



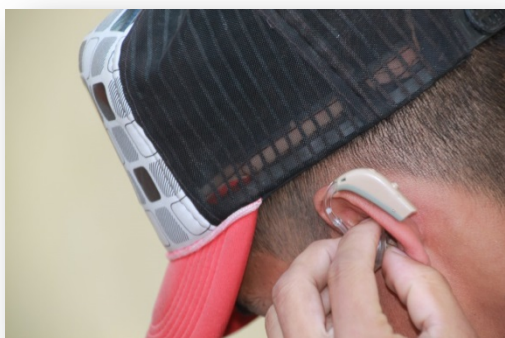
An amazing young man

At the INF Ear camps we are always seeking to improve people's hearing. Sometimes we have success and sometimes we don't. Occasionally we are amazed at how some people excel with a hearing impairment. During the recent INF Ear Camp in Pyuthan I meet Tekam Rana. At 21 years of age he and his sister, Sarshwoti, 20 years attend the deaf school in Butwal, some 6-8 hours bus ride from their parent's home in Pyuthan. Tekam and Sarshwoti have an older and younger sibling both with normal hearing. I found a very bright young man who recently sat for the Nepali SLC exam. He appeared confident that he would do well and has plans to complete further education in computers. He also has a facebook page and loves to communicate in this way. I was amazed to see such a young man bubbling over with life and enthusiasm for achieving his plans something which is not so commonly seen in someone with such a disability. Culturally if a person has a disability very few options are available for them.

During the course of his audiology assessment it was decided that we would trial a hearing aid to see if this would make a slight improvement on his severe hearing loss. And it did much to his and our surprise and he started to utter a few sounds in response to what we said. He was very happy and learnt very quickly how to operate and care for his aid.

Most parents want the best for their children and many times I have found that there is a resignation that seems to come when they realise their child has a disability. The Nepali term that is used is 'latto' which literally means deaf and dumb. Tekam and Sarshwoti's parents are remarkable as they have given their two hearing impaired children an education and a hope for their future.

We communicated by lip reading, Tekam signing to me, however I was unable to understand signing. To my surprise he began to write in cursive English in answer to my questions. Brother and sister communicate well in sign language. I found out he loves cricket and plays this game with the other children at the deaf school. He can also ride a motorbike though he doesn't have a licence.



There is no doubt that Tekam's future will be bright and that he will be an example to others in this land that are similarly affected.