

DAO Kathmandu Regd. No. 148/11/063/64
Postal Regd. No. 36/067/068. ISSN: 2091-0711
US\$ 1.00
Australia/New Zealand... US\$ 2.00
ME/Israel... US\$ 2.00
USA/Canada... US\$ 2.00
China/Korea/Hongkong... US\$ 2.00
Europe... US\$ 2.00
Other SAARC Nations... US\$ 1.00
Asean Countries... US\$ 1.00
Japan... US\$ 1.00
Nepal... NRs. 50.00
India... IRs. 35.00
Bhutan... NU 35.00



Opinion:
Dipak Gyawali

UNMIN Exit: Parting Wounds
Nepal Tourism Year 2011

Face to Face:
Bandana Rana



NEW SPOTLIGHT

Jan. 07-20. 2011

www.spotlightnepal.com

FORTNIGHTLY



Whither Reconciliation?



The Banker Awards 2010



 **नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेण्ट बैंक लि.**
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.

With each *award*,
We thank the *true* winners.

Our Clients, Employees, Stakeholders, Partners & Regulators

Winning our 4th Bank of the year award in 7 years could not have been possible without you. We appreciate your commitment and patronage.

With this global recognition of our service, performance and strong financial stability, we pledge to strive further to deliver the next level of banking services and contribute to the prosperity of our nation.

Tel: 4228229, 4242530 www.nibl.com.np

 **नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेण्ट बैंक लि.**
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.
Truly a Nepali Bank





From The Editor

Even as Nepal's fragile peace process struggles to move ahead the UN mission that had been deputed to oversee it is due to leave next week.

Without completing its mission, the UNMIN is making its exit after the government comprising of the Nepali Congress and the UML and some small outfits refused to oblige the main opposition Maoists. Prime minister has ruled out a derailment of the peace process despite the UNMIN's departure. Maoist chief Prachanda sees such a danger and suspects a conspiracy. That the mutually distrusting parties look at the future in different light is enough to point to what lies ahead.

More chaos, instability, disorder. In fact, chronic disorder has been the order of the day in the country in recent years. UNMIN or no UNMIN, the country was heading towards an uncertain future. The uncertain journey continues. Thanks to the inept leadership of the political class as well as the "self-righteous" elites. But one man saw it coming ages ago. Hence his call for the unity and reconciliation between the traditional and modern forces which alone, he believed, is the answer to the national crisis. No one listened. And the country is having to pay a heavy price. Better late than never. That's why we have decided to take a fresh look at the first democratically elected prime minister, B.P. Koirala, and the momentous appeal he had made exactly 34 years ago.

Keshab Poudel
Editor

NEW SPOTLIGHT FORTNIGHTLY

Vol.: 04 No.-14 Jan.07-2011 (Poush 23,2067)



COMMENTARY Reconciliation Not Consensus

9



FACE TO FACE: BANDANA RANA 22



Nepal Tourism Year 2011 21

NEWSNOTES

2

ECONOMIC BRIEFS

4

NEWS CLIP

5

OPINION: Dipak Gyawali

6

CONSENSUS DRAMA: No Happy Ending

7

KRISHNA PRASAD BHATTARAI: 87 Not Out

8

CHARITIES: Time To Tighten The Belt

13

FORUM: Ganesh Datta Bhatta

14

UNMIN EXIT: Parting Wounds

15

VIEWPOINT: Dev Raj Dahal

16

DARJEELING AGITATION: Heating Up

17

VIEWPOINT: Barshaman Pun Ananta

18

ARTICLE: Brahma Chellaney

19

DELHI DIRY: Abijit Sharma

20

FEDERALISM: Ethiopian Experience

24

PROFILE: Barbara Adams

25

ARTICLE: Dr. Aruna Uprety

26

Book: Glimpses Past

27

HEALTH: Buddha Basnyat, MD

28

Editor and Publisher : Keshab Poudel, Senior Correspondent: Saroj Dahal, Correspondent: Uma Kanta Khanal, (Jhapa) Abijit Sharma (New Delhi),

Reporter: Yogesh Gyawali, Nitish Dev Bhattarai

Marketing Manager : Madan Raj Poudel, Tel: 9841320517, Nabin Kumar Maharjan Tel: 9841291404, Photographer : Sandesh Manandhar

Cover Design/Layout : Hari Krishna Bastakoti

Editorial Office : Tel: 977-1-4430250 E-mail: spot@mail.com.np, P.O.Box: 7256

Office : Kamal Pokhari, Thir Bom Marg, House No. 559/144 (Opposite to Himal Hospital)

Printers : Pioneer Offset Printers (P.) Ltd., Dillibazar, Kathmandu. Ph: 4415687

Kathmandu DAO Regd. No. 148/11/063/64, Postal Regd. No. 36/067/068

US Library of Congress Catalogue No. 91-905060, ISSN : 2091-0711 (Print), ISSN: 2091-0754 (Online)

UN Women Born

After several years of efforts, UN Women, the UN entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women was finally born on January 1, 2011. UN women will merge and build on the important work of the following four previously distinct parts of the UN system, which focused exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment including United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Addressing a press conference, UN Women Program Coordinator to Nepal Sangeeta Thapa said that this is a major achievement for the rights of women.

"We have now separate women entity under UN system which will work to deal with the issues related to women," said Thapa, who has been working as a



UNIFEM program coordinator in Nepal for quite a long time. "Women's voices will be heard now," said Thapa.

Saru Joshi Shrestha, program manager for formerly UNIFEM, said that their role will be more effective in coming days as they will not have to face resources constraints in the areas of women related issues. "Despite limited resources, we have made several progress and we will continue to do so," said Joshi.

Shaha's Book Released

In his memoir, "Maile dekhkeo darbar" which means 'The palace, as I saw it', former palace military secretary Gen Bibek Shah writes that New Delhi provided arms training to Nepal's anti-monarchy Maoist insurgents and claims he was asked to resign because he came to know about it.

The 599-page memoir recorded various events which the general encountered during his tenure as a military secretary of Royal Palace.



According to Shah, who was military secretary to both King Birendra and his successor King Gyanendra, though it was undoubtedly Dipendra who pulled the trigger and caused the carnage on June 1, 2001, in which nine others died, he could have been incited by foreign powers.

King Birendra, he writes in his book, tried to modernise the outdated arsenal of Nepal Army. He had entered into negotiations with a foreign gun manufacturer to buy as well as assemble guns in Nepal, from where they could be sold in South Asia, Shah writes.

India, he writes, was against Nepal having more sophisticated weapons than

it had. "It was also worried about what would happen if such sophisticated guns fell into the hands of the Maoists."

During both Birendra and Gyanendra's visits to India, Shah claimed they were pressured by the Indian leaders to buy its indigenous Insas family of firearms at a "friendly" price.

Shah also writes that a team of Nepal Armed Police, that went to Chakrauta in Uttaranchal to receive arms training, were told by the trainers as well as locals that in the past other groups were also trained in the same facility.

Eleven KOICA Volunteers Arrive

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has dispatched eleven new KOICA Volunteers to work in Nepal for two years. This batch is the last batch for 2010. They arrived in Katmandu on December.

These new KOICA Volunteers will be assigned in different government and public organizations within and outside the Valley and will share Korea's



knowledge in Health, Horticulture, Automobile, Computers, Korean

language, Painting and Music etc with the Nepalese people.

In the meantime, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Volunteers, Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOV) organized a three-day Medical and Educational Camp in Janakinagar in Sarlahi District.

Fourteen KOICA Volunteers who are from Health background along with 20 other KOICA Volunteers (total 34) from different background participated in the Camp.

Moreover, the KAN with a support from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) organized a donation ceremony in Shree Shakti Higher Secondary School in Nuwakot. KAN is an institution established in 2001 to maintain good relation between the Nepalese who have participated in KOICA's short or long term training programs.

Indian Assistance To Bhojpur

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on December 14, 2010 by the Embassy of India, Kathmandu with the District Development Committee, Bhojpur for providing Govt. of India grant assistance of NRs. 2.67 crores for construction of 15 bedded double storied hospital building at Dingla in District Bhojpur under Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Programme. This is the fourth development project in the District Bhojpur being undertaken with the assistance of Govt. of India.

B'Deshi Art Exhibition

The Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Kathmandu organised an Art Exhibition with the theme "Dhaka - Kathmandu Art Fusion" at Nepal Art Council, Babar Mahal, Kathmandu on Monday, 13 December, in order to observe the Victory Day of Bangladesh.

Renowned Actor and UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador Ms. Manisha Koirala graced the exhibition as the Chief Guest. Dr. Neem Chandra Bhowmik, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Nepal and renowned artists were present as special guests.

Similarly, the Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Kathmandu observed the Victory Day 2010. The Embassy program included the

hoisting of National Flag, observance of one minute silence, special prayer and Victory Rally, discussion meeting on the significance of the day, cultural program and a documentary film show on the history of the liberation war of Bangladesh.

Dr. Atiur Rahman, Governor of Bangladesh Bank thanked the Embassy to organize the entire programme in Kathmandu. It will promote the country's image in Nepal that will enhance bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Indian Army Chief Visits

Chief of the Indian Army Staff General VK Singh returned home with the title of honorary General of the Nepali Army, capping a visit that included meetings with Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal and Defence Minister Bidhya Bhandari, among others.

The Indian army chief assured Prime Minister Nepal and Defence Minister Bhandari that New Delhi is ready to resume military assistance, including the supply of arms and ammunition, blocked since the February 2005 royal



takeover, if Nepal asks for the same.

According to NA's Directorate of Public Relations, Lieutenant General Toran Janga Bahadur Singh saw off General Singh at the Tribhuvan International Airport.

Leading a six-member delegation, Singh had arrived here on Chief of Army Staff Chhatraman Singh Gurung's invitation.

Indian Army Chief General Singh, on a four-day official visit to Nepal, was decorated with the honorary rank of General of the Nepal Army President Ram Baran Yadav. This is a reciprocal arrangement in practice between the Army chiefs of the two countries since the mid-sixties.

Nepal Army Chief General Gurung was conferred the honorary rank of General of the Indian Army by the Indian President during his visit to India in December 2009.

Book On Nepal-Pak Relations

A book on Nepal-Pakistan Relations, written by Hiranya Lal Shrestha, was published on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of establishment of Nepal Pakistan Relations at a function organised in Pakistan Study Center.

The book highlighted Nepal and Pakistan relations and importance of the present context. Despite sharing common history of South Asia, Nepal-Pakistan relations remains free from any tensions and problems.

"Nepal and Pakistan share identical views and have supported each other on several international issues. Nepal had supported Pakistani proposal to make South Asia Nuclear Free Zone, in 1974. Similarly, Pakistan had supported Nepal's proposal to declare a zone of peace in 1975," writes Shrestha in its preface. ■

Bank of Kathmandu Ltd. Presents M-PAISA

A unique Mobile Banking solution
which allows you to;

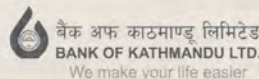
- Transfer funds to anyone-anytime
- Request re-charge PIN for your mobile phones
- Make payments to merchants
- Telephone/Mobile bill payments
- Balance enquiry
- Mini statement (last 3 transactions)

- All this and many more facilities available, using your mobile phones only.
- At present this facility can be availed only for Nepal Telecom customers.

Please visit our nearby branch or Bank's website www.bok.com.np for necessary details



FREE
SUBSCRIPTION



www.bok.com.np

EEC – Nepal Representatives Meet EC Delegates

A 7-member delegation from the European Commission led by EU's Asia Chapter Director James Moran held consultation with leading businessmen and industrialists affiliated with European Economic Chamber of Trade, Commerce and Industry (EEC – Nepal) on 14th December, 2010.

During the meeting Moran stated that EC has a stake in enhancing trade and business links as EU is the second largest trading partner of Nepal. He further added that it is important to maintain regular business dialogue as the trade between Nepal and EC countries has witnessed a drop in recent times and this is a worrisome signal. Nonetheless EC is willing to help Nepal in its trade with this important bloc. He expressed some concern about the political instability and its impact of the general business environment. He opined that it would be in Nepal's interests to have a stable government so that this could send a positive signal to potential investors from countries within EC.



President of EEC – Nepal Dibya Mani Rajbhandari briefed the delegation about the general business scenario in Nepal and also spoke about issues and problems facing the business community in general. He requested the need for further assistance from EC with funds targeting the least developed and land locked countries. He also asked for help in market access for Nepali products within EC. He requested the delegation help in extending derogation facilities which is currently provided to Nepal.

Ministers' Expenses To Be Put Online

The Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers' Secretariat is preparing to put online the expenses incurred by the ministers in their various visits. The move is said to be aimed at curbing the practice of engaging in numerous official visits to the districts and claiming the expenses running into hundreds of thousands of rupees. Source at the office said that the practice of putting their expenses online would start from January 2. "Expenses incurred by all the ministers in their visits in the first five months of the current fiscal year till mid-Poush will soon be made public," said the source. The PMO planned this concept after the code of ethics for the visits by ministers were flouted. In the first two months Shrawan and

Bhadra of the fiscal year, the ministers used up Rs 1.2 million in visits. The figure increased to Rs 4 million after Bhadra and till mid-Poush.

ENTERPRISE CHALLENGE 2010

The Enterprise Challenge is a free national competition for institutes involved in vocational education and training. It is designed for students aged 16-21 from Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) institutes of Nepal. It focuses on inspiring young students to embrace innovation, creativity, team building, communication and planning skills.

"Entrepreneurship is the key to development and success of Nepal," says Robert Monro, Country Director of British Council Nepal. "Through this competition we are encouraging young people to come up with innovative ideas that others may not have thought of. But those ideas will have to be practical and self sustaining. If they do that then we will be delighted to help them get off the ground."

This year five best teams representing TEVT institutes from Eastern, Central, Western, Mid-western and Far-western regions were invited to participate in the final national competition in Kathmandu after undergoing a 2-day training on 18-19 December.

The finalists for the challenge were Seti Mahakali Nursing Campus (Kanchanpur), Madhya Paschim Nursing Campus (Nepalgunj), Tansen Nursing School (Palpa), Balaju School of Engineering and Technology (Kathmandu) and Uttarpani Technical School (Dhankuta).

The topic given to these institutes was "What product or service can your team develop which will help reduce the number of people who are injured or killed in road accidents each year in your town?"

The teams worked for the whole day, brainstorming, researching, and finalizing an enterprising idea and submitted their proposal on 20 December. On 21 December all the teams presented their ideas before the judges.

Madhya Paschim Nursing Campus (Nepalgunj) was successful in winning the competition because their idea of

Road safety campaign in society, the aim of which is to reduce the number of accidents and to remove the fear and anxiety of the people about accidents

through awareness programs and partnership with insurance companies and local traffic authorities. Judges took this idea as innovative, practical and self-sustainable.

In a formal award ceremony organized at Hotel Radisson on 22 December, Ministry of Education Secretary Shankar Pandey announced the winner of the Enterprise Challenge 2010 and gave them the winning trophy and cheque for pound 1000 to implement their project plan.



NITISH DEV BHATTARAI



Let The UNMIN Stay'

We invited the UNMIN realizing the need for the role of the United Nations at the start of the peace process, given the deep mistrust among the parties and the potential increase in misgivings. So, its role must continue until the conclusion of the peace process. Second, the UNMIN is there in peace agreement, weapons monitoring agreement, interim constitution and all political agreements. Once the UNMIN goes, everything including the constitution, the peace agreement, and the weapons monitoring agreement will have to be changed. We have only five months left now. Therefore, to chase away the UNMIN at this point of time would be tantamount to dismiss the peace agreement. That is our concern. It should stay here until the tenure of the constituent assembly. The governing parties have wanted to chase the UNMIN away soon. It is also clear that their masters also do not want the UNMIN. We have seen the danger of the UNMIN exiting. Still, we are writing to the UN security council for its extension. (Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' in Himal, Dec 31)

UN Slaps In The PM' Face

The decision of the United Nations to promote the head of the UNMIN, Karin Landgren, and transfer her as the chief of the UN mission in Burundi has come as a slap in the face of the prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal. Her promotion has come despite the Nepalese government terming the UNMIN pro-Maoists. Landgren is due to assume the new office in January this year. The Nepalese government had earlier concluded that the UNMIN had to go because it had been 'leaning towards the Maoists'. But she has been rewarded for what she did and promoted has raised suspicions. Those who suspected that the UN might itself have sympathised with the Maoists have been taken by surprise. Because one of the parties, the government that invited it to Nepal is against its extension the UNMIN is sure to pack its bag despite the Maoists' unilateral request for its extension.

The UN has said the UNMIN's functions will now onwards be done from the headquarters in New York. This means that the UN can set up its mission in Nepal anytime should the security council decide so. In that event, it does not need to

seek the government's permission, according to an expert. Citing an example, he said, when calls were being made for the UN mission's exit from the African nation of Sierra Leone, the UN instead had sent a mission with additional security force. (Tarun, Dec.27)

Whose Agenda? Maoists' Or India's?

Soon after the 9/11 attacks in New York and Pentagon the US secretary of state Colin Powell came to Kathmandu. And despite the Indian objections that the US can not directly provide weapons to Nepal, the US Pacific Command began to deliver M-16 rifles at the Tribhuvan Airport. The then Indian defence minister, George Fernandes reportedly told Powell in New Delhi that 'under the 1950 treaty between Nepal and India the US can not directly supply weapons to Nepal.'

Powell countered, 'does that treaty have the signature of the US also?' And went on to add, 'after the terrorist attacks on the US, we have decided on a policy to assist all over the world against terrorism. Even if we had signed such an agreement we are not going to abide it.'

Bin Laden attacks New York and the Pentagon. Shortly afterwards, the US Pacific Command aircraft begins to transport weapons to Tribhuvan Airport.

Now, the Maoist spokesman Dinanath Sharma and senior leader C.P. Gajurel have denied Wikileaks reports that the Maoists used to get support of India during the insurgency. But how come that the then government of prime minister PV Narsimha Rao turned a blind eye to the so-called nationalist

a n d
patriotic
Maoist
leaders'
Noida
shelters
on the
outskirts
of New
Delhi?
Why, in
later years,
did staunch
anti-Maoist
and anti-
Chinese
socialist



leader and defence minister George Fernandes not take action against the men (Maoist leaders) who issued orders from New Delhi to dig trenches in Nepal to wage a war against India? Probably, India wanted such revolutionaries who would create grounds for its military intervention in Nepal a la Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Bhutan. Prachanda in an interview did also admit that the Maoists will have to fight the Indian army sooner or later because the Indian military would intervene to rescue the Nepalese government. 'That will be our war of national independence.' Was it the solo idea of the Maoists? Did not the Indian government and the military share it? (Nepalese ambassador to South Korea, Kamal Koirala, in Jana Aastha, Dec 29)

Audacity Of Clique And Clan Impunity

- DIPAK GYAWALI



Even a sceptic has to confess: there is something magical about loktantra. Just chant this simple mantra and Open Sesame! All doors to financial, political and intellectual impunity will magically throw themselves open.

How else does one explain a caretaker prime minister (i.e. no longer a prime minister but only a seat-warmer) berating the permanent secretaries of government for not obeying him? And that too at a function in official premises to launch a book written by the revenue secretary on general administration. (Why is a permanent secretary writing a book on administration - said to be his 22nd! - on taxpayer time and money rather than doing good administration in the first place and then writing his book only upon retirement?) In normal countries, a politician in his position would have simply taken administrative action he is empowered and obliged to, instead of ludicrously throwing a public tantrum. Or he would have resigned on moral grounds. But then he HAS already resigned so the moral high ground is ostensibly there. That illusion, however, rests on the quicksand of politically questionable ethics: what gives him and his ministers the right to take grave and far-reaching decisions when they as caretakers are not supposed to? Is such unaccountable behaviour the result of loktantra that allows him and most of his cabinet to consist of people who were rejected by the Nepali people during the last elections?

His foreign minister's private secretary was involved in passport scams some months back. She herself cancelled the MRP process and illegally awarded the passport contract to India's government press, resulting in not only time loss with re-tendering but also the Mughlanis being compensated \$48,000 for preparatory losses. Why should the price of such malfeasance be dumped on the Nepali taxpayer and not be recovered from her? Because she is the daughter of loktantra! That impunity now extends to her Bangladeshi son-in-law on the principle that no law is more powerful than a son-in-law, that too a loktantrik one! The feckless prime minister and the 23 parties in power, as well as the Maoist opposition, have no guts, or moral sensibilities, to demand that she step aside for public decency's sake.

In the same meeting, the prime minister confessed he felt ashamed of the ongoing load-shedding. It would have been more helpful if he had instead felt a sense of duty and done something about it. He lamented that the plan to import electricity from India by building transmission lines was going nowhere. Someone should have explained to him that north India has a current deficit of some 15000 MW and does not have any surplus to export, even at the very high price they are demanding, and that building 400kV transmission lines to

Bihar or UP is really to export electricity, and not to serve Nepal's needs. And his energy minister has been giving away licences to plum hydro sites for export, violating article 156 of the constitution, as if he were a Rana potentate distributing fiefdoms. For the leader of a party that calls itself Marxist, the incapacity to see the neo-colonial developmental politics involved is truly breath-taking. But to give him credit, he did take some action recently. His energy minister and secretary have not been on speaking terms, even as the country reels under crippling power cuts. The prime minister rightly refused to transfer the mild-mannered secretary for months, but recently did so only because the minister started turning to YCL-style violence (almost, but for the grace of Pashupatinath, in the presence of a Scandinavian envoy!) and the personal safety of the civil servant had to be ensured. Loktantra does not allow the sacking of loktantrik ministers for misdemeanour: it is the civil servants that are to be blamed and punished.

Such impunity for the new political masters lies at the heart

How else does one explain a caretaker prime minister (i.e. no longer a prime minister but only a seat-warmer) berating the permanent secretaries of government for not obeying him? And that too at a function in official premises to launch a book written by the revenue secretary on general administration. (Why is a permanent secretary writing a book on administration - said to be his 22nd! - on taxpayer time and money rather than doing good administration in the first place and then writing his book only upon retirement?)

of loktantrik politics all because of the magic mantra of loktantra. Such is its lure that its shamans can vampire-like, draw fresh blood from far and wide for their own sustenance, without the victims being aware of it. A

case in point is the visit of Nobel laureate Elinor Ostrom a month back. Physics Nobel laureates have visited Nepal in the past at the behest of RONAST, but Ostrom must be the first economic laureate to arrive here. It is not that Ostrom's award is universally acclaimed. Writing in the New York Times, Prof. Steven Levitt said that the economics profession has hated her getting the prize, and many eminent economists had to google her name to find what she had done. The reason is that she is a political scientist, and even among those there are many who argue that the link between her data and the rational choice theory that she and Vincent Ostrom adhere to is rather tenuous. The truth is, after Amartya Sen (and BRAC's Mohammed Yunus), Nobel Prize in Economics is slowly moving towards becoming a Nobel Social Science Prize, and the Nobel Committee must be praised for it.

Despite such international academic jousting, it must be said, her being awarded the Nobel prize is a great honour for Nepal too, because a significant part of her work is based on work done in Nepal on community-managed irrigation as well as other natural resource systems, and her students and colleagues too have made seminal contributions to the field. The irony is that she was provided full state welcome by a government which has done the most to damage community-based natural resource management in Nepal. The forest minister has introduced legislation on forestry which has sent forest user groups on a warpath, and the energy minister has

recently disbanded NEA's community electricity department forcing the national association of community electricity users to begin planning for nation-wide agitations. What Elinor Ostrom stands for, this current dispensation does not; hence its honouring her is but a cynical attempt to bask in reflected glory. Ostrom probably does not even realize this, even as she must be regaling department colleagues back in Indiana with stories of her Nepal visit.

One has to look beyond the democratic rhetoric spewed ad nauseum by our loktantrik party leaders, which in reality they themselves do not believe. The deeper political reasons for their actual anti-community actions by have to do with their pursuit of centralizing politics in the financial interests of their clans and cliques. An incident in Amelichhap village of Dhading on 27th July 2008 provides useful insights. It was the 2nd anniversary of the founding of the National Association of Community Electricity Users Nepal, and they were marking the day by creating a special fund to help the poorest of the households with their house-wiring. The CDO of Dhading and this author had to be the default chief guests as the water resources minister from the all-powerful Giriya-UML-Maoist cabinet failed to arrive. What was mind-boggling were the podium speeches by the local political leaders of both Maoist and Kangressi persuasions: both ends of the political spectrum were opposed to community electricity, both felt electrification was the government's duty which it should not shirk by heaving it off onto the shoulders of the community.

Why would these two very different political cultures have such a similar negative policy towards community empowerment? To the Kangressi leader, who was a shop-owner down below on the Prithvi Highway, community electricity undermined his 'vote for me, I'll get you electricity' patronage dispensing politics. For the Maoist, a village-level electricity cooperative or association would mean the emergence of a strong organizing principle in the village outside of his party's control. Community empowerment would mean their effective disempowerment, hence their need to prolong the current state of unaccountable impunity. This is why there is no seriousness in constitution framing or curtailing bad public behaviour by their cliques and clans. ■



The Legislative Parliament: No early breakthrough likely in the winter session

CONSENSUS DRAMA

No Happy Ending

Despite the parties' rhetoric, a consensus government looks increasingly unlikely

By SAROJ DAHAL

The extended deadline of the constitution drafting is fast drawing closer, but the much sought-after consensus remains elusive as ever.

The reason: all major parties are running after the seat of power. The constitution and the peace process are not high on their priority.

As each party seeks to gain the upper hand in the power struggle, internal wrangling have badly shaken them.

It was this wrangling that destroyed an earlier agreement on power-sharing on rotation basis. Under the tacit agreement, the Nepali Congress was to lead the government first, followed four months later by the Maoists on completion of the peace process.

The idea did not find many takers in the hardline Maoist camp. And the dissenters forced the party to seek the special session of parliament. This vitiated the slowly building atmosphere of mutual trust.

The routine winter session has subsequently been called. But there is no sign yet of a breakthrough in government-formation.

The parties realize the urgency of a new government at the earliest. But they are also in a hurry to lead it first. None of the parties are sure if the others will leave the chair once they grab it. Hence the current stalemate.

Given the present mind-set of the parties, all one can expect, if at all, from the winter session of parliament which is due to begin shortly is a majority government.

Probably, if going by what has been transpiring behind the scene as of this writing, Ram Chandra Poudel's long-cherished dream could come true. The Maoists will then sit in the opposition.

Maoist chief Prachanda has given a verbal assurance to this effect, although he has also been busy floating a number of other names like Sher Bahadur Deuba and Shekhar Koirala for the top job.

The other camp, led by Baburam Bhattarai, is also said to be in favour of a Congress-led government. Bhattarai has personally relayed the message to Poudel.

But many suspect a Maoist double-game here. They point at the support offer made to the UML boss, Jhala Nath Khanal, who seems more assured than before of landing at Baluwatar.

Whether and how he overcomes resistance from within the UML is, however, a big question - answer to which is not easy to find.

Only one thing has become clear so far: no Maoist-led government before the peace process is completed.

What is not clear yet is: will the new government take the shape of a national unity outfit with the Maoists also on board or the former rebels will continue to sit in the opposition bench. ■



KRISHNA PRASAD BHATTARAI

87 Not Out

As he targets a century in his long innings of life, the former prime minister and founding leader of the Nepali Congress stands tall and towers over the present-day Nepali leaders

By SUSHIL SHARMA

A former prime minister, but does no longer hold any office. A founding leader of the country's oldest surviving democratic party, but does no longer belong to any party. An ailing old man who defied death. A steely personality who stood alone against the republican tide. And still commands the kind of respect none of the present-day politicians can even dream of.

The man is Krishna Prasad Bhattarai who celebrated 87th birthday last week. From president Ram Baran Yadav, prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal and a number of former prime ministers of all hues to hundreds of commoners, all thronged at his Badegaun residence in the outskirts of the capital to wish him a long life.

The strong-willed politician is determined to live the life to the fullest. Having just seen his long-awaited memoir out to mark the birthday, the

octogenarian hopes to complete a century.

He may not belong to any party now, after quitting three years ago the Nepali Congress that he helped found more than sixty years ago.

But people cutting across the parties still keep him in high esteem.

Something none of the present-day leaders can claim to even reach closer to.

He is not a saint as some believe him to be. Like any human being, he has weaknesses and shortcomings.

A true democrat and nationalist, he is a man of principles.

But he made some political blunders he could and, should, have avoided --- the most notable being his abortive bid to enter the parliament through a Kathmandu by-elections immediately after a carefully drafted game-plan that engineered his defeat from the same constituency in parliamentary elections after the restoration of democracy in 1990.

By his own admission, as he told this reporter in an interview, he could not resist the provocation of the ambassador of an influential neighboring country.

That blunder undid him and the course of the national politics began to take a series of nasty turns, which show no sign of ending anytime soon.

Unmanageable crisis in the party he headed, dissolution of the parliament by an unsure prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala, mid-term elections, hung parliament, frequent change of the government, the foreign-bred 'home-grown' insurgency, the palace massacre, the suicidal royal take-over and the current mess even after a regime change.

He still does nurse an ambition, 'god willing', of play a role in the national politics to clear the mess it is currently in.

Perhaps he wants to make up for the lapses like the blunder of his otherwise illustrious political career mentioned earlier.

For his shortcomings and weaknesses, however, Bhattarai stands tall and remains a towering figure in the gory national politics of today.

Running in frail health, time may have run out for the be-spectacled leader to see far beyond, but the principles and the values he has espoused have not outlived their utility. They will never. ■

NEW SPOTLIGHT
NEWSMAGAZINE

Available at the following stands

1. Bhatbhateni Supermarket: Bhatbhateni
2. Bhatbhateni Store: Maharajgunj
3. Mandala Book Point: Kantipath, Ph: 4227711
4. Vajra Book Store, Jyatha Ph.:4220562
6. Book Paradise, Jamal
7. Namaste Supermarket, Narayani Complex Pulchowk
8. Namaste Supermarket, Maharajgunj (Opposite to American Embassy)
9. Himalayan Book, Bagbazar.
10. Bhaktapur Stationery, Nyatapaul
11. Utsav Books and Stationers, Putalisada Telephone:4220882

COMMENTARY

Reconciliation Not Consensus

As the nation remembered the late B.P. Koirala to mark one of his momentous decisions thirty four years ago, many miss a vital message that the country's first elected prime minister and founding leader of the oldest surviving democratic party sought to give: home-made national unity and reconciliation based on mutual trust and understanding is what ails a nation in crisis not a foreign-designed consensus founded on mistrust and suspicion

By SUSHIL SHARMA

December 30, 1976

Tribhuvan Airport, Kathmandu

As the plane flying from Patna touched down at a far corner of the Kathmandu tarmac, away from the domestic and international terminals, the waiting Ganesh Raj Sharma's eyes suddenly became wet. Tears trickled down his cheeks on seeing a familiar lanky face alighting.

As the security forces whisked the man away in a van to what then seemed an unknown destination a senior Nepali

Congress lady leader made a sarcastic remark, "Ganesh Rajji must have become happy now."

He was indeed happy. Not because the man was sent back to Sundarijal jail eight years after he was freed from the same place to face, to quote himself, "an uncertain future". But because Sharma believed that it was the most defining

moment of the 50-year political career of the man.

Facing a number of sedition charges, the man could have been hanged or sentenced to life. But he decided to take "a calculated risk" to return from the eight years of foreign exile, because "the existence of the nation was at greater peril than his individual life," and as a

nationalist he was "duty-bound" to place the nation ahead of him.

Prime minister Indira Gandhi did not want him to end the exile in India. The ruling Congress chief Deokanta Baruah tried to persuade him from returning to Nepal. Intelligence operatives hovered around his Benaras shelter to provoke him into changing the mind.

But the man would not budge. He had made up his mind. He was determined to return home and, perhaps, make up for the blunder of the life he made eight years earlier in going to India after being freed from Sundarijal jail.

He returned home with the call for national unity and reconciliation (see: BOX). Between traditional forces and the modern forces. Between nationalists and democrats.

To lawyer, close relative and confidante Sharma, it was "a momentous decision" of B.P. Koirala.

When B.P. made that momentous decision, the Cold War was at its peak, taking its heavy toll on a number of vulnerable countries including in Nepal's Asian neighbourhood.

The disintegration of pro-US Pakistan, the collapse of the pro-western Iranian kingship, the annexation of Sikkim ruled by a king with an American wife, the Soviet-engineered overthrow of monarchy in Afghanistan.

Many including the ruling absolute monarch feared Nepal was in danger too. It was the question of a nation, not of an individual leader or institution.

Three decades later, much has changed. The Cold War does no longer exist. The bi-polar world has become a thing of the past. It is beginning to take a multi-polar shape after a brief uni-polar innings.

Nepal today is not Nepal of yesterday either. Much water has flowed down Koshi, Gandaki and Karnali. There has been a regime change. The monarchy is no more. A republican set-up is in place. A federal structure is due to replace the long-running unitary state. A constituent assembly is in place with the newly empowered people exercising



The late BP Koirala with Ganesh Raj Sharma

File Photo

their 'sovereign' rights.

The change has not ushered in the desired results. Rather, the situation has gone from bad to the worse. Ironically, the agents of the change have been competing with each other to paint a dark picture and uncertain future of Nepal. The crisis B.P. saw thirty fours ago has assumed even more serious proportion. Nepal is in an unprecedented tatters

today.

That the global attention has shifted to South Asia has not helped the matter. With two rising economic giants, China and India, on its borders Nepal should have found itself in an unenviable position to cash in on their growth.

What it finds today, instead, is in a Catch-22 situation. The powerful neighbours had never been as suspicious

BP And Reconciliation: Right Leader Wrong Policy

-BHARATMOHANADHIKARI

At a time when Nepali Congress is celebrating the National Reconciliation Day, hailing the role played by late B.P. Koirala, CPN-UML leader BHARAT MOHAN ADHIKARI, an admirer of late Koirala as a great leader, however, sees his national reconciliation policy was a surrender before the King. Adhikari spoke to New Spotlight on the issue. Excerpts:

How do you view the role played by Nepali Congress leader late B.P. Koirala after his return from eight years' exile in India?

There is no doubt that Congress leader B.P. Koirala was a great leader of this country. So far as Koirala's national reconciliation policy is concerned, I have many observations. First of all, the policy was surrender to monarchy. B.P. Koirala came from India after facing humiliation there and he proposed national reconciliation to get concessions from the king.

Do you mean it was B.P. Koirala's compulsion to propose national reconciliation to return to the country?

B.P. returned after facing humiliation in India due to the State of Emergency. Yes, it was B.P. Koirala's compulsion to come back to Nepal. For his sudden and prolonged arrest, B.P. urged compromise with the king and discarded progressive forces of the country. All of us saw that Koirala, who launched armed insurrection against king, came to Nepal

of each other as they are today. India sees China as a number 1 threat to its national security. Though not as outspoken as defence minister George Fernandes after the 'China-targeted' Pokharan nuclear test twelve years ago, India has not hidden its Dragon fear.

Eyeing to replace the declining US as the number one world power China is, in the opinion of many, adventurous in its neighbourhood. If not, it is overly cautious. "We live in times of peace but we cannot forget war" said its defence minister in a recent interview. According to him, a full scale war is unlikely but 'the accidental outbreak' of regional

seeking peaceful solution with monarchy and regressive forces.

Nepali Congress leaders have been saying that B.P. wanted reconciliation among various political forces to restore democracy in Nepal. How do you look at this?

I don't agree with this. Had Nepali Congress leader B.P. Koirala been alive, Nepal would not have got the democracy in 1990. Because B.P. declined to form a joint front with the Communist Party, we had lost a great chance to restore democracy in 1979. Our leader late Man Mohan Adhikari proposed for a joint movement, but B.P. rejected it.

Do you say B.P.'s national reconciliation policy was against democracy?

I don't want to comment on it. After the death of B.P. Koirala, Nepali Congress joined hands with communists and formed a joint front against Panchayat. Because of this stand taken by Ganeshman Singh, we were able to overthrow the Panchayat system. Similarly, the alliance of seven parties and Maoists brought a historical change turning Nepal into a federal democratic republic. B.P.'s national reconciliation opposed such kinds of alliance.

How do you evaluate B.P.'s national reconciliation as a policy?

B.P. Koirala's national reconciliation is anti-progressive. Although B.P. claimed that the aim of his national

military conflicts cannot be discounted.

Not surprisingly, the military build-up on the borders of both India and China have been intense. Nepal happens to border both! It faces a challenge of its soil being converted into their playground and avoid becoming another Afghanistan or Lebanon. A tall order given the state the national institutions are in.

As global attention expectedly shifts to the strategically located South Asia of which Nepal is a part, the challenge becomes even more awesome.

With traditional institutions destroyed and whatever institutions are there in a very weak state Nepal the



reconciliation was to defend the democracy and nationalism, both the components were much weaker during the period. In terms of politics, I appreciate G.P. Koirala's role as he championed the cause of democracy and nationalism.

If B.P.'s main ideology of national reconciliation is irrelevant, why do you think has Nepali Congress been celebrating the day?

I told you that B.P. Koirala is a great political leader of Nepal and suffered a lot in the cause of democracy. If Nepali Congress celebrates it to take democracy to grassroots, there is nothing wrong with it. I think the national reconciliation was reinterpreted by G.P. Koirala, who joined hands with progressive forces to abolish monarchy.

situation is anything but comfortable.

The only way is look up to the time-tested formula BP propounded years ago at a grave personal risk.

The politics of reconciliation at home despite mutual disagreements is the answer, not the consensus imposed from the outside. Such a consensus has almost done Nepal in.

Will the present-day national actors - politicians and the intelligentsia - rise to the occasion? And make, at least, a semblance of the momentous decision BP dared. ■

Nationalism And Democracy

The statement B.P. Koirala gave on return from foreign exile on December 30,1976:

After a pretty long period of exile, we are returning to our country. On this occasion, I would like to say a few words to the countrymen.

Today, our country is in a national crisis. All have realized that this crisis is getting heightened since the last few years. As a result, the very national identity has been endangered. Others have also admitted this. All including the King have from time to time referred to the danger posed to national identity. We are returning to home after realizing this grave reality. We think that the lack of national unity is a major factor for such a national crisis as a result of which foreign elements have started to become successful in playing their dirty games and making Nepal a center of international conspiracy. National unity can be achieved only through a collective campaign and efforts of all Nepali people. Such a collective campaign does also lay the grounds for the institutional base for the emotional unity of the Nepali people. If the sloganeering alone could do this, the national unity would not have suffered so much nor our country would have landed in such a miserable condition in the last sixteen years. Today, there is selfishness, communalism, individualistic practices and the tendency to have external-tilt is rampant in the country. In such circumstances nationalism becomes the first casualty.

Till yesterday, our struggle was confined to the attainment of the people's democratic rights. That's why, we emphasized more on the democratic side. Today, there is a new dimension added to it. A dual responsibility has befallen the Nepali Congress. This second responsibility is, safeguarding the national identity. We have visualized two fold faces of today's Nepal: Nationalism and Democracy.

It means the Nepali people should take the responsibility of restoring democracy as well as safeguarding the nation. If we talk of only one responsibility we will be following the wrong track by being one-sided. And, if we emphasized only on the restoration of democracy, we will not be contributing to addressing this national crisis. Moreover, we may even fall into the trap of the foreigners by such one-sided action. Similarly, if we talk of the nationalism only, we will be repeating the same 16-years-old hollow slogans of nationalism, and will be siding with the authoritarianism. Such a hollow slogan of nationalism cannot generate an internal willpower in the countrymen to safeguard the nation. Therefore, we need now to understand that the national unity can be built on the

foundation of democracy only. And the foundation of the democracy can be cemented by the economic development and the just economic system. Therefore we feel that nationalism, democracy and economic development are interdependent on each other.

It is well known that the Nepali Congress has taken historical and serious decisions from time to time in the national interest. The decision to wage the 1951 revolution and its executions are some examples. After finding that there was conspiracy to put off the elections forever, it took the leadership of national campaign for the holding of the elections. We received the cooperation from various parties in that campaign. Nepali Congress launched the resistance movement for democracy after the cruel and the fatal blow dealt to democracy in 1960. And today, we have taken this historical decision seeing the crisis the nation is facing. This is in accordance with the tradition of the Nepali Congress.

In the history of every nation there comes such moment when its people have to risk their lives to safeguard the national identity. We think, such a moment has come in Nepal today. Our well-wishers had advised us not to return Nepal seeing the dangers involved in it. We would like to tell them that we have taken this historical decision because the likely danger to our lives is nothing as compared to the danger to the nation. The workers of Nepali Congress have also shown the example of unprecedented courage and love towards nation by returning to the motherland following the party directives.

In this hour of national crisis, all of us should get united by forgetting and ending the past unhealthy debates, experiences and differences. Our program should be directed by the feeling that we will no more exist in the absence of our nation. I do not know what fate awaits me after I return to the country. Through this statement, as the Chairman of Nepali Congress, I would like to appeal to the entire countrymen that let us all unanimously unite in the pious task of defending the nation, its progress, happiness and prosperity of the people. If I get an opportunity, I will put forth my feelings before His Majesty also. The responsibility to save the nation is the common responsibility of all.

Jai Nepal!
Bishweswor Prasad Koirala
Dec.30, 1976

(This excerpt has been reproduced in order to re-emphasize the importance of national reconciliation)





CHARITIES

Time To Tighten The Belt

With resources being scarce, charities are forced to look for alternative ways to continue their work

By BHAGIRATH YOGI in London

As the year 2010 was drawing to a close, British government announced a plan asking banks to adopt a system that will allow people to make a small donation to charity whenever they withdraw cash.

Officials said the government also wants shops to offer customers the opportunity to “round up the pound” when using a debit or credit card, with the extra money going to charity.

Under the proposals, anyone making sizeable charitable donations would get letters from ministers.

“We are arguing for new social attitudes that celebrate giving,” said Cabinet Office Minister Francis Maude. “Talking about what we do for good causes is often seen as vulgar. But sharing experiences can inspire others.

“Giving is too often characterised as worthy and selfless, but there’s nothing wrong with doing things for each other and repaying kindnesses. If we can agree as a society the values that underpin helping each other we can unlock huge potential for a stronger, bigger society,” he added.

Spending Cuts

These proposals are being floated at a time when the new coalition government, led by David Cameron, has announced plans to cut 81 billion pounds of budget deficit (some 10 percent of the country’s GDP) over the next four years.

Many charities are facing difficulties to shore up their funds at a time when the economy is not doing good. Thousands of businesses have closed down and over 2.4 million people are estimated to be unemployed. Of them, nearly 1.5 million depend on weekly grants from the government.

Despite such bleak scenario, Britain ranks eighth among the top charitable nations. According to the World Giving Index, compiled by the Charities Aid Foundation last year, about 73 percent of the Britons donate money every year giving charities an estimated 10.6 billion annually.

Some charities are already employing innovative strategies to broaden their support base. Ranjan Baral, database officer at the Brooke Hospital for Animals (The Brooke), said that his charity had

aimed to raise over 12 million pounds in the year 2009/10. The Brooke—that works in the area of animal welfare in 11 countries including Nepal—in fact raised over 13 million pound—a record amount for the Charity. “Besides working closely with our existing supporters, we are working on to find new supporters for our work and have developed the supporter care strategy,” said Baral.

Oxfam—a British charity that works in the area of poverty alleviation—called upon volunteers to run marathon in order to raise funds. “250 million people are affected by disasters every year. Our runners believe that people around the world have a right to survive and to live free from poverty. Use your determination to run for Oxfam,” said its website.

Nepali youths, studying and working in the UK, have been taking part in the British 10 K Run for the last three years to support charitable causes in Nepal. They also set up a charity, Run for Change (www.runforchangenepal.com) to institutionalise their initiative. The charity raised over 6,500 pounds last year to support three schools in Nepal in partnership with the Help Nepal Network (HeNN), another UK-registered charity.

“The British economy is yet to recover fully from the shocks of the global economic recession. But we have found that people are still enthusiastic and are forthcoming to support the charities of their choice,” said Paras Joshi, coordinator of the Run for Change.

Only those charities that learn their lessons fast are likely to survive in these trying times. ■

Are You In a Hurry for Suiting ?

GOPAL TAILORS

Is at your Doorstep
Specialist in Suit, Shirt and Safari

For All Kinds of Clothing materials
and Supplier of School Dress and
Office Uniform

Khichapokhari, Kathmandu Nepal
(Opposite to Everest Bank)
Contact: Gopal Upadhyay
Phone: 977-1-4423412
Mobile: 9841330970



Core Questions Confronted In Constitution Making

- GANESH DATTA BHATTA

Seven months' extended time of Constituent Assembly has already passed. The caretaker government has been ruling over the country for last six months and the legislative parliament or constituent assembly is merely used for power politics rather than for carrying out fundamental duties assigned to it. No single notable work has been done since last six months regarding constitution making except reaching to some political understanding among the major political parties of Constituent Assembly through the high level political committee which is not even a part of constituent assembly. However, thematic committees have been successful to produce preliminary reports remaining unable to give a holistic approach or clear direction for future constitution making. The provisions made and mechanisms proposed by reports are contradictory, confusing inconsistent and far from reality. Political leaders' claim that these reports of thematic committees have completed 80% of constitution making, but in reality these reports have not been successful to propose even the framework of constitution. These committee reports merely serve the petty interest of few major political parties, provisions and systems proposed by these reports are populist. If the future constitution is finalized based on these reports, the constitution will itself be the main cause for constitutional instability and disintegration of the country.

In the present context, frustration among the common people about the performance of constituent assembly, political parties and their leaders is escalating. Nepalese people are compelled to face post conflict situation, where disorder, insecurity, impurity, instability and frustration have been parts of their daily life. The state has not been able to maintain political order in the society. The presence of the state in the rural areas is not visible. Rampant corruption, impunity, lawlessness and anarchy and ever rising commodity prices have caused negative impacts on the livelihood of common people and these situations have rendered the future of constitution making process uncertain. The weaker presence of the state on the face of different forms of problems faced by the society at large will raise difficulties and uncertainties for making the new constitution.

The composition of a constituent assembly is itself a very important factor regarding the constitution making. If we observe a successful story of constitution making through the Constituent Assembly, the representation pattern in the House is always meaningful. If there is two-third majority of one single party or coalition between different parties on a common political ideology in Constituent Assembly, the constitution making process goes towards the right direction. And if the House is divided on the basis of political ideology and there is the lack of two-third majority of a single party in the House, constitution formation through the Constituent Assembly becomes difficult. Reality shows, that the composition of Constituent Assembly of Nepal is a hurdle in the process of constitution making. Political parties of Nepal uphold different political ideologies. They have entirely opposite view points on the major constitutional provisions. The past record of their relation with each other is bitter. UCPN (Maoist) is the largest political

party in Constituent Assembly. Without its firm commitment to form a new democratic constitution, constitution formation is impossible. The recently concluded UCPN (Maoist) central committee meeting has endorsed 'People's revolt' rather than the agenda of institutionalizing political changes introduced by the second popular movement, mainly upheld by UCPN (Maoist) itself.

When a country is involved in making a new constitution to save the destiny of the entire nation, independent thinking or judgment over some issues of national interest, nationalist approach, sense of legitimacy approach of nation building and faith on constitutionalism are subjects of prime importance. If we observe the duration of past thirteen months of constituent assembly working behaviors, most of the constituent assembly members are not serious about the value of constitution for a country to provide legitimate state. It is a tragedy of all the Nepalese people that they are bound to expect a democratic constitution from power hungry politicians and directionless Constituent Assembly providing a favorable situation for outsiders to implement their agendas 'to fish in troubled water' at a time of constitution making.



International Communities In Constitution Making

The role of international community or donor agencies is always important for Nepal for its overall development and now especially for institutionalizing democracy through new constitution. For last few years, many donor agencies are spending huge amount of money to institutionalize republic, secularism, federalism, pro-ethnic, minority, Madhesi, Dalit and gender oriented state structure, even though some people think that constitution based on these subjects will be the main cause for instability or national disintegration. However, donor agencies working in the areas of constitution making are only successful to evoke greater ambitions among the people through different activities, and such a trend will contribute to creating difficulties in times of making and implementing constitution. Similarly, the constitution support program run by donor community has been the cause of the emergence of newly rich class in the society, and this class thinks constitutionalism, democracy and rule of law as their project work only. They never think the basic principles of democracy as a subject of their own faith. It is obvious that, constitutional instability is always in favor of this newly rising class, so called intellectuals, experts, some NGO's and those who do not even know the basics of constitution. Because of their good relation with donor agencies, they are reaping more benefit at the cost of constitution making. If the international agencies seriously want to contribute in the area of constitution making process, they seriously need to find out the real actors to implement their programs. They need to find out those who are dedicated to forming the constitution and for protecting the national interest by understanding the reality of Nepal and limitations of the constitution. If the donor agencies continue their strategy to implement the constitution support program through the help of some newly rich people and if they believe in sending selfish

and self orientated people to different capital cities with the intention of making constitution in a perfect way in the name of workshops and orientations in the last moment of constitution making process, they are wasting money and certainly delaying the constitution making process.

Constitutional Stability

Regarding the constitutional making and constitutional stability in Nepal, we should never forget the geo-political situation of Nepal. Both of our neighbors have their own roles and interests in maintaining stability and instability of political and constitutional order in Nepal. The past record of our constitutional history reveals that there has been a major role of external force to destroy the prevailing constitution and promulgating a new constitution in the country. For example, 1990 constitution was mainly destroyed by the external force because of its positive provisions for safeguarding the national interest. After the second political movement, the domestic politics is mainly dominated by external force and domination favors constitutional instability in Nepal. If the external force has planned to maintain instability in Nepal, there will be no consensus among the national political forces because these forcers too are working for external interest rather than for national interest. On the face of such stark reality, constitution making process will prolong for indefinite time.

Political events and reality have shown that the second popular movement was only for destroying the 1990 constitution and the exercise of Constituent Assembly was to prolong constituent instability in the country aiming at the destruction of people's faith on constitution, political parties and ultimately on nationality and nation as such.

If we really need a democratic constitution for Nepal, political parties should build a consensus and show commitment for a democratic constitution without any delay. International community and donor agencies too should mobilize their support in proper and effective ways understanding the reality of Nepal and the limitation of constitution properly. Timely pressure should be built from international community on major political parties for new constitution formation. Strong unity among national political forces is required to defy external forces which always work for delaying the constitution making process and leading the country towards anarchy.

-The writer is an Associate Professor of Constitutional Law.



UNMIN EXIT

Parting Wounds

As the date for UNMIN's exit nears, Maoists, strangely enough, are on overdrive to extend its term

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

More the January 15 - the date of expiry of UNMIN's term - draws closer, more curiouser the Maoists are acting.

Just three weeks prior to its departure date, Maoist standing committee overturned party's earlier agreement with the government to end the UNMIN term in mid-January.

And as the date for UNMIN's term expiry is only two weeks away, the Maoists made an even stranger decision of exploring the possibility to knock the door of the Supreme Court against the government's decision to let the UNMIN pack up and leave.

"The interim constitution itself has provision about UNMIN. Therefore, the government cannot simply state that UNMIN's term will not be extended. We are discussing the issue of whether to approach the court against this decision of the government," Maoist spokesperson Dinanath Sharma said following the standing committee meeting of the party on January 2.

The Maoist exercise to keep the UNMIN is against its written agreement with the government.

Four months ago, Prachanda had signed a four-point deal with the

government stating the bilateral agreement to ask the UN Security Council to extend the term of the UNMIN - for the last time - for four more months.

But as that d-date arrived closer, the Maoists seem to be getting increasingly nervous.

Whether their disquiet is a genuine concern about the vacuum that could follow UNMIN's departure or is a carefully calibrated tactic to create a public feeling that they alone are serious about the logical conclusion of the peace process is not too clear.

That they are proceeding with a plan based on the latter course of action, however, gains currency especially if one looks at it from the perspective of recent decisions of the Maoist party post-Palungtar - to prepare for people's revolt.

Such a move by the Maoists on UNMIN - despite the full knowledge among their leaders on the high improbability of its success - can put them on good light when the parties have to inevitably confront each other in the run up to the May 28 deadline of the Constituent Assembly (CA).

That will be the time when the Maoists could fully exploit their current position on UNMIN. ■

Climate Change And Security In South Asia



DEVRAJ DAHAL

Introduction

The science of climate change is well covered by scientists in their publications. Climate change research focuses more on the physical effects such as protecting the Earth's atmosphere from a hazardous rise in temperature. Climate change has become one of the causes of droughts, floods, rise of sea level causing coastal tragedies, melting of ice, fresh water shortage, shifting climate zone, ozone depletion, loss of rain forests, biodiversity, etc. The post-Cartesian paradigm rooted in life science reveals the security implications of climate change. Industrial civilization is melting the Earth's third largest pool of glaciers of Himalayas and Tibetan plateau that nourished South Asian civilization. The drying of headwater due to changed land use combined with climate change is also eroding the land's capacity to support life and livelihood and risks inducing migration of people with the potential to flash local and trans-border conflicts. Warming temperature and atmospheric pollution by carbon dioxide build up, are making the monsoon rains unpredictable and affecting agriculture and health. Climate change imposes economic effects on human security and social peace.

South Asians are living in a society of increasing population and decreasing natural resources. Continuous efforts by people to satisfy their development needs are damaging pastures, forests and source of water on which they depend for their sustainable livelihoods. Vulnerable regions require high level of resource investment in adaptation measures. Excessive consumption of fossil

energy, deforestation and desertification are alarming us giving us consciousness of our relations with the vital forces of nature and different orders of life-plants, insects, birds and animals linked to each other within the life's cosmic web. It is defining an option for our common future. The recent Climate Change Summit at Cancun has left the negotiation for balancing development needs with meeting the target of emission control unresolved. How can a symbiosis of politics, economy and ecology contribute the security of our freedom, food and habitat? Can the environmental cost of production such as pollution, carbon emission and depletion of ecosystem be included in our development policy so that a quest for human security does not undermine the natural basis of our existence? Does comprehensive security become a response for South Asia?

Beyond State-Centric Security

Environmental security has become a main proposition at international conferences mobilizing resistance for ethically informed policies. The mountain regions of the Himalayas, whose environmental system and resources are very important for the densely populated Gangetic plain, are vulnerable in ecological terms. The region's average temperature has increased by 1.2 degree Celsius and could get warmer with 2 degree Celsius by 2030. The overall monsoon rainfall indicates a decrease and low aggregation of snow in the Himalayas. This environmental change has brought four critical challenges to

conventionally defined state-centric security: First, the effects of climate change transcend domestic and foreign policy boundaries of nation-states. Now security studies require planetary awareness and its linkages with various life-world and non-life sub-systems. Second, realpolitik approach to national security planning is insufficient. Our survival requires a judicious balance between the awareness of human freedom and nature's level of tolerance to it. This means mutual cooperation and surveillance among the affected nation-states and people can stem its negative spill-over effects unleashed by the corruption of free human will. Third, risk of mutual vulnerability to climate change requires mutual security through collective action. Finally, governance of climate change-both policy formulation and implementation-entails regional and international framework beefed up by the states, non-state and transnational actors and their mutual accountability. Since environmental challenges do not care human made borders what requires for its solution is 'comprehensive security.' This needs the establishment of related institutions to provide early warning and monitor the

international climate regime governed by environmental treaties and impose graduated sanctions for violating its standards mutually agreed upon by leaders. Future conflicts go beyond state-centric security limits if we refuse to acknowledge our systemic ties with the society, environment and future generations.

Rethinking Development

Development based on 'rational choice' discounts both

the social costs for society and the ecological costs for our common Earth. Garrett Hardin argues, 'Freedom in a common brings ruin to all.' In such a context, weaker sections of society have to bear more risks because they possess limited means. A development which does not recognize the limits to natural resource exploitation and is not amply 'system-sensitive' brings insecurity to all. Environmental degradation and poverty are closely tied to an intricate system of cause and effect. Without certain amount of democratic equity to all people, poverty fuels the source of insecurity and imposes challenges to the political order, stability and peace. Neither environmental challenges can be addressed by military means nor can it be resolved in isolation from the rest of development policies-local, national and international unless a balance is struck between carrying capacity of the Earth and farsighted self-control of human beings.

Human beings themselves are mostly responsible for this climate change. Burning of too much fossil fuel-coal, oil and gas-and destroying forest cover are among main the causes. Maldives is already constructing a seawall in its most populous island to protect it from coastal tragedy. Probably, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have to follow suit for the protection of coastal zones. Deforestation of Nepalese mountains, for example, causes flood havoc each year in Tarai, India and Bangladesh. Earlier this year, floods in Pakistan,



Tarai and Gangetic plains killed many, wounded others and devastated fertile lands. The sovereignty of state did not offer security to people engaged in agriculture, industry and trade. When environmental security is transnational in nature national separateness cannot alone become a rational solution. Coordination of national, regional and international policies is essential to respond to climate change.

The security in a wider sense requires reviewing a wide range of consequences of climate change for human livelihoods, insecurity of monsoon predictions affecting agricultural, hydropower, disease pattern and subjective insecurity in facing the future with confidence. The implications of climate change have also direct and indirect effects on violent armed conflict of different kinds such as human displacements, migration, interstate war, civil war, non-state group conflict and political instability. Nepal already experiences the effects of climate change in areas like loss of Himalayan glaciers, shortage of water supply, danger of glacial lake burst of the sort of Chho Rolpa, extreme weather events, fragile ecosystem, urban pollution, deforestation, over digging of mountains and rocks for sand and stones in Churia hills causing soil erosion, etc. They are eroding natural shield affecting production and food supply. The emission of greenhouse gases from Nepal is small. It also has considerable opportunities to attract foreign investment in Clean Development Mechanism project including hydropower development to meet domestic needs of energy and irrigation and demand of power in northern India. A cooperative approach to development assures mutual security. An entirely rational approach to South Asian security is somewhat outdated as global climate change requires global policy response.

Urgency to Act

Sustainable development path is one way to shift from the consumption of fossil fuels (coal, old and gas) to alternative source of energy (solar, water, wind and biomass). South Asian leaders have to upgrade the policy making and institutional capacity to address climate change by marking a transition to a low-carbon economy and to scale up interregional cooperation in hydropower, river management, flood data monitoring, etc and strive to do no harm to nature.

Dahal is Head, FES Nepal Office

DARJEELING AGITATION

Heating Up

Despite plummeting mercury, political temperature in Darjeeling is rising

By UMA KANTA KHANAL in Jhapa

The cold weather of Darjeeling is playing a host to a hot political discussion on the demands of forming a separate Gorkhaland State in the district and its peripheral areas of Siliguri and Dooars.

Forming of a separate state for the Telegus of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, dividing Andhra Pradesh are in discussion at the central government level and the effect has come to the hill district of West Bengal, Darjeeling, where the demand of the Gorkhaland state is in the peak.

The forming of Telangana state was in a climax last year. But clashes in Andhra Pradesh obstructed the process formation and the central government formed a commission to find out whether it is the original need of the Telegus to provide them a separate state, Telangana.

The commission was formed in the leadership of former justice of the supreme court of India, Shrikrishna. The commission submitted its report to the union home minister of India, P. Chidambaram, on 30 December. The report has been submitted in two phases. The central government is going to discuss the matter with the other political parties on 6 January.

The Gorkha parties in Darjeeling have showed their deep concern in the case of report made on the issue of forming Telangana state for the Telegus. They have expressed that if there is a possibility of discussion on the issue of forming Telangana state in south India, there should be discussion on forming a separate state for the Indian Gorkhas. Acting president Dawa Sherpa of an old Gorkha party, which has been demanding separate state for the Gorkhas for more than 30 years- Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League- told New Spotlight over phone, 'We are not going to accept sweets that the central government is providing us

except Gorkhaland. If there is a chance of forming the Telangana state, there should be the formation of the Gorkhaland state too.'

The Gorkha parties except Gorkha Janmukti Morcha, Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League, Marxist Communist Party of India (Revolutionary) and other parties have formed a forum to talk with the central government for forming the separate Gorkhaland state. They have blamed the now agitating party Gorkha



Janmukti Morcha that it is going to agree with the setting up of the Interim Authority in Darjeeling escaping from the original demand of forming the separate state.

The parties of the newly formed forum have declared there should be a united agitation. ABGL's acting president, Sherpa said, 'Unless we work together, there is a lesser chance of achieving the goal.'

Roshan Giri, general secretary of GJM said, 'We are also closely watching the consequence of the discussion. If the discussion becomes positive in the formation of the Telangana state, we will again start the final agitation for the Gorkhaland state.'

The Telangana leader Chandrashekhar Rao has expressed that there will be no agreement except the separate state. So, it will make Darjeeling warmer than before as the Gorkhas have planned their final agitation. ■

Reactionaries Working Against Changes

BARSHAMAN PUN ANANTA



It is a very crucial time in the history of Nepal. The country may see the peace process crumble and a new round of conflict begin. This conflict will be more chaotic than the past one. We need to avoid such a situation because it will benefit no major political force but give an ample room to regressive, reactionary and external forces to manipulate it in their favor. The mandate of People's Movement II is also to write the new inclusive constitution by accommodating aspirations of all the people of Nepal. UCPN-Maoist is committed to it.

As the situation is gradually worsening, regressive and feudalistic forces are trying to come back by discrediting the on-going political process. From the very beginning, reactionaries and feudalistic elements, with backing from foreign powers, have been taking steps to destroy the changes. Now, they are getting upper hands and waiting for the right time to fish in the troubled waters. UCPN-Maoist has been making every effort to avoid a new confrontation. Given the conspiracy of external foreign powers and feudalistic and reactionary forces, one cannot rule out any kind of situation. So far as UCPN-Maoist is concerned, it is committed to peace process and new constitution.

Despite UCPN-Maoist's insistence to extend the tenure of UNMIN till the completion of the peace process, the caretaker government, led by prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, sent a letter to UN Security Council to terminate its tenure. This government has no mandate to take such an important decision. Our party has already submitted its views to UN Security Council, seeking to continue UN presence in Nepal, to monitor arms and ammunitions. The modality proposed by the government for monitoring by the Joint Committee is not acceptable to us. Even if UNMIN leaves, there must be some sort of UN presence to monitor the arms.

I don't think anyone can fill the vacuum left by UNMIN. UCPN-Maoist is committed to peace process and our party wants to see the new constitution for a federal, democratic Nepal through existing Constituent Assembly by April 2011. If UNMIN pulls out from the country without viable alternative to monitor the arms, it will create a more complicated situation. This is the reason our party has already sent a letter to UN seeking some sorts of presence of UN in case the extension of UNMIN is impossible. Our party hopes that UN Security Council will consider our request.

One of the important aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement is the integration of Maoist People's Army and Democratization of Nepal Army. We are yet to achieve them. This is the reason our party proposed for the continuation of

UNMIN in Nepal. Another important aspect is writing the new constitution for Federal, Democratic and Republic Nepal. The tenure of Constituent Assembly is short but we can write the constitution if an all-party government is formed under our leadership. As the largest party, it is natural for us to claim the leadership in the new government. However, internal and external forces are hatching conspiracies against the formation of our government. Such forces have played a role not to extend the tenure of UNMIN.

As there is a growing difference among major political forces, regressive and reactionary forces have become active to destroy the peace process and achievements made by us in the last four years. It is very unfortunate that the external force is trying to sabotage the peace process. The caretaker government led by Madhav Kumar Nepal is working to destroy the peace process. Prime minister Nepal's activities are directed towards it. One can see growing numbers of articles against the very foundation of peace process including federalism, republicanism and secularism in Nepal. Even some forces are openly challenging them. This is because of disputes among the forces of change.

UCPN-Maoist is very flexible to find a political solution. We have proposed several models but Nepali Congress and CPN-UML have not given any positive indications. As the largest party, we want to stress once again that UCPN-Maoist should be given prime ministership to lead the next all party government. Once the issue of the next government is settled, the constitution writing process will also take motion. I am confident that the new constitution will be drafted by May 2011 once political parties agree on the formation of the government. It is a wishful thinking to see the new government without our participation. No one can write the new constitution sidelining us since we are the largest party in the parliament. Even the civil society members, academicians and intellectuals have been suggesting that UCPN-Maoist should be given to lead the government.

People's Army is not a threat to democratic process. Thanks to their presence, we have been able to exercise Loktnatra. Their sacrifice and contribution to abolish monarchy and writing the new constitution must be acknowledged. People's Army should be integrated giving them respect not through humiliation. They have shown caution and passion for more than three years living in cantonment under UNMIN's supervision. Once the writing of the new constitution is completed, the integration process will complete too.

(As Told to New Spotlight)





Troubling China-India Ties

BRAHMA CHELLANEY

The already fraught China-India relationship appears headed for more turbulent times as a result of the two giants' failure to make progress on resolving any of the issues that divide them. Earlier this month, during the first visit in more than four years of a Chinese leader to India, the two sides decided to kick all contentious issues down the road. Instead, Premier Wen Jiabao and Prime Minister Manmohan

Singh agreed to expand bilateral trade by two-thirds over the next five years.

But the trade relationship is anything but flattering for India, which is largely exporting primary commodities to China and importing finished products, as if it were the raw-material appendage of a

neocolonial Chinese economy. To make matters worse, India confronts a ballooning trade deficit with China and the dumping of Chinese goods that is systematically killing local manufacturing.

The focus on trade even as political disputes fester only plays into the Chinese agenda to gain bigger commercial benefits in India while being free to inflict greater strategic wounds on that country.

India-China relations have entered a particularly frosty spell, with New Delhi's warming relationship with Washington emboldening Beijing to up the ante through border provocations, resurrection of its long-dormant claim to the northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, and diplomatic needling. After initially seeking greater cooperation to help dissuade New Delhi from moving closer to the U.S., Beijing shifted to a more-coercive approach following the mid-2005 U.S.-India defense framework agreement and nuclear deal.

Last year relations sank to their lowest political point in more than two decades when Beijing unleashed a psychological war, employing its state-run media and nationalistic Web sites to warn of another armed conflict. The coarse rhetoric of the period leading up to the 1962 Chinese military attack also returned, with the Chinese Communist Party's broadsheet, *People's Daily*, for example, berating

India for "recklessness and arrogance" and asking it to weigh "the consequences of a potential confrontation with China."

Since then, Beijing has picked territorial fights with other neighbors as well, kindling fears of an expansionist China across Asia. The only area where India-China relations have thrived is commerce. But the rapidly growing trade, far from helping to turn the page on old rifts, has been accompanied by greater Sino-Indian geopolitical rivalry and military tensions, resulting in India beefing up defenses. Tibet remains at the core of the Sino-Indian divide. While Chinese damming of international rivers has helped link water with land disputes, the 30-year-long negotiations to settle territorial feuds have hit a wall and gone off on a tangent.

Little surprise a 20-fold increase in trade in the past decade to \$60 billion has yielded a more muscular Chinese policy. In fact, the more China's trade surplus with India has swelled - jumping from \$2 billion in 2002 to almost \$20 billion this year - the greater has been its condescension toward India.

Yet ignoring that lesson, China and India have left their political rows to future diplomacy to clear up, with Wen bluntly stating that sorting out the border disputes "will take a fairly long period of time." On the eve of his visit, Zhang Yan, the Chinese ambassador to India, publicly acknowledged that, "China-India relations are very fragile and very easy to be damaged and very difficult to repair."

Even as old rifts remain, new issues are roiling relations, including Chinese strategic projects and military presence in Pakistani-held Kashmir and a new policy by China (which occupies one-fifth of the original princely state of Jammu and Kashmir) to depict the Indian-administered portion of that state as de facto independent. It thus has been issuing visas to residents there on a separate leaf, not on their Indian passport. It also has stopped counting its 1,600-km border with Indian Kashmir as part of the frontier it shares with India.

In less than five years, China has gone from reviving the Arunachal Pradesh card



to honing the Kashmir card against India. Thanks to China's growing strategic footprint in Pakistani-held Kashmir, India now faces Chinese troops on both flanks of its portion of Kashmir. Indeed, the deepening China-Pakistan nexus presents India with a two-front theater in the event of a war with either country.

China is unwilling to accept the territorial status quo, or enter into a river waters-sharing treaty as India has done with downriver Bangladesh and Pakistan. Yet it wants to focus relations increasingly on commerce, even pushing for a free-trade agreement. With the Western and Japanese markets racked by economic troubles, the Chinese export juggernaut needs a larger market share in India, the world's second fastest-growing economy.

Such ties amount to lose-lose for India and win-win for China. As if to underline that such unequal commerce cannot override political concerns, India has refused to reaffirm its support for Beijing's sovereignty over Tibet and Taiwan. India had been periodically renewing its commitment to a "one China" policy, even as Beijing not only declined to make a reciprocal one-India pledge. But in a sign of the growing strains in ties, Wen left for his country's "all-weather" ally, Pakistan, with a joint communique in which India's one-China commitment was conspicuously missing.

Growing Chinese provocations have left New Delhi with little choice but to play hardball with Beijing. (*Japan Times*)

Five In One

By ABIJIT SHARMA



'Chalo India, say Big 5 world leaders' reads one of the news headlines in an Indian online media. Indeed, emerging super-power India played host to the leaders of five powerful nations in the last six months.



While all the visits focused on economic, defense and nuclear deals, the still-prevailing uneasiness in bilateral ties between India and China also came to the fore.

Interestingly, after the US President Barack Obama, it was Chinese Premier Wen Jiabo, who garnered maximum interest. Experts had rightly expected that Obama would hold talks and strike deals that would ensure job prospects back home. He made deals worth \$15 billion that would create nearly 54,000 jobs in the US and set a target of \$75 billion by 2015. A defence deal worth \$5.8 billion was also signed.

Addressing the joint parliament on the last day of his visit, Obama backed India for a permanent seat in the UNSC. He strongly urged Pakistan to act against the perpetrators of the November 2008 Mumbai attack and condemned it for supporting terrorist activities. His longest trip abroad as a President was also marked with visits to school children, question-answer session with colleges students and visit to Gandhi memorial and paying condolence to the victims of the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

As for the Wen viist, India was hoping that China would sympathetically touch on issues of Kashmir, terrorism in Pakistan and India's bid for the UNSC permanent seat. Hopes have been belied.

China failed to address the issue India hoped it would. Although economic deals worth \$16 billion were signed, Premier Wen did not even mention Kashmir in his statements and just reiterated Beijing's support for India's 'aspirations' for a permanent membership but did not show signs of strongly supporting its candidature. India, countered by refusing to reiterate the 'one China' policy.

With fear of 'hurting' sentiment of old friend Pakistan, no mention was made of the 2008 Mumbai attack in any of the

statements. Unlike Obama, Wen did not even show interest in paying condolences to the victims of the attack. What's more, the Premier next stop after Delhi was Islamabad, a strategic move as India prefers visiting leaders not to head to Pakistan from its soil. Critics pointed out that the visit of the Chinese Premier to Pakistan was more successful than his visit to India.

China apart, the other leaders shared one thing in common with Obama. Besides economic and trade agreements, they also signed huge defense and nuclear deals, which is a vital achievement on India's part.

While French company Areva signed agreement to set up nuclear reactors in India, Russia promised to co-design a fifth generation fighter aircraft. They backed India's aspirations for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council and strongly condemned Pakistan for failing to check terrorist activities in its soil.

It was the first time in the history that heads of state or government all five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) paid visit to a country in a such a short span of time.

The message was clear for the world powers to see: India is up next! ■

दैनिक मौज्दातमा

१२% ब्याज

प्रिमियर
प्लस
सेमिड्र

प्रिमियर फिनांस कम्पनी लि.

दुबई, संजयपुर, सेंट्रल ब्रंच नं. १६१, १६२
फोन नं. ५-५२९०२३, ५-५२९५०२
फैक्स नं. ५५५९५४४०६९९
URL: www.premierfinance.com.np

ISO 9001:2008

NEPAL TOURISM YEAR 2011

Mission 'One Million'

Given its track record, Nepal has enough potential to bring a million tourists. Nepal Tourism Year 2011 has placed this as its target

By A CORRESPONDENT

The year 2011 has begun with a mixed note. Nepal Airlines, the country's only domestic carrier, has obvious limits even when it does a superb job with its ageing aircraft. The process of bringing two new aircraft has stalled following the decision of the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority.

But then Nepal Tourism Year 2011 has also begun with an ambitious aim to bring in a million tourists.

If Nepal provides enough air seats, and regular air services, nothing will be impossible. But Nepal's tourism entrepreneurs are upset following the decision of CIAA which asked for cancellation of the deal with Airbus.

As Nepal is planning to formally embark on Nepal Tourism Year 2011, the challenge is now to bring a million tourists through the foreign airlines.

"It is very unfortunate that we are organizing Nepal Tourism Year 2011 without our own reliable aircraft. After the CIAA decision, Nepal will have to rely now to make Nepal Tourism Year 2011 a success on foreign airlines," said tourism entrepreneur Yogendra Shakya.

Other tourism entrepreneurs also expressed disappointment over the decision. "CIAA decision is taken with mal-intention," said Dhruba Narayan Shrestha, former president of NATA.

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the government of Nepal and Maoists, Nepal has seen a drastic increase in the number of tourist arrivals. Even during the election of Constituent Assembly, the number continued to rise.

As the number of tourists increased, the investment in the tourism sector also went up. In the last two years, most of the hotels have invested a huge amount of money to upgrade the facilities as well as to renovate the old structures.

"Nepal's hotel industries have made heavy investment in the last five years to increase their capacity such as number of beds. We are able to accommodate the present numbers and there is enough place for all," said Prasiddha Bahadur Pandey, president of Hotel Association of Nepal.

One of the constraints to accommodate the adequate number of tourists will be to provide enough rooms. Since the investment in the hotel sector was virtually zero during the ten year-

long insurgency, the present process of upgradation will take a long time to meet the demands.

Realizing this, Nepal Tourism Board is now promoting Home Stay. Home Stay will increase the number of rooms as well as it will also help to send the money at the grass roots level benefiting the local community.

Despite political instability and certain level of controlled anarchy, Nepal was able to bring about 700,000 tourists in the year 2010, according to an estimate of Nepal Tourism Board.

"This is a historic year for us as we broke all previous records of bringing the number of tourists," said Aditya Baral, spokesperson of Nepal Tourism Board. "Although the final record is yet to come out, it is estimated that the number is over 700,000." According to Baral, number of tourist arrived in Nepal by air is over 400,000 and the number of tourists arrival from land is over 200,000.

'We Want To Electrify Int'l Arena'

PRACHANDA MAN SHRESTHA

PRACHANDA MAN SHRESTHA, Chief Executive Officer of Nepal Tourism Board, is known for his best managerial skills. Shrestha, who used to head the Mountain Division of Tourism Ministry in 1980s, is now heading the board which is organizing Nepal Tourism Year 2011 with an ambitious plan to bring a million tourists in Nepal. Recently Shrestha spoke about Nepal Tourism Year. Excerpts:

What is the state's preparation for Nepal Tourism Year 2011?

As our demand, the government allocated 230 million rupees budget for us. As we are getting the entire budget as per our demand, we have already divided our programs in four stages. They include international promotion, opening of tourism year, capacity building and identifying new destinations.

How will you spend the budget?

We have allocated 120 million rupees for international tourism promotion, 20 million rupees for opening and Rs.30 million to enhance the capacity of home stay. Remaining money will be spent on management and buying a new package.

When will the event be formally inaugurated?

It will be inaugurated on 14 January in Kathmandu. Some of the tourism ministers from Asian countries are also invited to take part in the two-hour long inaugural ceremony. This will promote Nepal's tourism in

international area. We will also organise regional level programs. Our target is also to increase the number of tourists up to 300,000 from inland. We will make necessary arrangements to give facilities in the border points.



Don't you think it is too late to kick off the promotional activities?

Of course, the international promotion has been delayed a bit. One must not forget that Nepal Tourism Year is aims to bring a million tourists in Nepal over the year 2011. Even if we cannot bring a million this year, the target will be met within two years. We want to electrify international tourism market through this program.

What program do you have for international promotion?

We have been doing our regular international promotion program. We will use the new budget to reach consumers of various tourist destinations. We will advertise our products in international media, particularly in those countries where Nepal is already popular, like India, China and some European countries.

"Women Have Been The Most Affected By Conflict"

-BANDANA RANA

BANDANA RANA is the chairperson of Sathi-Nepal, a leading NGO working to empower women and raise issue with gender discrimination. Rana worked as a journalist for a long time before she took up activism for the cause of women. She spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues. Excerpts:

What is the state of violence against women in Nepal?

Violence against women is one of the major factors responsible for the exclusion of women from the mainstream of all development processes in Nepal. In spite of the efforts made by several governmental and nongovernmental organizations to address the issue, violence against women continues unabated. Researches and studies have indicated that women and girls continue to be subjected to physical, mental and sexual violence cutting across all lines of income, culture and class. The root of all kinds of violence perpetrated on women starts from the home in the form of domestic violence. A research conducted by Saathi with UNFPA in 2008 in Dang and Surkhet reveals that 81% of women face domestic violence frequently. This indicates that even the home is not a safe place for women. Social relations of power place women in a subordinate position, giving many women few rights in the family, community and society in general. This in turn impacts their health, access to education and their potential to be economically productive.

How do you see it in the context of armed conflict?

In addition, in the context of the decade long armed conflict and the volatile post conflict situation women have often become the target of violence. There has been an increase in sexual violence and sexual harassment. However, this remains largely invisible because of the lack of evidence, and adequate and proper documentation of women's human rights violations. Thus violence against women is a major development issue in Nepal that requires a comprehensive solution.

With your long experience in the struggle to establish women's rights, how do you see the transformation taking place in Nepal?

When Saathi was established in 1992 to address particularly domestic violence against women, it was very difficult for us to find allies supporting our vision. Domestic violence against women was a taboo topic and perceived a very private affair to be sought out by the family themselves even when the woman family member was on the verge of death through extreme torture and violence. Also the culture of silence shrouding the issue and absence of law have encouraged violence against women to continue unhindered. However with increasing voices from the women's rights organizations and the pressure created

due to Nepal's commitment to gender equality through international covenants, some progressive changes can be perceived.

How do you look at the state of present change?

I think the present scenario has brought about some positive changes in promoting women's rights. The 33 % women's participation in the CA is another great achievement. However, this mechanism needs to be established in the future elections as well. Also the 33 % women's participation need to be institutionalized in other state machineries as stated in the interim constitution.

Despite enacting new laws to prevent violence against women and providing constitutional guarantees, large numbers of women continues to face exclusion. What do you suggest?

I think the main problem lies in the lack of political will and serious internalization of the commitments made through policies and legislation. Plans and policies are made in Kathmandu without taking into account the infrastructure, human and financial implications, knowledge and capacity that are required to support the implementation of the plans at the district and community level. I think we should also have a strong monitoring mechanism. Perhaps coming up with national level women's rights indicators to track the progress made would be helpful in this regard.

Despite the commitments of the government and Maoist rebel, many conflict-affected women are yet to get relief. As a member of the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan Drafting team, how do you look at this?

Women have been the most affected by conflict. Many have lost their husbands, sons and brothers. Their children have been deprived of education. They have been the target of sexual and other forms of violence. Many young girls have been displaced and many due to lack of education and skill are forced to work in places where they are vulnerable to sexual violence. These are the kinds of cases that Saathi in the recent years is encountering in its different shelters.

How has Saathi has been supporting the cause?

In August, Saathi organized five regional consultations with women directly affected by conflict in the process of collecting their concerns for the development of the UNSCR 1325 & 1820 national action plan. In regard to the relief program their major complaints were that the relief program is not impartial, it is highly politicized and fraught with corruption. Only those with political connections have easy access to relief and compensation. We have tried to address these concerns in the five year NAP and also stressed on the provision of including participation of women conflict victims in the designing and disbursement

This indicates that even the home is not a safe place for women. Social relations of power place women in a subordinate position, giving many women few rights in the family, community and society in general.

plan of all relief and recovery programs. I do hope that the plan will be in effect soon and that justice will be provided to conflict victims. We the civil society and women's groups are ready to collaborate with the government for the implementation of the NAP but will also be the watchdogs to monitor its effective implementation.

You have recently been nominated as the member of the Asia Pacific Advisory Committee for Women Peace and Security by UNESCAP. This must be in recognition of your more than two decade long contribution in promoting women's rights not only in Nepal but across South Asia? Apart from your work in Nepal have you any plans for a regional initiative?

Almost all the countries in South Asia -- Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan and also India are plagued with internal armed conflict. Women of all these countries bear the heaviest cost of such conflict. In spite of that women's participation in all peace building processes is very negligible, particularly in peace talks and political negotiations. This is of grave concern. Also in all of these South Asian countries, including Nepal, a culture of impunity prevails, particularly in relation to violence against women, including sexual violence. These are issues mandated by the UNSCR 1325 & 1820 and other proceeding Security Council resolutions.

What are the urgent needs of South Asia?

We, the women in South Asia, working in this sector have felt a dire need for collective regional input to address this issue and monitor the effective implementation of the UNSCR resolutions on women, peace and security. In this regard I am happy to inform you that very soon we are launching a 'South Asia Women's Alliance for Peace'. This alliance will be a platform to draw strength from each other through sharing of regional experiences, promote participation of women in all peace building processes, improve women's access to justice and conduct relevant research. As one of the members of the Asia Pacific Advisory Group on Women Peace and Security from the civil society, I am confident that the learning I will gain from regionally coordinating this South Asia alliance will prove fruitful in providing relevant advice to the UNESCAP that will contribute to making the region a more secure place for women.

You have also been the regional coordinator of the South Asian Campaign for Gender Equality (SACGE) that spearheaded the campaign for a special women's entity in the UN. Now that the UN Women is operational from January 1st 2011 what difference is it going to make?

SACGE is a South Asian campaign with over 200 organizations across South Asia that advocated for stronger and resourceful gender equality architecture in the UN. The campaign was first initiated as a national campaign from Nepal as 'Friends of UNIFEM' in March 2006. SACGE later became



part of the global campaign - GEAR (Gender Equality Architecture Reform).

How do you see the birth of UN Women?

The New UN Women has come into being through the merger of four existing distinct women's U.N. entities: the U.N. development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues; the U.N. Division for the Advancement of Women; and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). UN Women will focus exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment and be as politically powerful and financially stable as other full-fledged UN Agencies. It is headed by the Under Secretary General Michelle Bachelet (former president of Chile).

How will it make things different?

The establishment of the UN Women will mean more effective and expanded programming for gender equality, more resources, sustained long term programming, increased prioritization for Gender Equality and stronger accountability and leadership and extensive field presence.

This is indeed a great victory for women's rights as well as for the coalition of women's and other civil society organizations that have worked hard for over four years to bring this entity into being. As it embarks on its journey of advancing women's human rights and achieving gender equality we hope that the UN Women will forge effective partnership with civil society from global to local/grassroots organizations to deliver results on the ground and ensure that all women can enjoy their full human rights. ■

The New UN Women has come into being through the merger of four existing distinct women's U.N. entities:



Nepalese Delegation In Ethiopia

FEDERALISM

Ethiopian Experience

As the debate on state restructuring goes on, CA members and academicians find the Ethiopian experience worth mulling over

By A CORRESPONDENT

Nepal is full of diversity. From the number of ethnic groups to the number of linguistic groups and from topographical diversity to diversity in flora and fauna,

Nepal has a range of experiences in diversity and difference. Nepal has big neighbors with two different political systems. India is federal in nature with a strong center and China is a unitary state with federal ingredients in its structure.

"The Ethiopian model has showed that federalism is not a panacea for all the problems as well as it not as bad as what many see," said Dr. Surya Dhungel. "Given good institutional backups, federalism will also produce effective government."

At this crucial juncture, a delegation comprising dozens of CA members representing various political parties, academicians and lawyers visited Ethiopia and participated in the 5th International Conference on Federalism. They thought the event was helpful to clear some misunderstandings and misconceptions about federalism.

"The visit to Ethiopia was very important for us. I have enriched my knowledge as well as my understanding about federalism," said CA member Khim Lal Devkota. "We have seen an ethnic-based federalism working in a good shape in Ethiopia. I also got an

opportunity to share knowledge about various types of federal systems currently experimented in various parts of the world."

With support from the Forum of Federations and Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal, members of Constituent Assembly visited Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia. Along with visiting some provinces and interacting with the local members, Nepalese CA members also took part in international conference on federalism.

"Although a section of the people are still saying that federalism will spilt the nation and encourage secessionist tendencies, the federal models including Ethiopian experiment have shown how it can strengthen the nation."

Even after the presentation of the report by State Restructuring Committee of CA, the debate about the number of provinces, questions of power sharing and modalities of federalism are yet to be decided.

"The challenges before us are how to make federal structure functional. The conference helped us a lot to know about various models of federal system functioning around the world," said Dr. Bipin Adhikari.

"We have learnt a lot about federalism. Our visit helped us to understand the federal structure and governments at various levels," said CA

Member Anil Kumar Jha. "The experiences of Ethiopia were noteworthy for us. Thanks to the Switzerland Embassy in Nepal, we were able to take part in the program."

"I am happy to say that this is one of the most inclusive delegations in terms of party representation, regional representation, ethnicity and gender. The delegation shared their views in international seminar as well as learned the Ethiopian model of federal government," said Vickal Deep Khadka, program manager Nepal Field Office, Forum of Federations.

The 5th International Conference On Federalism.

The International Conferences on Federalism were initiated in 1999 by the Forum of Federations with the first conference in Mt. Tremblant, Canada. This was followed by a second conference in 2002 in St. Gallen, Switzerland, a third in Brussels, Belgium, in 2005, and a fourth in New Delhi, India, in 2007.

The 5th International Conference was hosted by Ethiopia from 14-16 December 2010 in Addis Ababa, in partnership with the Forum of Federations. It was the first International Conference on Federalism to be held in Africa. The theme of the 5th International Conference on Federalism, 'Equality and Unity in Diversity for Development', reflected the need for sustainable development in federal, federalizing or decentralizing countries in Africa and other non-Western regions. Sustainable development requires equality and unity in diversity, qualities necessary for the emergence and sustenance of social peace and democracy.

During the conference, 45 papers were

The themes covered by the conference papers include Federalism and the Democratization Process, the Impacts of Regionalization and Globalization on Federations, Unity in Diversity through Federalism, Federalism and Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and fiscal Federalism and Equitable Development

Members of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal, academics, and civil society activists participated in the 5th International Conference on Federalism. Among 20 participants were members of the Constituent Assembly from UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, Sadhbhawana Party, MJF-N, TMLP, and Advisor to the President of Nepal, and others. Please see the attached list.

The Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal/PD IV supported the participation of Nepali delegation to the Conference.

BARBARA ADAMS

Witness To Changes

Barbara Adams grew up in America but she has been living in Nepal for more than four decades witnessing social, political and cultural transformation here

By YOGESH GYAWALI

In 1961, it took Barbara Adams more than a week to arrive in Nepal from the United States of America. Green paddy fields, mountains and a lovely town welcomed her in Kathmandu. Today, five million people mill around the chaotic city.

Call her a living history of Nepal's change, if you will, Barbara, however, is a bit frustrated about political leaders and the old generation. But she has not given up hope for a better Nepal.

"It's only the young people who give me hope for a newer, better Nepal," said Barbara Adams.

Barbara always had a penchant for peculiar experiences. Growing up in the shadows of the Cold War, Barbara joined a group of girls, who were trained to ride horses and rescue people out of Washington DC on horsebacks, in case the Third World War broke. Her experience with the horses led her to quit school and spend time in the stables. She was a bona-fide rebel by the age of 12.

In 1961, Queen Elizabeth II was due to arrive in Nepal. Barbara, an aspiring journalist, was commissioned by an Italian magazine to cover the queen's maiden Nepal visit. By the time Barbara arrived in Kathmandu from Kolkata, her subject was gone. The 20-something amateur was immediately mesmerized by the mountains. Her mother later described them as "big ice-cream cones floating in the sky." The shy girl, who was born in Manhattan, NY, soon found herself utterly at home in Nepal.

After more than four decades, Barbara was granted Nepali citizenship in 2009. In her nearly 50 years of experience in Nepal, Barbara has seen her beloved country transform from relative obscurity into a state that could best be described as relative 'chaos.' She has seen political

upheavals, regime changes, and socio-cultural transformation. As someone, who was once very close to the royal family, and the international community, she has exciting anecdotes to share with the readers.



Barbara On Kathmandu Then and Now

Kathmandu has become ugly. Its growth has gone out of control. We used to have a lovely view of the green hills and the snow-mountains. Huge, ugly billboards and even uglier buildings that have no rhyme or reason where they are placed have blocked the view. Kathmandu is a garbage ridden disaster right now.

Kathmandu was a small beautiful village; something untouched or unspoiled by western or foreign world. Everything was clean; there was hardly any trash because there was nothing to buy. Every day, you could see the mountains because there was no pollution. There were a few brick houses, the Rana palaces, the green hills and the mountains. It really deserved the name Shangri-La.

Sure, there have been some positive political changes, but visually, Kathmandu has become a disaster.

Observations on Class/Caste Divide

There was clearly an aristocracy class

(in the bygone days), which was not too interested in villages or ordinary people. But people were also less aware then. Oddly enough, things were less stratified back then. Now everything is divided and politicized. The house, where I used to live, we had people from different backgrounds and I ate more variety of food than what I eat now.

Nowadays people either drive their Pajeros/ Prados or they walk. Back then people walked or had bicycles. Walking and bicycling, you could communicate. So ministers communicated with their constituents and ordinary people communicated much more easily.

There is a much bigger gap between the rich and poor now than there was in those days. Now, money divides people. Back then, there was less division. Although the first people I met were mostly Ranas and Shahs, in a way, society seemed more egalitarian.

On Changing Social Attitudes

People were innocent back then. Instead of being suspicious, people readily chatted on the streets. They were very honest and very straight. I remember leaving my wallet with all my money and two days later somebody brought it back to my house.

I blame too much foreign presence and too much money being thrown too fast in Nepal for corruption and greed. Greed and corruption have become our culture.

On TV, you see appalling ads with half naked women, drinking, violence, stuff that I did not like in America. No wonder moral values of people are down. I don't think Nepal is ready for all that until the whole country is educated and ready for it. It wasn't like that in Nepal when I got here. Nepal is adopting the worst thing from the west.

On a Positive Note

Good things have come, like in the consciousness of people about their rights. In the Panchayat times, things were hidden, people could be thrown in jail for breaking the secrecy but now things are much more in the open, which is good.

Youth of Nepal is creative. The films that are being produced (by youth) are impressive for a country that was once so closed. There are films on animal sacrifice and third gender. It's only the young people who give me hope for a newer, better Nepal. They need to sink their teeth in and do what is needed to be done. ■

Lured By Langtang



DR. ARUNA UPRETY

I had heard a lot about Langtang and its beauty. So, when Ashok Bhurtyal from the Peoples Health Initiative (PHI) invited me to join his team to visit Langtang, I agreed.

"Are you sure you will have time to go with us?" Ashok asked several times to confirm I won't change my mind about this long, difficult trip. I promised I was really eager to see the place which is so famous among trekkers.

Soon we were walking on the beautiful but difficult terrains from Syaphrubensi to Langtang. In eight hours, I was so tired that I asked Ashok why they had chosen to go so far? They could have organized their program somewhere near Kathmandu, perhaps a walk of 2 to 3 hours.

I was told that Langtang was chosen to start the first health camp and research activity. A public health student had done his undergraduate research when people had asked if his thesis would help the local people. The public health student felt

that it was a moral duty to conduct health program in that part so that he could give back to the community which helped him to conduct the research. Warm welcome, nutritious food and open discussions involving the local villagers were very helpful for the student and his team (PHI) to finish that. At the same time, the profound beauty of Langtang was found to be so amazing for some of the health science (public health,



Langtang River

Photo by: Dusahla Adhikari and Ashok Bhurtyal

medicine, pharmacy and nursing) students that they decided to give back something to enjoy this beauty and to help villagers.

Ashok told me his first visit to Langtang was in May 2003, when he aimed at hard trekking and climbing small peaks. "Unable to resist the temptation posed by the beauty of the land, I went again in September that year. In 2004 I went twice to research people's livelihood activities and the nature conservation efforts," he said.

"In October-November 2005, on my descent from Mt. Langtang Lirung, I fell off into the river, injured heavily my arm and spent a scary and painful night by the side of the freezing river, gazing the stars. The next day, I managed to climb back to the trail and arrived at the nearest settlement. Villagers advised me to see a traditional orthopedic healer (Amchi). The healer fixed my arm bone, it worked!"

After this incident Ashok tried to find how the local Amchi (local doctor) did his job (which was like that of a medical doctor) and also found that they had so much knowledge about the local herbs and people used that a lot in their daily lives. "In collaboration with medical students, we made it a point to visit Langtang at least once a year and to let people learn more about lives and local traditional herbs as well as to help people of the villages here" Ashok explained.

Indeed the program to help the people of Langtang went

off quietly. It helped build the capacity of local people as well.

Ashok gave me more ideas about PHI work. "In March 2007, a landless peasant from Langtang joined Amchi training with assistance from PHI and a Tibetan medicine school in the Mt. Everest region. In May-June 2007, Langtang people and PHI started a campaign to improve health in Langtang. It was a mix of public health action and a medical camp. And then started the long-term program for improvement of health of villagers of Langtang."

I was clearly able to see how people respected the members of PHI and how much they had hoped for their help. When the team came to the nearby village, the villagers were happy to greet it: "Wow, you have come again and brought doctors and medicines." Villagers offered hot tea and even asked if we wanted to have the 'local tea,' that is, the home made wine.

It was amazing how kind people were to appreciate the good deeds. I was constantly thinking, "How the mighty river there could be brought to Kathmandu so that the people in there did not have to think about stealing water by water pumps at one O'Clock in the morning (including myself) and how could we learn from the people of Langtang to clean our roads."

Water falls in every corner of the long way to Langtang were astonishing and I hoped that for 2011, our government

would be able to do some ads so that not only tourists but also Nepalese would be able to come to see these beautiful waterfalls, green trees, flowers and high mountains.

I remember Sri Lanka and Laos have some hills, mountains and small waterfalls. But the beautiful pictures of these places, prepared by the government, more alluring to the tourists. Friends from various countries were so happy that they were dancing near the waterfalls and looking so cheerful.

In Langtang, I was wondering if those tourists would come to Nepal. What would they say or do here? In fact I have not seen any ads of Langtang. Still the flow of tourists in this area is much. I was surprised that without much publicity, this place is so much visited. With better publicity and better road from Kathmandu to Dhunche and Syaphrubensi, how many more tourists (both Nepali and foreigners) would come here?

I had to walk about 15 hours when I was coming back from Langtang to Syaphrubensi, which was of course a stupid idea as we had to walk through the jungle at 7 O'Clock to 9 O'Clock in the dark and we were exhausted to death. Then my toe nails were broken. I suffered from pain for one whole week. Yet the beauty of this place is so enchanting that I will go there again with my family members to enjoy the water falls, to learn about local medical herbs and to talk to people about their lives and love stories, which is in every corner. (She writes on women and gender issue) ■



Catching a Cold: The Vulnerable Population

- BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD

Our own experience seems to tell us that in the dead of winter we seem to be more prone to catching a cold. Many of us may think that catching a cold is synonymous with suffering from influenza virus. But in reality the most common "cold" virus in adults is the rhinovirus. Both the influenza virus and the rhinovirus are transmitted by coughing and sneezing through droplet infection. We can inhale these droplets or we can infect ourselves and others through our hands. For the rhinovirus there is no effective vaccination available, but for influenza virus there is.

The effectiveness of the influenza vaccine in preventing influenza among healthy adults depends on the match between the vaccine and the circulating strains of influenza virus that year. That is the reason why the vaccine is different from year to year keeping in mind the different circulating strains of the virus against which the annual vaccine has to be targeted. This year's influenza vaccine also incorporates last year's H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine. When the match between the vaccine and the circulating strains is close, the vaccine is 70 % effective.

Amazingly even when the match is poor, vaccination has been shown to reduce the number of deaths from influenza. One study even showed that vaccination of children and adolescents protected unvaccinated residents from the same community probably due to what is known as "herd" immunity effect.

The Advisory Committee for Immunization Practice (ACIP) from the USA suggests that everyone over six months should be vaccinated with the influenza vaccine including pregnant women. Last year when there was an outbreak of H1N1, pregnant women were especially vulnerable in terms of catching swine flu and dying from it. But in resource poor countries like Nepal, how relevant is this recommendation to vaccinate everyone?

There is no question there are more important vaccines than the influenza vaccine for countries like Nepal, for example the diphtheria or the tetanus vaccines. But there are indeed vulnerable groups in Nepal that could benefit from the influenza vaccine. People with COPD (chronic obstructive lung disease)

commonly populate the outpatients clinics and wards of many hospitals in Nepal especially during the winter months when many factors, including increased pollution lead to exacerbation of their lung disease. This COPD group of patients may benefit from influenza vaccine because of the already existing compromised lung function in this group of patients. An influenza infection on top of their COPD could push them over the edge, so to speak. (By the same token, the COPD patients could also in addition use a pneumococcal vaccine to prevent pneumococcal pneumonia that needs to be given only once unlike the yearly influenza vaccine). Unfortunately, both these vaccines (the pneumococcal and the influenza vaccine) are not cheap and are not always readily available. Furthermore with frequent electricity cuts, how sure can the patient be that the cold chain for the vaccines was maintained? These are important and common problems that are constantly faced in resource poor settings like ours that need to be dealt with at the government public health level.

Girls Speak Out

By NITISH DEV BHATTARAI

Beyond Beijing Committee brought 80 young girls from 27 districts of five development regions of Nepal to share their hardships and harassments at a workshop in Kathmandu organized from December 17 to December 20, 2010. The committee, with the support from Action Aid, Consortium, Himrights, Plan Nepal, UNICEF, UNFPA, DFID and World Vision, aimed at raising rights issues of girls who were married at early age, young mothers below fifteen, school dropouts, street girls and girls living in unacceptable circumstances. The objective of the workshop was to

identify and prioritize their difficulties at present. The process was expected



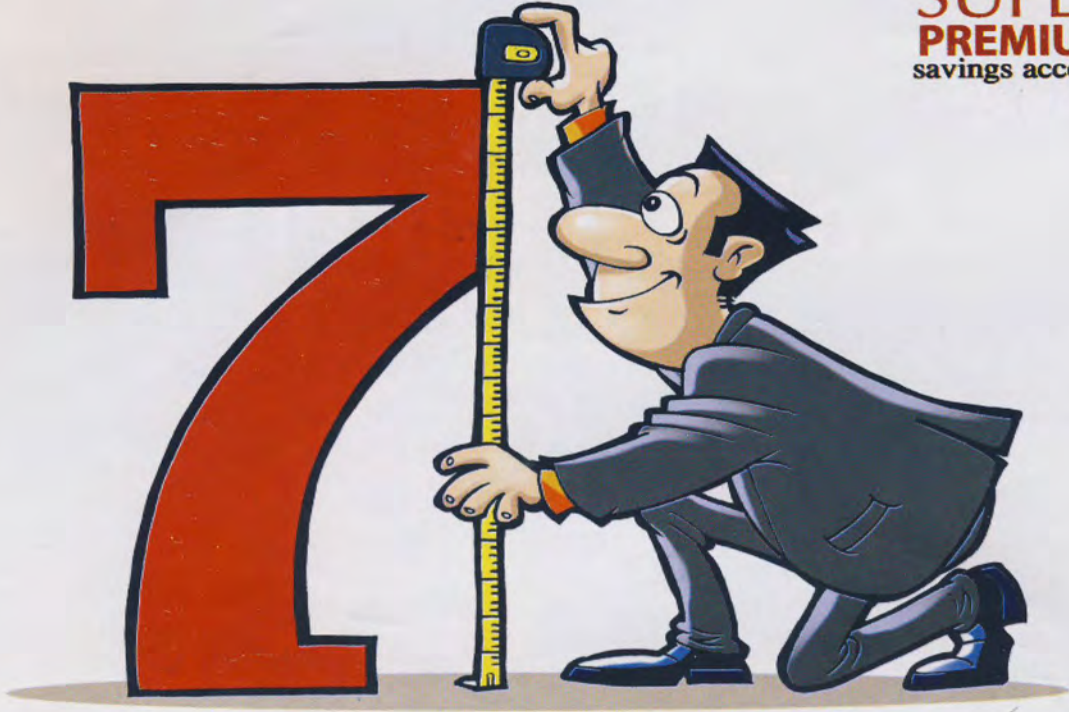
to help develop strategies and make their voices heard by policymakers.

Young girls shared their

circumstances in which they faced sexual abuses, restrictions and discriminations. They demanded strong action from related institutions to end such evils in the future. Some female members of the Constituent Assembly attended the workshop on the third day to interact with the girls about their real circumstances and assured the young girls of support in the advocacy for rights of the girl children.

The workshop issued the Kathmandu declaration with the slogan "Hamro Kura, Garun Pura" (Fulfill our demands) on the last day. The declaration demanded effective response to the issues related with sexual abuse, slavery, early marriage, discrimination, child labor, lack of guardianship, conflict victims and different ability of the girl children. ■


**SUPER
PREMIUM**
savings account



BUSINESS ADVANTAGE-II-9-2010

सुपर प्रिमियम बचत खाता
आफ्नो अपेक्षाअनुरूपको आकर्षक प्रतिफल प्राप्त गर्नुहोस्

खाताका विशेषताहरु

- वार्षिक ब्याजदर : ७.०%
- न्यूनतम मौज्जात : रु. १००,०००/-
- जति पनि रकम राख्न वा फिक्न मिल्ने
- सबै बैकिङ्ग सेवा शुल्कमा ५०%** छुट
- रु. ५००,०००/- सम्मको दुर्घटना मृत्यु बिमा
- नि:शुल्क एस.एम.एस. बैकिङ्ग
- नि:शुल्क कुनैपनि शाखाबाट बैकिङ्ग सुविधा
- नि:शुल्क इन्टरनेट बैकिङ्ग
- विशेष काउन्टरबाट सरल तथा छिटो बैकिङ्ग सेवा



हिमालयन बैंक लिमिटेड
Himalayan Bank Limited
(A Joint Venture with Habib Bank Limited - Pakistan)

The Power to Lead

Corporate Office and Thamel Branch
Thamel, Phone No: 4250201, Fax: 977-1-4222800
E-mail: hbl@himalayanbank.com
Website : www.himalayanbank.com

विस्तृत जानकारीका लागि हाम्रो शाखाहरुमा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोला

* सर्तहरु लागु हुनेछन्

** लकर, फन्ड ट्रान्सफर, टि.सी., ड्राफ्ट, स्टेटमेन्ट, चेकबुक, कर्जा सेवा शुल्क र अन्य सेवाहरु

Dear Coffee-Lovers



is also at
New Baneshwor

CAFÉ Kaldi, which has been in service since 1983 at various countries like Japan, Thailand, Dubai and Italy is now in Nepal. CAFÉ Kaldi promises you to provide the real great taste of different varieties of coffee products to all coffee lovers.

Indreni Food Land, Indreni Complex, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu

Tel. 4781 940 / 4784 518 / 4784 519