

Menstrual Practices in Chitwan, Bagmati Province, Nepal



Dignified Menstruation



Radha Paudel Foundation

April 2022

A. Among the Journalists, Federation of Journalist in Nepal, Chitwan Chapter, April 18, 2022

- ✓ Undignified Menstruation is common experience among the menstruators
- ✓ Men are always ask for excuses that their mothers are not agreeing or happy
- ✓ Men also said, I have already abolish the restrictions during menstruation but my parents are still doing but not strict as like before
- ✓ The restrictions are good because women get rest from kitchen and other works
- ✓ I am living in rental room so I do not follow anything here except religious activities. I have to do everything once my parents would come or I would go their home
- ✓ My mother or mother in laws ask about my menstruation like 'do not you have menstruation, your time for it has already cross'.
- ✓ A widow woman living with 2 younger son and have two cows. Her livelihood is maintain from these cows because she sells the milk. During menstruation, she could not sell because it is considered as contaminated. The operator/manager of diary ask for not bringing the milk during the menstrual days. If she like to sell milk during these days, she has to go different diary (may far from her residence) and pretended that she is not menstruating.
- ✓ If there is no menstruation, again the society discriminate to women
- ✓ The husband wife travel in same bike and use the *sunpani* (golden water, means a water that is touched or dipped with any form of gold, gold consider as pure) for purification once they back to home.
- ✓ Men are silent legacy of this practice therefore needs to engage men as much as possible. If the in laws asked to abolish such practices by their son, they would accept easily but would get aggressive if we (daughter in laws) propose for abolishing the menstrual restrictions.
- ✓ 'Fear' is created towards menstruation at the name of god.
- ✓ Hiding inside the home, called 'sick' while having first menstruation
- ✓ My family is liberal though not allow to enter in to the kitchen and religious activities
- ✓ Family also considered 'ok' outside of the home but has to follow the restrictions at home
- ✓ Not allow to touch the tap, utensils even for cleansing
- ✓ Feeling sad and dehumanize while giving cloth as gift during the first menstruation
- ✓ At least five days in a months, menstruating women in family separated even not allow to speak with my sisters in the few years back

At the name of tradition, menstrual practices brings various forms of crime.

Pratima Silwal, Female Journalist, Chitwan

I thought that there is no exception for No restrictions during menstruation

Ramesh Paudel, Male Journalist, Chitwan

B. Stakeholders, ward no 5, Madi Chitwan, April 19, 2022 (here majority of members including ward chair have been talking about dignified menstruation since 2020 though there was strict lockdown due to COVID-19, Pandemic.)

✓ The menstrual discrimination is rampant. The individuals, family, women and men imposing menstrual discrimination to their children.

✓ The aboriginal communities such as Tharu, Janjati communities have less forms of menstrual discrimination however they also do not talk about it openly and publicly.

Women asked to other women, please do not enter in to my house, do not touch me if you have menstruation.

Dilmaya BK, Women in Madi

The stigma, taboos, silence and ignorance is common among of them as well.

✓ The groups like Bramin, Newar and Dalit have practice more than aboriginal groups.

✓ The communities enhanced knowledge on menstruation and skills for making reusable menstrual pad therefore the dialogue of menstruation is bit open and easier but there is long way to transform the society towards dignified menstruation

C. Among the Students, Bal Kumari English Boarding School Narayangard (18 April 2022) Madi Campus, Diwakar Bhusal Memorial School Madi in Chitwan (19 April 2022)

These schools teach menstruation, menstrual practices while teaching them health, science and social science. These schools are representing the above average schools (public and private) in Nepal. However, the teachers and students are following various forms of menstrual practices at their home and school.

✓ Silence and ignorance is rampant. Even the students and teachers could not share the exact definition of the menstruation.

✓ Boys and men considered that this is women's private business, few considered that this is matter of girl's health issue.

✓ They are not allow to enter in to kitchen at least for five days

✓ Not allow to do any religious activities during menstruation

✓ Not allow to touch the men members, and many things which is considered as pure.

✓ Here in Chitwan, we almost all practice all kinds of practices as west Nepal but this is invisible as like west Nepal

I know little bit about menstruation from group meeting from last year though I do not milking buffaloes. If I were, I do not use this milk as other times.

Januka Bhujle, Women, Madi

✓ No one have talk at home, whisper with mother and confined within friends and sisters

✓ They do not like to follow, they ask for scientific reason against following these practices

- ✓ Those who are following the menstrual restrictions they are committing violence too.
- ✓ School recently have the pads but not breaking the silence among them.
- ✓ The sexual violence is rampant but not disclose. A case was disclosed but the school management committee, focal teacher (female) and community put the pressure towards the girls and their family (Madi Chitwan)

D. Balika Ashram, Sanskrit medium Orphan home

The girls study Sanskrit if they like to make major in college. Many of them are speaking English, Nepali and Sanskrit simultaneously. They do recite the songs in Sanskrit which is not common in daily life or ordinary study or life of girls in Nepal. This is orphan home which is lead and managed under the principles of Hinduism.

- ✓ Menstruating girl do not join in group for discussion, for photography and for other activities where others were doing during RPF team's stay.
- ✓ They do not enter in to kitchen and of course do not cook.
- ✓ They do not do any rituals that considered pure and religious.
- ✓ Used the clothes, menstrual pad (non-biodegradable) and recently started to make re-usable pads

Annexes

News Coverage after the interaction meeting with Journalist

<https://ins.news/archives/2257?fbclid=IwAR0S-OeqA7j-s7N4H2fng46GihiU4tPm8z8h9aDUIX8HAktWKUMD4Yc2bv8>

प्रतिमा सिलवालचितवन / | २०७९ वैशाख ९, शुक्रबार

१२०४: | विचार, समाज

देश निर्वाचनमय भएको छ । स्थानीय तहबाट सुरु भएको निर्वाचनले प्रदेश र संघ हुँदै राज्यका तीनै तहमा पाँच वर्षको लागि नयाँ नेतृत्व ल्याउन लागेको छ । दलहरूको चुनावी गठबन्धन, भागवण्डा त हरेक वर्ष यसैगरी हुन्छ, हुँदै आएको छ ।

हरेक दलहरूले ठूला-ठूला विषयमा ऐजेण्डा सेट गर्दै आएका छन् । मिठा लाग्ने चुनावी घोषणाहरू पनि भइरहेका छन्, केही भइसके ।

म चितवनको, त्यो पनि केन्द्रीय राजनीतिक महत्व बोकेको भरतपुर महानगरको बासिन्दा हुँ ।
गठबन्धनबाट भरतपुर महानगरमा रेणुको नाम फाइनल भएको छ ।

चितवनका कांग्रेस र उनीहरूको गठबन्धनप्रतिको असन्तुष्टिले ल्याएको र ल्याउन सके
बाइप्रोडक्टको बारेमा यहाँ छलफल गर्न खोजिएको होइन ।

एउटा मसिनो लाग्ने विषय । सामान्य प्रकृया । त्यो राजनीतिक एजेण्डा हुन सक्ला नसक्ला
घोत्लिरहेको छु ।

भरतपुरमा मेयरको नाम टुंगिएकै भोलिपल्ट नेकपा (माओवादी केन्द्र) को एउटा अपिलपत्र घरमा
आइपुगेको छ ।

राज्यले पहिचान गरी फौजदारी अपराधमा सूचीकृत गरेर कानूनी रूपमा दण्डित हुने व्यवस्था गरे पनि हरेकजसो
समाजमा ओपन सेक्रेट छ- महिनावारी विभेद ।

सरसरती पढें । तीनवटा अनुच्छेद र १२ औं बुँदामा नेकपा (माओवादी केन्द्र) ले भरतपुर
महानगरपालिकामा गरेका उनीहरूकै शब्दमा 'जनपक्षीय काम' को विवरण रहेछ ।

मुख्य भनिएका सबै काममा पूर्वाधार जोडिएका छन् । यी कामहरू अधिकांश संघ र प्रदेश
सरकारका हुन् र पूरा कुनै पनि भएका छैनन् । यसको पनि चर्चा अहिलेको मूल विषय होइन ।

नेकपा एमालेका तर्फबाट मेयरका उम्मेदवार बनेका विजय सुवेदीको यस्ता कामको विवरण घरैमा
आइपुगेको छैन । त्यसैले त्यतातिर पनि नजाऔं ।

मूल विषय प्रवेश गर्नुअघि सानो घटना उल्लेख गर्न उपयुक्त ठान्दछु ।

छिमेकमा एक दिदीको घर छ । उहाँ एकल (श्रीमानबाट त्यागिएको) महिला । निकै संघर्ष गरिरहनुभएको छ । दुई छोरा हुर्किएका छन् । तीनवटा गाई पाल्नुभएको छ । नियमित दूध बेच्नुहुन्छ । खेतीपाती गर्नुहुन्छ । त्यही कमाइबाट उहाँ जीवन निर्वाह गर्दै आउनुभएको छ ।

महिनाको चार दिन भने उहाँको दूध गाउँमा बिक्री हुँदैन । किनकी हरेक महिना उहाँ महिनावारी हुनुहुन्छ । बाध्यताले उहाँले गाई छुनैपर्छ किनभने स्याहार गरिदिने अरु छैनन् । ती चार दिन उहाँ पर डेरीमा दूध लगेर बेच्नुहुन्छ । उहाँले दूध लैजाने डेरीबाट गाउँका मान्छेहरूले त्यहाँ बिक्री गरिने डेरी प्रोडक्टसम्म पनि किन्दैनन् ।

०००

अघि पनि उल्लेख गरिसके, म महानगरको बासिन्दा । महानगरको मतदाता । ती दिदी पनि महानगरको मतदाता, बासिन्दा ।

उहाँलाई त 'महिनावारी अछुत' मा बानी परिसक्यो । म भने बेलाबेला यही कुराले कुँडिन्छु । किनकी महिनावारी जस्तो सामान्य प्रक्रिया 'अछुत' होइन भन्ने बुझेर मैले आत्मसात गरिसकेको छु ।

मेरो समाज भने चुपचाप 'महिनावारी पाप' बोकिरहेको छ ।

भरतपुर अहिले नेपालको राजनीतिको केन्द्र, चर्चित महानगर जहाँ अरबौंका भौतिक संरचना ठडिएका छन् । त्यहीँका मानिसको मनभित्र 'महिनावारी कुरिती'को अग्ला संरचना झनै चुलिएका छन्, यी कहिले भत्किएलान् ?

हामी महिनावारी, हिंसा लगायतका विषयमा चर्चा चल्ने बित्तिकै सुदूरपश्चिम, छाउगोठ अनि त्यहाँका महिला किशोरी सम्झन्छौं ।

मनन गरौं त, महिनाको चार दिन आफ्नै रोजिरोटीको विकल्प खोज्नुपर्ने विभेद छाउपडी भन्दा कहाँ नेर कम विभेदकारी छ ?

यसै हसा मर्यादित महिनावारीको बारेमा विश्वव्यापी अभियान चलाइरहेकी राधा पौडेलसँग यसै विषयमा सानो अन्तरक्रिया थियो । छलफलको विषय नै मर्यादित महिनावारी र राजनीतिक सवालमा केन्द्रित थियो ।

भरतपुर त्यस्तो ठाउँ हो जहाँको मेयर पाँच वर्षमा ६ सय किलोमिटर सडक पिच गरेको घोषणामा मख्व हुनुहुन्छ । उहाँ र उहाँजस्तै राजनीतिकर्मिका लागि भौतिक निर्माण, करोडौंको कारोबार आदि छाडेर महिनावारी जस्ता मसिना विषय कसरी राजनीतिक हुन सक्छ ?

अभियन्ता राधा पौडेलको दाबीमा महिनावारी राजनीतिक सवाल नै हो । यो धेरैले ठम्याए झैं सानो, मसिनो र सामाजिक, पारिवारिक विषय वा महिलाको 'प्राइभेट समस्या' भने होइन ।

हरेक मानिस परिवारमा बस्छन् । परिवार सामाजिकीकरणको पहिलो ठाउँ हो । अनि परिवारभित्र शक्ति निर्माण गर्ने पहिलो ठाउँ भान्छा हो ।

भान्छामा बसेर आमाबाबु, छोराछोरी, बुहारी, नातिनातिना सबै परिवारका सदस्यले पारिवारिक योजना बनाउँछन् । आफ्ना अनुभव सुनाउँछन्, एकले अर्कालाई सुन्छन् ।

कसैका कुरा काट्नु परे पनि भान्छा नै परिवारको त्यो थलो हो । एउटै टेबलमा बसेर परिवारको महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय हुन्छन् । जब एउटी छोरी महिनावारी हुन्छे, त्यसपछि हरेक महिना भान्छाबाट चार दिन उनी टाढा बस्नुपर्छ ।



राज्यले पहिचान गरी फौजदारी अपराधमा सूचीकृत गरेर कानूनी रूपमा दण्डित हुने व्यवस्था गरे पनि हरेकजसो समाजमा ओपन सेक्रेट छ- महिनावारी विभेद ।

त्यसपछि भर्खरै तोते बोल्न थालेको भाइ छ भने भान्छाबाट टाढा बस्नुपर्ने भएकोले आमा, दिदी वा महिला सदस्यलाई कमजोर ठान्न थाल्छ । महिलाले आफूलाई दकसमा राख्ने, हीन ठान्ने गर्छिन् । त्यही भान्छाबाट नै सुरु हुन्छ शक्ति निर्माणको अदृश्य शृङ्खला।

परिवारबाट नै कमजोर बन्दै आएकी महिलालाई तिनै सदस्यहरू मिलेर बनेका समाजले यसै हीन ठान्ने नै भए । त्यही अवस्था राज्यसत्तासम्म बिम्बित छ ।

अभियन्ता पौडेलले जोड दिएर भनिन्, महिलालाई परिवारदेखि राज्यसत्तासम्म कमजोर बनाउने अवस्था भएकोले महिनावारी सबैभन्दा बलियो राजनीतिक सवाल हो ।

यूएनएफपीएले महिनावारी र गरिबीको बारेमा सन् २०२१ मा गरेको एक अध्ययन प्रतिवेदनले महिनावारीलाई महिलाको 'प्राइभेट इस्यु' को रूपमा मात्रै चित्रण गर्दा महिला र पुरुषको बीचमा लैंगिक विभेद बढ्दै गएको उल्लेख छ ।

जसले गर्दा महिलाको उत्पादनशील उमेर हिंसामा पर्ने गरेको उल्लेख गरिएको छ । कालान्तरमा राज्यकै गार्हस्थ्य उत्पादनमा यसले असर गर्ने पनि यूएनएफपीएको अध्ययन प्रतिवेदनले भन्छ ।

सन्तानोत्पादनसँग जोडिएको प्राकृतिक प्रक्रिया जसलाई अछुत अवस्थाको रूपमा उल्लेख गरी महिलाको आत्मसम्मानमा किशोरावस्थादेखि नै ठेस पुर्याइन्छ ।

यस्तो विषय जुन महिला पुरुषबीच हुने विभेदको पहिलो अवस्था हो । त्यसैले यो विषयको सम्बोधन स्थानीय तहले मात्रै प्रभावकारी तवरले गर्न सक्छ ।

राज्यले पहिचान गरी फौजदारी अपराधमा सूचीकृत गरेर कानूनी रूपमा दण्डित हुने व्यवस्था गरे पनि हरेकजसो समाजमा ओपन सेक्रेट छ- महिनावारी विभेद ।

कोही महिलाले आफ्नै परिवारका सदस्यलाई कसरी उजुरी गरुन् ?

महिलालाई कसैले चार दिन आरामको नाममा त कसैले अशुद्ध अवस्थाको नाममा निरन्तरता दिइँदै आएको विभेदको अन्त्य गर्न राजनीतिक तहबाटै पहल हुन जरुरी छ ।

स्थानीय अगुवा नेता, उम्मेदवारहरूले विकासको नारा भौतिक मात्रै होइन मानसिक परिवर्तनमा पनि गर्न सकिन्छ भनेर जनतालाई बुझाउन सक्छन् । आफ्ना स्थानीय ऐजेण्डामा समेट्न सक्छन् । त्यसैले स्थानीय जनप्रतिनिधि र उम्मेदवारले बुझ्न जरुरी छ कि प्याड बाँडेर महिनावारी विभेद हट्दैन, मनभित्रको कुसंस्कार हटाउने योजना ल्याउन जरुरी छ ।

Participants:

- ✓ Sabitri Bhandari, Nysam, Chitwan
- ✓ Pratima Silwal, Journalist, Chitwan
- ✓ Pramita Dhakal, Vice Chair, FNJ, Chitwan
- ✓ Urmila Sapkota, Nysam, Chitwan
- ✓ Ramesh Paudel, Journalist, Chitwan for Kantipur
- ✓ Moti Paudel, Journalist, Chitwan
- ✓ Rajendra Acharya, Journalist, Chitwan
- ✓ Sabija Adhikari, Journalist, Chitwan
- ✓ Rajesh Ghimire, Journalist, Chitwan
- ✓ Narayan Adhikari, Journalist, Chitwan
- ✓ Netra Prasad Gautam, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ ...Paudel, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ Dil Bhadur KC, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ Khadananda Bhandari, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ Krishan Dhakal, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ Santosh Dahal, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ Krishna Prasad Sapkota, Madi Campus, Chitwan
- ✓ Tej Paudel, Madi School, Chitwan
- ✓ Somnatha Ojha, Madi School, Chitwan
- ✓ Man Kumari BK
- ✓ Maya devi BK
- ✓ Dila BK
- ✓ Nirmaya Ranabhat
- ✓ Sarita
- ✓ Shakuntala Sunar
- ✓ Manmaya Gurung
- ✓ Amrita Gurung
- ✓ Rajesh
- ✓ Sanjib Randaom
- ✓ Dhanmaya BK
- ✓ Laxmi Pariyar
- ✓ Laxmi Sunar
- ✓ Nira Chhetri
- ✓ Tirth Kumari Lamichhane
- ✓ Kalapana Darai
- ✓ Januka Bhujel
- ✓ Muna Sapkota
- ✓ Kala Lamichhane
- ✓ Dilmaya BK

Signified Menstruation

Schedule

Date	Activities	Remarks
18 April 2022 Monday		
8.00-11.00	Travel from Birganj to Bharatpur, Chitwan	
11.00-14.00	Observation of Pad factory and had discussion	
14.00-16.00	Interaction with journalists and stayed in Madi	
19 April 2022, Tuesday		
8.00-10.00	Interaction with stakeholders in Madi Cmapus	
11.00-12.00	Interaction at Diwakar Bhusal Memorial School Madi	
1.00-16.00	Interaction with stakeholders at ward 5	
16.30-18.00	Discussion with survivors of sexual abuse in educational institutions	
18.00- 20.00	Returned to Gaidakot	
20 April 2022, Tuesday		
7.00-8.00	Shining English Boarding School	
8.00-11.00	Interaction at Balika Ashram at Devghat Chitwan	
11.30-13.00	Pad Factory	
13.00 onwards	Back to Kathmandu	



Dignified Menstruation