**A**

**Summary Report**

**On**

**Virtual celebration of**

**Blind Rocks 7th Year Anniversary**

**&**

**Award Ceremony - 2021**

# Introduction

Blind rocks, an international Nongovernmental organization celebrated its seventh anniversary through a virtual medium I.e., Zoom call on June 3, 2021, Thursday from 1:00-4:00PM in the glorious presence of famous comedian, actor and singer, Mr. Madhan Krishna Shrestha.

The major highlights were:

* Panel discussion on mainstreaming persons with disability in visual mass media
* Release of the short film “The Cassette player”
* Award Distribution

# Sequential activities of the program

## Opening portion

Opening speech was delivered by secretary of blind rocks Ms. Narayani dawadi. She highlighted on:

* History and Objective of the organization
* Activities carried out by blind rocks till date and the way foreword
* Respectfully welcomed the at hand participants

the formal opening was done by presenting the recorded dance of the visually impaired dancer performed during MS and Mr. blind rockers 2019.

Panel discussion

On Mainstreaming persons with disability in visual mass media

Facilitator Ms. Sristi KC

Panelists were:

* Former chief editor of Kantipur television and current chief editor at news twenty-four television, Mr. Dil Bhushan Pathak.
* Famous actor of Nepal Ms. Swostima Khadka.
* GM of Rastriya Nachghar, Ms. Ashok Pyashi.

Detail of the discussion are given below:

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| **Q.NO** | **Question** | **Panelists** | **Responses** |
| 1 | Who is the first persons with disability you met or come across to? And what was your impression? | Dil Bhushan Pathak | He remembers Ms. Nirmala who worked at UNHCR. He also invited her at his interview show, “the tuff talk” as an interviewee. Mr. Pathak says that he was aware of issues of disability, challenges, stereotypes, situations and their capacity from her. She was a preliminary impression of disability to him.  He also later reclose his childhood teacher. The teacher had a physical disability and now same disable teacher is a judge of high cote in judiciary system of Nepal. He remembers how he along with the teacher collectively use bucket and rope to pull the water out of well. |
| 2 | Who is the first persons with disability you met or come across to? And what was your impression? | Ashok Pyashi | He feels that persons with disabilities engaging in various arias and doing great from their side. They also have abilities like every other person does. Therefore, they requires support and respect. |
| 3 | Who is the first persons with disability you met or come across to? And what was your impression? | Swostima Khadka | She remembers the days of studying in thapathali engineering college. she sees few persons with visual impairment in the pathway around the college and approached them to help. mainly out of deep generosity and she adds that she is not so proud of it at all. Though she had a sense of helping, recalling that particular moment now, she feels that it was not required. |
| 4 | Various normal kind of Interests of persons with disabilities are taken abnormally. What kinds of questions should be raised or should be done to normalize the abnormal perception of non-disable persons towards the disable community? | Dil Bhushan Pathak | He focused on the following aspects:   * raising awareness and sensitizing. * Various level of advocacy. * Mainstreaming the issues of disability. |
| 5 | In what level do you feel the portrayal of persons with disabilities in films rightful? Rate from the scale one to ten. One being the lowest and ten being the highest. | Swostima Khadka | “Is this issue portrayed or represented?” This question comes first according to Swostima Khadka. She also tells that this cannot be rated into the given scale. She doesn’t remember any Nepali film except Blind Rocks And also, she watched Darpan Chaya when she was a kid. She also has not known or have received any proposals or offers to act such characters into any of the films so far. She concludes that this will go in minus rating if she has to rate. |
| 6 | Why these contents have not been raised by films? Are there any initiatives taken? What may be the reason behind the scale being in a minus rating? | Swostima Khadka | Film industry itself is a struggling industry and there shouldn’t be any excuses for not raising any particular issues. She tells that the Nepali film industry is highly influenced by Indian film industries and Nepal follows the Bollywood’s filming trends. As Bollywood doesn’t have films on disability, same is the case here in Nepal. She also stated that as an actor she will be proudly representing or playing the character of persons with disability if she received any proposals or offers and, in case she happens to be a film maker in future, she would surely be concerned about it. |
| 7 | according to you, Where and how can persons with disabilities be included in Rastriya Nachghar? | Ashok Pyashi | In the various trainings of Nachghar, persons with disabilities are also given priority. He also highlighted the issues of accessibility and said that the Nachghar was not accessible for persons with disabilities. Therefore, he initiated to reconstruct it. Focusing on the role of these kinds of events and discussions in making persons responsible, he gave his words of assurance and promised the he will put all his effort to make Rastriya Nachghar welcoming and accessible for persons with disabilities in days to come. |
| 8 | How accessible is the television stations? What attempts has been made and what efforts are additionally required? | Dil Bhushan Pathak | He agrees that most television stations are not accessible and few only has facilities such as elevator.  Similarly, he also recalls his friends making comments about an interview. At that particular interview of tuff talk he removed the chair of interviewee and placed interviewee in the wheelchair she uses during the interview. He had varieties of persons for the interview irrespective of their backgrounds and disabilities.  He also shares how he took initiation in 2012 to make Kantipur television disability friendly. Currently also he is pressurizing to incorporate accessibility terms in the under constructed new building of news 24 HD television where he is holding the position of chief editor. |
| 9 | What kinds of plans are already being implemented in Nachghar to enhance the artistic skills of persons with disabilities? | Ashok Pyashi | He says that there are no such plans made specially focusing to persons with disabilities only and reaffirms the previously made assurance. |
| 10 | Imagine that there are only persons with visual impairment in a movie hall to watch a film. What percentage of film can a persons with visual impairment understand? Rate from the scale one to ten where one is the lowest and ten the highest. | Swostima Khadka | She says that if the film is dialog oriented then, persons can have good experiences. But currently, film is focused more on expression/visuals and lesser on dialogs. In this case persons with visual impairment will have hard time gaining good cinematic experiences. Therefore, this depends on the films they are watching. If she happens to imagine then, maybe she would get ¾ percentage of the total movie. |

Concluding remarks:

Former president of National federation of disable, country coordinator of abolish and coordinator of ICEVI ASIA, Dr. Birendra Raj Pokharel presents the summarizing compliments to the panel discussion:

* Current Chief editor of news 24 television showed the positive aspects while sharing his first encounter with persons with disability and gave example focusing on the persons with disabilities who holds good social and career position said Dr. Birendra Raj Pokhral. But, in reverse case specially the burocrats or government officers tend to give examples of persons with disability seen at Pashupati temple begging. This shows our mentality and also the negative mindset of government officers towards the persons with disability. This is the major reason why policy makers always view disability with the viewpoint of charity not by their capacity.
* Government always attempts to only satisfy persons with disabilities by providing allowance. But, never focused on building capacity, mainstreaming and involving them in countries development.
* He didn’t agree with the actress Swosthima Khadka’s statement that Nepali film are highly influence by or follows the Indian industries trends. With due respect Dr. Birendra Raj Pokhrel argued that there are numerous television shows, serials and film that shows 100 percentage unique Nepali culture, values, and diversity in such a positive manner. Some of them even showcased how disabled senior citizen should be cared and respected. The greater example is comedian and singer Madan Krishna Shrestha himself and the contributions he made.
* In the process of complimenting and arguing the actress point, he further gave example of the famous Indian film Tare Jaminpar by Amir khan which positively and properly portrayed a kid seeing alphabets always dancing which is called dyslexia. The film also presented the challenges in studies and how the teacher identified, intervened and motivated to use his strength/skills of art and painting. Same can also happen in Nepal
* Agreeing with the current chief editor of news 24 television Dil Bhushan Pathak, Dr Pokhral focused on the Attitudes and accessibility as the major barrier for persons with disabilities. He also openly admired the remarkable contributions and initiations made by Mr. Pathak. He added that accessibility issues of persons with disabilities are directly connected with their participation and human rights.
* Blind rocks and the founder director Sristi KC has been empowering persons with disability through various forms of arts including personality development, dancing, fashion, beauty pageants acting and so on. She has been working to protect and implement the UNCRPD in Nepal specially focusing on Article 30 that highlights the rights of persons with disability to have cultural, entertainment and sports life. Additionally, the article also suggests that the related areas should be disability friendly in terms of infrastructure and services it provides which is very challenging and innovative.
* By Admiring the words of commitment made by GM of Rastriya Nachghar Ashok Pyasi, he suggested to formulate a guidelines that would show the pathway of inclusion for days to come.
* By singing a song, “बादल माथि उडदा पागल जस्तो भयो”, “अन्दो छु मा बाटो खोजदै हिडछु आउ कोहि मलाइ बाटो देखाउ”, “बहिरो छु म केहि सुन्ने रहर् छ आउ कोहि मलाइ साहारा देउ”. he pointed out on the use of unacceptable and abusive words while referring to persons with disabilities. Additionally, these songs sung by famous personalities miss represented disability. Use of These languages in songs and other areas spreads wrong messages in society there by leaving negative influence. That eventually becomes the mindset hindering in development processes. Holistic approach is required to address these issues.
* If the panelists of the event raise these issues from their own sector then, the objective of this discussion will truly be meaningful.

# Release of the short film “The Cassette Player”

The short film “The Cassette Player” made in partnership of Gantabya Nepal, supported by abolish foundation, theater artist Prabash KC and directed by Saurav Lamsal has also been Release on this occasion. Promo was shown to the at hand participants before the official Release.

# Award Distribution

Following awards were distributed:

* Sristi Upama Puriskar: This award is specially presented to the great personality who is from education and sports sector and who did a remarkable contribution to that field. So, this year the Sristi Upama Puraskar award was presented to Padam Bahadur Badaila for is remarkable dedication and contribution in the blind cricket team of Nepal.
* Blue bird award 2021: This award is honorned to the coordinator of blind rocks member club Ms. Sabitri Paudel for her outstanding contribution and dedication, volunteering and coordination.
* Best staff award-2021: It was presented to former program coordinator of blind rocks Ms. Divya Shah Thakuri for her outstanding contribution and dedication as a program coordinator at Blind Rocks. Her dedicated efforts are greatly appreciated.
* Award of Honor to the Supporters & Donors: Since our founding in 2014, hundreds of donors, volunteers, grantees and scholars have come together to fuel our activities and help us achieve our primary goal of empowering blind and visually impaired community. In this precious occasion we honored our donor and supporter with a Certificate of Appreciation.

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| **List of Donors** | **List of Supporters** |
| Dr. Birendra Raj Pokhrel (Abilis Foundation)  Mitrata Foundation  Mr. Bir Bahadur Balal  Mr. Dinesh Lal Shrestha  Mr. Dinesh Roka  Mr. Gyanendra Gadal  Mr. Kiran Chandra Rayamajhi  Mr. Robin Shakya  Mr. Roshan Lal Shrestha  Mr. Suvas Moktan  Ms. Apara Thapa Bhattarai (Nyanopan Sanstha)  Ms. Jagadamba Pandit  Ms. Kamal Kesari Tuladhar  Ms. Puspa Gurung  Ms. Ranju Wagle Thapa (Sydney City College of Management )  Ms. Sabitri Devi Shrestha  Ms. Upama Acharya  ProELITEClub - for Success | Ms. Usha Rawal  Mr. Dipak Rauniyar  Mr. Keshav Thapa  Mr. Krishna Shrestha  Mr. Om Prakash Banjare  Mr. Prabesh KC  Mr. Prajwal Raut  Mr. Pramesh Nath Gongal  Mr. Prashant Tamrakar  Mr. Pravhati Kiran  Mr. Rajesh Khadka  Mr. Roshan Pokhrel  Mr. Roshan Pokhrel  Mr. Saman Shrestha  Mr. Saroj Rana Praja  Mr. Saurav Lamsal  Mr. Shekhar Gharti Magar  Mr. Suman Sagar Jung KC  Mr. Zappy Magar  Ms. Bimala Shrestha Pokhrel  Ms. Dilli Devi Shakya  Ms. Dipa and Ms. Damanta  Ms. Leena Joshi Shakya  Ms. Radheswori Shakya  Ms. Roop Kamal Chhetri KC  Ms. Rumita Joshi Gorkhali  Ms. Rupa Sharma Neha  Ms. Shanta Nepali  Ms. Shova Gurung  Ms. Sunita Basnet  Multi Graphics Press Pvt .Ltd |

# Concluding remarks by chief guest of the event Mr. Madhan Krishna Shrestha

The chief guest of the event Mr. Madan Krishna Shrestha - the legendary persona who has long been involved in music and comedy fraternity had delivered his remarkable speech and conveyed a very strong message to the participants.

* Shrestha requested everybody to not to use words remarking to the disability of a person in any way which may hurt them. He shared how careful should one be in selecting a word and how cleverly can s/he depict the same message with more sincere and polite words.
* As he was just recovering from COVID-19 infection, he urged people to be very cautious towards their health and others around.

**THANK YOU**