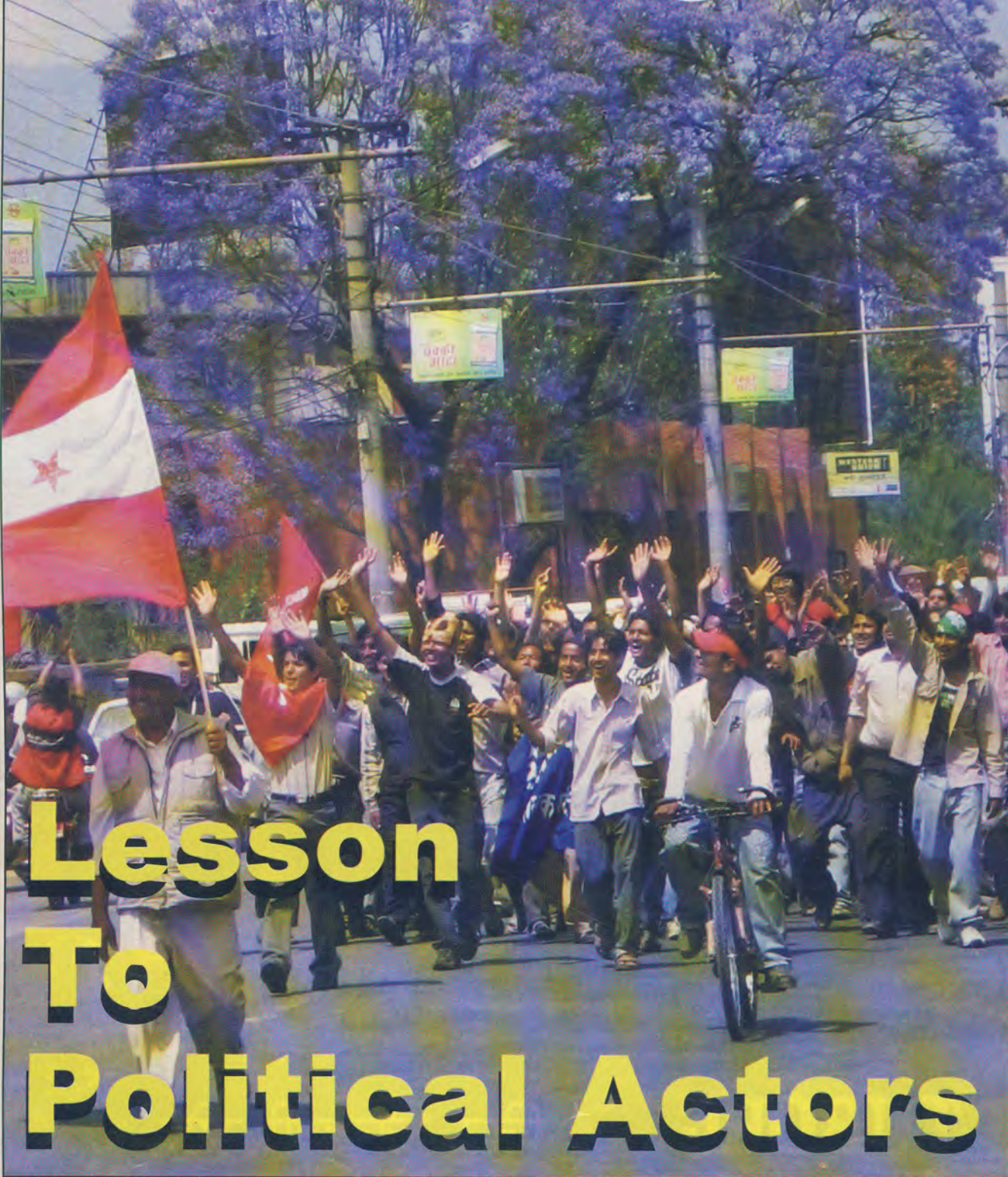


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The National Newsmagazine

SPOTLIGHT

April 28 - May 4, 2006



Lesson To Political Actors

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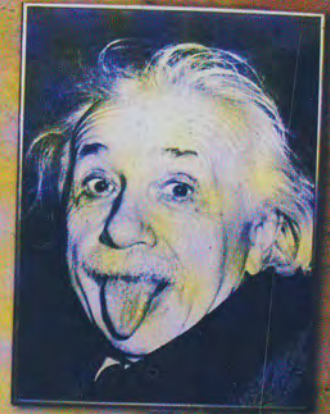
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< TUBORG Law no. 11 >

Great minds drink alike.



TUBORG
GOLD

जिउ जिन्दगी रमेर

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COVER STORY : Lessons To Political Actors

By choosing the name of 84-year-old congress-leader Girija Prasad Koirala as the next prime minister unanimously, the seven agitating parties have begun a new political course.

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DRINKING WATER : Not A Drop To Drink

Water crisis is heating the Kathmandu valley.

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INTERVIEW : Taranath Ranabhat

Speaker Ranabhat spoke about the need to strengthen parliamentary democracy .

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SPOTLIGHT

THE WEEKLY NATIONAL NEWSMAGAZINE

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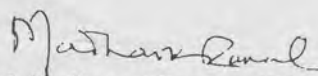
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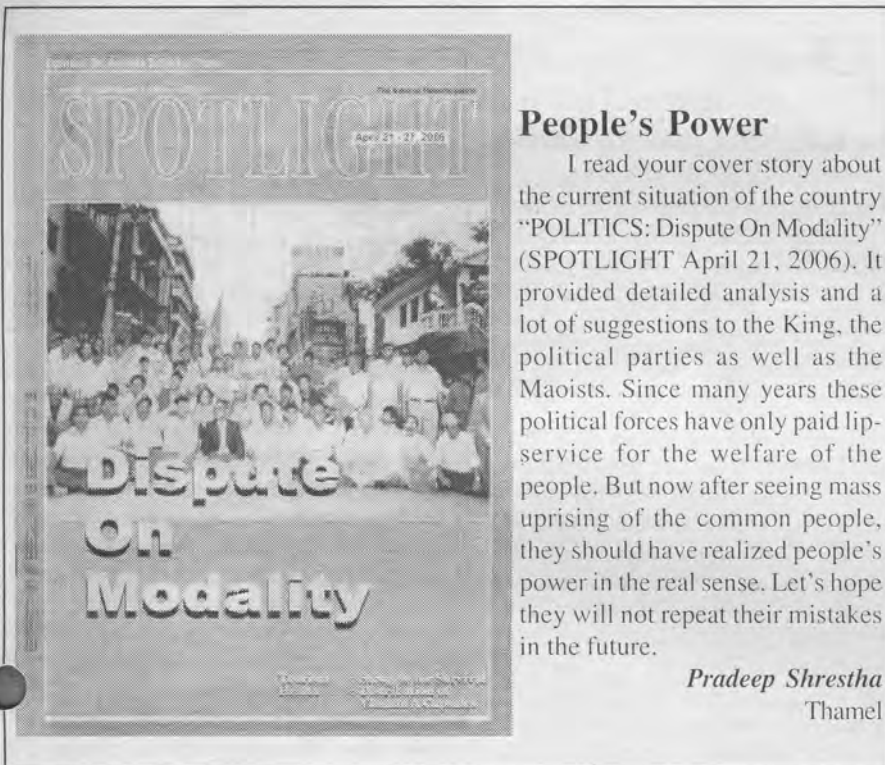
People's power has triumphed once again. The sycophants have not only failed miserably but badly let down the King. But they have lost nothing as they had no stake at all. And neither have they been denigrated. The monarchy has been the lone loser as well as the only one to be denigrated. But everything is not lost yet. Much can still be salvaged if wise course is followed. King Gyanendra's latest action in reinstating the House of Representatives, although quite belated, has saved the country from total anarchy. That failure to take lessons from history or to read the writings on the wall always lands one in peril has again been amply substantiated.

The Seven Party Alliance has again come into the lime light from the wilderness with ambitious designs and high expectations. The poor people paid the price with their supreme sacrifices but leaders of the SPA will reap the benefits. And Girija Prasad Koirala, the redoubtable leader of the Nepali Congress has, once again, been chosen to adorn the Prime Ministerial chair by consensus. But experiences have shown Girija Prasad Koirala is a man who never seems to learn. He keeps on making the same mistakes. If he wants to justify the trust put in him he has to clean his image and wash his hands. He needs no perfumes from Arabia for that. He just has to rein in some of his *Moh* (मोह) — the *putrimoh*, the *Drabya moh*, and the *satta moh*. May be the changed context and the heterogeneous company forced on him, will impel to change his behavior unlike in the past.

The peoples' power too is sure to work this time as the restraining influence. Because nobody can now even think of taking the people for a ride. If the people can rise against the King, they sure can rise against the politicians. They have become fully conscious of their own inherent strength and power. As such, Koirala must never ignore their basic needs and urgent requirements. For this what Koirala needs most urgently is a little bit of integrity, a little bit of patriotism and a little bit of humility. We sincerely hope this time he takes charge as a totally different man — a man of the poor Nepali people. In this belief we extend to him our support and best wishes and trust he will not fail us this time.

Although the Maoists have still to announce their full cooperation with the SPA in running the next government, we think, it is only a matter of time and the announcement might come before this print is out in public. The Maoist Surpemo Prachanda must be fully aware that Nepal severely needs a politician who can lead the people. The leadership on our politicians up till now, has been thrust on them — either by domestic power or by alien power. No son of the soil has yet been able to assume that revered position on his own merit. Poor Nepalis are groping in darkness looking for a leader. And now they are looking up to you, Comrade Prachanda. First renounce this Comrade. It sound so anachronistic. Rather, use a simple Mr. It is so timely, so respectful and so universal. And stop going piggy back. Learn to stand on your own sturdy legs. You have a big 'Karma chhetra' and you can win over a big following. Pursuing utopian dreams will only result in frustrations. You can really fill up the vacuum that has been there for a long time. And you also cannot overlook that Nepal is the birth place of the *Prince of Peace* and the land of *Ahimsa*. We must not permit any more killings of innocent men, women and children. And we must never lose sight of the fact that we are neither poor nor weak. Only our leaders have made us so. With our brave people and rich resources we are destined to be strong and rich. Let us achieve that. At this critical juncture in our history, we would like to appeal to all of our country men not to run after chimera, not to get carried away by emotions and not to fall prey to wily and unscrupulous politicians. ■


Madhav Kumar Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



People's Power

I read your cover story about the current situation of the country "POLITICS: Dispute On Modality" (SPOTLIGHT April 21, 2006). It provided detailed analysis and a lot of suggestions to the King, the political parties as well as the Maoists. Since many years these political forces have only paid lip-service for the welfare of the people. But now after seeing mass uprising of the common people, they should have realized people's power in the real sense. Let's hope they will not repeat their mistakes in the future.

Pradeep Shrestha
Thamel

Come To A Consensus

As you have written in your cover story, the major problem of the country at present is only a dispute over the modality of restoration of democracy "POLITICS: Dispute On Modality" (SPOTLIGHT April 21, 2006). The king has reiterated time and again that he is committed to hold elections to handover power to the people's representatives. Likewise, the ultimate aim of the political parties is also democracy. Although the aim of the Maoists is to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat, the ultimate goal is again development and prosperity of the nation and its people – the same as that of a democratic system. When the destination of all three power centers is the same they should come to a consensus about what roadmap would be best to achieve it. Since they have different modalities they should become flexible and compromise on certain issues. Taking the extremist stand will do no good to any parties.

Kedar Dhungana
Pulchowk

Renounce Violence

The people's agitation for the past three weeks has begun opened avenue

for political reconciliation in the country "POLITICS: Dispute On Modality" (SPOTLIGHT April 21, 2006). As you have written in your cover story the objective of the all three forces in the country is same. The only difference between them is the modality of achieving it. In a democratic process, they should learn listen to the views of the opponents and respect it. King Gyanendra has done a laudable job by listening to the voice of the people and reinstating the dissolved parliament. The parties have also taken a step towards reconciliation by deciding to form a government. Now, it is the turn of the give up violence and come to the mainstream politics. They have the option of going to the public in elections. They should now believe in the power of the ballot and not in that of the bullet.

Deepesh Pradhan
Kalimati

Beware Leaders!

The country has finally got an outlet from the stalemate for almost three weeks "POLITICS: Dispute On Modality" (SPOTLIGHT April 21, 2006). However, there is not much reason to rejoice as

yet, because reinstatement of the parliament in itself is not an end. It is only the means to achieve the ultimate goal. There was functioning parliament in the country for more than a decade. But the people's aspirations were not fulfilled. Now, the leaders should learn from their past mistakes and take bold steps to rectify them. One more mistake can cost them dearly. The Nepalese people are not going to forgive them if they do not deliver this time. People are eagerly waiting for a sustainable peace and economic revolution in the country. Now that the leaders have seen the power of the people they cannot afford to indulge themselves in vested interests and corruption anymore. So, beware leaders! This is the last opportunity to show your devotion to the people. Failure to do so will cost you your career.

Reema Sharma
Balaju

Country's Future

Following the royal proclamation to restore the dissolved House of Representatives the people are very confused about the modality of events to take place in the future "POLITICS: Dispute On Modality" (SPOTLIGHT April 21, 2006). While, they are feeling jubilant in that the king stepped down and decided to handover power to the representatives of the people, they are equally firm on their demand of constitutional assembly and the mainstreaming of Maoists. In fact, very few people know about the procedures of the constitutional assembly. They are raising the voice for two reasons. The first is because they think that the constitution made by the constitutional assembly will not allow any loophole for another coup. The second and the more important is they feel that the Maoists will renounce violence and come to the mainstream if this demand is fulfilled. Now, the intellectuals, journalists and political leaders should tell the people clearly about their strategy for national reconciliation and future course of the country.

Ajay Khanal
Kaldhara

King Reinstates Dissolved Parliament

His Majesty King Gyanendra restored the dissolved House of Representatives through a royal proclamation on Tuesday following a 19-day long general strike of the seven major political parties. In his televised address to the nation on Monday, the King stated that the lower house of parliament dissolved in May 2002 has been reinstated as per the spirit of the ongoing people's movement and the roadmap of the opposition seven-party alliance (SPA). The King also called the session of the parliament on Friday (April 28) at 13:00 p.m. at the parliament building in Singh Durbar. He expressed hope that the SPA would become able to establish permanent peace and national unity and uphold total democracy in the country and extended his condolence to those who lost their lives during the ongoing people's movement, wishing speedy recovery of those injured. Sovereign and executive power rest on the Nepali people as per the constitution of the Kingdom, the King said. Reinstatement of the parliament has been on of the main demand of the SPA that has been carrying out nationwide general strike since last 19 days. *Compiled from Reports.*

Seven Call Back General Strike

The seven political parties are holding meeting to discuss about the royal proclamation of Monday and to future strategy of the political parties. King Gyanendra through his royal proclamation reinstated the dissolved House of Representatives as per the demand of the seven agitating political parties. The seven political parties are holding general strike since last 20 days demanding restoration of complete democracy in the country and today's meeting is likely to call back the general strike and decide the future political strategy. Welcoming King Gyanendra's second proclamation leaders of the seven-party alliance (SPA) said the restoration of the House of Representatives (HoR), dissolved in May 2002, has opened the doors for resolving the current crises facing the country. The SPA is going to reschedule the protest rally scheduled for today. "Tomorrow's rally will be organized in a different way and all the top leaders will address the people," a leader of SPA said. The seven political parties were planning to organize a Ring-Road centered protest programme and the protest rallies were scheduled to led by the senior leaders of the SPA. The SPA had rejected the king's offer on Friday. The king had offered the parties the opportunity to form a government and recommend a name of their choosing for the post of prime minister though his first

proclamation on Friday. *Compiled from Reports.*

Six Killed In Chautara Clash

At least six persons — four Maoists, one civilian and a Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) soldier — were killed when the rebels launched simultaneous attacks on almost all security and government establishments of Chautara, district headquarters of Sindhupalchowk, Sunday night. Maoists began the attacks at 9 pm from the District Hospital (DH), which lasted till 4:45 on Monday morning. The 20-bed hospital was completely damaged in the clash. Among the 11 patients in the DH, four patients who refused obey the Maoists' order to leave, were buried in rubble after the hospital collapsed in the clash. They were later rescued on Monday morning only. Meanwhile, a press communiqué of Defense Ministry said that one RNA man, identified as Keshav Kandel of Gorkha district, was also killed in the clash. Nine other RNA men were injured, three of them seriously, in the overnight clash. The civilian killed in the crossfire has been identified as a local greengrocer Bhakta Bahadur Shrestha. He was hit by bullets inside his home. Various district level government offices including Administration Office, Nepal Telecom, Education Office, Post Office and Police Office have been damaged in the attack. The rebels also took away Om Thapa, an employee of the National Investigation Department, after the attack. *Compiled from Reports.*

Nepal DPRK Sign Info-Tech Agreement

Nepal and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) signed an agreement to promote assistance between the two countries in the field of information and communications. Secretary at the Ministry of Information and Communications (MoIC) Kumar Prasad Poudyal and Ri Ju Kwan, chief of visiting DPRK delegation, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments at the MoIC on Monday. The accord aims at enhancing bilateral assistance in the areas of radio, television and print media and exchange vital printed materials, stated a press release of the MoIC. The agreement to remain in force for the next three years will be renewed automatically for the following three years unless annulled by means of a written notice by any of the signatory. It is also subject to amendment or replacement on the basis of mutual agreement. The Ministry hoped that the agreement would be instrumental in further cementing the friendly ties between the two countries. The two countries have also

expressed commitment to work together in the intergovernmental committee of the ministers from the non-aligned nations. *Compiled from Reports.*

Government Starts School Enrolment Campaign

School enrolment campaign has been launched to increase access of children in the age group of 5-9 to school education. As per the school enrolment campaign launched by the Department of Education, students will be enrolled from April 15 to 23 while door-to-door visit campaign will be launched from April 16 to 30 to help enroll those children abstaining from the school. Director of the Department of Education Ramswarup Singh said the enrolment programme is aimed at enrolling those children of primary education who have no access to education. Initiated last fiscal year, the school enrolment campaign has succeeded to achieve 87 percent of enrolment. This year, the department aims to achieve 89 percent of enrolment. During this period, about 100 thousand children who have been deprived of education are expected to get enrolled in the schools while about 3, 70 thousand children are said to have no access to school, according to the Department of Education. Meanwhile, the Government has decided to offer scholarship to the children between five to nine years who come to enroll in school under the School Registration Campaign. It was decided to offer scholarship to the targeted group of children in those areas where are very few numbers of students of indigenous, Dalits and disables children studying. Of the total enrolled students in school, fifty per cent girls and all dalits, and disables will be provided scholarship. Director of the Department of Education Ram Sworup Sinha said. Rs. 100 will be provided to those children of targated group on May 7 as the first installment. It is said that a total of Rs. 350 will be provided to those students in three different installments. Likewise Rs. 50 to 1000 will be provided to those disables children looking at their conditions. The Department has aimed to provide scholarship to the 800,000 girls, 900,000 dalits and 8,000 disables. *Compiled from Reports.*

Security Forces Used Excessive Force: NHRC

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has said that security personnel were found using excessive force without prior warning, to control peaceful and unarmed demonstrations of the seven-party alliance. A press statement issued by the NHRC said,

"NHRC has recommended to the government to immediately stop excessive use of teargas, baton charging and even firing bullets without prior warning, while controlling unarmed and peaceful demonstrations." The national rights watchdog wrote a letter to this effect to the Office of the Prime Minister on Sunday, after it found abuse of human rights by security forces in the name of controlling pro-democracy demonstrations. *Compiled from Reports.*

Tourist Arrival Likely To Decline In April

After three healthy months of tourist arrivals in 2006, the month of April is indeed likely to be a cruel one. With the political unrest of the country and countries advising their citizens against travelling to Nepal unless they have 'important' reasons for travelling here, the tourism industry which was undertaking new endeavours to attract more tourists is likely to hit hard. According to the data compiled by the ministry of culture, tourism and civil aviation, the industry has witnessed an increment of 14 per cent in January, 12.5 per cent in February and 27 per cent in March in tourist arrivals through air this year. Tourist arrivals in April 2005 had decreased by 38 per cent as compared to the figure of tourist arrivals by air in Nepal in April 2004. *Compiled from reports.*

Many Children Participated In Stir: CWIN

A study report has presented an alarming picture that Children working in the transportation sector, the school-going children and the street children were involved in protest programmes. A report prepared by CWIN, an NGO working in the field of children after monitoring children in Kathmandu Valley from April 6 to 20 said that a total of 182 children below 18 years of age are been injured in Kathmandu Valley; and among the 81 children below 16, three are severely injured. According to the report the children were involved in activities like burning tyres, blocking roads, and shouting slogans. Thirty-four injured children were provided treatment in Kathmandu Model Hospital, 50 were taken to the Community hospital, Gongabu, 22 to the Binayak Hospital, Gongabu, 10 to the Teaching Hospital, Maharajgunj, eight to the Om Hospital, 17 to the Patan Hospital, 21 to the Bir Hospital, seven to the Friends of Patan, two to the Nepal Medical College, four to the Medicare Hospital and four to the B and B Hospital. Additionally, 27 children were injured in demonstrations outside Kathmandu Valley. *Compiled from Reports.*

SPOTLIGHT/APRIL 28, 2006

Vitamin A And Deworming Tablets Distribution Campaign Held

Children between the age of six months and five years were administered Vitamin A capsules and deworming tablets throughout the country on Wednesday. However, on Thursday (April 19), although the campaign went smoothly in rural parts of the country, it was affected by the daytime curfew imposed by the government in many urban areas including capital Kathmandu. 3.7 million children above six months and below five years were supposed to be administered with Vitamin A capsules and 3.9 million children above one year and below five years were supposed to be provided deworming tablets across the country. 5,000 women volunteers were mobilised across the country. Vitamin A capsule and Deworming tablets were provided from every wards, VDC's health institutes and municipalities. This is the first round programme of 2006 and will be conducted in two phases this year. "This distribution, which saves some 12,000 lives a year, is the largest exercise in child survival in Nepal," said UNICEF Representative, Dr Suomi Sakai, in a press statement issued on Tuesday. Children who don't receive Vitamin A capsules have four times higher risk of dying than those who do receive it. *Compiled from reports.*

SAARC Ministers To Meet In Dhaka On Thursday

Ministers from South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries are meeting on April 20 in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, in a bid to chalk out strategies for effective implementation of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). This is the first time that a ministerial meet is being held after the treaty came into force from January 2006. Meanwhile, a two day meeting of the committee of experts (CoE) started on Tuesday to discuss certain issues at the joint secretary level with representatives from all SAARC member countries. SAFTA came into force after SAARC member countries namely Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives agreed on the framework. Report quoted, Naindra Prasad Upadhyay, joint secretary at the ministry of Industry, commerce and supply, who is participating in the meeting of the CoE as saying that the ministerial meeting will discuss as to how all SAARC countries can move effectively to implement the SAFTA framework to boost South Asian economy as a whole. The meeting would also review the sensitive list of products, discuss about the trade in services which was not discussed during the earlier CoE meetings, said Upadhyay. As

per the provisions of SAFTA, agreed by seven member countries of SAARC. LDCs are supposed to get revenue compensation for the first four years beginning January 1, 2006.

Foreign Ministry Summons US Envoy Moriarty

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday summoned US Ambassador, James F Moriarty on Tuesday for his comment against the King. According to sources, he was summoned for his sharp comment if the king further delays returning power to people in an interview to CNN. According to report Moriarty in his interview with CNN said, "The US did not want to see King Gyanendra forced to flee clinging on the wings of a helicopter." Foreign Secretary Hira Bahadur Thapa reminded the envoy about diplomatic norms while making comments on Nepal's King and other internal affairs. According to reports, an official at the American Centre confirmed that Moriarty was summoned by the Ministry, but he refused to explain. Moriarty received royal audience on Sunday. *Compiled from reports.*

Karan Singh To Visit Kathmandu As Special Indian Envoy

As the nationwide general strike and opposition protests are to complete the second week, India is sending Karan Singh as Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's special envoy to convey New Delhi's message to the monarch. Former Union Minister and member of parliament Singh will visit Kathmandu on Wednesday and is expected to meet King Gyanendra. He is also expected to meet opposition leaders in Nepal, Singh, who is said to have excellent relations with the Nepalese royal palace, is also the president of Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). The decision comes two days after Indian ambassador to Nepal, Shiv Shanker Mukherjee, met the King and conveyed India's message underlining the immediate need for dialogue with political parties and restoration of multi-party democracy, the news report said. India and rest of the international community has also been building pressure on the monarch to relinquish power that he seized by removing an elected government 14 months ago. Expressing "concern" over the situation in Nepal, Mukherjee urged Nepalese monarch on Sunday to initiate dialogue with political parties aimed at reconciliation and evolving national consensus, according to reports. Indian premier Singh also held a high-level meeting on Sunday night to review the latest developments in the neighbouring country. *Compiled from reports.*



King Gyanendra addressing the nation on April 24, 2006

THE GOVERNMENT IMPOSED DAYTIME CURFEWS consecutively for five days from Thursday (April 19, 2006) to Monday (April 24) in the urban parts of Kathmandu valley crippling the mobility of common people. In an attempt to foil the peaceful demonstrations called by the seven seven-party alliance on Thursday the government ordered a 18 hour long curfew from 2:00 am to 8 pm. Before this curfew time ended the government issued another notice extending the curfew hours till 3:00 am the next morning. In the consecutive days the government issued curfew orders at varying time slots. However, the demonstrators widely defied the curfew orders.

AT LEAST THREE NEPALI WORKERS DIED IN MAMOURA locality of Qatar on Wednesday in an accident that took place in an underground drainage. According to reports, the deceased have been identified as Til Bahadur Karki of Jhapa, Ram Chandra Mahara of Siraha and Ujir Bahadur Ejim of Taplejung. "Although the exact cause of their death is still unknown, they must have choked to death after inhaling toxic gases formed in the underground drain," reports said. According to, Gulf Times, a leading newspaper of Qatar, Nepali Ambassador to Qatar, Shyamananda Suman, visited the incident site as well as the morgue of Hamad General Hospital, where the bodies are kept. After visiting the accident site, the ambassador said that it was sheer negligence that led to the tragedy. "Oxygen masks must be provided to those working in deep excavations which could be filled with toxic gases," Gulf Times quoted the ambassador as saying, adding, "I will take up the matter with the authorities to ensure that all companies adhere to adequate safety measures." Qatar is the attractive destination to the Nepali foreign job seekers. Remittance is giving life to the national economy at a time when the country is passing through a difficult turn due to the flaring conflict of the country.

A RECENT SURVEY HAS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE some 720,000 mentally retarded persons in Nepal. A survey carried out by Mentally Impaired Welfare Organisation said

that of the total victims, 40 per cent children below fourteen years age are mentally retarded. It is said that 10 per cent people out of the total population are disabled. The state run news agency Rastriya Samachar Samiti quoted, General Secretary of the National Disable Federation Nepal Mitra Lal Sharma as saying that disabled need help while eating, dressing up, sleeping and in other works, therefore the state, civic society and NGOs should work jointly to provide more facilities and extra care to the mentally impaired persons. According to a survey, it is stated that there are 250 scientific reasons behind being mentally retarded. Meanwhile, the Mentally Impaired Welfare Organisation from its various branches in 22 districts has been providing assistance to some 5,000 mentally impaired persons throughout the country.

NOT ONLY THE PRICES OF DAILY CONSUMER goods but the prices of gold and silver also continued during the general strike that is running in third consecutive week. The price of gold set a new 25-year high record in the bullion market over the week, with its price ending at Rs 14,575 (US\$ 201.31) per ten gram on Wednesday when the market closed from Rs 14,150 per ten gram on Sunday when the market opened. Spurred by a rise in the international price of silver, the domestic price also saw a steep rise in the domestic market over the week, touching a 25-year record. The weekly silver trading data demonstrates that the price of silver reached Rs 335 per ten gram on Wednesday, the last day for transactions this week from Rs 312 on Sunday when the market opened.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS WELCOMED THE royal proclamation to reinstate the parliament. "The United States salutes the people of Nepal's courage and resilience in their struggle for democracy," said Adam Ereli, Deputy Spokesman of the USA issuing a press release. "We believe that he (the king) should now hand power over to the parties and assume a ceremonial role in his country's governance."

GNP Welcomes Decision

Our party welcomes the decision to re-convene the Parliament dissolved in 2058 and the new government of seven agitating political parties. We will extend our co-operation and support in the practice of multiparty democracy. In his press statement Kuber Sharma, Chairman, Green Nepal party said "we express our deep regards to the martyrs of 'Peoples Revolution' and express our sympathy to injured and hurt participants. We urge the new government to stop vandalism to facilitate practice of multiparty Democracy."

“This is the victory of people. They don't have to do such sacrifice again.”

Girija Prasad Koirala, president of Nepali Congress and former prime minister, talking to journalists after the royal proclamation to restore the parliament.

* * *

“We have no option right now other than to unanimously accept name of Girijababu for the prime minister.”

Sher Bahadur Deuba, former prime minister and Nepali Congress Democratic leader, in Rajdhani.

* * *

The light - which I was waiting- has glowed today.”

Taranath Ranabhat, speaker of House of Representatives, in response to the royal proclamation to restore parliament, in Annapurna Post.

* * *

“If their objective is to torn the constitution and bring a new constitution, it is their issue.”

Sarbagya Ratna Tuladhar, a senior advocate, in Janbhawana.

* * *

“There is no ambiguity in the roadmap of seven party alliance.”



Bimarsha

Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary the Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML), in Gorkhapatra.

* * *

addressing a mass meeting in Satdobato.

* * *

“Maoists have signed understanding with us following long discussions. They must work in according to it.”

Bamdev Gautam, leader of the Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML), in Janastha Weekly.

* * *

“By accepting reinstatement of the House of Representatives, leaders of seven party alliance have betrayed us.”

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, leader of CPN-Maoists talking to BBC Nepali service.

* * *

“Although Girijababu initially rejected our proposal to become the prime minister, he later accepted it reluctantly.”

Amick Sherchan, leader of the United People's Front,

“We have to face many difficulties ahead. If we commit any mistakes regressive forces are there to overthrow us.”

Naryanman Bijukcche, leader of Nepal Peasants Workers Party, addressing a rally in Bhaktapur.

* * *

TRANSITION

AWARDED: Keshab Poudel, managing editor of Spotlight National News Magazine, with the Asian Development Journalism Award (DAJA 2006) in the Development and Development Agencies Category, in

Philippines, Manila, for his story “Changing The Livelihood” published in Spotlight.

LIFTED: The ban of peaceful assembly within Ring road of capital Kathmandu, by the government

RESTORED: The dissolved House of Representatives, by the king

DIED: Nar Shumsher, first Inspector General of Police of Nepal, a veteran sportsman and the producer of first Nepali feature film ‘Maitighar’, at the age of 95

CALLED OFF: General strike for an indefinite period, by the seven-party alliance. Blockade of the capital and other major urban areas, by the Maoists. ■

Three Gorges Water Control Project

By DR AB THAPA

Mr. Lu Youmei, President of China's Three Gorges Project Development Corporation writes that the Three Gorges Project has been a dream for the Chinese people for more than 70 years as it is a key part of the scheme for harnessing and development of the Yangtze River. Chinese people's relentless efforts over a very long period to harness the Yangtze River could serve us as a reminder that we too should take very seriously the development of our water resources since the projects to build dams on the Karnali or the Kosi rivers are almost comparable to the Three Gorges Project in magnitude and also in complexity.

The mammoth Three Gorges Project is still under construction. Few years back the bottom outlets of the Three Gorges dam had been closed and the filling of the reservoir started. Thereafter the construction of the Three Gorges Project had entered into its stage-3 and it was scheduled to be completed after six years..

The Yangtze River Dam

The Chang Jiang or Yangtze is the largest river in China. It carries nearly 40% of the country's annual runoff. It is also the third largest river in the world. At the dam site, the Yangtze brings an annual runoff of 438,000 million cubic meters, and an annual sediment discharge of 526 million cubic meters. The Three Gorges Project is located at Sandoupin in Hubei Province 1300 km from Shanghai and 660 km downstream from Chongqing.

The 660 km long Jingjiang Section in the middle reach of the Yangtze has been under serious threat of flooding. The dykes along this stretch of the river protect more than 15 million people, 1.56 million hectares of farmland and many industrial sites. At present these dykes breach whenever there is a flood greater than the one occurring once in ten years. Such floods result in a major disaster. After the completion of the Three Gorges Project, the flood control capacity of the Jingjiang Section could be raised from 10-year to once in 100-year flood.

The Three Gorges Project consists of a 175 m high concrete dam, two power plants, and a system of navigation facilities. The spillway dam section is located on the middle of the original main river channel, flanked by the power plant and non-spillway dam section, one on either side. The two power stations are at the toes of their respective dam sections. At the right bank there is room for an additional underground power plant to house additional generation units when the development is expanded later. Located on the left bank are the permanent navigation structures.

The spillway section of the dam has a total length of 483m. To facilitate sediment flushing and discharging high floods, there are 23 deep outlets and 22 surface bays.

Each of the deep outlets has a dimension of 7m by 9m. The surface bays have a net width of 8m. At the downstream end of this section, a trajectory bucket is provided as an energy dissipater. The maximum flood-releasing capacity of the project is 113000 cubic meters/s.

Upon completion, the Three Gorges Project would become the largest hydropower station in the world, with a total installed capacity of 18,200MW and annual energy output of 84710 GWh from 26 sets of 700 MW generating units. The power generated would be fed to central and eastern China. Inland navigation is a very important component of the Three Gorges Project.

Gezhouba Reregulating Dam

The Gezhouba project is a component part of the Three Gorges Project. Its reservoir is to function as a reregulating pool and a downstream navigation step for the Three Gorges Project. China decided to construct the Gezhouba dam before the Three Gorges Project for a number of reasons: to improve the navigation conditions of the gorge stretch; to produce hydroelectric power to meet the urgent demand in the area.

Inland Waterway

Inland waterways were very much developed in China from the time immemorial. Chinese had even built impressive canals between 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD. Outstanding were the Ling Ch'u in Kuangsi, 90 miles long from the Han capital; Ch'ang-an to the Huang Ho; and the Pien Canal in Honan. Of later canals the most spectacular was the Grand Canal, the first 600-mile section of which was opened to navigation in 610. This waterway enabled grain to be transported from the lower Yangtze and Huai to K'ai-feng and Lo-yang. China's past and recent experiences of developing inland navigation by using natural as well as artificial channels could be of great interest to Nepal as well India since both the countries, Nepal and India, have decided to carry out jointly a detailed study of the Kosi navigation canal linking Chatra in Nepal with the Ganges waterway.

In recent years the Yangtze river is extensively used for water transportation. The capacity of the Yangtze river waterway constitutes 78% of the China's total inland rivers transportation capacity. Despite such extensive uses, the navigation condition of its natural course could not fully meet the growing requirements of China's fast growing economy. There were bottlenecks from Chongqing in Sichuan province to Yichang in Hubei province. Here, the river flows through an area of high mountains and deep valleys, with considerable turbulence and dangerous shoals, which had limited the development of the Yangtze waterway. Upon completion of the Three Gorges Project, the reservoir backwater would reach Chongqing and the annual

transportation capacity for freight would be increased to 50 million tons, with costs reduced by 35-37 percent. For half of each year when the reservoir water level is high, 10000 ton ships would be able to sail right up to the Jiulongpo port of Chongqing. During dry seasons, the navigation conditions of the river downstream of the dam will also be improved, due to an increase in the low water flow.

Permanent double-line locks would be provided as the main navigation facilities after the project is commissioned. The locks would meet the requirements of a single direction downstream freight volume of 50 million ton, the projected volume for the year 2030, and they would allow passage of 10000 ton ship fleets. A vertical ship lift is also provided as an express passage for passenger traffic and also for certain specific types of ship.

Permanent Navigation Locks

The permanent locks comprising large-scale, multi-step structures would be provided, with the highest total head of any lock now in operation or under construction anywhere in the world. The effective lock chamber dimensions of 280m x 34m x 5m have been adopted. The minimum dimensions of the approach channels are controlled as follows: length of straight approach line entrance 930m, radius of bends 1000m, bottom width 180m, minimum upstream water depth 6.0m and minimum downstream water depth 5.5m. The maximum allowable river flow for navigation is 56700 cu.m/s, with allowable maximum water velocity at the mouth of 2.0m/s (longitudinal) and 0.3m/s (transverse) and 0.4 m/s (back flow).

The double-line five-step flight locks are situated on the left bank. The length of the main navigation structures is 1607m, with an upstream approach channel 2113m long, downstream approach channel 2722m, and a total lockage gate length of 6442m. Mitre gates are used to operate the lock. The height of the mitre gates at lock heads 1 and 2 is 37m and at lock heads 3 - 6 it is 39.75m. During opening/closing, the maximum submerged depth of the gate at the first lock head is 35m. At the first lock head, the filling valve is of the normal tainter type and at lock heads 2 -6, all are reversed tainter gates.

The method of operating the double-line lock under normal conditions is that one line carries up bound traffic while the other down bound traffic. During the periods when one lock is shut down for repairs, the other line of locks passes traffic in one direction, changing over to pass the traffic in the opposite direction at specific intervals. The filling or emptying time for the Three Gorges Project lock chamber would be 12 - 13 min. The time interval (or cycle time) for successive groups of ships to pass through would

approximately be one hour. Annual one-way capacity would amount to 51.52 million tons. Transit time for a group of ships to pass through the five flight ship locks would be 2.35 hours and the transit time for a group of ships, from entering the mouth of an approach channel to leaving the mouth of another approach channel is expected to be 3.14 hours. Annual water consumption, excluding flood season, would amount to 1.7 billion cubic meters.

Vertical Ship Lift Layout

The ship lift of the Three Gorges Project is a counterbalanced vertical ship lift with steel cable hoists, with effective dimensions of 120m x 18m x 3.5m, the same as those of the Gezhouba No.3 lock. Temporary ship lock has been provided to continue navigation even after the Yangtze river course is blocked by coffer dam. The effective dimensions of the lock chamber are 240m x 24m x 4m.

Operating Water Levels

During October, at the end of the wet season, the reservoir will be filled to Normal Pool Level. This is the highest normal operating level of the reservoir. Water levels will be maintained at Normal Pool Level until stored water is needed during critical dry periods to increase outflows for navigation and power.

During the winter season, the power plant will operate at full head when at the Normal Pool Level but with reduced output depending on the dry season inflows. Daily peaking operations will be possible with reregulation in the Gezhouba reservoir to ensure steady flows downstream.

A Lesson To Learn

The volume of the Three Gorges Project storage reservoir is too small to handle the enormous volume of the

The volume of the Three Gorges Project storage reservoir is too small to handle the enormous volume of the Yangtze river sediments. It would not take long time to fill up the reservoir. China has made considerable headway with the studies to find ways to preserve the live storage volume of the reservoirs. Their findings are reported in the Journal of the Hydraulic Research published by the American Society of Civil Engineers of the USA.

Yangtze river sediments. It would not take long time to fill up the reservoir. China has made considerable headway with the studies to find ways to preserve the live storage volume of the reservoirs. Their findings are reported in the Journal of the Hydraulic Research published by the American Society of Civil Engineers of the USA. It is being said that the unique mode of the Three Gorges reservoir operation, in particular the low pool level release of silt-laden normal flood under possibly the largest water surface gradient allows most (85%) of the live storage between minimum operating level and the full supply level be preserved for permanent use. In Nepal we could expect to encounter a similar problem in planning the Sunkosi-1 high dam despite the fact that it is a far smaller river by comparison with the Yangtze river. Needless to say that in future the information on the Three Gorges Project reservoir operation would be very valuable to us in planning the Sunkosi-1 or any other similar projects. ■

(Dr. Thapa writes on water resources)

POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

Lessons

To

Political Actors

By choosing the name of 84-year-old congress-leader Girija Prasad Koirala as the next prime minister unanimously, the seven agitating parties have opened begun a new political course. Following the proclamation of King Gyanendra shortly before mid-night, April 24, 2006, declaring the reinstatement of the House of Representatives as demanded by seven political parties and supported by popular uprising, Nepalese politics has shifted from the street to the floor of the parliament and the annoying political wrangling has landed into a safe and stable middle road. In a country with literacy of just over 50 percent, huge unemployment, slow economic growth and ruined by decade-long insurgency, it is now a great challenge as well as an opportunity to manage the state affairs. From bringing insurgents to the mainstream politics to holding elections and to take the nation towards new course of development by providing employment opportunities to hundreds of thousands, the government has many difficult tasks ahead

By KESHAB POUDEL

“The middle of the road is the entire stable surface. The extremes, right and left, are the gutters,” former American president and statesman Dwight D. Eisenhower once said

What former American president said more than five decades ago comes true in Nepal as Nepal’s political forces,

too, realize that the revival of parliament will pave for the middle way course with stable surface.

Through a televised address to the nation aired around the mid-night address on April 24, King Gyanendra reinstated the House of Representatives that was dissolved in May 2002, ending country’s 19-days long popular uprising. After the address politics has shifted from street to the floor of parliament. In

response, seven agitating political parties have unanimously chosen 85-year-old Nepali Congress leader Girija Prasad Koirala as the candidate for next prime minister.

Started from capital Kathmandu, the popular uprising of April intensified throughout the country with unanticipated consequences. The popular uprising that affected public life for such a long time receded as soon as



Koirala: Difficult times ahead

the House of Representatives was reinstated.

Proposed by CPN-UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal and former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and supported by United People's Front leader Amick Sherchan and Nepal Peasants Workers Party leader Narayan Man Bijukcche, Koirala— who was the supreme leader of popular uprising — became the unanimous choice of seven political parties. “Girija Prasad Koirala was our unanimous choice to lead the all-party-government,” said Deuba and Nepal duo addressing a press conference. “The new government will declare a ceasefire, call Maoists for peace talks and work to settle the political dispute through constitution assembly.”

The leaders of other parties in the alliance, too, concur with the duo's voice. “Girijababu has reluctantly accepted our suggestion as he is in no mood to lead the government,” said the leader of United People's Front Amick Sherchan, who led the crusade against Koirala four years back. “The new government will announce everything

necessary to hold the elections for constitution assembly.”

Shift of responsibility

The responsibility to run the state of affairs and fulfill the popular will expressed by the people has now shifted from the King to the political parties through three weeks long uprising. From addressing the populist political slogans like the constitution assembly to improving the ailing economic situation and maintaining social stability, the new prime minister has to deal with all kinds of challenges. In his fifth tenure as a prime minister, Koirala has burnt all his fingers and learnt the essence of statecraft.

Although Nepali Congress leader Koirala gambled his six decade long political career by taking all high risk in the uprising, he had little to lose. Had the result of the agitation gone the other way, Koirala's image as a nationalist would have been permanently tarnished. But the politics developed in the country by the resilience on the part of King Gyanendra and peace-loving people hankering for peace in the country matched with the sincere motive of

Koirala to broaden the alliance for democracy. “I will take rest from politics only after the restoration of democratic rights of the people,” Koirala had said. “My whole thrust is to pursue the reconciliation between all political forces including the King, political parties and the Maoists.”

With support of all mainstream political parties, popular will of the people and the King on his side, Koirala now has an opportunity to pay a real homage to his mentor and brother late B.P. Koirala's ideology of national reconciliation. The proposition of national reconciliation is rested on two prominent pillars of democracy and nationalism.

“The present agitation has everyone aware of the

people's power. This was such a crisis that if it had gone unmanaged, the country could have also lost its existence and independence. Had there been such a great upheaval in other parts of the world with other forms of dictatorship or autocracy, the ruler would either have fled the country or the people would have been violently suppressed. But, it has been a long tradition and practice of institution of monarchy in Nepal to submit itself to the popular will of the people and prevent bloodshed,” said an analyst.

Observing the resentments and angers expressed in the streets of Nepal on April 21, 22 and 23, the international community became nervous and expected major bloodshed in capital. From United States— the world's only super power—to Nepal's neighbors and other western countries, all the countries had asked their citizens to leave Nepal. However, following the third royal proclamation in the month with the declaration of the reinstatement of the House of Representatives, the mass turned victory. After giving the New Year's message to the nation, a second

royal proclamation followed the visit by Karna Singh- special envoy of Indian prime minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh-on 21 April.

Peaceful Nature

As usual, Nepal's political forces and common people have once again proved that they are peace loving and have a sense of reconciliation and adjustments. Although millions of people marched into the streets of Nepal with hundreds of thousands in the capital alone, the victory rally concluded without any untoward incident on April 25.

"The mid-night royal proclamation of April 24, 2006 has ended a phase of conflict and confusion between the King and constitution forces. After the proclamation both the forces have come into compromise and vowed for cooperation. Now, another difficult phase lies ahead where the constitutional forces have the leading role and the institution monarchy a supporting one. Like everyone who has witnessed this agitation, the political forces also have gone through a major trail phase and a learning process," said an analyst.

When the parliament was functional, the institution of monarchy, the army and the constitution all were out of controversy. The parliament stood as a shield to defend them. After the reinstatement of the House of Representatives, the institutions have again got a shield to defend them.

Had there been such a great upheaval in other parts of the world, either the ruler would have fled the country or the people would have been mercilessly butchered. But Nepal didn't face this misfortune as it has time-tasted institution of monarchy in the prominence.

The sky of the capital - which was full of anti-monarchy slogans - filled with slogans of victory of the people. Similar scenario was

witnessed during the upheaval of 1990. This clearly shows that Nepalese people do not tolerate any kinds of suppressions.

Support of Other countries

Along with popular uprising, Nepal's neighbors and western democracies including the world's only super power United States encouraged King Gyanendra to return his power to the people.

The changed political leaderships of India, too, had asked King Gyanendra to handover power to the political parties. Besides that the USA, EU, Japan and all other industrial democracies had been persistent in persuading the king to choose a democratic way to deal with the ongoing political crisis. This kind of support was not there during the 1990 people's movement. The democratic west has now unanimity to support democratic systems of governance all over the world.

If there is support and assurance from Nepal's neighbor and west, Nepalese can manage democracy as all other countries. By solving the crisis, Nepal has proved that it has an inbuilt process of crisis management. "If Nepalese are left alone, they are quite capable of resolving these controversies and conflicts. During 1990s upheaval, the constitution as well as popular representatives both were in rejection. That was just a beginning from a scratch - the old constitution was suspended and the new constitution was on the process of draft.

In the present context, a complete democratic constitution is there in the operation. There is a demand for rewriting the constitution through the 'Constitution Assembly' in order to accommodate the Maoists in the democratic process. Otherwise, the constitution in itself had not left any discretionary power to the King in the state affairs.

In fact, the present constitution has made the monarchy ceremonial in real sense. When asked to a constitutional lawyer what amendments in the constitution would make the King ceremonial, there was no precise answer. The royal proclamation of April 24 has concluded a phase of conflicts and confusions between the King and pro-constitution forces. After the proclamation, both the forces have come into a compromise and vowed for cooperation. Now a more difficult phase has begun with constitution forces in the leading role and the institution monarchy in the supporting one.

"One of the important lessons of the recent popular uprising is that no body will dare to grab power again with backing of arms. Thanks to the



Demonstrations: Victorious people

overwhelming support of Nepalese people, seven political parties have been able to restore the rights of the people," said Govinda Raj Joshi, member of Nepali Congress Central Committee. "With the leadership of Girijababu and support of Nepalese people, we will now settle all the political problems faced by the country."

The present agitation has taught a lesson everyone. The leaders of the political parties have realized their mistakes of the past that had put the democratic process into a deadlock and vowed in public forums not to repeat them. As they have always been in contact of the general people, they should have learned how furious the mass can be if they repeat their mistakes.

Some people are still trying groping for the logic behind the dissolution of the House and now they are astonished to know how the house is reinstated in the aftermath almost four years political crisis.

"The political pundits of Nepal are very curious and eager to learn about the powerful hand behind the premature dissolution of the lower house, in May, 2002 and its reinstatement after almost four years," said attorney general Badri Bahadur Karki. "On which goal and purpose did this power or the counter power reinstated the prematurely dissolved parliament."

When the House was dissolved, there were only four parties in the parliament. In the course of time, the MPs elected from one of these four parties have registered several different political parties. For instance, Nepali Congress has two major factions Nepali Congress Democratic and Nepali Congress. Prakash Koirala and Narayan Singh Pun, who were elected with congress' ticket have registered two separate parties. Similarly, CPN-UML has to accommodate

some half a dozens of MPs who have left their party. Rastriya Prajatantra Party has three factions with 11 MPs and Nepal Sadbhavana Party has two factions. Thus, the parliament now is going to be more complicated.



Youths: Emerging factor

Had there been elections for the parliament, hardly a fourth would have been reelected. Though the fresh public mandate is not in place, these experienced people will prove to be an asset in a situation like this to provide stability as the parliament has been reinstated. This is the positive side of reinstatement of the parliament.

Similarly, the King has also learnt more by his own experiences and got maturity and wisdom by burning all his fingers within a short period of time. It is very easy to sermonize others to do this and not to do in the affairs of the statecraft. The more influential position one holds, more diverse the opinions he will face.

The King has his own perceptions of the statecraft, but they were not sufficient to help solve the day-to-day problems of the country. He



Victory march: What next?



Parliament: No agenda

had G.P. Koirala, a senior and seasoned politician as the prime minister when he ascended the throne. If other things remain the same, Koirala will be again taking the oath of office of prime minister by the King next week.

In these four years, both these persons have learnt lessons from their experiences of the period with maximum troubles and turmoil. The King should not have lost a prime minister like Koirala in his initial days as the King. The prime minister was more experienced and capable to defend the government whereas the King was above the controversy.

Slowly and gradually by mysterious machinations, both of them were put into head on collision. Although King Gyanendra and Koirala, both have same sensitivity and the interest towards the country, they follow different paths to promote that. Thus, the conflict between

them enlarged into a broader conflict between pro-constitutional forces. The King was almost put into isolation. Though it was too late, it was the realization on the part of King that the greatest strength of a constitutional monarch is to follow the popular opinion of the people. In the midnight on April 24, the King was very calm and composed while bowing down to the popular will of the people which are being expressed all over the country. Submitting himself to the supreme will of the people, the King enhanced his stature higher

than anytime before. Some elites also appreciate the dignity of the crown with humility and courage.

King Gyanendra was similar to his sagacious brother late King Birendra while carrying out the dignity of the state and humility of the person. If he continues his dealings like this, Nepalese democratic process will permanently become stable with support from monarchy. Compared to many other conflict-ridden countries of the world, Nepal has time-tasted institution of monarchy to go along with the changing needs of the country.

King Gyanendra - who is well educated and has an impressive personality with a varied experience of public life - appears to be in the same mental make-up like his August brother late King Birendra. In the view of succession, he has capability to follow the noble tradition of his predecessors

from King Tribhuwan to King Mahendra and King Birendra.

Role of Nepal's Neighbors

In recent days expression leaders of both the neighbors of Nepal Indian Prime minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh and Chinese vice premier Tang Jiaxuan had expressed similar views regarding the political stability of Nepal. Nepal needs their support to make the functional democracy and economic development possible.

"Well, our role is to ensure that all elements of the Nepali polity are talking to each other. We are not dictating them. Our role is the role of a conciliator- to ensure that the democratic process is restored. Now I hope the King and the political parties will talk about the future of the country," said Indian Prime Minister Dr. Singh in his recent interview to Indian media. "So far our position is that constitutional monarchy and multi-party democracy are the two pillars of Nepali polity. There is no change in that position. No, we cannot afford to have Nepal as a failed state. We will do whatever we can do to strengthen it in every possible way as Nepal's close neighbor. I'm not saying that Nepal is a failed state. We have to help Nepal deal with the difficulties it has got into."

In his recent visit to Nepal senior Chinese leaders reaffirmed their support to Nepal. "We consistently support Nepal in its effort to safeguard sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. We believe that the Nepalese government and people have the political wisdom and capabilities to solve their own problems. A Nepal of peace, reconciliation and amity, enjoying stability, development and prosperity serves the fundamental interest of its people and will promote regional peace, stability and development," said Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan in his statement.

It is being realized very seriously in both the countries that the stability of Nepal is in their national interests, too, and only independent democratic and prosperous Nepal is in their interest and only such Nepal can have a lasting peace and stability as both the neighbors have same views. ■

DRINKING WATER

Not A Drop To Drink

Water crisis is heating the Kathmandu valley

By A CORRESPONDENT

Fed up with the irregular supply of drinking water and paying a lot of money to buy the water, Babulal Maharjan, 38, a resident of Chyasal, has decided to turn to his traditional way of water conservation. Maharjan along with other two dozens youths of Prayag Pokhari, Lalitpur district, gathered on Sithi Nakha, Monday (June 13) – a traditional festival dedicated to clean wells and to pray for uninterrupted water in stone spouts and wells. As the water-level continues to shrink because of over extraction, nobody is certain whether Maharjan's inclination will pay off.

As people extract large volumes of ground waters and the process of recharge is very slow as the rainwater is released to river through sewerage within a very short period of time. Many wells and stone spouts have already dried thanks to slow process of recharge. The water level in all the areas in the valley goes down from March to June.

Time Consuming

Collection of water is one of the most irritating and time consuming works in the valley. In almost all households, a family member has to spend at least an hour to accumulate water in the underground tank and then pump it to the higher floors.

Sundar Gurung, a resident of Koteshwor wakes up at 3 in the morning. If he does not wake up in time, he cannot get drinking water. His course begins by operating two-horse powered water pumps as he need to shock water from government pipe about 100 meters away from his residence. Despite all his efforts, getting water is still difficult. "If I am late for few minutes, other people will suck the water and my tap will remain empty."

Gurung is not alone in this area. All the residents of Koteshwor, Baneshwor, Thamel and other areas have similar

problems to face. Supplied routinely on three days a week, the sounds of the water pumps disturbs the tranquility of the areas on the day of water distribution. "There is 'might is rights'. If you don't have high powered pump set, your tap will go dry," said Surendra Khanal, a resident of Baneshwor.

This is not a unique character of these places but universal phenomenon of almost all the localities of the valley. Over ninety-percent registered tap owners use one or other kinds of pump



A Water Tap: No water to drink

sets to extract the water making the cost of drinking water higher.

Despite the efforts of Nepal Water Supply Corporation, there are still disparities in water supply. In Chundevi, Maharajgunj and north of Royal Palace areas, there are abundant of water supply. In some areas, people do not get even a drop of water as the pipe virtually dried up for months. Interestingly, those who do not get water have also to pay much higher tariffs than those who regularly get. According to a regulation of Nepal Water Supply Corporation,

Rs.500.00 is minimums for those whose meter does not operate.

As there is virtually no rain in the last two months and temperature goes up, the water levels in most of the reservoirs of Kathmandu valley gone down. "We have experienced drastic reduction of the water level in some sources or up to 300 percent," said general manager of Nepal Water Supply Corporation. "The Manohara Reservoirs – which is 8 kilometers east of Kathmandu – is now supplying 4 million liters per day compared to its supply capacity of 20 million liters per day. "The water supply capacity of Bode's Reservoirs, 10 kilometers of east of capital, has gone down to 3 million liter a day from 12 million liter capacity. The situation is similar in Sundarijal reservoirs; 8 kilometer north of capital, is similar.

According to Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC), the current demand of drinking water in Kathmandu valley is about 190 million liter per day but the corporation supplies only 90 Million Liters Per Day (MLD) At present there are about 1, 40,000 houses holds as registered users of water in the valley. NWSC installs average 5000 new taps every year. At the rate of 1000 MLD, there need additional 5 million liter per annum.

With the support from different agencies including JICA, many steps have already been taken to improve the supply situation. NWSC on its own resources has also constructed new projects and some old projects are renovated. As the population pressure is growing higher, the demand for water is rising.

With its 17 service reservoirs and overhead tanks including major ones in Sundarijal and Pharping, Balaju and Sinbhu, NWSC has been supplying the water. As the distribution network is getting older, there are frequent cases of leaks and burst. According to NWSC, around 40 percent of water is wasted due to the lick age.

Despite available abundant waters in Known as a country with huge water resources, large numbers of valley's population do not find adequate water to drink. ■

"I Have Resigned Because I Want To Pave Way For The New Comers"

— TARANATH RANABHAT

Although he was compelled to resign on Wednesday evening, speaker of the House of Representatives TARANATH RANABHAT's long dream came true when King reinstated the House of Representatives on April 14 and summoned its session for 28 April. Following the dissolution of the House in May 2002, speaker Ranabhat was the only person as an elected representative of people. Speaker Ranabhat spoke to KESHAB POUDEL on various issues regarding forthcoming session of parliament. Excerpts:

Why did you resign?

I have resigned because I want to pave way for the new comers who want to bring changes in the parliament through the street agitation. They need to be given opportunity to work in a new environment.

Didn't your leaders defend you?

When I had major differences, I did not see any reason to argue with my leaders. I want to be a dedicated party worker.

How do you see the reinstatement of the House of Representatives?

I have waited more than three years to see this day. When Royal proclamation came, it was the happiest moment of my political career. Although many of my colleagues pressurized me to resign from the post of speaker of the House, I stood on my conviction and upheld my constitutional duties. I knew that my presence as a speaker would pave way for the reinstatement of the House of Representatives. My political dream has come true. With a determination in my mind, I carried the ray of hope for the reinstatement of parliament. Although many of my colleagues had tried to damage my political career, blaming me as a power hungry and immoral person, I sacrificed my personal likes and dislikes and humiliation at the cost of parliament. The present moment is what I aspired since a long time. Even my party asked me to chair the parliament at the street. Had I gone there for cheap popularity, my utility and moral ground would have finished. I am proud to say that the parliament is reinstated and the country is once again back in the track of political process. I resigned following I have differences with political leadership. I don't want to be a part to finish parliament.

Do you believe the parliament will function in accordance with the spirit of parliamentary democracy?

If the representatives of people ignore their responsibility prescribed by the constitution and not follow the spirit of street agitation, we will lose all our opportunity and miss a major chance to improve our

position and credibility. If the reinstated parliament cannot solve the Maoists problem, problems of internally displaced people, problems of unemployment and education the future of parliamentary democracy will be doomed in the country. We need to revamp economic development program with sympathy from our foreign friends. If the parliament does not function as real representatives or sovereign people of Nepal, it will lose its image. This is an opportunity as well as challenge for the future of Nepal. There is a challenge of rehabilitation of the country. We have to provide better service delivery and faster economic growth by solving the Maoist problems. We have to improve our education environment, which is virtually collapsing.

How will the parliament address the demands raised by seven political parties?

One of the major demands of seven parties is to reinstatement of the House of Representatives. The second demand is an all-party-government and the question of constitution assembly. The issue of constitution assembly is a complicated matter. The question now is how seven political parties will convince Maoists to join mainstream politics and bring them to join all party government. How political parties will bring the Maoists in the main stream remains to be seen. One of the major problems of Maoists is their weapon. The time has now come to test the understanding signed between the Maoists and seven parties in November 2005.

How do you see the role of political parties?

If the parties just focus on the politics of street, the parliament cannot deliver anything to them. The political parties must show their commitments towards the parliamentary politics. The parliament is guided by the constitution and its own traditions and laws. The parliament cannot go to the street. If parties enter in the parliament with an attitude of revenge, the parliament will not function. Even the King has repeatedly stressed that the people are the sources of sovereignty and they are sources of power. Political parties should not forget this. We have already destroyed our systems. Now the time has come for reconciliation and accommodations. Democracy is a system of governance ruled by the will of the people.

How do you see the future generation in Nepali Congress?

We have to hand over the present democratic set up to the next generation. We cannot transfer democracy to the youth making them undisciplined and anarchist. Like B.P. Koirala trained us, we have to train our new generation about the sophistication of political process. Our generations are still responsible since we were

"If the representatives of people ignore their responsibility prescribed by the constitution and not follow the spirit of street agitation, we will lose all our opportunity and miss a major chance to improve our position and credibility."

groomed under the leadership of B.P. Subarnaji, Ganeshmanji and Kishunji. As we are trained by leaders like BP Koirala, Ganeshmanji and Kishunji, we cannot be irresponsible, intolerant, undisciplined and undemocratic. We must teach this lesson to our new generation, too. Girjababu has to train our cadres the same way we were trained. Nepal is in a very difficult phase of transition as it has complicated geo-strategic position. Nepal needs to change to suit our position at the global level. All of us know what interest of our friends and neighbors have in Nepal. All of us know for whom we have been working and for what purpose. This is an open fact now. We have to take our decision on our own. We need to develop institutional mechanism to solve the problems.

How will the parliament balance between the anarchist of street and members representing people?

It is very difficult to balance between responsible members and anarchist of the street. I am also considering how to manage it. Even some of my colleagues - who are angry with me for not accompanying them in the street and not violating the parliamentary responsibility and morality- will challenge my position. If there is a future of parliamentary democracy, they must follow the practices of parliamentary democracy as elsewhere in the world. Streets are always full of anarchist where people are allowed to speak everything and to do everything. The parliament is a different forum where it has its own legal and constitutional practices. All of us have to distinguish these differences. I am very proud to say that I made my every effort to uphold the spirit of the parliamentary practices. As long as I remain a speaker, I will uphold the spirit and dedication of my position.

How do you judge your role as a speaker?

Being an individual, I might have my own aspirations, wishes and ambitions, but I should follow the practices, traditions and laws when I have to work as a speaker of the House of Representatives. I have to limit my weakness on my own. The history will judge my role as a speaker. Everyone knows the importance of Nepalese parliament and recently a visiting British parliamentary delegation came to the parliament visiting our floor and house. The house was reinstated when British MPs visited the house. My whole duties were not for personal gains and benefits. The facilities were limited and there are no other advantages for speaker of House of Representatives. I get just Rs. 19,000 (approximately \$250) as monthly salary. I am very sad to say that our colleagues have shown chicken heart.

How do you see the dissolution of the House of Representatives?

Although it was the event of past, I didn't understand the reason behind the dissolution of the House of Representatives. It was dissolved when they did not need to do so. Then prime minister dissolved the House when it was supporting the government. The parliament was with the majority of Nepali Congress and main opposition as a CPN-UML. The country's economic situation was bad and the law and order situation was deteriorating.



Unfortunately, the house was dissolved and the country entered into a new phase of political confrontation.

How important is the role of centrist party like Nepali Congress now?

I still believe that Nepali Congress needs to survive as a centrist party following its policy of national reconciliation. The day when we give up national reconciliation, Nepali Congress will lose its image. My ideals are late B.P. Koirala, Subarna Sumsher and living leader Krishna Prasad Bhattarai. I will follow the path shown by them. Whatever personal grievances against the monarch, late B.P. Koirala had never gone against monarchy. Is there anybody like B.P. Koirala who had to suffer by King's action? But B.P. had never gone against monarchy. Similarly, Kishunji has also suffered a lot from the action of King but he too upholds his own ideals. If Nepal needs to survive as an independent nation, Nepal must follow constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy. The world opinions love Nepal because Nepal has democracy. There is wide sympathy on the world over Nepal's poor and desperate people. In the last fifteen years of experiences, there are many politicians with clean image.

What role do you play to protect the dignity of the parliament?

I have made every effort to protect the parliament and constitution. I have to admit that I was fully backed and supported by our leader Girija Prasad Koirala to remain in the position of speaker. Girjababu knows that presence of speaker is essential to fulfill his demand for the reinstatement of the House of Representatives. I went many times to meet Girjababu to tell him that I would like to resign, but he pressurized me not to do so. Koirala's backing was political. I have some imminent constitutional lawyers who always backed and encouraged me to continue as a speaker. Senior advocate Ganeshraj Sharma, Kusum Shrestha and Motikazi Staphit also advised me to remain as a speaker. Had I resigned on my personal wish or advice of some misguided members of our party, their demand of reinstatement of parliament would have been lost a long time ago. ■

"I have made every effort to protect the parliament and constitution. I have to admit that I was fully backed and supported by our leader Girija Prasad Koirala to remain in the position of speaker."

What Is Messy About The Mass Movement 2006?

By DR BIPIN ADHIKARI

A columnist of Nepal National Weekly magazine recently described two op-ed contributing sociologists of the Himal Khabar Patrika as 'coward' for their reconciliatory overtones in the movement against the executive monarchy. An advocate of republican Nepal, the columnist thought people who feel otherwise are pursuing the campaign to minimise the aspiration of the Nepali people.

Unlike many other revolutionaries, these sociologists emphasized the utility of re-conciliation between King Gyanendra and democratic forces, despite the current vicissitudes, and the need for the king to revert back to democratic system in the interest of the country and its smooth transition from the ongoing conflict.

A Culture of Violence

A culture of violence enforced by both the government and the Maoist opposition is about to eliminate the democratic centre of Nepal, and the conscience of the Nepali people is increasingly becoming hostage to the extremist dispensations.

The problem of institutionalization of democracy and empowerment of the people goes far beyond the issue of the restoration of the parliament, the elections to the constituent assembly, and drawing up of a new constitution acceptable to all. If some opinion makers think everything will be fine after the ongoing movement achieve these milestones, or the King is dethroned, or the Maoists are mainstreamed and power is handed over to the legitimate representatives of the people, they are not objective, and if the history of the world is any evidence, revolutions have frequently been successful to destroy the status quo, but not always to create and sustain a viable alternative regime. The later issue demands proper planning and clearly thought out strategies. An extremist culture based on violent parameters is, therefore, never helpful.

Change in Focus There is logic in the ongoing movement for the restoration of multiparty democracy. The continued denial of the King to handover power to the political parties, and help create an atmosphere to salvage democracy from the Maoist threat, was no doubt a crucial subject. But the logic alone does not answer all the questions that a credible movement might need to build on.

The movement started with the objective of restoring democracy, but now with the increasing tide of people, and surprisingly outstanding hits, the focus has been shifted to toppling monarchy straight away (than achieving the declared demands of the movement).

At this stage, the talk of toppling monarchy just appears either childish or lunatic. But assuming that it is possible for some reason, as of today, the nation is devoid of any non-state home-grown machinery to immediately fill up the vacuum in case the King quits the country, abdicates his throne or is toppled anyway. Unless the intention is to allow an alien force

to fit in the vacuum anyway, thereby creating a new ruler, the seven parties are not yet prepared for disastrous changes.

Nevertheless, the slogans on the streets have changed. The tendency of the mass to target the palace physically been frequently reported. This means more violent clashes, further bloodsheds and infiltration of armed Maoists in the peaceful movement. The politicians have not explained how they are going to protect the demonstrators from the wrath of the security forces.

As yet, the mass movement does not have an all-accepted leader, and the capacity of the seven-party coordinating body to monitor the movement and give it a political direction where needed seems to be frighteningly controversial. Movements are never eternal. They have a life cycle. Once created, they grow, they achieve successes or failures and eventually, they dissolve and cease to exist. The role of the leadership in mobilising this process to achieve the political is very crucial. The seven-party decision of April 22 to continue with the mass movement was taken simply because of the fear of the swelling mass, rather than any other thing. Thus, the perils of the upsurge are clear. What is not clear is how the politicians are going to revert back should they feel the need for it.

Tackling the King

By this time, the king must have realised that he took a lot of time to take the right decision in harnessing new political relationship with the representative institutions. Whether October 4 or February 1, his approach to the problems of governance has been too simplistic, and often charged up with his personal ambitions.

Even from a purely selfish standpoint, the King should have tried to improve his approach faster than what has been the counter speed of the parties which had started to polarise. Improving oneself is a lot more gainful than trying to improve others. As such, at the end of the rat race one is still a rat.

Moreover, the King underscored the importance of prior consultation with the parties before making his offer public. While there are still many people who want the King to stay in a democratic set up, there is much change in their expectations from the monarchy due to the strength of education (the wider dissemination of political literature, the increased mobility of labour due to the increasing economic activities and urbanization, the freedom of expression, economic independence, and the unprecedented number and scope of various contemporary political and social movements.)

The result is, therefore, right before him. Although he has finally agreed to turn the reins of government over to a prime minister chosen by the country's main political parties, he has not been able to find receptive audience for him. Many politicians consider his offer too little and too late. Now they want more - the fulfilment of the two principal demands of the

seven agitating parties and those who have poured out onto the streets for the last three weeks - the demand for the restoration of the latest parliament and elections to a constituent assembly to frame a new constitution in due course. The first demand hits the ego of the King, and the second hits his future.

The agitating parties are only relying on the slogans of the liquid masses on the street to press upon the King. They need to understand that there is a change in the balance of power, but they are doing very little behind the curtain to negotiate what is possible in the new context.

Positive Visions

So far the movement is still building on the hatred against the King without offering positive visions to the King and the people about the restored House of Representatives, the functions of an interim government, and how they intend to pursue the elections to the constituent assembly in the best interest of the Nepali people. There is no vision of what the seven parties believe to be an alternative constitutional system.

Ideas about how the transition might work vary considerably, especially with respect to the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA), the Nepal Police, the functioning bureaucracy, and other interim arrangements. As soon as the King is out of the scene, the challenge of dealing with the RNA will not be that easy.

There is also disagreement about how a constituent assembly might be brought about as a result of the unique opinions of the Maoists who are theorizing them within their broad Maoist genres. It is inconceivable that the political parties who have always lost with the Maoists, whether in the government or outside, and are conducting the mass movement with "borrowed hands" can strike out a constitutional image of their own.

Harsh facts

Whether the King runs the show, or the Maoists or the seven parties, Nepal will continue to remain the roof of the world, and its geopolitical realities will not change simply by shifting its status to a republican state.

Real democratic commitment is the function of the quality of relationships. If the King is to be thrown out because of his irresponsible exercise of power, there is absolutely no reason why the politicians who ruled (or misruled) this country with corruption, mismanagement and injustice during these awful years should be exempted from the same process. The Maoists, of course, are the principal assailant on the infant democracy, which had barely started to crawl. This holier-than-thou attitude does not serve the movement any more. The challenge is to recognise the weaknesses and leave them behind.

Free rider problem

Whether the King runs the show, or the Maoists or the seven parties, Nepal will continue to remain the roof of the world, and its geopolitical realities will not change simply by shifting its status to a republican state. Every movement in the past has cost the nation dearly. Sceptics can start counting what has Nepal lost since October 2002, and the list can surprise many. This is the harsh geo-political phenomenon. You solve

one and the other will come up. In this environment, the idea of a pure movement is just as illusory as the idea of an autonomous political process.

As the political parties are not clear about the specifics in the context of the three dimensions of power including decision-making, agenda-setting, and preference-shaping there is always a danger of outsiders reaping the benefits after their hard work. The general public may not be aware of what decisions are actually in their interest due to the power of invisible forces who work to distort their perceptions.

Conclusion

If there is any approach which has never proved wrong, it is the national reconciliation among all political stakeholders. With this approach, the great excitement of the future is that we can shape it, and all demands of the movement can be quickly realized. What the seven-party leaders need to do is to create not just a vision, as suggested above, but a vision with a meaning.

The country can be reinvented by developing a sense of connectedness among all political units, a sense of working together as part of a system, where each part of the system is affecting and is being affected by others, and where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For this the King is as much necessary as the other political forces.

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BOOK

On Conflict Resolution

The book discusses different aspects of the conflict management and conflict result

By A CORRESPONDENT

Conflict management is a very complicated and difficult issue. Experiences of many countries have shown that a proper mechanism for the resolution of conflict is required. Although Nepal has been facing the violent conflict for the last eight years, only a few steps have been taken to debate and discuss the way for conflict resolution and conflict management.

Following the breaking of ceasefire in August between the Maoist and government, the country has returned to the violence but what is lacking is the mechanism to resolve the conflict. In the last seven years, the Maoist insurgents and the government announced ceasefire twice and hold six rounds of talks but the peace negotiations broke down abruptly.

"Political instability and weak governance have bred and given continuity to economic and social inequality, urban/rural disparity and marginalization of minority politics making it a huge challenge for the political sector to handle," writes Dev Raj Dahal, in his forward. The promotion of peace, democracy and good governance becomes easy if there is a legitimate bulwark of security founded on a unitary legal order. Once the institutional capacity for conflict resolution is achieved, governance will

have the political will and capacity for building a modern Nepal, which promises a shared future for its citizens."

Based on a seminar on Conflict Resolution and Governance in Nepal, the book is divided into two parts. The first

"There is no doubt that there is a basic commitment to democracy in Nepal. A framework of institutions and laws as well as a democratic constitution are in place. However, a weak democratic culture and an environment of extreme polarization within and between institutions especially political parties- pose difficulties in consolidating democracy," writes Ananda P. Shrestha, executive director of NEFAS.

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chapter under a title of Conflict Resolution in Nepal includes articles written by Dev Raj Dahal, Meena Acharya, Krishna Bhattachan and Yubaraj Sangroula.

In another chapter Governance in Nepal, different authors including Hirmani Ghimire, Charamehr Vajracharyam, Raghab D. Pant, Bihari

Krishna Shrestha and Hari Upreti have contributed their papers.

"There is no doubt that there is a basic commitment to democracy in Nepal. A framework of institutions and laws as well as a democratic constitution are in place. However, a weak democratic culture and an environment of extreme polarization within and between institutions especially political parties- pose difficulties in consolidating democracy," writes Ananda P. Shrestha, executive director of NEFAS.

Ceasefire and successful talks are two important aspects of the conflict resolution since there are many more

issues to deal. In many countries, the complete resolution of conflict took decades. Even after the surrender of gun by rebels the society cannot secure absolute normalcy. Concerned parties also need to work out another strategy for confidence building measures.

"Conflict transformation may be defined as a process encompassing structure-oriented long-term peace building efforts, which aim to truly overcome revealed forms of direct, cultural and structural violence with outcomes acceptable to the parties in conflict," writes Meena Acharya in the paper Towards Conflict Transformation in Nepal. It conveys much broader sense than the concepts of conflict settlement and conflict resolution."

Other scholars also discuss the matter related to conflict and its resolution. Although most of the authors are well known to Nepalese societies having long working experiences in previous Panchayat system and present multi-party democracy. Interestingly, only a few scholars seem to be happy with open and plural political process. ■

BOT Investment Model

By ROSHAN LOVELY SHRESTHA

BOT investment model is an efficient way to meet the need of cash-starved government, yet, it has many problems in implement. Investor always require governments' guarantee in by warranty law files, such as; soil and logistics guarantee, foreign currency exchange guarantee, confined competition guarantee, management time guarantee, investment returns guarantee etc. Though governments' support and guarantee is substantial to the success of BOT investment style, there are some law flaws and if there is not any system to harmonize such problems then it would lead to conflict. Therefore, there should be a proper law system for BOT investment style to make it more successful.

Key words: cash-starved government, BOT, government's guarantee, law system

PPP/BOT and Government

PPP Background and Introduction

In 1990 there was a sharp decline in the level of donor support for infrastructure projects in developing countries. Aggregate flows of aid for the infrastructure sector halved during the course of the decade. This shift away from infrastructure projects reflected the appointment of donors with the performance of the infrastructure sector, which was often inefficient, poorly managed, socially and environmentally damaging, and lacking a clear and accountable process of governance to control corrupt practices. In contrast to the decline in official aid, private capital flows for infrastructure increased significantly during the 1990s, in response to the general trend towards privatization of infrastructure in developing countries.

"Public-private partnerships" (PPP) refer to contractual agreements formed between a public agency and private sector entity that allow for greater private sector participation in the delivery of infrastructure projects. Expanding the private sector role allows the public agencies to tap private sector technical, management and financial resources in new ways to achieve certain public agency objectives such as greater cost and schedule certainty, supplementing in-house staff, innovative technology applications, specialized expertise or access to private capital.

Some of the primary reasons for public agencies to enter into public-private partnerships include:

- Accelerating the implementation of high priority projects by packaging and procuring services in new ways;
- Turning to the private sector to provide specialized management capacity for large and complex programs;
- Enabling the delivery of new technology developed by private entities;
- Drawing on private sector expertise in accessing and organizing the widest range of private sector financial resources;
- Encouraging private entrepreneurial development, ownership, and operation of highways and/or related assets; and,
- Allowing for the reduction in the size of the public agency and the substitution of private sector resources and personnel

PPPs provide benefits by allocating the responsibilities to the party – either public or private – that is best positioned to control the activity that will produce the desired result. With PPPs, this is accomplished by specifying the roles, risks and rewards contractually, so as to provide incentives for maximum performance and the flexibility necessary to achieve the desired results.

- * The primary benefits of using PPPs to deliver infrastructure projects include:

- * Expedited completion compared to conventional project delivery methods;
- * Project cost savings;
- * Improved quality and system performance from the use of innovative materials and management techniques;
- * Substitution of private resources and personnel for constrained public resources; and,
- * Access to new sources of private capital.

As PPPs have become more common, many governments have become eager to capitalize on the increased efficiency of the private sector and have found that private developers deliver greater value for money. PPPs are often used to meet such public objectives as:

- Accelerating implementation of high priority projects by compressing and overlapping services normally sequenced;
- Providing management resources for large or complex programs to insure quality, cost and schedule deadlines are met;
- Accessing advanced (and possibly proprietary) technologies not available through standard procurement approaches;
- Improving asset management and the scientific application of life-cycle cost practices;
- Achieving set levels of environmental or aesthetic quality; and,
- Accessing new sources of private capital (debt and equity), thereby eliminating the need to wait for future budget cycles to pay for needed infrastructure projects.

Some examples of PPPs are as follows:

- Maintenance and Operation Fee Service Contracts
- Program Management Fee Service Contracts
- Design-Build
- Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) / Design Build Operate Maintain (DBOM)
- Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Transfer (DBFO)
- Build-Own-Operate (BOO)

For different types of PPP, responsibilities borne by two parties varies. The diagram below shows how the range of responsibilities shifts from the public sector to the private sector with different PPP options.



BOT and its growing potential

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in infrastructure projects is getting popular among many developing countries and among all the PPP models, BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) is the most common model.

BOT scheme can be described as a developing technique for infrastructure development by using private initiative and funding. In this model, a concession is granted to a concession holder (sponsor) who is required to build the relevant project facilities or infrastructure, operate them for a fixed period and at the end of the period transfer them back to the person who originally granted the concession. The concession will run for a finite period, which would ensure that any financial institutions lending to the sponsors are repaid and the shareholders receive a sufficient return on their initial investment. The scheme may have a definite lifespan within which the concession holder is allowed to operate the facilities, or the term may be variable, and would be determined once a target cumulative revenue has been received by the project company.

The sponsor is expected to finance the building of the infrastructure and undertakes the risk of constructing and operating the infrastructure facilities. A prerequisite for private financing is a need for the facility to be developed. It is only after market analysis justifies a need that private parties would be willing to financially participate as well as become involved in developing the facility.

A substantial part of the finance for the project company, aside from a basic equity commitment from the shareholders, is often provided by secondary parties such as banks, financial institutions and bond holders, on a limited recourse basis. In other words the repayment of the loans will be from the cash flow generated by the project and, and generally will not be guaranteed (at least not in full) by the shareholders of the project company. In some cases the government also provides part of the debt.

In comparison with other investment models, BOT model has following legal properties:

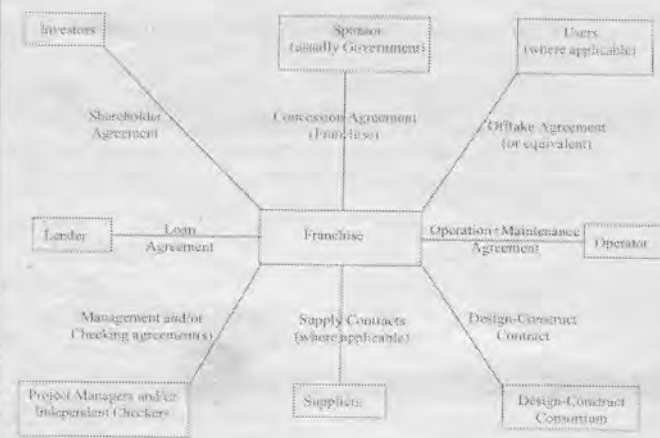
(1) Authority: According to the contract between government and franchise, franchise has the authority to operate the project for certain period of time and after that it should be hand in to government.

(2) Responsibility: According to the contract between government and franchise, investor has the obligation for designing, investment, construction, operation and maintenance of the project.

(3) Capital: The capital for the construction of the project can obtain from foreign investment or national investor or from the bank loans. Government will not provide any fund but can invest on the project.

(4) Participation: There will be the main participation of government and franchise by the contract. Beside this, with the contract such as loan contract, operation contract, construction contract, designing contract, between franchise and other parties there is involvement of bank, contractor and designer in this project.

The figure bellow illustrates the basic relationships in a typical BOT-type project.



The potential advantages of using the BOT approach for infrastructure development;

- * Use of private sector financing to provide new sources of capital, which reduces public borrowing and direct spending and which may improve the host government's credit rating.

- * Ability to accelerate the development of projects that would otherwise have to wait for, and compete for scarce sovereign resources.

- * Use of private sector capital, initiative and know-how to reduce project construction costs, shorten schedules and improve operating efficiency.

- * Allocation to the private sector of project risk and burden that would otherwise have to be borne by the public sector. The private sector is responsible for the operation, maintenance and output of the project for an extended period

- * The involvement of private sponsors and experienced commercial lenders, which ensures an in-depth review and is an additional sign of project feasibility.

- * Technology transfer, the training of local personnel and the development of national capital markets.

- * In contrast to full privatization, government retention of strategic control over the project, which is transferred to the public at the end of the contract period.

- * The opportunity to establish a private benchmark against which the efficiency of similar public sector projects can be measured and the associated opportunity to enhance public management of infrastructure facilities.

Globalization and Infrastructure needs

Investing in public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, ports, power plants, public utilities etc. is conventionally considered to be a necessary prerequisite for industrialization and economic growth, and has traditionally been the responsibility of governments, both in capitalist and socialist economies. Governments use tax revenue and/or loans from commercial banks or international finance institutions such as the World Bank to fund infrastructure investments. While the private sector is often sub-contracted to carry out construction work on infrastructure projects, governments have borne virtually all project costs and risks.

Given the current rapid industrialization in many developing countries, for a government to maintain adequate investments in infrastructure, which is very capital intensive, an enormous burden is placed on public finances. According to the World Bank, the developing countries now spend more than US\$200 billion a year on infrastructure investment, of which more than 90 per cent is government-sponsored. This emphasis on infrastructure investment has been a major cause of burgeoning government budget deficits and foreign debt, and cutbacks to sectors, such as health, education and social welfare. This often happen in connection with structural adjustment and other austerity programs imposed by creditors such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

The past decade has seen a new global economic trend emerge, actively supported by the World Bank group, which emphasizes privatization, economic deregulation and reducing governments' role in virtually all sectors of the economy. Supporting new mechanisms which enable direct private sector investment in infrastructure projects is part of this trend, and BOT is one model currently being promoted by the World Bank group, ostensibly as a strategy for increasing efficiency, reducing the drain on state revenue and enhancing private sector development.

The thrust of the argument in favour of the BOT scheme therefore appears to be that enabling the private sector to invest directly in infrastructure projects reduces the drain on the public purse and as the private sector operates on a commercial basis, efficiency will also improve. It is a remarkably simple and seductive argument, and one, which can easily conjure up visions of free development – public infrastructure being created without having to invest public money. It can also be argued that by encouraging foreign investment, BOT can help to facilitate effective technology transfer

between countries, and thus foster the growth of a strong local private sector. In the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) notes on Build-Operate-Transfer Projects, UNCITRAL argues that: "Since direct funds from the public budget are not required, the Government of a country will thus experience reduced pressure of public borrowing, while allowing the transfer of industrial risks and also of new technologies to the private sector".

Developing countries are having huge need infrastructure, which if not met will continue to affect their economic growth. Furthermore, it is quite clear that governments are no longer able to meet all these needs. At present, the BOT scheme provides one of the better options to solve this problem. Enhanced mobilities and instantaneous communications have enabled rapid movements of both physical and financial resources to areas where they are needed, or could reap more benefits. For example, excess construction capacities or surplus funds from one region could easily flow into another to redress shortages and meet sudden needs. The phenomenal demands to upgrade basic infrastructure in most developing countries can thus be fed by BOT-type arrangements that facilitate mutually beneficial flows. The megascale of such demands is boosted by tremendous pressures for both new infrastructure and infrastructure renewal in developed countries themselves.

Private financing of public infrastructure can be a great help for cash-starved governments. The efficient maintenance and operation of assets such as power stations and roads by the private sector provided an added advantage, while also allowing for the recovery of the investment over a longer period. The transfer of the asset back to the government at the end of a specified period in the BOT concept accommodated a variety of perceived needs.

Risk Distribution

An important facet of BOT is the radical realignment of risks between project participants. Construction project risks may be broadly classified into: "Project risks" comprising development, design, construction, operation, finance and revenue generation risks; and "Global risks" comprising political, legal, commercial and environmental risks. The shifting to the franchisee of many such risks previously borne by owners may accommodate enhanced rewards or, in the alternative, incorporate some minimal safeguards of minimal returns. The model shift in project financing for BOT-types projects was also crucial in that it envisaged "non recourse" funding, where lenders would treat the cash flows of the project as the only source from which loans would be repaid and the project assets as the only available collateral.

The risks like political risks are the most difficult to handle in comparison with financial risks, while technical risks are the easiest to handle. This problem was experienced in BOT projects conducted in South-Asia region and South-east Asia region.

Government Involvement

To encourage private sector participation in BOT programs, government must prepare attractive projects and provide stable political and economic environment. They must enact clear laws and regulations; develop strong domestic capital markets to borrow local long-term debt and float the project on local stock markets; ensure easy and speedy processing of the project, fair sharing of risks between government and private sectors and provide realistic incentives, adequate returns and protection of the investment.

The private sector BOT program allows governments to reallocate scarce resources. If BOT projects are conducted in a fully transparent manner and are properly structured, these will promote open competition, provide the lowest possible project cost, and transfer most risks to the private sector. The private sector's role is vital in providing wider access to capital markets, better management skills and access to latest technology, and implementing a project much faster than the public sector.

Although BOT being very popular these days and having a high success rate, but for the country which doesn't have perfect law system, the success rate of BOT project is low. As the infrastructure projects need large investment and long time period, the risks for investor is also comparatively more. Thus investor always requires government support and guarantees. Therefore, the degree of government support and guarantee is one of the important factors in the assessment of BOT projects. In other word, government support and guarantee is an important prerequisite for the success of BOT projects.

It is true that BOT can play a big role for the development of infrastructure, but it doesn't implies all the infrastructure projects should go under BOT-type procurement. Moreover, if a project is thought to be potentially appropriate for BOT-type procurement, then it should be consider which one is the most appropriate vehicle from the many versions, such as BOT, BOOT (build-own-operate-transfer) and BOO (build-own-operate). Ogunlana (1997) had analyzed BOT projects failures and came to the point that all infrastructure projects are not amenable to privatization. He identifies eight characteristics that indicate suitability for BOT-type procurement:

1. A stable political system
2. A predictable and proven legal system
3. Government support for a project that is also clearly in the public interest
4. Long term demand
5. Limited competition
6. Reasonable profits
7. Good cash flows
8. Predictable risk scenarios

Beside this there are also some other evaluation methods for suitability of a project for BOT, like Ashley's Project scoring table (PST). All these methods show that there should be strong support and co-ordination from government level for the success of BOT projects.

Conclusion

From above, it can be said that for the overall success factor of BOT-type projects, the following point should be considered:

1. Careful evaluation of the suitability of a project for BOT-type procurement appears critical at the outset, for example, with stable political and legal regimes and suitable socio-economic conditions with the project being clearly in the public interest, capable of sustaining steady cash flows, and being provided with adequate safeguards against the various risk factors
2. A reasonable but not excessive rate of return is needed, again with any useful safeguards to achieve the desired balance
3. A proactive, stable and reasonable (including non-corrupt) sponsor (e.g. government/public sector body) is needed
4. A financially strong, technically competent and managerially outstanding consortium is required as a franchisee, who should hopefully be attracted by the foregoing conditions.

Even on infrastructure projects deemed suitable for BOT-type procurement, deep SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats) analyses may be needed from time to time in advance of critical decision such as the precise type of BOT (or PPP) to be adopted and the franchisee selection. ■

(The author is a student, who doing Masters in Engineering Management and Science at Hohai University, Nanjing, China. He is now associated with Firestone Building Products in China.)

SHANTIRAM RAI

Creating Melodies

In his two decade long career Rai has established himself as a popular music director cum singer of Nepal

By THAKUR AMGAI

As a young lad played, sang and danced with friends in the hills of Buipa, Khotang an eastern Nepalese district in the late 20s (Bikram Era), he had little idea that all Nepalese would know him as a singer and a music director one day. However, he had a deep-rooted dream – to sing a song at Radio Nepal.

With these aspirations Rai headed for capital Kathmandu after passing high school in 2045 B.S. After meticulously learning music for two years, he got an opportunity to sing a song in Radio Nepal. He recorded a duet 'Kasam Nakhau Tadha Hune' with Bimala Rai. In the days, when recording studios were not as abundant as they are today, Rai, like other singers had the compulsion to wait till next year to record another song.

"To use the free time, I started composing music for other songs," said Rai. He mingled with poet Shrawan Mukarung and started composing music in his songs. It was during these times that the evergreen hits like 'Bato Here Hunchha Aama, Ma Ta Aundaichhu', 'Timi Tare Bhir, Ma Ta Lahara' sung by Sunita Subba, 'Dhoka Diyau Timile, Kalejoma Ghau Lagyo' sung by Sukmit Gurung, among others were created.

Rai has a melodious voice and the songs he has sung have been received well by the audience. However, given the wide popularity of the songs he has composed music for, a larger mass knows him as the music

director 'Shanti Ram Rai'. "I focused in composing music in the latter years, as my music composition started becoming popular and the demand for my music composition grew," said Rai.

He has however not given up singing completely. He released an album 'Aagaman' with modern song he sung about three years ago.

Rai had released his solo album of modern songs 'Aayam' in 2053 B.S. "This was the happiest moment in my music career," said Rai. "When I released my first album I felt that I could then survive in the music industry."

In the subsequent years, Rai has released more albums including 'Mayajal', 'Pardeshi', 'Mini Busaima', 'Sombare Hataima', 'Manchheka Geetharu', 'Sadhana 59' and 'Musukkai Hansera'. He has also composed music for various feature films like 'Manai Ta Ho'. Altogether he has given music to more than 400 songs including modern songs, folk songs, and child songs.

In addition to becoming a singer and a music director Rai has also been engaged in writing. He edited 'Khotang Souvenir 2057' and written a musical biography 'My fifteen years'.

Merely in late thirties, Rai has been honored and awarded with several awards. He bagged the Best Musician Award in the Yugkabi National Music Contest 2059, Environment National Music Contest 2051. He has won the 'Youth Outstanding Award' three times in 2056, 2058, and 2060.

Rai is equally active in social organizations. He has helped the youths of Khotang to develop their musical talent and the local people at various times of crisis.

Rai is currently the general secretary of the Nepal Musical Association. He advocates for the preservation of original Nepali songs. "It is not a good practice to copy and remix original songs," he said. "I urge all patrons of Nepali music to distinguish between the original and the remixed songs and discourage such songs by purchasing and listening to original songs." ■



Rai: Aspiring higher

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