

**Peace Education Network-Nepal (PENN) website launch program April 11, 2021 (Chaitra 29<sup>th</sup>, 2077) time 11.00am:**

**Chair: BN Sharma (Acharya), President, Peace Education Network-Nepal (PENN)**

**Chief Guest: Muskan Khatun, student at Bright Future HS School, Naikap, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**Guests: Peace Experts and Educators from Nepal (at large)**

**Audience: Peace Education Network-Nepal (PENN) Advisors, Resource Persons, Executives, Institutional Members and Individual Members and Peace motivated people & Education Journalists of Nepal.**

## **Who is Muskan Khatun:**

A 15-year-old girl was severely injured in an acid attack at Ganeshman Chowk in Birgunj at about 6am on Friday.

Muskan Khatun from Chhapakaiya in Birgunj was attacked with acid by 16-year-old Samsad Miya in order to exact revenge after Khatun rebuffed his friend Majid Alam's romantic overtures, according to police.

Khatun, a ninth grader at Tribhuvan Hanuman Secondary School, was assaulted on her way to school.

<https://kathmandupost.com/province-no-2/2019/09/07/yet-another-acid-attack-badly-injures-15-year-old-girl>

Muskan Khatun is a Nepalese human rights activist. She was a victim of an acid attack at the age of 15 after she refused the boy's romantic advances. She was campaigned for legislation and was instrumental in getting laws passed for tough action against perpetrators in Nepal. [Wikipedia](#)

## **Nepal's Muskan Khatun among the recipients of 2021 International Women of Courage Award**

Muskan will be receiving the US State Department's prestigious award for her work to end acid attacks, the US embassy says.



Photo via US Embassy website

Muskan Khatun from Nepal has been selected for the International Women of Courage Award for 2021 for her work to end acid attacks.

The United States Embassy in Nepal [said in a statement](#) that it is pleased to announce Muskan will be awarded the prestigious International Women of Courage Award for her work to end acid attacks.

“First Lady of the United States Jill Biden and Secretary of State Tony Blinken will host a virtual event on March 8,” said the embassy.

Muskan, 17, herself is an acid attack survivor.

“I’m absolutely thrilled to announce that Nepal’s Muskan Khatun will be receiving the State Department’s International Women of Courage Award for her work to end acid attacks,” Berry [wrote on](#) Twitter on Friday.

Muskan was critically injured in [an acid attack](#) in September 2019 for rejecting a boy’s proposal when she was 15. She had suffered severe burns on her face, chest, and hands.

After the tragedy, Muskan worked hard to bring about changes and lobbied for stronger laws and punishment for acid attacks.

Subsequently, the government called for drafting a new law for acid attacks. The President [promulgated an ordinance](#) on acid attacks in September last year.

According to US Ambassador Berry, Khatun will be the first Nepali to win the award and one of the youngest awardees ever.

Now in its 15th year, the International Women of Courage Award recognises women around the globe who have demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for peace, justice, human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment, often at great personal risk and sacrifice, according to the US embassy.

According to the International Women of Courage, the award honours women who have demonstrated exceptional courage, strength, and leadership in acting to improve the lives of others, from families to communities to countries.

“It is an extraordinary opportunity to bring international attention and support to women who have put their lives and/or personal safety at risk in order to improve their societies and inspire fellow citizens,” said the [US State Department](#).

Besides Muskan from Nepal, other recipients of the award this year are Maria Kalesnikava of Belarus; Phyo Phyo Aung of Burma; Maximilienne C. Ng Mbe of Cameroon; Wang Yu of China; Mayerlis Angarita of Colombia; Julienne Lusenge of Democratic Republic of the Congo; Judge Erika Aifan of Guatemala; Shohreh Bayat of Iran; Zajra Mohamed Ahmad of Somalia; Sister Alicia Vacas Moro of Spain; Ranitha Gnanarajah of Sri Lanka; Canan Gullu of Turkey and Ana Rosario Contreras of Venezuela, among others.

“Muskan's leadership was crucial in bringing about change,” said the US Embassy in Nepal. “The embassy is proud to support her and promote the advancement of women's and girls' rights in Nepal.”

Muskan is currently studying in Grade IX in Bright Future HS School, Naikap, Kathmandu, Nepal. With her kind consent and with generous Coordination of Mr. Mohan Kumar Karki, Director of the School, PENN has been able to have her as the Chief Guest to virtually inaugurate its website today – April 11, 2021 at auspicious time of 11.00am. We like to listen to her and Mr. Karki's story of about how she has had a challenging transformation in her life.



On this special occasion, considering her brave move as an inspiring example of a brave Nepali young girl who has been an excellent reason for the commencement of a very strong law against perpetrators of acid attacks in the nation, I on behalf of Peace Education Network-Nepal (PENN), declare her as Peace Ambassador of this network and will confer her the award on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 'International Day of Peace'. Also, on behalf of the PENN team, I would like to thank all the supporters of PENN for this milestone launching ceremony. While applauding Miss Muskan Khatun youngest (15 years old) leading Nepali Rights Activist, as Nepal awardee of 'The International Women of Courage Award (IWOC)' conferred by the Secretary of State, United States Department of States (America), we like to congratulate her for this heroic move for the entire Nepali women. PENN has always had immense aspirations to educate under-privileged girls of Nepal as well as install Peace Education with the Educators in Nepal in order build sustainable peace in the nation. As Bright Future Higher Secondary School, Naikap, Kathmandu is our institutional member school, we are proud to declare that PENN mission in Peace is being rightly exemplified by such feats. We feel, we all are on the right track in laying the foundation of Peace with youth and we hope to see our graduates leading Nepal in the global scenario soon in future.

Thankyou.

**BN Sharma**

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