामा पर्ने कुरा हो,' प्रहरी प्रधान कार्यालयमा कार्यरत एक महिला सहायक प्रहरी निरीक्षक भन्छिन् । उनका अनुसार प्रहरी प्रधान कार्यालयभित्र सबै तहका महिला र पुरुषका लागि एउटै शौचालय छ । त्यसमाथि शौचालयको पर्याप्त व्यवस्था छैन । शौचालय

नेपाल स्वास्थ्यको लागि पानी (नेवा) का मध्यमाञ्चल क्षेत्रीय कार्यालयकी संयोजक लक्ष्मी पौड्यालका अनुसार पानी र शौचालयका अभावमा छात्रामा पर्न जाने समस्याबारे गरेको अध्ययनले पनि यही कुरा औल्याएको छ । शौचालय भए पनि अधिकांश शौचालय लैंगिक दृष्टिकोणबाट बनाएको पाइएन, उनले भनिन् । कंटा र कंटीले प्रयोग गर्ने शौचालय सँगै जोडिएकाले किशोरीलाई प्रयोग गर्न अप्ठ्यारो हुने गरेको पाइयो । विद्यालयका भवन ठूला भए पनि शौचालयको योजनामा भने ध्यान नपुऱ्याएको उनको अध्ययनमा उल्लेख छ । कतिपय विद्यालयमा कंटा, कंटी र शिक्षकले एउटै शौचालय प्रयोग गर्ने गरेको पनि उनले बताइन् । त्यस्ता शौचालयमा शिक्षकले नै साँचो लिन गरेकाले विद्यार्थीले सजिलै भनेको समयमा प्रयोग गर्न पाउँदैनन् । त्यसले गर्दा पनि विद्यार्थीहरू वरपरका खोल्सा र खोला किनारमा जान बाध्य भएको पौड्याल बताउँछिन् । विद्यालय भवन निर्माण हुँदा नै व्यवस्थित र पर्याप्त शौचालयको निर्धारण हुनुपर्छ, उनको सुझाव छ । यसरी निर्माण हुने शौचालय लैंगिक रूपमा पनि संवेदनशील हुनुपर्छ ।

बालमनोविज्ञ नन्दिता शर्मा शौचालयको विविध समस्याको अभावमा हुर्किएका किशोरीमा आत्मविश्वासको कमी हुने बताउँछिन् । 'त्यस्तो वातावरणमा हुर्केका युवती धेरैजनाको अगाडि धक फुकाएर प्रस्तुत हुन सक्दैनन्,' उनी भन्छिन्, 'कंटाको तुलनामा उनीहरूलाई गोपनीयताको खाँचा पर्छ ।'

शौचालयको अभावमा उनीहरूमा मानसिक समस्या त पर्छ नै, लामो समयसम्म दिसापिसाब रोकेर राख्नाले पेट दुख्नेलागायतका शारीरिक समस्या पनि स्वप्नुपर्ने हुन्छ । यसले कंटीहरूमा पछिसम्म पुरुष साथीलाई विश्वास नगर्ने वातावरण सिर्जना हुने स्वतरा बढ्छ, शर्मा भन्छिन् । कंटासँग डराउने, लाज मान्ने समस्या पनि उब्जिन सक्छ । बाल सरोकार केन्द्र नेपाल (सिबिन) ले गरेको 'मौन पीडा शीर्षक अध्ययनमा पनि शौचालयको अभावमा विद्यालय जाने किशोरीमा विभिन्न समस्या उत्पन्न हुने गरेको उल्लेख छ ।

जथाभावी दिसापिसाब गर्दा भोग्नुपर्ने स्वास्थ्य समस्याबारे शिक्षित वर्ग सायदै अनभिज्ञ छन् होला । तर पनि यसबाट पर्ने शारीरिक, मानसिक र सामाजिक समस्याबारे उनीहरू सचेत भएको पाइँदैन । हेर्दा सामान्य जस्तो लाग्ने पनि यो स्वास्थ्यका दृष्टिले मात्रै नभई महिलाका समग्र अस्तित्वसँग गाँसिएको छ । विद्यालय निर्माण गर्दा अनिवार्य रूपमा कंटा र कंटी छात्रालाई छुट्टाछुट्टै शौचालय निर्माण गर्न सरकारीस्तरबाटै पहल गरेमा यसमा सुधार आउन सक्छ । शौचालयकै कारण बालिकाले विद्यालय छाड्नुपर्ने अवस्था बढ्दै गएमा यसले शिक्षाको राष्ट्रिय लक्ष्यमा नै नकारात्मक असर पुऱ्याउन सक्छ । छात्राले विद्यालय छाड्ने विभिन्न कारणमध्ये यो पनि प्रमुख बन्न पुग्नेछ । विद्यालय छाड्ने दरमा कमी ल्याउने सरकारी लक्ष्य पूरा गर्न पनि समयमै त्यसतर्फ ध्यान दिन जरूरी छ ।

सञ्चारिका लेखमाला, अगष्ट २००४

शौचालयकै कारण विद्यालय छोड्न बाध्य किशोरीहरु

संगीता रिजाल

राजधानीबाट करिब ४० किलोमिटर मात्र टाढा पर्छ घादिङको सिम्लेफाँट । तर, विडम्बना यहाँका अधिकांश परिवार व्यवस्थित शौचालयबाट वञ्चित छन् । सामान्य गाउँलेको त कुरै छाडौं, विद्यालयमा समेत शौचालयको व्यवस्था छैन । घरमा बस्ने महिला मात्र होइन, विद्यालय जाने किशोरीहरू पनि यसको अभावमा पीडा भोग्न बाध्य छन् । भूमेश्वर गाविस- ८ सिम्लेफाँटस्थित पञ्चकन्या प्रावि त्यसैको एउटा उदाहरण हो । यहाँका विद्यार्थीले वरपरका खोल्सा तथा जंगललाई शौचालयको रूपमा प्रयोग गर्दै आएका छन् । त्यसो त विद्यालय हाताभित्र एउटा शौचालय नभएको भने होइन ।

एक दशकअघि निर्माण भएको उक्त शौचालय प्रायः बन्द नै रहन्छ । एक त शौचालय कहिलेकाहीं आउने पाहुनाका लागि मात्र खुला गरिन्छ । विद्यालयका प्रधानाध्यापक रामहरि सुवेदी रकमको अभावमा पर्याप्त शौचालय निर्माण गर्न नसकेको बताउँछन् । खोल्सातिर दिसापिसाब गर्न जाँदा कंटाहरूले देखेखान् भन्ने डरले छात्राहरूलाई सधैं पिरलो हुनेगर्छ । अफ रजस्वला (महिनावारी) हुँदा त बढी समस्या खेप्नुपर्ने उनीहरूको अनुभव छ । 'महिनावारी हुँदा पटक/पटक शौचालय जानुपर्ने हुन्छ,' कक्षा ५ मा अध्ययनरत सुनिताले आफ्नो दुःखसो पोखिन्, 'त्यसैले यस्तो बेलामा विद्यालय नै आउँदैन ।

गाउँका विद्यालयमा मात्र होइन, शहरका निजी विद्यालयमा समेत यस्तो समस्या देखिने गरेका

छ । धेरैजसो स्कुलमा एउटा मात्रै शौचालय हुन्छ । लामो समय पालो पर्वनुपर्ने समस्याका कारण धेरैजसो किशोरी छात्राहरू शौचालय नै जाँदैनन् । अर्कोतिर शौचालयमा पानीको समस्याका कारण उनीहरू सजिलै प्रयोग गर्न पाउँदैनन् । कतिपय विद्यालयका शौचालयमा चुकुल र बत्तीका समस्या हुँदा किशोरीहरू पीडित छन् ।

कंकली माध्यमिक विद्यालय बयरा, चितवनमा कक्षा १० मा अध्ययनरत सुम्निमा डल्लाकोटीले पनि यस्तै अनुभव गरेकी छन् । विद्यालयमा भएका शौचालय उचित सरसफाइको अभावमा प्रयोग गर्न नसक्ने अवस्थामा रहेको उनले सुनाइन् । उनी पनि प्रायः रजस्वलाको अवधिमा विद्यालय जान्दैनन् ।

शौचालयभित्र लेखिएका अश्लील शब्दले पनि आफूहरू सजिलै शौचालय प्रयोग गर्न नसकेको किशोरीहरू बताउँछन् । 'शौचालयभित्र लेखिएका फोहार शब्द र चित्रले दिनभरि नै मुडअफ हुन्छ,' सुम्निमाले भनिन् । त्यसले गर्दा पढाइमा नै नराम्रो असर पुग्छ । शौचालयको उचित व्यवस्था नहुँदा कतिपय किशोरीहरू दिसापिसाब रोकेर बस्न बाध्य भएको सुनाउँछन् । 'चर्पीकै पीरले हामी पानीसमेत पर्याप्त पिउन सक्दैनौं, उनीहरू आफ्नो पीडा यसरी सुनाउँछन् । राजधानीका निजी विद्यालयमा समेत यस्ता समस्या नभएका होइनन् । लिटिल स्टार नामको एक विद्यालयमा पनि पानीको समस्याका कारण छात्राहरू समस्यामा पर्ने गरेको बताउँछन् । विद्यालय ठूलो छ तर विद्यार्थी संख्याको अनुपातमा शौचालय भने ज्यादै कम छन् । कहिलेकाहीं त छात्राहरू कंटाेले प्रयोग गर्ने शौचालयमा जानसमेत बाध्य भएको बताउँछन् । 'तर त्यो पनि सजिलो कहाँ छ र?', कक्षा ७ मा अध्ययनरत अस्मिता भन्छिन् । कंटाहरूले देखे भने जिस्क्याउलान् भन्ने चिन्ताले सताइरहन्छ । उनीहरूमा कंटा साथीबाट हुने दुर्व्यवहारको त्रास पनि उत्तिकै छ । शौचालयको अभावमा कतिपय छात्रा विद्यालयसमेत छोड्न बाध्य छन् । केही समयअघि हेटौँडाको एक विद्यालयमा शौचालय नहुँदा दुई किशोरीले पढाइ नै छाड्न पुगेको समाचार प्रकाशित भएको थियो । उक्त विद्यालयमा शौचालयको अभावले छात्राहरू नजिकै रहेको छिमेकीको घरमा जान बाध्य थिए । पर्याप्त शौचालय नहुनु र भएका सीमित शौचालयमा पनि पानीलगायतका सुविधा नहुँदा छात्राहरूलाई बढी समस्या पर्ने गएको हो ।

सर्वोच्च अदालतमा महिला न्यायाधीश हुन्छन् भन्ने सोच नै नराखी बहस बेञ्च पुरुषले मात्र पिसाब फेर्न हुने युरिनल ट्वाइलेट राखिएको थियो । तर, न्यायाधीश शिलु सिंह आएपछि यो व्यवस्था परिवर्तन गर्न बाध्य भयो । अहिले पनि कतिपय सरकारी अफिस तथा विद्यालयहरूमा सर्वोच्च अदालतमा जस्तै पहिलेको सोचमा परिवर्तन आएको छैन । त्यसतर्फ नीति-निर्णायक तहमा बसेका व्यक्तिहरूले सोच्नैपर्छ ।

धेरैजसो कार्यालयमा महिला र पुरुषका लागि एउटै मात्र शौचालय हुन्छ । यसले गर्दा कतिपय महिलाहरू शौचालयमा पिसाब फेर्न नगर्दै निकै लामो समयसम्म पिसाब रोकेर बस्ने गर्दछन् । यो समस्या बसमा यात्रा गर्दा पनि महिलाहरूका लागि त्यति नै धेरै हुन्छ ।

यति मात्र नभएर महिलाहरू पिसाब लाग्छ भनेर प्रसस्त पानीसमेत पिउँदैनन् । यसले गर्दा पिसाब थैलीमा पिसाब नै भरिदैन । र, कम पिसाब लाग्ने गर्छ । यसले गर्दा पिसाबथैलीमा संक्रमण हुने गर्दछ । मृगौला रोग विशेषज्ञ डा. ऋषिकुमार काफ्लेका अनुसार पिसाबथैलीमा लामो समयसम्म पिसाब रोक्नाले पिसाबमै संक्रमण हुनसक्छ । यसले गर्दा पेटको तल्लो भाग दुख्ने, कम्मर दुख्ने, मृगौलामा समस्या आउने, पत्थरी हुने, ज्वरो आउनेजस्ता रोग देखा पर्दछन् । यो समस्या पुरुषमा भन्दा महिलामा बढी मात्रामा देखिने गरेको छ । समयमा उपचार गरिएन भने यो रोग निको हुन गाह्रो हुने डा. ऋषिकुमार काफ्लेले बताउनुभयो ।

सञ्चारिका लेखमाता, जुलाई २००४

सार्वजनिक शौचालयको अभावमा महिला

निर्जला कक्षपति

रोल्पाकी धनमाया मगर राजधानी छिरेको केही दिन मात्र बितेको छ । दिनहुँजसो हुने भिडन्तका कारण गाउँमा बस्न नसकेर उहाँ राजधानी आउनुभएको हो । अहिले उहाँ राजधानीमा डेरा लिएर बस्नुभएको छ । राजधानी बस्नका लागि केही मेलोमसो त गर्नेपथ्यो । त्यसैले उहाँले राजधानीमा पसल थापर बस्नुभएको छ । यसरी दिनभरि फुटपाथमा पसल राख्दा उहाँलाई धेरै कुराको चिन्ता पर्दछ । धनमायाको जस्तै फुटपाथमा पसल चलाउँदा मानिसलाई दिनको तीनपटक त कम्तीमा पनि पिसाव फेर्नु नै पर्ने हुन्छ । बटुवाहरूले नै सार्वजनिक शौचालय 'ऊ त्यहाँ छ' भनेर देखाएपछि उहाँ शौचालयभित्र छिर्नुभयो । दिनको ४-५ पटक पिसाव फेर्दा १२-१५ रूपैयाँ त उहाँले पिसाव फेरेबापत खर्च गर्नुपथ्यो । तर, उहाँसँग सार्वजनिक शौचालयमा पिसाव फेरेबापत तिर्ने पैसा नभएका कारण उहाँ शौचालयभित्र छिर्ने छाड्नुभयो । अनि सार्वजनिक शौचालयकै छेउतिर खाली जग्गामा पिसाव फेर्न थाल्नुभएको छ । त्यो उहाँको रह्र थिएन, बाध्यता थियो ।

हो, यसरी काठमाडौंका धेरै युवाले अब पनि सार्वजनिक शौचालयको प्रयोग गर्दैनन् । किनभने सार्वजनिक शौचालय सञ्चालन गर्न काठमाडौं महानगरपालिकाले भाडामा दिएको छ । त्यसैले कुनै ठाउँमा एकचोटि पिसाव फेरे साहुमालिकहरूले २ रूपैयाँ लिन्छन् त कुनै ठाउँमा तीन रूपैयाँ । हाम्राजस्तो पितृसत्तान्त्रिक समाज अनि आर्थिक सम्पत्तिमा पुरुषकै अधिकार हुने हुँदा महिलाले पिसाव फेरेबापत दिनमा १५-१६ रूपैयाँ कसरी खर्च गर्न सकिन्छन् ?

जनसंख्याको हिसाबले हेर्दा राजधानीमा सबभन्दा बढी मानिस बसोबास गर्छन् । राजधानीमा अवसर र सुविधाका कुराहरू एकतिर छन् भने देशमा द्वन्द्व सुरु भएयता गाउँबाट राजधानी छिर्ने क्रम पनि तीव्र रूपले बढेको छ । त्यसैले काठमाडौं अहिले हरेक दृष्टिकोणले प्रदूषित बन्न पुगेको छ । करिब साँढे लाख जनसंख्या भएको काठमाडौंमा अहिले मानिसको संख्या हवानै बढेको छ । तर, काठमाडौं महानगरपालिकामा मात्र ३३ वटा सार्वजनिक शौचालय छन् । आकाशपुल निर्माणसँगै बनेका सार्वजनिक शौचालय अर्थात् आकाशपुलमुनि रहेको सार्वजनिक शौचालयको स्थिति केही ठीक अवस्थामा रहे पनि धेरैजसो सार्वजनिक शौचालय जीर्ण अवस्थामा छन् । सरसफाइको कमीले गर्दा परेवाट नाक छोपेर हिंड्नुपर्ने अवस्था छ । महिला र पुरुषका लागि एउटै घरमा शौचालय राखिएको हुँदा महिलालाई सुरक्षा छैन । अधिकांश सार्वजनिक शौचालयको ढाँका छैन पनि । कुनैकुनै ठाउँमा महिला र पुरुष भनेर छुट्याइए पनि त्यहाँ जाँ पनि छिर्ने सक्छन् । त्यसैले पिसाव फेरुञ्जेल अर्का एकजना साथी कुरुवा चाहिन्छ । नत्रभने ढुक्कले पिसाव फेर्ने गर्दा पनि एकजना महिलाले बताइन् ।

काठमाडौंको मुटु मानिने रत्नपार्क क्षेत्र र वरपर मात्र दुईवटा सार्वजनिक शौचालय छन् । पुरुषलाई नै मुख्य ध्यान दिएर बनाइएका यस्ता शौचालयमा महिलाका लागि सानो एउटा ठाउँ मात्र छुट्याइएको छ । पुरुषका लागि ६ वटा पिसाव फेर्ने ठाउँ बनाइएको छ भने महिलाका लागि बढीमा ३ वटासम्म मात्र बनाइएको छ । यसले गर्दा पनि महिलालाई पिसाव फेर्ने अप्ठेरो परिरहेको छ ।

काठमाडौं महानगरपालिका वातावरण विभाग तथा सहरी वातावरण शाखाका प्रमुख रविनमान श्रेष्ठका अनुसार, ६ महिनाभित्र २२ वटा नयाँ थप सार्वजनिक शौचालय बनाउने साँच महानगरपालिकाको छ । यो थप गरिने शौचालय पुरानै ठाउँमा पनि बन्न सक्छन्, नयाँ ठाउँमा पनि बन्न सक्छन् । तर यसरी नयाँ बन्न लागेको सार्वजनिक शौचालयमा पनि महिलाको लागि छुट्टै व्यवस्था गरिएको छैन ।

महिला र पुरुषको शौचालय फरकफरक ठाउँमा नहुँदा कामकाजी महिलाले समेत उत्तिकै समस्या भोग्नुपरेको छ । चाहे त्यो सरकारी कार्यालयमा काम गर्ने महिला कर्मचारी होस् या त निजी कार्यालयमा काम गर्ने ।

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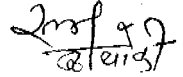
आभार

नेवाले सन् २००४ देखि निरन्तर सञ्चालन गर्दै आएको सरसफाइ प्रवर्द्धनका लागि सञ्चार अभियानमा सहभागी हुनुभएका सञ्चारकर्मीहरूको चासो र हौसलाले गर्दा यसपटक पनि हामीले सरसफाइसम्बन्धी लेखरचनाहरूको सँगालोलाई यो पुस्तकका रूपमा ल्याएका छौं । सरसफाइसम्बन्धी सञ्चार अभियानमा सहभागी भई सरसफाइसम्बन्धी वषयवस्तुलाई जनसमक्ष ल्याउन सञ्चारकर्मीहरूले गर्नुभएको प्रयासलाई नेवा सद्भावना गर्दछ । विभिन्न सञ्चार माध्यममा कार्यरत सञ्चारकर्मीहरूलाई उहाँहरूको मूल्यवान परिश्रमका लागि म हार्दिक धन्यवाद दिन चाहन्छु ।

यस पुस्तकको साजसज्जा लगायत नेपाली संस्करणको सम्पादनका लागि नेवाका सञ्चार अधिकृत भरत अधिकारीलाई एवं अँग्रेजी संस्करणको सम्पादनका लागि नेवाका परैवी अधिकृत सोनिया थापालाई धन्यवाद दिन चाहन्छु । नेपाली लेखरचनाहरू टाइप गर्ने नेवाका प्रशासकीय अधिकृत केशव बहादुर बिष्ट धन्यवादका पात्र हुनुहुन्छ । यसैगरी लेखरचनाहरूको अँग्रेजी अनुवादका लागि त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालयको शिक्षाशास्त्रका विद्यार्थी सदिना खत्री एवं स्वतन्त्र पत्रकार बीना खरेललाई पनि धन्यवाद दिन चाहन्छु ।

अन्त्यमा WASH अभियान सञ्चालन तथा यो पुस्तक प्रकाशनका लागि आर्थिक सहयोग उपलब्ध गराउने वाटरएड नेपालप्रति कृतज्ञता ज्ञापन गर्दछु ।

सरसफाइसम्बन्धी जानकारीहरू हासिल गर्न यो पुस्तक सहयोगी हुने कुरामा हामी आशावादी छौं ।



रतन बुढाथोकी
प्रबन्धक

ज्ञान व्यवस्थापन तथा परैवी विभाग

भूमिका

उचित सरसफाइको अभाव तथा फोहार पानीका कारणबाट लाग्ने रोगव्याधिले गर्दा प्रत्येक वर्ष हाम्रो देशका १५ हजार बालबालिकाको मृत्यु हुने गरेको छ, जसको अर्थ प्रत्येक हप्ता २ सय ८८ जना बालबालिकाले ज्यान गुमाउँछन् ।

नेपालमा स्वानेपानीको तुलनामा सरसफाइका सुविधाहरूको उपलब्धता ज्यादै कम छ । नेपाल जीवनस्तर सर्भेक्षण २००३/०४ अनुसार ८२ प्रतिशत जनसंख्याले सफा स्वानेपानीको सुविधा पाइरहेका छन् भने सरसफाइ (चर्पी) को सुविधा केवल ३९ प्रतिशत नेपालीले मात्र पाएका छन् । सरसफाइ सुविधालाई सामान्यतया स्वानेपानीको सुविधासँग समावेश गर्ने गरिएको छैन । तराईजस्तो जनघनत्व बढी भएको क्षेत्रमा सरसफाइको पहुँच नभएकाहरूको संख्या धेरै छ, जहाँका आधाभन्दा बढी जनसंख्याले स्वानेपानीको सुविधा पाए तापनि सरसफाइका सुविधाबाट वञ्चित छन् । विगतमा बनिएका चर्पीहरू पनि उचित व्यवस्थापनको कमीले गर्दा यसको प्रयोगको दिगोपन एक चुनौती बनेको छ ।

उल्लिखित परिस्थिति हुँदाहुँदै पनि सञ्चार माध्यममा सरसफाइसम्बन्धी सामग्रीहरूले निकै कम स्थान पाइरहेको वर्तमान स्थितिमा नेवाले सञ्चारकर्मीहरूसँग दुई वर्ष अधिदेखि सुरु गरेको सहकार्यले सकारात्मक प्रभाव पारेको अनुभव हामीले गरेका छौं । यस अवधिमा सञ्चारकर्मीहरूले सरसफाइसम्बन्धी विषयवस्तुलाई पहिचान गर्दै यसलाई मानव विकाससँग आबद्ध गरी महत्त्व दिने कार्य सुरु भयो । यो सहभागिताले सरसफाइसम्बन्धी चेतनाको विकास हुनुका साथै सञ्चारकर्मीहरूमा प्रतिबद्धताको विकास गर्नुका साथै सरसफाइसम्बन्धी सामग्रीहरूले सञ्चार माध्यममा स्थान पाए ।

यसैगरी सञ्चार माध्यमसँग सहकार्यका लागि नेपाल WASH समूहले पनि सञ्चारकर्मीहरूलाई सरसफाइसम्बन्धी विषयवस्तुको पहिचान गरी त्यस्ता सामग्री उत्पादन गर्ने उत्प्रेरित गर्दै आइरहेको छ । यसबाहेक सञ्चारकर्मीहरूलाई यस विषयमा अद्यावधिक गर्ने, उनीहरूको दृष्टिकोण तथा सुझाव लिनका लागि छलफल गर्ने तथा राजनैतिक विषयवस्तुसह सरसफाइसम्बन्धी मुद्दालाई उठाउने प्रयासलाई निरन्तरता दिइदै आएको छ ।

यसै सिलसिलामा नेवाले सञ्चारिका समूहको 'सञ्चारिका लेखमाला' मा सरसफाइसम्बन्धी लेखरचना प्रकाशनका लागि सहकार्य गरेको थियो । यसैगरी नेपाल वातावरण पत्रकार समूह तथा सञ्चारिका समूहसँगको सहकार्यमा चितवन जिल्लामा सरसफाइ प्रवर्द्धनका लागि दुई महिने सञ्चार अभियानसमेत सञ्चालन गरेको थियो । यस अवधिमा चितवन जिल्लामा भएका सरसफाइसँग सम्बन्धित जल्दाबल्दा विषयहरूले सञ्चार माध्यममा स्थान पाए । यी विषयवस्तुले सन् २००९ सम्ममा चितवन जिल्लालाई पूर्ण सरसफाइयुक्त जिल्ला बनाउने लक्ष्य प्राप्तिका सहयोग पुऱ्याएका छन् भन्ने कुरामा हामी विश्वस्त छौं ।

यो पुस्तक सञ्चारिका लेखमालामा प्रकाशित सरसफाइसम्बन्धी सामग्री तथा चितवन जिल्लामा सञ्चालित सञ्चार अभियानका क्रममा प्रकाशित लेख रचनाहरूको सँगालो हो । पाठकहरूको दायरालाई फराकिलो बनाउन यी लेखरचनाहरूलाई अँग्रेजीमा समेत अनुवाद गरिएको छ । सरसफाइलाई सञ्चार माध्यममा ल्याउन सार्थक भूमिका निर्वाह गर्ने सञ्चारिका समूह तथा नेपाल वातावरण पत्रकार समूहलाई धन्यवाद दिन चाहन्छु । यस पुस्तकका सम्बन्धमा आफ्नो राय तथा सुझाव पठाई यसमा रहेका सुधार गर्नुपर्ने पक्षहरू औँल्याइदिनु हुन अनुरोध गर्दछु ।



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यस पुस्तकमा प्रकाशित लेखहरूमा व्यक्त विचार तथा अभिव्यक्ति लेखकका निजी हुन् ।

यसमा नेवाको संस्थागत सहमति नहुन पनि सक्छ ।

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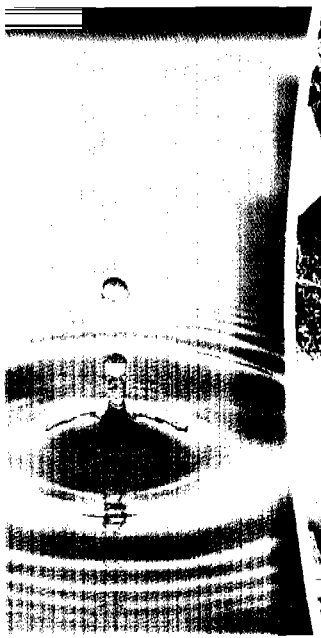
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चैत्र २०६२



पत्रपत्रिका नियाल्दा
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