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Face to Face
Laxman Prasad Ghimire

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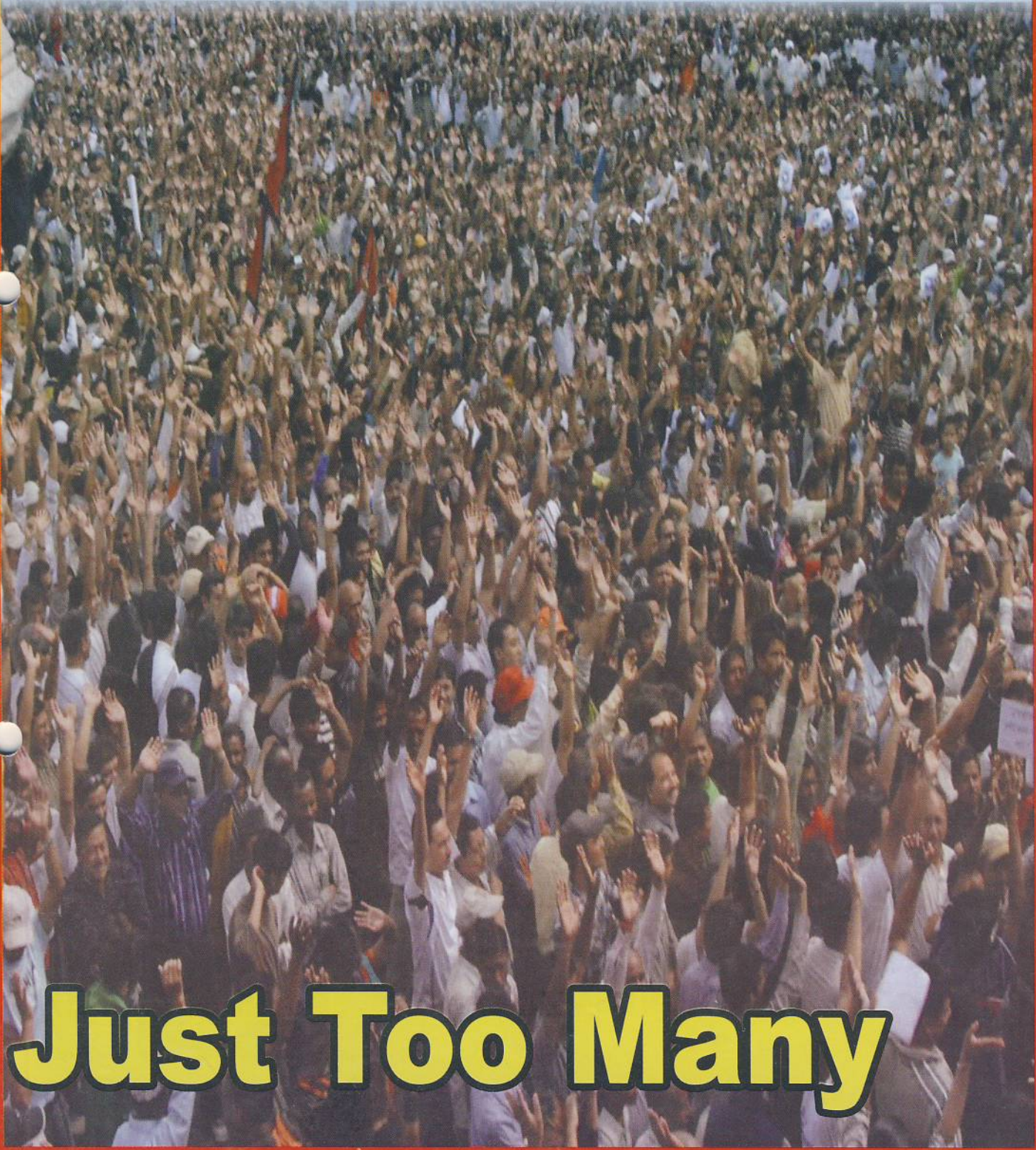
Interview:
Kedarnath Upadhyay

NEW SPOTLIGHT

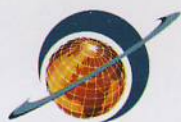
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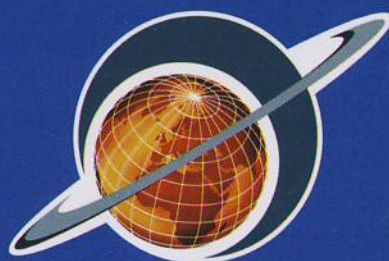


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From The Editor

If the present rate of population growth goes unchecked, countries like Nepal will face long term consequences. Despite several measures taken in the past, there are areas needing robust efforts and investments to manage population. Clearly, more serious attention should go to family planning and reproductive health issues. The government and related non-government agencies would do well to invest resources on these issues to meet the challenges thrown up by increasing population, especially in a poor and populous region like South Asia.

Government investment in Nepal's family planning and reproductive health programs is far from sufficient. Other South Asian countries fare no better in terms of such investment. As more than a fifth of humanity lives in South Asia with the world's 40 per cent adolescents and youths inhabiting the region, people here need reproductive health and family planning services in their doorsteps. If the countries in the region fail to meet their demands, population growth will only soar up and up.

South Asian parliamentarians, policy makers and experts recently discussed these matters in a consultative meeting where they called for more funds for these programs. Already teeming with the world's poor, South Asian countries cannot afford to host too many people being added too fast. This is the reason population issues matter in South Asia, where almost all countries are mired in political instability and chaos and often the governments fail to address the most urgent issues. Now the time has come for the region to accord top priority and matching funds for an effective population management program.

Keshab Poudel
Editor

NEW SPOTLIGHT FORTNIGHTLY

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COVER STORY: POPULATION IN SOUTH ASIA : Challenges Galore

9



INTERVIEW: Kedar Nath Upadhyay 18



POLITICS: Cabinet Reshuffle

8

NEWSNOTES

2

ECONOMIC BRIEFS

3

NEWS CLIP

4

COMMENTARY: Yubaraj Ghimire

5

FACE TO FACE : Laxman Prasad Ghimire

6

VIEWPOINT: PRAKASH JWALA

7

ARTICLE: Ashok K Mehta

13

NATIONAL : Troy Edige

15

OPINION : Dr. AB Thapa

16

GORKHALAND MOVEMENT: Success Of A Sort

17

PERSPECTIVE: Yubaraj Ghimire

20

DEVELOPMENT :Radha Paudel

21

VIEWPOINT :Reena Pathak Bashyal

22

FOREIGN INVESTMENT: American Interest

23

ARTICLE: Upendra Bahadur BK

24

KATHMANDU: Vulnerable Climate

25

ARTICLE : Tanka Raj Niraula

26

FORUM: Kishan Singh Dhimi

27

HEALTH: Buddha Basnyat, MD

28

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Indian Aid For Mustang Monastery

The District Development Committee of Mustang and Shree Pal Ewam Namgyal Monastery, Choonup, Ward No. 1, of Mustang and the Indian Embassy signed a Memorandum of Understanding for an Indian grant assistance of NRs. 3.73 crores for upgradation of infrastructure and provision of furniture for the Monastery under Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Programme. According to a press release of the Indian Embassy, this is the ninth development project being undertaken with the Indian assistance under Small Development Projects in Mustang district. India is providing assistance of NRs. 24.08 crores for construction of infrastructure projects in the district which include schools, bridges, community hall and river training works. The Indian government has also gifted three ambulances at Jomsom, Kagbeni and Chhosar VDCs in Mustang district.



Shree Pal Ewam Namgyal Monastery has been imparting religious education to Lamas/Students. The monastery forms a very important part of the socio-cultural life of the people

of the area besides being an ancient heritage building. The structure of the monastery has substantially deteriorated over the years and is in danger of collapse. Those at the monastery have been facing serious problems with regard to their housing, accommodation and pursuit of religious education. The new infrastructure being created with Indian grant assistance would upgrade the required facilities for their proper housing and education in a conducive environment.

UNICEF Nepal Has New Representative

Ms. Hanaa Singer has recently joined UNICEF Nepal as its ninth representative. She presented her credentials to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Upendra Yadav last month.

Singer is an Egyptian national and has served in UNICEF for over 21 years in both the development and humanitarian spheres. Before coming to Nepal, she was the UNICEF Representative in Kazakhstan as well as in Azerbaijan. She has also worked in the CEE/CIS regional office in Geneva, as well as in Haiti, Burundi and the



Maldives. She started her UNICEF career in Egypt.

Talking with the UNICEF Representative after the formalities, Deputy PM Yadav appreciated the role played by UNICEF over the decades in Nepal, and highlighted the need for collective effort to tackle challenges in the development sector for a country in transition.

"We would like to urge you to please ensure that everyone takes this issue seriously so that Nepali children do not lose their right to be citizens of this country," said Ms. Singer.

USAID's Nepal Transition Initiative Completed

The U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced the completion of its Nepal Transition Initiative (NTI) program. Designed to provide innovative support for Nepal's peace process and assist the country in its post-conflict transition, the program since August 2006 helped to support the political situation as it evolved by

increasing the public's access to information, by facilitating public debate on issues critical to the political transition, and by increasing local-level participation in the peace process. Speaking at the program-closing ceremony, David C. Atteberry, USAID Mission Director, remarked, "As Nepal moves forward in this delicate transition to peace and democracy, we will continue to support Nepali 'change agents' to assist and encourage strong local participation and ownership in Nepal's development and peace processes. The results from the program reinforce our belief that development must be community-led to be successful - only then will sustained, lasting changes be possible."

Countdown To London Olympics Begins

The 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games begin one year from today, 27 July. Honourable Vice President of Nepal Parmananda Jha marked the start of the countdown at a reception at the British Embassy today.

Drumming up excitement about the Games, Vice President Jha lit a butter lamp as a symbol of Olympic Flame while the British Ambassador, John Tucknott unveiled murals on the theme of the spirit of sport painted on the Embassy's wall (pictures attached).



Ambassador Tucknott said, "One year from now, London will welcome the world at the start of a celebration of sport. The environmentally-friendly Olympic Stadium will be abuzz as Nepal's athletes proudly parade the national flag in front of a global audience of billions. The Olympic Games represent understanding, peace and harmony among the nations and peoples of the earth." ■

New head of DFID Nepal takes office

Dominic O'Neill, the new Head of DFID Nepal, takes office on 1 August 2011. He succeeds Sarah Sanyahumbi.

Dominic has worked for DFID since 2002 and has previously headed three other DFID offices: Yemen (2003-6), Iraq (2007) and Sierra Leone (2008-11). Prior to joining DFID he worked as a Country Director for a British NGO, Raleigh International, in Namibia (1998-2000), Mongolia (2000-1) and Chile (2001-2). He speaks Arabic and has worked closely with Islamic and Arab organisations on their engagement in development in Africa. His professional background is in environmental health, with a specialism in water. He previously worked with the Ministry of Health in Namibia in this field (1996-1998). He is a keen trekker and mountain biker.



Dominic will oversee DFID Nepal's four-year £331 million country programme, the largest bilateral programme in Nepal.

On arrival, Dominic said, "I am delighted to have the opportunity to live and work in Nepal for the next few years. The UK has a strong relationship with Nepal, and we have recently agreed a new country plan, which I am sure will make a significant difference to the lives of many poor people in this country. I am looking forward to working with the Government and people of Nepal and all our other partners to make this happen."

MOU On Customs Modernization

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea and the Ministry of Finance of the Government of Nepal signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the project



'Modernization of Customs Administration in Nepal'. The MOU was signed by HONG Sungmog, Korean Ambassador to Nepal and Krishna Hari Baskota, Secretary of the Ministry of Finance on July 21, 2011 in the Ministry of Finance. Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) on behalf of the Republic of Korea and Department of Customs (DoC) on behalf of the Government of Nepal will implement the project. KOICA will spend US\$ 5 million for this project for 3 years (2011 - 2013).

The main objective of the project is to implement the Business Processes Reengineering (BPR) and draw up Information Strategic Plan (ISP) and improve the efficiency and transparency of the administrative process of the DoC. This project will also improve the ICT operating condition and capacity of the DoC through provision of ICT equipment.

KOICA will develop and establish Clearance Management Module, Risk Management Module and Data Warehouse. KOICA shall provide the software, equipment and materials necessary to implement the project.

KOICA will dispatch Korean experts to provide necessary technical guidance and KOICA will also provide series of trainings to Nepali officials of the DoC to acquire knowledge and experience required for the successful implementation of the project.

This project is expected to support the DoC to achieve its target that it has set under the framework of the "Customs Reform & Modernization Action Plan, 2009-2013" in order to increase tax revenue, provide user-friendly service, and enhance capacity of customs officials.

TDB Opens New Branch

The Tourism Development Bank has opened its sixth branch office in Pokhara. Bank's executive chairman Dr. Pushpa Raj Kanel and president of FNCCI Kaski district Krishna Mohan Shrestha jointly inaugurated the branch office.

According to a press release of the bank, the branch will provide business loan, tourism development packages and other loans to its customers. Along with this, the branch is providing service for e-banking, SMS banking, ATM remittances service, MBBS and bank guarantee. ■

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Indian Goodwill Package To Improve Relationship With Nepal

Neighboring nation India is to come up with a special plan to improve relationship with Nepal, and with that same intention, newly appointed Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Jayanta Prasad has done his homework to make the relationship between the two nations stronger.

Newly appointed Ambassador will arrive in Nepal before the third week of August for his tenure. Government sources in New Delhi say, to improve relationship



Jayanta Prasad

with Nepal the ambassador will bring a 'goodwill package'. Indian government, especially the South Block (foreign affairs) has accepted that the relationship between the two nations has deteriorated.

"Jayanta is coming to Nepal with a mission to improve the relationship between two neighbors," said sources in foreign affairs. But Indian officials did not reveal further information about the package. Jayanta is the son of one of the close friends of Nepal and former ambassador, Bimal Prasad. Jayanta is confident about improving the relationship with Nepal. "Actually India wants to improve relationship with Nepal," said Jayanta. In a meeting with editors, Jayanta said, "There was never an intention of India to interfere in the Nepal's political environment." Indian officials say they will always support the democratic view of the Nepali people. "Delhi will never leave the support of the democratic side in Nepal," said a high Indian government official. (Rajdhani)

More Than 1,000 Tibetans Flee Using Nepali passport

More than 1,000 Tibetan refugees have gone to countries like America after illegally obtaining Nepali citizenship and passport. A passport racketeer, the leader of the group, reportedly having connection with the various government officials has been caught by the police. The Central

Investigation Bureau (CIB) caught two Tibetan refugees, Jayang Tenzin and Tsering Lhamo on Wednesday night at around 12:30 A.M from Tribhuvan International Airport. They were destined for America and in possession of genuine Nepali passports. The racketeer Tsering Tashi Gurung (34) from Mustang, who was at the airport to see off the siblings, was also caught by the police. Police seized the passport of Tenzin and Lhamo, numbered 5218246 and 5218241 respectively along with their boarding passes. Both had departure stickers in their passports. Police seized their birth registration certificates and recommendation letters issued by the Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office. Police also obtained NRs 50,000 from the culprit, Tsering Tashi, which was intended to bribe the immigration officers. According to DSP Prabin Pokherl, the money was to bribe the immigration officers to pass the security check of the siblings. (Naya Patrika)

We have not excluded any party from contact and communication with us: Nirupama Rao

Former foreign secretary of India Nirupama Rao, who is appointed as Indian ambassador to US, in her interview with Kalyani Shankar of All India Radio, said that India gives high priority to its relations with neighbors including Nepal. "We are friends and well-wishers of the Nepalese people and we have a dialogue with all the parties in Nepal. We have not excluded any party from contact and communication with us," she added.

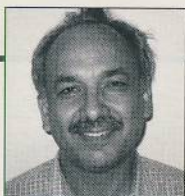
Rao said, "the situation in Nepal has been fluid for the last two years or so." "But it is really the internal dynamic in Nepal that has to, you know, to settle in this regard because you have a peace process that has to be completed. The constitution drafting has to be completed. India has not been an obstacle in this and you cannot hold India responsible for whatever is happening in Nepal. The political parties in Nepal are trying to find consensus. They are trying to see



Nirupama Rao

how through dialogue they can solve the differences that exist between the political parties so that multi-party democracy is strengthened in Nepal. But we are friends and well-wishers of Nepal. I want to emphasize that.

She said, "Well, our neighborhood, yes, is an extremely important area obviously our foreign policy. We spend a considerable amount of time on relations with our neighbors. And, I think, from India's point of view, our outlook, our approach has been very clear. We want peaceful and good relations with all our neighbors. We do not want contention with any of our neighbors. (All India Radio) ■"



Like Swindlers In A Fief

By YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

On July 31, Education Minister Ganga Lal Tuladhar told a parliamentary committee that money played a role in admission of students in the government-funded Budhanilkantha School. No one knows if it is a political statement without any sense of accountability by a minister, or a reality. But the onus to bring the whole truth lies on the minister, more than on the school management. Yes, money has started playing a big role, and openly in the current context.

But unless a serious attempt to attack it from the top, or from the political level, begins, and as long as the political bosses continue to appropriate immunity, like in the Darfur scam, under the current political dispensation, no one will take a minister or a politician seriously. Tuladhar may have felt the pinch of corruption in his ministry, but can he be sure, and speak honestly, if the political bosses who have pressurized him to recommend names of seven vice-chancellors for different universities—which he has obediently done—have not taken any money from the would-be vice-chancellors? On August 1, Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal, who is also the leader of Tuladhar, defied his own party, the Communist Party of Nepal—Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN—UML) and solely went by what Maoist Chief Prachanda ordered him to do. Khanal said he will use his prerogative as the Prime Minister to expand the Council of Ministers. But was he actually using his prerogative, or acting like a stooge? After all, the Maoists had declared the name and distributed portfolios of all the ministers-to-be a week ago, leaving Khanal with just a *fait accompli*.

Let us get into the circumstances leading to the cabinet expansion and portfolio distribution. Finance Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari—albeit, held guilty for budget leak, which is a crime in parliamentary practices—allocated Rs 2,000 million for the Peace and Reconstruction Ministry a week ago. Maoist leader Pampha Bhusal came to own that ministry on August 1. During the past five years, since April 2006, the state has been turned into a fief, and each minister has been enjoying discretion to use the ministerial funds without any transparency and accountability.

There is no official auditing of more than 18,000 million

rupees that the state paid in salaries and allowances to the Maoist combatants kept in 28 camps and sub-camps. A sizable part of that has gone to the coffer of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal—Maoists (UCPN—M). The authority of the state is being usurped by political parties and their leaders, and they have acted more like swindlers in use or misuse of

the state funds. Bhusal will be distributing a large part of funds under her command to Maoist families.

Prachanda did not take long to trudge on the footsteps of G. P. Koirala, who despite his credentials as a ‘fighter for democracy’, never believed in the principle of probity in public life. He promoted his daughter as an extra-constitutional authority, a status that Prachanda enjoys now.

Prachanda may have tried to placate a section of his disgruntled colleagues by giving their loyalists some share in the cabinet, but he is yet to earn a clean chit on charges of financial irregularities and sources of his property now. His explanation so far has been that ‘others’ in the party are corrupt as well.

Khanal, during his past few months, has spent more than 800 million rupees out of discretion. The amount was almost similar to that spent during Madhav Nepal’s regime. Koirala was above the law. Prachanda, Nepal, Khanal and all others of these political breeds are

following the precedents he created. Both Khanal and Tuladhar know that Khanal will be in power, as long as Prachanda remains the leader of the UCPN—M, and as long as he supports Prachanda. But Prachanda’s support to Khanal will come not to promote nationalism, democracy and economic prosperity, but at their cost.

So the source of corruption that needs to be eradicated lies in political deals, sale of minister’s positions, free hand to politically affiliated gangsters to acquire government contract, and political patronage to clandestine business of natural resources including stones, sands and forests. Tuladhar can sort out the Budhanilkantha issue in a few hours if he is committed to fight corruption inside his government and his party at the top. There has been no government as corrupt in the past, and no minister above accountability in corruption cases like in the present. ■



Gangalal Tuladhar

“Reshuffle Is Nonsense”

- LAXMAN PRASAD GHIMIRE

Chief whip of Nepali Congress LAXMAN PRASAD GHIMIRE is known for his blunt and straight political comments. Former water resource minister, Ghimire was elected from Ramechhap in the first parliamentary elections in 1992. As the country heads towards a new round of political confrontation following the reshuffle of the cabinet by Prime Minister Jhlanath Khanal, Nepali Congress leader Ghimire spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues. Excerpts:

Following the reshuffle of the cabinet by Prime Minister Jhlanath Khanal, how do you see the political process now?

It is a very unfortunate decision for the country. Prime Minister Khanal's decision invited political confrontation. To help internal patch-up in UCPN-Maoist, Khanal inducted Maoist ministers in the cabinet, completely ignoring the main opposition party. At a time when the country requires consensus and compromise to write the new constitution and conclude the peace process, Prime Minister Khanal's step virtually stops all the doors of negotiation. This is an absolute nonsense.

Do you think any tangible progress in constitution making and peace process will be possible now?

Had the government been really sincere to the peace process and constitution, the prime minister would not have reshuffled the cabinet. This decision indicated that Prime Minister Khanal and his coalition party, UCPN-Maoist, are not sincere to the cause.

What will be the position of Nepali Congress now?

Nepali Congress will continue to obstruct the proceedings of the House. We will not allow it to function until the resignation of the prime minister. This is our bottom line. There is no question to backtrack on our agenda.

Don't you think it is the prerogative of the prime minister to reshuffle his cabinet?

Following the signing of the five-point agreement by announcing to resign, Jhlanathji has been rendered into a lame duck prime minister. He should have tendered his resignation two months ago. In this context, his decision to reshuffle the cabinet is merely a joke. I don't understand on what grounds can a prime minister whose resignation was endorsed by the Legislature Parliament reshuffle the cabinet? This is an untimely dance.

This means Nepali Congress is now heading towards confrontational politics?

We are pushed to confrontational politics by the present government. We still want consensus in constitution making. Prime Minister Khanal and UCPN-Maoist leader have betrayed peaceful politics. Of course, the present cabinet reshuffle may settle the internal politics of Maoists but this will invite grave consequences in the country.

How do you justify your party's step to obstruct the House when there is the need to discuss the annual budget?

We have been playing the very role of a responsible opposition party. We have allowed the government to present its annual program and even supported it pass the bill allowing

the government to spend partial money. We have shown a maximum restraint despite the work of the government. However, the government and ruling parties take our sincere commitment as a weakness.

How do you read the prime minister's recent action?

His message is clear as he wants confrontation with main opposition party Nepali Congress. Otherwise, no sane people can take such a decision at this crucial juncture when the tenure of extended Constituent Assembly is just over five weeks.

Despite the opposition from Nepali Congress and a strong section of his own party, what compelled the prime minister to take this decision?

Only one reason is to woo the Maoist leaders. This reshuffle has settled the long standing internal disputes in the UCPN-Maoist. No one will be pleased by the reshuffle except the few Maoist leaders.

Prime Minister Khanal and his close associates have been saying that this step is necessary to bring the constitutional writing and peace process on the right track. What do you say?

This is all bogus and nonsense. All know that nothing has been done in the last two months to conclude the peace process and write the constitution. It is very unfortunate.

Prime Minister Khanal has said it is his moral and political obligation to resign in 13 days in case there is no tangible progress in the peace process?

Is there any sense to tender the resignation by August 31 when the tenure of the Constituent Assembly will expire? This is just a political game plan in which prime minister Khanal has turned himself as a pawn of UCPN-Maoist, which wants to capture the power. After reshuffling the cabinet, Khanal gave up all political and moral obligations. This is purely a communist propaganda. Prime Minister Khanal is a liar, and is immoral.

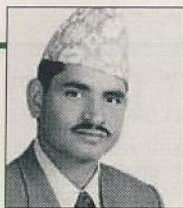
Do you see any possibility of the new constitution being promulgated by August 31?

If Maoist leadership and Jhlanath Khanal come with tangible programs, we still can make a difference. Our experiences with Maoists remains bitter as they always express commitments in words but they always avoid their implementation. We want to see the implementation of the programs. We are fed up with verbal commitments.

Don't you think your party is also responsible for the present political mess?

One of the main mistakes of Nepali Congress was that it agreed to hold the elections of the Constituent Assembly without completing the integration of Maoist combatants. Had Maoist combatants been integrated before the elections, Nepal would not have to face the present situation. As a politician, I should say this is our blunder. ■





Khanal Working For Peace, Statute

By PRAKASHJWALA

Nepal has been passing through a very critical time and it is the duty of all political parties to support any move to conclude the peace process and draft the new constitution. We have now less than a month left to meet the deadline for promulgating the new constitution. With the best interest of the people and country in view, Prime Minister Jhlanath Khanal has been working now. After a meeting with Prime Minister Khanal on Monday, UCPN-Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda also came out with a strong message to conclude the peace process. This is a positive development. If integration of Maoist combatants is carried out, the peace process will near conclusion. The commitments and schedules announced by Maoist leader Prachanda in the press conference are positive towards that direction. Political parties in Nepal have shown that they are much matured and that they agree on the issues of national agenda. Four years ago, all the political parties joined hands against the autocratic rule of monarchy. It is the unity of political parties which ushered in the new era in Nepal establishing it as a federal democratic and secular republic.

We signed the 12-point agreement with the Maoists and launched the joint agitation in April 2006. Due to the joint agitation, Janandolan II brought about the historic change. Given the past experiences, I still believe that we can make a change for the betterment of the country.

Prime Minister Khanal has been pursuing the cause of constitution and peace. This is one of the reasons the prime minister wants to constitute a national consensus government under his leadership. He proposed this to the main opposition party, Nepali Congress. If Nepali Congress leaders agree, Prime Minister Khanal will take necessary further steps. During the signing of the five-point agreement, Prime Minister Khanal said that he would quit

if once there is any possibility in forming a national consensus government. He still holds the view that if political parties bring a proposal for the national consensus government he is not going to create any obstacle.

I don't understand any reason behind blocking the parliamentary procedure by the main opposition Nepali Congress without any valid reason. Such steps will create more gaps and misunderstanding among the country's major political



PM Khanal

parties. I think this is the time for writing the new constitution and concluding the peace process. There is the need to develop greater consensus and harmony among the political parties so they can write the constitution. Minor irritants can create more trouble in future. Prime Minister Khanal has already made it clear that he will abide by the five-point agreement. This is his bottom line. He made this clear in meetings with Nepali Congress leaders. So far as the resignation of Prime Minister Khanal is concerned, it is not a political solution at all. He preferred a consensus government at this crucial juncture rather than a majority government. We have already seen that a majority government cannot solve the country's burning problems. This is the reason Prime Minister Khanal has made it clear that if the situation for national consensus government emerges, he will be ready to make sacrifices.

I am very much ashamed the way some

of our party leaders have been trying to misinterpret the decision of standing committee and central committee. The standing committee and central committee gave a clear cut mandate to Prime Minister Khanal to take necessary decisions in favor of peace and constitution. As long as Prime Minister Khanal's action is directed towards the constitution and peace, nobody can raise any question. Every individual has the right to speak his or her mind. This is a

democratic right and our party leaders too can exercise such rights.

So far as taking the decision regarding the government is concerned, it is Prime Minister Khanal's prerogative to reshuffle the cabinet. As per his prerogative, Prime Minister Khanal has reshuffled the cabinet, inducting nine ministers in it. Even our central committee and standing committee said so. Prime Minister Khanal is not only our party leader but he is also the prime minister of Nepal and it is the duty of the prime minister change and induct ministers in his cabinet. I don't think irresponsibility of some of our party leaders will not pay to strengthening our party but it will further weaken our party organization.

After induction of new Maoist ministers in the cabinet by Prime Minister Khanal, Maoist leaders have to show their commitment towards peace and constitution making. UCPN-Maoist leader Prachanda has already declared that he will show some tangible change within ten days regarding the peace process and constitution making. I don't think the words of leaders like Prachanda will vanish in the ears. By inducting Maoist ministers in the cabinet the prime minister has already completed his task and now it is the task of Maoist leader Prachanda to translate his commitments to reality.

(Jwala is Prime Minister Khanal's political advisor. This is taken from what he told Radio Nepal)



Ministers Taking Oath of Office

CABINET RESHUFFLE

A Misadventure?

Prime minister Jhulanath Khanal, in liaison with the Maoists, defies the party he heads to embark on a dangerous mission

By SAROJ DAHAL

Even as Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal reached agreement with prime minister Jhulanath Khanal at the latter's official Baluwatar residence on inducting the new Maoist faces into the cabinet, Maoist vice chairmen, Baburam Bhattarai and Narayan Kaji Shrestha were at senior UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal's private Koteswor residence to seek the latter's help resolve the cabinet expansion deadlock.

Nepal stood his ground and insisted on the immediate resignation of Khanal "to pave way for a national consensus government". And the two vice chairmen left there disappointed.

The drama at Baluwatar had just begun with a closed-door meeting

between Khanal and his confidantes including party vice-chairmen, Bamdev Gautam and Ashok Rai, where Khanal briefed them about "agreement" reached with Dahal.

The "agreement" was about the Maoists' commitment to begin "concrete moves" to move the peace process forward within a week.

Minister Ghanashyam Bhusal was entrusted with the task of working out the details so that the Maoist ministers could be inducted into the cabinet. But a minister present in the meeting said, "the prime minister had not agreed to induct the new ministers without additional agreement with Dahal, although we have not been briefed about that deal."

That Maoist chief Dahal decided to strike the "deal" with Khanal after a one-

to-one meeting instead of his customary practice of taking along colleagues with him in talks with the prime minister and that Khanal also chose to brief the "deal" to the trusted vice chairman Bamdev Gautam only lent credence to the suspicion that the two top leaders had some covert agreement.

This has alarmed the Bhattarai faction of the Maoists. Said a politburo member Devendra Poudel, "the latest developments have killed the possibility of a consensus government for now. We suspect something in the one-to-one deal between Dahal and Khanal."

Khanal had pledged to present the details of the deal at the party's standing committee meeting, but he did not dare, after seeing that even supporters like Bharat Mohan Adhikary and Yubaraj Gyawali did not side with him.

Clearly pushed to a minority in the committee, Khanal barged out of the meeting, spoke to Prachanda on his cell and rushed to Shital Niwas to administer oath of office to the new Maoist ministers.

Said a UML politburo member Pashupati Chaulagai, "Khanal's defiance of the party confirms that he trusts the Maoists more than own party for his survival."

By acceding to the Maoist pressure while ignoring the decision of the UML standing committee, Khanal has played into the hands of the former rebels at the cost of the unity of own party.

But even more serious casualty will be the peace process and the constitution-making, because the Maoists are unlikely to meet the two-week deadline that prime minister Khanal set to them to build "convincing" grounds to complete the peace process especially addressing the vexing issue of the Maoist combatants.

A day after the deadline, senior vice chairman of the Maoist party, Mohan Vaidya, ruled out acting on it. "It's out of question," he said. ■

POPULATION IN SOUTH ASIA

Challenges Galore

Nepal's population is estimated at over 28 million. The population of South Asia is projected to cross 1.5 billion at the end of 2012. The world population will hit 7 billion this year, and by 2050, 2.3 billion more people will be added on earth. No doubt, population is going to be a major challenge for developing countries like Nepal and regions like South Asia in the coming decades. Despite the declining total fertility rate and increasing accessibility to family planning and reproductive health services, most countries will face difficulties in meeting the demands of the growing younger population with the present level of intervention, investment and resources. Family planning and reproductive health, the crucial tools for population management, will be under tremendous strain. To worsen the situation, these instruments are rarely getting the required priority at policy levels.

By KESHAB POUDEL

Most of the South Asian countries, including Nepal, have seen a drastic change in their patterns of population growth in the last decade. However, eight South Asian countries, which have over 20 percent of the world's population, are sure to face many challenges in the coming days. Studies have shown that most of the world population will grow in the less developed region and countries in the coming decades and they will have to face many burdens and difficulties in development and

environment.

"What are the ... billion million populations ... for us?" They affect us and our livelihood. Thus, it matters to us. The trend indicates that the overall investment in family planning and reproductive health sector is still inadequate," said Dr. Saramma Thomas Mathai, regional team coordinator and Maternal Health Advisor (UNFPA - APRO). "When a woman in South Asia becomes pregnant, her survival cannot be assured. Countries of South Asian

region have a long way to go in meeting MDG targets. National figures mask intra-country differences, with maternal mortality and morbidity clustered around poor and rural populations. "Maternal mortality is an indicator of the poor functioning of the health systems, including poor infrastructure, lack of equipment and supplies, and shortage of skilled human resources. Inequalities in access are clear by the huge differentials in utilization of skilled birth attendants and life saving



South Asian Consultative Meet

caesarean sections in case of complication.”

At a time when there is a big need of investment in the family health and reproductive health sectors, it is difficult to make progress in the population management. Although Nepal too has invested a lot of resources in the areas of rural health infrastructure to provide facilities in family planning and reproductive health, they are still inadequate and insufficient.

The situation is similar to all the countries in the region. “Despite improvement in the maternal mortality, the life of pregnant woman is still unsafe in the Maldives,” said Uz Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed, SAARC secretary general. “In terms of infrastructure, we have built a lot in rural parts of Nepal, but it is difficult to claim that they provide quality services as well as offer reproductive health services to all needy people,” said Dr. Inu Aryal, head of family division at the Ministry of Population and Health. “There is still a long gap in supply side.” At a program organized by the International Council on Management of Population Program (ICOMP) in collaboration with South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Population Association of Nepal, with support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, government

representatives, parliamentarians, program managers and technical experts from SAARC countries raised various issue related to family planning and reproductive health.

“We need to focus on addressing the needs of men and women from South Asian Region, so that concerted efforts and interventions can be implemented towards achieving the ICPD and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),” said Dr. Wasim Zaman, executive director, ICOMP, Malaysia. “The aim of the two day program is to enhance the engagement of the parliamentarians and policy makers of South Asia along with the government representatives of policy makers, program managers and technical experts from the countries of SAARC region.”

Issues at stake are fertility trends, age at marriage, sexual and reproductive health behavior of adolescents and young people, contraceptive prevalence rates, reproductive health and family planning needs of poor segments of population, policy changes and its implications. Reproductive health is also regarded as the right of a woman. “The government must protect the reproductive rights of women by providing basic health services and family planning methods,” said Sapana Malla Pradhan, member of Nepal’s Constituent Assembly. The existing huge number of young and adolescent and youth population and growing

numbers of aging population are two major challenges that need to be addressed. There is the need of investment. Despite increase in the use of contraceptives and distribution centers, there is a huge gap in the supply side. As public bodies are responsible for the free supply of contraceptives, there has been mismanagement all the time.

Although even the private sector is involved in supplying contraceptives, the unmet need in Nepal is still over 40 percent. In South Asia, the percentage remains more or less the same. Here is the need for intervention. “We are still unable to meet the family planning needs of young and adolescent people whose role is important in population growth,” said Dr. K.G. Santhya of the Population Council of India. “If we are unable to meet the family planning needs of adolescents, the current population trend may go in a negative way.”

Experts argue that failure to meet unmet demands of family planning and contraceptives will bring unprecedented demographic upheaval. At the program inaugurated by Chairman of Nepal’s Constituent Assembly Subash Chandra Nembang, experts and parliamentarians shared their experiences in Regional Consultation with South Asian Parliamentarians and policy makers on Family Planning and Reproductive Health.



Population Management & Planning

By Dr. RAM HARI ARYAL

The main aim of this meeting (a regional consultation with parliamentarians and policy makers) is to involve parliamentarians and policy makers to understand the importance of population data and use them in socio-economic development planning and programs. This consultative meeting will also provide an opportunity to share the common issues on Family Planning and Reproductive Health and find out ways and means to overcome the problems that we are facing in South Asia.

This meeting is very appropriate and timely in SAARC region since the fertility transition is under way in these countries. In most of the SAARC countries, the demographic situation is facing with young age structure in their population composition. This is simply because fertility was very high in the recent past and started to decline lately. While discussing family planning and reproductive health issues, we have to address the need and demand of these young population.

Although the demographic situations of the SAARC countries are improving, such as both fertility and mortality rates are in decreasing trend, they are not as expected compared to economic development of the country. As we all know, family planning use directly or indirectly depends on various socio-economic and cultural factors of the country and it takes a long time to change these values and norms. It is also noticed that cultural aspects of the society are changing. In a situation of weakening cultural props there is a decline in the value of children in

Parliamentarians and delegates from SAARC countries attending the South Asian regional consultation on family planning and reproductive health underlined the importance of population management to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

“At a time when the countries of the region have been facing many challenges to manage the population, these kinds of consultations will provide

religious and social obligations.

Moreover, increasing educational facility and schooling have discouraged couples to have many children indicating that the traditional values attached to children are weakening in South Asia. As a result, acceptance of the small family size norm is gaining ground as more people aspire for a better life. This declining fertility in South Asia suggests that the social transformation taking place in the region is not only impinging upon the values of children



People attending meeting

but also the values attached to the gender of children. Moreover, the changing socio-cultural situation has also altered the family relationships and brought about pressure on families to have a smaller number of children. The fertility decline in the region is a result of change in family relationships due to socio-cultural change rather than significant economic change.

To accelerate ongoing socio-cultural change, the role of the parliamentarians is very important since they have close relationship with people at the grass root levels and also relationship and involvement at the top in policy level.

a common platform to share the knowledge and experiences,” said chairman Nembang. “This is very timely and highly significant.” One of the aims of the regional consultation was to increase commitments and adequate funding for addressing the unmet needs of the deprived and marginalized groups of population, including adolescents and youths in South Asia.

Demographic State of South Asia

Despite some good stories of success, we have still more challenges to face. The demographic improvements are focused on urban areas, educated population and good socioeconomic background of the country.

How to cover all population to increase family planning use, and how to empower economically backward population are the challenges in the region. We have to find out the gaps and focus on marginalized and socially and economically backward population and localities of the country. Most of the SAARC countries are eagerly waiting for fresh data from the census and Demographic and Health survey, which provide insights into the status of the family planning and reproductive health. Parliamentarians, policy makers and, also, the media should understand that population elements should be integrated in all areas of development process. Population is the denominator of development output and family planning is the main contributing factor for fertility decline in SAARC region. Understanding these issues, parliamentarians as leaders of the community, society and nation as a whole should act and provide leadership accordingly.

It is hoped that this meeting will address the common issues on and share the problems and find out the ways and means to resolve the problems that we are facing especially in family planning and reproductive health in South Asia. I would like to thank ICOM for this environment for the meeting of all the South Asian parliamentarians and policy makers together and for discussing the common issues of family planning and reproductive health.

(Dr. Aryal is secretary to Ministry of Science and Technology. Excerpts of the statement delivered at the Regional Consultation with Parliamentarians and Policy Makers on Family Planning and Reproductive Health in South Asia-Addressing the Challenges.)

Out of ten populous countries in the world, South Asia has three: India 1,224,614,000, Pakistan 173,593,000, and Bangladesh 148,692,000. According to an estimate, even Nepal has over 28 million population. Bhutan with over 700,000, the Maldives with over 400,000 and Sri Lanka 212, 83,913. According to an estimate, Sri Lanka has an estimated growth rate of 0.934 with infant mortality at 9.7 in 1000 and total fertility at 2.2.

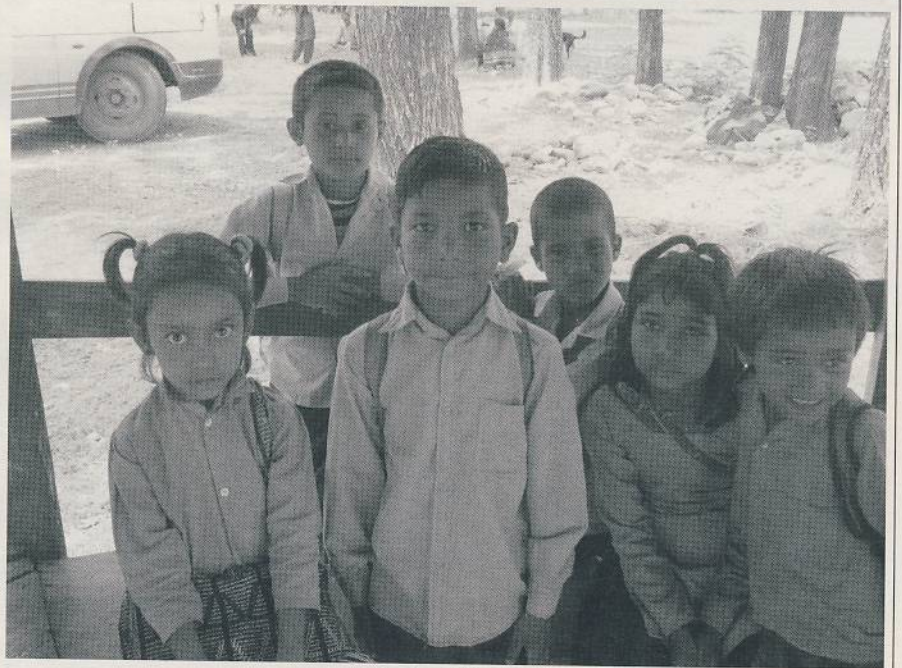
Afghanistan has one of the highest fertility rates with 5.39 and growth of 2.375. Infant mortality rate is 149.2 deaths in 1000. Bhutan's growth rate is 1.201 with total fertility 2.2 and infant mortality 44.48 per 1000. The population growth of Bangladesh is 1.566 with 2.6 fertility and infant mortality 50.73 in 1000. Pakistan's growth rate is 1.573 with 3.17 fertility and children and infant mortality 66.26 per 1000. Nepal's growth is at 1.596, fertility 2.47 children, infant mortality 44.54 and the Maldives has growth at 0.151 and infant mortality 27.45, with total fertility 1.81. India's population growth is 1.344, infant mortality 47.57 and fertility 2.62 children.

According to the data, the Maldives has 400,000 estimated population of the country. Similarly, Afghanistan, 298,35392, has the highest maternal mortality rate and high fertility rate. Sri Lanka is one of the countries in the region which is heading to negative growth. All these countries have been facing similar problems. The world population will hit 7 billion this year and will add 2.3 billion more by 2050, according to US researchers. As the population management becomes a major challenge, there is the need of strong political commitments and adequate funding to tackle it. Recent studies point out that nearly all of the 2.3 billion projected increases will be in the less developed regions, with nearly half in Africa.

These sizable increases represent an unprecedented global demographic upheaval, according to David Bloom, Clarence James Gamble Professor of Economics and Demography at the Harvard School of Public Health, in a review article published in *Science* on July 29, 2011.

The world's population has grown slowly for most of human history. It took until 1800 for the population to hit 1 billion. However, in the past half century, population jumped from 3 to 7 billion. In 011, approximately 135 million people will be born and 57 million will die with a net increase of 78 million people.

Already strained, many developing countries will likely face tremendous difficulties in supplying food, water,



Growing Child Population

housing, and energy to their growing populations, with repercussions for health, security, and economic growth.

While the percentage of elderly people in nearly every nation is growing, this aging trend is particularly stark in parts of Asia.

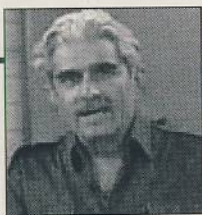
Projections indicate that the portion of the population age 65 and older will more than triple in China, and India. This demographic shift is coinciding with dramatic economic and social changes in Asia, including changing family structures and large-scale migrations from rural to urban areas. The two-day regional consultation, among others, discussed the key issues like fertility trend analysis, age at marriage, sexual and reproductive health behavior of adolescents and young people, contraceptive prevalence rates, reproductive health and family planning needs of poorer segments of the population, policy changes and their implications.

"The speakers highlighted the lack of appropriate policies to meet the needs of the young people in the areas of sexual, reproductive health and rights. They also discussed ineffective decentralization and devolution of power for family planning and reproductive health and gap between policies/laws and family planning and reproductive health programs especially for young

people," said Bhagabati Shedhai and Tej Adhikari presenting their views.

The current trends have raised critical questions about how nations can develop policies that best support public health and economic well-being in large and growing populations at older ages and adolescence. The time has come to act now. The longer the governments wait to respond, the more constrained their choices will be. "Governments in the South need to stress inter-sectoral collaboration for quality of Reproductive Health and Family Planning policies and programs. There is also the need of a mechanism to monitor, implement and develop programs for unmet needs of contraceptives as well as family planning," said Shiv Khare, executive director of Bangkok based AFPPD.

South Asian countries still have time to determine the best ways to respond to the unfolding demographic transformation but they need to act. "We need to have a collective voice in the parliament to raise the issues of family planning," said Norbu Wangzom, member of National Assembly of Bhutan. Members of parliament, policy makers and government officials agree that the present success, whatever little it may be, in demographic transition needs to be backed by strong family planning programs in reproductive health sector. This requires investment. ■



Nepal On The Brink, Again

By ASHOK K MEHTA

Nepal has hit a new crisis, this time not over the extension of the Constituent Assembly which is 28 days away but over the continuation of the five-month-old Government led by Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal and supported by the Maoists. Nepali politics has dug itself deeper into a hole. The threat by Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, better known as Prachanda, of withdrawing support made Mr Khanal hurriedly fall in line, accepting Maoist diktat in defiance of his party high command and the five-point agreement. He has bought time and, as the logjam following former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal's resignation shows, finding a new Prime Minister is a divine challenge for the Constituent Assembly.

'Old' Nepal's transformation to 'New' Nepal has hit a pause button. But the transformation of erstwhile Maoist guerrillas who see themselves as the flag-bearers of this change into a democratic political entity has made some progress. Out of power since May 2009, fresh churning of the party has thrown up new challenges and opportunities. The appetite for power and the lure of loaves and fishes of office have driven both the behaviour of the Maoists and the pace of the peace process. Despite the constitutional timeline of two years plus plus, there is little urgency over growing concerns of political instability which has fuelled the economic downturn and frustration among the people awaiting the Maoist miracle of a 'New' Nepal.

As key drivers of the peace process, Maoists have only last month resolved — rather, patched up — inner contradictions in the strategic methodology of securing power and their perceived prerogative to shape the contours of 'New' Nepal. They enjoy pre-eminence in the peace process by virtue of being the single largest party in the Constituent Assembly and the need for their political and military organisations

to be mainstreamed.

Maoists have been fixated on leading the Government to drive their agenda after their rule ended prematurely when un-constitutional means were employed to establish civilian supremacy over the Army. The latest ploy of the Maoists to wriggle back into Government and capture its leadership through a seven-point secret agreement with Mr Khanal was foiled by the unimplemented five-point agreement which allowed the three-month extension of the Constituent Assembly beyond May 28 this year. The Maoists secured Ministerial berths but Prachanda ordered Monday's reshuffle of the pack in order to

please different factions of his party according to a new

power-sharing arrangement within the high command.

While Prachanda remains chairman of the party (and retains parliamentary party leadership) he has been forced to delegate his other powers to the three vice-chairmen — Mr Mohan Baidya (organisation and discipline), Mr Baburam Bhattarai (prime ministerial candidate), Mr Narayan Kaji Shreshtha (leader of the new Ministerial team in the Khanal Cabinet) and general secretary Ram Bahadur Thapa, head of the PLA. This is the first exercise in decentralisation of power and more democracy in the party as a quid pro quo for the hardliners shelving 'revolt' and accepting the democratic political line for continuing the peace process. This is a Band-Aid on the peace process.

With just 28 days left for the third deadline for integration and drafting the Constitution to expire, Prachanda has said it is impossible to complete the

peace process by August 31. At best, an agreement on modality and specific numbers of PLA to be integrated is feasible. Separating Maoists from its parallel army will be a positive step. A status quo on the peace process is not surprising. Each of the four major parties — Maoists, Nepali Congress, United Marxist-Leninist and Madhesi — is deeply divided; yet the ruling Left alliance looks strong, though addressing the peace process is not a priority issue.

Mr Khanal acted in self-interest. While the Nepali Congress and members of his own party asked him to resign in deference to the five-point agreement to facilitating a national

With just 28 days left for the third deadline for integration and drafting the Constitution to expire, Prachanda has said it is impossible to complete the peace process by August 31.

unity Government, Prachanda demanded the reshuffle to accommodate Mr Narayan Kaji Shreshtha's team. A signatory to the five-point agreement, Prachanda is looking both ways: But he does not want Mr Babu Ram Bhattarai to become the Prime Minister of a future national unity Government.

Mr Khanal is doing what his predecessor, Mr Madhav Kumar Nepal did — echoing that he will step down as soon as a national unity Government is ready. This will shelve the peace process further. The next 28 days will be spent protecting the Government against the wrath of the divided Nepali Congress.

Nepal has tried all combinations of coalition Governments except one with the two political adversaries, Maoists and the Nepali Congress, together. For long it was known that only a national unity Government has any chance of bringing to fruition the unfinished peace process. Mr Bhattarai has been articulating the

need for a national unity Government to achieve a consensus on sticky constitutional issues.

Legal difficulties persist about extending the term of the Constituent Assembly any further. Last time, the Supreme Court served a show cause notice to President Ram Baran Yadav for extending the Constituent Assembly's tenure after the deadline had expired. The Supreme Court has overturned a verdict of November 4, 2010 which approved the one-year extension and the enabling Eighth Amendment. It argued that the interim Constitution had not thought of extension beyond two years: Except six months in an emergency. The doctrine of necessity allows extension of only six months of which three months will have been utilised by the end of this month. That leaves just three months to complete the peace process.

Surprisingly India-bashing is on the decline. No one is blaming New Delhi directly for the current political tensions which are the outcome of political formations being fractured irreparably. The Nepalese are happy that a new Indian team — Foreign Secretary, Joint Secretary and Ambassador — is taking the crease. The last two — Ambassador Jayant Prasad and Joint Secretary Akhilesh Mishra — are both Biharis and the latter has served in the Kathmandu mission.

Home Minister P Chidambaram told visiting Nepali editors last week that lack of a stable Government had impeded the peace process and enhanced security challenges for India, especially of terrorism and fake currency. He ruled out closing the 1,800 km border and instead called for its better joint management.

Only a national unity Government has a chance of reviving the peace process and restoring political stability, both imperatives for closure of the peace process and ushering in a 'New' Nepal with former Maoist guerrillas transformed into responsible citizens, soldiers and politicians. For this the collective blessings of the presiding deities of Swargadwari, Manakamana and Pashupatinath will be necessary. And Prachanda's good sense.

Courtsey : Pioneer

CORRUPTION

Slogans Against Political System

Slogans against corruption often tend to destabilize the political process

By KESHAB POUDEL

A group of youth and members led by Nepal's two prominent public figures Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansha Acharya handed over a memorandum to secretary of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority demanding stern action against the corrupt people.

The movement led by two public figures and other civil society members received nationwide support. Naturally, corruption is an evil of the society and it needs to be rooted out.

As Nepal has adequate laws to curb corruption and a super body like the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority to deal with it, political corruption

continues to rise. Even the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislature Parliament has been working to stop irregularities and corruption.

Given the last three decades of experiences in Nepal, the populist slogans of corruption always shake the political system. In 1990, one of the main charges against the Panchayat system was corruption though there was more powerful constitutional body than the present CIAA.

Populist leaders chanted slogans against corruption bringing a face Pampha Devi to project the symbol of corruption. Panchayat collapsed and a new era of multi-party democracy ushered with the liberal democracy. However, the euphoria of democracy did not last long.

Nepal's civil society members even hailed the violent Maoist movement as a result of scandal and corruption. The government introduced stunt act in 2001 making CIAA a body with sweeping powers. CIAA arrested many politicians

and government officials on the charges of corruption.

Nepal Green Party led by Kuber Sharma led the crusade against corruption and other many civil society organizations joined with them. A high level property commission was set up to check the property of the public officials. Finally, this round of anti-corruption drive ended in 2002 following the dissolution of House of Representatives.

King Gyandera came to the scene with the slogan against corruption following his tussle with late Girija Prasad Koirala who was given a clean chit after Janandolan II in 2006 by no other than CIAA chief



CIAA Secretary Bhagabati Kafle

Suryanath Upadhyaya.

Maoists and the seven party alliance used all kinds of corruption charges against King. Finally, Maoist, civil society and seven party alliance overthrew the 1990 constitution as well as monarchy. Now political parties are breaking all records in corruption and irregularities and Sudan scam has created a panic.

There are widespread accusations of corruption everywhere from member of legislature to ministers, political workers to government officials. It is yet to be seen what the simmering wave against corruption will do to the Interim constitution, or Constituent Assembly.

As long as the country has a weak institutional mechanism, every drive against corruption will destabilize the political system and constitutional process. Although organizers of new move declared that they will continue to fight against corruption, it is unclear where this campaign will end. ■

Lost In Rhetoric

- By TROY EDIGE

Democracy came to Nepal as a bitter victory. After ten years of The Nepalese Civil War (dubbed the People's War by the Maoists) and the death of almost 15000, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement finally brought peace and democracy to the country at great cost. Perhaps the Maoists were alone when they prompted the violent revolt, but they proved that they had the country's support when monarchy was abolished by popular vote. That momentum however has now been long lost, and very little progress has been made since the signing of the CPA. Now with only a few weeks left until the deadline for the constitution, many wonder whether it is going to end up as an empty promise.

Democracy, equality and freedom are often trumpeted as goals that make up the noble ideal of the Maoists. If they really mean these, there is a clear lack of disparity between their words and actions. In fact, what the Maoist leaders are doing directly undermine democracy. A 2006 BBC interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda sees him saying that UCPN-Maoist will be willing to work together with other political parties towards peace and prosperity. What has happened in reality however is that the Maoists have made every extra effort to make sure that they have a better standing than their counterparts. The recent cabinet reshuffle, alongside the one in May are testimony to this. By consolidating the position of their political elite, the Maoists are contradicting their own goal of putting an end to what they called "feudal rule". If they had any sort of political credibility and social capital five years ago, they have now run out of both. Although August 31st signifies the end of the constitutional period, the Maoists seem to be set to dominate the political scenes after the extended deadline. There certainly is no honour in preserving power through non-democratic means.

There is no honour in not keeping a promise either. Even though UCPN-M has promised to pursue peaceful ways,

they have a less-than-perfect record in contributing to the peace process, which is at the crux of the constitution that everyone is waiting for. Janardan Sharma, an ex-commander who has shed his weapons in favour of joining political ranks and is now a member of the Special Committee for Peace and Reintegration, attributes the lack of progress to disagreements between the political parties. Remaining loyal to the familiar line of rhetoric, he also underscores peace and advancing the interests of Nepali people as their ultimate objective, but



Maoist Combatants

makes it clear that "not only the soldiers, but the whole people will revolt" if the above goals are not fulfilled. This is certainly a sinister and somewhat contradictory remark coming from someone who is officially working for peace and reconstruction.

Sharma's words openly hint at the prospect of violence, but no one knows for certain whether the PLA really will take up arms once again. Witnessing life at one of the cantonments makes things even more confusing. The army whose actions contributed to the Maoists gaining political recognition is now not much more than a band of demobilised troops. Their weapons are stored and monitored in a special containment, and training is limited to two hours of physical exercise at dawn. After sunrise, soldiers change into plainclothes and the cantonment resembles an ordinary village, with the exception of armed guards at the gates. Living in the camps

for almost five years without any stated goal or purpose doesn't seem to have swayed the soldiers however. When asked why they joined the armed struggle in the first place, they talk about democracy and equality, echoing the rhetoric of their leaders. And perhaps unsurprisingly they also express their readiness to fight once more "for the people".

The CPA has clearly stripped the PLA of its functionality and much of its capacity, but of course it is almost impossible to make a Maoist admit this fact. Considering that the CPA is a legally binding document, the peace process should be settled once and for all. Behind the scenes however, there seems to be further strategy at work. As stated above, UCPN-Maoist is trying to strengthen its stock in the political arena. But it also has the possession of a wildcard in the form of the PLA. Even though they are largely demobilised, the presence of thousands of combatants who are apparently ready to fight makes for a good bargaining chip. Unfortunately for the soldiers though (of whom most are eager to integrate into the National Army), they remain as pawns at the hands of the political chess masters.

If uncertainty is a characteristic of Nepali politics, contradiction seems to be a characteristic of UCPN-M whose rhetoric and actions do not match up. At this point, the Maoists have to make two important decisions. The first is whether they will honour the promise they made to the people and work towards a Nepal that promotes democracy and equality. The second and equally important one is whether they will make a true commitment to peace and disarmament, which is an issue that must be settled before any progress can be made in rebuilding the nation. Unless they make the right decisions, the Maoists will lose whatever is left of their standing with their supporters. Whether they will lose their political standing is another question, for the democracy that was won at such a high cost seems to have already disappeared. ■

Kulekhani High Dam Was In Danger Of Collapse

By DR. AB THAPA



The Kulekhani high dam was in danger of being completely washed away just a few years after the completion of its construction. Implementation of extensive civil engineering works in a very short period based on the recommendation of a panel of top geotechnical experts from four different countries, viz the USA, Canada, Australia and Japan helped to prevent the disaster that could have resulted in many thousands of deaths apart from plunging the entire country into economic despair. How the Kulekhani dam was on the brink of collapse must serve as a lesson to our policy makers and planners. We can learn from it that even minor lapses in implementation of high dam projects could have disastrous consequences for the entire country.

Problematic Geology

Government was about to take the decision to implement the Kulekhani high dam hydropower project. It was a time when a few years earlier the world was terribly shaken by two major high dam disasters. In December 1959 the Malpasset Dam built in France had collapsed. Similarly, in 1963 in Italy the Vaiont Dam disaster was accompanied with a 200 feet high wall of water sweeping into downstream villages, wiping out everything in its path. Both disasters were consequent upon poor geology.

At that time I was not yet associated with the then Ministry of Water Resources though I used to take a great deal of interest in hydropower civil engineering problems of our country. I

got the impression that the geology of the Kulekhani dam area could be problematic based on general study of the project reports and site visit. I published about it in our daily newspaper "The Rising Nepal".

Storm of Criticism

Publication of my article to my great astonishment was met by a storm of widespread criticism. Even the newspaper like "Times of India" had reported that our government establishments as well as the World Bank authorities in Washington were terribly concerned about the issue raised in my article. Government had even published a statement to repudiate my viewpoint on geology of Kulekhani. Government too had good reason to be confident about the correctness of its statement because the investigation works as well as the design of that project was done by one of the world's leading consulting firm. It was rumoured that some critics had not hesitated even to demand punitive action against the publication.

The argument over Kulekhani high dam problems slowly subsided and it was almost forgotten. But the Kulekhani dam geology problem was out of the public attention only for a short period. Some years after the completion of the project construction all of a sudden our country was shocked by the

news that the Kulekhani high dam might be on the brink of collapse. At that time I was in the Ministry of Water Resources.

Looming Dam Disaster

Canadian Water Resources expert Dr. John Cooper had reported after his visit to the project site that deep cracks threatening to be extremely dangerous for the safety of the high dam have already developed over a large area just upstream dam around the intake structures. It was feared that a very large mass of the right bank would slide and plunge into the reservoir triggering the giant waves overtopping the earthen core dam. It became obvious that the Kulekhani dam was almost certain to collapse if prompt action is not taken to complete the necessary engineering works in time before the onset of the coming monsoon season to prevent the dam failure. A similar type of rock sliding into the reservoir had resulted in 1963 Vaiont Dam disaster in Italy.

The gruesome news about the imminent danger of dam disaster quickly spread and it was widely covered in local newspapers. Foreign experts and donor agencies operating in Nepal also were perplexed by this latest development in Nepal. Some foreign agencies appeared to have even started to sound out our government on the question of relocation of people at great risk in the event of dam failure.

Ironic Twist to the Event

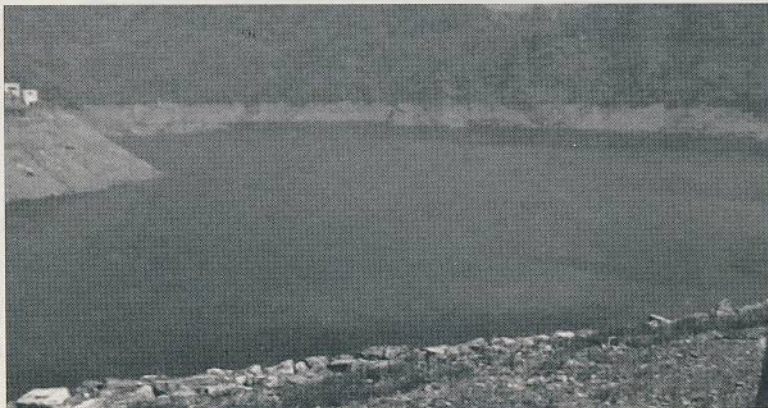
I, who had been blamed for misleading the government by publishing article about

the poor geology of the dam site, had to take the initiative on behalf of the Water Resources Ministry to help the top foreign experts to draw plans to prevent dam disaster consequent upon the poor geology of dam site.

Anyone visiting the Kulekhani dam site can even now see the extensive works carried out to prevent the dam failure. The intake and its surroundings have been anchored by long cables to prevent them from sliding into the reservoir. Large areas have been cleared of loose overburdens. Special drainage tunnels have been provided to prevent the landslides.

Conclusion

At present our country is heading for the implementation of the West Seti project that will have a 195 meters high cfrd type dam going to be the highest among this type of dams built so far, despite the fact that according to the article published in the INTERNATIONAL WATER POWER AND DAM CONSTRUCTION journal by Dr. Martin Wieland, Chairman of the Seismic Aspect Committee of the ICOLD (International Commission of Large Dams) this type of dam would be vulnerable in high seismicity areas like our Himalayan region. Needless to say that such gross negligence could be disastrous for our country. ■



Kulekhani Dam



WB Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Gorkhaland Leader Bimal Gurung and Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram

GORKHALAND MOVEMENT

Success Of A Sort

With their demands accepted, the people living in the hills of Darjeeling heave a sigh of relief

By UMA KANTA KHANAL in Jhapa

With the agreement to form Gorkhaland Territorial Authority (GTA), the Gorkhaland movement in the hill district of West Bengal, that is, Darjeeling, has been suspended. The movement was initiated by Gorkha Janamukti Morcha four years ago demanding a separate state for the Indian Gorkhas.

The agreement was signed on July 18 in a tripartite talk with representatives of central and state governments and the agitating Morcha by home secretary of West Bengal G. D. Gautam, organisational secretary of the central home ministry K. K. Pathak and general secretary of Gorkha Janamukti Morcha

Roshan Giri. The agreement was made public arranging a meeting in Pintail Village, Siliguri in the presence of union home minister P. Chidambaram, chief minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee and president of Gorkha Janamukti Morcha Bimal Gurung.

Gorkha Janamukti Morcha had eleven rounds of talks with the central and state governments. Morcha claims that the agreement is the positive result of those talks.

The territory has three subdivisions of Darjeeling district. They are Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. The same subdivisions were included in the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council, which was led by Subash Ghising. The

GTA will have 59 departments to operate. There were only 19 departments at the time of Ghising's administration.

GJM had demanded keeping Terai and Dooars areas in the territory but the agreement says that there will be a research in six months whether those lands will be involved in the territory or not. The administrative bodies of the territory will be elected within six months of the agreement. There will be fifty members in the administration. Forty five will be elected and five will be nominated.

The central and the state governments will provide a special package for the territory. "We are not dividing Bengal," chief minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee said while addressing the meeting in Siliguri, "We, the central and state governments are with you. You have to develop Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. You have to support us to develop Bengal."

Union home minister P. Chidambaram advised Gorkha leaders should use the package, not misuse it. Other pro-Gorkhaland parties have raised their voices against the GTA agreement saying that it is old whisky in a new bottle. Central committee member of Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League Pratap Khati said,

"The agreement is the greatest betrayal to the Gorkha people. The desire of Gorkha people was not autonomy but a separate state, Gorkhaland."

A similar kind of agreement was made in 1988 when the Gorkhaland movement led by Subash Ghising was in the peak. Dawa Pakhring, president of Gorkha Rajya Nirman Morcha, said, "The demand of Gorkhaland is not for making roads and buildings. But this is connected to the real identity of Indian Gorkhas."

But Gorkha Janamukti Morcha chief Bimal Gurung has said the original demand for Gorkhaland remains. "We have never said that we have withdrawn our demand for Gorkhaland," Gurung told reporters in Siliguri. When asked about the statement by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee that there would be no division of West Bengal, he replied, "That is absolutely her personal and political opinion." ■

“Trafficking Has Been Increasing In An Alarming Rate”

- KEDAR NATH UPADHYAY

Three sons of Krishna Prasad Koirala became prime ministers of Nepal. The family of KEDAR NATH UPADHYAY, former Chief Justice and the chairman of the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal, has similarly contributed in the modernization of judicial system in Nepal. His elder brother Bishwonath Upadhyay, who drafted the Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal 1990, served as the chief justice of Nepal's Supreme Court from 1991 to 1996. Upadhyay's another brother Bidhyanath Upadhyay is now the justice of Supreme Court. Born in Jaleswor, Mahottari District, Nepal on Feb 1939, Upadhyay obtained his basic degree from Patna University, India. He acquired his second degree in Law from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Besides, he completed a comprehensive course in Public International Law (including Humanitarian Laws and Human Rights Jurisprudence). He is also a diploma holder in Air and Space Law from the Institute of World Affairs, London (U. K.). Upadhyay was appointed in the present post on September 18, 2007. He has a long career in judiciary which includes twelve years in the Supreme Court of Nepal. He retired in 2004 after having served as a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court for a period of fourteen months. Apart from being the former Chief Justice and the present chairman of the NHRC, he has occupied several important positions in the past. He has served as a judge in various Regional and Zonal courts, Senior Government Advocate in the office of the Attorney General and Under Secretary in the Ministry of Law and Justice, Chairman of Administrative Court, member of Royal Commission on Judicial Reform and the director in the Board of Directors of Rastriya Banijya Bank. Chairman of National Human Rights Commission



Upadhyay spoke to SHRADHA GYAWALI at his office regarding human rights situation in Nepal. Excerpts:

What is the state of human rights in Nepal? Do you think people are aware of their rights and duties? What are you doing to educate them?

Well, lots of people do not have an idea. NHRC and Civil Society Organizations are trying their best to educate the masses. There has been a lot of progress in the last 5-6 years in the conceptualization of this term. NHRC has started this kind of awareness generation through Sagarmatha FM, our own fortnightly bulletins and other publications.

How do you view the issue of disappearances and abuse of human rights?

I can say the situation is alarming. However, National Human Rights Commission has been taking all measures to reduce human rights violation. We have already recommended actions against those involved in human rights

abuse. The commission has also been working on issues of disappearance. The commission has been seriously watching the situation and taking necessary actions.

Human Trafficking is a global issue today, how do you view it?

Trafficking indeed has been a great issue. Hundreds of Nepalese are trafficked every year. Our country accounts for both internal (trafficking within the country) and external (trafficking between countries) trafficking. We do not have an exact data but on an average 15-20 thousand Nepalese are trafficked every year.

What is the state of girl trafficking?

It has been increasing in an alarming rate and is a major problem today. We have strong laws to control trafficking; I don't think that legal instrument alone is a solution to this problem. This is mainly due to poverty, illiteracy, backwardness and discrimination of young girls. Unless these problems are addressed laws cannot make much of a difference.

What are the different activities of the NHRC?

We are now on a three-year strategy plan which covers 2010-2012. We have yet to discuss this plan. Our plan will be particularly focusing individual and economic rights.

What is your impression about evolution of modern judiciary in Nepal?

In the last six decades, Nepal has made a tremendous progress in the areas of rule of law and evolution of judiciary. In the present context too, it has gone through a long process. Even I have served at various stages of judiciary before my retirement as chief justice.

Where do you see yourself a few years from now?

After two years, I plan to retire. I have already worked for 50 years. I think I should relax and look back at what I had been doing. I will also try and see if my experiences could be useful for the future in any way.

What was school like for you as a child?

My father was a civil servant. He got transferred to different places due to which I had to shift from one school to the other. My childhood education wasn't very well planned. I did not get consistent education. I joined different schools in Jaleshwore, Biratnagar, Benaras, and finally joined Padmodaya in Kathmandu from where I completed my SLC examinations.

Of all the things that you have learnt from your parents what do you think was most valuable?

Honesty and sincerity have been the two major things that I have learnt from my parents. It's because of their teachings that I am here today. The value that they have instilled in me has proved to be one of my greatest assets all these years.

You are at the age of 72, having had a long working experience, what greater difference can you make now?

I think I can still make a difference. I am ready to contribute as much as I can to my country before I retire. ■



PM Khanal at Singhadurbar Secretariat

BUREAUCRACY

Politicized ?

As it is, the promotion in bureaucracy is often unpredictable

By A CORRESPONDENT

When Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal ordered chief secretary Madhav Prasad Ghimire to summon the meeting of the promotion board, he reportedly gave assurances to one of the joint secretaries that he would be promoted.

With the initiative of Prime Minister Khanal, the meeting was summoned and 15 joint secretaries were selected as possible candidates for the post of secretary as legal requirement.

When the final list of the candidates was proposed at the cabinet meeting, the prime minister's own nominee failed to get the promotion. A cabinet meeting promoted five joint secretaries ignoring the seniority list recommended by the Promotion Committee.

Out of 15 recommended by the committee, Lalmani Joshi, Madhav Regmi, Tulsi Sitaula, Bishwo Prakash Pandit and Suresh Man Shrestha have been promoted to the post of secretary though they were in the fourth, sixth, 10th, 11th and 14th places in the seniority list.

"There is nothing like this and secretaries are promoted on the basis of

their qualification and their experiences. There has been a tendency in civil service to criticize the process when some body does not get promotion," said a secretary on condition of anonymity.

Unlike in the past, this time one of the most predicted candidates Dr. Krishna Chandra Paudel, joint secretary at the Ministry of Soil Conservation, failed to be promoted to the position of secretary. It is reported that CPN-UML affiliated Employees Association protested Dr. Paudel's promotion. The cabinet also dropped Arjun Bhandari who was reportedly in the number one place in the list of 16 candidates. Many see this is a serious blow to the seniority and working performance criteria.

Bureaucratic values and system of promotion are gradually getting derailed in the country and the political maneuvering and political affiliation count much in the promotion to higher positions. "Nepal's bureaucracy is too much politicized; the norms, chains and seniority criteria are gradually breaking," said Dr. Bhimdev Bhatta, administration expert.

The State Of Flux

By YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram has expressed his concern over the prolonged political instability in Nepal. During his interaction with newspaper editors from Nepal recently, Chidambaram made it clear that the uncertainty in Kathmandu has wider implications, and India has reasons to worry about the situation in a country with which it shares more than 1,800 km of open border.

It may be a coincidence, but Chidambaram's statement came soon after US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asked India to play a more assertive role in south Asia, specifically Sri Lanka and Nepal. But what Clinton overlooked was that India had played a leading role in creating a road map in November 2005, and that the international community had mostly gone along with that. The new identity envisioned by them was a Federal Republic of Nepal in the place of a unitary and constitutional monarchy, and its institutionalisation through a new constitution. The constitution is nowhere in sight. And the political flux continues.

On Monday, Prime Minister Jhulanath Khanal inducted nine new Maoist ministers into his council of ministers, taking the total number of Maoist ministers to a dozen, ignoring the disapproval of his party, the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), and that of the main opposition, the Nepali Congress. He has not only defied the instruction of his party's standing committee but has also dared it to take disciplinary action. Khanal had come to power as a stop-gap prime minister, but he has consolidated his position by allying with Prachanda.

The entrenchment of the radical left in Nepal's politics will be a headache

for both India and the US, since its worldview remains unchanged. So, the concerns expressed by both Clinton and Chidambaram will be viewed in many ways in Kathmandu. Back in 2005, the US was a late entrant in the India-led international solidarity fold as it had reservations about working with the Maoists — which were still on the US terrorist list — and since it believed monarchy was a stabilising factor in conservative Nepal.



PM Jhulanath Khanal (Right) meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Nepal

Six years later, a politics of consensus, one that is required to draft a new constitution and facilitate a smooth transition, is missing in Kathmandu. Nepal's politicians have not only failed the people, but India and the rest of the international community as well. Chidambaram was voicing that concern. Meanwhile, most Nepalese lump India along with the Nepali political players of the 2005-06 change for the current instability. The worse, it seems, is yet to come. For, the politicians who stood together during the mass movement in 2005-06 are a divided lot now. The radical left has consolidated its grip on power, and moderate parties have been marginalised. A weak and divided Nepali Congress is reduced to a feeble opposition.

The new developments in Nepal will continue to be on India's radar. China too thinks that it has a lot at stake in Kathmandu. It claims that a nexus of

international donors and NGOs is promoting anti-Chinese and Free Tibet activities in Nepal, and has asked the government to stop that. It is in the light of these complaints that the government has asked for details of international aid agencies and NGOs. Diplomatic missions too have been asked to furnish details of their employees who do not enjoy diplomatic privilege. About 50,000 foreigners are estimated to be working in Nepal. Even the US embassy is being probed currently for granting US visas to some Nepali citizens as "Tibetan refugees". The action is not just a follow-up to China's complaints, but is also an attempt to address wide concerns that, with the authority of the state collapsing, foreign agencies are using Nepal as a playground to further their interests, rather than assisting Nepal's peace process.

China's new ambassador to Nepal, Yang Houlan, recently told this columnist that as a good neighbour, it wants Nepal to be a stable and prosperous country and that it should be able to sort out its problems on its own instead of depending on others. He also said China has no desire to compete with India in Nepal. However, China has one advantage over India: it was in no way involved in the political change of 2005-06, like India and the West. It only approved the radical change once it came into effect in April 2006. So it has been spared the blame for the current mess.

Courtesy Indian Express

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Gender In Emergencies



By RADHA PAUDEL

National and international media have been highlighting the tragedies of people of Nepal, especially women, girls and children, trapped in natural and human made disasters including floods, landslides, fires, epidemics, starvation, chronic malnutrition, and conflict.

These are called emergencies or humanitarian situations. None of the places could be wished to be free from all sorts of emergencies in the world. Both natural and human made emergencies or humanitarian situations are happening everyday in both developed and developing countries. To some extent, these emergencies are predictable, preventable and manageable. But we can't control them fully. Hence, prevention and efficient response are always crucial everywhere. Nepal is among the most vulnerable countries in terms of such emergencies. Every year, during monsoon, Nepal witnesses devastating landslides in hilly areas and floods in 17 southern districts, where many people lose their lives, family members, and properties. On an average, Nepal loses two lives a day from natural disasters such as floods, landslides, fires, droughts, and epidemics (cholera, dengue, HIV and influenza). Likewise, estimated 3.5 million people have been struggling with moderate malnutrition due to food insecurity in Nepal (NHP-2011). Likewise, the far and mid-west have always come to the limelight in the media due to diarrheal diseases. In case of Kathmandu, the earthquake is the most dangerous threat as it falls in the tenth seismic prone zone in the world.

Regardless of the nature of disasters and places, women always are at greater risk due to gendered roles, responsibilities and expectations. Seventy five percent disaster affected people comprise of women and children (WHO, 2011). Even during disasters, women have to play many roles such as caring for children, elders, and injured. The social safety nets (celebrations of festivals, religious events, informal groups, networks, neighborhood etc),

physical facilities (health, education, communication, police etc) and family breakdown (dead or separated) are also weakened and disturbed by disasters. They are the most vulnerable to sexual abuse and violence as well by many names and at various forms. Most of these women do not know much about the legal policies in general as well as responses to disaster. They are often unable to get the information well, consequently they are trapped by mental pressure as well as physical exploitation. Sometimes, they are tortured by the service providers or those involved in the response.

This is not a new issue. As gender is not considered in several other sectors, disasters prevent and response team members largely ignore policies and field level interventions to help women. Nepal Humanitarian Action Plan 2011 is an ironical example of it. The entire work plan is less gender responsive. It doesn't give space for different needs, interests, aspirations, expectations and roles of women, men and transgender (gender identity) people. The work plan mentions vaguely, or doesn't concretely spell out rights of women, children or gender based violence. Unless and until, there is a system to examine the disaggregated data of survivors (victims), it is hard to address the gender concerns. Even, this document has missed the logical links among the strategic objectives, overall activities and outcomes for women, men, transgender and children. In this scenario, how can survivors benefit from spending such a huge deal of money by various actors in regards to prevention and response of disasters?

Gender Based Violence, especially sexual violence, is serious and life threatening for women and children. GBV or sexual violence violate human rights issues as defined by national and international human rights instruments. Especially, these rights include right to personal security, right to highest

attainable standard of physical and mental health, right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and the right to life.

Most of the actors who are involved in prevention and response of disasters should consider the gender needs, interests and aspirations as well as cultural norms, values and local contexts. If that is not done, another disaster or worthless efforts, such as during the Koshi floods of 2008, would



be waiting. In the flood response package, there was nothing for the mothers who had children except for sanitary towels that receivers never used due to lack of knowledge about this. In order to avoid such scenarios as well as to protect the human rights of women, children, transgender, elder, and disabled people, the policy makers and field workers during emergencies should follow tools such as Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines, GBV Coordination Handbook, and WHO ethical guidelines. A few organizations as well as actors have started using the tools. The district disaster coordination committees, women activists, and national policy makers should know about these thoroughly. The data management system about GBV needs to be upgraded so the centre can collect them and use them in an organized manner. Massive information, education and communication are also equally important in the response and prevention of GBV in humanitarian setting. ■



Need Of Victim-Witness Protection

By REENA PATHAK BASHYAL

A victim is someone who suffers direct or threatened physical, emotional or financial harm as a result of commission of a crime. A witness is someone who has information or evidence concerning a crime and provides information regarding this knowledge to the law-enforcing agency.

It is a fact that witnesses play a crucial role in determining an offender's guilt. A study shows that every year thousands of cases are lost on their merits because they lack a witness. There have been instances wherein family members, lawyers and victims have been threatened and compelled to become hostile. The prosecution in such cases receives continuous threats from the accused, and as a result, witnesses decline to appear before the Court. In most cases victims become stigmatized and do not dare file complaints, fearing insecurity and difficulties at the police stations, in

and in the State Cases Regulation 2055. These laws provide for the traveling allowance to the victim-witness. However, much more needs to be done. Besides these provisions, the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2064 and its regulation, provide security to witnesses while traveling and in the course of attending the case's proceedings in the court. These regulations also keep the witness under police protection for a period of time and provides for rehabilitation at a rehabilitation center.

Realizing the need of victim-witness protection laws in the country, the Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) has filed a writ petition before the Supreme Court of Nepal. In response, the Supreme Court issued a directive order to the government to take necessary steps to prepare a separate law in order to create a victim-witness protection and assistance program.

Further the court issued a writ of mandamus to the Ministry of Finance and Police Headquarter to provide a travel allowance to

government witnesses according to the existing laws. The court also issued a directive order to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Police Headquarter to establish a taskforce to prepare an interim work plan on victim-witness protection and to execute it. The Court also ordered a Witness Protection Officer appointed, that a witness protection and assistance section at police headquarter be established, and that a witness protection and assistance committee in every district be established under the convener of Head of District Police Office.

If we look at international efforts on victim-witness protection, we find that the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime calls upon state parties to take appropriate measures to protect witnesses in criminal proceedings from threats, intimidation, corruption or bodily injury, and to strengthen international cooperation in this regard.

Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power adopted by General Assembly

Resolution 40/34 of 29 November 1985 discusses access to justice and the fair treatment of victims. Victims should be treated with compassion and their dignity respected. They are entitled to access the mechanisms of justice and to prompt redress, as provided for by national legislation, for the harm that they have suffered.

Judicial and administrative mechanisms should be established and strengthened where necessary to enable victims to obtain redress through formal or informal procedures that are expeditious, fair, inexpensive and accessible. Victims should be informed of their rights in seeking redress through such mechanisms.

In 2007, the U.N. Committee against Torture (CAT) expressed its concerns regarding the lack of witness protection and recommended adopting appropriate legislative and administrative measures to ensure that all persons who report acts of torture or ill-treatment are adequately protected.

So we see that the Court has issued a remarkable decision in favor of protecting victims-witnesses, and now the question is how to implement this court decision and create these programs and laws. This is all dependent on the willingness of the state machinery. State should enact the law for the protection of victim-witnesses. State should educate victims and witnesses about the criminal justice system, escorts victims and witnesses from the reception area to the courtroom, assists victims with the prompt return of personal property, arrange accommodation and transportation services, informs victims and witnesses of the availability of witness fees and reimbursement of expenses, provide counseling support and advocacy within the justice system, etc. For this, everyone should take the necessary steps from their respective places to create the consolidated law.

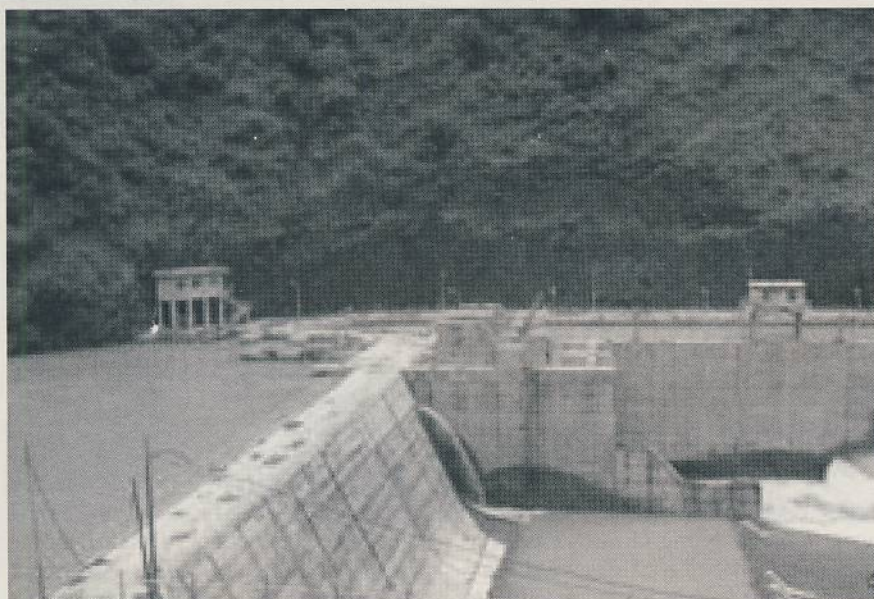
In sum, the protection of victims and witnesses must be given top priority in our Legislative enactment and administrative policies. The State should develop a protection program that provides information and support to victims and witnesses. Presently, there is fear and impunity and a comprehensive witness protection is the need of the hour. ■

Reena is an advocate

The court also issued a directive order to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Police Headquarter to establish a taskforce to prepare an interim work plan on victim-witness protection and to execute it.

the courts and in society. Along with this, there is a rising trend in organized crime, human trafficking and drug trafficking which worsen the situation. In this context, victim-witness should have the right to be protected from intimidation and harm. In addition, they should have the right to reparations, the right to be treated with dignity and compassion, the right to counsel, the right to be informed concerning the criminal justice process and the right to privacy.

Different countries of the world have designed their own victim and witness protection program. These programs provide services to the victim-witness and ensure that the voices and needs of crime victims remain uppermost throughout the judicial process. These programs give information on how to get help after victimization. In spite of the increasing crime rate in the country, the legislator has not adopted measures to protect victim-witness, and there is no comprehensive law on victim-witness protection in Nepal. However, there are few provisions regarding witness protection under States Cases Act, 2049,



Bhotekoshi Hydro Power Project

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

American Interest

Even as several industries are struggling to cope with the industrial unrest, American Chamber of Commerce-India has shown interest to invest in Nepal

By DEBESH ADHIKARI

Uncertain politics continues to steal news headlines and keep foreign investors at bay. Yet, a delegation of the American Chamber of Commerce in India has sounded a positive note in the midst of worries about the growing industrial unrest and worsening economy.

A delegation from the American Chamber of Commerce in India completed a three-day visit recently. The trade mission, the first by a U.S. business organization in 13 years, explored investment and trade opportunities in Nepal.

A US Embassy press release said, "This important visit demonstrated the renewed American interest in Nepal's economy. Building on the recently signed U.S.-Nepal Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), the Embassy hopes to expand the economic ties between the United States and Nepal."

Nine U.S. companies took part in the delegation, including Johnson & Johnson, GE Healthcare, Rockwell

Automation, Monsanto, and Bell Helicopter. The delegates met with the Prime Minister, senior government officials, political leaders, private sector companies, and U.S. Embassy officials.

Addressing a press conference, the business leaders said that they would study to see which areas would offer them advantage.

"Time has come to stop looking at Nepal from the lens of conflict and start looking beyond political issues and start rebuilding; time has come to change," said American ambassador to Nepal Scott H. DeLisi at the press meet.

To explore the various business propositions, Aniruddha Lahari, the vice president of the American Chamber of Commerce in India, and his team recently visited Nepal.

Lahari said, "I and my team members have been able to facilitate the chance of exploring Nepal, Nepal is not a land free of challenges and obstacles, but the business propositions, viable and strong ones, can succeed here."

Lahari and his team met prime minister Jhalanath Khanal, cabinet

ministers, political leaders, senior bureaucrats and local investors." We received positive vibes from all the people we met and that has led to a sense of satisfaction," Lahari said.

There are diverse business opportunities for foreign investors in Nepal. The naturally blessed land has various unexploited areas which can be attractive to any foreign investor. Sectors like hydropower, transportation, IT, and tourism offer big opportunities and are preferable investment sectors, said Lahari. Besides, the government is already in talks with American Embassy on the possibility of American investments in various sectors.

When asked about the scope of foreign investments, Lahari answered, "The initial investments will be primarily focused to tap the domestic market but in the course of time the markets in India and China can also be capitalized."

But foreign investment, especially from India, is not well received and supported by various political parties to make Nepal an ideal investment destination. In the past, various issues have put foreign investment in jeopardy. The instant strikes and bands do not help the investment climate get any better.

The recent attempt to sabotage the Indian company GMR (the developer of Upper Karnali Hydropower project) by Maoists has raised a few eyebrows in the international business arena, sending negative messages to the potential foreign investors. But the government's decision to protect the site by using armed personnel mitigated the situation. Regarding this incident, Lahari said, "It was an unfortunate incident which has given the wrong signals, but this isolated event shouldn't be generalized and it does not reflect the overall foreign investment situation in Nepal," adding, "We have been assured by the government to provide security to the investments and to take care of the labor issues and strikes but assurance only is not enough, the government has to demonstrate their commitments."

Despite all the uncertainties in the country, Lahari assured he would convey positive impressions about Nepal as a potential investment destination to his colleagues and investors in US, India and other nations. This has raised hopes for the advent of the foreign investments. ■

Caste-Neutral Provinces Work Better

By UPENDRA BAHADUR BK



The CA Committee on Restructuring the State and Distribution of State Powers has proposed fourteen provinces for Nepal. Eight provinces – Limbuwan, Kirant, Sherpa, Tamsaling, Newa, Tamuwan, Magrat and Jadan belong to ethnic identities of indigenous nationalities. In the context of Madhesh, two provinces – Mithila-Bhojpur-Koch Madesh and Lumbini-Awad-Tharuwan have been proposed. Remaining four provinces – Sunkoshi, Narayani, Karnali and Khaptad have been traced following identities of hill caste people. The very committee had taken capability and identity as determinants of provinces. However, it ignored economic inter-cooperation and capability, feasible state of infrastructural development, availability of natural resources and administrative proximity under capability. Another irony is that the committee

had set up the provision of having more than one percent of population of the

country to get provinces. Sherpa and Jadan provinces became exception to it.

Sherpas constitute of 36 percent of 89,000 populations spreading over an area of 5,000 square kilometers whereas Jadan Province, occupying an area of 15,000 square kilometers, owns 35 percent (Bhote-Lama) of 48,000 populations. Limbuwan Province owns 933,000 populations spreading over an area of 9,000 square kilometers along with 27 percent Limbus. Kirat Province covers an area of 8,000 square kilometers with 896,000 populations with 34 percent of Kirats. Mithila-Bhojpur-Koch-Madesh Province occupies an area of 14,000 square kilometers with 6,940,000 populations covering 49 percent of Madheshis. There is plurality of Madheshis within the province. With 699,000 populations, Sunkosi Province covers an area of 5,000 square kilometers including 26 percent of Chhetris. Tamsaling Province holds an area of 10,000 square kilometers with 1,419,000 populations sharing 44 percent of Tamangs. Newa Province expands to an area of 1,000 square kilometers with 1,702,000 populations sharing 36 percent of Newars. With 1766,000 populations, Narayani Province expands to an area of 8,000 square kilometers sharing 27 percent of Brahmans.

Spread over an area of 12,000 square kilometers, Tamuwan Province owns 571,000 populations with 32 percent of Gurungs. Covering an area of 15,000 square kilometers, Magarat Province holds 2,012,000 populations

constituting 34 percent of Magars. Lumbini-Awad-Tharuwan Province spreads over an area of 15,000 square kilometers with 3,765,000 populations comprising 26 percent of Tharus. Karnali Province, covering an area of 18,000 square kilometers, owns 987,000 populations with 42 percent of Chhetris. Occupying an area of 14,000 square kilometers, Kaptad owns 1,151,000 populations accounting for 54 percent of Chhetris. Karnali and Khaptad have become one culture dominant provinces accounting with presence of hill castes. All remaining provinces are multi-cultural with remarkable dwelling of hill castes and indigenous nationalities. However, they are dubbed as pro-ethnic. Such ethnic biased architecture of provinces will create hurdle to determine political status, pursue economic, social and cultural development for people

internalized 'Nation' in light of cultural-pluralism. The article 3 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007, has legitimized that 'having multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural characteristics with common aspirations and being united by a bond of allegiance to national independence, integrity, national interest and prosperity of Nepal, all the Nepalese people collectively constitute the nation'.

In multi-cultural countries like ours, the extreme level of segmentation leads to a series of conflicts in the name of identities. Nigeria is a sound example of how ethnic federalism paves ground for political and social divide. Currently she has been fragmented into 36 states. In 1947, Pakistan seceded from India in the name of Muslim identity. Even after formation of the Muslim country, Bangladesh emerged from eastern Pakistan in 1971. Of late, Bangladesh is not out of identity politics. Its crisis is deepening and unfolding into one after another.

The stated objective of transformation of Nepali patrimonial state into federalization is to create multi-tiers of governance through constitutional division of power and resources to reverse pre-eminence of affluent class in social, political, administrative and economic structures of governance. In Nepal, the spatial exclusion is reflected through disparities in development levels owing to the remoteness and location-specific characteristics. Gender-based exclusion is manifested in poor development indicators for women and the caste/ethnicity-based exclusion of specific castes, communities, indigenous people and nationalities are leading to low level of development achievements. To make caste, ethnicity and geography issues less divisive, multi-cultural provinces neutral to caste and ethnic groups should be proposed in a range of five to seven paying due attention to capabilities as primary and culture, historical continuity and ethnicity, secondarily. Dalits, Janajatis, women, Madheshis, deprived regions and others have to have equitable shares in governance, civil administration, policy, army, commissions and constitutional bodies. Parallel structures to local governments should not be created. It is necessary to curb vertical and horizontal discriminations through institutionalization of equal distribution of resources to all people in a community and society, and redistribution of resources to end significant discrepancies between people.

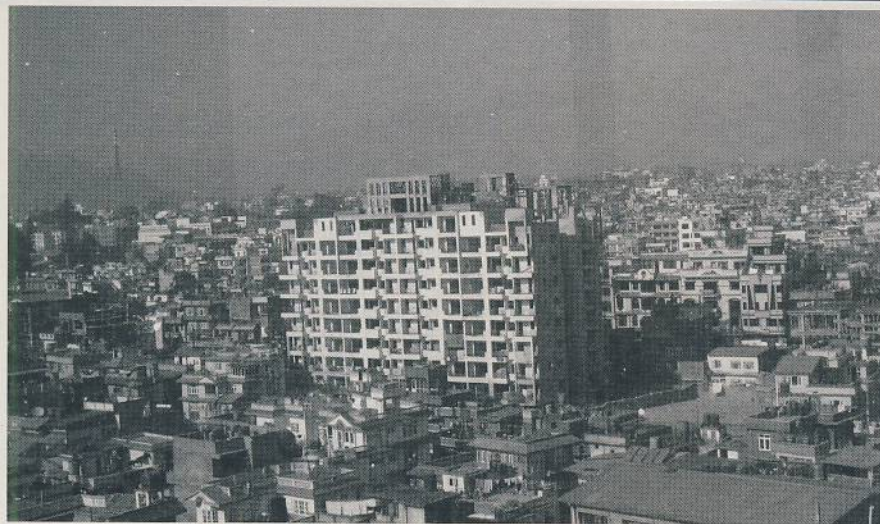
(BK is a researcher at Nepal Center for Contemporary Studies, NCCS).

Nepal is a multicultural country with more than 101 caste and ethnic groups, more than 10 religions and more than 92 languages. From eastern to western ecological belts of Nepal, most of ethnic and caste groups are dispersed, rather than concentrating within certain territories.

regardless of different ideologies, caste and ethnic backgrounds.

A provision of prime rights on executive offices of provinces and autonomous regions has been proposed to concerned ethnic groups for two consecutive terms whose name has been attached to provinces. Even the provision of 'Special Structures' – Autonomous Regions, Protected Regions and Special Regions, parallel to local governments with additional powers and resources are entirely ethnic centric. Some 23 dissenting opinions have been registered against the main proposal of concerned CA Committee regarding such impracticable federalization of Nepal. Of them, 12 opinions belonged to delimitation of boundary of provinces. It is clear that such federal anatomy far beyond the interdependency of demography and geography, possibility of socio-economic and infrastructural development, governance proximity to the doorstep of citizens and cultural co-existence will be source of ethnic conflicts and political divide.

Nepal is a multicultural country with more than 101 caste and ethnic groups, more than 10 religions and more than 92 languages. From eastern to western ecological belts of Nepal, most of ethnic and caste groups are dispersed, rather than concentrating within certain territories. The state of demography correlates to co-habitation of several caste and ethnic groups in the given territories across the country. Constitutionally, Nepal has



KATHMANDU

Vulnerable Climate

The impact of climate change will be more devastating in the capital because it is already facing several problems

By DEBESH ADHIKARI

Nepal is one of the earthquake prone countries of the world. So, a strong earthquake hitting it in the near future is a looming possibility. What is worse, recent reports have ranked Nepal as one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change as well.

Since there is a strong linkage between cities and climate change, it does not come as a surprise that Nepal is vulnerable to climate change. Nepal is the least urbanized country in Asia but its rate of urbanization is among the highest at 6.4%. Urban areas currently comprise 18% of the country's population. In the future, numbers are expected to reach new heights due to migration of people from rural parts to the urban areas and that could further enhance climate change.

Urbanization affects climate change, and climate change could impact cities, ecosystems and livelihood. Against this backdrop, at a function organized by UN Habitat, Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning and Ministry of Environment, experts pointed out the need to take appropriate measures to meet the challenges.

"Nepal has already imitated steps to reduce the impact of climate change," said Krishna Gyawali, secretary of Ministry of Environment. "The government has mobilized the local

bodies to cope with the situation."

Kathmandu, the capital of the nation, is the most vulnerable city to the impacts of climate change compared to other cities of the country. People in the valley have already started facing climate related problems, especially the horrendous pollution level. The air is heavily polluted due to industries and poorly maintained vehicles. The fate suffered by the rivers flowing within the valley is far worse than the air floating above. The situation of land is even worse and due to vehicles the noise level is deafening.

"Due to rise of temperature, countries around the world have been facing severe environmental problems," said Andre Dzikus, Chief, Water and Sanitation Section, UN Habitat, Nairobi.

Chief technical advisor of UN Habitat South Asia Bhushan Raj Tuladhar said that 31 percent of Nepal's population is living in Kathmandu Valley and population growth in urban areas in Nepal is 6.4 percent. "There is the need to increase the number of programs to cope with the climate change in urban areas," said Tuladhar.

Impacts of climate change

Climate change could be devastating. Global warming is one the major consequences of climate change and it could lead to various major

problems. "Rise in temperature related to global warming is associated with changes in rainfall patterns (such as less frequent but more intense rainfall events), increasing frequency and intensity of floods, changes in monsoon on- and offset, longer dry spells and drought events, increasing storms, and a growing threat from Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF)," reads a statement in NAPA (National Adoption Program Of Action To Climate Change) website.

Extreme weather events, natural disasters, change in level of water resources, increased risk in public health, food contamination, damage in infrastructure and buildings are a few of the major impacts of climate change.

"The government is now working under the National Climate Change Policy and NAPA to reduce the impact of climate change," said Batu Krishna Uprety, joint secretary and chief climate change division of Ministry of Environment.

Climate change is mostly linked with negative impacts, but, there are a few hidden benefits of climate change. Rainfall in the mountainous areas where there has been no rain for ages yields in increased fertility of land and could make life more favorable in those areas.

Furthermore, unceasing rain in the summer season could make days cooler and more preferable. Global warming helps in making winter days hotter. "Nepal's urbanization took place without adequate infrastructures in the city areas," said Suresh Prasad Acharya, joint secretary at Ministry of Housing and Works.

Mitigation and Adaption

Climate change is not an unnatural phenomenon. Our earth, from the time of its inception has seen climatic changes in leaps and bounds. In the beginning, earth's climate was supposedly not favorable for living beings but gradually over time, the climate has smoothed and turned in favor for the living beings and in the future climate could change beyond imagination. The problem is not the climate change per se, but the accelerating rate at which the climate is changing.

Along with evolution, living beings have adopted and coped up with the changing climates. But the rate at which climate is changing in the current scenario is far beyond the human adaptation capacity, so steps should be taken by the concerned stakeholders to mitigate the situation. ■

Confusion In Economic Policy By Politics

By TANKARAJ NIRLA



Norms once established resist change. This seems true for an oriental society like ours which is more than necessarily circumscribed by inertia and slackness. It takes time for any new notion like the democratic republic to flourish in Nepal.

Some puritans argue that people and planet would be better off without politics and profit. But the progress of the modern world is not possible without them. Every aspect of society is affected by politics of that country. Political science tells us that a country's prosperity depends to a great degree on the quality of its neighbourhood. But where is the spillover, and after that, catchup effect for Nepal from colossal growth in its bordering countries, China and India? The inherent cultural, social, political and economical characteristics may be upsetting the benefits on Nepal's growth path. Even Bihar is growing rapidly: 10-12% per annum and Tibetan Plateau of China is no longer far from development. The urgent need is for the Nepalese policy makers to decide what sort of economic policy the country has to follow in tune with its political setup.

It is well known that there are basically two types of economic system- capitalism and communism. But it will be pragmatic not to mention about communism any more since it can be regarded currently as obsolete.

Basically, critics are equivocal on terming Karl Marx as more of a political philosopher or a structural economist *per se*. But he might have been correct in his historicity that 'every particular social system must destroy itself, simply because it must create forces which produce next historical period'.

In the last century, imperialism was destroyed in continental Europe and replaced by fascism and communism and latter replaced by democratic political system. If the present economic crisis, due to global recession, spells the end of capitalism, it would appear that capitalism, in its *Laissez-faire* form, especially, had a short life. But as stated earlier, the room for improvement in capitalism is always there and the

followers of capitalism never hesitate to inherit Keynesian prescriptions sometimes deviating from neo-liberal approach.

In Nepal, no political hope is upbeat because the country looks like moving towards becoming a failed state. Politics is in a bad shape and is likely to get worse in the coming months. The job of the government as well as that of the opposition is shifting to foreign envoys. At present, in the process of constitution making, several questions arise on the issue of federalism in Nepal. First of all, there must be national debate on the following questions- What is federalism? Why do we need it? How many federal states do we need? Politically and economically, is federalism viable or not? Basically we need to look at the causes and consequences of federalism.

After its restoration in 1990, democracy was seen as a tool or means

But, one day, the Maoists too have to give up this discredited political structure as their objective. Similarly regarding federalism, Maoists are in a great dilemma. They are the principal initiator of federalism based on ethnicity and castes rather than depending upon economic feasibility, geographical location and other factors of undivided sovereign Nepal. Needless to say, whether the so-called self-branded true followers of Karl Marx are following class struggle or caste struggle! This is a great paradox on the part of Maoists, but by now, they must have realised that defensive battle is won by violence but the offensive one is won by ideas, which is contrary to their hypothesis.

It will be realistic for the big three parties to follow a definite ideology according to their conduct not according to their slogans. That means that NC should follow liberal democracy, UML- people's democracy and Maoists - new

democracy. But these are not pragmatic and sustainable due to internal and external circumstances. Since the need of the hour is to forge national consensus on all

It is well known that there are basically two types of economic system-capitalism and communism. But it will be pragmatic not to mention about communism any more since it can be regarded currently as obsolete.

for achieving the end which is to correct the social imbalances of the past created by then Panchayat era. But the political parties deviated from their respected path. The political problem with Nepal is that those hardworking leaders who toppled an old regime neither knew the complexities of contemporary trends of developmental ideas, and, what to do further, nor had the alternatives for globalization and capitalistic economic strategies. The Nepali Congress, primarily, a centrist party, having democratic socialism as its policy, lost its way and moved towards centre right. CPN (UML) changed its ideology from guerrilla warfare towards so called people's multi party democracy (*Janata ko bahudaliya janabad*). The current largest party in the constitutional assembly, UCPN-Maoist, is still following the New Democracy as its minimum goal for the time being and achieving communism as its long term strategy. For realization of this ideology, it even engaged in a long term people's war from 1996 to 2006.

fronts, the best alternative for all three is to follow a common course, which is social democracy with the realistic roles for both the state and market. This can be their combined mean to achieve in making an equitable and just society whatever may be written as the guiding principles in their manifesto or no matter what they have ended up with when they are in the government. If these big three can unite, the past has shown that they had abolished monarchy, when they did not, they could not sack an army chief!

The need of the present moment is to narrow the ideological and behavioural gap between these three parties for making the constitution drafting a success in the short run and ultimately transformation of Nepal into a developed and welfare nation state in the long term. In a nutshell, economically, socialist paradigm, and politically, democratic norms, will be good for new Nepal to follow. So, get the politics right in order to achieve economic development. ■



Nepal-France Relations: Historical Perspectives

By KISHAN SINGH DHAMI

Sixty-two years ago, in 1949, Nepal and France established diplomatic relations during the Rana time. The first French Ambassador to Nepal Levi Daniel presented his credentials to then Rana Prime Minister Mohan Sumsher on April 24, 1949. Daniel was residential ambassador to India. On March 24, 1952, Ostrorog was appointed as the French Ambassador to Nepal and India. Just after establishing diplomatic relations, the French began their first climbing of Annapurna I, taking Nepal's Himalayas to Europe. In 1950, a French expedition team led by Meoresh Harguog successfully climbed Annapurna I. By climbing the mountain, Harguog disseminated the message in Europe that Nepal is a tourist destination for Europeans.

With the official invitation of French President Charles De Golee, resident French ambassador to India and ambassador to Nepal Daridan came to Nepal. Late King Mahendra and Queen Ratna paid an official visit to France. After this successful visit by Nepal's King and Queen, the two countries agreed to open residential embassies. On April 24, 1967, Francois came to Nepal as the first residential French Ambassador. Initially, the French opened their mission in Annapurna Hotel and later the embassy moved to Bishalnagar. In 1968, he helped to establish the French Cultural Center in Kathmandu which is now known as Alliance Française. The center has more than eight thousand branches all over the world.

In 1971, Toussaint was appointed second French residential ambassador to Nepal. During his period, the current residence of French Ambassador was bought. Then, Max Dr. Tasta and Deloche De Noyelle were appointed French ambassadors to Nepal. During Noyelle's tenure, French president late Francis Mitterrand paid an official visit to Nepal

at the invitation of late King Birendra. The visit was made in 1983. The French president expressed his commitment to continue to support Nepal. Warren was appointed the next French ambassador to Nepal in 1984. Interestingly, most of the French Ambassadors did not stay here for more than two years. Some left even before that. In 1985, Barraux was appointed as the twelfth French Ambassador to Nepal. During Ambassador Barraux's tenure, French Nepal economic cooperation turned into a new era. The French government provided support to extend Kohalpur

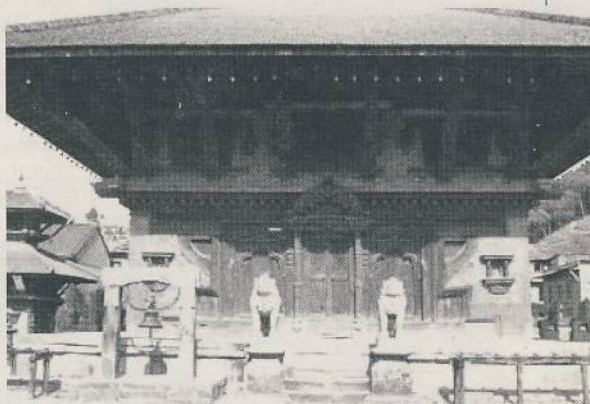
Panauti were renovated and protected. However, due to political opportunism in Nepal, the French aid was misused and Nepal's request for cash support chilled economic cooperation between France and the French government withdrew the support. Then came French Ambassador to Nepal Michel Lummeux, an art lover and a fan of wine. In his tenure, Nepal's art works were posted in various subways of France while he also introduced French wine to Nepal.

France gradually started to withdraw its support from Nepal. In 1995, then foreign and Deputy Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal visited France. Just after that visit Nepalese Prime Minister Manmohan Adhikari paid an official visit to France. In 2001, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala also paid an official visit to France.

Due to political instability in Nepal, Nepal did not appoint ambassador in France for four years and left the Nepalese mission in the command of the charge d'affaires. Recently, the government's decision to cancel the airbus deal is another blow in the bilateral relations

between the two countries. Had the French company failed to get MRP contract, the relations between the two countries would have further worsened.

Although the history of French-Nepal relations is more than three centuries old, this does not guarantee that France will maintain its mission in Nepal if Nepal fails to recognize its contribution. If Nepal wants to have good relations with France, Nepal should respect its sensitivity. Nepal France relations go back to 1650 when a French scholar visited Nepal. One can see some French-made weapons in Nepal's museum. In 1850, Nepalese Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana paid the first visit to France. French scholar Silva Levi visited Nepal in 1895. Silva Levi wrote the Nepalese history which was published in 1905. ■



A temple in Panauti

transmission live and other trade related activities. Air France supported in modernizing Nepal Airlines and Nepal Indosuez Bank was established.

In May 1990, Michel came to Nepal as the French Ambassador. Since Galas worked as a first secretary in French Embassy in Nepal, Galas took many steps to expand Nepal France Relations. He started French School in Nepal, provided Video Camera to Tribhuwan International Airport. Under French Food for Work support, Nepalese temples and many cultural places were renovated and reconstructed. In May 1993, Daniel Dupont came to Nepal as a new French Ambassador along with the invitation of French President to Nepal's King and King Birendra paid state visit to France. During Daniel Dupont's tenure, France continued food for work program. Under this program, ancient temples in

Gout in Nepal

-By BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD



Thirty eight year old Ram Bahadur awoke with an exquisitely tender right big toe which was red and swollen. It was so painful that even the weight of a light blanket hurt. He mistakenly thought he must have banged his foot at night. He was a general manager of a hotel in Kathmandu; and as he started out for work that day, he wore his shoes with great difficulty and hobbled around the hotel with the big toe throbbing away. He was

called "baath" in Nepali) is a very painful type of arthritis (joint disease) which often starts at night and is caused when uric acid crystals form in joints. Although not always a reliable test, uric acid in the blood is often checked to diagnose gout. Certain foods(red meats, organ meat, fish, alcohol, "gedagudis", and sugary soft drinks) increase the risk for gout. Eliminating most high protein food will help, but it

(pill), aspirin, and some diseases like diabetes, obesity and kidney problems may also lead to gout. So avoidance of these medicines and proper control of these diseases will help.

If you get more than 2 or 3 gouty attacks per year, it may be prudent to consider taking medicines long term to prevent gout and other related complications such as kidney stones. Effective drugs like allopurinol for prevention of gout that have been tried and tested for over many decades are available, but they need to be used under proper supervision of a competent doctor. Often just avoiding certain food stuff may not be enough to avoid the gouty attacks that Ram Bahadur suffers from.

Many doctors think that gout may cause predisposition to coronary artery disease. The existing data is not clear on this. But gout is indeed related to the "metabolic syndrome" which clearly is a harbinger for heart attacks. ■

Although the true burden of disease in Nepal is not known, gouty attacks are common and seems to start at a younger age group (less than 40 years) in Nepal than what is usually noted in Western medical textbooks (over 60 years). The reason for this predisposition at a younger age is not known.

relieved to see the doctor, who after a careful examination told him that in all likelihood he had gout. Some tests were ordered, and he received effective pain medicines.

This vignette happens all too regularly in Nepal. Although the true burden of disease in Nepal is not known, gouty attacks are common and seems to start at a younger age group (less than 40 years) in Nepal than what is usually noted in Western medical textbooks (over 60 years). The reason for this predisposition at a younger age is not known.

Gout has been around for many centuries. There are pictures from the seventeen and eighteen hundreds in Europe where rich people are shown to be eating plenty of meat and drinking lots of wine. Then the next picture shows a devil-like figure attacking the big toe of the indulgent person with a trident causing excruciating pain. Although other joints can be involved it is classically the big toe that gout affects. Importantly unlike another common joint disease, rheumatoid arthritis, gout does not simultaneously affect joints on both sides of the body (bilateral). It is usually a single joint that is involved on one side; and for doctors this unilateral involvement helps among other things in characterizing gout.

Gout (sometimes non- specifically

may not always be practical. Many gout sufferers carry a list of other food stuff to avoid including tomatoes and spinach, but this may be scientifically baseless. Some medicines like diuretics (water



पढ्ने, पढाउने
र पढ्न पठाउने
सबैको साथी

शिक्षक मासिक

ज्ञानविज्ञान शिक्षक सवकारी सन्घा लिमिटेड, ज्ञानमार्ग, मलिनपुर
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निक्षेप तथा कर्जा सुरक्षण निगमबाट हाल संचालित सुरक्षण (Guarantee) कार्यक्रमको विशेषताहरु

- पशुधन सुरक्षण कार्यक्रम :**
 - बैंक, वित्तीय संस्था, सहकारी तथा गैर सहकारी संस्थाहरुबाट प्रवाह भएको ऋणबाट कृषकले खरिद गरेका पशुधनको संरक्षण हुने,
 - ठूला पशुधनका लागि अधिकतम सीमा रु. ६० हजार र साना पशुधनका लागि अधिकतम सीमा रु. १० हजारसम्मको सुरक्षण हुने,
 - सुरक्षण गरे वापत कृषकले वार्षिक ३ प्रतिशतका दरले शुल्क बुझाए पुग्ने,
 - पशुधनको मृत्यु भएमा सुरक्षण रकमको ८० प्रतिशत र अनुत्पादन भएमा २५ देखि ४० प्रतिशतले हुने रकम निगमले तत्काल क्षतिपूर्ति दिने,
 - धितो राख्न नपर्ने,
 - यो कार्यक्रमबाट कर्जा प्रदान गर्ने संस्था र पशुपालक कृषकको जोखिम न्यून हुने ।
- प्राथमिकता क्षेत्र कर्जा सुरक्षण कार्यक्रम :**
 - बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थाहरुले कृषि, घरेलु उद्योग र सेवामा गरेको कर्जाको सुरक्षण हुने,
 - अधिकतम रु. २५ लाखसम्मको साँवा र सोको ब्याज सुरक्षण हुने,
 - त्रैमासिक ०.२५ प्रतिशतका दरले वार्षिक १ प्रतिशत मात्र सुरक्षण दस्तुर तिरे पुग्ने,
 - ऋणीले तिनै बाँकी रहेको कर्जाको साँवा र ब्याज रकमको ७५ प्रतिशतले हुने रकम निगमले क्षतिपूर्ति प्रदान गर्ने,
 - कर्जाको भुक्तानी अवधि समाप्त भएको ४ वर्षभित्र दावी गर्न सकिने ।
- साना तथा मझौला उद्यम कर्जा सुरक्षण कार्यक्रम :**
 - बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थाहरुले साना तथा मझौला उद्यममा प्रदान गरेको कर्जाको सुरक्षण हुने,
 - अधिकतम रु. ३० लाखसम्मको साँवा र सोको ब्याजको सुरक्षण हुने,
 - अर्धवार्षिक ०.५ प्रतिशतका दरले वार्षिक १ प्रतिशत मात्र सुरक्षण दस्तुर तिरे पुग्ने,
 - ऋणीबाट असूल उपर नभएको बाँकी साँवा र ब्याज रकमको ७५ प्रतिशतले हुने रकम निगमले क्षतिपूर्ति प्रदान गर्ने,
 - कर्जाको भुक्तानी अवधि समाप्त भएको २ वर्षसम्म दावी गर्न सकिने ।
- लघु वित्त तथा विपन्न वर्ग कर्जा सुरक्षण कार्यक्रम :**
 - बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थाहरुबाट यस कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत बिना धितो कर्जा रु. ६० हजार र धितो भएको कर्जा रु. १ लाख ५० हजारसम्मको साँवा र सोको ब्याज सुरक्षण हुने,
 - ऋणीले भुक्तान गर्न बाँकी साँवा र ब्याज रकमको ७५ प्रतिशतले हुने रकम निगमले क्षतिपूर्ति प्रदान गर्ने,
 - अर्धवार्षिक ०.२५ प्रतिशतका दरले वार्षिक ०.५० प्रतिशत मात्र सुरक्षण दस्तुर तिरे पुग्ने,
 - कर्जाको भुक्तानी अवधि समाप्त भए पश्चात २ वर्षभित्र निगमसँग क्षतिपूर्तिको लागी दावी गर्न सकिने, (Loan उपरोक्त अनुसारको कर्जाहरु निगममा सुरक्षण गराएको अवस्थामा नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकको निर्देशानुसार कर्जा नोक्सानी व्यवस्था (Loan loss provision) गर्नुपर्दा ७५ प्रतिशत छुट प्राप्त हुने भएकोले बाँकी २५ प्रतिशत मात्र कर्जा नोक्सानी व्यवस्था (Loan loss provision) गरे पुग्ने ।
- निक्षेप सुरक्षण कार्यक्रम :**
 - बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थामा प्राकृतिक निक्षेपकर्ताहरुको नाममा मुद्दती र बचत निक्षेपमा रहेको रु. दुई लाखसम्मको निक्षेपको सुरक्षण हुने,
 - निगममा निक्षेपको सुरक्षण गराउने बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्था लिक्विडेशनमा गएमा त्यस्तो संस्थामा प्राकृतिक निक्षेपकर्ताको नाममा मुद्दती र बचत निक्षेपमा रहेको रु. दुई लाखसम्मको निक्षेप रकम लिक्विडेटर माफत निगमले निक्षेपकहरुलाई भुक्तानी दिने,
 - निगमको सुरक्षण हुने निक्षेपको अर्धवार्षिक ०.१० प्रतिशतका दरले वार्षिक ०.२० प्रतिशत अर्थात् रु. एक सयको वार्षिक बीस पैसाका दरले मात्र सुरक्षण दस्तुर बुझाए पुग्ने,

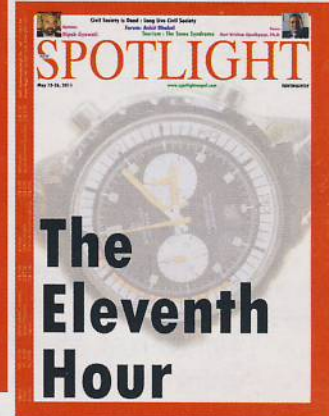
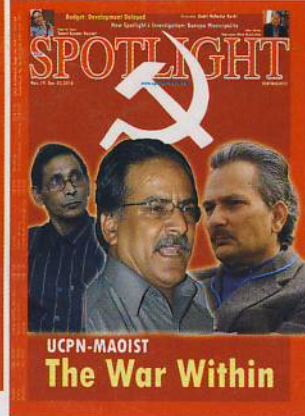


निक्षेप तथा कर्जा सुरक्षण निगम

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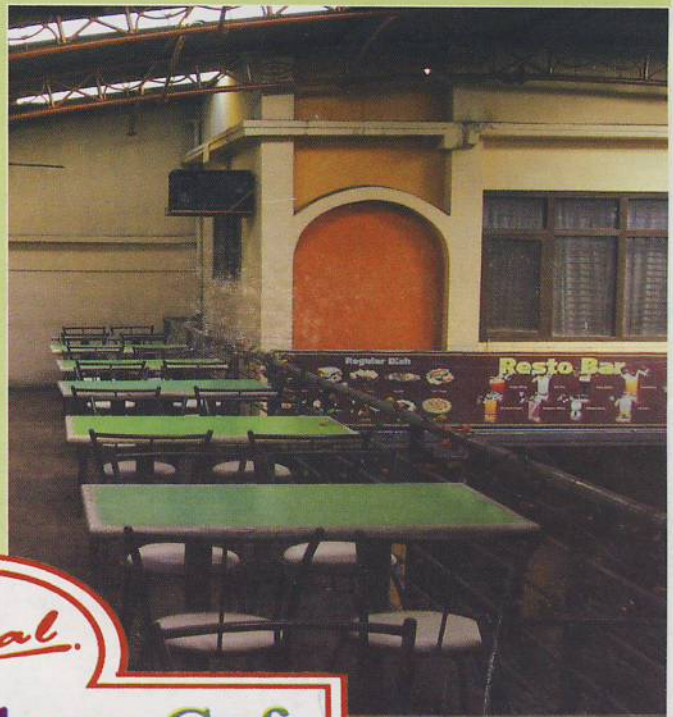


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