

NAMASKAR Nepal

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Will the Goddess Lakshmi bring back happiness and normality?!?

Today the Lakschmi Puja is taking place in Nepal (worshipping, adoration ceremony of the Hindu Goddess of happiness, wealth and beauty). The houses and homes had already been scrubbed and cleaned a few days beforehand. Garlands of flowers decorate the windows and doors. Candle lights shine brightly. In front of the door entrances, a path is painted that ends in a round, beautifully coloured mandala. In this way the Goddess Lakshmi is to be enticed and find her way into the home, so that she can bring happiness, wealth and beauty and perhaps also the longed-for normality...



Colours used for painting the mandala

Normality ... has not yet set in.

The new government under Prime Minister CP Sharma Oli and also President Bidhya Devi Bhandari who has been in office for two weeks, have not been able to conduct any successful talks yet with the protesting Madhesi. On the other hand, the talks with China were positive. Contracts were concluded for fuel supplies. Some lorries with petrol tanks were then able to bring petrol to Kathmandu over the Rasuwaghadhi border in the norther part of the Landtang region. Nepal dared to take the step of turning to its Chinese neighbours, in order to reduce its dependency on India somewhat.

Everything seemed to be taking a good end, when on 2.11.2015 the border to India was opened again. But only for a short time, however, as violent disputes broke out, and an Indian who was on Nepalese territory, was shot. And as a consequence ... the border was sealed off again.



Kilometer-long queues of motorbikes outside the petrol stations

How long will it take for the borders to be opened again? In 1989 India had closed the borders for 15 months. This was their reaction to Nepal purchasing Chinese weapons.

Due to the present situation, our reconstruction work is at a standstill. Neither the building permit process nor the transport of the materials can be carried out. For the building permit process the government's Building Code is required, but is has to be newly set up is not yet available. And building materials cannot be taken to the remote districts if there is no petrol available.



Training course for the villagers

And we are not the only ones in this situation ... all the relief organizations that wanted to begin their reconstruction work before the winter set in, have been brought to a halt.

We therefore made a difficult decision and discontinued our local, voluntary commitment. The construction of the 'model house' is not possible as there are no materials available, such as cement and sand. Furthermore, the villagers expressed their wish not to remove the house ruins for the time being. During the cold months they would like to store supplies there and also the timber that can be used for building the new houses.

At this point we would like to express our sincere thanks to all the voluntary helpers for their support up until now and for their excellent commitment. We are grateful and pleased that we have already been able to achieve so much, despite all the adversities up until now. Demolition of four houses, preparation of the site for the foundation of the 'model house', training the villagers in earthquake-proof building construction, surveying all the real estate and documenting in detail the houses to be newly built there.



Many thanks

After the Tihar festivities we shall be making a new attempt at acquiring the building permit, in the hope that we shall be able to begin building the 'model house' in February 2016.

HAPPY DIPAWALI!!

Namaste

Temba & Sabine



Garlands of flowers