

Tzu Chi's Semi-Permanent Classrooms

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On 25th April 2016, many schools across Nepal were destroyed and damaged, mostly in Sindhupalchok, Gorkha, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur and Kathmandu. The semi-permanent classrooms (SPC) of Tzu Chi are considered the safest and most comfortable, not only by the schools and colleges but also by the education departments and the Ministry of Education.

The campus chief of Patan Multiple Collage, Madhav Ghimire (PHD), said that, if Tzu Chi had not built SPCs in their campus, they would had no place to hold classes. He added that Tzu Chi's SPCs were one of the best he had ever seen.

The environment inside the SPC is comfortable for students and teachers to study for long hours. The SPC is not only safe but also friendly to students and teachers; it reduces the heat during hot days and acts as an insulator in winter. Since the roof does not allow in water, the SPC also acts as a sound protector during heavy rain.

Over 100 of semi-permanent classrooms have helped 22 schools not only inside the city but also in rural areas. No matter where it is built, the SPC provided by Tzu Chi has been heartily welcomed by everyone. Whether built in a hill-top school or in the middle of a heavily populated city center, the SPC had provided and guarded the study environment of Nepal.

The reaction of local people after seeing the SPC has been amazing; they respond in a unique way by expressing their happiness that their children can be safe in schools with Tzu Chi SPCs. With the completion of SPC and after experiencing the environment inside, the post-earthquake stress of students has been clearly reduced. The students have fearless smiles -- the SPC has proved itself a guard to protect a student's dream to gain education.

The Kenya Mandir Higher Secondary School and Patan Multiple Campus showed the highest satisfaction from the SPC provided by the Tzu Chi foundation. These two educational institutions were badly damaged by the devastating earthquake of April 2015. Most of the buildings were damaged and were unable to provide education; then Tzu Chi built the SPCs.

After using them for some time, one of the educational institutes plans to move the SPC to a different location to facilitate better education. The co-ordinator was highly impressed to see that the SPC can be moved to another location without any damage to its physical structure.

The Tzu Chi's SPCs are in demand in almost every school in the country as it has proved the safest semi-permanent classrooms in Nepal.

By Dr. Nirdesh Shakya, Nepal