

HAMRO SAMMAN PROJECT

THE STORY OF A MALE TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR



We are told to dream big from the start. Everyone loves a success story. We make heroes out of the uncles and dais (brothers) who come home with flat screen TVs, big phones, perfumes in shiny bottles and an array of other flashy things. But, there is a haunting silence about the fate of those who come back in a casket, those who return abused, and those who come back empty handed.

Alochak Dulal, 35, was from the same school of thought. He has a bachelor's degree and was a teacher in Makwanpur. But he had grown up with the dream of success and yearned to go abroad for better-paying work. In 2008, Dulal went to Dubai, where he worked as a security guard for two years until he returned home.

While looking for an opportunity to go abroad again, he stumbled upon an education consultancy offering "Job Guarantee after Six-Month Cruise Course" in Malaysia. He paid around 6 lakh rupees (\$6,000) in consultancy fees, got the necessary documents and left for Malaysia along with 15 to 20 other people who shared big dreams. But Dulal and his friends saw their hopes dashed into pieces. They had been scammed, their dreams choked at the hands of a fraudulent scheme.

The traffickers took away Dulal's passport and his fundamental human rights, forcing him to work in restaurants for nominal pay. He received life-threatening messages whenever he asked for passage back home. He struggled for almost nine months without proper sleep or food, before he somehow grabbed his passport and flew home with the help of some friends he made in Malaysia.

Depressed and broke, he was ashamed to return without success. In Kathmandu, he pleaded for help wherever he could, but all he got were empty promises. Tired of waiting, he finally decided to go home to Hetauda.

Still rooted deep were the hopes and dreams of making it big. So he applied for a job in Dubai as a taxi driver. Along with a couple of friends, he flew back to the land of dreams. His contract promised a fair salary, but all he earned was commission and tips. Frustrated and depressed yet again after a difficult 20 months, he finally returned home at the end of 2017. He now drives a private car in Kathmandu and is working hard to support his two kids and his wife back home in Hetauda.

Alochak Dulal learned the hard way that big dreams aren't always achieved in the Gulf or Malaysia. He acknowledges that he was trafficked — more than once — and that human trafficking isn't limited to trafficking of women.

Nepal's economy heavily relies on remittances, the money foreign workers send back to their home countries. It is one of Asia's top remittance-recipient economies based on proportion of GDP.

But sadly, migration for both labor and education is full of risk. Job placement agencies and education consultancies are driven by profit, sometimes realized on the backs of broken dreams of trafficked migrants.

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ALOCHAK DULAL - 35
MALE TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR



Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman

The deep-rooted hopes and dreams of making it big.

Photo Credit: Pramini Manandhar / Hamro Samman



The tempting promises offered by education consultancies:
study abroad and a guaranteed job placement.



Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman

Most Nepalese youth think their big dreams only take shape abroad. They leave behind their families, their friends and their jobs to pursue new employment in hopes that it will make their lives better. They don't think they will become part of the haunting silence.



Nepal's economy heavily relies on remittances, the money foreign workers send back to their home countries. It is one of Asia's top remittance-recipient economies based on proportion of GDP.



Photo Credit: Pramir Manandhar / Hamro Samman

The long queue of people leaving for foreign employment in Nepal's only international airport — as many as 1,000 Nepalis leave the country every day for foreign employment.

Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman



One of Dulal's jobs abroad was being a security guard in Dubai. Even though he had already been a victim of human trafficking, he still applied for new job placements. Dreams die hard.



Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman

Dulal flips through photographs of his time abroad.

Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman



He learned the hard way that big dreams aren't always achieved somewhere else.



Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman

Dulal now drives a private car in Kathmandu. The income is not as much as he would like.

Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman



What's important now, though, is that he work hard in Nepal instead of seeking a new opportunity abroad. He is still able to support his two kids and wife back home in Hetauda.



Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman

It's not only uneducated and unaware young people who are scammed and trafficked; even well-educated people can be victims. Dulal had a respectable job as a teacher before he went abroad. Here he spreads out his proof of his achievement and experience.



Dulal's photographs tell the story of his hopes and dreams for a better life.



Photo Credit: Pramit Manandhar / Hamro Samman

After the difficulties he endured and the struggles he continues to face, Dulal knows that it is family that matters in the end.

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