

## The Identity Card of an Unemployed Youth

by Rajendra Bhandari

Name: Dhanbahadur  
Father's name: Ranbahadur  
Mother's name: Birkhamaya  
Address: Where Kanchanjunga can be seen  
and if you walk a little you will find the plains,  
where the streams sing folk songs,  
where people mumble songs of grief.  
Mailing address: Any cardamom garden, rice field, tea garden,  
cow pasture, hill meadow, bamboo thicket.  
Age: As much as fire flows in my arms,  
as much as dreams flower in my eyes.

Attach a passport photo: here.  
The photo should be like this:  
your two ears should be visible,  
one to listen to speeches in the bazaar,  
the other to hear the laments of your home.

Your legs should not be seen  
because you have nowhere to go.

Your chest should be seen, but the stomach should be left out.  
Your photo, without a stomach but with a chest,  
should be verified by some gazetted officer  
with only a stomach and no chest.

That's it, your identity card is ready.  
Bearing this,  
you can go anywhere without fear,  
from Siachen to Kanyakumari,  
from Chambal to Dimapur.

Go looking for a peg on which to hang your mind,  
go looking for a plate to appease your hunger.

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