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The National Newsmagazine

# SPOTLIGHT

Nov 24-30, 2006

## Water & Sanitation Health & Wealth

Politics : What Next ?  
Prachanda : Passage To India

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**SPOTLIGHT**

THE WEEKLY NATIONAL NEWSMAGAZINE

Vol. 26, No 12, November 24, 2006  
Mansir 8, 2063

**Chief Editor And Publisher**  
Madhav Kumar Rimal

**Editor**  
Sarita Rimal

**Managing Editor**  
Keshab Poudel

**Senior Reporter**  
Sanjaya Dhakal

**Reporter**  
Thakur Amgai

**Design and Layout**  
Jyoti Dangol (Singh)

**Photographer**  
Sandesh Manandhar

**Legal Advisor**  
Advocate Lok Bhakta Rana

**Marketing**  
Navin Kumar Maharjan  
Madan Raj Poudel  
Bishnu Prasad Chaulagain

**Editorial Office**  
GPO Box 7256, Maitidevi, Kathmandu  
Tel (977-1) 4423127 Fax: (977-1) 4417845  
Chief Editor's : 4435594,  
E-mail : spot@mail.com.np  
Internet : www.nepalnews.com/spotlight

**Cover Design : Digi-Tech Scanning & Pre-Press Pvt. Ltd.**  
P.O. Box : 1655, Jwagal, Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal  
Tel : 5551251, 5529530  
E-mail : degiscan@wlink.com.np

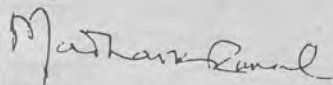
**Distribution : R.B. News Paper Traders**  
New Road, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Ph : 4232784, 2020247, 4244679  
E-mail : rbnewspaper@hotmail.com

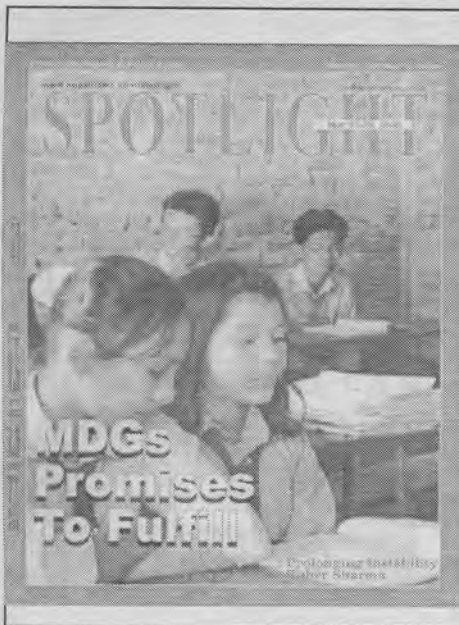
**Printers : Printers World**  
Maitidevi, Kathmandu  
Ph : 4423904, 4426520  
E-mail : printerworld@wlink.com.np

C.D.O.Regd. No  
151/039-40  
Postal Regd. No  
42/61/62  
U.S. Library of Congress  
Catalogue No. 91-905060

Nepal's search for a patriotic and nationalist leader does not seem to have ended. The only bane this small beautiful country, rich with natural resources, has suffered from, is the lack of honest leadership and men of integrity at the helms of affairs. The biggest frustration the poor people have experienced, in recent times, is from King Gyanendra. Nobody in the history of the world was favored with such a wonderful opportunity to carve out for himself the most immortal place that would have shone like a bright jewel for all time to come. Unfortunately, he wasted it. The incumbent Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has vowed to punish him, if found guilty. He thinks himself to be the paragon of virtue forgetting his crimes of Dhamija, Lauda and his nefarious designs to sell the Mahakali river apart from other corrupt activities. Perhaps, he has totally forgotten it is not his personal popularity or his erudition or exceptional capability that has thrust him where he is now. It is the alien powers that should be given the kudos of betraying the Nepali people, again and again, at the hands of nincompoops. It is no use talking about other political leaders who too have played no less infamous roles in looting the poor motherland and taking her to the brink of the precipice. If King Gyanendra would be presiding over the demise of two hundred thirty eight years old institution, the political leader would be happy to see Nepal turn into Bhutan, if the Indian statesmen have their way.

The emergence of Prachanda, the supremo of the CPN (Maoists), had generated a weak flame of hope in the hearts of many poor Nepalis. Even though, he has walked over the graves of thousands of innocent Nepalis to arrive at this place, the miserable Nepalis would have accepted him thinking, sometimes good comes out of the evil. But his first formal visit to India has thrown icy cold waters on their flimsy hopes. That the Indians could invite a head of a terrorist organization or the head of a terrorist organization could accept the invitation without any trepidation has, indeed, come to us as a big surprise. And even bigger surprise was to see the callousness of world powers for their passive acceptance of the situation. What could be a more blatant exhibition of hypocrisy than this? But the greatest surprise has come to see him to have fallen an easy victim to the world famous Indian charm. The Indians are wonderful magicians, famous all over the world for their rope trick and other bewitching activities. And moreover, our Nepali politicians are so spineless, they cannot resist the Indian charm even for a second. But all twenty five million Nepalis cannot be bewitched. There are, we know, the overwhelming poor, the honest civil society workers and the most honest and dependable Gurkhas (our security forces) who are always ready to defend their country. Like the proverbial phoenix, they always rise even from their own ashes.

  
**Madhav Kumar Rimal**  
Chief Editor & Publisher



## Keep The Promises

The targets and goals mentioned in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are critical for the well-being of any society. With regards to your cover story "Promises to Fulfill" (SPOTLIGHT, November 17), it is sad to note that in the education front there are still a lot to do. At a time when the country is passing through a difficult post conflict period, the issue of MDG must be highlighted so that the people of Nepal can be able to experience good life in near future.

*Krishna Regmi  
Dhobighat*

## Pay Attention To Socio-economic Issues

Since the country is undergoing transitional phase, all of the people – including the politicians, civil society leaders, students, organizations etc – are harping on the political slogans. There is not a single soul preaching for uplifting socio-economic conditions of the people. As pointed in the cover story "Promises To Fulfill" (SPOTLIGHT, November 17), it is actually the socio-economic condition that has haunted this country for centuries. The politics is only a mean to achieve the end of prosperity and happiness. Whereas in our country, politics has become means and ends in itself. What is the use of good and stable politics, if it does not deliver socio-economic benefits? A poor person cannot get any relief by democracy or any other cracy until and unless his basic needs and desires are fulfilled. Definitely, the people of Nepal have brought about a situation in which the political leaders are now enjoying the perks and benefits of power. But the people had not created this situation just for their sake. The people want food, cloth and shelter. They want peace, happiness, prestige and contentment. Above all, they want their leaders to deliver. The UN MDGs constitute some of the basic needs that people everywhere in the world must be provided with. The benefits of health, education and sanitation are some of the

most basic needs. Just as Nepal is moving on the path towards peace and stability, the leaders now must reorient their priorities and pay serious attention to fulfilling these socio-economic needs. Enough time has already been lost in the pursuit of political goals. Time has now come to work for attaining the social and economic goals. The MDGs, therefore, can provide a definite set of goals for our leaders. They must act without any further delay to prioritize the country's development plans and programs to meet these objectives. As they are now talking about creating a new Nepal, people have high expectations of the fulfillment of their long-desired wants and needs. If the political leadership again fails to deliver, the country could be embroiled in another phase of turmoil. Therefore, in order to avoid such pitfalls and disasters, the leaders of today must join hands not only on political issues but also on socio-economic agendas. They are standing at the crossroads of making history – good or bad – for the country.

*Lava Devkota  
Balaju*

## Phase Of Instability

The article "Prolonging Instability" (SPOTLIGHT, November 17) points out the threat of continuous instability. After the change of April this year, both national as well as international community have started to think that

Nepal is heading for the political stability. However, there are still many issues that need to be settled to actually regain the stability. Foremost, is the role that will be played by domestic actors. No less important will be the role played by Nepal's immediate neighbors.

*Kebal Bista  
Maitidevi*

## Alls Well That Ends Well

The interview with Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of the Unified Marxist Leninist (SPOTLIGHT, November 17) was interesting to read. The UML has always played dual role at times of crisis in the country. They refused to whole-heartedly embrace the 1990 Constitution. They never played a role of constructive opposition. Nepal himself refused to sit in the commission formed to probe royal massacre, at the last minute. It seems, the UML leadership wants credit for all the achievements but never want to shoulder any blame. During the time of Deuba-led government in 2004, also, the UML disowned the government policies when it did not suit them. Although the decision to hike the price of petroleum products was made by UML minister Iswor Pokharel, the party went to streets after sensing public wrath against the decision. The UML needs to evolve to become a responsible political party. They will not be able to continue fooling the people all the time.

*Birat Rai  
Lagankhel*

## Adieu To 1990 Constitution

The 1990 Constitution is going to be replaced soon (People and Constitution, SPOTLIGHT November 10). Now that it is going to be replaced, some people are debating about its salient features and positive aspects. I find it ludicrous that these lawyers and experts are now hailing the constitution when it is certain to die. Where were they and what were they doing when the constitution needed its defendants? The country and people cannot remain assured when its intellectual class does not call a spade a spade.

*Janak Shrestha  
Maharajgunj*

## Maoist Leaders Not Impressed With Indian Democracy

Maoist chairman Prachanda and leader Dr. Baburam Bhattarai have said that the kind of democracy being practiced in India was not their model. "We do not think India's democratic system has solved all the problems here," Dr. Bhattarai said speaking at a program organized by Nepal Democracy Solidarity Committee (India) in New Delhi on November 19. The Indian political system has not addressed the basic problems of the people, including poverty, hunger, casteism and feudalism, he said. Speaking at the program, the Maoist leaders conceded that India's leftist parties' support in the later stages of their movement was crucial for the success of the Maoists' negotiations with the Seven-Party Alliance. Dr. Bhattarai, however, hastened to remind that some Nepalese Maoist leaders were still lodged in jails in Left-ruled Bengal. "Two of our leaders are lodged in a jail in Jalpaiguri. We have spoken to Sitaram Yechury. He has assured us that they would be freed within a week," Bhattarai said. "I have to say that our success so far would not have been possible without the help of our comrades and the establishment in India. The Nepali autocracy has so far played India against China and vice-versa. We want to create conditions for both India and China to develop mutual trust. We are all neighbors, why fear each other?" Prachanda said. Prachanda also attempted to allay Delhi's fears of their alignment with the Indian Maoists, who have spread terror in large parts of India. "We have ideological affinities with the Indian Maoists as much as any Left group anywhere in the world. But there is no working relationship. There is no underhand deal with them, no agenda to develop a red corridor from Pashupati to Tirupati," he said. Meanwhile, at a luncheon hosted in his honor by Janata Dal (United) president Sharad Yadav, Prachanda broke down remembering his underground days spent in New Delhi. He said he wished to visit his old friends with whom he used to stay while living underground life. At the luncheon, two former prime ministers of India Inder Kumar Gujral and VP Singh were also present. Both the Indian leaders praised

Prachanda for leading a successful revolution and changing the history. After completing his three-day visit to New Delhi, Prachanda, along with his comrades, returned to Kathmandu on Sunday evening. He had gone to New Delhi to attend the Leadership Summit at the invitation of The Hindustan Times. *Nepalnews.com reports.*

## PTC Can Provide 10 MW Of Power

The Power Trading Corporation (PTC) of India has proposed providing 10 MW of power to Nepal for the time being. This proposal has come in response to the request by the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) for 50 MW of power in order to overcome the crises of load shedding in the country. "We had requested the power to overcome load shedding. It will be meaningless to purchase only 10 MW of power," said a source at NEA. The NEA is said to have turned down this offer as it could not resolve the load shedding problem. *Kantipur daily reports.*

## Middle Marsyangdi Stalled

The construction work of Middle Marsyangdi hydropower project has been stalled for indefinite period from Saturday as the agitation by the workers intensified. Consequently, the chief contracting company DDC JV has flown all its staffs to Kathmandu on helicopter. Demanding pay rise, among others, over 1500 workers had started agitation since Tuesday. Despite the warning by the contracting company to return back to work, the workers have continued with their agitation. On the other hand, workers have accused that the company unilaterally stalled the construction work of the project. "We are saying we are ready to settle the dispute through talks but they have gone ahead and stalled the whole work," said Shiva Raj Khadka, leader of the agitating workers. *Nepal Samacharpatra daily reports.*

## Nepal Bhutan Talks Postponed

The much-awaited ministerial level meeting between Nepal and Bhutan,

which was earlier slated for the third week of November (around November 20-23) in Thimpu, has now been put off. According to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister KP Oli the talks had to be put off due to intense and rapid political developments within Nepal. He said the talks would now be held sometime in December. *Leading dailies report.*

## Maoists Form Taskforce To Name Their Representatives In Interim Govt

The central committee meeting of the Maoists held in Phulbari VDC of Kavre on Sunday (Nov 12) has decided to form two taskforces – one for recommending the names of party representatives for interim parliament and interim government, and another for dealing with the issues of arms management. The first taskforce will be headed by Ram Bahadur Thapa aka Badal and the second one will be headed by its military commander Nanda Kishore Pun aka Pasang. Meanwhile, Maoist leader Dinanath Sharma said the central committee meeting discussed a number of issues including Maoist representatives to the interim parliament; arms management; November 8 agreement; and other likely changes the party structure would have to undergo in view of Constituent Assembly elections. *Leading dailies report*

## Korean Air Arrives In Kathmandu

The Korean Air began its scheduled operations to Kathmandu last week. It has become the third international airline to start flying to Kathmandu within a month. The 301-seater Boeing 777 aircraft of Korean Air landed at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) at 2:30 pm carrying 261 passengers and senior officials of the airline and left for Seoul at 5:55 pm with 126 passengers. Korean Air is the third international airline to launch its scheduled operations to Kathmandu after GMG Airlines of Bangladesh and Air Arabia of UAE. Mohan Adhikari, director general at Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN),

termed the start of Korean Air's operation as a 'historic moment' for the Nepali aviation sector, which would boost the economies of the two countries and strengthen people-to-people ties. "We are happy to operate a Kathmandu flight. This marks a historic moment for us to have our presence at the land of Mt. Everest," said Chul Hahm, managing vice president of Korean Air. The Himalayan Times daily reports

## Footballers Rue Nsc Action Against ANFA

Stating that its move to dissolve the All Nepal Football Association (ANFA) could derail the ongoing developments in this sports, clubs, coaches, national players, former national players, referees, and others have asked the Nepal Sports Council (NSC) to revert its decision. More than 300 football players, former national players, coaches, referees, clubs organized a press conference recently at the premises of Dasarath stadium to express solidarity with the ANFA. The NSC had earlier dissolved the associations of 15 sports including the football claiming that their elections held during the royal regime were illegitimate. ANFA president Ganesh Thapa has said that FIFA and AFC could ban Nepal if the duly elected body was dissolved and a new ad hoc one formed. He has said that ANFA elections had been held following due process and in presence of officials from FIFA and AFC. *Leading dailies report.*

## Maoists Lure 2000 Workers To Its Camp In Palpa

Violating the code of conduct and agreement with seven parties, the Maoist cadres have coerced around 2000 workers of Pokhara to go to their camp in Palpa district. From the lakeside area alone, the Maoists have lured over 150 workers away. Reports say they have been taken away for recruitment in Maoist army. The workers were lured away after they were promised monthly salary of up to Rs 7000. Meanwhile, Kaski district secretary of the Maoists Kiran Gurung claimed that the workers

were old and new Maoist cadres. He said they would be returned after training. *Nepal Samacharpatra daily reports.*

## Maoists In Fresh Recruitment Drive

Even as they have signed an agreement with the government on many issues including the arms and army management, the Maoists have launched fresh drive to recruit guerrillas. The news of their fresh drive comes at a time when joint team of the UN, government and the Maoists are inspecting various proposed locations of cantonments to place Maoist combatants and lock up their arms. Nepali Congress general secretary Ram Chandra Poudel has accused that the Maoists have started luring youths in villages to join their army in violation of ceasefire code of conduct and November 8 agreement. "The Maoists have started to recruit youths in their military in districts like Ilam, Sankhuwasabha, Surkhet and Rupandehi. They have lured the youths by saying that the country has entered into peace and that they can get Rs 7000 as salary (by becoming their army)," said Poudel, who is also the convener of all-party Peace Committee. The Committee had recently drafted a comprehensive peace accord to be signed by the government and the Maoists. Poudel said that such recruitment drives could create distrust in the whole peace process. In the ceasefire code of conduct, both the government and the Maoists have expressed commitment not to add army strength. Meanwhile, Poudel also alleged, that although November 8 agreement talked about seven major cantonments and 21 smaller camps, the Maoists are trying to cover 28 districts by placing smaller camps in different districts. *Kantipur daily reports.*

## Nepali Maoists Are Not Terrorists: Yechuri

The visiting Indian communist leader Sitaram Yechury has said that although Indian government lists Maoists as terrorists, the Nepali Maoists do not fall under that category. This list is

targeted at Indian Maoists, he said. Yechury added that since Nepali Maoists have already agreed to join multiparty politics, there is no reason to put them in that category. *Leading dailies report.*

## NC-D Leaders Under Pressure To Adopt Republican Agenda

At the ongoing meeting of district presidents of the party, the Nepali Congress (Democratic) leadership has come under pressure to adopt republican agenda. "Almost all of the speakers at the meeting (which started on Tuesday) have asked the leadership to adopt republican agenda," said Dr. Minendra Rijal, spokesperson of the party. He said the speakers told leaders that without taking up the agenda of republic the party would not be able to win votes from the people in the coming days. The meeting with district presidents, former MPs and central members is expected to continue for two more days. The NC-D has already decided to remain neutral on the issue of monarchy during its 11<sup>th</sup> general convention held during royal regime. *Nepalnews.com reports.*

## US Denounces Maoist Recruitment

The US Embassy, on Monday, issued a statement denouncing the recruitment of people, including children, in the armed ranks of the Maoists. "Such action violates all human rights norms and directly contravenes the spirit and letter of agreements the insurgents signed with the government," it stated. As the Maoists are poised to enter an interim government, "it is strange and troubling that they continue to harass the very people they claim they would serve in office," it said. Meanwhile, in a separate program on Monday, US ambassador James Moriarty said, "We urge the Maoists to end this practice immediately and all other forms of violence, intimidation, and extortion. All of these flout the rule of law and violate basic human rights. The Nepali people have lived in fear for 11 years. It is time to remove this fear and show respect for all Nepali citizens and their fundamental rights." *Compiled from reports.*



People throng at Pashupati area on the occasion of Bala Chaturdashi to remember the departed souls of their parents Gorkhapatra

**THE OFFICIALS OF ELECTION COMMISSION HAVE** started meeting with representatives of donor agencies with a view to request for technical as well as financial support in the next year's elections for Constituent Assembly (CA). Last week, Chief Election Commissioner Bhoj Raj Pokharel met with representatives of donor partners including UN representative Ian Martin, American ambassador James Moriarty and Australian ambassador Graeme Lade, among others. Pokharel has been meeting with a number of representatives of donor organizations in recent days. Already Finance Minister has urged the donor community to provide with Rs 5.5 billion of support to help the government cover expenses related with building cantonments, bearing the expenses for the upkeep of Maoist combatants, holding election of CA, rehabilitation of displaced persons and so on. The government feels it would need nearly Rs 1.5 billion to hold the elections for CA alone.

**THE VOLUME OF NON PERFORMING LOANS (NPL)** of the Nepal Bank Limited (NBL) has come down to 16.2 percent of total loan outlay. The amount of NPL stands at Rs 2 billion, claims the bank management. At a program organized to mark its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, chief executive officer John Fitzgerald said that the bank recovered Rs 1.7 billion of bad debts in the last one year alone. He said the bank would give top priority to recovering bad debts this year, too. He said the bank has posted profit for the past three years. This year it has posted profit of Rs 700 million. The bank has decided to distribute Rs 120 million as bonus to staffs. The bank had provided loan of Rs 10.2 billion in the past one year – which is 20 percent more than previous year. Speaking at the program, acting governor of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) Krishna Bahadur Manandhar said that the bank management has been able to resolve many problems of the bank in past few years.

**THREE NEPALIS AND THREE FOREIGN CLIMBERS** have gone missing in Amadablam mountain. They have been missing since Monday (November 13) when they left the third

camp to scale the 6812 m high Mt. Amadablam. Three Sherpa climbers and three foreigners including one Briton, two Swedish nationals have gone missing. Meanwhile, four French mountain guides have also been missing for a week. They had gone to climb Mt. Paldor. According to president of Nepal Mountaineering Association Ang Chhiring Sherpa, a 17-member team will start searching them from Thursday.

**THE CEASEFIRE CODE OF CONDUCT NATIONAL** Monitoring Committee has found both the government as well as the Maoists guilty of violating its provisions. The third report of the committee states that the joint committee to reduce the violation of the code of conduct has not been formed yet. The report states that the lack of the committee, which had to be formed by the talks teams of the two sides, was hindering in the effective implementation of code of conduct. The report was submitted to both the talks team on Wednesday. The third report deals with activities between September 11 and November 1. The Monitoring Committee has said that till now it has received 1425 complaints of which it has found violations of code of conduct in 913.

**A REPUTED GROUP OF INDIA HAS SHOWN INTEREST** in investing in the hydropower sector of Nepal. The Jindal Group has recently submitted an application to the Department of Electricity Development (DoED) showing interest to invest in 300 MW-strong Upper Karnali project. In its application, the company has stated that it would complete the construction six years from the starting date. The Group is involved in power and steel operations in India. It is soon going to complete the construction of 1000 MW strong project of gas power plant in Raigadh of Chhatisgarh state of India. Likewise, it has also initiated actions to construct 270 MW strong captive power plant in the same area. Apart from this group, other reputed Indian companies such as Reliance, Tata, GMR, Larsen & Toubro have also applied for investment in various power projects in Nepal in recent months.

**IN THE WAKE OF THE NOVEMBER 8 AGREEMENT** which states that around 35,000 Maoist combatants would be sent to seven cantonments to be managed under government funding, the Ministry of Finance has appealed to foreign donor organizations based in Kathmandu as well as the UN agencies for financial support. At the meeting held in the Ministry on Tuesday (November 14), Finance Minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat appealed to donors for aid of over Rs 5 billion to manage the Maoist army, building their cantonments, provide relief to internally displaced persons, and hold elections for Constituent Assembly. The Ministry has said that the government would need around Rs 1.44 billion for maintaining the rebel cantonments (including providing them with food and other essential stuffs); Rs 1.1 billion for rehabilitating internally displaced persons; Rs 1.44 billion for holding the elections of CA; and Rs 1.44 billion for strengthening internal security.



“Any individual party’s decision (to join or not join the interim government) will have no effect. This will be like trying to swim anti-current.”

*Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, in reaction to the assertion by the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) leadership that they may not join the interim government.*

\* \* \*

“The UML will not crawl to join the interim government.”

*Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of the UML, speaking at a public program.*

\* \* \*

“When we initiated the armed movement against the corrupt rule in Nepal (in 1996),” Prachanda said, ISI-type people offered us money and arms assistance. I resisted and our council agreed to refuse the assistance because we felt our movement would lose its Nepali-people-centric approach.”

*Maoist chairman Prachanda, in an interview with The Hindustan Times.*

\* \* \*

“We do not think India’s democratic system has solved all the problems. The Indian political system has not addressed the basic problems of the people, including poverty, hunger, casteism and feudalism.”

*Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, senior leader of the Maoists, speaking at*



Jana Bhawana

*a program in New Delhi organized by Nepal Democracy Solidarity Forum (India).*

\* \* \*

“My conscience stopped me from signing the report. That would have betrayed the martyrs and the people of the country.”

*Ram Kumar Shrestha, a member of Rayamajhi Commission, who along with another member Dr. Kiran Shrestha, refused to sign the final report claiming it had made ‘feeble’ recommendations for action against the oppressors of People’s Movement.*

\* \* \*

“You don’t walk into parliament with guns in your pocket.”

*Richard Boucher, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, calling for complete cessation of violence by the Maoists before they can be treated as political parties, at a press meet.*

\* \* \*

“It is essential that new commissioners are selected through a transparent and consultative process according to international standards, because this is the only way to ensure that the NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) will be credible.”

*Lena Sundh, the newly appointed chief of UN OHCHR office in Nepal, at a press meet.*

\* \* \*

## TRANSITION

**LEFT:** Madhav Kumar Rimal, chief editor and publisher of Spotlight News Magazine, for a week long visit to Pakistan.

**RETURNED:** Maoist chairman Prachanda, his wife Sita Poudel and senior leader Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, after completing three-day visit to India.

**SUBMITTED:** Final report, by the High Level Commission formed to probe the allegations of repression against People’s Movement, to the Prime Minister.

**LEFT:** Richard Boucher, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, after completing three-day visit to Nepal

**Sitaram Yechury,** politburo member of CPI-Marxist, after a brief trip to Kathmandu.

**EXPIRED:** Sudha Nath Panta, father of former Attorney General Sushil Panta, at the age of 84.

**GIVEN:** Clean chits by the Special Court, to two Congress leaders and former ministers – Khum Bahadur Khadka and Govinda Raj Joshi- acquitting them of charges of corruption filed by the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority. ■

# Disoriented Water Policy And IPPAN

By DR. AB THAPA

It is quite unfortunate that our government is launching hydropower projects to involve private sector completely disregarding technical, economic and other important issues. Such approach is very harmful to the nation and it would also land in great troubles those private developers who are sincerely interested to do a good job for our country.

It has been reported that our government has officially sought foreign investment in eight hydropower projects with a total generating capacity of 14,000 MW for power export to India. The projects offered by our government are 308MW Lower Arun, 402 MW ArunIII, 335 MW Upper Arun, 300 MW Dudh Kosi, 480 MW Kali Gandaki-2, 300 MW Upper Karnali and 10,800 MW Karnali (Chisapani) projects. Department of Electricity and Independent Power Producers of Nepal (IPPAN) had played key role in organizing a meeting to brief Indian and the US investors on hydropower projects earmarked to be developed by private developers. There would be a total confusion if a private developer dares to implement any of the above mentioned projects.

## A Total Confusion About 10,800 MW Karnali.

10,800 MW Karnali Project (Chisapani) is a mammoth multipurpose project. This project is expected to provide enormously large downstream irrigation, flood control and navigation benefits. The net irrigation benefit accruable to Nepal would be exceeding the power benefit. According to 1989 World Bank financed feasibility study report of the Karnali Multipurpose Project the total net discounted power benefit is 6.8 billion US \$. Nepal can expect to get about 1.36 billion \$ net power benefit if the private developer is charged 20% of the net power benefit as royalty. The total net irrigation benefit is 3.169 million \$ and Nepal will get about 1.58 billion \$ net irrigation benefit if we agree with India to apply the principle of the Columbia River Treaty signed between the USA and Canada about 50% sharing of the downstream benefit. Hence, the net irrigation benefit accruable to Nepal would exceed such power benefit. It need not be further explained that the power component of this project should not be taken up in isolation.

## Upper Arun & Arun-3

A joint team of German, Japan and the USA consultants has described middle stretch of the Upper Arun "It is worth mentioning that the search of the worldwide inventory of the existing hydropower installations identified only one plant with a combined head and flow magnitudes greater than that of the Upper Arun - Kemano in British Columbia, Canada". The Upper Arun might excel the Kemano Project if its full stretch is redeveloped to utilize the 1300m head at one go followed by the Arun-3 Project to be operated in tandem. It has been explained on several occasions that it would be very attractive if Arun III and Upper Arun projects are redesigned to operate in tandem. Dam building with de-sanding structures is the most expensive component of these projects. Fortunately it is possible to have only one dam common to both these projects. Such redesigning would greatly help to enhance the attractiveness of these projects. It should, however, be noted that the Arun development is good for the development of cheap firm power preferably to meet the demand for the base load. The proposed projects would not be so attractive to generate energy to meet very short period peaking demand because of the need to have enlarged sized long tunnel which invariably involves high cost. We would be committing a great blunder if we decide to develop the Upper Arun and the Arun-3 in isolation without

exploring the possibility to utilize the potential of the Arun river in a most effective way to accrue optimum benefit to the country.

## Kali Gandaki-2

Gandaki river basin power study had been done with the assistance of the UNDP and the final report was submitted in July, 1979. Even at that time this project had been dropped from the list of the candidate projects considered for the development because of the huge environmental implications. It has been clearly mentioned in the report "The Kali Gandaki No. 2 Project is considered to have the greatest environmental implications of the projects proposed in the Master Plan."

Kali Gandaki-2 is a relatively small project. Its capacity would be only about 500 MW. According to the UNDP study report even in 1970s about 47,000 persons living at that time inside the proposed reservoir area would have to be relocated. Now the number of the persons to be relocated might be well over 100,000. Would any private developer like to get his fingers badly burnt dabbling in the bid to implement such a highly problematic project?

## Upper Karnali Project

The 4180 MW Upper Karnali Storage project about half the size of the Karnali Chisapani project could help to accrue our country enormously large benefit from export of electric power at highly competitive rates. Such excellent opportunity could turn into a desert mirage if we unwisely decide to lease out to build a relatively small 300 MW simple diversion project.

According to the World bank financed Upper Karnali pre-feasibility study report the 4180 MW Upper Karnali storage project and the small 300 MW Upper Karnali simple diversion project are mutually exclusive of one another. The excerpt from that report is given below.

*Even when assuming that the KR 1A run-of-river project (300 MW simple diversion project) is a sunk cost, it will be seen that a single large power plant (4180 MW) associated with the major storage project is less costly than the combined cost of smaller plant at the same location (3532 MW) and a second power plant at the foot of the storage dam (408 MW) discharging directly into the KR 1A 9 (300 MW) run-of-river project head pond. Based on this assessment, it appears that the later development of the major hydro storage project at Site KR 1 would cause the KR 1A run-of-river (300 MW) project to be effectively discontinued. There may be limited opportunity for secondary energy generation during the periods of spillage.*

Mr. Paul D. Terrell from the Bechtel International was advisor consultant to Karnali Project. He must have sensed our inability to understand the true value of our hydropower projects. He had expressed his concern in an article published in the journal "HIMAL". He has written that Nepal should beware of unintentional "give away" in hydro development, and not rush to compromise the optimum development for the sake of a quick deal.

By comparison with the mammoth 10,800 MW Karnali Chisapani Project the firm head of the Upper Karnali Project would be almost two times greater. It can be derived based on Stage A Optimization Study Data of the World Bank financed Karnali Project Study report that per KW installed capacity construction cost of the Upper Karnali Storage Project could be only about 70% of such cost of the project at Chisapani. The total generation of the Upper Karnali Project could be about 10,000 GWh.

The Upper Karnali Hydroelectric Project could be one of the very few projects in the world to produce on a huge scale at an exceptionally low cost peaking energy which is in great demand all across India. Unfortunately, we are virtually unaware of this vast potential. At present we are on the verge of virtually ruining this potential by leasing out this site to a private developer to build a relatively small simple diversion type hydropower.

**Dudh Kosi Project**

We should be greatly ashamed that on one hand we agree with India to conduct a detailed feasibility study of the Kosi dam project, which has been considered indispensable to save the life and property of millions in India and Nepal, and on the other hand we invite private developer to implement the Dudh Kosi dam project that precludes the viability of the Kosi dam project. The proposed Dudh Kosi dam hydropower station will be completely submerged in the Kosi storage

reservoir. Moreover, the water discharged from the hydropower of the Dudh Kosi dam project would be dropped directly into the Kosi reservoir bypassing the Sun-Kosi dam. Thus the dry season flow to be diverted into Terai for irrigation from the Sun-Kosi project would be greatly reduced.

**Lower Arun Project**

The proposed Lower Arun hydropower would be completely submerged into the Kosi storage reservoir. Thus the Lower Arun project and the Kosi dam project would be mutually exclusively of one another.

**In Conclusion**

We should conduct a through study and hold comprehensive consultations before taking important decisions on any major water resources development project.

*(Dr. Thapa writes on water resources)*

# India, US And UN Welcome CPA

Meanwhile, apart from domestic political leaders and organizations, the governments of India, the United States and the United Nations have also welcomed the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). A statement by the Embassy of India in Kathmandu said, "The Government of India welcomes the signing of the Comprehensive National Peace Agreement between the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). We believe the Agreement reflects the overwhelming desire of the people of Nepal for peace and stability."

The statement reads further, "We hope that this Agreement brings to an end the politics and culture of violence, and heralds the beginning of a lasting peace in order to let the people of Nepal exercise their right to decide their destiny through free and fair elections, without intimidation."

The Indian reaction further states, "The critical test of this Agreement will be its implementation on the ground. We call upon all sides and all stakeholders in Nepal to strictly abide by their commitments under this Agreement. Violations must be dealt with under the laws of the land, and full cooperation extended to those empowered to supervise the steps ahead, such as the police, the Election Commission, and the UN. The people's mandate, and their trust, must not be betrayed." India has also expressed its readiness to continue to help in every way, to ensure that this historic opportunity is not lost."

On the other hand, a statement from the US Embassy said, "The US Embassy welcomes the announcement of a comprehensive peace agreement between the Government of Nepal and the Maoists. We hope this step will place Nepal on the path of lasting peace and democracy. We want the peace process to work and we pledge our full support. We support an agreement that safeguards the aspirations of the Nepali people." The statement further states, "This means violence, intimidation, and criminal acts — such as forced recruitment of cadre and extortion — must end. The Nepali people, who have lived in fear for 11 years, deserve a chance to live without fear and choose their form of government in fair elections. The United States is committed to help Nepal build a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic future for its people."

Likewise, Ian Martin, Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Nepal said, "It is a privilege to have been

present at the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, marking another key step forward in the peace process. When Secretary-General Kofi Annan heartily welcomed the agreement of 8 November between the Seven Party Alliance and the CPN-M, he called it a historic opportunity for the people of Nepal to end the armed conflict and to build sustainable peace within an inclusive and democratic state. Now today's Agreement promises to convert the ceasefire into long-term peace. Those involved on both sides are to be congratulated for their hard work in finalizing an Agreement which is entirely a Nepali achievement."

Martin added, "The Secretary-General has said that he intends to move promptly to respond to the request to the United Nations to help in key areas of the peace process. I am pleased to say that my Office is working in an excellent spirit of collaboration with the Government and the CPN-M on these areas, and today we have completed agreement on the locations of seven divisional PLA cantonment sites. With the Comprehensive Peace Agreement now signed, I hope that we will quickly be able to reach tripartite agreement on the full modalities for the management of arms and armies, clarifying essential details regarding confinement to cantonments and restriction to barracks, weapons storage, permitted and prohibited activities, and monitoring arrangements. The United Nations will then be able to move forward with its planning to deploy monitors and other personnel. I also look forward to discussing how the United Nations' role in the other areas requested, of human rights monitoring, assisting independent national monitoring, and electoral assistance and monitoring, can help to create the climate of multi-party democracy and pluralism throughout the districts and villages of Nepal which is essential for the free and fair Constituent Assembly election to which the parties have committed themselves."

The seven cantonment sites (that have been finalized), which Martin referred to include Chulachuli area in Ilam; Dudhauri (Ratmate) area in Sindhuli; Dahaban-Nuwagaon in Rolpa district, Masuriya in Kailali and Dasrathpur in Surkhet district. However the proposed site in Kamidanda of Kavre has been shifted to Shaktikhor-Jutepani area in Chitwan district and the proposed site of Chirithung of Palpa district has been shifted to Jargha of Nawalparasi.

## POLITICS

# What Next?

Nepal has seen a new political development following the government-Maoist accord, but everyone has a question in mind - what next?

By KESHAB POUDEL

A trekker can feel happy when he/she reaches at the top of the mountain. As soon as he/ she sees another higher summit close by, the person loses his or her spirit to continue the journey. Nepal's political development is like that to the people of all walks of life. Situation changes so abruptly that everybody is forced to think about his own future and future of the country.

For the past two hundred years or so, Nepal has been facing similar kinds of problems. In the words of American scholar late Leo Rose in his book *Nepal: Strategy for Survival*, "To Kathmandu, the current potentialities of external domination and subversion are not very different in kind - though they may be in degree - from those with which Nepali governments have had to contend for at least two centuries. If the problems are not particularly new, neither is the repertory of response devised by the Kathmandu authorities. There is basic similarity between King Prithivi Narayan Shaha's analysis of Nepal's role in the Himalayan area and his selections of tactics and that of the ninth ruler in his dynasty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev."

### Hope for Peace

After signing of peace agreement between prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Maoist leader Prachanda on Tuesday, November 21 evening, the twelve years long ideologically covered Maoists insurgency comes to an end. This is the sixth insurgency - which is major one in terms of destruction and loss of life - wrapped up following signing of peace accord with the government.

Addressing the gathering following signing of 11 pages long accord - which contains 10 sub-headings including a preamble, prime minister Koirala declared that rebellion comes to an end. "This is the historic moment when all Nepalese showed that long lasting peace is possible through the efforts of Nepali people. I am happy that there will be no killing

from now," said Koirala. "No body needs to raise gun against the state in future."

Similarly, Maoist leader Prachanda hailed the accord as an historic. "We are able to change the country's 238 years history and Nepal is now entering into new phase of its development," said Prachanda. As Nepal still occupies similar geographical areas as it was in 238 years ago, no body knows what Prachanda means.

Challenging the peace accord, a section of people from terai - which is under the banner of Terai Loktantrick Mukti Morcha has already raised the gun assassinating a popular political leader of hill origin - has indicated that they will obstruct the peace and political stability.



PM Koirala (left) and Prachanda : Quest for peace Rajdhani

Following overthrow of Rana regime in 1950-1951 through the violent rebellion, Nepal has seen six different kinds of violent insurgency. The first insurgency was led by Nepali Congress overthrow century old Rana Regime. The second rebellion - which was led by K.I. Singh in 1952 against Congress led government-, was crushed by the state. Nepali Congress led third insurgency following the dismissal of B.P. Koirala's government in 1960-1962 and again in 1969-1970. In 1972, Nepal Communist Party Marxist Leninist, present CPN-UML, led another rebellion in Jhapa in 1973 which is popularly known as Naxal movement. Ram Raja Prasa Singh - who claimed in his interview that he handed over baton to Maoist, led another insurgency in

1984. Then, CPN-Maoist launched the insurgency in 1996. Despite signing the peace accord, Terai Loktantrick Morcha, a breakaway faction of Maoist, vows to continue the insurgency in southern plain of Nepal.

### Geo-strategic Interest

As Nepal's geo-strategic position remains unchanged, whoever may hold the reign of the country, the person in power has to encounter similar problems and the country has to see one other kinds of violent insurgency. More than thirty five years after publication of first analytical book on Nepal's geo-strategic implication by American scholar late Rose, another American scholar Quentin W. Lindsey, economist by profession, has observed competitions between Nepal's two neighbors.

Lindsay, in his book *The Transformation of Nepal*, writes, "Foreign governments don't want to get drawn deeply into domestic issues unless it is vital to their own national self-interest. India would be upset if China tried to help in ways other than the forms of aid they provide now. Likewise, China would object if India became too involved with Nepal. The United States might give some informal moral support but the current president and Congress do not

want to get involved in the complex political problems of a little country such as Nepal, especially if doing so might upset their relations with major powers like China, India or Russia."

Whatever the political system they have in their own country, Nepal's both the neighbors India and China's interest in Nepal is guided by their security interests.

"Nepal has two different political models on both of its sides which are militarily dangerous and economically

dominant. Security is their main concern in Nepal. Whenever a democratic system tends to evolve, it is thwarted by the waves of their under current movements. This threat is still there and it is in much more serious dimension. One - who takes total state of responsibility of Nepal - is preferred by the hard-core strategists of both the countries. They compete for instruments to serve their strategic interest which has a long history in Nepal," said a political analyst.

Inviting hard core communist leaders who ideologically believe in absolute control of power by justifying any crude forms of violent acts against the pluralistic political system, democratic India's well-circulated newspaper showed whom they prefer in Nepal.

Addressing leadership summit in India along with Indian prime minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, Maoist leader Prachanda, who once described India as a hegemonic power, sees India as a genuine supporter of Nepalese people. The flexibility in Prachanda's statement has certain meaning. On the question of China, Prachanda said, "Chinese are very cold and Chinese officials have not contacted us." On the question of their connections with Pakistan's Intelligence Agency (ISI), Prachanda said, "We don't have any connections with ISI. However, the ISI activities were drastically subsided following the launching of our movement in Nepal." In fact, Prachanda is not the first Nepali revolutionary leader to have been accorded such a welcome in New Delhi. Back in 1956, then rebel (who went on to become a prime minister once) KI Singh - who was regarded as dacoit by the Indian authorities - was also similarly welcomed.

#### Political Stability

Everybody in Nepal wants peace and political stability. Given the past experience it has been shown that bringing peace and stability in Nepal is like the myth of Sisyphus. Nepalese have to wait a long time to see political stability in the country.

"Some people from the developed countries ask why the people of Nepal are so much politicized. The reason is continued instability in politics and its ups and downs and turbulence. While looking behind, Nepalese politics have gone through major events in the past fifty years and in every major events in its history, the constitution and political system arranged within that has always been a casualty," said the analyst. So this has happened again in Nepal. "Persons who are happy with the political change of 1990 have emerged as a victorious with a new word of democracy (Loktantra in Nepali). Maoists are happy that they achieved the goals of Constituent Assembly which was their major demand. Politicians who are opposed to the concept of CA are too happy to see the constitution brought by them was defaced and destroyed."

In the last 17 years, the direct rule of the King was for 17 months and remaining period was ruled by the champions of the 1990 constitution. Maoists held the guns against them and the governments led by seven parties and the Maoists had engaged in fierce fighting. Atrocities from both the sides were no less during the conflict of that period.

"Now both are claiming themselves as victorious and have joined hands to fight against the other force in the country under

the proposition of bringing out a new political order. Both have different pattern of politics as their goal. Maoists still hold the view that their ultimate goal is to create communist system and they are happy that their road to communism has been paved out," said the analyst. "Democrat of pluralistic multi-party conviction is happy that the obstructions created by reactionaries have been removed but the question remains how both are going to achieve their contradictory goals?"

#### Politics of Intolerance

If there is no spirit of tolerance, compromise and reconciliation, how could that contradiction be reconciled to proceed forward for a peaceful and prosperous Nepal. The political scenario of Nepal is alarmingly confused and mass of the people in Nepal whether they are in politics or other profession is frustrated and confused.

### Insurgency in Nepal

1. Nepali Congress 1950-1951 against Rana Regime
2. K.I. Singh 1952 against Nepali Congress government
3. Nepali Congress 1960-1962 and 1971 against Panchayat
4. Nepal Communist Party Marxist Leninist in 1973 to establish communist role
5. Janbadi Mukti Morcha (Ram Raja Singh) in 1984 against Panchayat
6. Nepal Communist Party Maoist 1996-2006
7. Terai Loktantrick Mukti Morcha 2005 till continues

Pradeep Nepal, a prolific columnist of CPN-UML leadership, in his recent article in Nepal Samacharpatra wrote, "Nobody knows where the country is heading and nobody knows who is ruling the country. Political leaderships are helpless."

Yubaraj Ghimire, editor of Samaya weekly and a journalist with independent view, in his paper Samaya argued increasing trends of intolerance in Nepalese politics is causing more problems in the country. "What is happening today is essentially a process of conciliation, compromise and flexibility to certain understanding which will be the basis of future polity of Nepal. Manifestation of the past intolerance in one or the other form would adversely affect the on going process."

As extortion, kidnapping and killing continue and the politicians have been using the words of hate against each other, one cannot see the sign of emergence of a bright prospect in Nepali politics. Nobody knows

what is going to happen next after the signing of the peace treaty with the Maoists.

#### Rise of Absolutism

"The culminating effects of all these contradictions and confusions may produce an absolutist in the power - Nepal had in many such occasions where such persons emerged into the power in a casual way. In a common man parlance, people call it Jung Bahadur Syndrome. Though in medieval political setting, he emerged mainly from conflicts and confusion of the court conspiracies. Hitler, who emerged as absolutist in highly literate society in a modern age, was outcome of similar conflicts and confusions. Nepal is in lurking danger of an absolute decision maker in power. It is immaterial whether he will be in military uniform or a civilian facet," said the analyst.

When democracy failed to accommodate multiple views and interests under a guarantee of just and fair political order, even in many Asian and African countries dictators have emerged in civil facet through ballot papers.

Now a decisive point has come to Nepalese politics where the negligence or difficulty of political forces in Nepal may do away with all dreams of prosperous and peaceful Nepal - turning them all into a wishful thinking.

"A dangerous trend is emerging in Nepal where the government and leadership of the parliament are destroying the values and norms of a constitutional order. They reach into the power by a liberal interpretation of a constitution but soon after that they started using and misusing a very bad precedent for the future. They claim all the powers provided in the constitution but they are not prepared to be restrained. Yes they want all the power but they don't want any restraint (by the same constitution). That is the beginning of an absolute trend in power," said the analyst.

"It is not necessary that Jung Bahadur may appear in military forms only but it may come in different phase and forms in different country where non-functional democracy picked up leaders and made them autocrat. A blurred image of Jung Bahadur is already there in Nepalese politics. The octogenarian leader who had a long record of a vowed democrat in his fragile health has no capacity to act as a despot but any of his successor of any political belief may have an easy opportunity to lead the trend of absolutism vigorously," said the analyst.

Whoever may come to power, Nepal's fundamental problems will remain. No prophet is required to predict the next development in Nepal.

# ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION

# Changing

# The

# Social Status

The experiences of disadvantaged communities in rural and urban Nepal show how access to pure drinking water and sanitation facilities can transform the livelihood of the people. Cleanliness enhances social prestige and makes people healthier giving more opportunity to integrate with other communities in education and economic activities. For some backward communities in eastern Nepal, pure drinking water and sanitation facilities helps to end day-to-day life of isolation and integrate with other communities. Living in unhygienic surroundings without basic sanitation and pure drinking water and facing discrimination on the basis of caste and economic status for centuries, access to pure drinking water and sanitation brings about good health, wealth and social prestige

By KESHAB POUDEL

**F**or backward and dalit communities of Khatwe tole of Babiya Village Development Committee, 400 kilometer east of capital Kathmandu, it was beyond imagination that simply changing their surroundings could transform their life in such a manner that the isolated and neglected village can become a model to other settlements in the areas.

The villagers used open space for toilets, drank the contaminated water of nearby wells and tube wells and extracted water from nearby dirty ponds to wash clothes and use them for household purposes. They used the open space to throw garbage and dirt.

This resulted in frequent cases of diarrhea, dysentery, jaundice and other diseases. School going children spent most of their time either in health post or at home and family spent a lot of their

income in health. Among others, nearby communities of upper caste saw these dalit settlement as origin of all the dirt and diseases.

Many generations of communities in Khatwe tole passed away totally disconnected from other upper class communities with very low number of literacy and rampant poverty.

The small intervention by NEWAH (Nepal Water for Health) and Plan International through supporting



**A mother and her child:** Tapped water available now

With 57 households, the per capita income of the residents of Khatwe tole, a dalit settlement, which was regarded as the dirtiest place in the village – is lowest in the area as majority of the people living in the villages don't have agriculture land.

Due to age old tradition of cultural discrimination, denial of education rights and social exclusion, people in the settlements used to throw garbage everywhere and were forced to drink the contaminated water. "Majority of the ponds were dirty and they used unsafe water from tube-well for drinking. People used all open spaces as toilet. As a result,

the village suffered from diarrhea, dysentery, jaundice. Because of this, each household spent around Rs. 2000 (US\$30) a year on medicines," said Sharma.

After changing old practicing practices and replacing them with new ideas including using soap to wash hands after using toilet and cleaning the drinking water tap has not only transformed the settlement but also enhanced the social status of Khatwe.

According to the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy 2004-007, with approximately 85 percent of the total population living in rural areas, poverty is largely rural phenomenon. "There are significant ethnic and caste based disparities in what is recognized as a largely pluralistic society with diverse ethnic, caste linguistic and religious communities. Most of the dalit population is disadvantaged and there is striking caste and ethnicity based disparities."

Clean and hygienic environment is one of the basic traditional criteria of social stratification. It is widely held view that dalits live in unhygienic place in unclean the dirty surroundings.

At a time when the government is spending huge amount of money to end the social discrimination and improvement of health and hygienic, people of Khatwe community have made it clear that a very nominal investment can transform a community.

Khatwe is not the single settlement in Nepal where sanitation and supply of drinking water brought such changes. One can see how the supply of pure drinking water and well planned sanitation can transform the life of community in squatter settlement in the capital also. After implementation of sanitation and drinking water programs in the squatter settlement and slums in Kathmandu valley, the statues as well as lives of these areas have greatly transformed.

Living in areas full of filthy garbage, open sewerage and contaminated ground water, majority of urban poor and dalits are discriminated against by nearby communities. Communities are divided between hygienic and unhygienic, resulting in widening cultural and social gap.

Although the construction of new concrete buildings and black-top roads have changed the physical surroundings of a small dalit community of Kumbeshwor, 10 kilometer south of capital, construction of sanitation facilities and water supply tap has transformed their social status and improved the health.

"Although majority of people in communities still work as sweepers, the attitude of other high class communities towards us has changed. I am sending my children to nearby boarding schools where he has been studying with the children of other communities," said Ramcha Nepali, 40. "Thirty years ago, it was beyond imagination that our communities would have water taps and sanitation and my children would go to school."

With the support from Lalitpur Sub-Metropolitan and local NGO, the dalits

drinking water and sanitation program brought about a substantial change in the village.

This is what one can see in the life of Jashodha Sharma, 18, a resident of Babiya Village Development Committee of Khatwe Tole who had never imagined construction of a toilet and tube well for drinking water could enhance their prestige and social status.

Just after cleaning their settlement and constructing toilets and cleaning water sources around the village have turned the dirtiest settlement of the area into a model for other settlements of nearby communities.

"I was so delighted when upper class communities in nearby settlements invited me and other members of village to learn about how to improve the sanitation and improve the quality of drinking water," said Sharma. "We are able to change our social status just within a couple of years, which our fathers and grand fathers were unable to change for centuries."

of Kumbeshwor had constructed the toilets as well as connected their home with drinking water supply. In the last one decade, the situation of the slums and squatter areas of Kathmandu valley has drastically changed. Compared to the national average, slums and squatter settlements in the valley have almost hundred percent toilets now.

Construction of toilets and tap water at home enhanced the dignity of poor people. As people receive the social and cultural recognition through sanitation, there is rush among disadvantaged communities of all walk of life to do so. Separate toilets and clean drinking water taps is a symbol of new prosperity in the disadvantaged communities in Nepal.

"In the past, only rich and upper caste communities used to have toilets and drinking water tap. Now almost all houses in our communities have it," said Ramcha Nepali. "I realize now that lack of sanitation and drinking water were two major components that pushed us in backwardness and social discriminations. As soon as we have made efforts to be clean, our social status has changed."

Although the access to sanitation and drinking water has increased drastically over the years, there are still large number of household in rural and urban areas which don't have pure drinking water supply and toilets.

"Many urban population in Nepal have inadequate provision of water,

sanitation and-drainage system which contribute to very large disease burden and hundreds of thousands of premature deaths each year," said Sanjaya Adhikary, country representatives of Water Aid Nepal. "In slums and squatter settlements, whose deprivation is hidden behind national average, there are specific problems relating to water and sanitation provision."

As the only INGO in Nepal that exclusively focuses on enhancing access of the poor and vulnerable communities to safe water, affordable sanitation and improved hygiene behavior practices, Water Aid Nepal is uniquely positioned to support and to contribute to the implementation of national priorities and sector reforms through increased civil society participation, said Adhikary.

According to Human Development Report 2006, Nepal falls in the category of countries with sanitation coverage of less than 40 percent and inequality in water provision relates not just to access and expenditure but also to price.

Statistics show that approximately 81 percent of the total population in the country currently obtain drinking water from improved facilities. According to United Nations Development Program, the overall coverage of sanitation went up from 6 percent in 1990 to 46.8 percent in 2001.

Like other parts of the world, the poor have less access to water for life in Nepal for domestic use and sanitation. We see examples of this everyday in Nepal at community water taps where lower-caste people are forced to wait until upper caste groups have finished. Here the less powerful, who are also often the poorest, spend more time collecting water, which means they have less time for income generating activities that could pull them out of poverty. At the same time education opportunities are being lost, as girls are spending time collecting water when they should be at school.

"Access to clean water and sanitation are among the most powerful drivers for human development. They extend opportunity, enhance dignity and help create a virtuous cycle of improving health and rising wealth," said Matthew



A lady farmer irrigating land: Water for agriculture



Kahane, UNDP Resident Representative. "Undermining Nepal's efforts to meet several of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) particularly reducing poverty and improving education are the unresolved challenge that access to water and sanitation at present."

Recent studies have shown that water and sanitation are directly related to the poverty. Poorer the people are, lesser access to sanitation and drinking water. This is the reason the government has made water and sanitation as one of the major sector in poverty alleviation.

Easy access to drinking water also reduces the burden of women and improves the health condition of children. "Access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation is a poverty reduction strategy's priority," said Dr. Bishnu Chandra Pokharel, vice chairman of National Planning Commission. "Our aim is to raise water supply coverage to 85 percent and availability of sanitation facilities to 50 percent of the total population by 2007."

However, it must be noted that significant disparities exist in access to water and sanitation, in spite of the rapid expansion of the last fifteen years. According to Nepal Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2005 in Nepal, the richest quintile is 13 times more likely to have piped water in their home than the poorest quintile (39 percent vs. 3 percent) and are nearly eight times more likely to have improved sanitation (79 percent vs. 10 percent). Over the years, the gap between the urban and rural areas has been narrowed in terms of access to water and sanitation coverage.

Increasing drinking water and sanitation skills are crucial for achieving the health sector's MDGs and child health in particular. Decentralization and localization may help to raise the quality of service provided locally by various donor agencies and NGOs. As per Water Aid Nepal 2004 estimates, if each VDC out of the total 3913 VDCs in Nepal provided additional water and sanitation service to only five household every month, the water and sanitation MDG targets would be met.

The Millennium Development Target (MDT) is to halve the proportion



**Water for hygiene:** Good habit results in good health

of people without access to drinking water and sanitation in 1990 by the year 2015. Based on Water Aid Nepal (WAN), a Britain based International Non-governmental Organization, estimates; the MDT will hence be to reach 63 percent in rural areas and 85 percent in urban areas for drinking water within the reasonable distance of 15 minutes. The corresponding figure for sanitation will be 57 percent in rural and 80 percent in urban areas.

To reach the sanitation target, an additional 14,000 households need to be served per month between 2000 and 2015 and an additional 11,300 households need to be served per month to reach the drinking water target.

"Our works even inspired other communities out of our districts. We got health, wealth and prestige not making money but following some basic things like using toilets, cleaning the water sources like wells, constructing platforms around the tube wells, covering foods and cleaning the roads," said Sharma. "To discourage inappropriate hygienic conditions; the children started blowing whistles and chasing people who still performed toilets outside the houses and in the villages."

Although sanitation can bring about substantial changes in society and transform the social order, it has always been a low priority program area, never receiving attention and resources to make any significant improvement. ■

# "If We Can Agree On Common Political Agenda, We Can Also Agree On Common Economic Agenda"

BHARAT MOHAN ADHIKARY

*BHARAT MOHAN ADHIKARY, deputy leader of CPN-UML Parliamentary Party and standing committee member, has been in politics for a long time. Brother of former prime minister and communist leader late Manmohan Adhikary, he has also served as deputy prime minister and finance minister in the past. Adhikary spoke to KESHAB POUDEL on various issues regarding the contemporary politics. Excerpts:*

*"Now we must draw a long term economic package to solve the economic problems. Our country is backward and younger people are coming in search for job, we must develop our economy to provide jobs to all. Economic should be our first priority now. If we can agree on common political agenda, we can also agree on common economic agenda."*

**How do you see the recent peace agreement signed between the government of seven party alliance and the Maoists?**

The agreement is historic as it is in accordance with the mandate of People's Movement II. The mandate of people includes holding the free and fair elections for Constituent Assembly, bringing permanent peace and settling dispute through negotiations. I evaluate it as a highly important document bringing the peace in the country ending decade long violent rebellion against the state. Bowing down to the demand of people, King Gyanendra took the first step by restoring the dissolved House of Representatives. The second important step was the declaration of House of Representatives, which declared that the people are sovereign to decide and they are supreme.

**If the House of Representatives declaration had made people sovereign, what do you say about the article of the present constitution that already states that people are sovereign?**

Of course, the Constitution of the Kingdom of 1990 had such provision but the Declaration finally made the people as supreme and nobody can challenge the sovereign rights of the people.

**You mean to say that the declaration has more legitimacy than constitution?**

Declaration was announced with fresh mandate of people while the Constitution of 1990 had failed to do so explicitly.

**How do you visualize the situation in future following the permanent agreement?**

Maoist rebels will now lay down the weapons and live in cantonments. This was one of the main demands of the Popular Uprising of 2006. After Maoist cadres enter into the cantonments and lay down their arms, the phase of peace process will begin.

**Are you sure the Maoists will abide by the agreement given their present activities?**

They don't have other option. Since the United Nations will take care of the matters related to the observation of Maoist weapons and cantonment, it is impossible for Maoists to break the lock and hold the arms again.

**When will all the formalities be complete?**

The House of Representatives will announce the interim constitution by November 21, 2006. After the

announcement of new interim constitution, new interim parliament and interim government with the participation of Maoists will be constituted by December 1. The new interim government will announce the date for the elections of Constituent Assembly. The country is in the right track and there is no hurdle to hold the elections for CA. It is the mandate of people who supported our efforts to restore peace in the country. The peace process had a long history. From signing 12-points agreement to five point agreement, CPN-UML has played important role every time. Even our leaders visited Indian cities of Lucknow and Siliguri to talk with Maoist leaders. This is joint work of all the parties involved in the negotiations. We have shown that all the eight parties can resolve their problems on their own. They don't need others' help.

**If you have done it yourself, how do you see the role of CPIM leader Sitaram Yechuri and other leaders of Indian political parties? Even the Maoist leader Prachanda publicly thanked positive role played by India. What do you say?**

As a close and friendly neighbor, India supported us initially to break the deadlock. Being a largest democratic country in the world, it is natural for Indians to support efforts to strength democracy in Nepal. Of course, India's good wishes were there but ultimately it was the Nepalese leaders who solved the problems.

**What will be the challenges in future?**

The challenge for the future is implementation of the agreement in its true spirit. The agreement paves the way for peace process but we need to implement it cautiously. The implementation is always difficult task. If we fail to implement it, the country will have to face very dire consequences. At a time when some are skeptic about holding the elections for CA and restoring law and order in the country, this agreement gives hope for the people.

**Just after signing an initial agreement, some regional based political parties and ethnic groups criticized the agreement saying that it failed to address their problems. How do you see their reaction?**

There is something missing like the issues of ethnic community. It will be addressed at the time of issuing the interim constitution. We are pursuing the idea of proportional representative system for holding the elections for CA. Our argument is that only through the proportional representation, can we address the issues raised by ethnic groups. We need to address all the criticism raised by different communities. We will correct whatever was missing on the peace agreement.

**What about the differences between your party and Maoists regarding the leader of new interim government? Does it mean that your party wants new leadership replacing Girija Prasad Koirala?**

At a time when we are on the process to make history, the issues like changing prime minister are non-issues. What our general secretary Madhav Nepal said was that

the decision has not been taken yet regarding who will lead the next government. Former prime minister Sher Bahadurji and Lilamaniji are also saying similar things. According to them, the proposal has not come in any meeting of eight parties. Only after the constitution of interim parliament, it will be appropriate to discuss the new prime minister. It is the right of new interim parliament to choose its leader. Do we want to grasp the privileges of members of new interim parliament? Since the interim parliament will exercise all sovereign rights till holding the elections for CA, it is the privilege of interim parliament to choose its leader and form the government. It is, therefore, childish argument.

**What about the remarks made by your general secretary Nepal?**

General Secretary Nepal merely said that they did not discuss probable name to lead the next government. If Prachandaji's party has made certain decisions, he is free to say but he cannot involve us in his decisions. At a time when there require unity among the major political parties, this kind of debate will create unnecessary misunderstanding. We have certain mechanism in seven parties under which we can decide next leadership. To show that he is close to Nepali Congress, Prachandaji should not raise such issues. Even after such a bitter experience, we have yet to learn our mistakes. Prachandaji also suffered difficulties in the last 12 years and we have also made many mistakes in the past. We must realize our mistakes.

**If it is non-issue, why your leaders are arguing on it?**

I was shocked to know that. When will we learn political culture? All of us are behaving like student leaders. We must realize now that we are leading the country not a campus.

**How hopeful are you that the interim constitution will be announced on November 26?**

We have been working to finalize the draft of interim constitution. I am hopeful that it will be announced on schedule. After the announcement of interim constitution, an interim parliament will be constituted.

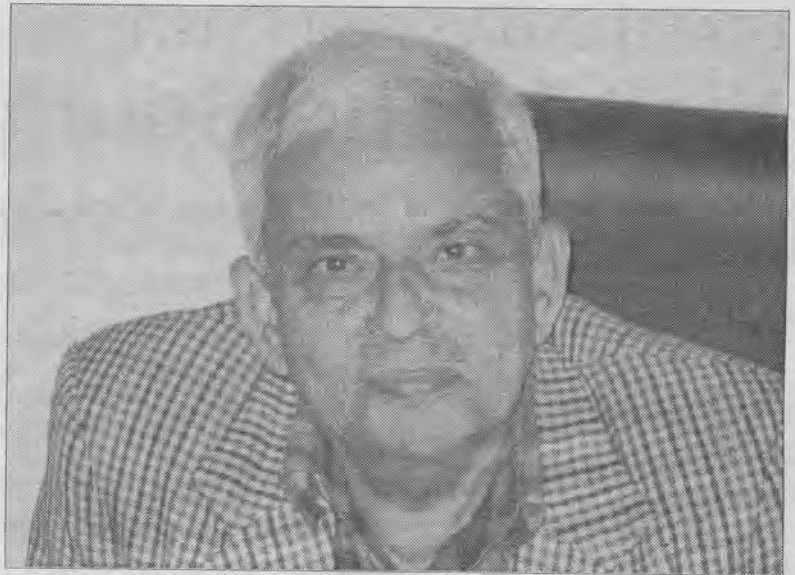
**At a time when the country is heading to hold the elections for Constituent Assembly, why are you in such a hurry to formulate law regarding the citizenship?**

Since the citizenship is the major problem of terai, it must be resolved before holding the elections for CA. There is a major problem of citizenship in terai. Before the elections, it must be resolved. There are many backlogs as large number of people living in terai are yet to get citizenship.

**What will your party do about the two Notes of Dissent?**

Our party still strongly holds the view that the referendum is the only legitimate way to decide the fate of the monarchy. Nepalese people should be given the right to exercise their sovereign rights. Whatever other parties say, we still stick to our stand and we will take it to people. So far as the issue of proportional representation is concerned, we believe that only through the proportional representation, can we make the elections for CA inclusive.

**How do you justify changing the cut off year from 1962 to 1990 in distributing the citizenship?**



We want to resolve the problems of citizenship forever. We have chosen the date 1990 as cut off year because that was the date of successful popular uprising. All Nepalese should get the citizenship. There must not be any discrimination. Frankly speaking, we try to be more liberal regarding the issue of citizenship. If it can be resolved forever, we must not hesitate to accept the new cut off date.

**What mechanism will you develop to identify genuine Nepalese?**

All of us know that Nepal is a small country and we are sensitive towards our own identity. We will make provisions so that no foreigners can get citizenship. We are making this provision of providing citizenship not for foreigners but for genuine Nepalis living in southern terai. In resolving the problems of million of people, we have to tolerate entry of a couple of thousands foreigners.

**Even if you agree to change the cut off date in such a manner that everyone gets the citizenship, people in terai expressed resentment over it. How do you look at it?**

There is always a tendency to oppose any move in the name of politics. Of course, if there is something wrong in the agreement, we will address it but opposition for the sake of opposition has no meaning.

**Politics has been the main agenda for quite a long time. What should be economic agenda for Nepal?**

After the peace agreement, Nepal entered into a new phase in its history. Now we must draw a long term economic package to solve the economic problems. Our country is backward and younger people are coming in search for job, we must develop our economy to provide jobs to all. Economic should be our first priority now. If we can agree on common political agenda, we can also agree on common economic agenda.

**Do you think Nepal's economy will pick up?**

In the last few years we have learnt many things about our economic policy. We have adopted liberal economy back in 1990 but it failed to address the problems of common people. Similarly, there was state-controlled economy throughout Panchayat period, it also failed. These two lessons have taught us that we must follow mixed economy.

*"We will make provisions so that no foreigners can get citizenship. We are making this provision of providing citizenship not for foreigners but for genuine Nepalis living in southern terai. In resolving the problems of million of people, we have to tolerate entry of a couple of thousands foreigners."*

## PRACHANDA'S INDIA VISIT

# Visit To The South

Prachanda goes to New Delhi to attend the Leadership Summit

By A CORRESPONDENT

**M**aoist chairman Prachanda left for New Delhi on November 17 to attend the Leadership Summit organized by The Hindustan Times.

On November 18, he addressed on the topic of "Democracy: Forbidden Fruit or Nectar for Progress." Addressing the summit, Prachanda said he is in favor of democracy for the masses. "Democracy has been a forbidden fruit for a majority. It has been nectar for people in power. The challenge of our time is to transform democracy into nectar for the oppressed. Masses are the ultimate creator of history, so democracy should take care of the people."

He stated, "Democracy has been reduced to an exportable commodity. The political battle in the 21st century will be fought over democracy and whoever practices the "right" democracy will rule the world." Prachanda also stated that the parliamentary democracy has been reduced to a "farce in South Asia" as the basic tenets like liberty and equality have been ignored.

Following the speech, Prachanda also addressed a press conference in the Indian capital where he vehemently denied any working relations between Nepali Maoists and Indian Naxalites. Terming the "red corridor between Pashupati to Tirupati" as myth created by "religious fundamentalists," Prachanda said that his party only had "some ideological relations" with the Indian Naxalites.

He, however, refused to comment about the continuation of armed uprising by the Indian Naxalites. "We have decided to go for multiparty competition whereas they have not decided so," he said, adding that he would not want to "hurt our ideological comrades" by commenting on their modus operandi.

At the press conference, Prachanda said a republican front was necessary in



**Prachanda:** Passage to India

Nepal to defeat "remnants of feudal monarchy." He added that if the King agrees with the verdict of the people, then he will be allowed to live a life of common citizen. Stating that right to rebel is one of the basic human rights of the people, Prachanda said there would not be any necessity of raising arms when there is economic and political equality in real sense.

On the issue of Indo-Nepal relations, Prachanda said he wants to develop relations with India on new basis. "Certainly, there is some psychological feeling of insecurity among the people of Nepal and they also look at 1950 Treaty from that perspective," he said, adding, "However, since India's positive role during the signing of the 12-point agreement last year in New Delhi, Nepali people's psychology is also changing.

Furthermore, the decision of New Delhi to abandon its two-pillar theory of supporting constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy has also helped in changing Nepali people's attitude towards India. I think a new relation can be developed on the basis of this change."

In a separate interview with The Hindustan Times, on November 18, Prachanda, disclosed "for the first time ever" that "when he decided to take the 'movement to the streets', back in 1996, he was offered "assistance" in the form of arms and money from representatives claiming to be from the ISI."

"We must accept that the anti-India activity from Nepal (including acts like the hijack of IC814) was centered in the royal durbar," Prachanda said in the interview. He also claimed that with the growth in his party's movement, the activities of ISI in Nepal have declined. "With our movement gaining people's consensus, the anti-India ISI activity controlled by the Durbar is almost non-existent," Prachanda claimed.

The daily stated that this was the first time Prachanda, 52, had visited India openly – "a sign of his movement's

growing popular acceptance, to which India is resigned." "When we initiated the armed movement against the corrupt rule in Nepal (in 1996)," Prachanda said, "ISI-type people offered us money and arms assistance. I resisted and our council agreed to refuse the assistance because we felt our movement would lose its Nepali-people-centric approach," Prachanda said. ■

## ANTI-CORRUPTION DRIVE

# Under Rule of Flaws

By dismissing the charges against two Congress leaders, Special Court gives message that CIAA's anti-corruption drive has many flaws

By KESHAB POUDEL

As usual in the past, Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA)'s populist media backed major anti-corruption drive turned into a fiasco following the Special Court's dismissal of charges against two former ministers Govinda Raj Joshi and Khum Bahadur Khadka.

This is not first time that politically motivated anti-corruption drives in Nepal turned into fiasco. In 1970s, many senior bureaucrats and politicians were charged on corruption but the court dismissed the cases after several years of hearing.

The recent decision of Special Court to dismiss the charge of corruption against Joshi and Khadka, two powerful politicians of Nepali Congress, sparked a new row whether Nepal's anti-corruption drive was politically motivated or it was in accordance with the rule of law. Only question is: why the court took such a long time to dismiss the charges.

Although western liberal democratic country genuinely supported anti-corruption drive supporting institutional capability and legal sides of CIAA, the charge sheet filed against Joshi and Khadka was so weak that judges except the institution like previously dissolved Royal Commission for Corruption can toe the line with CIAA.

Had the Commission filed the case in accordance with law, the court would not have found reasons to dismiss the cases. The CIAA filed cases against two dozen politicians following the dissolution of House of Representatives and dismissal of Deuba government in 2002. The first act of then government appointed by King Gyanendra was to arrest dozens of politicians on charges of corruption including Joshi and Khadka.

Corruption remains a major problem in the country and nobody wants to see corrupt persons walking scot-free. However,

the agency like CIAA needs to properly investigate the cases before making it public.

From the very beginning, the modus-operandi of CIAA's anti-corruption drive was questionable as it filed the cases on the basis of pick and choose method targeting the Nepali Congress leaders.

High-level Anti corruption commission formed by King Gyanendra arrested former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and former minister Prakash Man Singh. A secretary committed suicide reportedly under the threat from the commission.



Joshi: Gets clean chit

"The charge sheet filed against Joshi and others were quashed on the ground of time bar of one year from the date of dissolution of parliament. Whence from Joshi was ceased to be a public official. According to CIAA Act section 29 provisions, the CIAA shall not file any case against any public official whose service was terminated one year before the execution of the act. The CIAA filed the case on disproportionate property after 21 months elapsed," said former attorney general Badri Bahadur Karki.

"Honorable court dismissed the case against Joshi on the principle of time bar," said advocate Karki, who pleaded on behalf of Joshi. One cannot presume that CIAA did not know this.

Lawyers argue that the cases were very weak in this court. They charge that CIAA did not believe in legal principle rather on propaganda by populist newspapers.

From media barons to politicians, CIAA filed cases against many Kantipur's publisher Kailash Sirohiya was also put in prison on charges of obtaining TV license through illegal and corrupt means. Later on, his case was dismissed by the Special Court.

On the grounds of merit of law, the cases filed by CIAA were always weak. Former minister Joshi and Khadka were implicated and made accountable for the properties of his mother-in-law and son-in-law's assets - who Nepalese family law always considers as members outside Joshi and Khadka's family.

CIAA was against the clear provision of law charging Joshi for not being able to prove the valid source of the properties owned and possessed by his mother in law and son in law.

But, CIAA officials blamed the court defending the merit of their case. "If cases were weak in legal merits, why did court take such a long time to dismiss them?" asked Basudev Lamichhane, former commissioner of CIAA. "If court starts to follow similar precedents, no corrupt person will ever get punishment," said Lamichhane.

Although the court dismissed the case, it is a tragic story that Joshi's mother in law died as a sad old lady in pain before CIAA case was quashed by the Special Court terming it illegal.

"There is no law in Nepal for obtaining compensation against malicious and illegal prosecution in the cases like Joshi's mother-in-law," said a lawyer. "It is also a pity that some reporters and media houses, backed by the purse of tax payers money continue to hound Khadka and Joshi without caring to tender apology for conducting media trial against them before the court of law has a chance to do justice."

On behalf of Joshi, senior advocate Radheshyam Adhikary, advocate Harihar Dahal, Upendra Keshari Neupane, and Lalit Basnet had pleaded in the court.

The special court's message is clear to CIAA that the time has come now to go for genuine efforts to eradicate corruption through law rather than going for politically motivated and propaganda-based drive. ■

## RAYAMAJHI COMMISSION

# Taking Stock

Although Rayamajhi Commission has submitted its final report, the eleventh hour differences among its members have dented its credibility

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

When it was formed on May 5, its chairman former Supreme Court (SC) judge Krishna Jung Rayamajhi had made tall claims. He had repeatedly stated that nobody was beyond the commission's jurisdiction. "We have the mandate of the people," he had stated.

After six months when he submitted the final report about the repression of April People's Movement, Rayamajhi now claims that since the commission did not have authority to probe the King's actions, the report does not mention the King's name for action. "But the report has indicated that then head of the government was mainly responsible for the repression," he says.

However, the 1184-pages long report does recommend action against 202 persons including then Head of Government King Gyanendra. The report has recommended actions against the entire member of then Council of Ministers including its then chairman King Gyanendra.

Likewise, it has also recommended actions against security chiefs, top administrators, royal advisors and so on. It has advised taking action against them on charges of human rights violations, corruption and abuse of authority.

It suggests enactment of new laws to prosecute the accused persons under charge of human rights violations. The report has found ministers Kamal Thapa, Shrish SJB Rana and Tanka Dhakal as well as then army chief Pyara Jung Thapa guilty of misusing state funds. The commission has recommended departmental action against the current army chief General Rukmangat Katawal and chief of Armed Police Force Basudev Oli.

Meanwhile, A number of events have taken place in recent times that have dented the credibility of Rayamajhi report with people now fearing its fate will be similar to that of Mallik Commission report, which was released after 1990's people's movement.

First of all, the November 8 agreement between the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) and

the Maoists stated that a separate investigation would be conducted "about those who were involved in gross violation of human rights at the time of the conflict and those who committed crime against humanity." The agreement states that "a high level Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be formed to create an environment for social reconciliation."

As the human rights organizations have also started demanding such a Truth and Reconciliation Commission – which was able to reconcile differences in South African society after the end of apartheid regime – it

Furthermore, the major differences among the commission members, which erupted at the eleventh hour, has deeply hurt the credibility of the report. The two members – Ram Kumar Shrestha and Dr. Kiran Shrestha have refused to sign the final report expressing dissatisfaction over what they called as 'feeble' recommendation, particularly in relation with the action against the King and other top officials. The disagreement erupted after the final report of the commission recommended action against the former home minister Kamal Thapa; royal advisors Satchit SJB Rana and Sharad Chandra Shah; former army chief Pyara Jung Thapa; former police chief Shyam Bhakta Thapa; former armed police chief Sahabir Thapa; and former chief of National Investigation Department Deviram Sharma only on the charge of misusing state coffer instead of slapping them charges of murder.

The Shrestha duo, in fact, submitted a separate report to the Prime Minister Monday (November 20) stating their differences.



PM Koirala receives the report: Will it be implemented? *Gorkhapatra*

appears that the current report's recommendations may not be implemented.

Although Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has assured the Commission members that their efforts will not go wasted, the fact that the report was not made public indicates otherwise. Last week, talking to journalists in Biratnagar, PM Koirala had also said that once the report prepared by the Rayamajhi Commission is submitted, the government will study it before taking decisions about actions against culprits. He said the government would also take action against the King if required.

The Commission had interrogated over 600 persons. The five-member commission also undertook a number of field missions to study the allegations of repression first hand.

PM Koirala has assured that the report will be tabled at the House of Representatives. But since the tenure of the House is set to expire in less than a week (as per November 8 agreement, interim legislature will replace the House by November 26), it is unclear if the Maoist-included interim parliament will own up the report with similar zeal and take action based on its recommendations. ■

CPA

# Peace At Sight

By declaring the People's War over, the government and the Maoists vow to chart a new course for Nepal

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

It was an electric moment. Following half-an-hour-long narration of the draft of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) by the Home Minister Krishna Sitaula, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Maoist chairman Prachanda put their initials in the document that promises to chart a new course for Nepal.

Assisted by Sitaula and Nepali Congress (Democratic) president Sher Bahadur Deuba, PAM Koirala - who is not in good health - signed all pages of the accord. On the other hand, Prachanda was the first one who completed the process of signing the accord as he was ably aided by his deputy Dr. Baburam Bhattarai.

The moment was 8:29 pm - the third Tuesday of the 21st day of November of the year 2006. As soon as they rose to shake their hands and exchange the document, the evening in the hall of Birendra International Convention Center (BICC) turned into broad daylight with incessant flashes of camera lights - attempts made by journalists to capture that moment of history. In one quick second, the silence of the hall was broken as it ruptured into deafening noise of clapping. Political leaders, foreign diplomats, civil society leaders, central leaders of Maoists, government officials and journalists all rose to welcome the peace accord - which they believe would put the derailed country back to track.

Following the signing of CPA, the People's War launched by the Maoists in February, 1996 has been officially declared over. From now onwards illegal carrying and display of weapons, their use, attacks and threats have all been deemed punishable by law. Reiterating the commitment to hold the elections of

CA by mid-June, 2007, the CPA prohibits all kinds of illegal use of weapons, raid, ambush, mining, aerial attack, abduction, etc. Within 30 days both the sides will share information regarding the placement of mines and within 60 days they all would be disabled, it states.

It vows to form a high-level Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate about human rights abuses. The accord has separate provisions dealing with civil and political rights and rights of women and children. The accord

Government, parallel tax collection and similar other parallel outfits will cease to function. The CPA further states that after the formation of interim parliament and promulgation of interim constitution, the "two parties" will cease to exist and the sole responsibility of implementing the agreements, including the CPA will fall under the shoulder of interim cabinet.

After the CPA was signed, both Prime Minister Koirala and Maoist chairman Prachanda addressed the audience. "Beginning today, the politics of killing, violence and terror will be replaced by the politics of reconciliation," said Koirala. He said that he took the political gamble of 'dealing with terrorists' because he thought it was a duty of a democrat to bring non-democrats into the framework of democracy.

Prachanda stated that with the signing of the CPA, people of Nepal were



Signing agreement : Hope for peace

Kantipur

states that the UN will be allowed to continue its monitoring of human rights. Likewise, the UN team will be asked to verify and monitor arms and army management, which will be as per the November 8 agreement. It also states that the UN will be asked to observe the CA polls as well.

The CPA also declares that henceforth no parallel institution will exist in the country - which means the Maoists' People's Court, People's

in a position to give message to the entire world. "The continuity of 238-year-old tradition has been broken now. This is the victory of Nepalese people and the loss of regressive elements," he said. Prachanda said that like in the war, his party would work with equal zeal to implement the peace accord. "We have no prejudices against anyone. We want to make it clear to everyone that we are neither conservative nor dogmatic in our thinking," he said. ■

BOOK

# Conflict and Conservation

The book highlights how conflict has affected Nepal's conservation efforts

By A CORRESPONDENT

In the last three decades, Nepal has made some remarkable achievements in the area of nature conservation. From wildlife conservation to natural resource management, Nepal has taught a lesson to the world on how to successfully launch sustainable conservation works.

Although Nepal has lost almost all prominent figures last September in helicopter crash in Taplejung, the concept of conservation propounded and implemented by them is still hailed in international conservation world. In the last twelve years, Nepal's conservation was badly affected also by the conflict.

Edited by Mangal Man Shakya and Anil Chitrakar, the book is first of its kind which highlights various sectors of conservation. Based on the reporting conducted by the journalists of various newspapers, the articles included in the book are intensive and provide real picture of the affected areas.

The book depicts the eleven conservation areas pointed out in the reports on each of these conservation areas and the problems faced by them during the conflict. The reporters covered all major national parks of Nepal visiting the sites and meeting the people at ground level. From field trip to analysis, the reporters have done all kinds of field based research.

Topics range from environment, peace and international security by Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif to impact of armed conflict and impact of removal of armed forest guards in

organization and national forest protection of Nepal by Prem Narayan Kandel, the book is full of many other articles. Other important aspects include impact of Maoist activities on the forest sector.

The report also explains the influence of the Maoists and their movements since 1999. "The journalists have depicted the physical action undertaken by the Maoists that has affected conservation and development

projects and have indicated that illegal wildlife poaching and tourist visitation is negligible," write editors Shakya and Chitrakar. "They have reported information on the geological positions, rare wildlife assets, and fatalities of violent conflict on wildlife, effects of conflict on tourism, the security position and illegal poaching inside the park."

Reporters were assigned to report on Shivapuri National Park, Manaslu Conservation Area, Bardia National Park, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, Shuklaphata Wildlife Reserve, She-Phokshundo National Park, Parsa Wildlife Reserve, Rara National Park, Chitwan National Park, Kanchenjunga Conservation Area and Sagarmatha National Park. Journalists Ram Prasad Dahal, Bindu Kant Ghimire, Shiva Raj Yogi and Prem KC, Yam Pradhan and

Bijaya Santoshi Rai, Karni Bohara, Ajaya Bam and Pushkar Thapa and Gopal Tiwari, N.K. Dahal and Ganesh Chowdhury covered various national parks.

From state of wildlife species to the plants, the journalists discussed all issues in detail. Although the government and Maoists have signed the peace accord in bringing the long lasting peace, it will take decades to compensate the damage done by the decade-long conflict in the area of conservation.

In translating the book into English, editor duo Shakya and Chitrakar have contributed to enlighten the global community how conflict can destroy the successful conservation efforts like in Nepal.

Written in two parts, the book has both experts view as well as the field reporting of the journalists. This combination of theoretical and practical approach is worthy to study. The book is interesting and useful to those who work in conservation areas. Registered as a non governmental organization in 2002, the Wildlife Watch Group has already carried out number of training classes to journalists on wildlife conservation. ■



## Cost of Conflict on Nepal's Conservation Efforts

Editors  
Mangal Man Shakya  
Anil Chitrakar



*Cost of Conflict  
On Nepal's Conservation Efforts*  
Editors: Mangal Man Shakya and Anil Chitrakar  
Published by: Wildlife Watch Group (WWG)  
Price: NRs. 700 and US\$10  
Pages: 238



# OHCHR, UNICEF Stress On Protecting Children's Rights

On the occasion of the 17th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the OHCHR and UNICEF in Nepal appeal for the government and Maoists to place the rights and wellbeing of children among their key priorities in the implementation of the peace process.

"On the eve of an historic peace agreement, there is an opportunity to restore the rights of children who have suffered greatly during the long conflict, and to ensure that future generations of Nepali children can grow and thrive in lasting peace," states the joint press release.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, CRC, which was adopted 17 years ago on 20th November, states that anyone below 18 years of age is a child and has the right to special care and protection. "Protecting and restoring the rights of children is an enormous challenge," said Dr Suomi Sakai, UNICEF's Representative in Nepal.

"The conflict has taken a great toll on the children in the country. Their childhood has been snatched from them. Their education has been disrupted and they have been torn apart from families. Even today, when there has been a cessation of conflict, children have not returned home and continue to be active in the CPN-Maoist armed groups. Even today children continue to be killed and maimed from the explosive remnants of war."

The release quotes Lena Sundh, Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal, as stating, "Children in Nepal have been among the thousands forced from their homes, displaced by the conflict," added.

The release states, "OHCHR and UNICEF in Nepal remain greatly concerned that even now children under 18 are still being recruited, voluntarily or forcibly, by the CPN-Maoist, in violation of international standards and their own commitments. Over the coming days, the parties will be signing a comprehensive peace agreement.

OHCHR and UNICEF in Nepal urge the parties to ensure that there is no recruitment of children under the age of 18 into armed groups." They have also urged for facilitating the return and reintegration of such children through immediate and concrete collaborations between the Maoists, the government and organizations and agencies working in the field of child protection and human rights.

They have also called for immediate steps to identify children under the age of 18 currently in armed groups, and to make provisions for returning them back to their families and communities. ■

## Spaniard Enthralls Audience

The Spanish pianist Leopoldo Erice enthralled the audience at the Hyatt Regency in the evening of November 21 with his magnificent musical pieces that reflected the best of traditional European Music.

Even as the government and the Maoists were signing the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) around the same time in another part of the town, Erice seemed to be celebrating the ushering of peace with his superb musical skills.

Born in Madrid of Spain, this is Erice's first performance in the Asian soil. "We are happy to bring the traditional music of Europe to Nepal," said Eduardo Lechuga Jimenez, acting Head of Delegation of European Commission to Nepal.

"I feel very excited to be performing here," Erice said in a press conference held before his performance. Supported by Spanish Embassy and organized by Infinity International, the piano performance was sponsored by a number of organizations including Nepal Investment Bank, Ace Finance Company, Ace Hotel and Resorts, Nepal Duty Free, and Gorkha Beer. The German Embassy in Kathmandu provided a piano for the performance. "We are happy to organize this function by bringing a famous pianist to this part of the world," said Pratima Pandey, director of Infinity International. Added Sangita Thapa of the Infinity International, "We are honored to bring such an internationally renowned musician. It will be a treat to Nepalis people."

The 29-year-old pianist from Spain performed a number of recitals by renowned musicians such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Franz Joseph Haydn, Fryderyk Chopin, Claude Debussy and Franz Schubert.

The proceeds from the concert will go for the benefit of the Kathmandu University's Department of Music. The Infinity International has been organizing similar functions for fund-raising and other social causes. In fact, they had also invited British Pianist Anthony Peebles last year. ■

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## BOUCHER'S VISIT

## A Touch Of Realism

A senior US official looks at the current developments in Nepal with a touch of realism

By A CORRESPONDENT

In his second visit to Nepal since the April change, Richard Boucher, the US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, said that he views the recent agreement between the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) government and the Maoists with a touch of realism.

Addressing a press conference, on November 16, during the three-day visit, which he said was aimed at "better understanding Nepal's transition to democracy," Boucher said that though he is hopeful about the current peace process bringing in political stability in Nepal, he is also 'realistic' about it.

"Maoists have to give up weapons; send their forces to cantonments; end harassment, coercion, beatings and the efforts they make to keep political parties out of villages," Boucher said when asked if the current peace process would restore political stability in the country.

"A comprehensive peace agreement between the Government of Nepal and the Maoists is anticipated. My government looks forward to this step in hopes that it will place Nepal on the path of lasting peace and democracy. We want to see the peace process work. We pledge our full support. We support an agreement that safeguards the aspirations of the Nepali people. To reach this goal, however, violence, intimidation, and criminal acts must end. The Nepali people, who have

lived in fear for 11 years, deserve a chance to live without fear and to choose their form of government in fair elections. If the Maoists separate from their arms, renounce violence and establish their credentials as a peaceful entity, the United States can remove them from our terrorist list and treat them like any other political party," Boucher stated.

"We support a robust and effective role for the UN in the peace process. We will also continue to contribute to Nepal's long-term development. The



**Boucher:** Realistic Perspective

United States is committed to help Nepal build a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic future for its people."

On the issue of Maoists joining the government, Boucher said that the US will find ways to continue its support to the people of Nepal on economic recovery, health and education. He said that the Maoists could need to completely renounce violence if they want to come off the US terrorist list. Asked if the US government was prepared to deal with the Maoists, he

said, "We are fully prepared to deal with them as a political party once they start behaving like one."

For now, he said, "We haven't seen them change their behavior. We haven't seen them act like a political party. So, its not a time to deal with them." Boucher said that the Maoists should not go on a half foot when it comes to renouncing violence. He regretted that 'Prachanda still talks about reserving the right to raise weapons.' "You don't walk into parliament with guns in your pocket," he said.

On the issue of the agreement on arms management whereby the Maoists get to keep the key of the single lock under which their weapons will be stored, Boucher said, "I don't think it's the matter of keys. It's the matter of intention." He, however, hastened to add that he has full confidence on the UN's ability and expertise on the matter.

On the issue of monarchy, Boucher said, "The King's action last year and his unwillingness to reconcile with the political parties damaged his reputation and his role." He said the US would support whatever decision the people of Nepal make regarding the fate of monarchy.

On the issue of Bhutanese refugees, Boucher - who had arrived in Kathmandu from Bhutan - said, "We are in favor of repatriation those who qualify. We are in favor of third country resettlement for those who make this choice. Above

all, we are in favor of resolving this issue." The US government had recently said that it was willing to resettle up to 60,000 Bhutanese refugees. This US comment has triggered a controversy among the refugees with some welcoming the offer and others terming it as a move that could derail the process of repatriation.

During his stay in Kathmandu, Boucher met with the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, senior officials, and chief of army staff, among others. ■

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