

Agonies of caste based victims

Ms Manju Nepali, a representative from Badi Community narrated the pains of being a Badi, a sub-caste among Dalit Community. She said that she had not been able to get the name of her husband though her daughter is adult now. Without the name of her husband, her daughter has not yet obtained citizenship.

Lilkumari Bishwakarma, a 22-year old Dalit girl, did not only melt the participants with her heart-rending stories but also emboldened them to combat caste-based discrimination together. She was narrating her story at the International Consultation, since she belonged to Dalit community, some upper caste people continued conspiring against her and her family members. Her 13-year-old sister Saraswati has been jailed on a false charge of murdering a Gurung girl named Deepa who was in fact her friend. It is also much depressing to find that the upper caste Gurungs in her community connived to falsify her date of birth, registered in her school and made it 17 so as to try her in the court. Saraswati had, in fact, noticed Sunita, another girl in her community, murder Deepa. Helpless Saraswati and her mother were handed down the verdict of life imprisonment and they are now languishing in prison for no reason. The sufferings of Lilkumari and her family did not end here. Their house was burnt down by the upper caste Gurungs in Ghandruk village near Pokhara, a famous tourist hub in Nepal. The trauma led to mental break down of her mother. The entire family was dismissed from the village. A team of the participants took the heart-breaking story of Lilkumari to various ministries and National Human Rights

Commission seeking justice for her.

Similarly, Geeta Sunar Rana from Parbat district said she was just 13 when she happened to fall in love with her teacher. She later conceived and gave birth to a baby girl, Mausamee. The teacher's family members refused to accept Geeta as daughter-in-law because she was from a Dalit community. She sought help from the villagers and asked them to recognize her relation with the teacher.



But the entire society turned deaf ears towards her agony, as they were upper castes. However, some members in the village convinced the teacher's parents to provide a meagerly support to her. But it also discontinued after the teacher left the village. Mausamee has not yet obtained citizenship as her father has refused to accept her as his child.

The participants after having heard the pathetic story of Geeta, immediately collected some fund to support for Mausamee's education. Ruth Manoram, a Dalit leader and activists from India have promised to send some thousands of rupees for Geeta.

Janaki Ram, 40, from Saptari district narrated how she along with her fellow villagers, underwent severe hardships

when the so-called upper castes imposed 'economic blockade' on their community just because they did not throw a strongly stinking carcass. Janaki Ram and her villagers were subjected to various other discriminations. They were boycotted from defecating around their houses and they were also prohibited from even buying daily essentials from the shops. However, they continued fighting the discrimination and some other Dalit organizations and activists supported them to get justice. The representatives from international communities present during the Consultation pledged strong support to the struggle for justice and dignified life.

It was a fateful day for Ram Bahadur Parki, a haliya worker on 5 May, 2004 when he was taking some logs out of the house. He said his master was accidentally hit by a log and was slightly wounded. The enraged master then bitterly scolded Ram Bahadur and started beating him on the face. Ram Bahadur, scared, ran away from his master's house leaving his wife and children in the lurch. But it did not end his suffering. His wife also had to bear the mistreatment from the master. He refused to provide even sufficient food to them. He served his master Uddhav Singh of Raikabar Bichawa VDC-2 for over two years. Parki had also served Bahadur Singh Bhandari in Samaiji VDC-9, in Dadeldhura district as he had taken a loan of Rs. 12,800 from the latter. Parki's forefathers also had served Uddhav Singh Bhandari as haliya. As a haliya, Parki's duty was to look after Bhandari's 7 bighas of land. Forty-two years old Parki, son of Jogi Singh Parki had also the responsibility to look after a six-member family.

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