

# A Person Brought by Kkotpun



It was the front of the Pyongyang Grand Theatre.

Reminding of a flock of cranes which were to fly high up to the sky where the sun is shining brightly like in spring with this big building on their back, people are making a rush to the blue roof.

The 31<sup>st</sup> April Spring Friendship Art Festival has been being held for several days on a grand scale in celebration of the Day of the Sun.

Friendly missions from different countries of the world such as famous artistes and sportspeople who had become acquainted through TV screen and figures from political, academic and public circles got off the buses, arrived in succession, and shook hands with each other, adding more to the festive mood.

Together with the Juche idea followers, I was getting near the stairs leading the entrance of the theatre.

At that moment, someone held me by the sleeve from behind to stop me. It was Manik Bahaduru Lama, chairman of the Nepalese Association for Supporting the Songun Politics. What's the matter with him?

Smiling meaningfully at me who was blinking eyes out of habit, he pointed a mosaic on the right wall of the theatre.

Both of us approached the mosaic.

Oh, the Flower Girl!

His party and I had much to talk about the flower girl in the previous evening.

Nevertheless, I skipped over this mosaic unconsciously.

Filled with remorse, I blushed in private. Kkotpun was kept in the minds of them who came from abroad. I was born in Kkotpun's native place, but I had not stopped before this mosaic as they did?

I wondered whether I forgot how happiness was provided as I have grown up without any hitch like a flower in the garden of socialist system.

I looked at the flower girl again.

Kkotpun, a girl who was born into of a farmhand family that could be found in every rural village of Korea in the early last century!

Holding a basket of flowers, Kkotpun is now awakening the people with the profound truth that devotion or sympathy cannot save the destiny of miserable people in the imperialists' colonial society and the masses of the working people can carve out their destiny independently only when they turn out in the revolution.

“Kkotpun brought me to Pyongyang.”

Manik told me thoughtfully. I could see something glittering in the wrinkled eyes of him who was looking at Kkotpun.

A voice was heard at that moment.

“It happened when I was 17.”

It was Manik's story which I was told yesterday evening.

Manik recollected his young days.

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“Let's go to see a Korean film!”

Sonorous voice of a little boy sounding louder than cockcrow shook morning air in a small farm village called Kabul, 50 km away from Katmandu.

Manik had promised the boys of his age to go to the DPRK embassy in Katmandu on Sunday from several days ago. That Sunday Manik called at their houses before the dawn broke asking them to get up quickly.

He looked so young for his small height, but had tough character. So his friends were always guided by him with good favour. Early in the morning, all of them did not linger but bounced helter-skelter out of their houses as if they had been ordered. They wore national dresses, not new but as white as snow thanks to the efforts made all night by their mothers. Collared shirt with short sleeves and vent in lower sides, trousers with wide in thigh part and narrow calf part and fairly-assorted vest--all were adapted for them. In addition, they wore round or oval headgears in different colours and thus they looked much more dignified.

A young girl told her parents, who recklessly scolded her by saying that she was dangling about boys, that she would go sightseeing in Katmandu and made up to them for consent. She wore the best skirt and short sleeved unlined jacket, tied a belt and then put on a shawl that covered her head and shoulders. Decorating with ear rings, bracelets and a finger ring which seemed to be jeweled though they were made of glass beads, she woke her sleepyhead younger brother and brought him.

At that time, there was no bus from Kabul to Katmandu. So the people had to leave home with faded stars over their heads to go marketing when they had a few chance to go there.

Farmers' children attend only the primary school as there is no middle school and plough the fields for farming since their childhood. That is why they have never dreamed of enjoying films.

And it was a Korean film. It will be really great...

According to Manik, the country called the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a curious country which is free from exploitation

and oppression and where everyone is equal under the wise leadership of the great leader and the people are the masters of factories and farm land.

Manik's saying will be right. He has seen much and heard much as he has lived without any worries about food and shelter thanks to his father possessed of the biggest amount of land in Kabul and graduated from a middle school in other village.

They were 15 in all. They followed Manik busily while chattering with each other.

They walked farther and farther...

When they left they became talkative. But they became silent because they felt hungry. They failed to bring fried cakes made of corn and hulled millet flour, the food of ordinary people. Their living was not sufficient. They felt sorry to their family members because they were going for enjoying without working a day.

Someone jumped into someone's banana patch by roadside to approach its owner who was doing his early-morning chores.

Nepal is a mountainous country. There are terraced paddies and fields for corn, rice, barley and wheat in every part of Nepal.

When one goes for sowing, manuring and harvesting, one must make full preparations of food to stay at mountains for several days.

No one ignores land.

Rather, the area of terraced paddies and fields increases every year. It was natural to suffer from flood as the people bring the steep mountains under cultivation.

Most of households in Katmandu and its vicinities cultivate tropical fruits like banana. No one scolds the children who ask for banana when

they pass by.

Getting the owner's permission, the boy plucked a big cluster of ripe banana with kukri (broad and heavy dagger whose back is curved) and joined his colleagues.

“Oh, boy”

They shouted for joy. Nothing is more delightful than taking foods. Tittering repeatedly, they ate up bananas one by one. Bananas were big and sweet but not enough for the 15 pulsating young girls and boys. The bananas were sufficient thanks to their devotion for others.

With full stomach the children began to advance in high spirits.

Every dynamic step they made might reflect delight seethed with the pride of seeing the DPRK film that no one has seen yet.

When they arrived in Katmandu, it was broad daylight. Even though Katmandu is a capital where the government buildings are located, stout cows, dogs and monkeys were coming and going between the people. So the streets were full of their excreta. Being afraid of falling on the dirt, girls minded their steps while taking shawls firmly in their hands.

However, unusual sceneries that could not found in the countryside made the children restless as the capital is the biggest commercial center in the country. The children completely and easily forgot the worries. In fact, it was the first time for other children to be in the city, except Manik.

Different kinds of things were heaped up in the stores by the road.

They must be the goods imported from India through Birgandgi, a border area.

But such things failed to attract the children's attention for a time.

They felt hungry again.

My god! There are different kinds of chophouses, but there is no banana field here.

Smells from the windows and gates inflamed the children...

They did not dare enter them. They had no money.

Sucking lips with relish, they turned their faces for fear of their inmost heart being laid bare to others.

At that moment Manik motioned them to enter, walking into a house without hesitation.

The children looked at each other for a moment but they rushed to the house.

“Is Manik going to serve us?”

“Thanks, Manik.”

A boy thanked Manik even before being served. They could not guess what Manik ordered, but vegetables and a bowl of fried rice garnished with pepper-incense were served on a long table for each pacifying their empty stomachs.

Quivering their noses in front of fragrant food which they had never had at home, the children plied the food. They emptied their bowls in a moment. The children wanted anxiously to have more but none of them expressed their feelings.

It was foolish to think that one will be full in his stomach when one's meal is paid by others.

“Thanks.”

Emptying their bowls, every child said to Manik.

Manik gave a quick smile. Unlike when he made noise and woke up the children before dawn, Manik was silent and behaved imposingly

not only in the whole trip but also at the moment. That was why even the village elders had never expressed opposition to his words once Manik said.

Manik's was a rich farmer's family through generations. His parents wanted him to do farming on the land handed over by their ancestors, but he began to participate in the socio-political activities since he attended a middle school. Manik read lots of books.

He read also the works of Marx and Lenin.

He read the books about DPRK President Kim Il Sung, too.

With what ideology should the Nepalese people be enlightened for prosperity and interests of the country and nation?

Nepal was a country that was deprived of independence under the long British subordination, a country in which flunkeyism and dogmatism tarnished soul of the nation in all fields of politics, economy and culture although it was called an independent state.

We must change ourselves. No, we must do more than that. We must be conscious of us.

We must demonstrate to the world once again the spirit of the Gurkha, the tribe of Nepal that had never been submitted to the enemy as it was so brave and militant.

Why should the young people regard it as the most honorable job to be singled out every year not for national defence but as the guards of the British king's family?

Why could the Nepalese people have permission to work at the state political organs only when they graduated from universities or colleges not in Nepal but in India, Australia, UK and US?

Manik was young, but he was not childish in thinking.

He began to visit the DPRK embassy. He began to be enchanted by the Juche idea of the DPRK, the spirit of independence, self-sufficiency and self-reliance in defence.

He wanted to share his mental growth with his friends.

He wanted to make his friends know his inner world.

Maybe, he might have saved pocket money his parents gave him little by little, for the sake of such case.

Manik led the children to Jamsikel. There was the DPRK embassy.

“Good afternoon, Mr. Councilor.”

Acknowledging Manik, the councilor of the DPRK embassy opened his eyes wide with pleasure. He replied, bringing his hands together to raise them upward his chest like the Nepali people.

“Namaste.(Good afternoon.)”

The councilor correctly pronounced in Nepalese the words of greeting the Nepali use in ordinary times.

He was the only person at the DPRK embassy whom Manik knew. Wearing a bright smile on his face, the councilor shook hands warmly with all the friends of Manik as if they had been his own friends.

True to his promise, the councilor guided them to a projection room to show them the Korean film “The Flower Girl”.

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“That day I met Kkotpun first. My friends and I saw the film shedding tears.

Girls sobbed bitterly.

Miserable life of Kkotpun’s family was as same as hardships and sorrow of every house of poor farmers in Nepal.

Seeing the film, I talked to Kkotpun in my heart.

‘Kkotpun, Kkotpun, you teach us that slavery in exploiter society will lead only to death.

That’s it. The struggle is the only way out. Kkotpun, I have come to know it now.’

I think I was probably a boy of Kkotpun’s age. That was why I had a candid talk with Kkotpun.

That day, we came back home late at night.”

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On the way home, the children sang a song shedding tears.

Buy flowers, my flowers, pretty red flowers,  
Beautiful and fragrant red flowers,  
Buy flowers, my flowers, these red flowers,  
Which I tend with such care to get medicine  
for my sick mother

The moon in the sky and Kkotpun followed them. No, Kkotpun was leading them. Kkotpun, who sold flowers repressing every grinding toil and contempt while shedding bitter tears, who wailed over her mother’s death who failed to have a dose of medicine even though Kkotpun had made money for medicine, who made a long journey, leaving her blind sister alone, but collapsed when she heard her imprisoned brother died and who threw a burning brazier against the landlord’s face out of grudge, was leading the children.

Beautiful azaleas bloom at the foot of the mountain,  
Pale pink apricot blossoms grow at the foot of

the mountain,  
But flowers, my flowers! When you take these flowers  
Spring will come even to an aching heart

Voice of the children walking along the wild path where dewy grass made their trousers wet got hoarse with tears. Their voice was not loud, but echoed farther and farther over the Himalaya.

“It was first time for us to follow Kkotpun. The song we sang that night was the pledge to vigorously cover the road of class struggle following Kkotpun.

Like Kkotpun who recognized the truth of the revolution and embarked on the road of a new life, I have considered it as my occupation to struggle from then on.”

His words touched my heartstrings.

That’s it.

Manik who was a young boy that day has become an aged person but the flower girl remains young.

With the image of selling flowers not with tears and filial devotion but for struggle and revolution, the girl strongly calls many people to the cause of independence for a new society free from exploitation and oppression.

I looked at the person brought by Kkotpun.

A short gray-haired man!

Manik combed his gray hair with his hand screwing his eyes like a man standing before the sun, in front of the mural “The Flower Girl” as if he had heard Kkotpun’s call.

Kkotpun did not bring Manik only.

A girl who sang “flowers to sell, flowers to sell” while weeping and laughing on the farm road hand in hand with Manik is his wife.

She also followed Kkotpun together with her husband.

Their children also followed Kkotpun. What the righteous people they are.

I led Manik and his party to the gate of the theatre. It seems to me that all other people from different countries entering the theatre are those brought by Kkotpun.

I will stand in front of Kkotpun forever along with them.