

1988

## Notices

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## NOTICES

### RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT AT CHIWONG MONASTERY

Over the past four years, Buddhist monks and villagers in the Everest Region of Nepal have banded together to restore a classic example of Sherpa monastery architecture. Chiwong, built in 1923, was once the largest monastery in the region. Farther from Everest and off the trekking routes, it is less well known to foreigners than other Sherpa monasteries. In recent years, Chiwong had fallen into disrepair and water damage threatened many of its magnificent frescoes.

The restoration project got its start through an unusual chain of events.

On December 11, 1984, a German film producer, Franz-Christoph Giercke, and an American ethnographer/film-maker, Richard Kohn, had just finished shooting a film at Chiwong. The film, *LORD OF THE DANCE/DESTROYER OF ILLUSION*, was a documentary of Mani Rimdu, the region's most important festival.

Giercke and Kohn asked the monks if there was anything that they could do to repay the generous cooperation the monastery had shown them.

Head Monk Nawang Phintsok did not hesitate. Speaking for the monastery, he replied, "We need a new roof for the courtyard gallery."

The two-story gallery was built in the early 1950's to hold the nearly one thousand spectators who attend the Mani Rimdu festival each year. Over the years, its roof had become unsound and its brilliantly colored murals had been damaged by rain.

The film-makers promised to help in whatever way they could. Kohn remembers, "We knew we could raise money for a roof. But we could see they needed more, and wanted to make sure they got sound architectural advice. We also wanted to encourage them to work in a traditional style. As outsiders, though, we realized if the project were to succeed, the community itself would have to be in charge."

The film-makers returned to Chiwong in 1985 to stage a premiere performance of *LORD OF THE DANCE* at this isolated monastery, far from electricity or roads. Meeting with Sherpa community leaders, they helped set up the Chiwong Gompa Samarkchan Samiti, the "Chiwong Monastery Conservation Committee." Seed money had already been raised through benefit screenings in Europe.

The committee engaged architects John Sanday Consultants International of Kathmandu to draw up a complete restoration plan. Sanday, a pioneer in using local methods and materials, was the architect responsible for the highly regarded restoration of Hanuman Dhoka in Kathmandu and the old Royal Palace in Gorkha.

In December 1986, the architects' survey was complete. Their 200-page report detailed the monastery's present condition and recommended repairs.

Some of the findings were surprising. Murals were endangered not just by leaking rooves, but by rising damp. The most pressing need was not a new roof, but a new kitchen. Undermined by decades of erosion, the original kitchen was in danger of falling down the mountainside.

Using local materials and labor, however, the budget for complete restoration was less than seventy-five thousand dollars.

The community rallied to the project, providing labor, materials and project administration. Community leaders like former Minister of Forests Tsering Tenzing Lama, a founding member of the committee, became heavily involved, as did Sherpas from Phaphlu, Junbesi and other nearby villages. Although Nepal is consistently counted as one of the poorest nations on earth, a sizable amount of

money has been raised by local efforts. One enterprising monk went as far as Darjeeling to solicit funds from the Sherpa community there.

By June of 1988, a retaining wall had been built around the monastery compound, the new kitchen was complete, and the facilities for visiting lamas had been renovated. The long-awaited gallery roof was also well under way.

For Sherpas, a monastery is more than a religious institution, it is an expression of cultural identity. In the 1920s, when Solu-Khumbu had become prosperous through agricultural improvements and trade, Sherpas put a significant part of their new-found wealth into building monasteries like Chiwong.

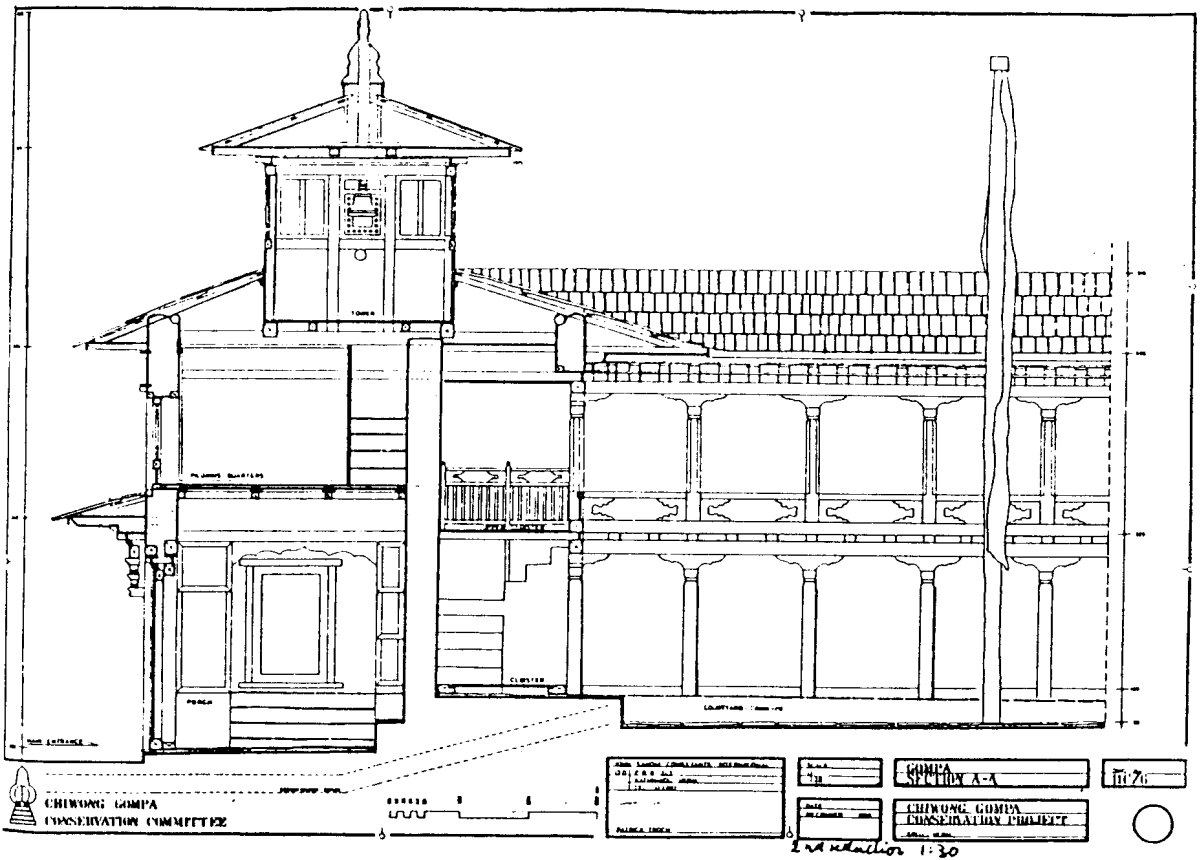
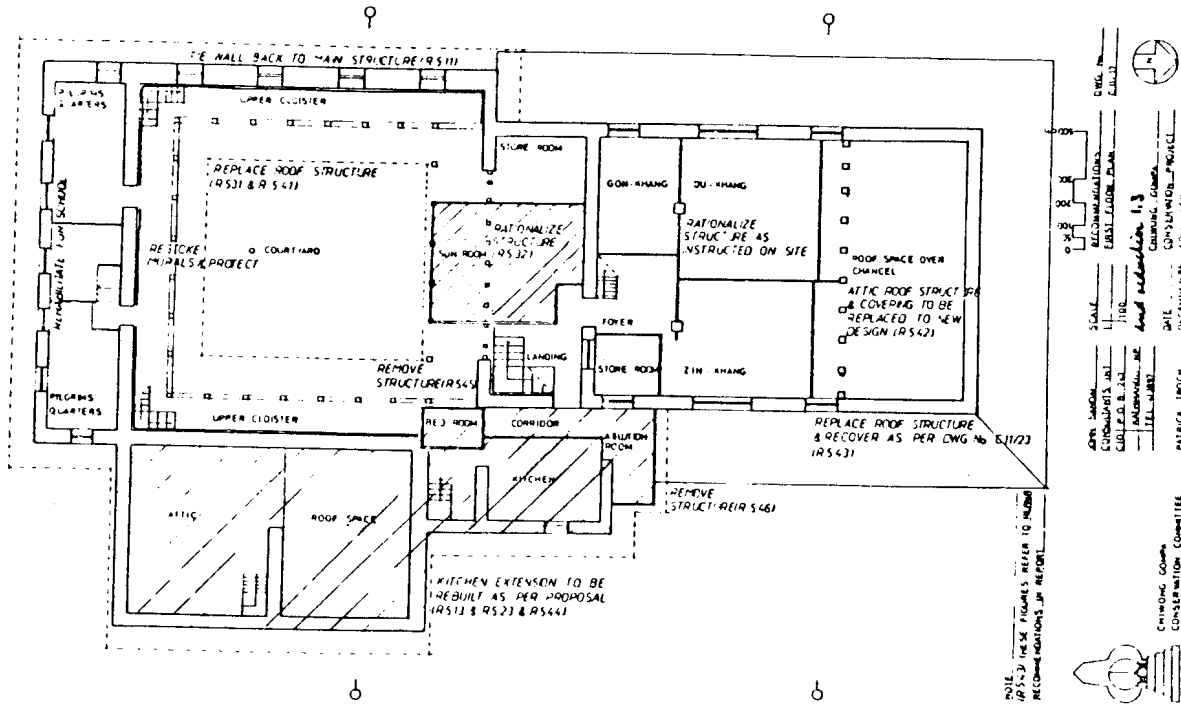
The restoration project is sign of a healthy sense of local cultural identity. With modernization and change threatening from all sides, the Sherpas are aware of the value of their traditional institutions in maintaining their culture. The Chiwong committee has inspired Sherpas to organize other cultural preservation projects.

Giercke has continued his efforts on behalf of the committee, and has staged benefit screenings in Zürich, Kathmandu, Paris, and other cities. Despite local support, however, so far the project has received no help from any major international funding source.

For the time being, the Sherpas will have to go it alone. But then again, they are famous for scaling difficult heights.

The committee may be reached at:

Ven. Nawang Phintsok  
Chiwong Gompa Samrakchan Samiti  
Chiwong Monastery  
Phaphlu/Salleri  
Dist. Solu-Khumbu  
NEPAL



CHI WONG GOMPA CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

CHI WONG GOMPA CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

SCALE: 1:30

## WISCONSIN SUMMER LANGUAGE PROGRAM

The Department of South Asian Studies summer language courses will include the following South Asian languages offered during two 5-week sessions, June 12 to August 18: elementary intensive courses in Hindi-Urdu, Nepali, and modern Tibetan and a course in intermediate Hindi-Urdu.

As with the past summer language programs classes will meet Monday through Friday, four hours per day for the ten weeks. In addition to the University of Wisconsin students, enrollment is open to non-degree students and Title VI Fellowship holders from other universities.

Contact:

South Asian Area Center  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
1236 Van Hise Hall  
1220 Linden Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

## BERKELEY SUMMER LANGUAGE PROGRAM

A ten-week program of intensive language study in elementary Hindi-Urdu and elementary Nepali will be offered by the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies this summer. Each course will provide ten semester units of credit, equivalent to one academic year of elementary language study. Summer sessions will commence on June 12 and conclude on August 18, 1989. The Hindi-Urdu course will be taught by Mrs. Usha Jain and the elementary Nepali by Mr. Gautam Vajracharya. Course fees (\$620) and additional registration fees (\$183) apply to all registrants in summer session courses. The deadline to register for summer session courses without incurring a late fee is June 2, 1989. Students interested in registration materials should write to:

Summer Session Office  
22 Wheeler Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
Phone: 415-642-5611

## CORNELL UNIVERSITY NEPALI LANGUAGE PROGRAM

June 12 - August 4, 1989

Intensive Nepali - 10 credits, (8 weeks)

Monday-Friday 8-12:00) plus two hours of language lab daily

Instructors: Banu and Shamba Oja

Tuition \$295 per credit hour - \$2950.00

This eight-week course provides an unusual opportunity to develop professional competence in the language in one summer. Emphasis is upon the spoken (colloquial) language. Attention is given to assisting students to develop vocabularies and skills appropriate to their unique professional needs. Reading and writing practice use both colloquial and scholarly materials in the Nepali (Devanagari) script. A limited number of tuition awards and stipends are available.

For more information contact:

The South Asia Program, Center for International Studies  
170 Uris Hall  
Cornell University  
(607) 255-8493

or

Cornell Summer Session (607) 255-4987

## AMERICAN NEPAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The foundation has recently published its annual list of up to thirty academically superior Nepalese students who wish to study in American institutions at the bachelor's, master's and/or doctor's level in various disciplines. The list includes a summary of each student's credentials. The student's have very limited funds and would need substantial financial assistance. Interested individuals and institutions not now receiving this list, particularly those having scholarship aid available to foreign students, may receive it by requesting it from: Hugh B. Wood, American Nepal Education Foundation, 2790 Cape Meares Lp, Tillamook, OR 97141; phone 503-842-4024.

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LADAKH STUDIES

The association was formed to provide contacts among all who are interested in the study of Ladakh, and to disseminate information about proposed and completed research and publications. To do this, the IALS intends to organize colloquia, to arrange publications of the proceedings, and to publish an occasional newsletter. This will include information about planned and current studies, requests for specific information and help, short reports, and general information about Ladakh. Membership is open to all who are interested in Ladakh. The initial subscription is 1 or U.S.\$2, to cover stationary and postage. Further subscriptions will be requested when necessary. Checks should be drawn on U.K. banks and expressed in sterling. Sterling or dollar notes are acceptable. For further information contact:

Dr. Henry Osmaston  
Department of Geography  
University of Bristol  
Bristol BS8 1SS, U.K.  
Phone: 0272-303030 ext. 3848

## COMPUTERS AND LASER PRINTING

DEVANAGRI CHIWRITER for IBM personal computers and compatibles, available from Swabian Technology Ltd., provides the entire Devanagari script. Every single conjunct consonant and vowel sign is available, often in several shapes. Laser printing is possible on most laser printers. The only technical requirement is that the laser printer emulates either the Hewlett-Packard LaserJetPlus or Postscript laser printers. Both of these laser printers are fully supported. For additional information contact Swabian Technology, Ltd., P.O. Box 153, Oxford, OX4 4BP, U.K. Phone: 0865 717168.

A program called DEVANAGARI, for IBM machines and compatibles, is available from Gunthard Muller, Pembroke College, Oxford, OX1 1DW, U.K.

Those interested in Tibetan should contact the Tibetan Automation Bulletin, 1 Tintern Road, Wood Green, London N22 5LU, U.K.

## CENTER OF INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN RESEARCH

The Center of Integrated Mountain Research has been established at the University of Punjab, Lahore, under its Director, the Dean of the Faculty of Science, Professor F.A. Shams. The Center's field station is located in Khanspur (Ayubia) in the "Gallis" just beyond the hill station of Murree in the Punjab Himalaya.

### CALL FOR PAPERS

1989 NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES, Coolidge Hall, 1737 Cambridge Street, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, October 14, 1989. Paper and panel proposals (should be one or two paragraphs) on topics pertaining to all aspects of Asian Studies (Art, Anthropology, Economics, History, International Relations, Literature, Music and Ethnomusicology, Politics, Science, and Sociology, etc.). They will accept proposals and individual papers and hope they can accommodate those papers within a suitable panel, but prefer that individuals work up their own panels. The Conference will be a one-day event with the length of the panel sessions 1-1/2 hours. The most a panel can accommodate is four people: three papers and one discussant or four papers and a moderator. Send proposals no later than the May 19th deadline to Professor William Johnston, Program Chairperson, Mansfield Freeman Center for East Asian Studies, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT 06547. Phone: 203-347-9411, ext 3152 or 2846.

18th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC REGION, ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., October 20-22, 1989. Papers are invited on the whole range of subjects concerning the countries of Asia, and their relations with other regions of the world. Contributions are encouraged from the natural and applied sciences as well as the humanities and social sciences. Paper and panel proposals should be sent to Dr. Thomas Timberg, Program Committee Chairman, Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., 1301 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20004. The deadline is June 15, 1989.

18th ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTH ASIA, MADISON, November 3-5, 1989. Short typewritten abstracts (150-200 words) of the papers in each panel must be included with panel proposals. All panel proposals should also be accompanied by a short abstract or description of the panel. Single paper proposals must also be accompanied by an abstract (up to 300 words). The deadline for the submission of proposals is May 1, 1989. Application forms and guidelines are available from the Conference Coordinator, South Asian Area Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1242 Van Hise Hall, Madison, WI 53706. Phone: 608-262-3012.