Nisarga Batika School

PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to Nisarga Batika School

Dear Parents,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Nisarga Batika family, a growing community of children and adults engaged in meaningful and transformative education. We believe that your child will be a valuable addition to our vibrant community, and we are committed to providing an ideal learning environment where your child can flourish.

This handbook is an important document that ensures cooperation between parents, teachers, and the school administration. It contains essential information for parents and provides guidelines that enable parents to create and sustain a safe and harmonious environment in the school. We request you to read this handbook thoroughly and consider the detailed policies and procedures that enable the school to function smoothly. We believe that the handbook will assist in establishing a home-school collaboration so that any issue that concerns your child can be addressed positively and effectively in school as well as at home.

If you have any questions, queries, or concerns regarding the contents of this handbook, please communicate with your child's class teachers through the School App. We sincerely hope that, together, we can make your child's schooling enjoyable and successful.

Best wishes,
Monica Pradhan
Principal
Nisarga Batika School

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School Philosophy and Mission

Nisarga Batika School is a thriving community of learners who engage in teaching learning activities that deliver holistic education that is relevant and meaningful. As an experiential learning school, Nisarga offers a stimulating environment where children are taught through real life experiences. Everyone looks upon the world as their classroom and values self-motivated learning as a way of life. The school engages learners in real world experiences and encourages them towards critical thinking, self-discovery, and creativity. The school aspires to foster individuals to realize their protentional, instilling respect for self, others, and the environment.

The primary objective of the school is to nurture skills and values that students can carry with them for the rest of their lives. The utmost importance is placed on nurturing children's curiosity and enthusiasm and fostering in them the most vital skill of growing into independent learners. Teachers work as facilitators, providing an ideal learning environment where children take the lead. Teachers are available to guide, support, and help students whenever needed, but their primary role is to ensure that children understand concepts through their own experiences. At Nisarga, children are part of a vibrant and caring community of learners who benefit from the presence of teachers and peers who learn to value their input and assist each other in their learning process.

We aspire to cultivate the following qualities in our students:

- **Proactive:** Children will learn to be responsible for themselves by actively making choices, having the appropriate attitude and enthusiasm.
- **Set goals:** Children will start by envisioning the end results, making plans, setting goals, and implementing them. They will thoroughly enjoy the process.
- **Learn to prioritize:** Children will be able to organize their days by putting first things first and will know what is important and what is not.
- **Cooperate:** Children will realize that it is always possible to have a solution where everyone benefits if there is cooperation and sharing.
- **Seek to understand others and to be understood:** At Nisarga, learning is possible by working in groups, taking turns, synergizing with others, listening to others patiently, considering multiple perspectives and learning to walk in the shoes of others.

We value the following ideals:

✓ Providing an education for the whole child: mind, body, and spirit.

✓ Nurturing the child and supporting the family.

✓ Supporting cultural, religious, racial, and socio-economic diversity that is representative of our community.

✓ Modeling open communication and creative problem-solving for children and adults alike.

- ✓ Creating an environment where teachers, staff, and childcare providers can learn and thrive through support for their personal as well as professional growth.
- ✓ Sustaining harmony between the needs of the individual and the needs of the school.

Parent Involvement

Active parent involvement is an integral part of an effective school program. Besides the obvious benefits of shared communication and direct support of the functioning of the school, your interest in the school shows your child that their accomplishments and progress in school is extremely important.

It is important for parents to be familiar with the school's philosophy so that parents can understand the relevance of the curricular activities that children require to do during an academic year. It also prepares parents for supporting the school during any activities like events and trips outside school. Students can get maximum benefit from these activities with cooperation from parents.

Parent Interaction Sessions in Preschool

A parent interaction session for Preschool parents will be held at the beginning of the academic year. This session will brief parents on what children will be experiencing during the year. Furthermore, this session will focus on aspects of education and child development. This interaction session will also serve as an excellent opportunity to interact with and get to know other parents.

A parent orientation and welcome session is held at the school for all new parents before the beginning of the new academic year. The purpose of this session is to make parents familiar with the school's policy and its philosophy so that the parents and the school can collaborate for the overall growth of the child.

Conferences and Progress Reports

Parent-Teacher Conferences for Praise, Clarify and Support **(PCS)** are scheduled twice a year at the end of each semester where progress reports of your children are distributed. The Conferences will be marked in the school calendar. Parents will also be given prior notice about the exact date and time of the conferences. Nisarga emphasizes the importance for parents (both parents as far as possible) to attend each conference as this is a time to know in detail how your child is performing and what steps need to be taken for further growth of your child. Parents are required to consider the points discussed during PCS and provide support at home according to the suggestions from teachers. ***Missing the child's PCS may be a reason for the decline in the progress of your child's performance.*** A brief

progress report of your child will be provided at the end of each mid-semester.

If you have concerns or queries regarding your child's progress at any point during the academic year, please do not hesitate to schedule an appointment to meet your child's teachers.

Volunteering

Volunteering from parents is essential in ensuring that the school programs are effectively executed. Furthermore, this solidifies the relationship between the parent community and the school.

In junior Grades families will be contacted to volunteer when needed through telephone, email, through notes in the communication diary or through the school App. If you or your family members play any musical instrument, dance, cook, draw, read, or are interested in any other creative activity, you are welcome to contribute to any of the school programs or activities. You may even be invited by the class teachers as a guest speaker or for storytelling.

Before becoming volunteers, parents are recommended to either attend a parent interaction session or speak with the coordinator to receive individual orientation on the codes of conduct that need to be followed. We believe that knowing the adult's role in the Prepared Environment will make our volunteers comfortable and this will be most beneficial to the children.

Parents can contribute in various ways, such as sharing their expertise, creating teaching – learning materials, reading to children, volunteering during emergencies, and inspiring students as guest motivational speakers.

Class Outings and Trips

Nisarga Batika School uses a combination of school vans and chartered buses to transport children on field trips. During the school year, field trips may be taken to local areas of interest in coordination with an area or theme being studied in class or to show children special community events. Parents will be notified of the details prior to the school trip.

Outbound Expeditions

Outbound expeditions are an integral part of Nisarga Curriculum. These expeditions are meant not only for acquiring subject-related experiences but also for developing life skills that will be beneficial for them as adults. The curriculum requires Grades IV and up to go for overnight expeditions and the lower grades will go for day-long expeditions as preparation for the later years. Grade III will go for a day-long hiking trip and have a night camp within the school premises. Participation in the Outbound Expeditions is extremely important as the kind of participation will affect the child's learning as well as his/her report and grading. Parents must understand that any outbound expedition that requires children to spend a night or more incurs additional expenses over the regular monthly fee which might be charged before or after the trip.

Student Assessment

We provide a qualitative and continuous evaluation of the children's performances in class. Children will be assessed holistically with consideration of their cognitive, social, physical, and creative abilities and achievements as well as development of life skills. The teachers closely observe each student's progress and readiness to advance to new lessons. We assess day-to-day activities and assignments to see where the child stands, and how he/she is progressing. The assessment is meant for the teacher to understand where the child stands so that s/he can plan the next step. Nisarga does not have a traditional grading system in the primary years till grade 4 because it creates a competitive and stifling environment, undermining the spirit of cooperation and community. Furthermore, research has shown that grading reduces creativity, as students aim for work that will be safe and acceptable to the adult. And a third powerful reason for not using traditional grades is that children often start to focus on pleasing adults rather than pursuing their own interest and passion. This shift can lead to prioritizing extrinsic rewards over intrinsic motivation.

Homework/Assignments

Homework in most cases will be an application of what has been done in class. When drilling exercises are needed for certain lessons such as learning basic mathematical facts or spelling, children may also bring home games or other interesting activities which can be played with family members.

Parents support their children with homework ***neither by teaching them how to do the work*** nor by partially doing the work themselves.

It is for parents to make sure that children have done their work to the best of their capability.

✓ As it is important for children to read aloud to someone, parents are requested to listen to their child read. Also, parents are encouraged to read to their children in any language to develop the love of literature in children.

✓ Parents are expected to ask questions about the book their child is reading or the book you have read to them. Questions can be asked and answered in the language both feel comfortable with.

✓ Parents are requested to provide a suitable quiet location and time, free of distractions, for students to complete their homework each day.

✓ Parents are requested to supervise their child's homework. Check to see if your child has homework, review the instructions with your child, but **NOT** correct or do it for them. If your child faces difficulty with

the homework, please write a note in the communication diary or the School App to the teachers mentioning what difficulty the child is facing.

✓ Parents are requested to sign the communication diary after the child finishes homework every day.

✓ Parents are requested to write a note in the communication diary/School App to explain reasons for incomplete homework (e.g. too difficult, not enough time, child was ill, festivals, family commitments, etc.).

✓ Parents need to understand that not all home/ class assignments need to be corrected by teachers. Self-evaluation, peer teaching and peer cross checking of assignments are also some forms of corrections that are applied in the classrooms.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedure

It is important that your child arrives on time. Latecomers disrupt the class and cause distraction for the children already engaged in an activity. Children who arrive late miss special classes and academic lessons given during the morning. If your child arrives late on a regular basis, we will request a conference. Also, a child needs to be picked up on time as the school will not have anyone attending to the child after school hours.

To maintain an uninterrupted learning environment, it's essential that students arriving late to school due to emergencies are dropped off no later

than 9:30 AM. Likewise, if parents need to pick up their children early, they must inform the school before 1:00 PM. These measures are vital to minimize disruptions to classes and ensure the smooth progression of learning for all students.

It is required for parents to sign their children in and out every time the child accompanies a parent out to lunch or a doctor's appointment or any other activity during the day.

For arrival and dismissal in Preschool and the elementary level, the school's staff members are required to verify the identity of persons picking up a student from school. Students must stay inside the school compound until they are released to their parent or guardian carrying the student's ID card. Parents are required to wait for and drop their child in the designated area only. Parents/guardians are requested ***not to enter the school building*** when they come to pick up or drop their child.

For students who walk home from the bus stop unattended, the school will not be responsible for any incidents that may occur.

A note should be sent to the classroom teacher in the morning if a student is going to leave early or if other routine changes are requested. Messages are not to be conveyed through the didis on bus duties or any other staff.

Transportation

A school bus is available for picking up students from and dropping them off at the nearest point from home that falls on the designated route. A door-to-door drop-off facility will be provided ***only for students at Pre School***. The school van will not divert from its route to drop a child at their doorstep and parents are requested to comply with the school transportation policy. The vans will not detour to drop a child if the roads are narrow for the vans to turn. If the roads are too narrow for the school vehicle to turn around, it will not detour to drop off a child.

Children are allowed to have different pick up and drop off bus stops **only if** they fall in the same bus route and the school should be notified about it. The school will not cater to a request for a single child to take two different routes. Application for change of bus stops is required at least one week prior to the change. Changes of bus stops will be allowed for at least a month and **not** just for a few days. Different routes will not be made available in the middle of the year. In some cases, if required change may be possible **only** if seats are available.

As the safety and security of children are of the highest concern to the school, the school provides a safe transport system. For the child's safety parents will be provided with 2 ID cards for the child. Children will be handed over to the person who comes to pick them up only after showing the ID card.

As the transportation staff is assigned specific duties with strong instructions from the management, parents are requested to give importance to the following points:

- ✓ If, in case, you need to send any message to the school or have a complaint regarding your child, call the school and coordinate. **Do not** send any message to the driver or the didi.
- ✓ Do not give any form of gift (cash or kind) to the drivers, didis or teachers. They are forbidden to accept any gifts from parents/guardians.
- ✓ The van drivers will not entertain phone calls. Please call the didis on van duty **only if important.**
- ✓ Didis on duty will call parents only for emergencies.
- ✓ Request for frequent change of bus stops will not be entertained.
- ✓ If school transportation is taken from or left in the middle of the month, transportation fee for the whole month will be charged.
- ✓ In case parents decide to pick their child early, they must inform the reception before 11:00 am for Preschool and 1:00 pm for the rest of the school.
- ✓ The school staff have been instructed to wait for the student at the bus stop for not more than two minutes.
- ✓ A chaperon is expected to be waiting for the child at the bus stop. If parents request the child to be sent alone, the parent/s will have to fill up and sign the form of no objection provided by the school so that the

safety of the child will be the responsibility of the parents once their child is out of the school bus.

- ✓ If a road repair or construction is going on in your locality, parents are expected to inform school about it to avoid confusion and delay.
- ✓ All students have their afternoon snack at school. Parents must make sure that their child does not carry food in their bag as they will not be allowed to eat in the school van.

Absence

Students are expected to be in school on a regular basis. We request parents to call school by 8:30 A.M. if your child will miss school. In instances when your child becomes sick with a communicable disease, please call the school immediately, so that the school can take measures to stop it from spreading. When absences occur, immediate attention is to be given by the student, parent, and teacher to the work missed by the student. When a student is absent from school, **the parent or guardian is required to send a note** mentioning the reason for being absent. In case we find that the children have been infected with a communicable disease, parents will be immediately notified and asked to pick their children up from school as soon as possible. If a child is absent for more than a week, it is required for parents to send a prescription/verification from the physician.

Attendance

Consistent attendance is important as learning will be most effective if children are present in class regularly. For this reason, we request parents

to schedule appointments with a doctor, dentist, or other professionals outside of classroom hours. Also, if parents decide to take their children out during school days the school will be unable to provide remedial lessons to cover up what the child has missed.

Sign In and Sign Out

For arrival and dismissal in Preschool and Elementary School, school employees are required to verify the identity of persons picking up a student from the school. Students must stay inside the school compound until they are released to their parent or a parent's designee.

Students will not be released before the dismissal time unless a parent or guardian comes personally to the school office to sign them out. If parents use this procedure, we can avoid both unnecessary class interruptions and parents having to wait for students. A note should be sent to the classroom teacher the morning a student is going to leave early or if other routine changes are requested.

Student's ID will be required to sign a student out of school. Students will not be released to anyone without the ID of the child.

Communication from School

Nisarga Batika encourages many forms of communication with the parents/guardians of the children during the school year. Parents are required to check the child's bag **every evening** for any message from the school. Likewise, teachers check the bag first thing in the morning for any

message from parents. Parents may also receive multimedia text messages through the school App, MS Teams, and emails in case of emergencies as well as any other message from the school. It is required that both parents download the School App and be familiar with its operation. Parents and guardians are always welcome to contact the office with any questions or concerns through the School App. Teachers may be contacted via the school phone or notes sent in the communication diary or Teams/School App. Please check the Teams/School App on a regular basis for any notification from school.

The school will call parents/guardians only when it is very important or urgent. If parents/guardians miss a call from school, please make sure to **call back immediately.**

Parents' Communication with School

Nisarga values frequent, timely, and open communication with you about your child.

Please:

- ✓ Do not make direct phone calls during class time (leave a message for the teacher at the front desk).
- ✓ Do not drop by the classroom to speak to the teacher during the school day.
- ✓ Do not hold an extended conversation with the teacher, driver or didis at the bus stop.
- ✓ Do not send any verbal message to the teacher via didis or your child.

- ✓ Do not discuss the child's development/issues with teachers as and when you meet them. If you need to discuss an issue, please fix an appointment with the teacher.
- ✓ Do not extend any individual favour or gifts to the school staff.

Proper Channels of Communication

Please communicate directly with your child's teacher for any issue regarding their learning activities or class performance. Many times, a child's development presents hard issues to consider. Working directly with the teacher in a spirit of collaboration is the most effective way to resolve any issue and to build a solid partnership between school and home for future work. Speaking to anyone else about the issues of children (either yours or any other students at the school) may make you feel better but will not help your child.

Parents are refrained from boarding the school vehicle for conversations or discussions with staff or other students. In case of issues related to management and administration or concerns regarding other students, please schedule an appointment to meet the concerned authority.

Nisarga fosters a positive atmosphere defined by motivation, encouragement, and respect towards all individuals. It is crucial to emphasize that any language or gesture that could potentially undermine the morale of our staff members is strongly discouraged. We expect the strict observance of respectful behavior and language from and towards everyone at all times. We firmly adhere to the principle of resolving

disagreements or misunderstandings exclusively through channels of constructive and affirmative communication.

Earthquake/Fire Drill

Adequate safety measures are taken by the school for earthquake and fire preparedness. Nisarga staff has taken training on preparedness for earthquake and fire. Students have earthquake and fire drills during regular school hours in different situations.

Emergency Management Plans

In times of emergency, as it will take too long for the school to finish conveying the message to all parents, text messages through the school App will be sent to groups of parents. This is required especially in case of sudden bandhs/strikes or when bandhs/strikes are called off at the last moment. Classes disrupted due to sudden bandhs/strikes will be compensated for through virtual classes.

Decisions which involve the safety and smooth education of your child lie with you. We want to ensure that the Nisarga community is safe, and children can learn without interruptions or delays.

✓ For elementary students, please make sure your child knows where their home is and that they know their home phone and parents' cell phone numbers. It would be wise for students to know the school's telephone number as well.

✓ Please make sure that you keep the school informed and updated with changes in phone numbers and e-mail address.

✓ We will try to ensure that your child's transport to/from Nisarga does not get stuck in a strike/demonstration by anticipating these ahead of time, but this may not always be possible. Please call the school if there has been an unusually long delay in your child returning home.

Voicemail

Parents are also responsible for checking the school's voicemail in times of emergency. When there are bandhs and sudden closer of the school, a message will be recorded in the voicemail by 6:00 am. Parents are to check the voicemail by dialing **1618014275193**. Usually, as these closures are confirmed only in the late evening or early morning, the school phone might be engaged or not reachable.

Nisarga Meals

Nisarga believes that fulfilling children's basic needs is of utmost importance for their physical as well as cognitive growth. A mid-morning

snack and an afternoon snack are provided every day for preschoolers and Grade 1 while lunch is provided in between. As for Grades 2 and up, an early lunch and an afternoon snack are served. The snack and lunch menus are planned with advice from a professional dietician giving high importance to nutrition as well as the calories that children require.

The school will not provide a separate meal for children recuperating from illness and children with allergies. We encourage children to eat the food provided by the school. Special requests for change of certain food items will not be entertained.

Dress Code and Grooming

Students at Nisarga Batika are not required to wear formal uniforms. However, we provide children with a school T-shirt and track suit which the students will wear during sports activities, field trips and outings. Children are encouraged to wear comfortable and weather appropriate clothes and shoes every day.

For preschool children, please send an extra set of clothes and a pair of indoor shoes every day.

Dos and don'ts regarding clothes:

- No caps in class
- No hoodies in class
- No expensive jewelry
- No offensive symbols or language on shirts

- No undershirt tank tops as tops
- No underwear on display
- No ripped clothes or shoes
- Shoes must be always worn around school campus
- No shoes with high heels and no flip flops
- No mini-skirts or dresses above the knee for girls in Grades 5 and above
- No spaghetti-strap, transparent and midriff-baring tops
- Tights to be worn with long shirts, skirt, shorts, etc. and not as pants
- Hair must be maintained in its natural color. Dyeing it in vibrant or unnatural colors is not allowed.

Parents are requested to label the clothing items provided by the school with your child's name so that they can be returned to the child if misplaced.

Rules and Responsibilities

✓ All students are encouraged to show respect for one another, as well as for adults. Teachers and children create a classroom environment conducive to learning, concentration, creativity, and participation. Children make their own rules inside the classroom and make sure that the rules are followed. A lot of discussion is conducted about the results of positive behavior and consequences of negative behavior. Parents are encouraged to provide a similar environment at home as well.

✓ Children are forbidden to chew gum in school.

✓ We strictly discourage elementary children from bringing **mobile phones** to school as any emergency calls are made by the school, teachers, or van attendants.

✓ Children are forbidden to bring sharp objects or weapons to school.

✓ Children are discouraged from bringing expensive gadgets, jewelry, and other expensive items to school. School will not be responsible in case of loss or damage of such items.

Lost and found

Jackets, shirts, pants, shoes, and other belongings of children that are left behind at school are deposited in the Lost & Found box. Items labeled with names are returned to students. At the end of the year, the unclaimed items are removed and donated to a charity. Please check regularly for your child's items.

Necessary Health Records

It is important to fill in the Enrollment Form with accurate details. These records will equip us to handle any emergency involving your child more effectively. Please be sure that this form is always updated, especially with phone numbers where parents or other emergency contact person can be reached immediately when needed.

Illness, Accidents or Emergencies at School

If your child exhibits symptoms of illness during a 24-hour period prior to attending school, then we request you to keep your child at home. If a child becomes ill during the school day, we will separate him/her from the other children and contact a parent with the request for the child to be taken home. The school has an in-house infirmary, with a nurse equipped with first-aid material, where the students will be kept before parents arrive to pick them up. Please pick up your child within an hour of the call. We will call the next emergency contact on the Enrollment Form if a child is not picked up within this period or if we cannot reach the parents. Your child should be clear of all symptoms and must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Our teachers have received basic training in first aid. If an accident or injury occurs, the nurse or the trained teachers respond immediately and follow emergency procedures.

Medicines

If your preschool child is under medication, it is the parent's responsibility if medicine needs to be given. The school staff will not administer medicines to children.

Medicine will be administered to Elementary children after teachers receive a note from parents together with a copy of the doctor's prescription.

Allergies

Food allergies should be reported to the classroom teacher, and noted in the Enrolment Form so that the school can take precautionary measures.

Swimming Classes

Nisarga provides swimming classes to its students within the school premises every week during swimming season. Parents will be notified about the days for your child's swimming classes. Please send your child with the required proper swimming gear – swimsuit, swimming goggles, cap, towel, slippers, etc., in a cloth bag. Also please make sure that your child applies sunscreen lotion before she/he leaves for school during such days.

Some children may have fear in the initial stage of swimming. We assure parents that our team of coaches are trained and experienced in handling children from a very young age and support them in overcoming their fear.

Nisarga has a team of well trained and experienced swimming coaches who pay high attention to the safety of children. Children will be excused from swimming only in case of extreme fear or sickness and allergies.

Nisarga Optional Program

Nisarga gives importance not only to academics but also encourages children to enhance their inherent talent. To address this, children from Grade 4 and above have optional activities twice a week. Nisarga offers a variety of activities to students of Grades 4 and up. Each student is offered two activities of their interest in a year.

Extended School Program (ESP)

The Extended School Program (ESP) provides students with opportunities within a structured environment to explore, understand and develop their own skills, interests, and capacities through their independent initiatives as well as supervisory support. From Grade 7 the school hours are extended, and ESP is scheduled before and after school academic hours. The students will be involved in an activity of their interest and join a club from the following four categories of ESP at Nisarga: Sports, Visual and Performing Arts Clubs, Academic Extended Curriculum. The Sports Clubs run between 5:30 am to 7:30 am in the morning and the rest are from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm in the afternoon.

Parent Representatives

Nisarga Batika School believes that home-school collaboration helps considerably in positive growth of children. To coordinate and facilitate involvement of parents in the school's activities, a Parent Representative

is elected from each class in the beginning of the academic year. The Parent Representatives will make sure that messages reach all parents in times of emergency. The role of the parent representatives of a class is to coordinate events where parents must be involved and support the school in times of emergency, and to maintain good communication between school and parents.

School Fees

The payment of school fees at the time of admission includes the first month's fee and can be paid in cash or by cheque at the school's account section. The school's Fee Account is at Nepal Investment Bank, and we request parents to pay the fees for subsequent months on this account. The total amount of the fees charged for one academic year (200 school days) is to be paid in 6 installments. We request parents to pay the fee within 2 weeks of receiving the bill from the school. Late fee will lead to penalties. The progress report will be given only after all dues have been cleared. Full monthly and transportation fees are payable even if a student is present for only part of the month. Transportation fee will not be deducted if the student stops using the school van temporarily. An additional fee will be charged in case of overnight expeditions.

To set up bank payments or find out more about paying the fees, please contact the school's Account Office.

In case of termination of the child's enrolment at any time of the year, return of the security deposit will be done only at the end of the year after

a request letter from the parents is received by the account section of the school.

School Supplies

Nisarga Batika School provides its students with all necessary educational materials. As the school does not believe only in textbooks, a good supply of reference books, materials for games, arts and hands-on activities, worksheets, and all the necessary stationery and equipment are made available for children by the school. Some additional textbooks are also provided for students. The stationery supplied is for use in the classroom and in case students end up taking them home, we request parents to ask their children to return them. Additionally, we request parents to acquire a set of stationaries for their children to use at home.

In case a library book from the class library or the common library is damaged or lost, a fine, equivalent to the price of the book, will be charged.

The annual fee charged to students at the beginning of every academic year is used for a variety of things required during the year. This fee includes a set of PE uniforms, maintenance of classroom materials, various day trips outside the school, special events like Sports Day and Showtime and a lot of activities that do not occur on a regular basis.

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