

Dr. Surya Mani Adhikary : The Brave Man

- Pramod Adhikary*

*It's been a year now since you left me
And I still feel like a little boy
I still hurt when I think about you
And the hole you left in my world.*

*I miss you more than these words can say
I always will 'til the day I die
What hurts the most, Dad, is the fact
I never got to say goodbye.*

*So if you ever look down upon me
I'm sure you'll realize how I feel
You were my Father, Mentor and Hero
You were then, and you are still.*

Lets allow me to start from here.....

The day of May 16, 2006 was a terrifically dark and scary day for me. I lost our family hero, our pillar and our symbol of success forever. Let allow me to introduce you to my Hero. My hero is my father who has taught me, guided me and instilled wisdom in entire life. For an example he taught me "when somebody asks for help and holds out his hand, you don't turn him away". I learnt so many things when we walked, played, sit and eat together. He was so kind hearted and most accomplished man. I felt safe when I was with him. We spent a lot of time together. When we were at home, we loved to play badminton and tell jokes. In his 45-47th I was his best opposition to play badminton with him. Sometimes he got upset with me, but that was ok because there was no one on this earth that understood me better. Besides just because my father got upset with me doesn't mean that he did not love me. About four years ago, in 2002 my father was suffered by continuous vomiting. We went to the ward clinic in Kathmandu for possible advice. According to their advice, we went to the Teaching Hospital, one of the renowned hospitals in Nepal. After several X-rays, MRIs, and other tests, they found a tumor in his intestine. During this period, it was clear to us that those doctors who have been working in nation's one of the most famous and reputed hospital were led to our father not for his sake, but for theirs. They showed up their worst interest towards the money rather than the patient's treatment. They gave us a terrific and bitter experience. I have a long story inside of my heart and would like to make it public in

the future. I am only looking for suitable time and means to explore the story. We, Nepalese are poor, we do not have sufficient resources, our environment is polluted, we are not getting hygiene food and water, but we have the greater ethics in our big heart. But, we became confirm that those doctors who are highly intellectual professionals and working in very sensitive human health related field have been playing with patient's life for the shake of money matter. They sold out their heart and earth where they born and achieved this opportunity to become a doctor in one of the nation's renowned hospital. Anyway, I want to keep silence on it now, and want to come to the point.

According to those doctor's advice my father were admitted in a private nursing home that directly or indirectly run by those doctors. In the third day of the admission in that nursing home, they did a major surgery to remove out the tumor from his intestine. It was about 5 hours long surgery. We were impatiently waiting in the nursing home premises to get the result of his tumor removal. After five hours doctors came out, they did not try to share the progress with us. We just felt that they just wanted to escape from us. Anyway, we approached them and asked about our father's progress. Then a doctor said that it was not cleared due to some blood veins. Only in that time we came to know that the tumor was on the top of the blood veins so that was not cleared in the surgery. One doctor said, "in the case of cancer such things may happen some time". After that unsuccessful surgery, we came to know that my father has been suffered by cancer. When we came to know about the bitter truth, my world, including my family members, relatives and good wishers, fell

apart. Personally, I didn't know how to react or what to do. At that time my earth was down. But, I hoped we would catch a break somewhere. We were worried about his health and continuously tried to find the possible ways to get better treatment. We sent sample of the tumor to Spain for the better lab test. In around 20-25 days we got the lab test result. Result confirmed that the tumor was the carsonoid cancer but the growth rate was too low. Doctors added that the tumor might be 25 years old.

When we got the report and the growth rate about the tumor, we hope that the tumor could be less harmful than the other types of cancer. But we have been continuously trying to remove out the tumor completely.

In the mean time I got to go to the Netherlands where my wife Ms. Jayanti was studying, and then after to USA where I was going to join a graduate level course in Brandeis University in Boston. First, I tried to ignore the offer, but my father always encouraged me to accept the opportunity and not to stay with him by ignoring such offers. My mother, wife, brothers, and other relatives and good wishers also motivated me to take the offer. I was really in dilemma about what to do. My younger brother has given me the great words regarding father's undergoing treatment in my physical absence. He also advised me to go to abroad. So, I chose to go to the Netherlands first and then after the USA. When I reached to the Deventer city of the Netherlands, my wife and I were started to make frequent phone

calls to get information about our father and grandfather's health condition. In the month of September 2002, our grandfather has passed away.

Something about our Grandfather

When my wife and I were in the Netherlands, we missed our grandfather. We badly missed the opportunity to be with him in his last day. My grandfather was 82 years old and to me, he was strong and my hero always, the strongest, most accomplished man, I had ever found. He worked hard and was eternally devoted to his whole family. He was the family's pillar and origin of our family success.

One day, he started to feel some pain in and around his heart. After that his personality started to change. It was peculiar and we tried to take him to different hospitals and consult with different heart specialists. But we lost all the ways of his treatment when a very famous heart specialist said that the treatment was impossible not only in Nepal, but in United States either. Medical reports showed that his blood-valve had shrunken and dried up. In my grandfather's case, due to the over age, the dried valve could not have been treated. So that was the main malignant matter for us. The doctor took us aside and said "it's cruel; he has 2-6 months to live". We astonished, broken and devastated. We were unable to make up our mind about what to do or what not to do. Even though we were hopeless, we requested to the doctors to keep continuous their efforts for his treatment.

After some days, I moved to the Netherlands and it was month of September, 2003, we heard about the tragedy that took his life. We cried, denied, appealed, and begged. In my case, I lost my grandfather with whom I had a very intimate relationship. He saved my life. One day, when I was a 6-7 years old small child, I got very sick. My parents, grandparents tried to cure but all actions were failed and I was being critical serious. My grandfather put me on his shoulder and continuously walked around one and half days to the hospital. That was sharpen-stony foot trail, extreme up and down and scary due to the wild animals. He did not care about all those things. Only the cause he wanted me more than himself, so he pulled up me and started to walk. My mother followed him. Ultimately they reached to the hospital and I got cure. They saved me. But, about three years before, I lost my grandfather, my love, my teacher, my life saver, and my hero. I'll never forget that black day.

When I was in Boston

After spending some time period in the Netherlands, I came to the USA for my study in the Brandeis University in Boston. My middle brother Kalyan and his wife Bishwa were already been in the Kentucky, USA, so I went to them. I lived with them in around a week in Kentucky and we all moved to the Toledo city of the Ohio state where my brother and his wife got the admissions in the Master's level course in Radiation Therapy discipline in the

Medical University of Ohio. In Sept. 1, 2003, I came to the Boston city and started my study in the Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts.

During that period I have been in regular contact with my father in Nepal. Within this period, my father went to Rajiv Gandhi Medical Hospital in Delhi, Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital in Mumbai India and several times to the Cancer Hospital in Chitwan, Nepal. During his treatment, my mother and younger brother have been with him always.

My returning from the USA

In September 2004, I was returned to my home in Nepal. I was eagerly wanted to see him first. During the travel I always thought and guessed about him. When I reach to him, and I tried to read his face and I found that incredibly difficult to me to watch this wonderful, rambunctious, rabelaisian lover of life so reduced by the ravages of cancer. He suffered greatly. He lost weight, and he was terribly fatigued. He had been a very youthful 57-year-old before the chemotherapy. He seemed to age 10 years in the passage of a few months. He fought with tenacity for life. He wanted to live for all the unwritten books he felt he still had in him.

After my reaching to the home, my father, my younger brother and I went and talked to the different specialists and doctors again and again. And bit by bit, day by day, he recovered. Until he was 58, he continued to write books and went regularly to the central department

of history in kirtipur from the Nayabazaar residence once or twice a week. His last book "*The Bhagabat Geeta*" was published in 2006 was greeted by several readers and organizations. Dozens of readers have told me how importantly he described the philosophy of the human life in his last book.

My family members and I were suggested him to go to our middle brother in the USA to get better treatment. He also realized that the treatment in USA would be better than the other places of the present globe. He already received the VISA to come to the USA. Then after he was looking for his smooth health condition to come to his middle son. At that period, his health condition was not stable. He faced several other health disturbances and health condition up and downs. When I returned back to Nepal, I also was looking for the suitable time to request him to go to the USA, but I also have not found that time. In every two-three weeks alternative he has faced different problems e.g. jaundice, fever etc. In that time period I was involving only to be with him to go to meet the consultant physicians. I was not able to contribute much more than that. Anyway, I was involving to encourage his strength, and I always said him to not to get worry about the expenses for his treatment. All of my family members assured him for the availability of necessary fund for his treatment.

My father was great; he was real a great god. He loved me too much, so he started to ask me about my future step for my carrier. Even I was thinking to not to returning to the USA very

soon, but he started to say me to return back to the USA for my further study. Ultimately I returned.

My that time involvement for my father's treatment I learnt a lesson. I learned the difference between "healing" and "curing." As I understood, 'cure' is a medical procedure that reliably helps the patients to get recovery from an illness and 'healing' can be described as an inner process through which the human organism seeks its own recovery-physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. My belief is that hope is fundamental to achieving the best possible quality of life with cancer. So, If I could say only one thing to cancer patients who want to live, I would like to say repeatedly that "never give up hope". You can fight for your life, even in the face of tremendous odds. Give yourself permission to hope, even in the face of all the statistics that physicians may present to you. Statistics are only statistics. They are not you. There is no such thing as false hope. I saw the truth of this in my father's experience.

His Early Life

My father was born to relatively remote area of Nepal, a village located in the west south of the Tanahun district of Nepal. My grandmother is a housewife – very much talent in mathematics especially for multiplication and remembering different dates e.g. date of

birth, married date, deceased date etc, and my grandfather was a well-educated man and professionally he was a Great Pundit (priest) in his age. My father was the first child followed by three more brothers and five sisters.

Due to lack educational and other public facilities, my father has made his first attempt to go to school in the age of seven. When he started to study in the local school, after some time that was closed. Then he started to go to the *Kunchha*, that time district headquarter of the Lamjung district of the western Nepal for his continuous study. At that time he used to walk at around six hours to go and come to the school. Moreover the foot trail that he and his colloquies used was so dangerous because of prickly coarse stony foot trail, local fauna, seasonal flora, and tall grasses. He never felt difficulty with seasonal monsoon, heavy rainfall and heart frozen cold in cold season and midday hot in warm season too. He continuously walked in the path of success that was most difficult, frightening, scary and remote. Ultimately he completed grade nine from the school. When he was in 16, he got married with a daughter of '*Poudel*' family. What I found in my mother is that she has the very soft heart with full of love and care. She is the woman of brave and courage.

After the arrange marriage my father and mother came closer to each other. They understood each other very fast and started to work together in the mission of success of the life. After marriage my mother could not keep continuous her formal study, but my father did. When my father was studying in ninth grade, my grandfather has bought some

bighas^[1] farmland in *Terai*^[2] part of the Chitwan district of Nepal. Chitwan district is one of the seventy-five districts of Nepal. According to the Wikipedia^[3] - the source of free content, multilingual encyclopedia written collaboratively by contributors around the world - the Himalayas range is the world's highest mountain range, with the fourteen highest mountain peaks in the world. It is also one of the world's longest ranges begins from the Arunachal Pradesh of India in the east to ends to the Tibetan region of the China in the west. It spans over 2,400 kilometers. Chitwan lies at the foot of the Himalayas^[4]. It is a nature-rich district. It has a particularly rich flora and fauna. One of the last populations of single-horned Asiatic Rhino lives here.

These days Chitwan is counted as one of the developed district in Nepal. Narayangarh, on the bank of Narayani River, is the town with numerous shopping zones where people from all over the district and even from the neighboring district and country come to shop here. It build up its identity as of a politically conscious, economically rich and diversified district of Nepal. But in 1960th decades, the scenario was very different than today. At that time the district was not developed and secured. Also the malaria^[5] disease has not been controlled. In 1964, my parents came to Chitwan to take care the family owned farmland. They started to live in a small wooden wall with a thatched roofed small house. Even though, they faced so many economic and other problems they continuously trying to move forward in the path of success by joining their cooperative hands to each other.

As an Academician and Writer

My father, Dr Adhikary was not only an administrator, he was also a great academician, poet and storywriter. He was particularly noted for his nimble brain, flamboyant memory and conceited capacity to conduct independent research. He has studied all over the life. He always tried to find new ideas and events. He spent several years traveling all over the country identifying, collecting and deciphering Nepal's ancient monuments, sculptures, carvings, manuscripts, coins and scriptures to piece together the entire ancient, medieval and modern history of Nepal. He was the perfect reader of the ancient domestic writings too. Several people came to him to get his cooperation to read out of those letters. We are keeping his collections very safely and carefully because no body could find that kind of wealth in Nepal. People could find fragments and pieces, but not in such good condition. We are making plan to display those valuable materials in the library that we are going to establish so that many more researchers and students could be benefited by those materials.

He was the first Ph. D. holder among the permanent residents of the Chitwan district of Nepal. His Ph. D. thesis entitled "The Khasa Kingdom: A Trans-Himalayan Empire of the Middle Age" has published in 1987 and after a year the Nirala publication printed out the second edition. In this book he explored the reality of that time public. He did not focus his intellectuality to write down that time king and king's family history. That book consisted

different contents in the history of the Nepalese history books. Content of the books are: The khasas, Political History, Administrative System, Society and Culture, Economic Conditions, Art and Architecture, and Recapitulation. Readers said that the book brings to light the struggle of Non-Vedic Aryans who entered the Indian subcontinent from the northwest around the first millennium B.C. and settled as the chief inhabitants of the northwestern mountainous region. During the early medieval period they established a grand kingdom known as Khasadesa, the Khasa kingdom. Using the Sanskrit scriptures, sculptures, murals and stone--pillar inscriptions he examined how these Buddhist warriors later played a prominent role in the unification of Nepal and shaped the fabric of the present Nepalese socio-cultural set-up.

After the book he has continuously involved to write different books too. In his life, he has published about three dozens of books related to history, language and culture, literacy, and religion. He also wrote course textbooks for different grades. Everybody can buy his books all around the world. For example people can buy his "The Khasa kingdom (Nirala series)" from several leading bookstores in the America. As of Dec. 30, 2006, the Amazon.com[6] is selling the book by \$16.53, eBay[7] (half.com) is selling his four most popular products, those are The Khasa Kingdom: A Trans-Himalayan Empire of the Middle Age, Nepalama Prajatantrika andolanako Itihasa (History of Democratic Movement in Nepal), Nepali Kangresako Itihasa (History of Nepali Congress), and Baise Rajyako Itihasa

(History of twenty two states). This is only the example but in fact people can buy his books from Islamabad to Washington and from Tokyo to Moscow anywhere.

He has not involved only for writing of books. He did well take care to his family, he has also always deserved excellency in his full time professional job, he participated in different social events, public speaking events, and political and social meetings, more than this he involved for the development of the "*Chitwan Sahitya Parisad* (a literature forum established by him and his colleagues). He has become President of that forum in Jan.12, 2002. He has also provided his intellectual services as the advisory board members of several learning institutions in Chitwan and Kathmandu. It was an enormous and huge task and was done single-handedly. It is a miracle that he could do during his lifetime what would generally take several lifetimes to complete. But our father was no ordinary man. He was driven by his unstoppable desire to understand what made Nepal and what it was. Actually, I feel that my father was a writing machine. Its unbelievable, its amazing and its great that a cancer suffered person has written four books after the discovery of cancer in his lungs, and he kept continuous his writing till his dying. Therefore, in death he died as a great man. We can hope that there will be many young people who will take inspiration from his life story, devotion, contribution, and dedicate their lives to make their country a great place and the world a better place to live in.

Funeral

My father was my powerful role model. From him, I learned the value of respecting and appreciating other people. By him I learned the meaning of real world in practical way. But I missed the opportunity to being with him in his last days. I was in New York, USA when he passed away. I was participating in my final examinations in the Yeshiva University of up town Manhattan. I thought to move to Nepal to see him after completion of my examinations. I was in need of staying in New York for one more day, but in the mean time I heard the message from my Aunti Ms. Kamala Adhikary that the father is passed away. When I heard that sad and bad news, I first sat on the floor, covered my face by my two hands, tears continuously came out, I cried, wept, and recalled his memories. I did not get any solutions what to do or what not to do. After some time I called up my apartment mate Mr. Luv Khanal to come to the apartment as soon as possible. He was at the work, but he left the work for the day and came to see me. When I met him I cried loudly. I was unable to stop my crying. Then I said him to book an airline ticket to go to Nepal. According to my interest, he tried to find out the ticket for the same day. Fortunately, I got the airline ticket for the Air India and that was direct from New York to New Delhi, India. Then I called up another one friend Mr. devendra Rawal to help me to collect the ticket and reach to the airport in time. He immediately drove away from the office. We used his car to reach to the JFK International Airport in New York ontime.

Before my going to Nepal, I informed about the tragedy to my sister Usmita in Mineosota, my brother in laws Ms. bishwakala and Ms. Ranju in Pittushberg and Kentucky. All of them also wept in the phone when they heard the sad and bad news. I found Air Idia as the good one for the passanger's care and hospitality, but I had the bitter experience with the terminal staff in Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi. I stayed there for about 12 hours. In the following day I got the flight to go to Kathmandu, Nepal. When I reached to Kathmandu there were no any more domestic flights to go to Chitwan. So, I took taxi and reached to my home in Chitwan. When I reached there I saved off my hair and took bath. My two brothers were already been in mourning with my mother and wife. But I were not allowed to meet them at that night. I lived in different house for the night. When the prist Pd. Govinda Acharya came for the morning time procession of the mourning, I took bath and he chanted some religoius slogans and did some necessary activities then after I went to my family members who were in mourning.

After my involvement in the mourning we completed all the procession together. My middle brother Mr. Kalyan and my younger brother Mr. Madan have reached to see our father before some days from Pittsburgh and Kentucky of the United States. They also involved for father's treatment. That was bitterly unsuccessful. Ultimately he passed away.

In Nepal, some communities bury their dead. According to the Hindu culture, for married Hindus, men and women alike, cremation is the normal procedure for disposing of the body

because it is believed that this will help their soul to escape quickly from the body. Only infants are buried instead of being cremated. In most cases the rite takes place within a day of the death. Usually the cremation process has to be done on the bank of rivers.

My family members also decided to follow the normal process to dispose his body. According to my brothers, family members, relatives and others, in the death of my role model many more community people, academicians, supporters, friends and relatives participated in the funeral. After my father's death some relatives, friends and party workers wanted to arrange a big funeral preserving and parading the body. Because of my father's political opinion, those party workers might be right, but my family members did not agree on that. He was the man for all, he was unbiased, open and kind hearted man, so my family members decided to open the way for each people to come and say good bye to our father even they have different political philosophies. They agreed on immediate disposal of father's body and that decision was appropriate for a man who lived such simple and austere life and worked for all. So there was no visitation, no cold storing of the corpse, or other fanfare. A simple and quiet cremation was arranged.

A large number of people were participated of well-known academician, historian, poet, administrator, social worker, and think tank Prof. Dr. Surya Mani Adhikary at the cemetery in Devghaat of Chitwan and Tanahun districts of Nepal on May 16, 2006. Even that was the very hot day; many mourners took part in the funeral procession. That was the incredible,

so many onlookers and passing vehicle stopped to watch the possession with great curiosity. As I came to know, Prof. Dr. Ishwori Laudari has read out some of the many condolence messages received from different personalities including National General Secretary of the Nepali Congress Mr. Ram Chandra Poudel, expressing their sorrow at his untimely death and their respect for his contribution towards the education, literacy and social work.

During those 13 days between his death and the funeral, thousands of people came to home to personally express their condolences to my mum and us. Many signed the condolence book. Many of those at the funeral not only expressed sorrow at his death but also commented on his sacrifice, contribution, devotion and struggle during his life span. Local radio stations and newspapers covered the story for many hours and pages. In every day, there were mass gathering, they conducted different events e.g. talk programs, literature events, and interaction programs. At that time, we heard very so much heart touchable poems and story about our father. In 13th day, that was special, several well known personalities, political leaders, community leaders, local residents, academicians, teacher-students, relatives, friends and many more other people came to us. They arranged a speak program with poems and short stories. That was the touchy program; we hurt many times again and again, including our mother, we wept repeatedly.

In this way, we completed those 13 days. My father was a very rational man and did not believe in dark myths and idolatry of any religion including Hinduism. He was religious, but not the blind supporter, that we could find in his last book "*Bhagawat Geeta*". When he was in hospital bed, he suggested my mum to not to follow all dark myths in his funeral procession. So, we followed his suggestion accordingly with big hope of eliminating dark myths and idolatry from Hinduism.

Our Commitment

The gathered relatives asked us if we knew of any of unfulfilled wishes of father. We promised publicly that we will keep continue our skill, efforts and resources to make his motive successful. We are not sure about the priority of works to be done in the shake of his memory. At that time we announced full amount tuition scholarship in each year for the five students in the history department of the Birendra Campus in Chitwan district, where he appointed as the lecturer in 1977 and became a Campus Chief in Oct. 28, 1985 and that ended up for approximately 7 years. We also decided to publish a memory book before his 1st death anniversary. In this book we want to explore on his fundamental thought that goes to the wellness of humankind. This book will proof that he was not only the historian but also a history making man, who made the history of success, history of humanity and history of dignity. We are also wishing to establish a foundation in his memory. We are

making plan to establish a library and ambulance service under the foundation's starting period. We have master plan, we have skill and ideas, but we do not have sufficient fund to do that immediately. So, we are seeking to get some part of the necessary fund as the donation for this not for profit making foundation. In its initial stage we need some money to establish the foundation, then after the foundation itself will create it's sustainability. It will be in the earth when the earth will be and carry on the message to our future generations about the humanity, contribution, sacrifice, and struggle.

At the end

It's been about a year, I am grieving continuously. I tried to accept the reality of human's life as the birth and death. But I am not getting able to come out from the grief. In last father's day, I remembered him so much, I recalled him repeatedly and I wept on his early death. In that day, I wrote something.

*My father has gone far away from this land,
I miss the precious touch of his loving hands.*

*All I have now a heart full of love, and eyes full of tears,
To remember your love throughout the years.*

*Now I will have to look up at the stars and
say, "I love you, father! Happy Father's Day!"*

"Om sarve bhavantu sukhinah, sarve santu nira-maya-ah; sarve bhadrani pashyant, ma-kaschit dukha-bhak bhavet. Om... shantih, shantih, shantih".

Those *Sanskrit* wordings taken from the book that published by my father. Those sentences said that "Oh Lord may all of mankind be happy, may all of mankind be healthy, may all of mankind experience prosperity; may none (in the world) suffer. Om... Peace, peace, peace. OM - The sound that brings peace to many, the sound that contains the principle of unity.

Ref:

* Mr. Adhikary is the first son of Dr. Surya Mani Adhikary. Currently he is studying in Keller Graduate School of Management in New York.

[1] Land measuring unit in Terai Nepal

[2] Tarai Region is a lowland tropical and subtropical belt of flat, alluvial land stretching along the Nepal-India border, and paralleling the Hill Region.

[3] <http://www.bookrags.com/Himalaya>

[4] The abode of snow

[5] The vector born disease

[6] <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/8185693501>

[7] http://people.half.ebay.com/_W0QQcidZ1189589523QQmZbooksQQsortZ88QQsoZ1