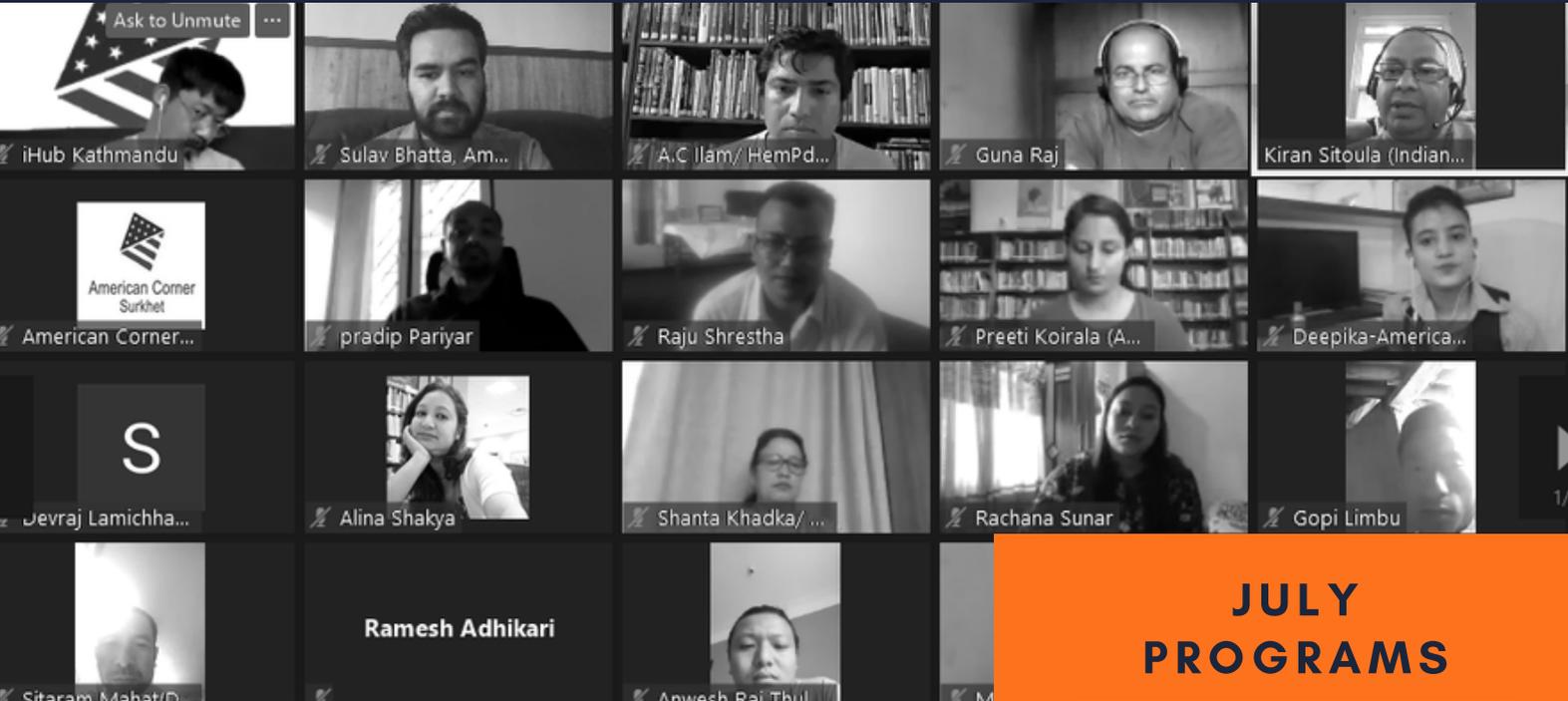




AMERICAN CENTER

NEWSLETTER • JULY 2020



WELCOME NOTE

AMERICAN SPACES TEAM

Namaste!

We hope many of you have enjoyed and found our virtual programs enriching. Our team continues to work tirelessly to develop the programs that will resonate with you the most. As the lock-down eases across Nepal, we will continue to provide virtual programming until we are able to open our Spaces to the public. In the meantime, we welcome you all to join us virtually as we hear from subject matter experts and discuss topics ranging from caste discrimination; LGBT+ issues; and COVID-19 misinformation to our regional Book Club with folks from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and the Sri Lanka.

To register for our programs, please click on the given link (Register). We post more programs on our Social Media platform (<https://www.facebook.com/nepal.usembassy/>) so, keep checking the page for additional program postings. And feel free to share the American Center Newsletter [Subscription link \(https://rb.gy/el55li\)](https://rb.gy/el55li) to interested ones.

Sincerely,
American Spaces Team

JULY PROGRAMS

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Virtual Regional Book Club:
Books Beyond Borders
Book: The Last Lecture by
Randy Pausch
([Register](#))
•Monday July 6-17

Pandemic Virtual talk with
Mr. Uttam Sanjel (Founder -
Samata Shikshaya Niketan)
([Register](#))
•Tuesday July 7 | 1-2 PM

Challenges to Entrepreneurs
during the Pandemic
महामारीको समयमा उद्यमीहरूलाई
चुनौती
([Register](#))
•Wednesday July 8 | 1-2 PM

THE MONTHLY RECAP

PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE STATUS OF THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY DURING PANDEMIC

Panelists (Ms. Manila Neupane, Mr. Shiva Prasad Gaudel and Mr. Resham Neupane) spoke on a range of issues that have prevented the LGBT+ community from receiving appropriate help during the health pandemic, such as lack of awareness in the general public, cyberbullying, absence of LGBT+ friendly quarantine sites, and a lack of trained professionals to deal with their specific health needs. Panelists encouraged audience members to honor LGBT+ issues throughout the year, not just in the month of June. One of the panelists underscored the triple stigma faced by community members from the Dalit community who are HIV positive and identify as LGBT. Praising the support from celebrities as well as audience members, the panelists called for further support from the government, the public, and the civil society for their unique issues faced during this health pandemic.

JULY PROGRAMS

Pandemic Talk with
Television Journalist
(Mr. Rupesh Shrestha)
([Register](#))

•Thursday July 9 | 1-2:30 PM

Women in Development
([Register](#))

•Friday July 10 | 1-2:30 PM

Virtual Rapid fire
Quiz Contest ([Register](#))
•Tuesday July 14 | 1-2:30 PM

THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN GOOD GOVERNANCE

A panel consisting of youth activists (Kiran Sitoula, Rachana Sunar, Pradip Pariyar, Raju shrestha and Ramesh Adhikari) lamented the Government's indifference towards youth issues, such as youth unemployment, and complained about a lack of engagement opportunities to promote good governance. A main theme of the program was the importance of youth seeking out opportunities to educate themselves and to hone their leadership qualities, as these will help them navigate the unpredictable labor market during this current economic crisis. Lastly, the panel recommended that the Government trust youth as a partner and that they should establish a youth advisory council at the local government level as a means to engage with future local leaders.

RELEVANCE OF ONLINE CLASSES IN PANDEMIC

Over 68 stakeholders from the education sector across Nepal, along with four subject experts from the Private & Boarding School's Organization Nepal (PABSON) discussed the challenges of running online classes. The topics that were discussed include: the need for teachers and parents' to be trained in using online platforms; the role of local governments in supporting online learning; and the need for digital literacy to be expanded. The stakeholders in attendance spoke about the issues their students have faced during the abrupt cancellation of in person classes, such as the lack of internet and proper technology to facilitate online learning at home. The discussion touched on a host of issues and possible immediate solutions. In the end, there was consensus that the public school curriculum for online classes has a major learning curve for it to be inclusive and effective.

THE MONTHLY RECAP

CNN SUPERHERO INSPIRES VIRTUAL AUDIENCE

CNN Superhero 2016 Pushpa Basnet spoke about her journey; her work with children whose parents are in jail; her struggles to establish a successful organization; and her principles in life. During her presentation, Basnet reiterated her belief that people need to dream big, stay committed when facing adversity, always be willing to learn new things, and most importantly be humble.

The Third & Fourth Virtual Regional Book Club

Over 135 participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka read, *A Good Man Is Hard to Find*, by Flannery O'Connor for the third book club and *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie for the fourth book club. In the twice a week webinars, participants touched upon several themes. These included religious connotations and the use of comedy in the writing style of O'Connor to talk about sensitive topics. Whereas, for the fourth book, participants focused on the principles referenced by Carnegie.

The Contextator

The virtual series was facilitated by researcher and translator, Nayan P. Sindhuliya and Dr. Dovan Rai - a Fulbright scholar, researcher, writer, programmer, and designer. Both speakers discussed the importance of inclusion to ensure social transformation and the limitations of youth leadership within Nepal's current social structure to address societal issues. The conversation addressed the recent death of five young Dalits boys in Rukum and the rape of a 13 year-old Dalit girl in Rupandehi and the public outrage that arose from these heinous acts.

Fighting the Health Misinformation

This unique event was a live web chat with prominent U.S. health experts: Dr. Rupali J. Limaye, Associate Scientist at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Dr. Alain Bernard Labrique, Director and Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins University's Global Health Initiative; Dr. David Lazer, University Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Computer and Information Science at Northeastern University; and Sunil Prabhakar, Digital Media Consultant from Kerala, India. The panelists spoke and debunked common misconceptions about the COVID-19 pandemic, discussed the drivers behind the spread of misinformation, and shared recommendations for how citizens can actively participate in the fight against health misinformation and disinformation.

LISTENING TO UNHEARD VOICES FROM FAR-WESTERN NEPAL

A dynamic and gender-balanced panel consisting of a journalist, a social activist and two human rights activists highlighted the alarming increase of suicides in Nepal during the lockdown. During the two and a half months lockdown, roughly 1,200 suicides have occurred. Women in particular composed the majority of the cases in the total tally. According to the panelist, the factors for the increased suicides were mental stressors, economic difficulties, and domestic violence. Recommending a zero-tolerance against domestic violence, the panelists stressed that communities, police, health professionals, and local governments should work together better to help these women who are crying silently for help.

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