

# *Save the Donkeys*

*Animal Nepal asks for your help*

*Because something MUST be done!*





**Gandhi, a rescued donkey, died on January 25**

*Donkeys in Nepal are true beasts of burden. They are made to work till they drop dead. Something MUST be done.*

*“Let’s make sure this donkey did not die in vain.”*

**When we first started working with donkeys in Lalitpur brick kilns we did not know exactly what to expect. “How much dressing should we buy for 150 donkeys?” we asked Dr Sudip Koirala, coordinator of the mobile clinics. “Buy as much as you can; it’s hard to find a donkey without wounds,” he said.**

We found this hard to believe. The brick kiln season had recently started and the donkeys had only just arrived. But Dr Koirala was right.

The 150 donkeys we treated did not only suffer multiple wounds, including deep tissue injuries, they were malnourished, dehydrated, stressed, depressed, and they seemed unable to survive another five months of hard labour. At least five donkeys had already died from their injuries. One of them was so badly hurt during transportation

from the Terai, her spine was broken. She was simply left to die by the side of the road. A painful slow death with no one paying any attention.

At Animal Nepal, in the past four years, we have seen unspeakable suffering among stray animals. The conditions of ‘brick donkeys’ are among the worst. No one pays any attention; the bricks they carry are stained with the blood and tears of the donkeys.

We at Animal Nepal have vowed to end the worst forms of cruelty against brick donkeys. We conduct mobile camps, lobby for better working conditions, educate the owners and the handlers and rescue those who need rescuing.

**Join us in our fight for the donkeys!**

Directors Pramada Shah & Lucia de Vries

*If you are planning to build a house think twice. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the bricks you buy are **BLOOD BRICKS**, stained with the blood and tears of children and donkeys.*

The employment of donkeys at brick kilns is a new phenomenon in Nepal. Brick producers, after facing trouble finding sufficient workers, started recruiting donkeys from the Terai some six years ago. Now it is estimated at least 500 donkeys are transported to Kathmandu each season to carry bricks to and from the kilns.

The donkeys are provided by *Tekdars*, contractors, who also provide labourers (mostly children) to manage the donkeys. The donkeys are transported back to the Terai when the brick season is over, and generally sold. There is no mercy for these intelligent creatures; in their new jobs they either carry

goods along mountain trails or pull overloaded *tongas* in the hot plains.

Despite the labour shortage, some brick kiln owners refuse to employ donkeys.

*“I have seen how they are treated at other places. They are beaten, starved, traumatized, and made to work till they drop dead. They too are living beings; it’s a sin to treat workers like that,” says the manager of one brick kiln.*

Others, despite having reservations against the way the donkeys are treated, agree to use donkeys in order to earn more money.

The conditions of the working donkeys of Kathmandu Valley are as dark as those of the children who work there. It is believed 60,000 Nepalese children make a living by making bricks. They don’t go to school and their childhood is spent in a dusty, dangerous, unhealthy working place.

In January we carried out a baseline survey of brick donkeys in Lalitpur district. We were shocked by its findings, both of conditions of human workers and of donkeys.

Donkeys are not provided any basic care such as nutritious food, water, rest, shelter, and are continuously overloaded and overworked. Injuries go untreated, severely ill donkeys are left to die. Death is welcomed by them as the donkeys are beaten relentlessly by their handlers, mostly children, some as young as six years old.

*The donkeys are beaten relentlessly by their handlers, mostly children, some as young as six years old.*



**Images of our first Donkey Clinic: Volunteer (student) vets, cleaning a deep tissue wound, donkeys and people gather, taking temperature**

### *Animal Nepal Says: Enough is Enough*

We have taken the first step. With the help of graduates and student vets from HICAST we are conducting mobile clinics for all donkeys in Lalitpur brick kilns. Soon we will expand the programme by designing a Code of Conduct for working kids and donkeys. We also plan to conduct ongoing clinics, to establish a pharmacy where owners can buy medicine at cost price, to organize weekly education sessions, produce educational materials, introduce first aid kits,

improve harnesses, and organize Healthiest and Happiest Donkey competitions among owners and handlers. Rescued donkeys (injured ones which are no longer fit to work) will find a loving home in a sanctuary or in adoptive homes.

We will not allow more donkeys to die by the side of the road. If the owners are not willing to introduce basic care we will expose them, if needed in court.

**Become part of the Save the Donkeys campaign!**



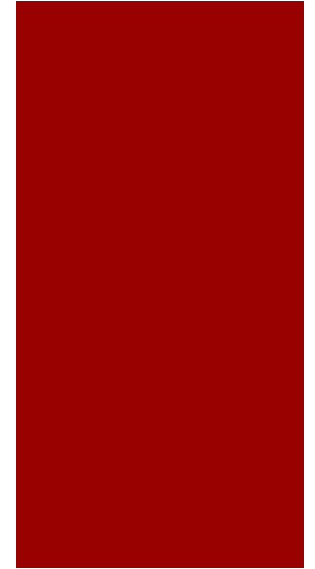
Pramada Shah talks to brick kiln owner



Gabi & Lucia with rescued donkey White Beauty



Healthy, happy working kids with horse



**How can you help?**

-**Treat one donkey** - Basic treatment (deworming, vaccination, dressing, tetanus injection and mineral supplements) costs as little as NRs 300.

- **Sponsor a donkey clinic** – The costs of a clinic in one brick kiln is NRs 10,000.

-**Support a rescued donkey** – Providing food and treatment for a rescued donkey for one year costs NRs 10,000

**THANK YOU volunteers and donors of January donkey clinics:** Shali, Gaurab & Utsarja Shah, Rajat & Pramada Rana, Happy Children Trust.

**Medicine:** TTT Distributors & Lalima Vet Distributors, Animal Aid Abroad/Murdoch University

*There is relentless pressure to over-work and overload the donkeys. Life expectancy for these animals can be short: in Europe a donkey can comfortably live for 30 years; in the brick kilns, it may only last 18 months.*

**Help us to build a sanctuary or adopt a rescued donkey!**

Animal Nepal has introduced a novel project called Adopt a Donkey. Injured donkeys which are no longer fit to work will be rescued and treated. When their health has been restored they are available to good home, with space, greenery, and above all, lots of TLC.

Together with **Happy Children Trust** we plan to build a Donkey Sanctuary and Hospice for donkeys that are injured and unwanted. We send a specific budget to interested sponsors.

**Let us know how you like to help!**

**Pramada Shah – 98510-41103**

**Lucia de Vries – 9841-348563**

on



*Romeo and Juliet were rescued from a brick kiln by Happy Children Trust last year. They were joined by another white, extremely sick donkey, White Beauty, rescued by Animal Nepal, January 25. The three donkeys are a symbol of hope for all of us!*

*Cruelty against donkeys can be stopped  
But we need your help!*

*Animal Nepal*

*c/o Saathi Nepal, Ekantakuna, Lalitpur District*

*[www.animalnepal.org](http://www.animalnepal.org)*

*[www.icarefordonkeys.blogspot.com](http://www.icarefordonkeys.blogspot.com)*