

TOASTMASTERS

# INKSPIRE

NEWSLETTER OF  
TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL  
DIVISION A, N, & O

JUNE 2021



EVEREST  
SANSKRITI  
GANDAKI  
POKHARA  
NAMI  
FOUNDERS  
SANSKRITI  
AGNI  
RELIANCE  
PRABHU  
POKHARA  
BIRGUNJ  
EVEREST  
FOUNDERS  
GANDAKI  
BHAKTAPUR  
POKHARA  
SHANGRILA  
RELIANCE  
NAMI  
SANSKRITI  
HEALER'S  
AGNI

KCM

KATHMANDU

BHAIRAHAWA

YETI

BUTWAL

DHARAN

KUSOM

ACADEMIA

LEADBOX

KCM

NABIL

NORTHMANDU

JHAPA

KUSOM

ACADEMIA

BHAIRAHAWA

TOURISM

LEADBOX

BANESHWOR

KATHMANDU

DHARAN

KUSOM

STANDARD CHARTERED

ACADEMIA

KATHMANDU

TOURISM

LEADBOX

BUTWAL

BHAIRAHAWA

TOURISM

DHARAN

LEADBOX

KUSOM

KATHMANDU

JHAPA

ACADEMIA

NORTHMANDU

DHARAN

YETI

STANDARD CHARTERED

ACADEMIA

KATHMANDU

TOURISM

LEADBOX

LAXMI BANK

CHITWAN LANDMARK

JAWALAKHEL GROUP OF INDUSTRIES

PROFESSIONALS

DHULIKHEL

HIMALAYA

BODHI

RATO BANGALA

SANIMA BANK

ACAN

LAXMI BANK

RATO BANGALA

PROFESSIONALS

IMPERIAL

CHITWAN LANDMARK

DHULIKHEL

ACE

RATO BANGALA

HIMALAYA

SANIMA BANK

LAXMI BANK

DHULIKHEL

ACCA

HIMALAYA

PROFESSIONALS

SAIM

HIMALAYA

CHITWAN LANDMARK

DHULIKHEL

EURO

BODHI

# CONTRIBUTORS

## **Editor**

*Alfa M. Shakya*

## **PR & Editorial Team**

*Kriti Panth, Aastha Shrestha, Biraj Gurung  
Mohini Shrestha, Sagarika Khadka*

## **Contributors**

*Aashaya Upadhyay, Aasish Rai, Alex Wrigley, Anushka Shrestha,  
Archana Thapa, Basanti Maharjan, Bhupendra KC, Durga Pandey,  
Esha Thapa, Grishma Shrestha, Johnson Shrestha, Krishna Prasad Acharya,  
Kriti Panth, Manoj Subedi, Mridul Basnet, Neha Agrawal, Niladri S. Parial,  
Priya Chapagain, Ritu Bhusal, Sampanna Shrestha, Sandhya Rathi,  
Santoshi Nepal, Saroj Tamrakar, Srishti Hada, Sunetra Pradhanang,  
Sumycheen Bhusal, Suraj Gurung, Suraj Thapa, Youbesh Dhaubhadhel*

## **District Officers**

*Ranjit Acharya DTM, Suman Shakya DTM, Moon Pradhan DTM, Anish Dixit,  
Avish Acharya, Diptee Acharya, Rabindra Pradhan, Brijendra R. Joshi,  
Anjali Acharya, Ankit Goenka, Subrath Poudel, Prashant Shrestha,  
Biraj Pradhan, Jenny Manandhar*

## **Aspire**

*Dilip Nepal, Payal Saria, Chandan Goopta & Seema Golchha*

## **Inscribe**

*Bhanu Dabadi DTM, Priya Chapagain, Alfa M. Shakya*

## **Opus**

*Bijaya Mishra, Dipesh Chalise, Madhu Sudan Dahal*

## **Newsletter Design**



*Inkspire 2020/21*

*Newsletter of Toastmasters in Nepal  
Issue 1*



@ ToastmastersInNepal



@company/toastmasters-in-nepal



toastmastersnepal.org

# EDITORIAL TEAM



MOHINI SHRESTHA



ALFA M. SHAKYA



SAGARIKA KHADKA



KRITI PANTH



BIRAJ GURUNG



AASTHA SHRESTHA



MESSAGES

# PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



**RANJIT ACHARYA, DTM**  
District 41 Program Quality Director (2020-21)  
District 41 Director Elect (2021-22)

Dear Nepal Toastmaster members,

It is said that the journey of a thousand miles starts with a small step.

I started my Toastmasters journey more than 21 years ago taking the first baby step by entering the meeting room of Kathmandu Toastmasters Club in the United Nations building. From then till now, I have taken so many steps, have made so many mistakes, have learned so many lessons, and have met so many friends for life. All these were not planned but happened naturally in my journey of 2 decades. I had never imagined that one day I will lead the world's largest Toastmasters District as the District leader. The leadership path that I followed was full of challenges and learnings, it enabled me to make decisions and helped me to network with so many members and fellow leaders.

Today, while I feel elated to reflect back on my journey, I equally feel proud to be part of the Nepal Toastmasters fraternity. The growth in all three divisions A, N, and O has been praiseworthy, the leaders and members have once again achieved excellence in everything they have executed this year too. My sincere gratitude to each one of you for supporting, helping, and guiding me in my path, my humble appreciation to each one of you for doing what you have been doing. Without teamwork, without cooperation, and without collaboration, this wouldn't have been possible.

Friends,

If I can make it this far in my journey, just imagine where each one of you can reach. There are boundless opportunities in Toastmasters to foster your leadership and communication skills. Start taking small steps by taking responsibility in the club executive committee and gradually grow as a leader to take up club leadership someday. The path is already paved for each member, it is up to us to walk through that path. There is an abundance of opportunities knocking at our doorsteps, it is up to us to open that door and welcome the opportunity.

My journey of learning continues and will always keep me a learner. As I start my new chapter in Toastmasters leadership, I seek your support and cooperation as always. I am confident together we can and together we will make ourselves proud, once again.

## DISTRICT PARLIAMENTARIAN'S MESSAGE



**SUMAN SHAKYA, DTM**  
District 41 Parliamentarian (2020-21)  
Coordinator – Toastmasters in Nepal

### Staying 'positive' while testing 'positive'

A new understanding of what normal is, has filled the consciousness of every individual in the world the past year. Covid-19 pandemic spread dangerously, especially during the 2nd wave in Nepal, affecting Toastmasters and its extended family members. My sincere prayers to those who lost their lives. To those who braved the situation, my good wishes for all to stay safe and healthy.

For the first time, the word 'positive' has a negative meaning. Initially looked down upon to have tested 'positive', there has been a growing acceptance (at least in the urban setting) that Covid-19 will be part of our lives. Staying 'positive', maintaining good health practices, and getting vaccinated to prevent or lower health impact have been a way out.

I have personally learnt many lessons from Toastmasters who stayed positive during such times. One, to participate in the meetings and continue learning. Two, using new creative ways to conduct meetings including humorous, musical sessions, and yoga. Three, to maintain mindfulness and sanity as positive energy in the meeting became therapeutic.

We switched from online meetings to hybrids to fully attending physically and back to online mode. In the process, members became more comfortable with the technicalities of handling online and hybrid activities. It helped them in their profession and to better appreciate the global change touching our lives, be it at work or with children/students studying online.

This year too, our members did not disappoint. Kudos to all the participants who made it to the semifinals and finals of the District 41 contest. Congratulations to District champions Shreya Ghimire (Evaluation) and Priya Chapagain (Table Topics). Additional appreciation to Priya for being 1st runner up in the International Speech Contest. You all have made the Toastmasters fraternity in Nepal proud.

There were more challenges for leaders this year to rally their teams to achieve significant goals. My deep appreciation to the 3 Division Directors and its council, 9 Area Directors and its council, 45 Club Presidents and its Executive Committees. Thank you for your contribution and service for starting new clubs, supporting weak ones, and collectively remaining positive.

I would like to congratulate all the new leaders who will don the mantle of Chief Happiness Officers for the new term starting July 2021 and serve the members. Congratulations to the Country Office team especially the Public Relations and the Editorial Team for bringing out this issue of Inkspire through these difficult times. One more reason to stay positive!

### **DIVISION A DIRECTOR'S** **MESSAGE**



**MOON PRADHAN, DTM**  
Division A Director

Dear Fellow Toastmasters,

The Toastmasters year 2020-21 has been unlike any other I have experienced in my 10 years of journey in this fraternity. I have seen some highs, some lows, some dejections, some perseverance, and overall, I have seen triumphs over tribulations. As this year comes to an end, I am thankful that we have grown through it all.

It is with great pride that I share the awards that the clubs and areas in this division have achieved. Area A1 (TM Diptee Acharya) became the first area in District 41 to achieve Agile Area Director award, followed soon by Area A2 (TM Rabindra Pradhan), making Division A itself Agile Division within September 2020. The Division started with 11 clubs total. We had added 2 clubs by September end (Sanskriti Toastmasters Club and Healers Toastmasters Club) and two more by January 2021 (EBL Toastmasters Club and Birgunj Toastmasters Club). It is with pleasure that I share that Division A is the first Division in District 41 in which all the areas added one new club each. We were successful in chartering a club in a new city – Birgunj, which is in a new province/district than those covered earlier. Out of the 4 clubs added, three are eligible for Young Achievers Award (Sanskriti Toastmasters Club, Healers Toastmasters Club, and EBL Toastmasters Club).

As I look at the dashboard, I am happy to see that so many of the members have completed their levels, new members have been added, club officers have attended their training, and the clubs have completed their administrative responsibilities. It was overwhelming to see the response for the three events that were organized within the Division.

All these achievements were made despite two lockdowns, clubs having to adjust to online meetings, sometimes even going hybrid. Everest Toastmasters Club was the first in Nepal to start hybrid meetings, which was going on successfully. I am sure in the days to come clubs will slowly revert to hybrid meetings and eventually a fully physical meeting. Some clubs have thrived in the online setup during lockdowns. I foresee that these clubs will continue their online meetings either fully or go hybrid. It's all about learning life skills in the guise of learning public speaking and leadership skills, the medium is not going to be a hindrance. During this year, we were successful in reviving Prabhu Bank Toastmasters Club and NAMI Toastmasters Club, which were on the brink of non-renewal.

Congratulations to the Area Directors, Division and Area Council members, Division mentors, club presidents and the executive committee, and all the members.

Cheers to all the achievements! Here's to looking forward to moving further in the next year!

## **DIVISION N DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**



**ANISH DIXIT**  
Division N Director

Fellow toastmasters.

Despite many challenges due to Covid-19/lockdowns during the current term, we were able to deliver fantastic results across all three divisions of Nepal, which is a testament to the fact that we have grown continuously despite various odds, and we have proven that we will not stop in our journey to become better communicators and leaders. During this term, our leaders have collaborated together for Club, Area, and Division success. We have opened new clubs in various geographies like Jhapa, Birgunj, etc and added new members and existing members continue to grow and have joined our ever growing toastmasters community in Nepal. We can proudly say that Team Nepal has always set a benchmark in District 41 not only in terms of club growth but have also set high standards with the quality of our club meetings culminating in many awards. In addition during the current term, we have two District level winners in Toastmasters- Shreya Ghimire and Priya Chapagain winning in Evaluation and Table Topics contest respectively. Huge congratulations to them for making us so proud.

Friends, the road ahead is challenging again as Covid-19 second wave has come back to hit us. We will not falter, we will pass it together. Cheers to our success. Let's continue learning through this amazing learning Toastmasters platform. More importantly, please take care of yourselves and your families.

Stay safe.

### **DIVISION O DIRECTOR'S** **MESSAGE**



---

**AVISH ACHARYA**  
Division O Director

---

After the Mahabharata had been narrated to Janamejaya, the great grandson of the warrior Arjuna, he was confused and asked, “So, who won?”

June, 2021. I find myself going into self-reflection as my term as Division Director is coming to an end. What have I achieved out of this role? Is it the ‘accolades and awards’ that our members, clubs, areas, and the Division have won? Is it the recognition that I received with the title ‘Division Director’ leading one of the three Divisions in Nepal?

Of course not. Toastmasters isn’t a job for me and I have no ambitions here. The clubs that we chartered, the events that we organized, the accolades and recognitions are great but my real take-aways, wins and victories have been less material and more intellectual and emotional. I am better equipped at facing leadership challenges, managing conflicts, and influencing positively. I have also learnt to rejoice in service as the role was always about the members--their betterment, their victories, and their accomplishments.

Maybe the answer to Janamejaya’s question is “there is no winner, there is only wisdom.”

July 1, I will no longer be a District Officer, yet I will be proud of the relationships I fostered and the wisdom I gained from interacting with each member.

## **PR MANAGER'S MESSAGE**



**MOHINI SHRESTHA**  
PR Manager - Nepal Country Office

Dear Passionate Toastmasters,

I am delighted to celebrate the launch of INKSPIRE 2020-2021 and incredibly overwhelmed to be part of this exciting journey in celebrating you and your success. On behalf of the Country Office PR Team, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the readership of Inkspire. I take this opportunity to thank our editors, contributors, and all of whom have volunteered to contribute to the success of the edition.

The past few months have been extraordinary, with COVID- 19 hitting us hard in the second lockdown. While we were once again confined within our homes, our passion for learning and growing within the fraternity continued with many success stories. We celebrated the formation of some new clubs, but at the same time, we were equally devastated by the loss of some outstanding members of the fraternity.

Joy and sorrow are part of life, keep motivating, keep learning, and striving to groom yourself as a better leader.

Happy Reading!

### EDITOR'S MESSAGE



---

**ALFA M. SHAKYA**  
Editor  
Inkspire 2020/21

---

Dear Toastmasters,

As we continue to journey through tough times, we have learned to embrace the little joys that we can find in our everyday life. The connection we share as Toastmasters has helped me in many ways to remain optimistic as the days turned gloomy.

Once more, it is time to bring to you Inkspire, the Newsletter of Toastmasters in Nepal - a platform to share our stories, experiences, and memories. Our team is honored to have had the chance to read your words and understand your journey on a deeper level. We are ever grateful to all the contributors and the helping hands who have made this newsletter a reality - our edit team, design team, PR team, and all those who helped us directly and indirectly.

Our fraternity continues to grow, and so do our stories. As you turn the pages of Inkspire, we hope you will find new reasons to connect, understand, and rejoice along with the words of our fellow members.



AREA  
DIRECTOR'S  
SAY



**DIPTEE ACHARYA**  
AREA A1 DIRECTOR

Henry Ford wisely said "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is Success." As I reflect back certainly there was a beginning, and thankfully there was also progress and yes - undeniably we have been successful!

After taking my oath to lead as the Area A1 Director, I was doubtful, curious, and nervous but I can proudly and happily share that my tenure was a blessing. With the support of my Area Council, Division Director, my fellow ADs, all the Presidents and executive Committee members of the four clubs, Area A1 was able to bond and bring out the best in each other. The year has been challenging but despite the odds we have come out stronger, braver, and more resilient and I shall miss my area profoundly.



**RABINDRA PRADHAN**  
AREA A2 DIRECTOR

Congratulations Inkspire and the whole team. This year we achieved many milestones and most importantly created many happy toastmasters. The Toastmasters community has grown to a large extent and with publications like Inkspire, it definitely brings the community even closer.



**BRIJENDRA R. JOSHI**  
AREA A3 DIRECTOR

The pandemic spread us thin with physical distancing, converting a corner of the room into our workplace or the place for Toastmasters meetings. During this challenging time, Toastmasters created a thick bond and connection, supporting each other, growing and fitting where possible. We welcomed the challenges, as they came, with a wide smile.

### ANJALI ACHARYA

AREA N1 DIRECTOR



I designed my journey on a blank canvas by drawing a picture-perfect circle from start to the end. As I started, the circle was intact but as the wheel of time rotated, the circle morphed. By the end of my tenure, I learned that the picture-perfect image which I had in the beginning was not the same, but my journey was enriching with this change.



### ANKIT GOENKA

AREA N2 DIRECTOR

During my second tenure as Area N2 Director, I learnt that there are no shortcuts to learning; if you are passionate about something and you sincerely want to learn it, always take one step at a time. This year too has been a year of growth and new learning for me in which I was able to open one new club - Nabil Toastmasters. I was also able to receive Select Distinguished Area Director for the term 2020-2021. One of the best things I learnt is that teamwork can take you to places, which showed in the work we did as Team Nepal, supporting each other to achieve the best. Being bestowed with the responsibility with a new role as Division N Director Elect for the term 2021-2022, I look forward to more learning, growth, and networking without taking any shortcuts; one step at a time.

### SUBRATH POUDEL

AREA N3 DIRECTOR



When I'm writing these lines, I have in my mind that this year was not like last year or even the past few decades. This once in a lifetime global pandemic hit us and affected every corner of our life directly and indirectly. And yet we continued. This is the true spirit of humanity, that we always come up with ways to overcome challenges and find creative ways of doing things. We have had the opportunity to share our grief, joy, happiness, help each other in need during these extreme times, collaborate with people thousands of miles away and attend global meetings. Let's keep the ball rolling with the same camaraderie.



**PRASHANT SHRESTHA**

AREA 01 DIRECTOR

### **Beyond the Awards and the Accolades**

Being one of the Agile and President Distinguished Area Directors for the term 2019-2020, I felt good looking back at my tenure. All the challenges me and my team faced together gave us bigger reasons for celebrating. However, my second term as an Area Director has been a completely different experience. Though I do not have any awards, I have never been more satisfied and grateful for the opportunity to personally connect and engage with the executive leaders of all the clubs in my area. Finally, after toiling long and hard for almost a year, we were able to revitalize and reform the executive committee in all of the three struggling clubs in the Area.



**BIRAJ PRADHAN**

AREA 02 DIRECTOR

### **Oxygen not only for Covid but for the community**

Each phase in life has an end and this is true with my tenure of the year as the Area Director of Area 2, Division O. The journey has been a rewarding one with four clubs, a supporting area and division council. We also charted a new club, ACCA Toastmasters, in March 2021 amidst the pandemic. A few productive meetings of the Area in between were as fresh as Oxygen to the club members, Toastmasters community, and the participating guests. Personally, the leadership experience has been rewarding as Area O2 (oxygen) lends vitality to each member in our Area and our efforts are on the right track.



**JENNY MANANDHAR**

AREA 03 DIRECTOR

It is almost the end of the Toastmasters' year. I still remember the first few days of being the Area director. I was exceedingly nervous and anxious about the position. I always thought I needed to give 100% to all and help all members. I did have my fair share of learning; conducting contests and online events helped me groom my technical skills. No doubt I made a lot of friends and family throughout this year. I am ever grateful to all the members of Area O3 for helping the area achieve the highest award in Toastmasters. I hope to give my service next year too as I believe I need to help more members learn about this wonderful organisation.



# MEMBER EXPERIENCE

# JAWALAKHEL GROUP OF INDUSTRIES TOASTMASTERS CLUB: BOUNCING BACK BETTER!

As a corporate organization that sets peoples' development as one of its key priorities, the lookout for tools and mediums for personal development and enhancement of soft skills has always been a challenge. Toastmasters was unheard of until Distinguished Members from various Toastmasters clubs approached Jawalakhel Group of Industries and took out their valuable time to give us a taste of how it works and how it would be a great means for personal development. Our club, Jawalakhel Group of Industries (JGI) Toastmasters Club (Club Number: 07683705) was chartered in December 2019, under the presidency of Toastmaster Rikesh Maharjan. Since then, JGI has observed Toastmasters as a key medium for both personal development of its employees through various avenues of Toastmasters' pathways as well as a platform for its employees to take up leadership roles - inside and outside the club.

We started our club with 25 members with much exuberance and fanfare. But as members started finding it difficult to manage time from their busy after office-hour schedules, we were reduced to half of the original charter members within a year. Also, due to the unforeseen Covid-19 circumstances, our Toastmasters meetings became inconsistent - both in frequency as well as in no. of attendees - leading to a lack of interest from existing members, too. Our club was in a slump! However, left with a few energetic members, we never lost hope and never gave up. We even had a meeting in presence of only five members at one point in time though the situation was hopeless.

Nevertheless, under the guidance and determination of our Area Director, Toastmaster Prashant Shrestha, we decided to start again from scratch and formed a new Executive Committee on 23rd May 2021, under the presidency of Toastmaster Aashaya Upadhyay. We now have a new zeal like before and more determination to take this movement forward.

**Organizing or reorganizing a new Toastmasters club requires dedication, time, and effort but, at the end of it, we have realized it to be one of the most rewarding experiences.**

**AASHAYA UPADHYAY**  
PRESIDENT, JGI TOASTMASTERS



# FELLOW TOASTMASTER: INDIRECT EVALUATORS IN A TOASTMASTERS MEETING

Good writers write the story of their own life, great writers write the story of others' lives. This is the story of my fellow toastmasters.

That's me trying to be sassy. How about exploring the narcissist side of me?

Being an extreme introvert (Not just an introvert but an extreme introvert), I was reluctant to talk to people. In fact, I still am. I always used to find ways to shy away from people. As Tyler The Creator said, "Exactly what you run from, you end up chasing", my goal for life had to do a lot with people.

I don't know how the dots connected but the end result was that now I belong to this amazing fraternity of Toastmasters. Let me remind you again, this is the story of my fellow Toastmaster. I was so impressed to see people synergizing every week for 1.5 hours, and in that process improving themselves and contributing towards the progress of their fellow toastmasters. The beauty of Toastmasters' meeting is that different people take up different roles and learn something new at each meeting.

Allow me to write about some of the roles of Toastmasters meetings.

With due respect to all the roles, I'm just writing about the indirect evaluators and ballot counter here.

Timer:

Tip of the iceberg. A timekeeper who tracks and records the time.

But if we dig deep, a timer is the one who can dictate the pace of the whole meeting and create a culture of speaking within a time limit. No matter how good of a speaker you are, if you speak over an allocated time, you won't provide value via your speech. You can take the example of your teacher not leaving the class after the bell. You disliked those teachers for that, right? And if it was an off period or a recess, the dislike must have gone even higher. The timer literally saves the speakers from being that teacher.

Ah-counter:

This was the role I found the most interesting. Calculating the numbers of 'ahs' in a speech was something I had never thought or heard of. It may sound simple and insignificant but it helps speakers to eliminate those disrupting sounds. This helps them work on their fluency and move towards transforming themselves into proficient speakers.

Grammarian:

According to millennial and Gen-Z terms, Grammarian can also be called a Grammar Nazi.

Since we all used to have a whole book regarding Grammar during our school days, I believe we already know how important this role is. One interesting thing about the Grammarian is that, they help us widen our vocabulary by providing a word (referred as Word of the day) in every meeting.

Vote Counter:

If I guide others to the treasure I can't possess it. I have never seen the vote counter winning any awards but they present the awards to all the winners and encourage them to keep up the good work.

If you're someone who can't talk in front of people, these are the roles which I feel can work as a great confidence booster as there's less talking involved with them and the gratification after you successfully complete any role is immense. You've provided value to someone and received a larger amount of value as a return for yourself.

If you are wondering, what's the greatest thing about all the roles and a Toastmasters meeting?

They are all strategically placed to develop communication, leadership, and public speaking skills.

All the roles emphasize listening (not just listening, but empathic listening) more than speaking. Communication is all about comprehension. If you're not comprehending, that's not communication.

The more you listen, the more you comprehend. And then there's a speaker who communicates what he/she has comprehended. Let me remind you for one last time, this is the story of my friend. (That's just me trying to be sarcastic and prove myself a great writer.)



**AASISH RAI**  
JHAPA TOASTMASTERS

### MY SEMI FINAL EXPERIENCE

Have you ever been pushed to do something that you didn't want to do? Perhaps from a family member or a friend?

If that's a yes, then most likely you were probably bitter in the moment but once you did the activity or task, you were thankful for them.

This happened to me during this year's contest season (2020/21). After last year's contest, I decided to take a back seat from Toastmasters and contests to focus on my work.

However, once the club contest details were announced, I was pushed to participate again by a close friend and fellow club member, TM Chandrayan, for all the three contests. I was frustrated as I had other commitments and had lost the zeal that I once had. But after some pushing, I participated.

Surprisingly, I got through to the division level for all three contests and then for two, into the district semi-finals. At the district level, I was competing for the International speech and the Evaluation contest. I wasn't stressed or focused on taking a title because I knew how epic the participating speakers and evaluators were.

To be honest, I enjoyed watching my competitors give it their all, way more than giving my own speech, because there were so many take-home lessons. In addition to this, my practice zoom sessions with TM Priya provided me with a lot of insights and experience into evaluation. Similarly, it gave me an opportunity to connect with others in the district, make new friends and gain valuable feedback that I could use for my Toastmasters journey going forward.

My journey to the district stopped in the semi-finals. Am I bitter, no? I'm happy and now pumped to improve myself in the next term. I might have been bitter at myself if I had said no to TM Chandrayan for his suggestions. The truth is, the competition season has filled me with invaluable learning lessons and provided me with an experience I'll never forget.

**So next time your mentor or fellow toastmaster pushes you to compete, speak, evaluate or take a role, try not to say no.** Because if you do, that moment of bitterness will stop you from reaping all the flavors Toastmasters has to offer.



**ALEX WRIGLEY**  
BODHI TOASTMASTERS

It was my level 2 project 1 speech at my Toastmasters club and I had to write a speech on my leadership style. I had no experience of leading any group or organisation-- I never was a school captain, neither a lead in any project nor was I a boss of anything. Does that mean I have no leadership skills? Maybe or maybe not. After a long thought process, I felt leadership styles are reflected even in our day to day actions. Whether it is effectively communicating with others, helping them, giving our decisions or suggestions, fulfilling a given task or taking necessary actions at the right time, everything reflects our leadership style.

I always wondered, can a person lead without a certain title or status? Will other people follow him/her, especially



**BHUPENDRA K.C, ASSOCIATE SAA**  
NORTHMANDU TOASTMASTERS

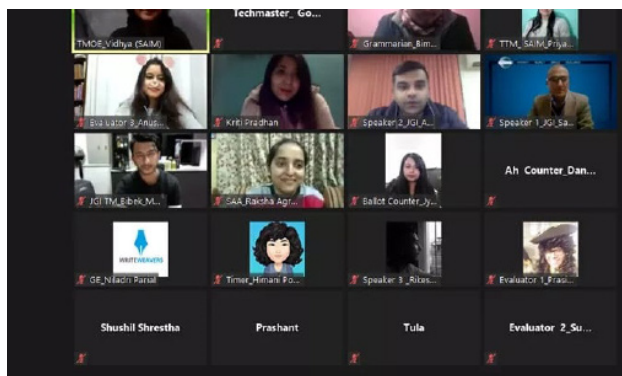
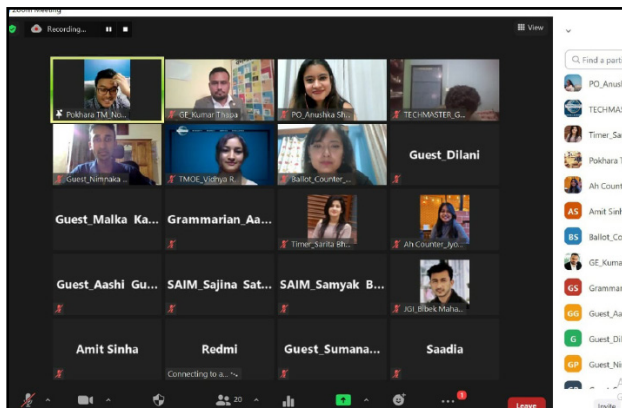
### A LEADER INSIDE ME

the people in higher levels? Can he/she really be a leader? Now I have learnt, yes he/she can. Now, I feel leadership doesn't depend on any status or title. What really makes a person a leader is his/her knowledge, communication style, strategy, management, and ability to help others grow. In addition, leadership is not about making followers but making leaders. It's all about becoming the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily even if you own neither the title nor the position.

In my opinion, a leader is best when people barely know he/she exists, when his/her work is done and his/her aim fulfilled. The first responsibility of a leader is to explain the gap between reality and ideal perspective. The last is to say thank you. In between even the leader is an employee with a responsibility similar to his subordinates. Before being a leader, success means individual growth and after becoming one you'll realize, success is all about growing with others.

Though my brother usually says, "You never listen to us, you always do whatever you want," which I acknowledge is a trait of a bureaucratic leader but I want to lead in order to better serve others. So, I think there is an altruistic leader inside me which I realized as soon as I pursued my leadership project in Toastmasters: know the leader inside you.

# TO NEW BEGINNINGS!



I do not want to say Toastmasters is a great public speaking platform because Google can reiterate the same within seconds. Many spend years making up excuses to not join Toastmasters and then finally do, after running out of excuses. I am a Toastmaster that didn't even get 10 minutes to contemplate over a yes or no!

Day one - I was a Toastmaster; day five - I was asking what an executive committee does; and Day ten - I took up my maiden role as the Toastmaster of the Evening. Fast forward to 8 months later, I was elected President of SAIM Toastmasters Club. People might think that Toastmasters is a platform where 'Leaders are made' and where people improve their speaking skills. But for me, Toastmasters has been something that I walked into without knowing what I was signing up for - complaining halfway through - which gave me the people skills that I needed. It may not be a job that pays but it is a job I do not want to give up on.

I was a student far from any leadership activities in school while growing up - a quiet person who only did her assignments as a compulsion and never spoke up. Neither could anyone imagine me in such a role nor did I think of doing anything of this sort. I don't blame them because I was THAT kid who would not do anything except assignments. I can assure you that things would be the same had the Covid-19 pandemic not happened. Had I not been elected the class representative without knowing what it entailed and had I learned to say NO, I would not have been writing this. So, for me, Toastmasters is something that happened by chance, and turns out that not being able to say NO isn't so bad after all. It is about turning the tables in your favor.

SAIM Toastmasters Club is what made me realize that having a compliant attitude, sometimes, makes things happen. It changed THAT silent kid focused on only assignments into someone who wants to do everything except assignments. I grew up from being a shy girl in the corner to the confident student at the center of the crowd - leading her team with confidence.

Keeping the club going has been challenging. From not having enough members to form an executive committee, struggling to conduct regular meetings to now being a strong standing Toastmasters Club today, we have been through it all. The fact that we are still here is what makes us different at SAIM Toastmasters Club. We have been able to navigate through the recent ups and downs, collaborating with different clubs. Overcoming all the challenges, we have survived through this tough time well. Together we have helped one another achieve milestones and had fun along the way. So, here is to our new beginnings!

**ANUSHKA SHRESTHA, PRESIDENT**  
SAIM TOASTMASTERS

# MENTORING: A GIFT OF SELF REFLECTION

We envision a mentor as someone who is both a counselor and a teacher. Someone who instructs, admonishes, and assists the other person in attaining success of some kind. In Homer's epic poem, The Odyssey, Mentor was a trusted friend of Odysseus. When the latter was about to set out for the Trojan War with his allies, he entrusted Mentor with the care of his home and the education of his beloved son, Telemachus. Mentoring has always been the hallmark of success in the Toastmasters program.

I came to Kathmandu Toastmasters Club in mid 2018 as a very shy person. I slowly started networking with Toastmasters of my club and began making friends. TM Anjali, TM Shaurab, and TM Rupali were the mentors who helped me improve my communication skills. They helped me become who I am today.

Recently, Kathmandu Toastmasters had a month-long contest - The Kathmandu Toastmasters Achievers Trophy Contest that started from January 23rd and lasted to February 23rd for its members. It was a part of the Level 5 project of TM Rupali Poddar. There were different categories in that contest - The Incredible Speech, The Incredible Member, Most Innovative Toastmaster and Member Completing Levels for Club Goals. An Overwhelming participation was registered in the contests, which just goes to show how Toastmasters are willing to learn and expand their knowledge. I had the privilege of mentoring two Toastmasters, TM Sabeeta Dhakal and TM Avash Bhandari for that contest.

That month-long mentoring provided an opportunity for me to reflect not only on what I have achieved but also on how I got there. I spent a lot of time building up the confidence in my mentees for the contest. From being encouraging and supportive to not letting them lapse into negativity, I told them to believe in and be kind to themselves. However, that same lesson is something I'm still working on within myself. So, whenever I reminded my mentees of their good qualities, I took a minute to remind myself that as well. The contest award distribution was on February 23, 2021. TM Sabeeta won The Incredible Member while TM Avash was the Member Completing Levels for Club Goals. They were so elated that they gave me gifts, but the biggest gift for me was the gift of self-reflection. While a mentoring relationship is first and foremost to benefit the mentee, the mentor has just as much to gain in experience, confidence, and knowledge. Mentoring can be equally beneficial as it is fulfilling, as long as we take the time to reflect on our own life, and consider our lessons as we take the journey.

It is not only the roles we take, the speeches we give in Toastmasters that help us grow, but also the support, mentorship, love, and belief we get while taking the role that helps us grow. Members are always there for each other to say, "Look, it's not that tough. It's not as hard as you think". This comradery helps us to remove the cobwebs of flaws that surround us, and helps us shine brightly.

Alone we can do so little. But together with great love we can all do so much, do something wonderful.



**MRIDUL BASNET, VPM**  
KATHMANDU TOASTMASTERS

## CHEERS TEAM BUTWAL TMC

It is our one year completion at Butwal Toastmasters Club where we took our baby steps into the world of public speaking. It is indeed a special feeling. Toastmasters for me was always an aspiring public speaking platform. So, when approached by the Toastmasters team in Nepal, I readily agreed to initiate a club in Butwal. Though we started our meetings regularly in February we got chartered in April. There has been no looking back since then. We were just 20 members when we started but we grew to 26 this year. As time passed, I started realizing Toastmasters is much more than what I had thought. Today when I say "Butwal Toastmasters," it occupies an emotional ground in my life. Something which I had dreamt about 20 years back was coming into shape and it was almost unbelievable at one point of time. But the rigorous efforts from the Toastmasters fraternity in Nepal made the journey smooth.



**NEHA AGRAWAL, PRESIDENT**  
BUTWAL TOASTMASTERS

Throughout this first year journey, there are significant moments which will remain as memorable episodes of our lives. The first TMOE, first evaluation, first time speaker or whichever role we took on will always be treasured by each member of our club. When we started bagging better role players awards at other clubs is when each one of us felt like children again. We shared our certificates in the group with our members to keep us motivated and going.

Our team is very happy to achieve this one year milestone and it is important to see the kind of bond we share with each other on and off Toastmasters. The countless efforts put in by the members and the executive committee to achieve this success has carved an image for "Butwal Toastmasters." It has been highlighted as a young and enthusiastic team. Today when I write this I feel immense pride to have been associated with such gems that have formed a beautiful piece of necklace-Butwal Toastmasters. We had our share of hardships and failures too and we learnt some lessons along the way. Despite everything we gloriously celebrated our 25th meeting, 50th meeting and 1st anniversary. I know together we are going to make it big. The anniversary celebration spirit will be on with each meeting where we will be showcasing different aspects for a couple of weeks.

Despite being virtual for most of our year-long journey, it makes me feel good that we have been able to motivate each member to grow. Thank you to everyone who has directly or indirectly contributed towards this milestone of Butwal Toastmasters Club. Without your support we would not have gone this far and the journey towards betterment continues.

Over the past year we have had so many guest speakers and keynote speakers from within and outside the Toastmasters fraternity which has helped us identify to be better in every aspect of life. Talks have covered numerous subjects like mindfulness, keto diet, young entrepreneurship, domestic violence, retinopathy, cataract in childhood, small scale business ideas, our spine, inspirational and motivational workshops have been conducted at our club. The joint meetings have also proved to be very fruitful and a gateway for networking. As the years will pass on "Butwal Toastmasters" will shine because each member has created an aura of growth together.

## SIX REASONS TO NOT BE A TOASTMASTER

After listening to Toastmaster Mansi Agrawal's 7 reasons to never ever visit Nepal and 4 reasons to never ever visit Boudhanath, I racked my brains to see if I could find some reasons to never ever become a Toastmaster. To my surprise, I came up with quite a few - here are six reasons to never become a Toastmaster.

1. Toastmasters' journey is all about "expecting the unexpected". It is not as simple as what most Non-Toastmasters might perceive. Being a Toastmaster is all about putting in effort, doing ordinary things the extraordinary way, and constantly striving to bring out the best in you. It is about challenging yourself to do things you are not confident about but have a knack for. Therefore, if you are the kind of person who is happy without ever challenging yourself, you should not become a Toastmaster.

2. Most of us fear public speaking - it makes us nervous and unsettled if asked to do so. It takes a lot of courage and practice to be able to stand up on stage and speak your heart out. If you want to remain this way - never combat fear and build your confidence, then you should not become a Toastmaster.

3. Leadership skills are vital, irrespective of the size of your team. It has become an essential part of our daily lives where we juggle various roles. If you do not want to polish your leadership and improvisation skills and always hide behind your doubts, then you should not become a Toastmaster.

## MEMBER EXPERIENCE

4. A well-knitted network of professionals and friends is one of the things you need in this dynamic world. Such networks add value to your personal and professional growth. Toastmasters club helps you develop and maintain this woven network of professionals and friends who motivate you to do better. It is about surrounding yourself with successful people who spread a positive aura and are constantly investing in themselves. So, if you do not want to be exposed to a diverse group of enthusiastic people, then you should not become a Toastmaster.

5. In a Toastmasters club, you get plenty of opportunities to speak. Members listen to you and provide feedback on how you can improve which helps you develop self-confidence. You want to thrive to be the best. Hence, if you are an individual who does not like to be confident, then you should definitely not become a Toastmaster.

6. The journey of Toastmasters is taking baby steps - starting from your host club leading to the international Toastmasters' fraternity. Every time we speak, participate in competitions, or give impromptu speeches we receive small goodie bags of feedback and suggestions that help nurture ourselves. These goodie bags are filled with traits and skills that enhance the quality of our life. So, if you are a person who is content with stagnant life, then you should not be a Toastmaster.

To be or not to be a Toastmaster is entirely up to you, but my dear readers, never forget what Buddha rightly said, "There is no secret to success. It is the preparation, hard work and learning from failure that keeps you going". Therefore, keep your spirits high.



**ESHA THAPA**  
TOURISM TOASTMASTERS

Multi-faced rippling effects of "Special Leadership Program" Toastmasters has such wealth of knowledge and is as deep as the ocean for learning if one has the hunger to learn and keep growing. District 41's Special Leadership Program (SLP) is one such platform that not only helped me but also many leaders across Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, North and East India, to learn the nuts and bolts of Toastmasters and leadership. Participating in SLP in March 2021 helped me gain insights about different spectrums of Toastmasters that includes helping budding clubs, forming new clubs, conducting demo meetings, enhancing club quality, running membership-driving PR campaigns, leading an Executive Committee effectively as well the arts of motivation and video communications.



**GRISHMA SHRESTHA, VPPR**  
AREA A2 CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR  
BHAISEPATI TOASTMASTERS

## MULTI-FACED RIPPLING EFFECTS OF "SPECIAL LEADERSHIP

As said by Peter Schwartz, "knowledge is the only kind of wealth that multiplies when you give it away," SLP did not just end with the training but we were challenged to either help form a new club or transform a budding club into a distinguished club. While I decided to choose the latter, Division A Director Moon Pradhan, DTM, teamed an energetic and vibrant team of Toastmasters from diverse clubs in Nepal to help revive NAMI Toastmasters Club and support Healers Toastmasters Club to become distinguished. This all-women powered clan that included TM Alfa Maiya Shakya from KU-SOM Toastmasters Club, TM Ekta Lamichhane and TM Ayushi Gupta from Himalaya Toastmasters, TM Neha Amatya from Tourism Toastmasters and myself from Bhaishapati Toastmasters Club, not only gave us a platform to put our learnings into practice but created a cross-learning environment. Within a span of one and half months, this team was able to help revive NAMI Toastmasters Club, reinstate its Executive Committee, kick-start club meetings, and similarly helped transform Healers Toastmasters Club to a distinguished club by June 10, 2021. I can't wait to wear my SLP pin and participate in the SLP graduation ceremony.

When I look back to my overall SLP experience, it has been a fruitful journey so far. It not only helped me network and learn from veteran Toastmasters across the globe but also gave me a platform to put different Toastmasters spectrums into play. I feel a sense of contentment to see other clubs growing through our efforts. I feel more confident now to take up any leadership positions, help others grow, whether in Toastmasters or in my professional front.

### LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

"Acknowledge your weakness and work on it; that is the way to move forward."

This was the line that led me on my Toastmasters journey. As a law student, it was mortifying not to be strong in public speaking. Thinking I had plenty of time, I never focused on improving it. My assumption that public speaking skills grow eventually with time proved to be wrong when I realized I was in the same place even after a couple of years. Looking for ways to change it, I came across a simple quote that struck me - the one mentioned above. It is what led me to acknowledge my frail oratory skills and made me work on them, for which, I joined TOASTMASTERS.

Since I didn't know anyone, I was quite hesitant at first, but the supportive community proved my decision to join as one of the best. Toastmasters provided me with a platform of like-minded people for growth and development. Members of this club were from diverse backgrounds and ages. For me, it translated as an opportunity to learn diverse things and grasp diverse perspectives. Joining the meetings left me intrigued as they were uniquely effective and practical. The three sessions in the meeting gave each member a chance to hone their skills. From challenging impromptu speaking,

wearing different hats to our fun Postmaster sessions, I enjoyed everything Toastmasters offered. I have joined more virtual sessions than physical ones and I must say that this club does not rest even in the time of a pandemic! Seeing the dedication of veteran members towards club goals has deepened the roots of professionalism in me. **Being a Toastmaster, I have learned one crucial thing - Mistakes will always be there, be it major or minor, but with it learning and growth will always be there too.**



**SURAJ GURUNG**  
GANDAKI TOASTMASTERS

While scrolling through social media in May 2021, I found that it had been 2 years since I met DTM Suman Shakya at an event. I was spellbound by his speech delivery. I met him after the event and talked to him regarding how much I appreciated his speech delivery. He invited me to a Toastmasters meeting. I had always seen activities of Toastmasters club shared by DTM Moon Pradhan in her Facebook page. So, I got interested in it and joined Bhaktapur Toastmasters Club as one of its chartered members. Two years after that event, I think I am walking continuously in the path of improving my leadership and communication skills.

As many Toastmasters do, I too started with the Table Topic. I still remember how DTM Moon Pradhan motivated me to participate in the Table Topics session at Bodhi



**SUNETRA PRADHANANG, VPPR**  
BHAKTAPUR TOASTMASTERS

### MY EXPERIENCE OF COMPLETING TWO PATHS

Toastmasters Club. Yes, that was not a great speech but what was important was that I gained confidence to stand on the stage and deliver. Then I started giving speeches in my club. I always like to challenge myself, so whenever there is an opportunity I am excited to deliver speeches in other clubs as well.

It had not been a year since I was in Toastmasters when the world was hit by the coronavirus pandemic, and still we are fighting with it. Everyone's life is affected by the pandemic and Toastmasters also switched to virtual platforms. I took it as an opportunity to connect, participate and also deliver speeches in clubs situated outside the Kathmandu valley or even Nepal.

The Toastmasters basecamp is designed in such a way that it acts as a virtual coach. The levels and projects are designed in a way that motivates us to go further. Additionally, there is a sense of suspense and surprise in each step of the Pathways journey. What I liked the most are the electives in Level 4 and 5. This challenges us to do things that we have never done before.

I always believed in progression rather than perfection. Completing two paths and taking up leadership roles have made me a better communicator and a better leader. What amazes me in Toastmasters is that there is still more to learn and improve on. You can never be perfect but you can improve yourself. Hence, I am now on to my third path to the journey of improvement.

### EXPRESSING MYSELF

Did you know that half the people you meet in your life struggle to communicate the message they want? And we could be one of them. It may be because we are unable to control our environment, express our personality, or even simple things like conveying affection to our loved ones. These might sound like petty things but trust me, they aren't. Most of the time we are scared of the judgments people will have. But I say it's so necessary to speak up. Nora Roberts says, "If you don't go after what you want, you'll never have it. If you don't ask, the answer is always no. If you don't step forward, you're always in the same place."

For sure, speaking up won't solve all your problems. Whether it is fair or not, not speaking up for yourself, is a sign of weakness and that's how people will view you. Your opinion establishes your impression and why would you let someone have an opinion about you without knowing you first. I used to be this person who would stay silent even in offensive situations. I used to stay quiet when people would blame me for things I didn't do or mistakes I didn't make. I thought I was being non-aggressive or non-violent but I was being a coward. How people viewed me mattered to me a lot. There used to be times when someone would borrow things and not return, times when someone used to make me wait for hours, times when someone would just appear when they needed favours, times when someone made rude comments on my body, and more. All these times, I felt like screaming at them and I felt like standing up for myself. But I simply did not dare to do so.

People would come up with their meaningless "SORRYS" and guess what I would reply with, "It's okay!" Often we hide behind a half-hearted, unreal smile and nod in agreement instead of speaking up about what we think. It is going to be difficult, no doubt. But, if you learn to express yourself, you are ready to let go of the weight from your shoulders that you've been carrying forever. People are going to call it arrogance, attitude problems, and what-not. But, you have

to call it confidence. I was the person who was not able to combat the verbal attacks, it disturbed me and got me thinking that I could have said this and that later on. I had it all in my head but I couldn't speak up. This logic applies in expressing every human emotion.

Sometimes, you will also come across situations where you are not able to say "NO" even if you don't agree with someone. I know some of us just aren't the best at expressing ourselves because we have never opened up but once you try it out there's no going back. Even in your career, being opinionated makes you visible. Stand out from your colleagues, and have an opinion as it is a sign of confidence and knowledge. Speaking up leaves no room for assumptions, but it is always nice to know the best way to express yourself, finding the right words. So, it is good to be part of forums where you can express yourself, your opinions and master your delivery. I was already pushing myself on expressing my views more often and the Toastmasters journey has so far been all about how to express my views.



**SAMPANNA SHRESTHA**  
PRABHU BANK TOASTMASTERS

---

Joining a Toastmaster club during the pandemic worked out very conveniently, economically, and fascinatingly. By January 2021, I felt I was at my peak - attending online meetings as soon as I had some spare time, taking on impromptu roles day after day, exploring, and challenging myself.

My family had gotten so used to me attending online meetings that I thought it couldn't get any crazier. And as it turned out, this was only the beginning. Synergy took place in Birtamode, Jhapa during the second week of January 2021, where few enthusiastic learners got together and by the third week the numbers had swollen up to 24. Jhapa was ready to have a Toastmasters club. The schedule was tight considering the new club incentive provided by Toastmasters International, the club had to be chartered by January 31.

### A BEGINNING AND ANOTHER NEW BEGINNING

January 28, 1 am: The charter documents are finalized and submitted to Toastmasters International (Special Thanks to TM Nikisha Rijal, Chartered Secretary of Northmandu TMC)

January 28, 6 am: TM Subrath Paudel (Area Director for N3), TM Chandrayan Shrestha (CGD for Division O), and myself, are on a day-long drive to the eastern side of the country. **It was a sort of 'Dil Chahta Hai' moment with lots of professional responsibility completed along the way, thanks to the super-smart technology we call mobile phones** (I could write another article about the 12 hrs drive).



**SAROJ TAMRAKAR, CHARTERED PRESIDENT**  
NORTHMANDU TOASTMASTERS

January 29: Dharan TMC conducts a hybrid meeting, I get to be the GE and experience my first ever physical meeting.

January 30: With the help of fellow Toastmasters from Dharan TMC, we successfully manage to conduct a demo meeting for Jhapa TMC in Birtamode (Special Thanks to TM Jyotsna Rimal, TM Sundhya Vashisht, and TM Ashish Shrestha).

Being a Toastmaster during the lockdown was sweet. Chartering Northmandu Toastmasters Club thereafter was the icing on the cake. But it was helping and facilitating charter a new club in my hometown which gave me a sense of accomplishment. For the first time in my life, I had gone to my hometown not to visit my family but to conduct a demo meeting and this in itself was a new beginning for me.

TOASTMASTERS  
INTERNATIONAL

## TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL

*Congratulations***RANJIT ACHARYA, DTM**

District Director (Elect)  
District 41  
Term 2021 - 2022

**SUMAN SHAKYA, DTM**

Club Growth Director (Elect)  
District 41  
Term 2021 - 2022

TOASTMASTERS  
INTERNATIONAL

## TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL

*Congratulations***SHAURAB LOHANI, DTM**

Division Director (Elect)  
Division A, District 41  
Term 2021 - 2022

**ANKIT GOENKA**

Division Director (Elect)  
Division N, District 41  
Term 2021 - 2022

**PANKAJ PRADHANANGA**

Division Director (Elect)  
Division O, District 41  
Term 2021 - 2022



**TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL  
PROUDLY CONGRATULATES**



**TOASTMASTER PRIYA CHAPAGAIN**

**FOR WINNING THE  
TABLE TOPICS SPEECH CONTEST  
DISTRICT 41 FINALS 2020-21**



**TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL  
PROUDLY CONGRATULATES**



**TOASTMASTER SHREYA GHIMIRE**

**FOR WINNING THE  
EVALUATION SPEECH CONTEST  
DISTRICT 41 FINALS 2020-21**



**TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL  
PROUDLY CONGRATULATES**



**TOASTMASTER PRIYA CHAPAGAIN**

**FOR SECURING 1ST RUNNER UP POSITION  
IN INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST  
DISTRICT 41 FINALS 2020-21**



CREATIVE CORNER

## THE HUMAN THOUGHT

To ensure things around is fine  
You try to hold yourself down  
You have a life too  
But you feel, it is ok to not be always on your own

You see their grudge for you  
And you know you have no one for your rescue  
Yet you smile because you have no choice  
And you hope this for long won't continue

You try to believe life is good  
And you know you are wrong  
You have been trying to hear..  
That unsung beautiful song  
Don't believe you only live once  
And you kill yourself every day.  
For this becomes a mindset you choose  
To live leaving everyone away

Can you search for happiness within?  
For yourself to live as your own self  
To let you help your mental wellbeing  
And imagine being loved every day

Your thought is your power  
The power that is within you  
Just a matter of this time you Chase  
This will just pass, as one of these life's phases.



**ARCHANA THAPA, VPM**  
LAXMI BANK TOASTMASTERS

## THE EARTH IS YOURS



**SURAJ THAPA**  
SCB NEPAL TOASTMASTERS

The sun shines bright on you  
Because of mother nature  
Do not disturb the harmony, do not disturb nature  
The earth is yours

There is rainfall, there are forests, there are animals.  
There are vegetations and life  
All because of mother nature.  
So I love mother nature and everybody gives me a high five.

Let's reduce carbon emissions and let's aim for net-zero emissions.  
Everybody has a role to avoid deforestation and climate change  
So let's be nature lovers and let's be real-life heroes,  
The earth is yours.

# CRACK

I know what it feels like  
 When your anxiety become your demons, and doubts terrorize your dreams  
 When you descend helplessly into the void but no one else believes  
 You turn to your words, in hopes of breaking free  
 Drowning you cry for help; all they hear is poetry

As you lose your grip with reality, the blue skies fade to gray  
 You try and kick up the leaves, but the passion's gone away  
 You feel like you wait in line just to hit another low  
 All that hope you muster, but a cold breeze, and it blows

Your island is uninhabitable, and merciless is the sea  
 And I know, even if you can't swim, you've tried in your way to be free  
 You sit there with your heart in your hands, wonder how much more it can take  
 But dear, they say the heart grows a little, every time it breaks

I know what it feels like to have been lost yet never found  
 Have heart – roll out a battle cry – you can stand your ground  
 The world ain't magic – everything is not going to be alright  
 But when the days are dark, one learns to find solace in the night

It's alright to be broken, everyone has scars on their skin  
 Nothing is truly round, and even our Gods tend to sin  
 Yes, there's a crack, a crack on every wall but that's how the light gets in.



**JOHNSON SHRESTHA**  
 LAXMI BANK TOASTMASTERS

# LEFTOVER



**MANOJ SUBEDI**  
 LEADBOX TOASTMASTERS

I caught one of many rushing thoughts  
 the thought, my key to utopia.  
 Elated in every step and every breath,  
 Walking down at ease holding the thought,  
 that was gasping, pleading for its freedom.  
 Hastily I was surrounded by dark,  
 out of darkness someone seized my juvenile, took it to  
 postmortem, and pronounced dead due to asphyxia.

# GRAY



When it rains, I can smell the grass and mud,  
And see the tree leaves abide the wind raucously with the flood.  
May I seize it just for a minute?  
I can be me, you can be you,  
And we both can be true.  
True to our hearts and true to our soul.

When a raindrop begins to pour and hits the ground,  
It sure splashes little mud, creating infinite joy and a delighted sound,  
But the sky's existence becomes unanswered.  
Why isn't the story told?  
Why does the sky go numb when it rains?  
Where do all the vibrant colors go?  
Why isn't there anything that can tell us why everything turns gray and blue?  
Does it also affect me and you?  
Do our perceptions turn gray too?

My emotions are just like the gloomy sky,  
Some admire it, treasure it, and fancy it,  
And some deject, weep, and mourn.  
There was a time when I used to be warm,  
An empowered human being with a charm.  
May I blame the time or the soul, I trust for now?  
Or may I disapprove to adjust for now?

I stand when my heart is heavy,  
When my heart is heavy and my soul frustrated.  
My ambitious intuitions are turning into agitated emotions,  
My creative hands are turning into resentful hands,  
Hands without a purpose of being on the lands.  
My striving eyes are now ambivalent and immature,  
It is bitter and stuck with the soul that I know could never secure.

My barefoot wanders around the same old room,  
Same old room with the same old white walls as they say,  
But I see them gray, lifeless, defeated.  
They are immaculate walls, but gigantic walls,  
Gigantic walls and enormous walls,  
And they come closer to see my falls.  
May I scream in agony, but my mouth is shut,  
Shut by the wind and the perilous crowd with a voice so loud.  
When I try to glance up to the ceiling, I see a petite rope,  
A rope of hope or maybe a rope of a miserable slope.

# CREATE YOUR OWN HAPPINESS



Just until a few months ago, I held this picture-perfect concept in my mind regarding what happiness should look and feel like. Theoretically, I knew that I was the only one who could truly make myself happy but I overlooked what happiness would actually mean for me. I had a rough sketch in my mind that I would firstly have a job that I would enjoy and pay me well enough to fund frequent trips and adventures-both national and international. Secondly, and equally important, I imagined I would have great and nurturing relationships.

However, this idea of mine was challenged as I watched a YouTube video of someone I genuinely admire and look-up-to as he has quite the heart and lifestyle that I wanted to cultivate for myself. He mentioned he has some bad days! It blew my mind! He casually explained, "...well sadness is just one of the many human emotions, just like happiness, so I should be good..." This was not the most revolutionary idea an 18-year-old could come across, but it sure did hit me like one! Most of the time, even though we are conscious about what influences us, we can be driven by the wheels of the society we live in, namely the ideal timeline and components of a successful life and the guarantees of dopamine and endorphin levels this perceived success brings.

Let us think, let us think hard. Are we aiming to be beaming all the time? I doubt it would always be true even on days where we are surrounded by our loved ones and other materialistic desires. I reckon it is the peace we are searching for to fill ourselves with-an aid to bear all moments of pain and pleasures. I would like to believe all of us have that sense of peace; all that is left is to scrap away deterrents and realize that inner peace.



**SUMYCHEEN BHUSAL**, ASSOCIATE VPE  
KU-SOM TOASTMASTERS

# "PROGRESSIVE MIND"

We tend to try painting with limited colors in our palette, usually to find the perfect rainbow amidst the thunder and storm. Everything is bound to settle and be at the places where they are meant to be. The dire situation we are living through the second wave in Nepal, which we weren't prepared for, was a massive blow to the mental, physical, and emotional state of minds battered by the traumatic conditions. We all have been waiting, expecting things to get better and more regular than what used to be.

During this time, we often overlook mental well-being, which is crucial. At the same time, my past track record of achievements taunts me, placing me in a position to rethink and doubt my abilities. The term imposter syndrome has been resounding in our ears for quite some time. It refers to the notion that some individuals feel as if they ended up in esteemed roles and positions not because of their competencies but because of some oversight or stroke of luck. This particular situation resonates with me a lot. I have never been satisfied with myself. The triumph behind testing the waters filled with glory and achievement was in my upbringing, and learning has always been my first love. As a traveler with a camera as my companion, being locked in a room, I had to reimagine discovering beautiful destinations. I started to unfold the entire archive of my travel diaries and started to travel again and found stories worth sharing with the viewers as a visual creator.



**YOUNBESH DHAUBHADEL, VPPR**  
BANESHWOR TOASTMASTERS

Every day I think of narrating a voiceover on my travel videos but would take a step back - the reason is that I cringe over my recorded voice. Wait, I assume it isn't just me who flinches at the recorded voice of their own. Eventually, the day I get a hold of my confidence in my recorded voice, a new sensation is set to be born. While I have never put a confined boundary to limit my interests, is it the perfection that I have sought in everything that I do that is limiting me to get the best of myself? It could be the reason, and I expect to break the ceiling of glass to emerge as the new sensation Morgan Freeman, whom I look up to. Narrating like him is a long way to set a journey, but I firmly believe having the trait of a conquer garnishing the skills that would trigger all of those instincts and qualities of an achiever. The progress of building the verbal narratives are duly skimmed by the practices as a Toastmaster and not just limited to that, moderating sessions eloquently in Clubhouse may be a stepping stone to the switch. Practicing over perfection has been an ideal turnover to climbing the steps of progression in productivity.

I got reintroduced to yoga and pranayama and realized we all must have been misguided from the idea of self-care and time in pursuit of being productive. The time I spent focusing on my breath and the unnoticed activities this human body does, helped me accelerate the process of controlling our minds. Self-esteem is congruent to the amount of time we set for ourselves, the most important thing that I figured out. The definition of happiness is abstract to the extent we bind ourselves with the pressure given to our brain. I find intrinsic happiness in honing the skills that I intend to enhance each day in a positive upward curve. We often quote, "I don't have time for myself, extreme busyness due to work," but alongside managing time for ourselves, managing energy is equally important to redirect the force that our body possesses. Cognitive restructuring is a helpful technique that I have adopted to understand unhappy feelings and moods and challenge the sometimes wrong "automatic beliefs" that can lie behind them. I practice framing the unnecessary negative thinking that we all experience from time to time to counter negative thoughts with positive statements and to come up with affirmations that neutralize those thoughts.

# TRAVELLING AND STORYTELLING

Ibn Battuta said, “Travelling leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller.” Nowadays, domestic and international tourism of Nepalis is on the rise. After a friend offered to take me to a place I wanted to travel to, Kalinchowk, I packed my bags and joined my friends. Kalinchowk is situated in Dolakha District and Janakpur zone, which is 150 kilometers away from Kathmandu valley.

My trip was in March, which marks the end of winter and beginning of spring. Unlike spring weather, during our drive there, the continuous rainfall resulted in cold and foggy weather. This forced us to roll up our windows during our drive there. After we crossed Dhulikhel, the weather made it difficult to drive through the twists and turns on our way to Kalinchowk. We could barely see past 4 or 5 meters.

Suddenly, a trip with my friends became an adventure and I was terrified to the point that I started to think this might be the end of my life. Fortunately, the driver of our car was very cautious and experienced, which made us feel secure. To add to our nervousness the road a little ahead was slippery due to construction work. There were many motorbikes that were sliding due to the slippery roads.

Due to the road and weather delays we reached Charikot, Dolakha Bazar at 4pm. Kalinchowk was an additional two hour drive from there. To avoid further road risks we decided to stay at my friend's relative's house for the night. Even the road to my friend's relative's house was narrow and slippery adding to our fears. But, everything changed when we reached my friend's relative's house.

They greeted us with warm smiles and delicious organic home cooked food. The rest of the evening was spent eating, talking, and dancing. Given our long journey, we fell asleep soon after. The next morning we woke up early, well rested and prepared to continue our journey to our intended destination-Kalinchowk. We ate breakfast and started our remaining drive.

The remaining journey was even more adventurous. The terrain of the road to Kuri Bazar was difficult and one that was only possible with jeeps. It was an intense half hour of shaking and shifting inside the jeep. Suddenly, I could see snow and I was excited. Moments later we reached Kuri Bazar, the base of Kalinchowk Bhagwati cliff. The moment we reached there, I forgot all the difficulties of the trip and it felt like heaven on earth. I could see the mountains, colorful huts covered by snow and everything around me was breathtaking. My eyes were wide open and my jaws dropped down as I enjoyed the beautiful scenes.

We made a snowman and took lots of pictures with it. Then we trekked up the cliff to take a cable car to Kalinchowk Bhagwati. When we reached the *mandir* we sprinkled holy water and prayed. After some time, we took the cable car back to Kuri Bazar. We enjoyed a hot lunch in the chilly atmosphere. The trip back home was filled with contentment and I felt like my dream came true. This experience made me realize that we should promote domestic tourism as there are so many destinations in Nepal that can turn us into storytellers.



**BASANTI MAHARJAN, TREASURER**  
HEALER'S TOASTMASTERS



## MY SINGAPORE DIARY

Human beings, by nature, love traveling. Mankind has been traveling to new places from time immemorial. Travelling helped mankind go ahead and invent new things. Nature is an open book to gain knowledge and we can read the book by visiting new places. Travelling has become easier now because of modern inventions. Therefore, we travel to countries miles away to spend our vacations. I travelled to Malaysia and Singapore last year with my wife and daughter.

I was very eager and happy to travel to two of the developed countries in the world. We packed our clothes and other necessary things in our suitcases. The flight date came and we took our flight. After landing at Malaysia Airport, we went to collect our luggage. To my surprise, I could not find them. I informed the help desk officer about the issue and sought his help. He lodged a complaint in the system and tried to find the lost luggage but all in vain. The official noted my email, contact number, and residential address during my stay in Malaysia and told me that he will contact me if the luggage was found. My first step into Malaysia was bitter as I lost everything except my travel documents and the clothes I was wearing.

We went to the apartment of my friend located at Bistari Condominium, Kuala Lumpur. After a short rest in the apartment, we went shopping in Putra Mall as I had lost all my belongings at the Airport. The first thing we did in Malaysia was shopping for clothes.

Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia, has become an important hub in the Southeast Asian Region. So, I was eager to visit each nook and corner of the beautiful city. We left our room early the next morning and visited the PETRONAS Twin Towers, the amazing engineering of mankind. The towers have become a landmark of Kuala Lumpur recognizable by the world.

We, then, decided to travel to Singapore by road and purchased bus tickets. We reached Singapore in the evening and stayed in a Hotel. We left our hotel room early in the morning and started our visit. First of all, we visited the Singapore Zoo. My little daughter enjoyed seeing different animals in the zoo. Then, we visited the aquarium where

we were amazed by the wonders of marine life. We enjoyed eating Duren (a jackfruit-like fruit) and other local cuisines.

Then after, we visited Mustafa and spent some time shopping and had lunch in a Gorkhali restaurant.

The next day, we went to visit some of the loveliest places I have visited in my entire life, Sentosa Island, Marina Bay, Merlion Park and Universal Studio. Marina Bay is one of the popular tourist destinations in Singapore. The Skypark is the main attraction of the place. Likewise, the Merlion Park, the figure of a mythical creature that has the head of a lion and body and tail of a fish, spouting water from its mouth in a fountain, draws the attention of the tourists. Then, we went to Universal Studios. The most amazing part of the day was the electric Crane Dance in the evening. It is one of the best light engineering.

I was mesmerized by the amazing development of Singapore. Once, an unproductive barren backward part of Malaysia has turned into the most developed country in the world after its separation from Malaysia. Many historians give credit to Lee Kuan Yew, a visionary leader. It is like a Chapter in Mahabharata where Dhritarastra, King of Hastinapur (Kuru Kingdom), gives Khandavprastha, a barren land-like dessert to Pandavas. The Pandavas turned the barren land into a beautiful heaven-like territory named Indraprastha by their dedication, hard labor, and good deeds.

We spent our holidays and returned to Malaysia Airport to come back to Nepal. I went to the help desk where I lodged my complaint about my luggage. To my utter surprise, my luggage was found. The person who had mistakenly taken my luggage had returned it, the official said.

The pandemic of Covid 19 spread all over the world shortly after. Now, we are confined to the four boundaries of our residence due to the worldwide outbreak and wish for eradication of this pandemic so that we can again travel freely where we wish to.

**KRISHNA PRASAD ACHARYA**  
EBL TOASTMASTERS

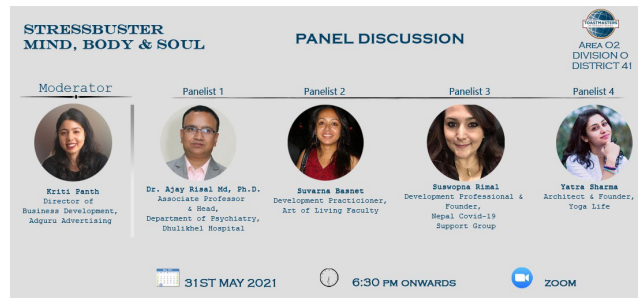
# CLUB NEWS AND UPDATES

## 1. Stressbuster: Mind, Body, and Soul

KRITI PANTH, SECRETARY, PROFESSIONALS TOASTMASTERS

While front liners are the true heroes of the pandemic, it is important to recognize that each of us is important during the pandemic. Area O2 planned a stressbuster with a diverse panel to show how some individuals are responding to the pandemic by emphasizing the need for solidarity and compassion during these times.

Covid-19, coronavirus, SARS COV-2, regardless of what you call this virus, is a term we are all aware of. We've been living through a pandemic for over a year and a half now. This has brought about an immense amount of change to our lives. Everyone ranging from children to the elderly and everyone in between is facing an altered life. The lack of "normalcy" has put people under massive stress-- finances are stretched out, our mobility is restricted, sources of outlet outside our homes are no longer deemed essential. While



we all fall under a spectrum regarding mental health, our environment right now requires every one of us to find an outlet or a stressbuster. Given that the second wave has been even more devastating in Nepal, it's taking a further toll on us all. The good news is, we can manage our stress. An esteemed panel of individuals shared how they manage their stress, alongside how they are using these practices to help others.

## 2. Exotic 8

SANDHYA RATHI, VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION, JHAPA TOASTMASTERS

On 1st June 2020, for the first time in the history of Nepal's Toastmasters fraternity, six clubs outside the valley came together as 'Synchrony Six'. The meeting concluded with the commitment to continue this momentum each year on June 1st. To carry on with the legacy from Synchrony 6 held in 2020, we experienced a touch of Exotic 8 in 2021 with the theme "The Power Of Connection".

On 1st June 2021, the Exotic 8; Chitwan, Dharan, Butwal, Jhapa, Bhairhawa, Pokhara, Birgunj, and Gandaki, conducted a virtual meeting which was a resounding success with a participation of about two hundred members not only from across Nepal but also from our neighboring countries. As someone rightly said "Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved" and what better example than the exotic connection between our eight exotic clubs.



At sharp 5:00 pm, the sergeant-at-arms, Ayusha Gupta Khetan (Dharan TMC), called the meeting to order, followed by a welcome address from the Presiding Officer, Junu Shrestha (Chitwan Landmark TMC). The floor was then handed over to the Toastmaster of the Evening, Sandhya Rathi (Jhapa TMC) who carried the meeting further. The meeting was marked by the presence of Suman Shakya, DTM (District Parliamentarian 2020-21, District 41 CGD elect 2021-22), Moon Pradhan, DTM (Division A Director), Anish Dixit (Division N Director), and Avish Acharya (Division O Director) who enlightened the audience with their speeches on the power of connection, collaboration, and team spirit. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm from closing remarks by the Presiding Officer, Baibhav Paudel (Gandaki TMC).

Teamwork makes the dream work, and this dream that Ankit Goenka (Area A3 Director 2020-21, Division N Director elect 2021-22) saw wouldn't have been as exotic as it was without the tremendous efforts of the entire team of Exotic 8. The hard work and dedication of all the role players and the tech team were evident with special mention to the PR team for the appealing flyers and extensive publicity, which made the event a huge success. Continuing the momentum, hopefully, we meet next year physically as the "Fantastic Fifteen".



## 3. Celebrating Champions at Leadbox Toastmasters

MANOJ SUBEDI, LEADBOX TOASTMASTERS

Scene 1: A Toastmaster reached out to a fellow Toastmaster.

"Hello, Toastmaster! Can I ask you for one favor? I was about to take this role in today's meeting, however I have to attend one important meeting with a client during that time. Will you help me by taking that role, please?"

After going through the agenda sheet, the fellow toastmaster agreed to take the role.

Scene 2: There was a discussion going on about membership growth within the club. The VP-Membership along his team were doing their best but the club was not achieving the desired goal line. With the leadership of the club President and VP-Membership, a team was formed including some executive committee and club members. With the combined effort of all involved and proper utilization of resources, the club membership growth excelled.

Scene 3: One day the VP-Public Relations made a suggestion for our club during an informal conversation. He asked, "How about a joint club meeting with other clubs, where we can share and gain new experiences?" The idea was spontaneous and all the club members supported his suggestion. Within two months our club hosted four joint meetings with four different clubs. This helped build connections and share experiences.

The above three scenarios are some examples of what our club did in the past year. These efforts align with the club vision, which is to "provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth." With the pandemic and strict measures in place to control the spread, most of the meetings this past year were conducted virtually. There were limited physical meetings and online meetings came with challenges. In online meetings, each member has to make an additional emotional effort to appear interested-- in the absence of many non-verbal cues, some of the members even appeared exhausted. Given the circumstances, the club members were encouraged to share their thoughts, which made all members comfortable. This approach worked, the club was able to achieve all ten Distinguished Club Program goals set by Toastmasters International and our club achieved President Distinguished Club.

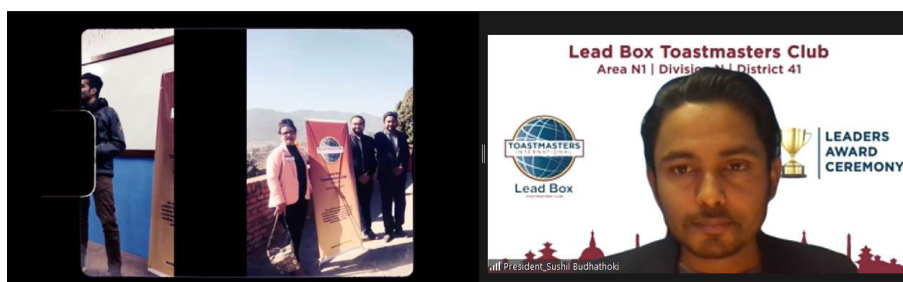


Each club member gave their best to achieve this feat and the result was worth celebrating. Each member was proactive in taking the roles, utilizing pathways, actively participating in contests, promoting membership, extending public relations, attending Toastmasters Leadership Institute training, and seizing all opportunities. Toastmasters International's emphasis on fostering leadership values and creating a supportive environment to equip those leadership traits among members has helped our club members. In line with this mantra, the club celebrated the triumphs by awarding the leaders of the club. To honor their devotion and encourage future club leaders, the club organized the "Leaders Award 2020/21."

The "Leaders Award 2020/21" had a jury and 13 different award categories: Best Pathway Achiever, Best Grammarian, Best Ah-Counter, Best Timer, Best Vote-Counter, Best Table Topic Master, Best Toastmaster of the Evening, Best Evaluator, Best General Evaluator, Best Emerging Toastmasters, Best Toastmasters, Most Active Toastmaster, and Best Featured Speaker. There were nominations in each category, determined after the rigorous analysis of past meeting agenda and attendance sheets. The jury then democratically chose the best among the three based on: commitment, visibility, and leadership.

The award ceremony took place in the honorable presence of District 41 Parliamentarian DTM Suman Shakya, Associate PQD DTM Shaurab Lohani, Division N Director TM Anish Dixit, and Area N1 Director TM Anjali Acharya. The winner in each category was announced by honorable guests and each winner made a brief acceptance speech. Then, the honorable guests shared their remarks and appreciation of the initiation taken by the club. The preparation of the awards ceremony took ten days and each member that was part of the planning process made sure the event was a notable one. The members once again proved the power of unity and collaboration. We concluded the program with the promise to meet next year with more enthusiasm and dedication towards the success of the club and its members.

Manoj Subedi, Leadbox Toastmasters



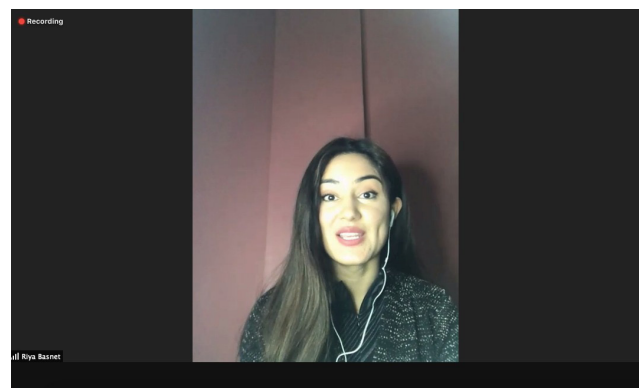
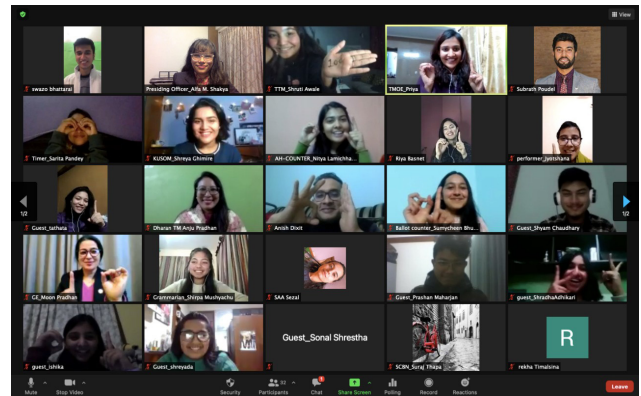
## 4. KU-SOM Toastmasters Celebrates 100th Meeting

PRIYA CHAPAGAIN, VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP, KU-SOM TOASTMASTERS

The 100th Meeting!

To be honest, I was super nervous when I was asked to lead the 100th Meeting because it was supposed to be bigger, funnier, and more interesting than the regular meetings- and bigger, funnier, and indeed more interesting it was. We had Division N Director TM Anish Dixit and Area N3 Director TM Subrath Poudel give their congratulations and remarks on the meeting. Division A Director DTM Moon was the GE for the meeting. Special guest Riya Basnet, Miss Nepal Earth 2019 gave a speech about her experience with public speaking. The meeting was further charmed by the melodious voice of Guest Jyotshana. The latter half of the meeting was extremely fun as attendees played Scavenger Hunt and the winner bagged a certificate- the winner being TM Shreya. We also had toastmasters from various other clubs including Division O Director TM Avish Acharya and Area N2 Director TM Ankit Goenka, who shared their favorite KU-SOM Toastmasters Meeting.

None of this would have been possible if it were not for the great assistance from TM Abhilasha and TM Alfa. I may have been the captain of the ship but rowing was definitely not a one-man job and I sure am glad to have had the support of these fantastic, talented, and supportive ladies!



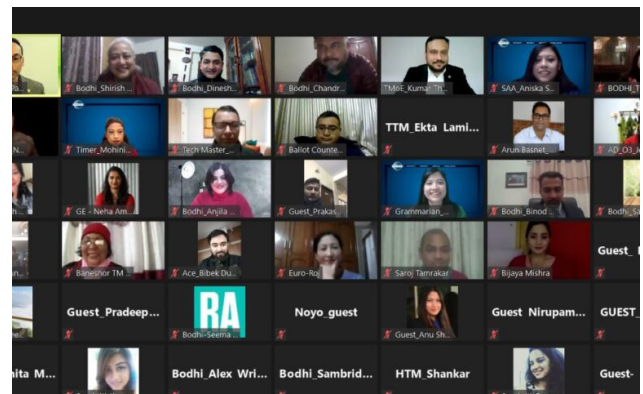
## 5. The Journey of 3 Years at Bodhi

NILADRI PARIAL, IPP, BODHI TOASTMASTERS

The 3rd Anniversary celebration of Bodhi Toastmasters Club took place with members and friends of Bodhi over afternoon tea at Hotel Radisson on January 9th. This is an anecdote dedicated to the same.

It was 2017 when a group of educators came together to commit their combined energies and effort to form a Toastmasters club for educators. The lead was taken by Toastmaster Diptee Acharya. I recall the first Demo Meeting at John Dewey School and I was the TMoE. Prior to that, I had spent over 4 years dilly-dallying over whether I could commit the time to be a Toastmaster. I, along with several other educators, took the plunge, and our first formal meeting of Bodhi at Brihaspati Vidya Sadan, on 5 January 2018 cemented our journey and right from the 14th of February, we took the leap into having meetings that were different and talk of the town – I remember the rose petals that were strewn on the library table at BVS and the curated list of romantic melodies that filled the meeting hall as members and guests streamed in. Yes, we have been consistent in having a lot of fun while partaking in serious learning from the Toastmasters platform. Fun and camaraderie never ends at Bodhi.

I remember us graduating from a club where educators came to be themselves and relax after having spent a serious day at the office to one that has been able to contribute to the ecosystem. Over these three short years, we have graduated from novices to more mature learners. We may not have champion public speakers yet, but we have a host of gems that are accomplished in their own domains and bring their specific expertise to solidify our community.



## CLUB NEWS & UPDATES

It is said that it takes an entire village to raise a child, and the 3-year-old child that is Bodhi, has been nurtured with love and support by several Toastmasters over the years. A few names that immediately come to the forefront, who have helped from Club Charter to role-taking, mentorship, and support are Toastmasters Ekta Lamichhane, Neha Amatya, Sagar Shrestha, among others. DTM Moon Pradhan, our Club Mentor, has been instrumental in shaping the club into what it is today. Toastmaster Alexandra Wrigley found it fun and inspiring to be with us and she even became a dual member - a commitment that few of us have made till date. The two constant pillars for the club have been DTMs Suman Shakya and Ranjit Acharya; they have always been the early responders for our need of guidance and direction. Our current

Area Director, TM Jenny Manandhar, has been a big support to us. And, we cannot but thank all Bodhians, especially the newer generation of dynamic individuals. We have immense faith in their combined energies to take the Club to the next level.

This year, despite the challenges, our current Club President has been able to lead the club in the best manner possible, by turning hurdles into opportunities for connection and growth. We are continuing our journey of empowerment toward building better communicators, leaders, and public speakers, as is every Toastmaster club in Nepal and the world. Let this 3-year-old walk beside all of you and build a more resilient Toastmasters fraternity in Nepal.



### 6. 1ST ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF ACE TOAST MASTERS CLUB

**RITU BHUSAL, VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP, ACE TOASTMASTERS CLUB**

On 28th May 2021, Ace toastmasters club celebrated its 1st-anniversary meeting. It was a huge milestone for our club. We had prior plans of a grand-celebration in physical setup but due to the current situation, we chose to have a virtual meeting. I was the Toastmaster Of The Evening of the meeting so I had this pressure to make the celebration eventful and grand, even if it was a virtual setup. I did all the preparation from weeks ahead from collecting the roleplayers for the evening, preparation of flyers, and promoting our meetings on all possible social platforms.

A celebration is all about togetherness, fun activities, and laughter, so I wanted to keep a theme that would incorporate every aspect of the celebrations for our first-ever anniversary meeting. Therefore, I had the theme 'Never Have I Ever.'

We then started promoting the flyers all over our social platforms. Ace Toastmasters club usually conducts meetings every Friday evening from 4:30-6:00 pm. I was having all sorts of mixed emotions; I was excited, nervous, and happy. Our meeting started exactly on

time by our Sergeant of Arms (SAA) TM Ishwor Khanal. I was amazed to see so many guests from more than ten Toastmasters clubs and being blessed by the presence of amazing distinguished guests from many clubs. Then the meeting was preceded by our presiding officer TM Prabin Shrestha. As he is also the Vice President Education (VPE) of the club, he highlighted all of our achievements in the past year. Ace Toastmasters Club has achieved three DCP goals so far. We were awarded the most contributing club at OPUS newsletter launch. In Invictus, an online video speech challenge, TM Bibek Dutta was one of the finalists and TM Manasi Parajuli was in the organizing team. Similarly, TM Bibek Dutta and TM Dhiroj Shrestha represented our club in the area-level table topic contest. TM Bibek Dutta was later able to represent our club at the division level table topic contest too. After



acknowledging all the amazing achievements we had accomplished, our division director TM Avish Acharya motivated all of us and set the tone for the meeting. After that, I took the lead of the meeting as the host.

Initially, we showed prepared video of all the pictures and memories of the past year. I could see all the club members being nostalgic as we saw the anniversary special video. Likewise, after formally discussing the agenda, I introduced the theme. I was stunned to see such large guest participation and even amazed to see how most of the guests came with their glasses of drinks ready to play the game. So I started asking questions and observed all the guests who were sipping drinks with laughter, embarrassment, or guilt. It was fun seeing guests enjoying and actively participating in the games. Then I introduced all the role players by also mentioning their favorite drink.

After that, we had two amazing speakers. TM Rashmi Pokhrel is a newly chartered member of our club and she was giving her Ice Breaker speech. TM Bibek Dutta was giving his level 3 Project 3 speech. Both of the speakers were amazing. Just to carry on the theme throughout I kept asking "Never have I ever" questions between the sessions by which I could see the audience was engaged throughout the meetings. During the game, the Principal of Ace institute, Mr. Ashish

Tiwari also mentioned being sad about not getting a chance to have enough drinks and realized he was not enjoying life as much which was very hilarious to hear. After the featured speakers, we had the table topic session conducted by TM Rasmita Pokhrel. Many guests volunteered in this session and it was indeed an amazing table topic session. Normally after the table topic session, we move directly to the evaluation session but as it was our anniversary meeting I also added a little game session with instant Rs. 100 top-up rewards to the winners. It was a time-limited quiz session where the guest had to volunteer first and I would be asking questions and they would be given 30 seconds to answer. Two guests were able to win the awards. It was indeed a very fun and engaging session during the meeting.

Then came the last session which was the evaluation session which was conducted by our General Evaluator TM Niraj Khadka from Baneshwor Toastmasters Club. The direct evaluation was followed up by TM Manasi Parajuli and TM Biraj Pradhan. The indirect evaluation was well done by all the roleplayers. We ended the meeting with an amazing musical performance by our VPE, TM Prabin Shrestha, which was definitely the cherry on the top of our amazing anniversary celebrations. After the meeting was adjourned we continued with an informal session.

## 7. Leaders in the making

**DURGA PANDEY, VPPR, EURO TOASTMASTERS**

Euro Toastmasters Club started its journey in January 2021 with a mission to empower members to develop their communication and leadership skills. The core values of this club are Resilience, Excellence, Passion, Optimism, and Teamwork. Meetings are held every Friday at 3 PM.

Toastmasters is a platform where 'Leaders are Made' and this was evident after just a few meetings at Euro Toastmasters Club. It took us some time to form an Executive Committee of seven passionate members with a common goal of "growing to greater heights". As we came together to plan and explore ahead, we were amazed to find a large extent of resources in the Toastmasters International website which could help us learn many new things and be a better version of ourselves. We continued learning from this platform and other established clubs. With growing confidence, we were assured that Toastmasters was truly a place 'Where Leaders are Made.'

With the completion of our 8th formal meeting, here are the descriptions of the smiles, love, and laughter filled meeting. The 8th meeting of Euro Toastmasters Club witnessed exciting participation of up to 36 members and guests. It started at 3 PM with a welcome message from our evergreen SAA, Toastmaster Jyoti Shahi, where she stated the club mission and briefed on the virtual meeting guidelines. The screen was then handed over to the charismatic Presiding Officer, Toastmaster Rohini Pradhan, who again welcomed



everyone present and shared some insights on the theme of the meeting, 'Health is Wealth.' The Toastmaster of the Day, Toastmaster Puja Singh then, took over with zeal and explained the flow of the meeting. And for the benefit of the guests, she also briefed about the club and the weekly meeting schedules. The General Evaluator, Toastmaster Sagarika Khadka from Rato Bangla Toastmasters Club, was warmly welcomed before introduction of all the auxiliary role players. It was then followed by the Table Topics Session, the featured speeches session, and the evaluation session.

The most interesting and exciting part of it all is that you feel connected and close to various Toastmasters from different clubs who, with their supportive and pleasant nature, urge you to be the same. The constructive feedback you receive from one another is so cogent that you always look forward to the next meeting. To all those who have not yet experienced the essence of Toastmasters, come, join us - every Friday at 3 PM. Refer to our Facebook Page, Euro Toastmasters Club.

### 8. Infinite Journey started Virtually for Agni Toastmasters

**SANTOSHI NEPAL, SECRETARY, AGNI TOASTMASTERS CLUB**

Agni Toastmasters- a young corporate club, started its journey on June 29, 2020. Since our Toastmasters journey began during the time of the Global Covid-19 pandemic, our meetings were mostly on a virtual platform with a handful of hybrid meetings.

Even though our club has not yet experienced a full-fledged in-person Toastmasters meeting, Agni Toastmasters club is constantly trying to be creative and innovative. We are motivated to move towards being a well-established Toastmasters club.

In doing so, Agni Toastmasters Club is constantly experimenting and exploring themes such as MasterChef challenge, Trivia Night, Stress Management, Wellness, and more. Our Educational events were led by Toastmasters members from the fraternity - DTM Moon Pradhan, Division A Director, TM Rabindra Pradhan, Area A2 Director, and TM Heema Mukarung, VPE at Everest Toastmasters and Division A PQD and DCP Coach.

Agni Toastmasters Club has had Special guest judges and speakers such as our Managing Director of Agni Group Mr. Cabinet Shrestha, DTM Saurabh Lohani, Stand Up Comedian Mr. Suman Karki, Chef Rajendra Ghimire and Agni Group Brand Ambassador and Miss Nepal 2018 Ms. Shrinkhala Khatiwada. With great initiative from our club members who are dedicated and persistent to achieve personal growth, our desire to constantly learn and develop our communication and leadership skills with the help of Toastmasters International will continue to strengthen Agni Toastmasters Club.



# IN LOVING MEMORY



POKHARA TOASTMASTERS



DURGA BHAT

KATHMANDU TOASTMASTERS



MADHAB PRASAD GHIMIRE

BHAIRAHAWA TOASTMASTERS



NITESH KARN

---

*You may no longer be with us,  
but your memories -  
the smiles you brought on our faces,  
the kind deeds you sparked,  
the bond you've had,  
will continue to live on.*

- TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL



# EXCERPTS

# TRAVERSING A LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SPEAKING JOURNEY



Toastmasters hit me as a novel term and my proposed membership was also an unplanned one – in hindsight, everything seemed to have happened in a blur. I knew the engagement was to be voluntary and that it will help shape my leadership and public speaking skills.

The idea was to form an institutional framework where we envisioned that our faculty members at the Reliance Education Network will benefit from this journey. And, with that began the journey of Reliance Toastmasters Club.

To this moment writing an article for Aspire, I would retrospect the time the core faculties were summoned by the chairman of Reliance Education Network Mr. Rabindra Jung Thapa, Academic Director, Mr Birendra Kumar Mehta, and the current club president Mr Basanta Lal Lamichhane for a joint meeting with the then mentor and an initiator of this club, Mr Ajay Regmi.

The first session was not only mesmerizing but also baffling to us all. We had felt then as if we were in the midst of clouds, amidst a turbulent take-off and not knowing which direction this flight will take us all.

A demo meeting had posed several questions to us as we arranged time and money out of the tight schedules of everyday academic proceedings in our institutions. We had our reservations during the initial days to get actively involved. “Is this going to be a wishful move or a waste of time?” was a giant question then.

**The first session was not only mesmerizing but also baffling to us all.**

It's been four years since Reliance Toastmasters has been in the scene of the Toastmasters fraternity in Nepal and in District 41. I am proud to say that it has remained one of the safest abodes for us all growing collectively with numerous wilful souls stretching their arms in every need to tune our combined fostering.

As one of the founding observers and serving officers to this club presently, I have experienced many ups and downs as other clubs in Nepal have. Nevertheless, a top achievement today to us all is that the club's exciting 24 members have grown in measure and in stature as public speakers and leaders.

**I firmly believe that ingraining self-confidence will be the best wing to have miles to fly towards an unlimited horizon of learning and growth.**

I, who used to be a deliberate escapist when it came to role taking, a man that used to sweat and shiver during public speaking, and an individual hesitant to bear any leadership roles, have beaten off all these anxieties.

Today, at this proud state that our club is at, I have understood that Toastmasters has been precisely, a zone of ‘Sapere Aude’ in Kantian term meaning dare to know, which makes us genuinely comprehend a fact about knowledge, “Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity.” I firmly believe that ingraining self-confidence will be the best wing to have miles to fly towards an unlimited horizon of learning and growth.

**DILIP NEPAL**  
RELiance TOASTMASTERS CLUB

# MY TOASTMASTERS EXPERIENCE

Somebody once told me that being a Toastmaster is like being an MBA student but with a lot of Business School money and time saved, and well, after being a Toastmaster for one year, 11 months, and 20 days, I for one can vouch for that.

I knew this was no ordinary organization the minute our club's then VPM came to my house to collect my membership form, leaving me with no choice but to join the club. I also had done my research in finding the club by attending various meetings (some even twice), speaking to people, and eventually just forgetting about it after a week, delaying it with a hundred different excuses in my head. But you see Toastmasters work differently. Although everybody joins Toastmasters to improve their skills, the members are as invested in your progress as on their own.



My "non-toastmasters friends" often ask me, "But what exactly do you do in a Toastmasters meeting?" "Do you have to go up on a podium and speak?" "How does it help you improve your public speaking? Do you have teachers?" More often than not, I never have a fixed answer to give to them. Toastmasters is about being in a room filled with people from all spheres of life, doctors, bankers, engineers, artists, investors, homemakers, and teachers. Still not feeling out of place, still being able to voice your opinion without the fear of judgment.

50+ meetings, several events are bound to add a lot to the memory box in my head. One evening I randomly decided to attend a Toastmasters meeting because I was free. What better way to pass the time than a combination of good food, speeches, and conversations, right? (of course, this was way before COVID-19 had even decided to befall upon us). So yes, I went to the meeting, not knowing a lot of people and just sat down at the very end. I sat down quietly, avoiding making any sounds to disrupt the flow of the speaker, but wait! Nobody seemed to notice me or pay heed to any of my interruptions because the speaker, (WOW!) had

engulfed the whole room in her speech. She had the audience hanging on her every word, and I, being privy to this kind of a show for the first time, was amazed. Like everybody else, I soon lost myself in her speech and was blown away with what I saw and heard. The speech was one of the most vulnerable yet persuasive speeches I'd ever heard. At the time, the speaker gave her speech in her most unguarded state, yet each word coming out of her carried that conviction.

Toastmasters has worked even better than an MBA because it has not only helped me evolve as a speaker or leader but has also provided me with the interactions and opportunities to grow as a person altogether.

***One evening I randomly decided to attend a Toastmasters meeting because I was free. What better way to pass the time than a combination of good food, speeches, and conversations, right?***

**PAYAL SARIA**  
SHANGRILA TOASTMASTERS

# Q&A WITH ROASTMASTER SEEMA

She's a Standup comedian, a self-taught ventriloquist and a TEDx speaker. Ventriloquism is a dying art and she has introduced this age-old art in Nepal, being the only ventriloquist in the country. She's been performing regularly in Nepal and India. She has also taken her art to International platforms like Thailand and the USA. She joined Everest Toastmaster in 2009 and is now the President of her club. She's forever grateful to ETM for being instrumental in helping her choose and pursue her comedy career.

## Where did you get the idea of Roastmasters?

I was discussing how to make our meetings more interesting and discussed different themes with our ETM ExCom members. We realized that Gai Jatra was round the corner so we did something fun. Since Gai Jatra is a festival of merriment and forgetting your sorrows, the idea of roastmasters came up. People usually don't feel bad about being made fun of under this theme.

## How receptive were the members to being roasted?

The members were very sportive and in good spirits to take the banter.

## How often are you planning to do Roastmasters? Do you think other clubs should try this too?

This was just the one time plan because of the Gai Jatra theme. No plans as of now. Yes, other clubs should try it, but it has to be done very tactfully as people can get offended if your jokes get personal.



**CHANDAN GOOPTA**  
EVEREST TOASTMASTERS



## Compared to the regular meetings, how successful and interactive did the meeting go?

As compared to the regular meetings, this was fun and very interactive. We had maximum attendance and guests that evening.

## Can anybody be the Roastmaster of the evening and conduct a Roastmasters meeting? Give our readers some tips.

Yes, anyone can be a roastmaster. It's a great way to involve members. In fact, ROASTING is one of the projects you have to do in an advanced communication manual called Special Occasions Speeches. Toasting and Roasting is all a part of being a good speaker.

## Anything you would like to add at the end?

Don't be afraid to try different things to make your Toastmasters meetings and journey a fun and fulfilling experience.

# THE 3M OF MENTORING: MANUAL, MENTEE & MENTOR

For about a century now, Toastmasters has been well recognized, for its education system having amazing processes that enable individuals to transform their lives by becoming effective communicators and leaders. Having lived as a dedicated Toastmaster for twenty plus years, I am happy to acknowledge the whole process as 'mentoring', which I prefer to call the 'technology' of Toastmasters. The distinct flow of processes is very well documented in the manuals of Toastmasters. Human emotions, aspirations of a mentee, and empathy of a mentor to offer support give the manual a life and the technology works so well that it has been applied and replicated to produce desired results for the past 96 years.



The technology looks as simple as water, and yet is magical in its impact. It is a fine equilibrium in three major constituents: Manual, Mentee, and Mentor, and through mentoring operative and optimal results can be generated when these constituents are congruent, fully operative, and aligned to the same objective. Each constituent has its own dimension.

**Manual:** A member joining a Toastmaster club gets access to a manual. Very well crafted manuals have specific objectives of guiding a member to the desired result on completion of an activity outlined in the manual. However, a member at times skims superficially at a level of letters and misses subtle and deeper aspects of the spirit encapsulated within the letters. Therefore, the manuals require careful and deeper diving. I recall, when I joined Toastmasters in 1998, we used to have printed manuals and mentors guided us to read, re-read, and highlight important portions to delve deeper. Compliant to these deeper aspects are the objectives of projects a member undertakes to complete.

**Mentee:** A mentee in a Toastmaster club is a seeker who comes with an aspiration to transform. There are multiple human emotions at work as one sets out for the journey. However, one has to prepare emotionally to be able to accept, assimilate, and apply the feedback one receives in the process. Each member of Toastmasters begins from 'ice-breaking' and letting go of their inhibition, ego, and biases. Preparing oneself for this process is both a big challenge and a change that I have felt myself and seen others take time to acclimatize. For some, this is an easy cake while for others, a panting and perspiring moment. Yet, by few role-plays, project works, and speeches, a member sheds ego

and hesitations. Prerequisite of a mentee is humility- willingness to listen, accommodate, and apply what comes in. A Toastmaster is expected to be the most compatible member of the community and all are helped to achieve this goal gradually.

**Mentor:** A mentor in Toastmasters is someone who has earned credibility by being consistent in the discipline of taking responsibilities and has made substantial progress in transformation and scaling up in educational achievements. However, all personal achievements kept aside, a mentor has different

sets of empathy for mentees and demonstrates a keen inclination to offer support and lead people. A mentor himself/herself is a learner, aspiring to get better in this regard by way of mentoring as a process and diligently trying to apply knowledge, skills, and experience earned.

Mentoring is an art which does not come by a casual wish but must be nurtured by a deliberate dedication following the laid process. A Toastmaster polishes this skill by adhering to discipline and applying the skills learned during the journey. Like many other skills, one must deliberate substantially to unleash mentorship. Anybody who is trained in the legacy manual of Toastmasters will acknowledge the fact that the Pathways has a better-consolidated manual of mentorship with all the details, procedures, and forms laid down. However, mentoring is a supplementary path that is offered to a member as an elective after completion of Level 2. A Toastmaster matures to the next realm once they consciously consider taking this route.

For a member of Toastmasters, mentorship is an opportunity and a responsibility blended together and offered as a privilege. Through the mentorship program, Toastmasters regenerates the technology of learning to make it ever-relevant. The mentorship is a wide sky and a mentor has a parachute having fabrics of Integrity, Respect, Service, and Excellence to navigate through; no other tool, other than the credibility of a mentor, is of use here in this space. Everyone cannot be a mentor, one has to earn it. Once you do, you are expected to demonstrate and deliver. Toastmasters has thrived so far on this commitment of members and, I believe, mentoring keeps the learning system ever afresh.

**BHANU DABADI, DTM**  
BANESHWOR TOASTMASTERS

# JOURNEY OF A CHAMPION: MOHAMMED QAHTANI

How does a speaker become a Champion?

Whenever I see Champions on stage, I always wonder about every step they must have taken to reach this far. If even one thing had happened differently, would the person still be standing there as the Champion? How beautiful is it to be able to see every stroke of hard work, luck, and footsteps taken by a person by using our vivid imagination to paint their picture using the real words they speak? I have always found it beautiful to be able to trace my fingers on each one of those words and see the whole journey map out at the end; it is absolutely blissful, charming, and oh so, cathartic!

To paint this picture of the journey of one of the most acclaimed International World Champion of Public Speaking, Division N on 12th September 2020 organized a programme "Journey to the Championship" for the one and only Mohammed Qahtani to come and bless everyone with his mesmerizing words. The programme had more than 1200 registrations and more than 500 attendees. SAA TM Samyak Bajracharya started the meeting and handed the virtual floor to Division N Director TM Anish Dixit for a short introduction of the speaker who in reality needs no introduction.

From a child who stammered, did not have any friends or could barely talk to his cousins, Mohammed Qahtani started his journey as a social recluse. And sure enough, with his introverted nature and stammering challenge, speaking was not an easy feat for him to achieve. Whether it be the slap by the teacher for stammering while reading to the class, or being bullied with the nickname "Broken Radio" by the students of his school, Mohammed Qahtani started his journey with much more hurdles to overcome than many other speaking Champions have to. Listening to Mohammed Qahtani speak about his stammering issue being an obstacle for speaking, despite his yearning to be able to speak in front of the school, reminded me of "The King's Speech" where during the whole movie I kept on rooting for King George VI. And even as the listener to Mohammed Qahtani, I was rooting for him to keep on trying- losing myself in his words so much that for some moments I even forgot that he has already won the Championship as an accomplished speaker who did overcome his stammering issue.

Mohammed Qahtani went to the USA for his further studies, trying standup comedy for some time there. When he returned to Saudi Arabia, in 2009, he joined Toastmasters. But despite all of the speeches and standup comedy, in his first Table Topics, nervousness took the better of him and after 11 seconds, he was done. But hearing words of affirmation from a fellow person allowed him to keep on speaking and improving. This further prompted him to take part in contests. And during 2015, he won the World Championship of Public Speaking, and the rest is history.

"The journey to a thousand miles starts with a single step." Not only do we have to iterate the same step a million times, but also be aware that doing so will take time. It is not going to happen in a matter of days, months or a year. Improvement is a gradual process and it will take years on end for a person to be able to accomplish their journey and fulfill their dreams. So, we need to have the perseverance to keep on striving forward. Not just this, but we also need to understand that talent cannot beat hard work when talent doesn't work hard. During this process of working hard, we will stumble and fall numerous times. But it does not matter how many times we fall, but how many times we pull ourselves back up and keep on trying. Remember, talent will only last as long as you practice and keep on learning. To be able to accomplish this, we need to set targets for ourselves- targets which we can measure and which will keep us both motivated from making excuses and in check. These were some of the main takeaways for me from this programme.

Mohammed Qahtani also talked about believing in yourself and knowing that one day you will reach your goal, how we should always speak from our heart and how excuses are always going to lead to pitfalls. After the Question and Answer session with Mohammed Qahtani, where TM Ankit Goekna, Area N2 Director, was the moderator, TM Shraddha Joshi gave the concluding remarks for the programme.

Division N did a wonderful job with the whole programme's execution. I am pretty sure, similar to me, every attendee had important takeaways from the event and in retrospect, as they lay in bed and ruminate over the programme, is able to paint every step taken by Mohammed Qahtani in his Journey to the Championship.



**PRIYA CHAPAGAIN, VPM**  
KU-SOM TOASTMASTERS

# PATHWAYS: BEYOND SPEECHES AND PROJECTS

Ah Pathways! It felt like a big complex jigsaw puzzle when I first logged in. Every time I forgot where the projects were and where I had to click. However, with time it not only became easier but also equally exciting to unlock new projects and challenges. It's like when the puzzle slowly begins to take a form and the picture becomes clearer and clearer. With new changes in the user interface, the navigation is now much smoother.

As I come to the end of my first path, I have realized that Pathways has given me a comprehensive opportunity to explore new areas of interest, revive old hobbies, and embrace difficult challenges. It goes beyond speeches and projects. I have had the chance to reflect on my leadership styles, understand conflicts, record a podcast, and lead a team to achieve a definite goal among many other projects. Each one carries its own set of learnings and memories.

Through these experiences I have come to understand the core competencies in Pathways function as an integrated whole. Each project builds in separate skills and when combined together with another, the synergy is undeniable. A visual aids project in Level 3 compliments the Prepare to Speak Professionally in Level 5. A Level 4 project with Q&A prepares for mental agility and ability to connect patterns. A 22 minutes speech in Level 5 builds stamina and strength to deal with longer presentations not just at Toastmasters but everywhere from work to home. Speech writing in general improves our ability to arrange ideas more logically.

It is indeed like a big complex jigsaw puzzle. Doesn't matter where you start solving it from - the edges, corners, or any pattern on the puzzle - each part plays a role in completing the whole, in bringing out the final picture. When you can finally see the completed jigsaw, it feels wonderful.

Of course there are bound to be errors and lags, and thus an opportunity to work on them on the next path. As I unlock a new path, new experiences await.



**As I come to the end of my first path, I have realized that Pathways has given me a comprehensive opportunity to explore new areas of interest, revive old hobbies, and embrace difficult challenges.**

ALFA M. SHAKYA, PRESIDENT  
KU-SOM TOASTMASTERS

# MY INCREDIBLE INVICTUS JOURNEY

"If you believe you can, you probably can. If you believe you can't, you most assuredly won't. Belief is the ignition switch that gets you off the launching pad" - Denis Waitley. The twist in my story is that I have an immense fear of public speaking. I never believed in myself. Recording a video for a challenge was not in my farthest sights and winning it was an almost "impossible-to-achieve" dream.

When I first heard about the INVICTUS Video Challenge, I asked TM Asira if it had to be done 'live'. Her 'not required' response put me at ease. To participate, I had to record a 2-3-minute video on Resilience. My mind was ready for the challenge, telling me, "It's just 2-3 minutes, take it anyhow" I was happy knowing I was daring enough to take the challenge, at least, mentally.

Now came the hard part – preparing the script. Where to start? What to share? How to express?

Sitting down with a pen and paper, I started looking back at my life. Flashes of all the beautiful scars of pain, tolerance, and resistance flashed before my eyes and I could feel my story of resilience as I jotted down the memories. We are all stronger than we believe because stories of resilience are found in every moment, every day of our lives. Don't you think so?



**We are all stronger than we believe  
because stories of resilience are  
found in every moment, every day  
of our lives. Don't you think so?**

**BIJAYA MISHRA**  
DHARAN TOASTMASTERS

When the script was ready, the next challenging task was to shoot the video in a single take. Sounds easy, right? I don't know about you but it took me 3 days and over 45 takes to produce the final video. And this, too, had one small hesitation...but only I could notice it. There were times when I'd forget words, hesitate, or say something else, or forget the first words in the beginning. My patience was tested. I had to do multiple takes until it became what I had expected it to be. Finally, the video was uploaded and sent to the INVICTUS team. And I was satisfied with myself, which was a victory in itself. Honestly, I had no expectations of being selected in the top three, let alone winning. It feels... surreal.

I remember the day of the results – 28th September, Monday. We had our regular club meeting at Dharan Toastmasters Club; I had just finished my speech and the event started LIVE on Janata TV at 6 pm. As the Top 3 videos were announced, I could hardly believe when my name was called out. I was super-duper excited! But I had to remain calm as I was still in a club meeting. And then, it was time to announce the winner... In the club, Toastmaster Alex was evaluating me on the speech I had just delivered a while ago. I was acting normal and was trying to focus on the evaluation. I remember, after the evaluation, the GE, TM Niladri saying, "I have an announcement to make. I don't know if TM Bijaya will approve of this but I was watching the LIVE broadcast of INVICTUS Video Challenge on TV, and TM Bijaya has just won!"

Everyone in the club started congratulating me. I was overwhelmed with all the wishes and messages I was receiving on WhatsApp. Yes, it was an incredible feeling. And I didn't know that the victory would include certification, awards, and gifts. As Oprah Winfrey said, "You don't become what you want, you become what you believe." I had never thought about doing what I did – sharing my story of resilience. But I took a chance, I believed in myself and shared my story. Preparing the script and sharing my story made me realize that we are stronger than we believe. This is my journey of the challenge. And I am sure you will be able to share yours someday. Until then, don't stop believing.

# THE RIGHT KEY TO LEAD



My first thought looking at the Toastmasters tagline “Where Leaders are Made” was somewhat skeptical. Although I knew good communications are managerial attributes, I wasn’t too sure about how it would help people grow from managers to leaders. Throughout four years with Toastmasters, as much as I have learned about the ‘HOW’ of communication, I have completely unlearned and relearned the ‘WHAT’ of communication.

Speaking with customers, drafting emails and responding to emails, were what I was taught as communications under the syllabus of Office Management. Likewise while communication can be taught, leadership can only be developed. An important brick on my leadership development under Toastmasters was that I got to revisit my understanding of communications.

The positive mindset and supportive culture fostered by Toastmasters brings out a new dimension of communication – empathy, which is the difference between management and leadership. Leadership becomes incredibly easier when we communicate with empathy. A show of empathy towards our teammates can help us break the highest of barriers.

Four years back, in circumstances of conflicts or complications which demanded the compassionate self of me to get involved, I would have easily gone away by maintaining silence and expecting time to magically heal everything. However, today I choose to lead by communicating with empathy. This gives a better sense of self-satisfaction, content, and belongingness.

Communication is the key to leadership. With empathy, we find the right key. I have always received empathy as a Toastmaster, and I have been trying to replicate that to others whenever I find a room to lead. With my gun of communication loaded with bullets of empathy, I can afford to take a shot at every challenge coming my way. If I hit, I win. If I miss, I learn.

**DIPESH CHALISE, PRESIDENT**  
LAXMI BANK TOASTMASTERS CLUB

# SPARKLE LIKE A DIAMOND

Every day we all are in the cyclic process of improvement. To become a better version of ourselves, we all need mentoring. Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push towards the right direction.

Thinker Lucia said:

"A mediocre mentor tells  
A good mentor explains  
A superior mentor demonstrates  
A great mentor inspires."

As my final defense was approaching nearer, I was so much gripped by fear and anxiety and I was worried about facing the audience. I shared this with TM Binay. He suggested that I join Toastmasters Club to overcome my fear of public speaking and become an eloquent speaker.

I was quite excited to join the regular meeting of Himalaya Toastmasters Club. Each of the members were very friendly and cooperative. At the first meeting, TM Binaya hinted to me to raise my hand during the impromptu speech segment, Table Topics. Without thinking much I raised my hand and spoke. To my utter surprise and delight I was able to win the Table Topic session of that meeting. The credit goes to TM Binay who mentored me on how to deliver my speech fluently and the points to be considered while delivering a speech. I was so fascinated by the ambience of Toastmaster meetings that I decided to become a member. TM Birendra was assigned as my mentor, who helped me a lot to significantly improve my presentation skills from speaking slowly to making breaks at intervals and smiling while speaking so that I could connect with the audience. He also helped me to figure out some important aspects of public speaking like body language, gestures and gimmicks.

From the very first day, TM Birendra guided me for my icebreaker speech. He thoroughly reviewed my first draft and suggested points for improvements. I incorporated them and practiced a lot. I also sent him my practice videos. He was happy with my efforts and suggested further improvements. Finally, I gave my first ice breaker speech and won the best featured speaker award. My mentor was so happy and he suggested that I take the role of TMoE. At first I was quite nervous to take the role, but his continuous motivation made me take it up. Thanks to his continued guidance I was again awarded with the title of the best role taker of the meeting.

Due to my regular office and research, I became quite busy and couldn't attend regular meetings at Toastmasters. Still, I was connected to fellow Toastmasters virtually through social media. TM Ayushi and TM Ekta kept on encouraging me to deliver speeches and take roles. I couldn't deny their humble suggestions and started to deliver speeches. For the past two months, I have been regularly taking roles and delivering speeches. And now, I have started venturing out of Himalaya Toastmasters Club and taking roles in other clubs as well.

During my school days, I did not understand any other subject except Mathematics. My English teacher disliked me so much that I stopped going to school. But my Math teacher visited me at home and encouraged me to come to school, at least for Math. Encouraged by that I rejoined school and started studying all subjects. Till today, every year during Guru Purnima, I do not forget to call Pemba Sir to wish him Happy Guru Purnima. He has always motivated, inspired, and encouraged me.

Although Dr. Kalam, the former President of India did not consider himself to be very qualified, his mentor, Dr. Sarabhai saw great potential in him, and nurtured him. Dr. Sarabhai is a perfect example of what makes a mentor truly qualified to lead a mentee. The mentor-mentee relationship of

Dr. Sarabhai and Dr. Kalam has led to many remarkable scientific achievements.

Here, I would like to quote Benjamin Franklin:

Tell me - I may forget  
Teach me - I may remember  
Involve me - and I learn

Joining the Toastmasters fraternity, and winning all the awards that I have till date is the result of the wonderful mentoring that I have received throughout. A mentor is a person who believes in you, pushes you out of your comfort zone and helps you grow with greater knowledge and perspective. Actually, I feel that each member of this club is my mentor. I am really thankful to all the mentors.

Mentors have the ability to spot a diamond before it shines and make that diamond shine bright.



**MADHU SUDAN DAHAL**  
HIMALAYA TOASTMASTERS CLUB



AWARDS

AND

ACHIEVEMENTS

# DIVISION & AREA AWARDS

## **PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED DIVISION**

*Division A*  
*Division N*  
*Division O*

## **PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED AREA**

*Area A1*  
*Area A2*  
*Area N3*  
*Area O3*

## **SELECT DISTINGUISHED AREA**

*Area N1*  
*Area N2*

## **DISTINGUISHED AREA**

*Area A3*

# CLUB AWARDS

## GOLDEN GAVEL AWARD

*Everest Toastmasters  
KU-SOM Toastmasters*

## DISTINGUISHED CLUB

*Agni Toastmasters  
EBL Toastmasters  
Healer's Toastmasters  
Prabhu Bank Toastmasters  
Rato Bangala Toastmasters  
Sanskriti Toastmasters*

## TALK UP TOASTMASTERS

*Himalaya Toastmasters  
Baneshwor Toastmasters*

## SHINING STAR AWARD

*Himalaya Toastmasters*

## YOUNG ACHIEVERS AWARD

*EBL Toastmasters  
Healer's Toastmasters  
Sanskriti Toastmasters*

## PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED CLUB

*ACAN Toastmasters  
Bhairahawa Toastmasters  
Bhaise pati Toastmasters  
Bodhi Toastmasters  
Butwal Toastmasters  
Dharan Toastmasters  
Everest Toastmasters  
Himalaya Toastmasters  
Kathmandu Toastmasters  
KU-SOM Toastmasters  
Leadbox Toastmasters  
Baneshwor Toastmasters  
Shangrila Toastmasters*

## SMEDLEY AWARD

*Bhairahawa Toastmasters  
Bhaise pati Toastmasters  
Butwal Toastmasters  
Chitwan Landmark Toastmasters  
Dharan Toastmasters  
Himalaya Toastmasters  
Kathmandu Toastmasters  
KU-SOM Toastmasters  
Leadbox Toastmasters  
Prabhu Bank Toastmasters  
SCB Nepal Toastmasters  
Baneshwor Toastmasters*

## ACCELELATORS AWARD

*Butwal Toastmasters  
Himalaya Toastmasters*

## RISING STAR - SILVER

*KU-SOM Toastmasters*

## SMEDLEY CHALLENGE

*Butwal Toastmasters (Gold, Silver, Bronze)  
Northmandu Toastmasters (Silver)*

## SELECT DISTINGUISHED CLUB

*Gandaki Toastmasters  
Tourism Toastmasters  
Chitwan Landmark Toastmasters  
KCM Toastmasters  
Northmandu Toastmasters  
Pokhara Toastmasters  
Professionals Toastmasters  
Reliance Toastmasters  
Tourism Toastmasters  
Laxmi Bank Toastmasters*

## BEAT THE CLOCK

*Himalaya Toastmasters  
Kathmandu Toastmasters*

## RISING STAR - GOLD

*Bhairahawa Toastmasters  
Butwal Toastmasters  
Chitwan Toastmasters  
Himalaya Toastmasters  
Kathmandu Toastmasters  
SCB Nepal Toastmasters*

## FANTASTIC FIVE

*Bhairahawa Toastmasters  
Everest Toastmasters  
Kathmandu Toastmasters  
KU-SOM Toastmasters*

# MEMBER AWARDS

## DISTINGUISHED TOASTMASTER AWARD

*Pankaj Pradhananga, DTM*



## TRIPLE CROWNS

*Aayusha Gupta  
Alfa M. Shakya  
Amita Khadka  
Anjila Bista  
Anju Gaire  
Bhanu Dabadi, DTM  
Bibek Dutta  
Biraj Pradhan  
Chandrayan P Shrestha  
Diptee Acharya  
Ekta Lamichhane  
Grishma Shrestha  
Hitesh Agrawal  
Jyotsna Rimal  
Kripa Awale  
Krishna Prasad Upadhyay  
Kriti Panth  
Kumar Thapa  
Min Prasad Sharma  
Manoj Subedi  
Moon Pradhan, DTM  
Neha Agrawal  
Niladri S Parial  
Niroj Maharjan  
Omkar Pandey  
Parineeta Thapa  
Parthivendra Upadhyaya  
Ritu Manandhar  
Sandipa Thapa  
Saroj Tamrakar  
Shanta Sharma  
Sindhu Khatiwada  
Sushil Budhathoki  
Sushma Shrestha*

## LEVEL 5 & PATH COMPLETION

*Aayusha Gupta  
Alexandra Wrigley  
Alfa M. Shakya  
Ankit Goenka  
Biraj Pradhan  
Chandrayan P Shrestha  
Diptee Acharya  
Kausalya D. Khadka  
Min Prasad Sharma  
Niladri S Parial  
Parthivendra Upadhyaya  
Sindhu Kathiwada*



**DIVISION A | DIVISION N | DIVISION O**  
**DISTRICT 41**

**TOASTMASTERS IN NEPAL**

June 19, 2021