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Class 9 English (Beehive) Notes

Kathmandu

Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

10. KATHMANDU

–Vikram Seth

- The author visits Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal and hires a cheap room in the centre of town and sleeps for hours.
- Next morning accompanied by Mr. Shah's son and nephew he visits the most sacred Hindu temple, Pashupatinath on the bank of Bagmati river.
- The atmosphere in and around the temple is completely chaotic. There are priests, devotees, hawkers, tourists, cows and monkeys etc.
- a sign board announces entry for the Hindus only. People are jostling to go to the front. A policeman is not allowing saffron clad westerners to enter. Monkeys and dogs are roaming freely there.
- The author is amused to see two monkeys fighting with each other, chasing and one jumps on to a Shivalinga.
- A corpse is being cremated on the bank of the river, washerwomen are busy doing their work, children bathing in it. A basket of old offerings is thrown from a balcony into the river.
- A small shrine half protrudes from the stone platform on the river bank. It's belived that when it emerges fully, the goddess inside will escape and the evil period of Kaliyug will end on earth.
- In contrast Baudhnath Stupa is very calm. Its white dome is surrounded by a road, small shops surround it, no crowds, shops, mainly owned by Tibetan immigrants selling bags, jewellery, etc.
- Kathmandu is described as lively, commercial and religious place having busy, narrow streets.
- Kathmandu market has fruit and flute sellers, hawkers, shops selling western cosmetics, chocolates, antiques, filmrolls etc.
- Noises of film songs, car horns, vendors shouting, cows roaming freely here and there.
- Author buys eatables and coca cola etc. for himself.
- He thinks of two plans to go back home, one by bus and train to Patna and then sailing up the Ganges and Yamuna. But being homesick he stick to the second one, buy's a next day ticket for direct flight to home.

- The author is fascinated by a flute seller standing in a corner of the Square near his hotel.
- He has a pole on which many flutes are stuck like quills of a porcupine. He plays flutes whose sound is clearly audiable in the traffic and hawker's noise. He doesn't have to shout for his product; Occasionally sells a flute, plays melodious tunes which impress the author.
- Flute is present in different cultures with different names with its specific fingering and compass. But author finds the commonality of all mankind in flute music.
- He observes that as we have to breathe to live, its playing also needs to pause and breathe to produce music.
- The melodious tunes of bansuri had never left him spell bound earlier.

ACTIVITY

Elaborating with drawings/pictures, describe the place you have visited. It may be a,

Market place

Monument

Religious place.

COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

1. There are so many worshippers that some people trying to get the priest's attention are elbowed aside by others pushing their way to the front.

   Questions

   a) Name the lesson?

   b) Which place is being talked about here?

   c) Why were the people elbowed aside by each other?

   d) Make a sentence using the word 'worship' in your own words.

2. But I am too exhausted and homesick; today is the last day or August. Go home, I tell myself; move directly towards home. I enter a Nepal airlines office and buy a ticket for tomorrow's flight.

   Questions

   a) Who is 'I' in the above lines?

   b) Why does the speaker want to "move directly towards home?"

   c) How does the speaker decide to travel?

   d) Give the verb for the word "flight".

3. I find it difficult to tear myself away from the square. flute music always does this to me; it is at once the most universal and most particulars of sounds.

   Questions

   a) Who is 'I' referred to here?

   b) Why couldn't the speaker tear himself away from the sqaure?

   c) What is 'it' here?

   d) Write the comparative degree of the word 'difficult.'

Short Questions

Q. 1 What is the belief associated with the half immersed shrine in the river Bagmati ? What does it tell us?

Q. 2 What is the author attracted to while standing in a corner of the square? Why?

Q. 3 How is the flute-seller different from other hawkers and vendors?

Q. 4 What is the effect of flute music on the author?

Q. 5 Who is struggling for permission to enter the Pashupatinath Temple and why?

Q. 6 Why does the author decide to take a direct flight back home?

Q. 7 Why does the author call Baudhnath stupa a haven of quietness?

Long Question

Q.1 The holy river 'Bagmati' is used for different social customs and is badly polluted. How can the sacredness of the holy rivers be maintained?

Q. 2 What is the difference between the atmosphere at Pashupatinath Temple and Baudhanath Stupa?