

अब... १* रु. १ मै बचत खाता



नेपाल इन्वेस्टमेन्ट बैंक बढी भन्दा बढी
नागरिकहरूमा बैंकिङ्ग सेवाको पहिलो अनुभव
एवं बानी बस्न सकोस भन्नाका लागि सजोरब
प्रस्तुत गर्दछ... **मात्र रु.१ मा**
“आफ्नै बचत खाता”
सम्पूर्ण अन्तराष्ट्रिय स्तरको सेवा सुविधा सहित ।



जीवनका पहिला पलहरू देखिनै बचतको बानी
सुरक्षित भविष्यको लगानी ॥

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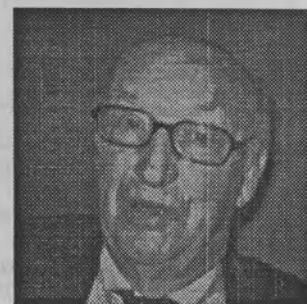


KP BHATTARAI: A Lone Voice Of Conscience
Senior Congress leader Bhattarai has acted as the sole conscience keeper by issuing a statement cautioning his party against adopting extremist line

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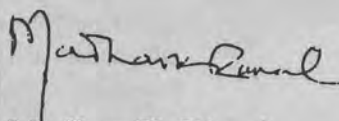
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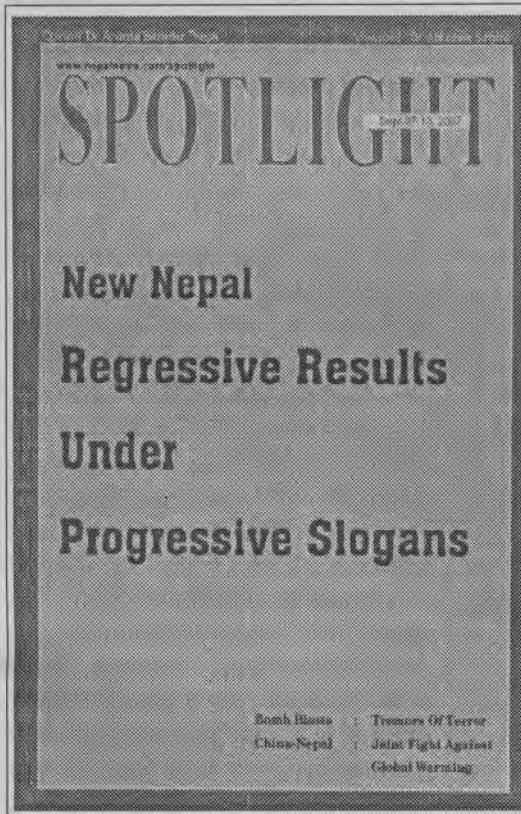
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As the stipulated date for elections to the Constituent Assembly gets nearer, all the bigger political parties are getting panicky and vigorously looking for a scapegoat even though they are posing as being very enthusiastic to fool others. We have never wavered in our opinion that, under the existing circumstances, a peaceful, free and fair elections is an utopian dream. When will the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons be rehabilitated? Or are the politicians thinking of depriving them of their fundamental voting rights? When are the *crores* worth of looted property being restored to the rightful owners? When are the thousands of *Pahadiyas* made to flee their homes in *Madhesh* be permitted to go back to their homes? And when will the government be able to stop *bandhas* and *chakkjams* so that ordinary citizens could freely move around in their own country? Can any politician of the name deny that some political parties are still running parallel government? Why is the eight party government so impotent to stop these stark illegal actions? Why is everybody behaving so hypocritical? Does the international community, stationed in the capital, and do the U.N. agencies assigned to supervise the peace process and elections, sincerely believe that situation in Nepal is suitable for holding the elections? What do they really want? A bloody civil war in Nepal? As it is, they are unabashedly supporting an unconstitutional government? Simply because Nepal is small, poor and weak and disunited and a perfect victim for their machinations, they can overlook all morality and humanitarian considerations? And now some politicians are threatening to embroil the *failing state* into a more vicious conflagration by demanding the immediate abolition of monarchy? Why must the twenty-five million Nepalis listen to a few politicians whose loyalty to the nation and people are not above board? As a matter of fact, even he Constituent Assembly (if formed at all) has no valid authority to pronounce any judgment on monarchy. It must be done via a "national referendum" directly by the people themselves. Indeed, King Gyanendra could have avoided all these troubles and directed the poor nation to progress and prosperity, had he listened to saner counsels. May be, his destiny blinded his vision. Any way, since it is no use crying over split milk, we will not dwell upon his unfortunate behavior. And now, a former prime minister - Krishna Prasad Bhattarai - has found a favorable opportunity to catch cheap lime light by coming out strongly in favor of monarchy and starting a big controversy. It is not for one man, even not for a handful of politicians of several hues and neither for neighbors or international community but for the poor, honest and patriotic millions of Nepalis to give the final verdict on monarchy. As such, it is high time millions of poor Nepalis be aware of the machinations of the enemies of the state and unite, setting aside all personal or partisan differences to save our poor nation from the disintegration lurking around. Of course, the Nepali Army is always there as the ultimate savior.


Madhav K. Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Why Defend Monarchy?

Your cover story New Nepal: Regressive Results under Progressive Slogans (September 7-13) is a good piece of analysis. Although I disagree with you on certain issues, your analysis has some valid grounds. Of course, revolutions are bad but when a despotic ruler like King Gyanendra does not abide by people's aspiration, there is no option left for the people. I think the period of monarchy has gone now and no body can prevent Nepal from turning into republican. This is the hope of many people. I don't understand why your paper is still defending the monarchical institution.

*Jeevan Dhungana
New Baneshwore*

Missing The Point

The result of the so called April revolution launched by the nefarious foreign power is anarchy, lawlessness and disintegration of the country. This result was obvious since the Maoists, who were trained, backed and supported by securities agencies of foreign countries, were behind the move. Though Maoists are now harping slogans of nationalism, they are working to destabilize Nepal. Leaders of seven parties alliances too have similar problems as they too supported the move of Maoists. It is very sad to note that your cover story failed to point out the main culprit of Nepal's present crisis.

*Phurba Lama,
via e-mail*

Good Interview

After a long time, I found an interesting Interview of India's

eminent lawyer and Congress I leader Dr. Abhishek Singvi. His interview is an eye-opener to Nepalis. As a close neighbor with so many commonalities, Nepal needs to look at the experiences of India rather than inviting some white colored foreigners who have neither any idea about Nepal nor it is applicable to Nepal. For this, I would like to thank B.P. Koirala India-Nepal Foundation for bringing such prominent lawyer. As all of us know that Nepal's intelligentsia is led by cynical persons - in the words of Lenin they are useful idiots for communists. The arguments given by Dr. Singhvi are very strong and courageous. I think it is better for all the donor countries to invite more constitutional experts from India and other south Asian countries.

*Prativa Khanal
Kathmandu*

Too Much Politics

It is frustrating to read so many stuffs on politics and related issues as if Nepal has no other issue left. In the last few years, Spotlight too is following political matters. In a country where more than 30 percent population is living below the poverty line, covering politics will serve nobody's interest except some handful so called elites. I hope Spotlight will go for development, environment and poverty issues which are going to serve the broader interest of the country as well as people. Please don't misuse space. I am bored reading politics and politics all the time. Even donor communities seem to be too busy on political issues as they have been spending a lot of money in the name of CA. I would also like to request donor communities to spend some money for the needy people of the country.

*Jagriti Shrestha
London*

Climate Concerns

The cover story on Climate Change (August 24-30) was very in-depth and interesting to read. It is very unfortunate to say that Nepal contributes very little emission but it has to face very dire consequences. The effect of global warming has already been seen in the high Himalayan region and plains. It is a matter of great satisfaction that some Nepalese scholars have been doing research to understand what is happening in Nepal. As we know, the climate change will badly affect the life of poor people; Nepal must prepare a long term plan to cope with the situation.

*Shristi Subba
Montreal, Canada*

CJ Hearing On Tuesday

The parliamentary special hearing committee is likely to initiate hearing of Chief Justice designate Kedar Prasad Giri on Tuesday (September 11). The committee members said that they would have to reach conclusion on complaints filed against Giri only after hearing the viewpoint of Giri. Meanwhile, the committee members could not reach unanimous decision over the 16 complaints filed against Giri. The committee had even formed a nine-member probe panel led by Dilendra Prasad Badu to investigate the complaints. Complaints against Giri include his failure to protect the rights of FM radios to air news during royal regime; the recommendation by Public Accounts Committee of previous parliament for his impeachment on Mahalaxmi Sugar Mills case; and that he had issued stay order against the US embassy while he was chief judge of Patan Appellate Court, among others.

Compiled from reports

NSP-A On The Verge Of Split

Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP-Anandidevi) has reached to the verge of split following a tussle between two factions within the party. The problem erupted after party president Anandidevi Singh petitioned to sack her party's leader and Minister for Industry, Commerce and Supplies Rajendra Mahato from the cabinet to be replaced by another leader Shyam Sundar Gupta. Anandidevi Singh also announced suspension of party convention scheduled to start in Birgunj later this week. Hitting back, the dissidents led by Mahato have decided to proceed with the convention and has said they will introduce a no-trust motion against Anandidevi Singh. Meanwhile, in Birgunj, despite Anandidevi Singh's announcement, the preparations are underway to hold the party convention. *Leading dailies report*

Maoists To Re-Launch Land Seizure Campaign

The Maoists have decided to resume the process of confiscating the land of the 'landlords' which they said would be distributed to the landless people. They had stopped the seizure campaign with the signing of peace accord, which has a provision whereby Maoists had agreed to return seized lands and properties. According to the information given by Maoist-affiliated All Nepal Peasants Association (Revolutionary) in a press conference organized in the capital on Friday, the Maoists would resume their policy to capture the lands of the citizens. The campaign will continue from mid-September to mid-October.

The organization said it will organize various protest programs across the country and claimed the constituent assembly polls will not happen in the present circumstances.

Compiled from reports

WB Warns Against Prolonging Case Against Governor

The World Bank (WB) officials have shown interest in the case against Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) governor filed by the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) and have warned that the case, if prolonged, could affect the financial sector reforms program. In a report presented last week to the Finance Ministry by the WB senior officials who had visited Nepal last month, they have said that prolonging the case against governor could hurt the morale of central bank employees. It has called for quick settlement of the case. The report says that the agreement by the central bank with KPMG Sri Lanka was as per the bilateral understanding. The CIAA had filed case of corruption against governor Bijaya Nath Bhattarai and NRB director Surendra Man Pradhan in connection with the understanding with KPMG SL. *Nepal Samacharpatra daily reports*

Police Yet To Locate Blast Perpetrators

Informing about their preliminary investigations, police have said they are yet to locate the perpetrators of Sunday's triple blasts in Kathmandu, which killed three persons. At a press meet on Thursday (September 6), Additional Inspector General of Police Keshab Baral who is leading the investigation team said that they believe that blasts were carried out by elements that wanted election derailed. Baral informed that Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) were used in the explosions. He said that further investigations were underway. The police also released a sketch of one suspected person behind the Balaju blast. "Till now, we have not been able to identify the culprits as we need to get our hands on facts to reach any conclusion," AIG Baral said. *Leading dailies report*

Army Planning A Coup: Dr. Bhattarai

Maoist second-in-command Dr Baburam Bhattarai on Thursday (September 6) said the monarchy and Nepali Army (NA) are making final preparations against revolution. Addressing a press meet organized by the Rupandehi chapter of Revolutionary Journalists' Association, he said that the NA has blamed the Maoists for Sunday's blasts in a report yesterday, adding it is an indication of the NA's preparations for war. "By blaming the Maoists, the NA is trying to come out of barracks for a coup. This is a plot to disrupt the CA polls and the peace process," he said. The capital's bomb blasts were planned by regressive forces and the style and objective of the blasts did not resemble that of the Maoists, he said, adding the blasts were planned to disrupt the CA polls by forming a fake Madhes group. The NA still supports the King, Bhattarai charged. A roundtable conference among patriots, leftists and pro-republicans will be organized on September 11, he said, adding, "The

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next Janaandolan should be led by the pro-republicans." While he blamed the Nepali Congress for giving continuity to feudalism and militarism, he accused the CPN-UML of not daring to go for progression. A certain obligation has forced the NC to go for a republic, he added. He reiterated that the polls were impossible until the Maoists' 22-points demands were met.

The Himalayan Times daily reports
NRB Asked To Appoint Nepali Management At NBL

The World Bank (WB) has asked Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) to appoint Nepali management team at the Nepal Bank Limited (NBL). Two weeks ago, during the visit by high level team from WB, it was agreed that the WB would appoint and send the management team to oversee NBL. However, on Wednesday, the bank officials told NRB officials that they were unable to appoint such team and have asked the central bank to nominate Nepali team. "The WB has not informed us in written form yet. Once it does so, we will proceed with the effort to appoint Nepali team," said a senior official at NRB. Earlier, NRB and WB had agreed that while a foreign team should oversee the NBL management for a short term, a Nepali team needed to be appointed for longer term. After the expiry of contract of ICCMT group one and a half months ago, the NBL is being managed by NRB-appointed three member team for the time being.

Nepal Samacharpatra daily reports
YCL Warns Action Against 'Corrupt'

The Maoist-affiliated Young Communist League (YCL) has said that it is preparing a list of 'corrupt people' whom it will start taking action against soon. Coinciding with the agitation planned by the Maoists from September 18, the YCL, too, will begin to take action against 'corrupt people.' The Maoists had warned that their agitation will include "people's action," against regressive elements.

According to valley in-charge of YCL, Sagar, they have already prepared a list of around 50 persons including politicians, industrialists and common people. He did not elaborate the nature of action they will be taking. *Leading dailies report*

PLA Commanders Demand Role For Combatants In CA Election

A delegation of commanders of Maoists' People's Liberation Army (PLA) met with Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, on Tuesday (September 4), demanding a role for their combatants in the process of Constituent Assembly (CA) election. The commanders handed over a memo to Prime Minister Koirala saying that they could launch struggle if their demands are not met. "We demand that our combatants be given role in the election process," said Nanda Kishore Pun aka Pasang, a deputy commander of the Maoists. Pasang said that the PLA combatants should be allowed to work to create environment conducive for the election. Meanwhile, Maoist MP and PLA deputy commander Janardan Sharma aka Prabhakar claimed that PM Koirala has assured them of government's response to their demands as well as on the republic agenda within four days. *Leading dailies report*

Victim Succumbs To Injuries, Blast Toll Reaches Three

Another student succumbed to her injuries on Tuesday (September 4) night in Bir Hospital taking the blast toll to three. Sandhya Khadka, a student of Viswa Niketan higher secondary school, who was injured in Sunday's blast in Tripureshwore, passed away at around 8:15 pm. She had been kept in ventilator support since late evening on Tuesday. With her death, the toll of the triple blasts has reached to three. Another student of the same school Anisha KC had died

on the spot in Tripureshwore blast. Likewise, a lady named Kamala Devi Shahi had died of blast injuries in Balaju. *Leading dailies report*

UML Forms Committee To Propose Candidates

The Standing Committee meeting of the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) has decided to form a nine-member committee headed by Amrit Bohara to propose candidates for the coming election. The committee includes Bharat Mohan Adhikary, Iswor Pokharel, Shanta Manavi, Asta Laxmi Shakya, Yubaraj Gyawali, Bishnu Poudel, Ashok Rai and Raghubir Mahaseth as members. Likewise, the party has also decided to ask the constituency, district and zonal committees to recommend names for their candidates. "The detailed action plan for selecting candidates will soon be unveiled," said Bohara. *Kantipur daily reports*

Middle Marsyangdi Shut Down Due To Fuel Shortage

Due to lack of diesel fuel, the construction of 70 MW strong Middle Marsyangdi hydropower project has been shut down since Tuesday (September 4). The civil contractor DDC JV has decided to halt the construction pointing at the lack of diesel due to strike by tankers. The construction of the project used to continue round the clock. The project had requested Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Supplies and Nepal Oil Corporation for diesel before deciding to halt the construction. The contractor has said it will resume the construction once diesel supply resumes. The project needs 15,000 to 20,000 liters of diesel everyday. Apart from civil works, other works related with electrical, mechanical and transmission lines are going on. A day of stoppage of work in the project results in losses amounting to Rs 3.8 million to Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). *Kantipur daily reports*



King Gyanendra, Queen Komal and Queen Mother Ratna visiting Crown Prince Paras at Norvic Hospital Photo: Kantipur

HEALTH SITUATION OF CROWN PRINCE PARAS has improved satisfactorily. Doctors say he is now in a stable condition. He had been hospitalized at Norvic Hospital in Thapathali after suffering from a mild heart attack. Doctors performed angioplasty and stent procedure to clear one of his blocked arteries. He was rushed to the hospital after doctors checked him at his residence in Nirmal Niwas at 10:20 am, Thursday (September 6). Doctors had been called after CP Paras complained of severe chest pains. King Gyanendra and Queen Komal had also reached the hospital. Crown Princess Himani, Queen Mother Ratna and other royal relatives also visited the hospital.

A DELEGATION OF NEPALI ARMY (NA) generals, and divisional heads led by Chief of Army Staff General Rookmangud Katawal met with Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala on Sunday (September 9) and briefed him about the NA's preparedness for the upcoming Constituent Assembly (CA) polls. They briefed the PM about the conclusions of the recent meeting of NA's division commanders. Anticipating the 'worst-case scenarios' in the days ahead, the division commanders and other departmental heads discussed the Army's preparedness in the two-day meeting. The cases discussed include: "If the CA election does not take place on November 22 and is once again pushed further for some time in next spring; or if the CA election takes place on schedule, but the poll results do not appear as per the liking of a particular group." "In both the cases, a degree of violence is expected. The meeting concluded that while postponement of election may invite a civil war, the election result, on the other hand, may also instigate violence," a General present in the meeting told The Himalayan Times daily. He said the meeting has decided to get prepared for both the situations. Apart from formulating strategies to tackle such situations, which would

be implemented if the government asked the Army to take action, the 'coordination meeting' also discussed the current "total chaotic situation" in the Tarai. The division commanders discussed the activities of the United Nations Mission in Nepal, which is mandated to monitor management of arms and armies and assist the government in holding the CA polls. They discussed the government's reported intention to replace Army security by YCL's security in certain "vital installations like television towers". "Internally, we are soldier-focused, and externally we must be people-focused to win their trust that the army is transparent, accountable and democratized," the General quoted army chief Katawal as saying at the conclusion of the two-day meeting last Friday.

THE BULLISH NEPAL STOCK EXCHANGE (Nepse), on Sunday (September 9), climbed to a new high as its index crossed the 800-point mark for the first time in its 14-year long history. The Nepse index touched 811.98 points, clocking a double-digit growth of 15.64 points from an opening of 796.34 points. The robust growth is mainly led by soaring share prices of commercial banks. As a result, the banking sub-index gained 22.60 points. Most of the commercial banks earned in the range of Rs 16 to Rs 159 per share on Sunday alone. Everest Bank Ltd is the highest earning company, as it gained Rs 159 per share and closed at Rs 2,575 from the opening of Rs 2,416. Nepal Investment Bank followed suit with adding a value of Rs 145 per share. The bank's trading closed at Rs 2610, which had opened at Rs 2,465 at the beginning of trading. Total market capitalization of listed shares at Nepse also grew by over Rs 4.30 billion and closed at Rs 223.62 billion from the previous closing of Rs 219.32 billion. Of the 35 companies that had their shares traded at the Nepse floor Sunday, shares of 28 companies gained, while only seven of them lost ground.

FIVE PERSONS WERE KILLED AFTER the microbus they were traveling in was swept away by swollen Dhansar River along the East-West highway in Bara district on Saturday (September 8) night. The dead have been identified as Narottam Rajbhandari, his wife Sami Rajbhandari, Jivan Joshi, Jayanti Joshi and Indreni Prasai, police said. The microbus was heading towards Kathmandu from Dhankuta, carrying wedding attendants. Another five persons were rescued by the locals. After the bridge over the seasonal Dhansar River had been swept away a few days ago, vehicles have been driving through the riverbed during daytime when the current is usually low. The accident, however, occurred at around 11 pm Saturday night.

SEVEN PERSONS WERE KILLED and 25 missing after a boat capsized in swollen Rapti river in Kachanapur of Banke district. Seven persons have swum to safety. The boat is said to have capsized as it was overcrowded. The people were headed from Nawalpur to Govarpur when the mishap occurred.

THE REPORT OF AUDITOR'S GENERAL presented to the Prime Minister on Wednesday (September 5) has shown that in the last fiscal year 2006/07, the Beruju or unsettled amount has decreased. The report states that the total unsettled amount stood at Rs 26.42 billion in the fiscal year compared with Rs 29.9 billion previous fiscal year. ■

“Politics of hatred and denial dictated by undemocratic desires of rebels will only sow the seeds of disintegration of the country. It is our responsibility to defeat those desires together.”

Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, senior Congress leader and former prime minister, in a statement he issued on the eve of BP Jayanti.

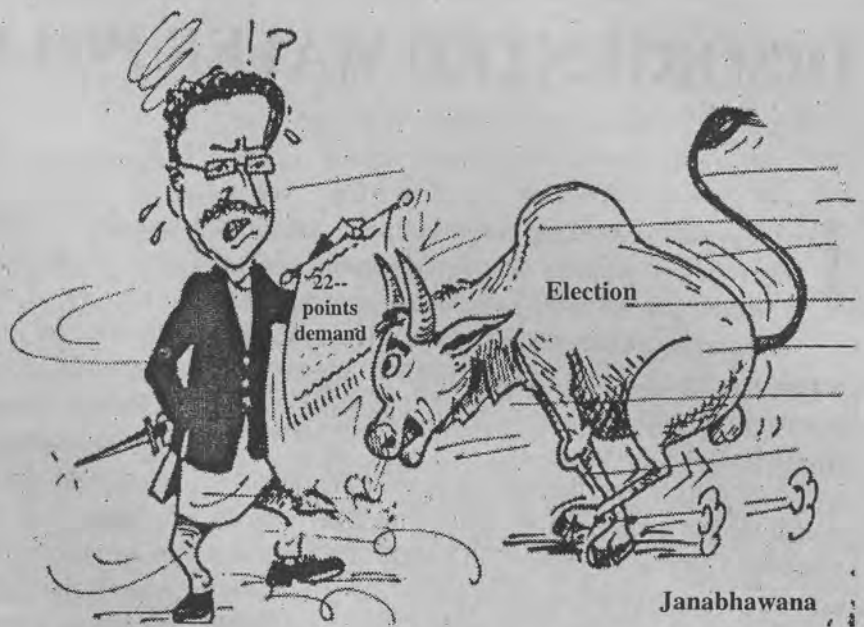
“This has shown that our conclusions were objective and based on reality.”

Prachanda, Maoist chairman, said that blasts in Kathmandu proved the significance of the 22-point framework his party has presented as being crucial if the country is to hold the CA election on time, in Radio Nepal.

“Unless such a situation emerges, the election is not going to take place. Let everyone understand this. CA election is not going to take place. We see no such situation.”

Dr Baburam Bhattarai, senior Maoist leader, stressing for a new understanding among the parties to abolish monarchy, and set up republic to ensure the election, speaking at a program in Butawal.

“We are waiting for the seven parties to respond to our 22-point demands. If they agree to declare republic, then all



will be okay. If not, we will then hold roundtable conference and go for peaceful street agitation – which means we will walk out of the government. And that will happen by Asoj 1 (September 18).”

Barshaman Pun aka Ananta, deputy commander of the Maoists, talking to reporters.

“If the Maoists run away from the elections then the allegations that communists do not honor peoples’ mandate and want only to capture power by force will stick.”

Madhav Kumar Nepal, general

secretary of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), in Kantipur.

“We demand that our combatants be given role in the election process,” said Nanda Kishore Pun aka Pasang, a deputy commander of the Maoists’ People’s Liberation Army (PLA).

“Till now, we have not been able to identify the culprits as we need to get our hands on facts to reach any conclusion.”

Additional Inspector General (AIG) Kesab Baral of Nepal Police, at a press meet to inform about the ongoing investigations surrounding the blasts in Kathmandu.

TRANSITION

FORMED: A nine-member committee headed by Amrit Kumar Bohara, by the Standing Committee meeting of the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), to propose candidates for the coming election. The committee includes Bharat Mohan Adhikary, Iswor Pokharel, Shanta Manavi, Asta Laxmi Shakya, Yubaraj Gyawali, Bishnu Poudel, Ashok Rai and Raghubir Mahaseth as members.

VISITED: Krishna Mandir on the occasion of Krishna Janmashtami by

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala on Tuesday (September 4), in his capacity of acting head of state.

DECLINED: Security arrangement by the Home Ministry for King Gyanendra who wanted to visit Krishna Mandir on the occasion of Krishna Janmashtami.

HOSPITALIZED: Crown Prince Paras, at Norvic Hospital, Thapathali, after suffering from heart attack.

PASSED AWAY: Sandhya Khadka, a twelfth grade student of Vishwa Niketan Higher Secondary School. She succumbed to injuries she sustained

during bomb blast in Tripureshwore. She became the third victim of the blasts.

PRESENTED: The report of the Auditor’s General for the fiscal year 2006/07, to the Prime Minister.

CROSSED: The Nepal Stock Exchange (Nepse) index, 800 points, on September 9, for the first time in its 14-year history.

APPOINTED: Digamber Jha, as the new executive director of Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC), by the government.

DISORIENTED WATER POLICY AND IPPAN

- 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 billion \$ 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 1 A 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 1 A (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 1 A 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.

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.

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)

MAOISTS

Rising Tempo

The Maoist leaders have stepped up their pressure by threatening to quit cabinet and unleash new 'revolution'

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

While other parties are preparing for the November 22 elections, the Maoists – the crucial partner of the current eight party alliance – have been increasingly distancing themselves from the election.

Maoist chairman Prachanda, and senior leaders Dr. Baburam Bhattarai and Mohan Baidya aka Kiran have spoken in the same language and same tone in the recent days threatening to walk out from the government and launch movement from September 18.

"We are very close to walking out from the government," claimed Barshaman Pun aka Ananta, deputy commander of the Maoists.

Advancing their 22-point demands – including immediate declaration of republic and fully proportional representation based election – the Maoist leaders have been addressing their workers and activists asking them to prepare for the final revolution.

A few days ago, Prachanda talking to reporters in Nepalgunj said he was concerned that the election will end up as a 'drama.' In Baridya, he asked his party cadres to prepare for the agitation to press for their 22-point demands. Prachanda said revolution was necessary as the government had still not laid the foundation for the CA polls.

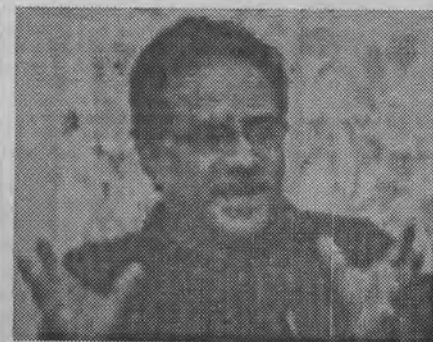
On Monday (September 10), Prachanda addressed Newa Rajya Samiti in Lalitpur and gave the same message of new revolution.

Last week, addressing a meeting of party's student wing All Nepal National Independent Student Union – Revolutionary (ANNISU-R) in Kathmandu, Prachanda directed the students to begin the movement for republican set up. He said Nepal needed "one more revolution" for establishment of true democracy

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai has called for a new understanding to create environment conducive for the polls. Addressing a function in Butwal, Dr. Bhattarai said that there should be a new understanding among the parties to abolish monarchy, and set up republic to ensure the election.

"Unless such a situation emerges, the election is not going to take place. Let everyone understand this. CA election is not going to take place. We see no such situation," he said. Dr. Bhattarai added that he sees serious conspiracies to derail the election. "We want election for republic and progress, which is not possible at present. Therefore, the election will not take place," he said.

Stating that CA agenda was first raised by Maoists, Dr. Bhattarai said CA was like their 'baby.' "Nobody loves (CA) like we do," he claimed. "Election will not take place just because the foreigners are shouting," he added. He urged the parties to seriously consider their 22-point demand or face agitation, which he said will not only be against monarchy but also parliamentary forces.



Prachanda: Fiery remarks

Another senior Maoist leader Kiran has said that if their demands are not met, they will unleash a storm of agitation. "We will see how Nepali Congress government will run then," he challenged.

Kiran claimed that recent agreements with some Madhesi and Janajati groups were not legitimate enough. "They are the agreements between NC's minister and the groups. We were never consulted," he said.

Kiran added that other parties, particularly the NC, were not serious enough about their demands. "They have not even called a meeting of eight parties to discuss our demands," he said.

In another indication of the seriousness of their threats, the peasants wing of the Maoists has decided to resume the process of confiscating the land of the 'landlords' which they said would be distributed to the landless people. They had stopped the seizure campaign with the signing of peace accord, which has a provision whereby Maoists had agreed to return seized lands and properties.

The Maoists moves have troubled leaders of other parties. Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal and NC leader and Minister for Peace and Reconstruction Ram Chandra Poudel have urged the Maoists to drop their agitation plan and instead concentrate on the polls to usher in democratic republic. ■

POLITICS

Nepal's Hard Reality

Nepal's hard reality is that it has two most powerful and big neighbors

By KESHAB POUDEL

Sandwiched between two great powers of Asia, India and China, Nepal survives as an independent nation in a very small geographical space of Himalayas. For many, Nepal's survival as an independent nation is itself a mystery.

Boasting Nepal's bio-diversity, geographical and cultural diversity, Aban Marker Kabraji, regional director of IUCN, Asia, who came to attend the IUCN's international conference, expressed amazement at how Nepal has survived as an independent nation between Indian and China -two big powers of Asia.

For many friends of Nepal like Kabraji, Nepal's survival as an independent nation for more than two and half centuries in this most volatile zone is really an issue of huge interest. Whether it was in the period of unchallenged British colonial power or the powerful Chinese dynasties or in the modern time, Nepal's strength lied in its position of equilibrium.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah once aptly described his newly conquered Kingdom in the central Himalayas as "a root between two stones. "Even in his day - the mid 18th century - Nepal's most formidable problem in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy was the preservation of the country's independence in the face of the concurrent but separate threats posed by the newly emerging dominant power in northern India, the British East India Company, and a slowly and but steadily expanding Chinese presence in Tibet. Present-day Nepal thus perceives its critical geo-political situation in terms of a long tradition as a buffer state and with some deeply ingrained attitudes towards the policies and tactics required to maintain its political and cultural

integrity," writes Leo E. Rose in his book Nepal Strategy for Survival

But, in fact, the presence of equally two big powers on both the sides of Nepal has ensured Nepal's independence. "Bravery of the people in different countries for their struggle for independence has been exemplary in record but that alone had not been able to ensure their independence. Many such countries of brave people have been brutally concurred and colonized. People in Nepal generally express their worries about the prospect of peace and as well as preservation of independence of this country. Except a rational logic, there is none to provide appropriate answer for this question," said an analyst.

Obviously, Nepal has a unique problem. "One has to see the nature of disturbance. If there are more than one sources of creating disturbances that could generally make persons worried. In Nepal's case, till now that is not the case. Whatever might have been the facts, or causes being used to get concessions, center of operation of destabilization till now appears to be the same. And that is now in everybody's knowledge. Though there is no leadership yet to get it exposed and to counter that effectively," said the analyst.

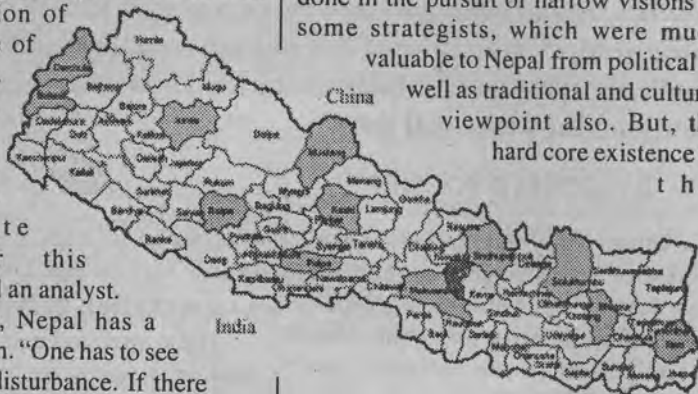
For that also there is a limit determined by the hard realities of the country which remained a safeguard of Nepal's existence and independence. "Nepal has gone through most heinous violent activities under a covert design for the past one decade. People suffered much, Nepal has lost much in terms of opportunities for development but none

has been a gainer. The center of covert operation has been slowly and gradually exposed to even a layman in the streets in Kathmandu."

After all what is that factor which helped Nepal endure so much to survive in its continuity of independence and what is that secret in the character of the people that any outsider is visibly impressed by the contagious innocent smiles in the faces of the people despite the hardships?

It may sound a fanatical expression of one's national pride but, after all, it is a fact of life in Nepal. Considering all these peculiarities and the character of the people, one can be assured of the fact that Nepal will remain the same as a geo-political unit between two equally powerful neighbors though sometimes one of them may get wild and violent. It is not Nepal itself but its equally competent neighbors on their side to see from its security perspectives and deal with the other promptly and effectively.

"Some unnecessary damage has been done in the pursuit of narrow visions of some strategists, which were much valuable to Nepal from political as well as traditional and cultural viewpoint also. But, the hard core existence of the



country can be undone at an unpredictably high price in terms of materials and manpower," said the analyst.

The hard realities of the country have determined the character of the people, too. Whether the King rules or baron rules, some basic qualities of life have always been preserved in a continuity of its independence. Like it was once said by English poet T.S. Elliot in different context, whoever rules Nepal whether King's rules or Baron rules, Nepal's strength as well as challenge remains the similar.

As T.S. Elliot said in his poetry *A Murder in the Cathedral*,
King rules or barons rule;
We have suffered various oppressions,
But mostly we are left to our own device,
And we are content if we are left alone

IUCN'S REGIONAL CONSERVATION FORUM

Call For Sustainable Conservation

Passing through a phase of fragile democracy, difficult peace process, effect of climate change and scarcity of water, Nepal is in the complex position to strike a balance between the development and environment. At a time when Nepal's successful stories of sustainable conservation and development like buffer zone project, national park management, wildlife protection and community forestry are in critical stage, IUCN (The World Conservation Union)'s decision to hold 4th Asia Regional Conservation Asia in Nepal is very significant. Devastated by twelve years long internal bloody conflict, Nepal's nature conservation is also in a very critical phase of recovery. Compared to its geographical space, Nepal has unique combination of bio-diversity and cultural diversity and the challenge now is to maintain balance. Even after signing the peace agreement, it is still uncertain how long the peace will last

By KESHAB POUDEL

Although they are regarded as unique examples of sustainable environment and development programs, Nepal's community forestry and community participation in the national park management and wildlife conservation programs are all at a very critical stage now.

Devastated by twelve years long bloody conflict, it will take a lot of time before there is recovery and revival of public enthusiasm in the sustainable management of Nepal's bio-diversity. Thanks to the conflict, community forestry is now at the process of destruction and deteriorating law and order has encouraged poachers to hunt wild animals from national parks.

Thanks to the growing population in the adjoining areas of national park and greater demands for food and feeder, the conflict between the man and wild animals continue to grow. In the last one year alone, more than 3 dozen one-horned rhinoceros were killed. People

continue to cut trees in the forest areas to clear way for their settlement.

Conservation in Nepal

The consequence of unpredictable weather is worrisome. Although it is yet to make detail study, Nepal's glacier lakes are under the constant threat from rising temperature due to global warming.

Due to the unpredictable hostile weather, Nepalese this year have seen one of the worst floods in the last thirty years which caused huge losses in terms of man and materials. All these incidences indicate that Nepal's nature conservation is not in good shape and that Nepal will have to face more difficult days ahead.

With the population living below poverty line at 31 percent; there are greater demands for the resources to bring the change in their livelihood. As agriculture contributes 39.2 percent of GDP, with high rate of under employment and unemployment, Nepal

needs to follow the balanced policy to achieve success.

Nepal's past experiences have shown that bio-diversity conservation diversifies rural income and reduces burden of women and children for access to water, enabling children and women to reduce their collection time and use for education.

The availability of sustainable biological resources, including non-timber forest products, resource management through community forestry and agro-biodiversity have already contributed to address poverty.

At a time when Nepal is making efforts to revive its past successes and implement the programs to support them, the four days gathering of experts from around the world and region in the IUCN's conference was a significant event.

"I believe this conference will encourage us to maintain our conservation reputation and to move

forward in partnership with world conservation community. As you all know, Nepal suffered a decade long People's War. However, we are proud to announce that now we are in the peace process to build more prosperous, democratic and socio-economically and environmentally rich country," said Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation Dev Gurung.

Endowed with rich biological, cultural and economic diversity, forest and cultural diversity including crops, vegetables, trees, herbs, birds and animals have sustained the livelihood of Nepali people.

"The commitment expressed by politicians is important achievement in the area of natural conservation. From climate change to other environmental problems, all the issues are now being debated," said Surendra Shrestha, regional director UNEP ROAP.

Protected areas in Nepal have now entered a significant phase of development. With the expansion of protected areas, it also addresses the issues of bio-diversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. Communities living in the adjoining areas of national parks and wildlife reserve are sharing benefits through the buffer zone initiatives.

"The delegates can learn many things from Nepal including the living in harmony as Nepalese have been living in diversity. People of Nepal have shown that nature and culture can go together," said Prabhu Budhathoki, country representative IUCN-Nepal.

Situated in the small stretch of Himalaya, Nepal is known as a country of rich bio-diversity as well as a pioneer of some of the important successful stories of sustainable environmental management. With the growing population and results of bloody conflict, Nepal's bio-diversity is under a serious threat now.

The challenges Nepal face now is how to put the situation right on the track. "Nepal is a pioneer country in developing various modalities of community based natural resources management systems. The community forestry and protected area management

systems can be seen as success stories where over one third of Nepalese people are engaged in some or other way in managing and sharing benefits of such resources," said minister Gurung.

"Unlike our successes in the conservation field, we have yet to develop and demonstrate sustainable models of physical, social, economic and cultural development to suit our needs and hope of our people."

From combating poverty to



IUCN Conference: International concern

environmental problems and consequences of climate change. Nepal has been facing all kinds of problems. The community forestry has shown how participation of community in the forest management protects the forest areas and benefits local communities.

"For this particular important Regional Conservation Forum, there could not have been a better venue than Nepal where we are constantly reminded of this country's rich natural and cultural heritage, some of which is exemplified by the many world Heritage sites in this small country as well as in the more modest, but equally impressive sites all around us. Nepal also has demonstrated leadership in community based natural resources management, in the conservation of flagship species, and in establishing a network of protected areas," said Julia Maron-Lefevre, Director General, IUCN.

Similarly, through the buffer zone management programs, Nepal has shown how we can avoid the conflict

between the human and wild animals living in the protected national park areas.

"With such a bio-diversity, Nepal has great potential as well as challenges for the future in the area of environmental conservation," said Aban Marker Kabraj, regional director IUCN Asia. "Nepal has some of the most successful programs. As peace process continues and democracy is thriving, Nepal's two neighbors and Asia's two major countries can contribute a lot for Nepal."

IUCN's Forum

As a continent of world's huge resources, Asian region has been facing many challenges for sustainable management as well. There is a tendency of rising gap between the rich and poor.

The forum showcased Nepal's rich natural and cultural heritage and measures taken for its management. About 400 representatives from IUCN's membership with major stakeholders, including those belonging to the donor community and private sector from as many as 30 Asian countries took part in the seminar.

The participants discussed on the critical conservation and development issue in the region as well as their solution. Emphasis was given to the impact of emerging socio-economic trends in the region during the 21st century. Asian ecosystems support over 50 percent of the world's population and its bio-diversity. As such, it is imperative for member countries as well as the international conservation community to work towards the common goal of a sustainable Asia, not lest because of the inextricable links between human security, peace and environment.

The participants of the seminar discussed on three main regional issues like climate change, energy and

environmental security. RCF also focused on three thematic priority areas: conserving bio-diversity for life, climate change and energy and poverty, environment and greening the economy.

"Today, the continent of Asia encompasses many worlds, many realities plus one of the most diverse

sustainable environment management and sustainable development," said Kabraji.

Divided into three important sessions, the forum discussed on issues like Future of Sustainability, Alternative Models of Development and Role of Private Sector in Ensuring

and discussed about the situation.

Along with discussing other issues, the forum also discussed on conserving biodiversity for life: Integral Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change and Energy, Poverty, Environment and Greening the Economy.

"We have learned many important models from other countries of the region as well as we also shared our experiences and achievements with the representatives of other countries," said Dr. K.C. Paudel, chief of the monitoring and evaluation division at the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation. "It gave us opportunities to learn many things."

Along with sharing the project models of various countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan and Republic of Korea, the experts also discussed the way on how to cope with new challenges.

By selecting Nepal as the venue for such a mega conference attended by more than 400

experts from different parts of the world, IUCN provided Nepal an opportunity to show Nepal's real situation and difficulties it is facing.



Rich biodiversity: Natural endowment

human and natural habitats on the planet. This forum will contribute to the

Sustainability. Experts from different parts of the world presented their papers

ROLE OF JUDICIARY In Constitution Making

At a time when communist-dominated unelected and unaccountable parliament was interrogating nominee of chief justice, lawyers and experts from Nepal, Canada and India discussed various issues on Independence of Judiciary in a Federal System.

Organized by Constitutional Advisory Support Unit, UNDP and the Federal Judiciary Concern Committee of the Nepal Bar Association, the International Commission of Jurists, the three-day seminar discussed various models of judiciary.

Senior lawyer from India, Rajeev Dhavan shared his views regarding the

independence of judiciary. He argued that present procedure under which judges are grilled in the parliament committee will definitely harm the independence of judiciary. Only an independent judge can make the judiciary independent.

Sharing the experiences of India, senior lawyer Dhavan said India made its constitution where there was unprecedented level of consensus among all the political forces and intellectuals. "When your society is divided in such a manner, it is virtually impossible to make a good constitution in Nepal," said Dhavan.

On the issue of independence of

judiciary, Dhavan said lawyers and politicians have to decide what kind of judiciary they want. Independent judiciary is fundamental element for democracy. "If your country's judiciary is guided by politicians, people cannot get the independent judgments," said Dhavan.

"Without an independence of judiciary, we say, there cannot be the rule of law. And without the rule of law, there cannot be the enjoyment of human rights or the predictability of the consequences of our decisions or transactions," said Yash Ghai of UNDP's Constitutional Advisory Support Unit.

Acting chief justice Kedar Prasad Giir, Justice Meen Bahadur Rayamajhi, and former chief justice Kedar Nath Upadhaya, Trilok Pratap Rana and other various scholars and Canadian political scientist also shared their views at the seminar. ■

Petro Price Will Not Be Hiked Till Election

The government is preparing not to hike the price of petroleum products till Constituent Assembly (CA) election by bearing the losses itself. The state-owned Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has submitted a report detailing the losses that the government will have to bear if prices are not adjusted till election.

Deputy executive director of NOC Umesh Dahal has said that the government will need to provide it with Rs 2 billion if oil prices are to be kept

stable till election in November 22. This amount includes NOC's monthly losses, payment of its dues to Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and interests. Dahal said that if the government provides that amount, NOC can ensure smooth fuel supply till the election.

Meanwhile, the last two weeks witnessed recurrence of fuel crisis as import was halted due to an indefinite strike called by tanker drivers and after IOC cut down supplies pressing for payment of dues. The strike ended after a week.

Subsequently, Dahal traveled to Raxaul and held talks with IOC officials who agreed to ensure smooth supply for the time being.

The NOC's outstanding dues to be paid to IOC currently stands at Rs 3.2 billion. Accumulated loans to be repaid by the corporation have already crossed Rs 11 billion, said Ichha Bikram Thapa, spokesperson at NOC. Due to huge price disparity, NOC claims that it has been suffering a monthly loss of more than Rs 310 million and more than half of its loss comes from LPG. Since price disparity in LPG is as high as Rs 277 per cylinder, NOC is losing over Rs 160 million a month, the NOC official said.

Enlightened States Can Help Alleviate Inequality

Dr Ifzal Ali, chief economist at the Asian Development Bank (ADB), on Thursday, stressed on an enlightened and active state to alleviate inequalities, while policymakers must be made accountable for an inclusive growth. Rising inequalities in South Asia, particularly in Nepal, pose a clear hurdle impeding growth, said Dr Ali, while making a presentation at a program organized by the South Asian Institute of Management (SAIM), on Thursday (September 6).

Referring to Nepal's Gini coefficient which is among the highest in the region, he further said that although Nepal has achieved a lot in terms of reducing poverty, it has failed to address the gap between the poor and the rich.

Among South Asian countries, Nepal and Sri Lanka have the Gini coefficient of above 40 points, which is one the highest in the whole of Asia. Nepal's inequality is characterized by high inequality in access to education and basic health services, which is a

strong impediment for upward mobility, Dr Ali said, adding that access to infrastructure is another crucial factor that constrains access to productive economic opportunities. "As a result, the rich are getting richer faster than the poor," he added.

Contemplating the recent findings of ADB, he said that poorer households have benefited less from growth than richer households. This has, in many cases, hindered the growth prospects, resulting in redistribution and eventually to distortions of wealth and opportunities, Dr Ali added.

"In many cases, a high level of inequality may hinder social cohesion causing political instability. This is quite evident in Nepal," he said, adding that high concentration of income may enable the wealthy to steer economic outcomes and policies in their favor.

The main drivers behind inequalities in Nepal are unevenness in growth, particularly between the

rural and urban areas. Real per capita income/expenditures increased by 42 percent in urban areas between 1995-96 and 2003-04 compared to 27 percent in rural areas, he said.

"This phenomenon has led to a widening rural-urban gap." Regional inequalities and structural transformation and outward orientation are other two main factors for the rising inequality in Nepal. Slowdown of public investment in rural infrastructure, breakdown of extension services to disseminate modern technology and depletion of natural resources have also resulted in fuelling inequalities in Nepal, he said.

Inclusive growth could be an answer to rising inequalities, but it needs to be well defined with a proper approach that role of public policy is to circumvent the disadvantages of circumstance-based inequalities, Dr Ali suggested. While, states should be enlightened and active, its policymakers need to be ready to be accountable for ensuring outcomes and impacts of such practice. (Courtesy: *The Himalayan Times daily*) ■

“The Art Of Leadership Is The Art Of Compromise”

-Peter Russell

It is the real truth that the most stable democracies in the world so far have been in monarchies All the Scandinavian, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain have most stable democracy along with all of the commonwealth including New Zealand, Australia and Canada. All these countries are very strong monarchical democracies.

Professor PETER H. RUSSELL, who has been teaching political science in University of Toronto, Canada, is a well known scholar on federalism. Professor Russell was in town recently to address a program on The Justice System and The Constitution organized by UNDP Constitution Advisory Unit in collaboration with Canadian Bar Association-Nepal Bar Association and International Commission of Jurist. Russell spoke to KESHAB POUDEL on various issues. Excerpts:

After experimenting five constitutions in the past, Nepal is once again in the process of constitution making through the elections of Constituent Assembly. Do you believe that the constitution made by CA will last longer?

It is a big challenge but a challenge that only a brave and democratic people will take up. It is, of course, not easy way but you have tried to be other way. You have experiences now that will show if a constitution is going to really have a popular base and people are going to feel ownership of it. Particularly, your country is going to be very important moving from monarchy to republic. These are the two words I know. Underneath, a way beyond those two words are deep feelings that go back to family, generations in the last fifty years. It has really been the central issue. Most people in Nepal agree about multi-party system like all democratic people. The top issue has been ballot and the vote to decide it. They are about to decide it and they also know about the diversity of the people who have not been participating in the political life of democratic Nepal.

How would you bring consensus?

This is another challenge in bringing them in and getting a popular root for republican constitution doing it with a consensus but you cannot have unanimity. There will always be

some people who disagree. Some disagree passionately. But they are always relatively small minorities. I don't dismiss their views as foolish as they will have well argued positions for rejecting the majority. If you can get a consensus, it is alright but you need to have fairly a broad majority. It will be a huge achievement.

Despite declaring independence, Canada still retains British Queen as a head of state. Why doesn't your country declare republic like Nepal?

It is for a very good reason. Our experience with monarchy is very different than your experiences. Rather than being opponent of democracy in the last century and half going back to the middle of the 1800s, our monarchs and their representative governor general have been supporter of constitutional democracy. They show that they have accepted their role basically as a ceremonial. In other words, we have very good experience. Our governor generals who represent the queen of United Kingdom have done a job well. They are highly democratic people and they believe in democracy. So, democratic people have had difficulty in continuation of monarchy. That seems not to be a case here.

Do you mean removing monarchy and establishing republic will guarantee absolute functional democracy in a country like Nepal?

Oh! no. It is the real truth that the most stable democracies in the world so far have been in monarchies All the Scandinavian, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, former fascist country Spain have most stable democracy along with all of the commonwealth including New Zealand, Australia and Canada. All these countries are very strong monarchical democracies. Republican democracy has a very

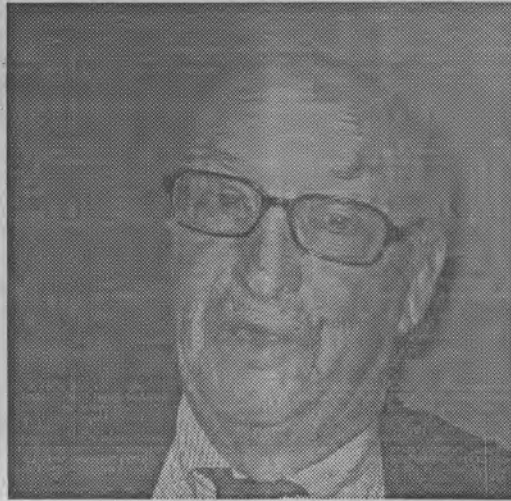
mixed record particular with the country with no parliament and those with both elected president and parliament. Besides the elected president, there is an elected congress or legislature. They have not done very well and they have been quite unstable except the United States. So, becoming republic does not guarantee democracy. What I can judge from meeting you people, talking to them and reading your history in the books, your monarchy is still too strong, which our monarchy has lost a long ago.

Sandwiched between Asia's two big powers India and China with heterogeneous ethnic groups, diverse culture and geography, people have been saying that federalism is the panacea to all problems here. How do you look at it?

Federalism is a word with many variations and practices. There is a federal movement in the whole world right now. You can see it everywhere. Certainly, it is not only happening in the European Union, the countries within the union including United Kingdom where issue of Scottish devolution is being raised and so on. And the reason for that is the respect for minority culture. There is a realization that a nation does not have to be based on single culture to be strong and unified body. Once you make that decision you can respect the minority culture and remain strong and unified. Of course, you have a strong national government and you also have some forms of self government locally.

What way do you prefer?

How will you do in Nepal is a different matter. Say in the United States, with its 50 states united not based on culture, not based on language or religion. There may be a little more like a Swiss or little more like a Canada, which has a mixture. We have a province which is set aside for French Canadians. Fifty-six aboriginal nations, they have been enjoying a kind of self governance. We have a very complex federal structure. Diversity is our strength if you recognize them. You mustn't use force. It must be settled through goodwill and negotiations. I believe in it. If you try to impose by force, then there will be trouble. It is very easy to say that we have one country and one government.



In a country with a very weak judiciary, weak parliament and other institutions, what does Nepal need to do?

The most important thing is really getting better people committed to their political career. In each developing country, I have been watching for nearly fifty years, the first thing the educated people do after getting their degree in laws, medicines and whatever, they will go to make money in other professions because politics is really a tough area. In politics, you need to risk everything. If you lose the election, you will lose the money, break the family. You need strong participation of your best people in the political life of the country. There is no substitute for that. It is has to come from political leadership. If you go to your history, your seven or eight political parties failed managing your country. There is a tyranny of small differences. The art of leadership is the art of compromise. Political leaders must have ability to say I don't agree with that person but my disagreement is not that important. If you don't have this kind of culture, you won't be successful.

How important is the independent judiciary for democracy?

It is crucial to have an independent judiciary. A federal country has to make a choice how it is going to have a strong judiciary or federalism. The Americans may be one choice - that's one model in which they say they have two judiciary- the states have their own courts, lower courts, appeal courts etc or a central court like Supreme Court of the United States for very important national matters. That is an expensive

You need strong participation of your best people in the political life of the country. There is no substitute for that.

system and it is also potentially divisive. The one way it has been able to maintain unity in justice is the Supreme Court of USA having a very strong mandate to enforce the American constitution in all the states and judges of the state. That took a couple of hundred years and in the middle there was a civil war. It has been doing that only from early 20th century. US Supreme Court is unifying the American justice system. They had strong and brilliant judges who delivered.

How about other models?

Other models are the Canadian and Indian. There is the one basic central court in the country. That's good and that gives you a national judiciary. In Canada, a federal process of appointment of judges to the national judiciary is controlled politically in the national capital by politicians. Governments were able to share in the appointment in national judges and the appointment of judges is dominated by national politicians. The unitary judiciary model is better one for Nepal but make sure that the provinces or self governing people whatever they are called have some say how judges are appointed.

Just as Canada shares the border with World's only super power United States, Nepal shares border with Asia's two powers India and China, how do you see the possibility to evolve stable, functional democratic federal system here?

Of course, Canada shares her border with one super power but you got two of Asia's super powers India and China - this is itself a very complex issue. Well. I don't know your country well enough but I do have some knowledge about your two super big powers. Of the two, I have spent much of my time in China than in India. Let's start from China. China has not done well about their diversity. They have not done at all for what they call national minorities. Of course, their GNP is large and strong economy at superfluous level is growing. They got the seeds of very fundamental of civil conflicts.

Similarly, you have many messes in India as it is much more difficult to govern India



than China. Though India has made some efforts to treat their minorities fairly, there also exist fundamental seeds of conflicts.

Can Nepal manage federal structure?

I don't know how you will organize a federal structure in Nepal. One model you can have is lets say you have tribal ethnic people who have their own cultures and languages, laws and practices. You can certainly provide for special provision which the Americans have done. We have also done special provision for tribal people like Eskimo Indians.

What are other alternatives for accommodating diverse groups?

What should you try to do is to help them participate in national government, perhaps in a second chamber. They should be given participation in second chamber which controls overall national laws.

Do you think it is possible for Nepal to have full governments at the state/provincial level?

I don't see that for Nepal. It is so expensive to have full governments at the state or the provincial levels with all the bureaucracies and so on. It takes a lot of money. I have been to Russia quite a lot of time in the last few years. They have 89 units and all of them run under Moscow or under Putin. It's a fake federalism. I think there are different models with local autonomy. ■

It is so expensive to have full governments at the state or the provincial levels with all the bureaucracies and so on. It takes a lot of money.

TOURIST ARRIVAL

Sustained Growth

With the onset of peace process, the arrival of tourists has increased in a sustained manner

By A CORRESPONDENT

The latest figures released by Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) shows that the number of tourist arrival has registered a sustained increase in recent months.

In the month of August alone, the tourist arrival (by air) recorded 18 percent growth.

The total visitor arrivals in August 2007 reached 26865, up by 4052 compared to the same month last year, according to the data released by Immigration Office Tribhuvan International Airport.

European market registered a healthy growth of 36 % in July and August. "It is generally considered as low season for international tourist arrivals. However, the visitors from some countries like Italy, Korea and Spain soared up in these months," says a press release by the NTB.

Major European markets like UK

(32.5%), Germany (38.9%), France (32.9%), Italy (34.2%), Spain (46.4%) registered healthy growths in this month. The Spanish (12.8%) and Italian (7.6%) markets this month presented themselves with a large pie in the total arrivals, creating a fair support to the lean season of the tourism industry of the country. However, the arrivals from Sweden and the Netherlands plummeted by 53.2 % and 1.2 % respectively.

The arrivals from SAARC region as a whole recorded a decline of 9.6 % due to the fall in arrivals from a major market- India by 13.7 % though other markets like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka showed commendable growths by 54.4 %, 30.2 % and 93 % respectively.

Other Asian markets like People's Republic of China, Japan, S. Korea, and Chinese Taiwan have shown robust

growths by 88.2 %, 14.5 %, 91.7 % and 94.2 % respectively. Malaysian and Thai markets fell by 26.6 % and 32.2 % respectively.

US, Canadian and Australian markets also recorded strong growths of 50.1 %, 44.6 % and 43.2 % respectively.

The total arrivals in the first eight months of this year grew on the average by 33.1 %. India, USA, UK and Japan are in the top list of tourist generating markets in this period with share of 32.1 %, 6.7 %, 6.6 % and 5.8 % in the total arrivals respectively.

"It is highly notable that Chinese and Korean markets are getting stronger and their arrivals during the first eight months have grown up by more than double compared to the same period last year."

"NTB believes that the arrivals in the coming months will become stronger because of festival seasons in India and Nepal. One of reasons for decline is lack of air seats from India as most of seats are now being filled by European visitors coming to Nepal via India. Another reason is infrequent service provided by Nepal Airlines, the National Carrier in Indian sector due to technical hitch." ■

NEPAL-CHINA TRADE POTENTIALS

Experts have urged the Nepali policymakers and businessmen to explore and promote the huge potential of trade with neighboring China.

At an interaction on "Exploring Nepal's Trade and Investment Opportunities" organized jointly by Nepal China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCCI) along with Enhancing Trade Related Capacity (ENTReC/UNDP), experts called for coordinated and coherent approach to take advantage of the huge potential.

"As Nepal is between big economies like India and China we have to mobilize our trade capacity," said Prachanda Man Shrestha, joint

secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies.

Presenting a paper on the topic, Dr. Tilak Rawal, former governor of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), said that poverty alleviation cannot be achieved without economic growth. "The Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand have started taking advantage of China's growth. Nepal also needs to take advantage of the growth in its neighboring country."

"If we achieve growth, then we can adopt egalitarian approach in its distribution," he said.

Economist Professor Dr. Bishwambher Pyakuryal also presented his paper on the topic emphasizing the

need to increase trade between Nepal and China. "At present, the volume of Nepal-China trade is only 5 percent of our total trade volume," he said.

He said Nepal should take advantage of China's policy of advancing developing in its western region.

President of NCCCI Rajesh Kazi Shrestha urged Nepali authorities to talk with Chinese government to ensure zero tariff market access soon. He said Special Economic Zone should be set up in Paanchkhal and Inland Container Depot be constructed in Tatopani region.

Shrestha said that since China has brought railway link up to Lhasa, Nepali traders should take advantage of the link. ■

KRISHNA PRASAD BHATTARAI

A Lone Voice of Conscience

Former prime minister and founder of Nepali Congress Krishna Prasad Bhattarai shows moral courage by solidly backing national reconciliation

By KESHAB POUDEL

Although the founding member of Nepali Congress and former prime minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai is out of political mainstream, a political statement issued by him defending B.P. Koirala's national reconciliation being as relevant as ever generated ripples in Nepali politics. The response came from left to right and leaders of his centrist party also reacted – showing that his statement in defense of BP's view counted.

Despite organizing nationwide program to mark 94th birth anniversary of legendary leader BP Koirala by two factions of Nepali Congress - which are in the process of unification by dumping BP's ideology and political stand - the political debates centered around Bhattarai.

Prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala, under whose direction party's central committee prepared an election manifesto to go for federal republic, avoided all formal programs organized to mark the birth anniversary of BP but he showed his weakness towards his legendary brother and mentor BP Koirala. Addressing an international conference in the capital, prime minister Koirala, who dumped political stand of his legendary brother, remembered BP as a pioneer of tree plantation.

"BP Koirala is pioneer in idea of nature conservation. This is the reason he promoted the cause to plant trees," said Koirala, speaking at a program on environment conservation.

Although Congress founder member Bhattarai, who is at his last leg of life, has hardly spoken about BP's national reconciliation, this time when BP's ideals

of national reconciliation is under a serious threat, Bhattarai has demonstrated his courage by opposing his party's new proposal to go for republic.

Although a strong group including Koirala's daughter Sujata Koirala, Sunil Kumar Bhandari had opposed the party's decision to dump BP's stand on monarchy, their opinion did not count as much as Bhattarai's statement. "As BP said, the country still has utility of monarchy," said Sujata. "Declaring republic will not guarantee democracy. There is majority in Nepali Congress who are in favor of my stand."

Issuing his statement on the eve of 94th birth anniversary of BP Koirala, octogenarian leader Bhattarai stressed the need for national unity to safeguard Nepali nationalism, independence and democracy.

"Let us be guided by our lessons of the past and collective thoughts for future and not by any thing else including republicanism," he said.

"Late BP Koirala and Ganesh Man Singh came back to Nepal from India in 1976 ending

their eight year long exile with the call for national reconciliation. They were clear in their minds that a prolonged difference between the King and democratic forces will weaken the Nepali nationalism, independence and democracy. Besides it will also weaken great economic opportunities. Policy of national reconciliation and spirit it represented is valid even today as it was before. I have no doubt that this will remain valid for quite some time to come."



Bhattarai: Conscience keeper

"Let us not destroy our history and legacy, which generations together have built," said Bhattarai.

As it was expected, Bhattarai's statement generated a new wave in country's politics." It is an outdated statement and against the wish of the people," said CPN-UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal.

Nepali Congress leaders, too, reacted against the statement. "We were shocked to read Bhattarai's statement. Kishunji should have issued the statement fully understanding its consequences," said Nepali Congress leader Dr. Shekha Koirala. Congress leaders of republican fold Sushil Koirala, Ram Chandra Poudel and Narahari Acharya termed Bhattarai's statement as outmoded.

Whatever one can say, Bhattarai's statement has political meaning. "It is a highly conscious, highly moral statement of octogenarian political leader from sick bed. A step towards a wrong direction can spoil the whole achievements of life. Similarly, a right step at the right moment can immortalize a man in the pages of history," said a political analyst. "The opinion which Krishna Prasad Bhattarai

has expressed at this stage is neither influenced by the temptation for power nor out of vengeance against anybody. He fought for the country and democracy, which again has been reaffirmed by his statement.”

Stating that Nepal’s current transition needs a “safe landing, which is possible only through unity and reconciliation,” Bhattarai said, “Now it is high time to remember again that the monarchy truly acted as a unifying symbol of diverse religious, cultural, ethnic and political groups in a truly democratic set up.”

Bhattarai was with BP Koirala during his eight year long political detention from 1960 to 1968. After he was released from jail, BP went to India for medical check up and got involved with a new possibility for fighting for the restoration of democracy in Nepal for almost another eight years in exile.

“After termination of Vietnam War, BP visualized the South Asia being merged as a ‘Zone in Turmoil.’ Bifurcation of Pakistan into two and annexation of Sikkim by India had alarmed BP Koirala much regarding the future of Nepal also. After a serious analysis of situation, he made a decision to come back to Nepal and face any kind of repercussion for his past rebellion acts,” said the analyst.

BP Koirala was put into jail for some time but political situation took a new

turn. King Birendra put the party less Panchayat system into the referendum and he started assuming a role of an arbiter between two contesting political alternatives.

“Though the Panchayat system was approved by the verdict of 54 percent of the voters, but the minority in favor of multi party system was not neglected. Slowly and gradually, the political system was heading towards peaceful and constitutional accommodation of all the political forces. But, the transition was hindered by mysterious machination and a situation of confrontation was brought into play,” said the analyst.

It was the wisdom and tolerance of King Birendra who conceded power to the people and enhanced his acceptability and stature as high as any monarch of democratic societies.

Francis G. Hutchins, teacher of King Birendra, in his book Democratizing Monarchy, writes “as the great Shah ruler, Birendra seems certain to be remembered as a pivotal figure in the history of Nepal.”

“At this critical juncture of history, all those contribution of a noble visionary politician like BP Koirala and wise and tolerant monarch like King Birendra are at a critical stake. There was nobody in the present day politics of stature of Krishna Prasad. Bhattarai who could vibrate the nation by his moral and conscious appeal compared to the

contribution of his whole life. This one statement at this critical period of this country may be considered as superseding all his previous contribution,” said the analyst.

“Bhattarai, a person of high political image, neither has family nor his own abode for living. He is passing his days with the help of some dedicated sympathizers. What Bhattarai has said is neither a lust for power nor a vanity or vengeance against any. He has stirred a political opinion which may be recalled all the time by the posterity in Nepal,” said the analyst.

At a time when Nepal has been passing through a very critical phase of its history, BP’s national reconciliation is more relevant now than in the past as there is a need for reconciliation among all the country’s forces including monarchy to bring back Nepal in the right track from present chaos. This is what Bhattarai’s statement is all about.

“Before B.P.’s death, in his last public meeting B.P. had expressed anguish over the populist mode of the politicians calling himself Lone Brihaspati- that means a lone voice of conscience. On the same spiritual level, his political colleague K.P. Bhattarai has again appeared as a long person of conscience among the politician of the country,” said the analyst. ■

KP Bhattarai’s Statement

The country is passing through an unprecedented crisis. Any such crisis will demand collective wisdom and dedication on the part of the people so that it does not sweep away everything that makes Nepal. Political parties, especially the Nepali Congress, have equally crucial role to play as the true representative of the people as well as the country. As a founding member of NC, I am proud to state that our party has always stood in favor of nationalism, independence and democracy against all odds right from the day it was founded.

Late BP Koirala, Ganesh Man Singh

came back to Nepal from India in 1976 ending the 8-year-old exile with the call for national reconciliation. They were clear in their minds that a prolonged difference between the King and the democratic forces will weaken the Nepali nationalism, independence and democracy. Besides, it will also weaken great economic opportunities. Policy of National Reconciliation and spirit it represented is valid even today as it was before. I have no doubt that this will remain valid for quite some time to come.

Let us not destroy our history and legacy which generations together have

built. Now it is high time to remember again that the monarchy truly acted as a unifying symbol of diverse religious, cultural, ethnic and political groups in a truly democratic set up. Nepal’s transition needs a safe landing, which is possible only through unity and reconciliation.

Politics of hatred and denial dictated by undemocratic desires of rebels will only sow the seeds of disintegration of country and it is our responsibility to defeat those desires together.

Let us be guided by our lessons of the past and collective thoughts for future and not by anything else including republicanism.

September 9, 2007

Book Review

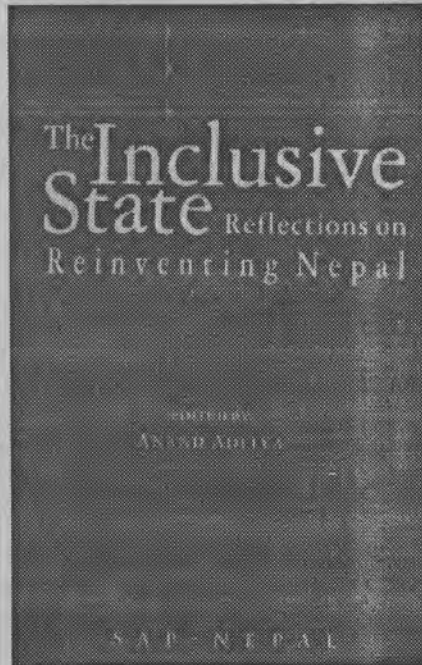
On Inclusive Democracy

By Madhav K. Rimal

"The Inclusive State – Reflections on Reinventing Nepal" is a collection of essays by fifty-three authors and published by SAP-Nepal. The book is edited by Anand Aditya and Anand is a good and kind friend. When he asked me to review the book a few days back, I could not deny him even though reviewing books is not my cup of tea. Most of the essays have focused on inclusive democracy and inclusive state! The adjectives used before Democracy and State seem to be redundant to me as inclusiveness is the intrinsic characteristic of both democracy and state. Both democracy and state have to treat all its citizens with total equality. If any part of the society or any group of citizens is denied equality or equal opportunities, it must be the fault of the administrations and people in authority, not of democracy or state. In such cases of lapses, the administrations and rulers must be punished appropriately. Failure to take action against the wrong doers would clearly manifest the impotency of the governed. And in a society like ours where governments are callously indifferent to their obligations, the small intelligentsia must have shouldered greater responsibility in educating and leading the overwhelming illiterate and exploited masses. Our intellectuals have not only miserably failed in their pious responsibility but have behaved and are still behaving like absolutely self-centered, only running after the power

brokers for personal gains.

Democracy must always be an open society. And in an open society, there can be no inclusiveness or exclusiveness. Since there has been no democracy ever, not even after the spring revolution of 2006, a very peculiar situation has emerged in Nepal. Blatant exploitations and discriminations by the administrations and rulers for more than two hundred and forty years have, indeed, viciously denied a considerably larger part of the populace equality and equal opportunities. They badly need



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 Reinventing Nepal**

Edited by:
Anand Aditya
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SAP Nepal

redressing with top priority. But inclusiveness is not the remedy. Because inclusiveness, if regularized by law, is apt to divide the nation into smaller compartments each jealous of the rest. The need of the hour is not division but cohesion – to rivet the whole country into one unit that is Nepali, irrespective of caste or ethnicity. This is the only way to preserve our nationalism, national integrity and national pride intact. Moreover, the inclusive principles do have the tendency to generate the concept of inferiority complex, which would directly infringe upon the dignity and pride of man.

It is quite surprising to see that most of the authors have not thought it pertinent to mention even the behavior of the incumbent eight party government and the present political situation in the country. Some even have forsaken objectivity and smack of spite and vengeance. If the one hundred four years of Rana regime was guilty of personalized administration, extreme exploitation and corruption, the end of Rana regime nearly six decades back has given birth to even dangerous element of 'quislingism.' And in the name of democracy they are practicing unbridled authoritarianism. Extolling the inclusive democracy, most of the authors have overlooked even to mention that the SPAM government is neither constitutional, democratic nor inclusive, as they would like to call it. Rather, it is most pliant, authoritarian and directed by remote control, which has contributed to lower our country in the estimation of the world. While most of the writers are quite eminent, even though, at times, self-centered, there are couple of chaffs, too. However, reading the book gives an idea about the state of mind and character of Nepali intelligentsia. ■

German Support For Peace Process

The government of Germany has provided assistance worth US\$ 7 million for the peace process in Nepal.

The GTZ has launched the new project "Support of measures enhancing the peace process".

The new project is aimed at improving the living conditions in the cantonments and the surrounding communities.

"The new project is only one in a series of activities with which the German Government supports the peace process in Nepal. All together, Germany has made available assistance amounting to more than US\$ 7 million for the peace process in Nepal. Of that amount, more than US\$ 6 million is fresh money on top of our regular development program," said German Ambassador to Nepal Franz Ring, speaking at a program to announce the launching of new GTZ project.

Ambassador Ring said that the German Government has been supporting the peace process from the very beginning. "One week after the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement, our governments agreed to start right away with the German assistance for the peace process relying on existing infrastructure of ongoing projects but also making available substantial additional funds," he said.

"The German development projects have been in a position to start providing assistance already since November 2006 in the areas of health services, medication and access roads, improving the sanitation in the Cantonments and the surrounding areas as well as organising surgical camps."

The projects are aimed at supporting the people in need and internally displaced people (IDPs) by improving their living conditions.

The German Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation provides civic and voter education, thus supporting the constituent assembly elections.

Briefing about the new GTZ project, he said, the project is an integral part of the Nepali government's peace and reconstruction policy as, among other things, expressed by the Nepali Peace Trust Fund policy.

For this project the German government has made available an additional amount of about US\$ 4 million.

"Focal areas are medical services for both, the combatants in the Cantonments and the people living in the surrounding wards. Promotion of skill development for reintegration is also part of the project's activities," he said.

"For bringing the peace process to its logical end, it is of utmost importance that the constituent assembly elections take place as scheduled in November 2007," he said, adding, that for allowing reasonably free and fair elections to take place, the security situation has to be improved considerably.

"Therefore Nepal needs the full commitment of all political parties to restore law and order," he said. The ambassador also welcomed recent agreements between the government and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum and Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities. "These agreements follow a good democratic tradition of compromise," he said. ■

BOOK

Catalogue Of Film Artistes

Yam Chaulagain's book is the first of its kind that records the profile of persons related with the entertainment world

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although history of Nepalese entertainment industry is about a century old, there is only a few books that have been written about persons involved in it. There are no records of involvement of personalities in the early days.

Thanks to the efforts of Chaulagain, there is now at least a record of persons involved in the entertainment industry in last few decades. From first Nepalese film Satya Harish Chandra to first Nepali singer, all have made immense contribution to carry Nepal's entertainment industry to the present shape.

"In an attempt to provide a glimpse of current Nepalese cinema, and which is part of Asian cinema's new flora, Yam Chaulagain is projecting this facet. This definitely inspires our vision and contribution towards our contemporary cinema and scenario," writes Prakash Sayami, film maker and film historian.

**Chalchitraka
Sarathi
(A Biographical
Collection)**

By:

**Yam Chaulagain
Published by:**

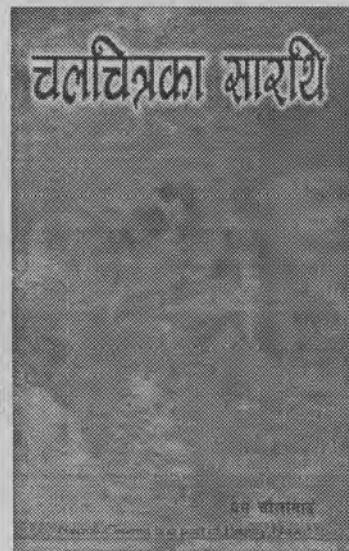
Yam Chaulagain

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Pages: 372



From popular singers Narayan Gopal to Taradevi and from Aruna Lama and director late Prakash Thapa to musician Gopal Yonjon, Chaulagain also has noted down the brief profile of new singers like Yam Baral, Devika Pradhan, Sapana Shree and Ram Krishna Dhakal.

All old and new film actors have been included in the book. Udit Naryan Jha, Deepa Jha, lyricist Deepak Kharel and Dinesh Adhikary are also included in the biography.

The book is of interest for those who want to do research and write the history about Nepalese entertainment industry. Chaulagain's efforts are highly commendable and noteworthy. ■

Need To Harness Economic Power To Attain Twin Goals - Biodiversity Conservation & Poverty Alleviation

-By **JULIA MARTON-LEFEVRE**, Director General IUCN

For this particular important regional Conservation Forum, there could not be a better venue than Nepal where we are constantly reminded of this country's rich natural and cultural heritage, some of which is exemplified by the many World Heritage sites in this small country as well as in the more modest, but equally impressive sites all around us. Nepal also has demonstrated leadership in community-based natural resources management, in establishing a network of protected areas. We will all be enriched by learning more about these experiences.

I would like to, therefore, welcome all participants on behalf of IUCN as well as to profusely thank the government of Nepal for hosting this meeting and thank our IUCN staff in Asia and particularly in Nepal for having already looked after us so graciously.

Asia is one of IUCN's largest and most important regions. Equal to its size is the number of challenges the region faces. Rapid population growth and economic development have generated huge demands for natural resources and energy; leading to tremendous pressure on eco-systems. The diversity of this vast region with its different needs, different levels of development, and varying availability of natural resources, arable land and water makes these challenges formidable.

An equally pressing issue for Asia is the rapidly rising inequalities between the rich and the poor. There is increasing concern within the region that the benefits of the region's spectacular growth have not been shared equally. The challenges Asia faces are worsened by the adverse affects of climate change, natural disasters and the emergence of diseases such as Avian influenza.

Indeed, we have just witnessed in Nepal and in neighboring India and Bangladesh, the worst floods the areas has experienced in four decades with resulting loss of thousands of lives; and the displacement of a large rural population, at least temporarily. In recent years, Asia has witnessed an increasing number of extreme weather events ranging from droughts to floods to tropical strong fires and landslides and sand storms. Many people ask whether these events are indicative to the times to come.

We see similar problems in the Himalayas which provide water to Asia's major rivers. According to scientists, the glaciers of the Himalayas are also retreating

and if this situation continues, it may threaten the livelihoods of millions of people in Nepal and neighboring countries, as the services we had taken for granted from eco-systems, such as flood control and water regulation are disputed.

Of course, Asia is not the only continent to be affected- the glaciers in the Swiss Alps are melting as consequence of global warming, and the list of examples is as long and spares no part of the world.

I remember so well the passionate plea made by a 13-year old girl, Severn Suzuki at the Rio Summit in 1992 where she talked about the fears of her generation about the future of the planet. She asked the elder statesman and officials, "Did you have to worry of these things when you were may age?" She emphasized what her parents and teachers preached: respect others, clean up the mess, do not harm other creatures; and then asked the leaders at the meeting, "Why do you go out and do things that you ask us not to do?"

Do we have good answers for her fifteen years since the Rio Summit which brought us the Conventions on Biological Diversity and on Climate Change? While we have made a lot of progress since then, we still have a long way to go to address the serious environmental and social concerns facing our planet.

This brings me to one of the most pressing issues of the 21st century, that is, the fight against poverty. Each of us is reminded every day of the close links between poverty and the environment. It is a paradox that some of the world's most biologically diverse areas are also home to some of the world's poorest people. Asia is an example of this paradox; it contains fabulously rich and diverse biodiversity and human cultures; it is the world's fastest growing economy, - yet at the same time it is home to some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities.

At the start of my career I was fortunate enough to spend time in a very economically poor rural community in Thailand. There I learned first hand that economic poverty does not mean cultural or biological poverty and I have seen with my own eyes how well-managed natural resources can help rural communities emerge from the misery of poverty.

The challenge now is to scale up the positive results of the past decades in areas such community management of forests and

water resources. The speed and depth of Asia's economic progress are unprecedented and we should be able to harness some of this economic power to ensure the twin goals of bio-diversity conservation and elimination of absolute poverty and hunger.

According to some predictions, by 2020 Asia will have dramatically transformed economically. However, many questions about the effect of such transformation on the rural poor, on Asia's rich cultures and on the region's wealth of biodiversity remain unanswered. We have a new term, 'Environment Poverty' to describe the phenomenon. As we make progress in poverty reduction in terms of income, we need to also take into account the possibility of generating a longer term poverty trap as a result of the unabated and increasing degradation of the environment. This situation is being further compounded by the effects of climate change and associated extreme weather events. The rapid and sustained exodus of rural poor to already congested cities is not a long term solution to poverty as ultimately our cities too depend on healthy ecosystems for food, water, timber and a vast range of other services.

Another development in the past few years is the increasing willingness of the private sector to address the same biodiversity issues that are of concern to us. Responsible business leaders are recognizing that their own prosperity depends very much on addressing issues of conservation. We need to seize this opportunity and help business become a positive force for conservation and social equity.

This meeting is an opportunity for the World Conservation Union's members and partners to examine how our 60-year old conservation organization can best contribute to today's environmental issues and address some of the underlying causes of environmental degradation such as climate change, the way we generate and use energy, the impact of poverty and security, and the links with the world markets and the private sector.

(Excerpts of the statement delivered at the inaugural of 4th Asia Regional Conservation Forum)



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