

By Dr. Rabin Man Shakya Edited By Kuon Hunt

**July 20 through August 3, 2021**

## **Charya Dance Classes for Children through OBT**



For the three weeks ending in early August Guruju Prajwal taught Charya classes once a week to kindergarten through fifth graders on the grounds of da Vinci Arts Middle School in Northeast Portland. His classes included a basic introduction to Nepal, its rich culture, arts and traditions, as well.

These classes were organized by Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT)'s Education and Community Engagement department, along with classes in Folklore Ballet, Afro-Brazilian dance and Hula. Each class celebrated the diversity of the people and cultures that make up the various forms of dance.

Guruju Prajwal Vajracharya very much enjoyed his time with the students! Although it takes focus and concentration to learn the elements of the dance, he said, “The



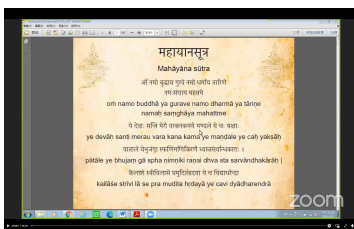
students loved the hand mudras!" They were particularly charmed by the "caterpillar" hand movements he presented, flexibility exercises useful to dancers. Vajracharya is especially good at using playful approaches when teaching youngsters the hand and feet movements that facilitate the flow of energy that moves through the body during Charya dance.

"It was a matter of great satisfaction for me, and for Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, to have an opportunity to teach little kids the age-old esoteric dances of Nepal," Guru Prajwal said.

August 8th-Sept 8th

## **Namasangiti Chanting During the Month of Gunla**

Guruju Prajwal has been leading Namasangiti chanting every morning for the month of Gunla, which will end on September 8th. Gunla is the ninth month in the Nepal Sambat, the unique Nepalese lunar calendar. It is a sacred month for Newar

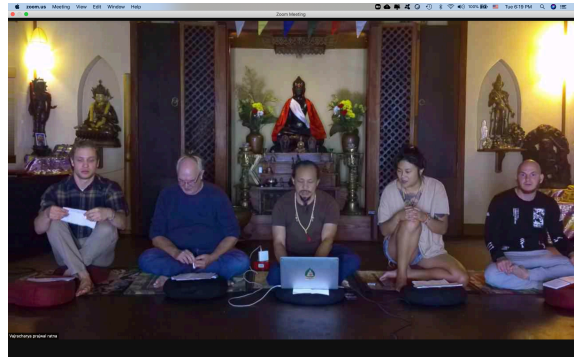


Buddhists, who typically chant the 160 verses of the Namasangiti every morning during Gunla. In Nepal, this is often accompanied by a walk up to Swayambhu, the very first sacred caitya in the Kathmandu Valley. This has been

done with Nritya Mandala Mahavihara sangha members both online and in person.

The Namasangiti is said to be a particularly clear condensation of Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings, provided as a recitation of

the many names of Manjushri, a succinct and accessible text for sanghas to use and share. Often additional mantras are chanted and bajans, devotional songs are sung and/or played on traditional musical instruments. Dr. Subhash Prajapati, a Seattle-based Newar music expert, has indicated that Gunla Bajans are an 800 year old tradition.



Priest Prajwal Ratna Vajracharya considers Gunla on of the most important times of year for Newar Buddhists. At the end of the Gunla month a potluck Paru Bhoje celebration picnic is organized at Laurelhurst Park in Portland.

**Sunday, August 22, 2021**

### **Zoom Event Celebrating Charya Dance**

In the recent Zoom event “Healing Our Earth -- Celebrating Dance,” hosted by Honey Kalaria and moderated by Sharron Rose, Guraju Vajracharya said, “In Charya practice, singing is the mantra, while dancing is the meditation and healing. When you combine the two -- Charya giti and Charya nritya -- that can then become the He Vajra Tantra, and transformation takes place.



“Charya dance, which dates back more than a thousand years, is a meditational dance that tells stories of the inner qualities and awakening of Buddhist deities. Through it you grow spiritually, and you can liberate yourself from bondage and limitations,” Vajracharya said. He indicated that the mudras of the deities embody purity, power and wisdom.

"We begin our practice of Mudra Yoga with the meaning and significance of each finger.

Applying the appropriate gesture can heal the organs, tissues, bones and nerves of the body," said Rev Vajracharya. He shared the origin of the dance in the Buddhist viharas of Nepal, danced originally only by the priests therein.

In her introduction of Prajwal, Kalaria indicated that he was a priest of one of the Vajrayana Buddhist lineages of Nepal and a ritual master both of the Charya Nritya dance tradition and other ritual forms performed by Newar Vajracharya Buddhists. She informed the audience of his training in Charya from the age of eight by his father, the Buddhist scholar and ritual master, the late Ratna Kaji Vajracharya.



"Prajwal is now the premier teacher, practitioner and performer of the tradition and is a veteran of several world tours with beginning and advanced students around the globe," she said. Sharron Rose added her personal comments on the beauty and power of the dances, as well as her gratitude to Vajracharya for keeping this very special dance form alive.

**Thursday, August 26, 2021**

### **Sangha member Jagat Maharjan Passes Away at 85**



Nritya Mandala Mahavihara is sad to announce the passing of one of its Newar sangha members this month, Jagat Maharjan. His antyesthi samskara (the funeral sacrament) was held on August 27th at Aloha Funeral Home and Crematory in Aloha. All appropriate funeral rituals were conducted by the Ven Guruju Prajwal Vajracharya.

Jagat Maharjan was born at Dupa Tole in the Kathmandu valley. He was an active community member of the Dupa Twa. He was the first person at Dupa Tole to pass the SLC examinations. He is survived by his wife Krishna, daughter Shanti and sons

Prakash and Bikash. Multiple Nepali organizations in Oregon mourn his loss and extend condolences to the bereaved family.

Jagat Maharaja celebrated two Bura jankos, Bhima Rathahana and Deva Rathahana, during his lifetime, two very important life cycle rituals, the most recent at Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.

**Friday, August 27, 2021**

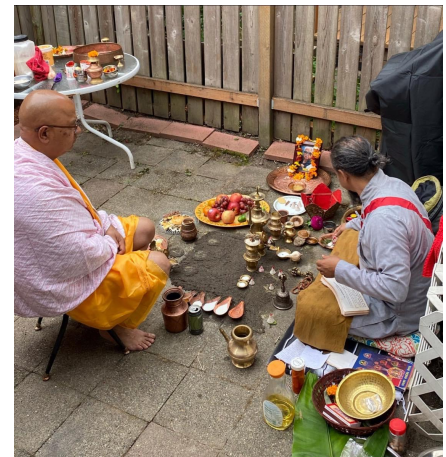
### **Dakila Rituals Performed for the Late Chandra Mali**



A Dakila ceremony was performed by Gurujū Prajwal at the home of Raju Mali in Tigard, Oregon, to commemorate the first anniversary of the demise of his mother, Ms. Chandra Mali. In addition to the Gurumandala Puja and the Maamaki Pujas, a variety of other pujas were performed, offerings made and prayers said to protect and support the soul of Ms. Male being reborn into the Sukhavati Bhuvan.



Ms. Mali's Bhima Rathahana Buri Janko was celebrated by Gurujū Prajwal in October, 2019. Her children, Raj Mali and Ganga Sharma, are both former presidents of the Nepali Association of Oregon.



**Buddhist Bhajan started**  
**Every Wednesday after Sadhana practice**  
**6:30-7:30 pm Sadhana practice**  
**7:30-8:30 pm Buddhist Bhajan**

so far we have 7 Buddhist bhajan to sang. Leading singer is Budda laxmi Shakya from San Diego, we have 15 people joining, all are Welcome and join

