# Himalayan Project

**A Danish NGO dealing with Development Aid in Nepal**

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**Dear Fire Chief and Members of Fire Brigade!**

Now half a year has passed since you were introduced to the concept of forming a **Village Fire Brigade** in your village, and we handed over to you a Hand Pump, a paper with Fire Theory and a document about how to establish a Village Fire Brigade. And at that time we also promised you to send more pumps and equipments when you had completed your establishing of the Village Fire Brigade. So now I am ready to take the next step and keep my promise. Did you take the first step? Are you also ready to go on?

You all know how it is a disaster to a family if their house is burning. The loss can be complete, leaving the family without anything. Luckily it is not that often a fire ravage peoples home, but you can never tell who and when it will happen. Therefore a Fire Brigade usually have nothing to do. And therefore Firemen use to fall asleep. And sleeping Firemen have no value when the disaster breaks out. If you want to have a Fire Brigade which is ready, then you must be alert and aware what to do all the time, day and night. And also be aware that a Fire Brigade shall be ready to help in many other situations in the village where danger and disaster call for emergency service.

Many people believe that if they just have some Fire Equipment somewhere, then everything will be fine if a fire break out. But that isn't true at all. The most important thing in fire fighting is ***Knowledge*** and the capacity to ***Organize***. Therefore the most important part is to establish the Fire Brigade where men and women can meet who want to fight one of the biggest enemies of a village, ***the Fire***. In this Fire Brigade the Fire Fighters can hold meetings where knowledge and organizing can be established by discussions and trainings. And equipments can be maintained and repaired. And all Fire Fighters will learn exactly what each of them has to do when a fire develops.

When the Fire Brigade is established in your village, then Himalayan Project is ready to help you more. Last year we gave you the document about establishing of Village Fire Brigade and a few months later Namgyal handed over to you the same document in Nepali writing. Now I hope that you have done the first step by doing all the tasks which is prescribed in this document, so I can help you by taking the second step. The tasks you *must* perform before I come again is:

1) Forming ***Fire Brigade Committee*** and a group of ***Fire Fighters***.
2) Establish a ***Fire Station*** – as a minimum just a room, which is in use only for Fire Brigade purpose.
3) Store ***Fire Equipments*** in this Fire Station.
4) Make a ***Water List*** mentioning all important and easy accessible water sources.
5) There shall be a ***Fire Brigade Minuting Book*** where all meetings and events are described.
6) Fire Chief shall call for ***regular Meetings and Exercises***, and they shall be written in the Minuting Book.
7) There shall be a ***Book of Record*** for Superintendent.
8) There shall be a ***Book of Account*** for Treasurer.
9) Fire Fighters shall be ***active and participate*** in meetings and trainings.

When an *active* Fire Brigade is established, Himalayan Project will send a bag of equipment all the way from Danmark to your village. In this bag you will find:

1) One ***Bag*** with Wheels and carrying straps
2) Two ***Hand Pumps*** (same as you had before)
3) One ***Fire Helmet*** for those who go into a damaged house or a house on fire.
4) Four heavy ***Fire Jackets*** made of fire resistant materials to protect Fire Fighters
5) Three ***Fire Trousers*** made of fire resistant materials to protect Fire Fighters
6) Three woollen ***Sweaters*** to keep heat and cold away from Fire Fighters body
7) Four uniform ***Shirts***
8) Four woollen ***Gloves*** treated with fire protecting chemicals
9) Three blue ***Scarves*** to prevent sparks to fall inside the dress, and just to look good

All this equipment of course shall belong to the Fire Brigade. It shall be hanging in the Fire Station to be ready for emergency situations, exercises and meetings only. No one is allowed to use the clothes and equipments for any other purposes in the daily life than for Fire Brigade purposes. And this equipment shall be looked after regularly by the Superintendent and he shall make sure that it is always kept dry and ready for use. By own efforts the Fire Brigade shall add more equipments to the Fire Station like many buckets of different sizes, ladder, shovel, axe, iron bar and other equipments by the Fire Fighters own wish.

The clothes shall serve two purposes:

1) During village meetings and community meetings it can serve as an ***Uniform*** worn by the Fire Brigade Committee to show off for other people that here is an active Fire Brigade who is proud of being so.
2) During emergency and fire situations and also during exercises this is ***Fire Equipment*** which shall protect those bravest Fire Fighters who are working very near the fire and who are commanding all the other Fire Fighters and Volunteers. Especially the Helmet isn't a symbol of rank, but it is for protection for that brave Fire Man who is working very near the fire where there will be the greatest risk of falling objects.

When Himalayan Project experience that your Fire Brigade is active and dealing with the equipment in a proper and responsible way, we will feel emphasized to find even more equipment in Danmark to send for you. It can even be more technical and expensive equipments if you really work with the Fire Brigade in an exemplary manner. Your efforts will influence Himalayan Project's wish to support.

When Himalayan Project experience that several Fire Brigades in Solu are working in a proper and progressive way, we will send a professional Fire Fighter from Danmark to give professional emergency training and knowledge to the active Fire Brigades.

Especially in Phaplu-Salleri the Fire Brigade is most important. There are many houses and they are built closely together and many of them from wood. And furthermore there are important offices and banks with very important and irreplaceable documents. And finally there is the Airstrip which can serve as emergency landing facility for all eastern Nepal. As this place even have road access it will be possible to have real efficient and heavy fire equipments which can roll on the road from Fire Station to the place where the fire break out. But of course Himalayan Project will have real severe demands towards Phaplu-Salleri Fire Brigade than other places. All other places in Solu the Village Fire Brigades shall work voluntarily by its own villagers. But in Phaplu-Salleri Fire Brigade there shall be at least two professional Fire Men, who on daily basis shall work on maintaining the equipment, keep ready and work with the whole Upper Solu Fire Brigade. They will create and operate the central Fire Brigade Office of Solu, where trainings and education of Fire Fighters of all Solu can take place.

Phaplu-Salleri Fire Brigade is given some more demands than the small Village Fire Brigades. They shall meet some minimum demands, but are of course welcome to make more:

1) Establish ***Phaplu-Salleri Fire Brigade*** and have more regular meetings and trainings than other places.
2) Build a ***Fire Station*** with a garage with space for a Fire Engine and lots of equipment.
3) Build a big ***Water Tank on Wheels*** as a hanger behind the Fire Engine.
4) Achieve ***approval*** from Local and Central Authorities to import the Fire Engine.

When Phaplu-Salleri Fire Brigade has meet above demands, Himalayan Project will deliver a full equipped Mercedes Benz L 608 D Fire Engine including additional other equipment, and instructions on how to operate the vehicle and the engines. Then Phaplu-Salleri Fire Brigade will be one of the most modern and well equipped in the whole Nepal.

But Himalayan Project will not stop there. Each time you Nepalese take a proper step, Himalayan Project will take the next step. If we continue taking steps together, we will establish a warm connection between emergency services Danmark and Nepal. We will send professional people to give training and advice to the Nepalese colleagues and they will bring more equipment, both normal equipment and more sophisticated equipment. But please, don't stop being active. Don't think it is not necessary that YOU are personally active. Don't think that it is not necessary to keep working in the Fire Brigade even when nothing happens. Because then the Danish Fire Men will also stop being active and interested, and Himalayan Project will stop supporting the Fire Brigades, and then everything will go back to old days when a fire had its own rule without human interference.

Let us together rule the fire and show that we can control it and save people's lives and property.

Yours Papa Kurt!