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THE SHILLONG DECLARATION FOR SHIFTING CULTIVATION IN THE EASTERN HIMALAYAS

Responding to the suggestion of the Hon'ble Union Minister of Government of India on Tribal Affairs and Development of North East Region, Mr. P.R. Kyndiah, to propose a Shillong Declaration,

Recognising that shifting cultivation is key to production systems, both agriculture and forestry, for providing livelihood to many ethnic and tribal groups in the tropical and sub-tropical highlands of Asia and Africa as well as Latin America,

Recognising that Shifting Cultivation is one of the most complex and multifaceted forms of traditional agroforestry practice in the world reflecting a robust traditional ecological knowledge,

Realising that Shifting Cultivation evolved as a traditional practice and is an institutionalised resources management mechanism at a species, ecosystem and landscape level ensuring ecological security and food security thus providing a social safety net,

Being conscious of the diverse Traditional Institutions and Tenurial Systems pertaining to Shifting Cultivation in the Eastern Himalayan region comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar and Nepal,

Understanding that the Institutional Mechanisms ingrained in Traditional Shifting Cultivation Systems can ensure access to productive resources to every member of the community including landless and the most marginalised,

Recognising that shifting cultivation is a way of life for a large number of indigenous, tribal, and other poor and marginalised upland communities,

Recognising that traditional shifting cultivation systems have been stressed by external and internal forces,

Having knowledge on existing policies on shifting cultivation in the countries of the Eastern Himalayas.

We, the participants from the Eastern Himalayan countries, representing government agencies, farmers, international bodies, non-governmental organisations, academia, science and research institutions, local institutions, international donors and development assistance agencies, the private sector and other professionals, concerned about shifting cultivation and shifting cultivators, regionally and worldwide, assembled in Shillong in Meghalaya, India from 6 to 8 October 2004 declare as hereunder:

(a) That shifting cultivation must be recognized as an agricultural and an adaptive forest management practice which is based on scientific and sound ecological principles.

(b) That it is imperative to provide an enabling environment in order to address the urgent livelihood and ecological concerns arising out of rapid transformations driven by development and other externalities including market forces.

(c) That it is imperative to empower shifting cultivators

as practitioners of rotational agro forestry to become active participants in decision making and policy processes that impact them most.

(d) That it is essential to make existing research and extension services sensitive and relevant to the needs and challenges of Shifting Cultivation and Shifting Cultivators and simultaneously assimilate the traditional ecological knowledge of shifting cultivation into future research, development and extension processes.

(e) That it is necessary to recognize the traditional institutions and intellectual capital generated from traditional practices relating to shifting cultivation and ensure its protection in the legal and policy regime.

(f) That it is essential to provide interactive forums and environment for information access and sharing between multiple stakeholders at local, national, regional and global level.

(g) That it is imperative to acknowledge that women usually play the most critical role in shifting cultivation both at the activity and impact level and therefore any development intervention must be sensitive to this fact.

AND THEREFORE

The Regional, National and Local Policies for Shifting Cultivation need to be re-appraised and, where necessary, reformulated. For this purpose, the detailed recommendations of the 'Shifting Cultivation Regional Policy Dialogue Workshop for the Eastern Himalayas', 6-8 October 2004, Shillong can provide input.

WHERE ALL POLICIES AND ACTIONS SHOULD BE FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To support decentralized, participatory, multi-stakeholder, interdisciplinary, eco-regional and adaptive management approaches that respect human and cultural diversity, gender equity, livelihood security and enhancement as well as environmental sustainability where we value and build upon both traditional and scientific information and knowledge.

To read the episodes of the pilot radio project, please visit: http://www.mtnforum.org/apmn/radio_index.htm

Shifting Cultivation Policy Dialogue Workshop for the Eastern Himalayas was organised in Shillong, India October 6-8, 2004. "The Shillong Declaration for Shifting Cultivation in the Eastern Himalayas," is the result of this workshop.

Eklabya Sharma, Ph.D.
Programme Manager, Natural Resource Management
International Centre for Integrated Mountain
Development

THE INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN EXPLORERS CONNECTION (IMEC, formerly the Himalayan Explorers Connection)

The International Mountain Explorers Connection (IMEC, formerly the Himalayan Explorers Connection) is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that seeks to promote responsible and sustainable connections between travelers and the people of developing mountain regions of the world. IMEC provides and coordinates education, assistance, and cross-cultural experiences for members, volunteers, trekkers, and local communities. Members can receive e-mail and postal mail, store luggage, receive local discounts, and locate homestays from our Clubhouses in Kathmandu, Nepal, and Moshi, Tanzania. Members also receive our hardcopy newsletter, Kangri News, and our monthly online newsletter, MountainNet.

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ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNAL HARMONY IN ASIA (ACHA)

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Executive Director: Pritam K. Rohila, Ph.D.,

To promote peace in the world, but particularly in South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), and harmony among all, but especially among South Asians of all ethnic, religious, and regional communities, everywhere they live, the Association for Communal Harmony in Asia (ACHA) was formed in 1993 in Beaverton, Oregon, USA. ACHA is a non-political organization, which has been granted non-profit status by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

To further its objectives, ACHA

1. Organizes lectures, conferences, and other projects;
2. Offers electronic publications, namely ACHA Peace Bulletin, and ACHA Community Calendar;
3. Conducts electronic discussion forums namely, Asiapeace, Kashmir Solutions Forum, and India-Pakistan Peace Day;
4. Gives ACHA Peace Star, and Make A Difference awards each year; and
5. Supports work of other peace and harmony organizations.

In 2004, ACHA circulated a petition urging the governments of India and Pakistan to build at the Wagah border crossing a suitable memorial to the victims of the Partition-related violence in 1947. Signed by people from more than 20 countries, the petition was presented to the representatives of the two governments personally by some ACHA members when they visited with them as part of a Peace and Goodwill Mission.

For the last three years, ACHA has organized in Portland, Oregon, civic dialogs on Kashmir, the longest running conflict in the world.

More information about ACHA is available from its websites www.asiapeace.org & www.indiapakistanpeace.org and by email at pritamr@open.org

STUDY ABROAD: NAROPA UNIVERSITY: THE FIRST FOREIGN ACADEMIC PROGRAM IN SIKKIM.

Out the dining room window of the program center located above Gangtok, students can look directly into the awe inspiring face of the guardian deity of Sikkim, Kangchendzonga, the third highest peak in the world. Gangtok is a vibrant city within the small, yet dramatically mountainous Indian state of Sikkim.

Well into the third year of its study abroad program in Sikkim, Naropa University is finding this to be an outstanding place for its program once held in Kathmandu. As the situation of civil unrest in Nepal worsened, the director of the Naropa program, Clarke Warren, reluctantly realized that it would be fruitful to seek out a new location where students would be able to move freely and safely during their studies. Due to Naropa's unique educational heritage and its commitment to bringing together scholarship and meditation/contemplation, Naropa found a warm welcome as Sikkim's first foreign academic program. The program has developed close ties with the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, as well as many local scholars, experts, lecturers and Tibetan lamas. Sikkim is a stable and peaceful region of India, but it remains a restricted area that requires special Inner Line Permits.

Students from Naropa University, as well as wide range of students from other US universities, may attend the program during either fall semester, spring semester or the whole academic year. Scholarship and meditation practice are balanced in the program to offer students the opportunity to gain a more complete understanding of Buddhism

of the region and how it finds expression in the culture. Students begin each day with one hour of basic mindfulness and awareness meditation practice. Then they plunge into an enlivening schedule of courses including Buddhist Traditions, Culture, Traditions and Contemporary Issues of Sikkim, Nepali or Tibetan Language, and Independent Field Research, as well as a number of electives. The program also includes home stays with local families and a group pilgrimage to sacred sites and monasteries of western Sikkim.

Sikkim retains wisdom from its shamanic and Buddhist heritages while engaging a vital present. It is a complex multiethnic state that is a role model for surrounding Himalayan regions in its environmental efforts. The newly opening pass to Tibet is bringing a flux of energy, interest and potential trade into the region. Students' research has addressed everything from eco-tourism to shamanic traditions to social issues. The Independent Field Research component of the program has taken students all over Sikkim and as far afield as Bombay and other locations within India that are central to students' research goals. This program is a rare opportunity to spend time in this enchanting region of the Himalayas and to engage an educational program that plunges into the heart of the local culture.

For more information on the program, see the Naropa website: www.naropa.edu (under Study Abroad) or contact Peter Volz, Director of International Education at 303-546-3595.



Colomoo Lake and Lachen River from Bomtso

Himalayan Journals, Sir J.D. Hooker

An unusual, illustrated campus presentation:

AAMA'S JOURNEY:

A PILGRIMAGE BETWEEN CONTINENTS AND CULTURES



Broughton Coburn, author of five books (including two national bestsellers) has lived and worked in the Himalaya for two of the past three decades. Recently, he has been bringing an unusual and compelling, illustrated lecture program to college campuses. *Aama's Journey: A Pilgrimage Between Continents and Cultures* is a true journey of discovery that springs from his heart—a thought-provoking, poignant and powerful odyssey.

Based on Coburn's first two books, *Nepali Aama: Life Lessons of a Himalayan Woman* and *Aama in America: A Pilgrimage of the Heart*, this mesmerizing, 55-minute program (in PowerPoint or standard slides, with brief audio clip) takes the audience on more than an unusual travelogue. Beginning in a subsistence farming village in the foothills of the Himalaya, we are immersed in the cosmology, philosophy, hopes and humor of an elderly village woman—Aama—who has never been exposed to Western civilization.

In 1992, Aama turned 84, a watershed year sanctified by a long-life ritual that relieves the elderly from further worldly duty—the perfect time to go on a circuit of holy sites to gain additional merit before death.

That's when Aama came to America.

Aama's odyssey evolves into a 12,000 mile pilgrimage in search for the soul of America. She visits cities, advises farmers, kisses a killer whale, bathes ritually in the ocean, meets with Native Americans, finds kin among the Hutterites and prays at Old Faithful. Aama's reactions to our country are amusing, surprising and sometimes unsettling, yet we find that her emotions and sensibilities live and breathe within us all.

Aama's Journey has headlined America's Knife and Fork Clubs and captivated audiences at universities, museums, associations and professional societies across the United States.

"Aama's story is moving on so many levels in terms of exposing people to the richness of her culture, in considering the delights and difficulties of cross-cultural interactions, and in seeing anew our own American culture through her eyes. The presentation style conveyed her story with depth, warmth, thoughtfulness and humor. One result was that all those who attended gained a renewed faith in the value of learning and sharing across cultures, an especially important lesson in our post-9/11 world."

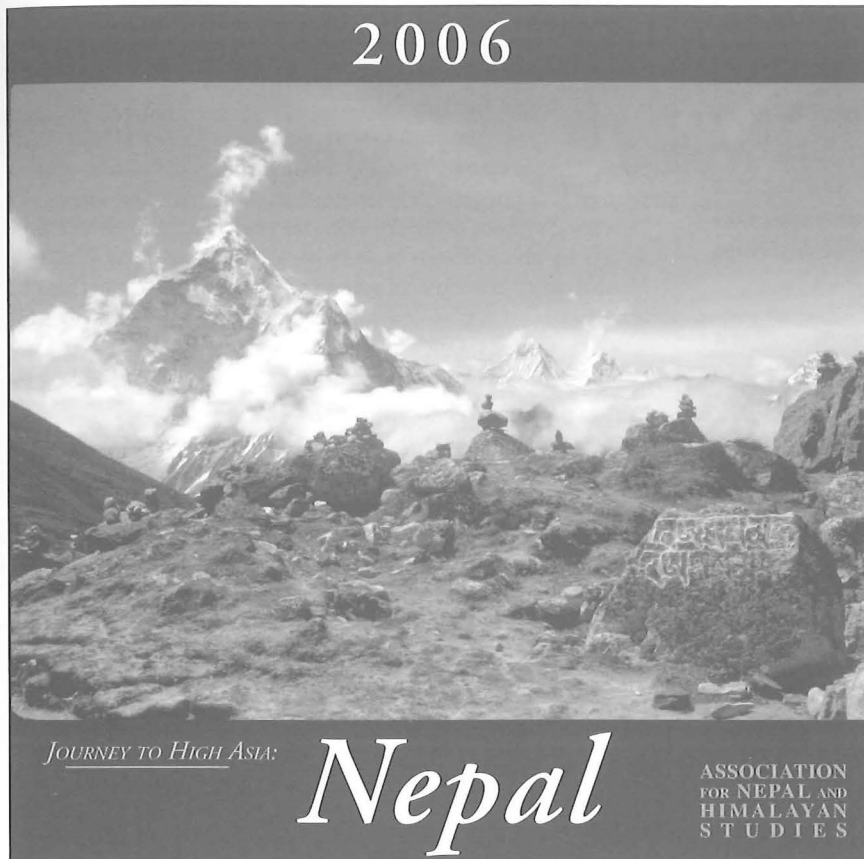
For the many students who attended, the thorough background information helped contextualize the presentation with all that they had been learning in class. As a professor, I can assure you that one of the most exciting things is to see a spark in the eyes of a student. Mr. Coburn not only had their attention, but generated sparks aplenty!"

Carol McGranahan, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder

A preview of the program and more information can be found at www.unusalspeaker.com or by contacting Didi Thunder at didi@wyoming.com or (307) 733-4124.

ANHS announces our 2006 calendar Journey to High Asia—Nepal

JOURNEY TO HIGH ASIA: NEPAL 2006 brings together exhibit-quality photographs in gorgeous color with informative text to heighten awareness of this magnificent mountain landscape, and to deepen appreciation for the richly varying peoples who make their lives within it.



Discover the beauty and complexity of land and life in the world's greatest mountain region

Learn about High Asia in a year-long virtual journey through the pages of the calendar.

Each month illuminates a piece of High Asia with maps, color photographs, and the stories behind the images.

JOURNEY TO HIGH ASIA: NEPAL 2006 is designed and produced by Portland State University senior Capstone class—a collaborative project with a community partner—in partnership with ANHS. The calendar will be available in the fall. Advance orders help us plan the printing and distribution of the calendar, and offer you a substantial discount. Regular retail price for the calendars will be \$13.95. But for a limited time, ANHS members and HIMALAYA readers can receive a special discount on large orders received before July 15th—\$10 per calendar (minimum order, 10 calendars). Member discounted price after July 15th is \$12.

Journey to High Asia-NEPAL, 2006 Discount Order Form

# of Calendars	Price	shipping	total
10 (minimum order)	\$10	Included*	\$100
Additional calendars	\$10	Included*	
Grand total for early-order discount calendars			\$

*shipping is by media mail to US addresses; contact HRB office for other rates

NOTE: Order must be received by July 15th to qualify for this discount rate

PLEASE SHIP MY ORDER TO:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

(Order online if you prefer.: <http://www.himalayan.pdx.edu/Calendar.htm>.)

Please make checks or money orders payable to "ANHS" and mail along with this form to:

Himalaya
Geography Department
Portland State University
Portland OR 97207

