

अब... १* रु. १ मै बचत खाता



नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंक बढी ठन्डा बढी
नागरिकहरूमा बैंकिङ्ग सेवाको पहिलो अनुभव
पूर्व बानी बस्न सकोस भन्नाका लागि सजीव
प्रस्तुत गर्दछ... **मात्र रु.१ मा**
“आपनै बचत खाता”
सम्पूर्ण अन्तराष्ट्रिय स्तरको सेवा सुविधा सहित ।



जीवनका पहिला पलहरू देखिनै बचतको बानी
सुरक्षित भविष्यको लगानी ।।

CONTENTS

	Page
LETTERS	3
NEWS NOTES	4
BRIEFS	6
OPINION : Laxmi Thapa	7
POLITICS: Fall Of Titans	10
ECONOMY: Deficit Surges	11
OBSERVERS' REPORT: Clean Chit	17
ELECTION: Outside Perspective	20
REVIEW: More On Madhesh	22
QUOTE UNQUOTE/TRANSITION	23
ART: Depicting Violence	24



COVER STORY: Rise Of The Red The CA election results has formalised the rise of the red as the Maoists sweep the polls unexpectedly 12



THE PRIME MINISTER : 'Games They Played' A stunned prime minister sees a hidden hand in the poll setback to his party Page 9



FACE TO FACE: Chinese ambassador Zheng Xianglin speaks on the issue of anti-China demonstrations Page 18

SPOTLIGHT

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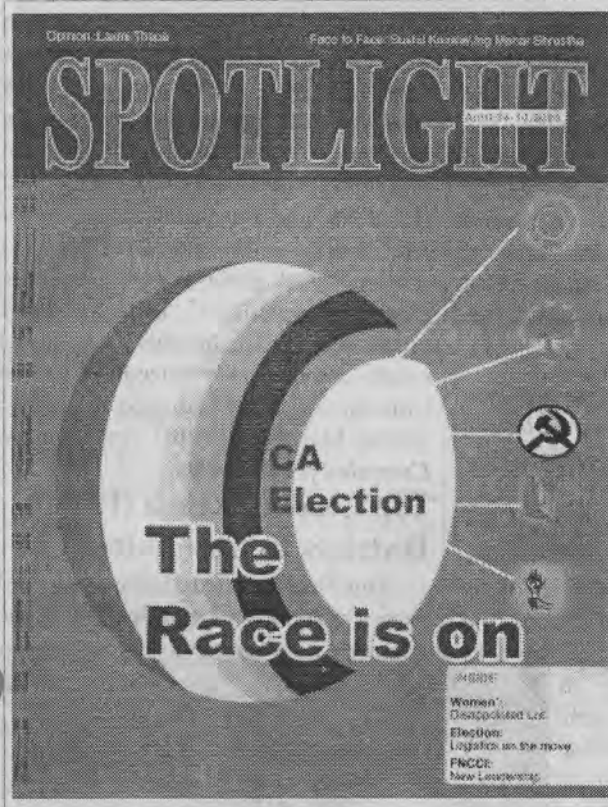
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The declared results of the polls to the constituent assembly have clearly shown that the people of Nepal want a revolutionary change. The Nepali Congress, the CPN (UML) and the three Panchayati Parties have alienated the Nepali people by their corrupt, selfish and anti-national behavior. Consequently, belying all speculations the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) has swept the polls and established itself as the repository of peoples' confidence and hopes. It is, indeed, a very big responsibility and can only be satisfactorily met by men and women who can rise above personal and partisan interests and work only in the interests of the country and the people. Since the fall of the Ranas nearly six decades backs, the various administrations that ruled the country have exploited the poor enriching themselves only. In the last two years, since April 2006, the SPA administration led by the Nepali Congress almost turned the country into a vassal state. This was not acceptable even to the uneducated and poor Nepalis. The peoples' mandate given to the SPA has been withdrawn and transferred to one party- the CPN-(Maoists). As such this is a trial period for the Maoists. They cannot and should not associate with the totally discredited and rejected parties. With the death of the three Panchayati parties, the Panchayati remains too have been totally obliterated. Whatever small success the Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML have made in the polls is because of their role in the government. Otherwise, they too might have met the same fate like the three Panchayati parties.

The Maoists have been given the sole mandate to form the government that will help the constituent assembly to draft and enact the country's first peoples' constitution. Drafting a peoples' constitution is not only an historic occasion but comes only once in a country's life. It is not a party's constitution and as such the party government must liberally associate all wise, learned and patriotic men and women from all sections of the society, whether political or non-political. The people also expect the Maoist government will restore the pride and dignity of the country and bring the nation's foreign policy back to track. The Maoists are expected to give a cleaner administrations by rooting out corruptions and booking all corrupt politicians and bring them to justice. The poor people groaning under unimaginable miseries expect some immediate relief. Since the prime duty of the Maoist administration, at the moment, would be to bring the peoples' constitution into play at the earliest, we do trust they would call the constituent assembly without losing time, establish peace and rule of law in the country, not be carried away by their unprecedented success in the polls and also will be able to set an example how a real people's government should work for the people. While congratulating them on their brilliant success and assuring them of our cooperation in the nation building task, we would also like to advise them not to forget the simple Nepali adage," The tiger that can kill you, can kill me too."

Madhav K. Rimal
Madhav K. Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Final Stage

After nine years, Nepalese are on final stage to vote their candidates who will rule and draft the constitution for them. The country has seen all kinds of experiments in the last few years. This experiment of holding the elections for Constituent Assembly has historic importance. Nepalese people who always see election as a festival are now eagerly waiting its results.

Jashmina Shrestha
London via-email

going to open Pandora's Box but the question is who will have the magic to control them. In the name of constitution making, Nepal is going to face very severe political instability. This will create more problems to both of our neighbors. Although it is a choice of India to fulfill its security interest by making Nepal unstable, the recent remarks of Chinese ambassador to Nepal have shown that it is not going to be easy time for all concerned political forces in Nepal. As the forces of anarchy and destruction already exist in Nepal, anyone can use them to create trouble. I don't know how the new constitution will be written and whether it will address Nepal's political, ethnic and other problems.

Ghanshyam Khatiwada
Via-email

A New Nepal

We think the CPN-Maoist have performed a miracle. The way they have dug the graves of the nearly sixty odd years old political parties of Nepal has not surprised us. It should have happened a few years earlier. The Nepali Congress and the CPN(UML) are just power hungry parties not hesitating even to sacrifice country's interests if it served their purpose. Recently, they had reduced the country to almost a client state. Now since the Maoists have cut them down to their size, we NRNs living thousands miles away from our land of birth, do hope and believe that the new political party that has emerged as the strongest political force will take steps to bring back Nepal's lost image and the poor country to a new world where all Nepalis will be offered equal opportunities to take the country towards the cherished goal of a New Nepal.

Mahindra Bhatt and friends, USA
Via-email

Biased View

Like all other newspapers, Spotlight also seems to be against Maoists as it projects Maoists as evil. In its three previous interviews, all were directed against the Maoists. As a good English magazine, you need to publish balanced views. Of course, Maoists might have committed some mistakes but they are not only to blame. Nepali Congress and CPN-UML too are using all the power, money, muscle and media to influence the voters but you are publishing only one side of stories. Maoists are democratic, non-violent and peaceful as all other Nepalis. I hope you will give due respect to Maoist party and bring their point of view to the readers living around the world. Everyone knows which foreign force is behind the big media houses.

Dhan Bahadur Rai
Dubai via-email

Coming Conflict

I agree with you that Nepal will have to face major conflicts and political problems in coming days. As Nepal's two neighbors have already expressed their concern over growing foreign money

coming from abroad to launch programs against their interest, Nepal's coming government has to face all kinds of problems along with drafting a new constitution. The rise of number of Madrassa and Muslim population are matters of security concern for Nepal just like the rise of Tibetan monasteries has already alarmed Chinese authorities who recently faced violence in streets of Lhasa. In a rare press conference, Chinese ambassador to Nepal clearly pointed out the need to take more severe actions against Tibetan refugees who are involved in anti-China activities. At a time when almost all Nepali NGOs, political parties and other such right organizations have been receiving huge amount of money from western INGOs, it is very difficult for Nepalese authorities to crack down this kind of act. More Nepal's neighbors show concern, worse situations the country will have to face. The time for Nepal is to act carefully protecting its own interest.

Simal Rai
Manbawan

Pandora's Box

Whether one likes it or not, Nepal is

The previous issue of Spotlight could not be published due to closure of printing facility due to CA election. We apologize for the inconvenience caused to our readers and patrons - ED

King, PM, CEC Urge People To Vote

On the eve of the election, King Gyanendra Wednesday (April 9), called on all Nepalis, who are eligible to vote in the April 10 elections to participate in the CA. In a message he delivered he has urged Nepalis to exercise democratic franchise in a free and fair environment maintaining harmony and unity in the crucial polls. King Gyanendra added that he has always wanted the country to prosper through democratic means as per the decision of the people. "Beloved countrymen, it has been our only wish that the country progresses and prospers according to the sovereign decision of the people through the democratic process and that the nation's existence, independence and integrity come under threat in no situation," the king said in the statement. "We request all Nepalese citizens who are eligible to vote to exercise their democratic right in the April 10 Constituent Assembly elections in a free, fair and fear-free environment, maintaining the mutual harmony and unity," the statement further added. Likewise, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Bhojraj Pokharel has urged people to come out and vote freely on Thursday. Addressing a press meet, Wednesday evening, CEC Pokharel also informed that all kinds of arrangements have been completed for the April 10 Constituent Assembly (CA) election. "I appeal to the people to come out and vote on Thursday," he said, adding that the right to secret balloting would be completely respected. Amid sporadic incidents of violence in different parts of the country, Pokharel said that overall security situation was satisfactory. Prime Minister President Girija Prasad Koirala Wednesday called on all Nepalis to exercise their franchise to vote freely from intimidation and doubts with confidence that their votes



will remain secret. In his special message address to the people on the eve of the crucial Constituent Assembly (CA) elections today, PM Koirala said that the CA elections will open doors for Nepal to enter a new era. Similar messages and appeals have been made by Maoist chairman Prachanda, UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal, among others. *Compiled from reports*

Gold Price Picks Up

Gold price started picking up again this week as global oil price touched \$110 per barrel and American dollar remained weak. Gold price touched Rs 19,550 per 10 gram — Rs 22,803 per tola (11.664 gram) — in the domestic market on Friday, the closing day of the week. According to Nepal Gold and Silver Dealers' Association's (NEGOSIDA), the price of precious yellow metal has gone up due to weakening of dollar. "The price rise in global crude prices that touched \$110 per barrel that was \$903 last Friday, slow down of US economy, weak global stock market and further weakening of dollar has pushed the price of gold up," says NEGOSIDA. Similarly, silver price has also witnessed a bullish trend this week. It increased by Rs 4.50 to close at Rs 386 per 10 gram on Friday from the opening price of Rs 381.50 on Sunday, in the domestic market. *Leading dailies report*

Nepse Slowdown

Once 1064-point-Nepse has not fallen below 700 points though it has reached as low as 702 points. This week Nepse witnessed only one session of trading on Sunday due to Constituent Assembly elections holiday from Monday throughout the week. However, Nepse has in one-day trading this week recorded a growth of 16.55 points to 746.69 on Sunday — the first and the last day of trading for this week — from the last week's closing of 730.14 points. *Leading dailies report*

Singh The First Winner

The vice president of Nepali Congress (NC) Prakash Man Singh has become the first winner of the

Constituent Assembly (CA) election. He won the election in Kathmandu -1 constituency by garnering over 11,254 votes. His win has not yet been formally announced by the Election Commission yet. He defeated Unified Marxist Leninist (UML's) Pradeep Nepal, who bagged 5486 and Maoists' Ram Man Shrestha who bagged 3898 votes. The vote counting result of Kathmandu 1 constituency came out this morning. Its results came quickly since the Election Commission (EC) had used Electronic Voting Machines in that constituency. *Compiled from reports*

Top Leaders Reach Home

Districts To Cast Vote

Top leaders of different political parties including NC president and Prime



Minister Girija Prasad Koirala have reached their respective home districts to cast their votes in the constituent assembly polls Thursday (April 10). PM Koirala will cast his votes at a polling centre in Adarsh Secondary School located in Biratnagar 9 under Constituency No 7 of Morang. Senior NC leader and former PM Sher Bahadur Deuba will cast his votes in Dadeldhura district where he has been camping for the last three weeks. NC acting president and candidate from Banke-3 Sushil Koirala will cast his votes at the Forest Office polling centre in Nepalgunj. Maoist chairman Prachanda, contesting from Rolpa-2 and Kathmandu-10, has reached Chitwan along with his family to cast his votes at the polling centre in Laxmi Higher secondary School located in Bharatpur Municipality-6. Senior Maoist leader Dr Baburam Bhattarai will

cast his votes in Khoplang-4 of Gorkha. RJP chairman and former PM Surya Bahadur Thapa, entrenched in home district Dhankuta for the past one week, will cast his votes at the polling centre in Ram Secondary School in Gaurigaon of Muga VDC under Constituency No 2 of the district. RPP chairman Pashupati Shumsher Rana will cast his ballot in the seat that he is contesting in Sindhupalchowk district. *Compiled from reports*

Govt Assures Of Full Security

Expressing sadness over the incidents in Dang and Surkhet district in which at least ten people lost their lives, the government has pledged an investigation into the two incidents. Issuing a press statement, the Home Ministry said the government would probe these incidents and bring the guilty to justice. Home Minister Situala said that security situation will be bolstered for the election. He said that the government has made all preparations for the election. Meanwhile, following the killing of UML candidate Rishi Prasad Sharma in Surkhet-1, the Election Commission has decided to postpone the poll in the constituency till April 19. *Compiled from reports*

EC Initiates Action; NC Says Violations Of Code Continue

The Election Commission (EC) has taken initiative towards taking action against the violators of the election code of conduct by issuing circulars to the concerned offices of the election officers and the local administration. The EC has also sought clarification from the concerned political parties regarding the violation of the code of conducts. In a regular press briefing Sunday, the EC spokesperson Laxman Bhattarai said that the EC has sought clarification from the election offices on eight incidents. Meanwhile, Nepali Congress (NC) has said that despite last week's pact inked by top three leaders, the incidents of violation of code of conduct have continued. "It is unfortunate that such incidents have continued after the

understanding among three top leaders." said Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat, chief campaign coordinator of the NC, at a press meet, Sunday (Apr 6). "In last three weeks, there have been 51 incidents of attack against our cadres and leaders. Most of them were carried out by the Maoists," he said. Dr. Mahat also regretted what he termed as attempts by Maoists to mislead the people by threatening that they would know whom they vote. "The right of the people to secret voting must be upheld," he said. Dr. Mahat said his party was committed to play by the rule of the game. "We are prepared to work together with other parties even after the election," he said. In another incident, senior leader of NC, Sher Bahadur Deuba has expressed fears that unruly activities by the Maoists were posing as obstruction against the Constituent Assembly (CA) election at the last moment. "Maoist chief Prachanda says one thing, his workers do quite the opposite. What is this happening? I cannot understand. If attacks against other parties continue, the election could be stalled even at the last moment," said former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, at a press meet in Dhangadhi, Sunday. *Compiled from reports*

UNMIN Urges Parties To Ensure Secrecy Of Ballot

United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) has urged the parties to "confirm and support the Election Commission's assurance to voters of absolute secrecy of the ballot", also suggesting them to put aside partisan interests in order not to risk endangering the election and the peace process. "Voters should cast their ballots without fear of their vote being known to anyone, and without regard to violence, intimidation or inducements," UNMIN stated in its third report on the conditions for the 10 April constituent assembly election. UNMIN's recommendation to the parties to respect the secrecy of the voting process comes amid reports of intimidation of voters, particularly by Maoists, who are even 'rumored' to have terrorized the voters in some places by saying that the ballot boxes are fitted with

video camera and that those not voting for the Maoists would be identified and punished later. The five-page report released Sunday (Apr 6) said that though the election campaigning has been peaceful in some constituencies, incidents of violence have continued unabated in other constituencies. Despite some cases of violence and human rights abuses, UNMIN report noted that momentum for the CA election continued during the past week. "Perhaps the most positive feature of the last week was the restraint and responsibility demonstrated in the face of the deliberately provocative bombing of a mosque in Biratnagar on 29 March, which caused the deaths of two persons and injuries to others." Furthermore, UNMIN also suggested the Seven-Party Alliance to confirm publicly its intention to work together after the election and to reach out to the wider political forces to ensure that the future political course would be an inclusive one. *Compiled from reports*

Number Of Centers Needing Re-Polling Reaches 106

The Election Commission (EC) has further revised the number of polling centers requiring re-polling, on Saturday (Apr 12), to 106. "106 centers of 21 constituencies of 12 districts will have to have re-polling," said Laxman Bhattarai, spokesperson of Election Commission (EC). The EC had said on Thursday, immediately after the polls, that



there would be re-polling in 33 centers. On Friday, they had said the re-polling will be required in 60 centers, which again has been increased to 75 on Saturday. The EC has said that re-polling is being conducted in places where the polling were either cancelled or suspended due to violations of election laws. The EC has also announced date of re-polling in many of these centers. In total, there were 20,888 polling centers across the country. *Compiled from reports* ■



People cast votes on CA election day

KING GYANENDRA HAS SAID HE IS SATISFIED by the enthusiastic participation of Nepalese people in the Constituent Assembly elections. "The enthusiastic participation of the Nepalese people in the Constituent Assembly elections, through which they have emphatically reiterated their firm resolve not to compromise the nation's existence, independence and integrity under any circumstance, is a source of satisfaction for us," the King says in his customary New Year's Day message. "Along with peace and democracy, may the New Year inspire us all to uphold our legendary wisdom in ensuring that our national pride, its distinctive values and identity remain uppermost," he has further said in the message. His message has come at a time when the parties have decided that the first meeting of the elected CA will remove monarchy. "On the occasion of the advent of the New Year 2065, we extend best wishes for peace, good health and prosperity of all Nepalese, living in the country and abroad." Nepalese are celebrating New Year 2065 on Sunday.

PRIME MINISTER GIRIJA PRASAD KOIRALA has congratulated all Nepalis for making the constituent assembly election a success. The Prime Minister said in a statement that the success of the election has materialized six-decade-old aspiration of the country. The octogenarian leader added that the success of the election has "shouldered additional responsibility on us to usher the country in a new, progressive era." This responsibility should be fulfilled on the basis of understanding and reconciliation, he said, thanking the

international community for its support for the success of the historic election. Maoist chairman Prachanda also hailed the people "for establishing their greatness in the world" by giving a fitting reply to curiosity and doubts by helping hold the CA election in a grand manner. In a statement, Prachanda said his party greets and salutes patience, sacrifice and initiative taken by the people during the election to ensure epoch-making change and sustainable peace. The Maoist chairman said his party feels special joy and pride over the success of the election as the Maoists had made great sacrifices and exercised restraint from the time of the People's War to the peace process and to the election campaign. Warning that reactionary forces may hatch conspiracies, he called on people to remain alert until the election results come out and a new constitution is drafted. General secretary of the CPN-UML Madhav Kumar also congratulated the Nepalis for turning out in huge numbers to cast votes. "Your enthusiastic presence has simultaneously rejected the armed groups that wanted to give continuity to violence and murders and the royalist force that wanted to impose feudal autocracy, and has accepted our common agenda for peace and drastic reforms," Nepal said. Stating that the election was by and large peaceful, Nepal demanded that re-polling be conducted in 91 places, where "attempts were made to defeat his party."

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA has hailed CA election as a "welcome and historic step" towards realizing the aspirations of the people of Nepal for a democratic future. The spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs of India issued a statement in New Delhi terming the election as a "happy outcome" which is a "product of the determination of the people of Nepal, with significant contributions by the political parties and the Election Commission of Nepal." The statement further said that the Constituent Assembly provides a platform for the people of Nepal to determine the manner of their governance and their future. "As always, India will stand by the people of Nepal in the major tasks of democratization and development that lie ahead while building a stable, prosperous and peaceful Nepal," the statement added.

CNI HAS ASKED THE GOVERNMENT to provide incentives for Nepali vegetable ghee industry. CNI's request came after the Indian government's waiver of import tax on vegetable ghee's raw materials last week. With the waiver, Nepali industry will be less competitive in the Indian market, states a CNI press release. CNI has asked the government to initiate process to annul quota system imposed on exports, Rs 1.5 percent canalising fee and different taxes and fees being levied by the state governments in India. Earlier, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and Nepal Chambers of Commerce (NCC) have also urged the government to reduce the import tax on vegetable ghee industry's raw material. "If it is not reduced, recent decision of reducing import tax on raw material for vegetable ghee in India will badly hurt Nepali vegetable ghee industry," they said. ■

GRAND UNIFICATION OF HIMALAYAN REGION

Role of Bhakti Thapa

•Mrs Laxmi Thapa

Bhakti Thapa had laid down his life in the battlefield at Deothal on 16 April, 1815 fighting against the British, which had already established itself as the world's most important colonial power. Bhakti Thapa became a legend even in the eyes of British historians. One of the historians CB Khanduri writes quoting various contemporary British historians "The euphemism of the BRAVEST OF THE BRAVES had been used by Napoleon for Marshal Ney, whose bravery during the retreat from Moscow in 1812 was one of the highest. BRAVE LES BRAVE, said Napoleon of him. British then used this citation for the Gurkhas during and after the Anglo-Nepal War. **Such was the bravery shown by BHAKTI THAPA that the next legend of the BRAVEST OF THE BRAVES had been created on the day - 16 April, 1815 at Deothal.**"

The most important contribution of Bhakti Thapa was his great role in the establishment of present day Nepal in general and the creation of the vast Himalayan state capable to challenge the British attempt to expand their empire in the South Asia in particular. The following excerpt from the *Sainik Itihash* based on the book of Vikramjit Harshat (History of Nepal, V.V. Research Institute, Punjab 1970) clearly explains it:

"Until there was life in the body of Bhakti Thapa Nepal's territory was in a state of great expansion. Soon after his death the Great Nepal crumbled."

Campaign to Build Great Nepal

In the late 1780s the campaign to build the Great Nepal appeared to end in failure. The forces of Nepal and Jumla were poised for head on confrontation. According to Hamilton the Nepalese force was no match to the strength of the large Jumla force of that time so an outright attack against the Jumla force would have been extremely bloody, and it could even end up sadly. Hamilton writes the stalemate continued for more than two years. At the end of this stalemate period Bhakti Thapa entered into the unification campaign in 1789 and helped to score a swift victory, that opened the door to grand unification of the Himalayan region.

In the first major performance itself to unite the Himalayan region Bhakti Thapa demonstrated his exceptionally brilliant skill in launching a very successful operation under the most adverse condition that was sure to astonish anyone. He changed the

strategy of the predecessors and led the Jumla operation from the difficult north route. The result was a swift victory and the life of many people was also saved. A letter sent by the king highly commends Bhakti Thapa for the skill displayed in successful accomplishment of the Jumla operation. The letter also cautions Bhakti Thapa not to advance further without completing the process of consolidation over the entire newly added territory. The capital appeared to be gripped by fear that further advance to the west would be very difficult and also risky. It was clearly explained in the letter to Bhakti Thapa that the whole operation would be in a mess if further advance is continued without fully completing the task of consolidation. It implied that the operation to extend the territory of Nepal further to the west would have to be suspended for next two to three years to complete the task of consolidation. However, Bhakti Thapa appeared to be too eager to advance swiftly to the west. Immediately after the unification of Jumla Bhakti Thapa shifted his attention to the west to integrate with renewed vigor and determination new territories into the Great Nepal despite the warning of the Capital against

such move. Poet *Jayaratnakaran* of that period has described in one of his books how Bhakti Thapa himself had led the operation to integrate Doti into the Great Nepal by defeating the king of Doti.

Bhakti Thapa Became Supreme Leader

In the 1790s, the effort to unite the Himalayan region had been greatly intensified. Nepal spared no efforts and resources to accomplish this historic mission. The process of unification had gone ahead at an exceptionally rapid pace. At the height of this unification campaign Bhakti Thapa was the chief commander and the administrator of the entire territory to the west of the Chepa-Marshangdi. At that time the western boundary of Nepal had extended up to the Jamuna river. Unfortunately, soon after, the unification campaign of the Great Nepal came to a complete halt due to political turmoil in the capital Kathmandu.

The next phase of the unification campaign began in early 1800s. Nepal's western boundary had extended beyond the Sutlaz river in course of this phase of campaign. Bhakti Thapa had played very important role in this phase of campaign also.

Kingdom of Kangra was the main obstacle to grand unification of the Himalayan region. Bhakti Thapa had completely routed the army of the Kangra in the battle fought at Tehra in Punjab. Kind Sansar Chand of Kangra had fled from Tehra with his remaining force to take refuge in the Kangra fort.

Confrontation With British

Continued expansion of the Great Nepal was seen at that time by the Great Britain as the biggest threat to realization of their dream to convert the whole of the South Asia into their colony. So the Great Britain declared war on Nepal in 1814. British invasion had started even before the war was officially declared. The war continued for three consecutive calendar years.

The War

The British began preparation for the war from the time when F.R.

Hastings- Earl of Moira landed in India as Governor General and Commander-in-Chief in 1813. The actual declaration of war against Nepal is recorded

as 1 November, 1814, though the war began from middle of October. British force had marched into Nepal across a frontier of more than 1500 km to attack at several points at the same time. The eastern British flank was moving north from the Teesta area whereas the farthest western flank from the Sutlej river area. It was virtually a modern type warfare extended over a period of three calendar years and necessitating to protect the entire region bordering the enemy held territory. The British invasion force, in comparison with Nepalese, had absolute superiority in cavalry, pioneers, and at least the superiority of 10 times in infantry and 100 times in artillery. They also had the advantage of maneuverability in movement of their fighting force.

The British was expecting a blitz-krieg victory. It is said that the Governor General Hastings had planned to win the war in one mighty sweep in one to two months in end 1814 but certainly before the Christmas. He was badly mistaken in his assessment. We Nepalese fought very bravely. In early months of the war the initial British invasion was completely beaten off. The British rule in India was at a risk of falling apart. Unfortunately at that time the Sikhs and Marathas did not join Nepal in liberating the whole of the South Asian Continent from the grip of the European domination. British army had at their disposal virtually unlimited resources from the Nepalese perspective. They continued to press Nepal all across the frontier that stretched over a distance of more than 1500 km. Nepalese resources were being sharply depleted. There

was not any chance to be replenished. So the ability of the Nepalese force to defend the territory under their control was steadily declining. They were forced to pull back. There was breakdown in control and command system. Towards the middle of the 1815 Amar Singh Thapa, chief of the Nepalese force fighting in the western front was confined within a small area of the Malaun fort

Deothal Battle

Towards the sunset of the April 15th evening Bhakti Thapa and the army units under him arrived at the Malaun fort from their station at Surajgarh without being noticed by the British army units scattered around the Malaun fortress.

The following day in the morning Bhakti Thapa at the age of 74 led a kamikaze type counterattack against

the British force entrenched at Deothal. Historians have presented the description of this battle at great length. It was 3.15 a.m. when a force of 400 under Bhakti Thapa marched out of the Malaun fort, to a slow but steady beat of drums. The British column under Thompson

had taken position at Deothal on reverse slopes. The cannons of 6 pounders were properly concealed. There were two Indian battalions, the Grenadiers companies of the Light Battalions and some 1000 Irregulars. The British strength was up to about 3,500 troops and weapons.

Bhakti Thapa and his followers in the counterattack appeared to have vowed to fight to the death. Bhakti Thapa had even handed his infant grandson in the custody of the Amar Singh Thapa just before going to the battlefield. It was a bloody battle. It would not be wrong to visualize that the Khukri charge and the battle cry of the Nepalese fighters might have shaken the enemies with fear. RP Ochterlony, the author of "Sketches Of The Goorka War" has written. A body of Gorkhas advancing to charge bears no resemblance to a European column. Several huge trumpets putting up a harsh but stirring noise, set the multitude in motion who, except some carry shields, grasping each a matchlock in his left hand and a broad sword in his right, rush on, disregarding all regularity, very like a pack of hounds in full cry.

Bhakti Thapa laid down his life in the battlefield. Every one who fought from the Nepalese side was either killed or wounded. According to one account the British casualties of dead and wounded in Deothal battle were 384 as against 390 Nepalese casualties - almost a ratio of one to one, under the most adverse conditions to the Nepalese. ■



Prachanda (Centre) : Maoist wave

MAOIST WAVE

Red Alert

The electoral outcome has left many key stakers in a flux

By SUSHIL SHARMA

I am amazed too," Maoist chief Prachanda told prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala when he called on him at his Baluwatar residence on Sunday.

The reaction was on the unexpectedly strong showing of the Maoists in the constituent assembly elections.

Prachanda, accompanied by Baburam Bhattarai, pleaded for continued "cooperation" and alliance as

the Maoists looked all set to lead the new government.

Koirala was non-committal. He is under tremendous pressure from within the Nepali Congress to stay away from a Maoist-led government.

Some reports suggested that the Maoists wanted the veteran democratic leader as a ceremonial head of state under a communist government.

Koirala is widely criticized for his

lust for power. But, in all probability, he is likely to shift back from the spacious Baluwatar official residence to the cozy room on the second floor of the Maharajgunj residence of the nephew Shashank Koirala.

Shashank incidentally is the only survivor in the Koirala clan's year-end electoral massacre.

The senior Koirala is still reeling under its shock. He has been pondering what went wrong.

Sources close to him say, Koirala felt "betrayed" by the powerful forces he did trust prior to the elections.

It was this trust that led the prime minister to brush aside last-minute suggestions from senior military officials to deploy the army in the polls.

According to sources, just a few days before the vote senior military officials had warned Baluwatar about "a certain Maoist victory" because "about a third of the voters had made up their mind only days before the elections — under duress."

That chunk of the voters made the all the difference to the final outcome.

The Maoist victory has shocked key international powers too. Having sensed gross miscalculations as the results began to come, some of them even thought of a last-minute "damage control".

Said a senior cabinet minister, they came up with the idea of creating a situation for a re-poll in at least 60 seats "to tame the Maoist upsurge."

Having found no takers, the idea was dropped, according to the sources. ■

THE PRIME MINISTER

'Games They Played'

A stunned prime minister sees a hidden hand in the poll setback to his party

By SUSHIL SHARMA

P rime minister Girija Prasad Koirala is in no hurry to step down even after a humiliating debacle at last week's hustings.

He has asked Nepali Congress ministers to hold their resignation until "the entire picture becomes clear".

A senior minister and one of Koirala's confidants was about to



Koirala: Who played ?

announce his resignation last Monday.

But the prime minister persuaded the minister to hold the announcement until the first meeting of the constituent assembly.

Taken aback by the reversal the Nepali Congress faced in the elections, the prime minister hinted at a conspiracy, "there was a great game at play."

The minister said that Koirala is expected to give some hints of the game as he saw it in his farewell speech at the inaugural meeting of the constituent assembly.

The meeting is due to be held within 21 days of the announcement of the complete results of the elections.

The complete results are not expected until next month. ■

CA ELECTION

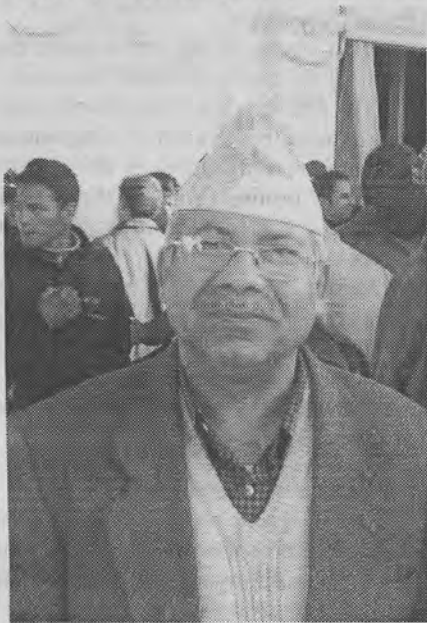
Fall Of Titans

From east to west, many established leaders were made to bite the dust by political minnows

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

The most astounding result of the recently concluded Constituent Assembly (CA) election could be the defeat of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal who lost from two constituencies he contested.

Nepal – a prime ministerial candidate projected by the UML, which was confident of windfall in the election – was routed by unknown Maoist candidates in



Nepal: Routed

Kathmandu-2 and Rautahat-6 constituencies.

Following his defeat and stunning loss suffered by his party, which has been cast to third place, Nepal resigned from the position of general secretary.

But Nepal is not the only prominent leader to have suffered defeat in the election. Nepali Congress's acting president Sushil Koirala, too, lost in Banke

3 constituency.

One former prime minister (Surya Bahadur Thapa, president Rastriya Janashakti Party), three deputy prime ministers (Bamdev Gautam, KP Oli, Bharat Mohan Adhikary), three home ministers (Khum Bahadur Khadka, Krishna Sitaula and Govinda Raj Joshi) were also knocked down.

Apart from Koirala who was defeated by a Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) candidate, all others lost to Maoist candidates.

Nepal was downed by Jhakku Prasad Subedi in Kathmandu and by Devendra Patel in Rautahat.

"I had to be in CA just as Nepal should have been in the CA. Our chairman had proposed for electoral alliance but he refused. His arrogance got him," Subedi said.

In the east, the sitting Home minister and an influential Congress leader who was also deeply involved in the peace process Sitaula was ousted by Purna Singh Rajbanshi in Jhapa.

"It the people who helped me win. It has nothing to do with what status my opponent held," said Rajbanshi.

In nearby Jhapa-7 constituency, UML strongman KP Oli lost to Bishwodeep Lingden.

"The people decided to throw out the leaders who did nothing for them," Lingden said.

Surya Bahadur Thapa, the 80-year-old seasoned politician, had to face a bitter defeat in Dhankuta 2.

He came in the third place in the vote count. His constituency was won by

Hariraj Limbu, who was far younger than him both in terms of age and political experience.

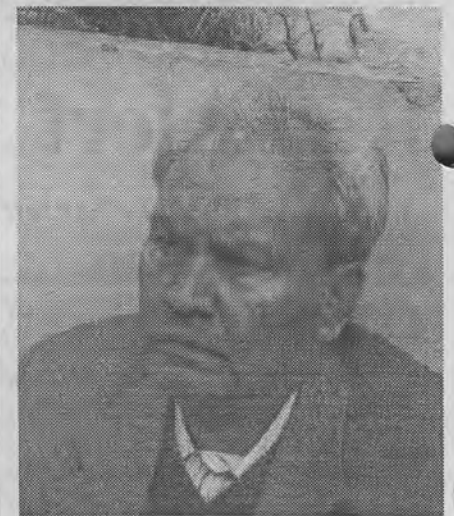
In the west, Koirala was also cast to third place in Banke where Sarbadev Ojha won the seat.

"People have chosen based on our agenda and programs," said Ojha.

In Bardiya district, the UML leader Bamdev Gautam was defeated by 38-year-old Sarala Regmi.

NC heavyweight Khum Bahadur Khadka lost in Dang I constituency.

Khadka was ousted by 28-year-old Indrajeet Tharu. "The people of Dang, the



Khadka: Humbled

marginalized and poor section of society have chosen me," said Tharu.

Other heavyweights who suffered defeat include Pashupati SJB Rana, president of Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP). Rana tasted electoral defeat for the first time in last three and a half decade of his political career when he lost from both constituencies in Sindhupalchowk with wide margin.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala's daughter Sujata and nephew Dr. Shekhar Koirala also lost the election.

As these heavyweights will now have to stay out of the Constituent Assembly, which will write a new constitution, the political underdogs need to prove their mettle by fulfilling the commitments they have made to their voters. ■



Marketplace: Shadow of Inflation

NRB REPORT

Deficit Surges

The latest report by the central bank points to soaring deficits and threat of inflation spiraling out of control

By A CORRESPONDENT

The latest report by the central bank has revealed some of the very important issues the government will need to focus on immediately after the election is over.

The report shows how the government will be pressed to make hard decisions after the election to address the protracted economic ills.

The report by the central bank – the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) – for the first seven months of the current fiscal year, has shown that budget deficit is increasing.

The high government expenditure due to election and other reasons, the budget has posted Rs 6.18 billion deficit. This is very high when compared to the same period last year when the budget

was at the surplus of Rs 1.82 billion.

The saving grace for the government, however, is the handsome revenue mobilization, which has increased by 29 percent to Rs 54.52 billion compared to an increase of 17.9 percent last year.

The financial report states that domestic credit has increased by 12.6 percent in comparison to a growth of 2.3 percent last year. The NRB has injected a net liquidity of Rs 42.16 billion by net purchase of \$660.6 million from commercial banks through foreign exchange intervention in the review period. A net liquidity of Rs 37.17 billion had been injected through the net purchase of \$510.8 million in the same period last year.

Another disappointing trend has been

the decline in exports. Total exports declined by three percent, equal to the decline in the corresponding period of last year. “Of the total exports, export to India fell by 5.5 percent in comparison to a decline of 4.6 per cent in the same period last year,” according to the central bank.

Third country exports posted a growth of 2.5 percent in comparison to an increase of 0.7 percent in the same period last year.

On the other hand, total imports rose by 11.9 percent compared to a rise of just 1.6 percent in the

corresponding period last year, states the NRB report.

The year-on-year inflation moderated to 6.4 per cent in mid-February 2008 from eight percent in the corresponding period of the previous year. The minimal pass-through effect of the hike in the prices of petroleum products in October 2007 accounted for the moderation in the overall price index.

“Likewise, the appreciation of the Nepali currency against the US dollar also dampened the inflationary pressure,” it states.

But the problem is that the international fuel price has continued to soar. On the top of that, prices of essential food items have increased tremendously across the world in recent months. The next-door neighbor India, too, is witnessing a surge in its inflation rate – which traditionally has immediate effect on Nepal.

Indian currency equivalent to Rs 50.23 billion was purchased through the sale of \$790 million in the review period. During the same period last year, a total of Rs 30.49 billion was purchased through the sale of \$420 million US dollar.

As the election approaches, the surging inflation and deficit can have a very negative effect in the coming days.

Immediately, after the election, the government will need to focus on ways to address the longstanding problem of fuel price, among others. It cannot afford to continue to postpone its decision to adjust fuel price with the international market level. ■

RISE OF THE RED

Inexplicable

Results

Wining majority from out of 240 seats allotted for first-past -post system, the CPN-Maoist, which is yet to receive global recognition as a mainstream party, has turned Nepal, a back water of world's largest democratic country, into a red field. Although the counting of votes for another 335 seats allotted for the proportional representative system is yet to complete, it is almost certain that CPN-Maoist is going to emerge as the single largest party in the Constituent Assembly Elections 2008. The result is inexplicable but CPN-Maoist, a party which fought a decade long violent insurgency – got the mandate in an election which international observers described as free and fair. In a country where a minority government of CPN-UML collapsed in nine months, how long another government led by a radical Maoist will be watched with great interest

By KESHAB POUDEL

"The results of the present election were unexpected. We had not imagined that our party will win such a large number of seats," said CPN-Maoist leader Dr. Baburam Bhattarai to The Kathmandu Post.

"This result surprised us as our candidates have suffered badly," said CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal, who resigned just a few days back following the election results.

"How the Maoists won the election

in so many places is surprising," said Nepali Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba, after his victory in two constituencies in far western districts.

Prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who was congratulated by international observers including former American president Jimmy Carter, too, is shocked by the results. "I didn't imagine that our party will be rooted out in such a manner. Just wait for few more days before deciding to quit the

government," prime minister Koirala told his colleagues who had gone to meet him at his residence in Baluwatar on Monday.

Not only the top leaders, common people in the streets, too, are very surprised to see the outcome. This is the reason there is no jubilation and happiness despite the wave of victory in favor of the Maoists and there is no spontaneous support and jubilant mass of the people. The only persons



Voters at Polling Booth : Choosing candidates

participating in the election rallies are the party cadres.

Constitutional Provisions

With the elections to the Constituent Assembly accomplished, the focus of political debate in Nepal has at once shifted from the electoral issues to the issues involving formation of a new government according to the fresh mandate.

"But in the absence of a clear direction under the Constitution, which suffers from many deliberate lacunas and caveats, a very constitutional process is about to be handled in a very controversial way. It is giving the impression that even after housing 601 assemblymen, freshly elected and nominated, the culture of *ad hocism* does not intend to disappear," said Dr Bipin Adhikari, lawyer and constitutional analyst.

According to Article 38(1) of the

Interim Constitution, the Prime Minister is to be appointed on the basis of political consensus. "There is no provision in the Constitution as to who should initiate the process; how it should be done; and whether there are standards of conduct to get it done. Political consensus is the rule even if there is a majority party in the House. Although the Council of Ministers is to be formed under the Prime Minister's chairmanship, the Council itself is to be the product of political consensus. In this jurisprudence of consensus, the difference between those who have more popular support, and those who have barely survived, is not constitutionally recognized. So, essentially, a majority Prime Minister has no majoritarian power, even if that means disregard to the voters, and the fresh mandate the voters have conferred on the Prime Minister," said Dr. Adhikari.

The Constitution clearly states that

if consensus cannot be reached as above, the Prime Minister shall be elected by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the Constituent Assembly. Even if this provision is rationalised as a stimulant towards consensual process of constitution making, it does not stand out as an acceptable rule of law.

According to Dr. Adhikari, a unicameral house of 601 person is a very loud arrangement. It is impracticable also because the interim Constitution has not provided any mini-legislature within the Constituent Assembly to work on legislative and policy issues so that these jobs are done professionally, and through a deliberative process. It is too much for all 601 assembly men to work in the Constituent Assembly as legislators, and in a meaningful way.

The present result of first-past-post system is just one of the forms decided



MJF Rally : Victory with cause

to elect the members for Constituent Assembly as there is just 240 seats allotted under this system. According to article 63 of the Interim Constitution, the constituent assembly consists of 601 members. Under the proportional representation system there will be 335 members, 240 under the first-past-post system and 26 are nominated on the recommendation of the cabinet.

For the purpose of this constitution "political consensus" means the political consensus reached between the seven political parties- Nepali Congress, Communist Party of Nepal (UML), Janmoracha Nepal, Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Anandadevi), Nepal Majdur Kishan Party, Samyukta Janmorcha and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

After 1995 when CPN-UML formed a government as a single largest party, this is first time in the history of Nepal when communist party with radical ideology has won such a large seats in the election held under the observation of more than one thousand observers led by former US president Jimmy Carter and United Nations Mission to Nepal.

Despite monitoring by international observers, the election was full of

violence and threats. From daughter of prime minister Koirala, Sujata Koirala to many other NC leaders who lost the elections lost due to intimidation and threat.

Even many goons came from across the border to terrorize the voters of Sujata Koirala in her constituency 3 of Sunsari. One of Sujata's workers died in cross firing in the bordering polling booth.

"Don't ask me about election. I cried for help from all sides. I did not receive any support. EC was one sided and administration was not concerned about mass rigging," said Koirala.

Though Nepali voters are hailed as a peaceful and conscious voters, Nepalese have tendencies to back one extreme to another without knowing its fall out. When King dissolved the elected parliament in 2002, people welcomed it by lighting the lamps. In similar way, people welcomed the move of February 1, 2006 action of the King. They welcomed the interim government led by Koirala and all its actions without any resentment. In the election, they voted radical communist outfit to power without knowing its implications on

their life like in CPN-UML in 1992 elections.

Reasons Behind Election Debacle

Several reasons work for the debacle of two parties. One of the main reasons of debacle of Nepali Congress and CPN-UML is their long negative list. Those who had negative views against those two parties voted Maoists as a next choice.

The second important reason was that voters decided to give a chance to fresh players. At a time when there is no plus point in favor of CPN-UML and Nepali Congress -which followed the Maoist line - people saw the Maoists as better alternative.

Nepali Congress has lost a big monarchist vote bank and people disliked CPN-UML because of its feeble stands on political issues. CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal- who was also a member of constitution drafting committee in 1990, proved to be inconsistent.

Along with others, CPN-UML also gave up its stand on nationalism. CPN-UML was completely silent over the citizenship Act, water resources treaty and other such sentimental issues. Except anti-monarchy posturing, nothing was left



Counting Votes : Winners take

to Nepali Congress and CPN-UML to compete with Maoists. However, the Maoists established itself as an anti-monarchical force long before them. At the last minute, Maoist even issued statement urging Royalist to vote for them.

People have seen Nepali Congress and CPN-UML's role in the government turn by turn. However, among three players, Maoists were untested. This also prompted voters to vote for Maoists.

Other major reason for Maoist victory is deep rooted fear psychology. Rural people decided not to take the risk of voting other parties. When there was a wide spread rumor in the rural areas about Maoist threat and intimidation, no one could dare to risk their life by not voting the Maoists.

Even in his last leg of political campaign, CPN-Maoist leader Prachanda urged his cadres to behave as Gandhiji for seven days. That means they would continue to use drastic methods after the election.

"One of the main reasons behind our devastation is our failure to convince the rural voters that they will be safe after the election for CA," said senior CPN-UML leader Pradeep Nepal.

In an indication of how the Maoists would behave in coming days, on Monday (April 14) Maoists attacked finance minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat and his convoy when he was on his way home after winning election in Nuwakot

Because of guarantee of security in urban areas and presence of huge international observers, the population in

urban areas did not feel any threat. However, the situation in rural Nepal was very difficult. By winning from a constituency in Rautahat district, a wanted man Babban Singh showed how threat works in rural areas.

The role of unseen power was the most significant to notice. "Maoists have been used for first phase of destabilization in Nepal from 1996-2007 by this unseen power. Now, Maoists can be used for second phase of operation in Nepal to have upper hand in Nepal security," said a political analyst.

International Response

International response to the Maoist victory is positive now. India which has backed Maoists and seven party alliance since November 2006 permitting them to ink the 12 point agreement in New Delhi has already expressed satisfaction. From Indian point of view, this is a great success as they have covertly backed parties and Maoist up to the present point.

Indian ambassador to Nepal Shiv Shanker Mukherjee has already met Maoist leader Prachanda and congratulated him for the success of his party in the election. "India has taken the Maoist victory in constituent assembly elections in Nepal as a positive development," said Indian foreign minister Pranab Mukherjee. "We support the Maoist victory in the April 10 Constituent Assembly election in Nepal and view it as a positive development. The Maoists have successfully taken part in the democratic process. It will now be easier to India to work with the democratically elected government of Nepal."

The United States - which still tags Maoists in its terrorist watch list - has mumbled few words of congratulations for conducting election. For Europeans, they were in constant touch with the Maoist leadership.

Nepal's other neighbor China also expressed satisfaction over the way the constituent assembly election was held.

Lessons For Nepali Congress

Nepali Congress legendary leader B.P. Koirala often said that Nepali Congress has no utility if it gives up the policy of national reconciliation. "If we



Dr. Mahat: Victim of violence

give up national reconciliation, which is based on nationalism and democracy, our role will diminish. We must understand that we will lose our identity in case we give up national reconciliation," said Koirala in his book *King, Nationalism and Politics* (Raja, Rastriyata and Rajniti).

"National unity cannot be achieved in vacuum. Which means that the people factor and the monarchy must combine, that there must be total understanding between these two elements of national life. The alternative to this is ruin. That is what I feel and, therefore, I do not contemplate any alternative to this," said B.P. Koirala in his interview to Bhola Chatterji, an Indian journalist in 1979.

However, joining hands with extremists and following their ideology, Nepali Congress has badly suffered in the election. Although he is regarded as a hero by international community, prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala is completely a loser at his end of political carrier. He pushed Nepali Congress from largest party with majority to nowhere.

Challenges ahead

The greatest challenge for the elected representatives of the people is to realize their responsibility as trustee of the people – the sovereign. "In no way, this elected body would be under a bondage to follow the diktat of the dubious power centers of the party or elsewhere. Though it was an avoidable game of populism, the CA is a reality. It will have to take up

every issue in the constitution making in accordance with the fresh mandate of the people. It is under no compulsion to endorse the ruling or decisions of the previous nominated house of legislators," said the analyst. "The greatest challenge to Nepal at present is a question of survival as a truly independent, democratic and prosperous nation."

"We will bring peace, stability and prosperity to the people. We will work to protect our independence and sovereignty," said Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda in his victory rally.

While talking about these consensus issues, national unity is the first and foremost task ahead. "It requires a caliber in the leadership, a long term vision and accommodative attitude. People of Nepal have always been supportive of the political ideals of broadest unity between different sections of the people. B.P. Koirala is all the time remembered by different ideological groups of Nepal mainly because of his politics of reconciliation based upon a long-term vision," said the political analyst.

Issue of Monarchy

Although article 159(2) of the interim constitution declares that the implementation of transition to republic shall be made at the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly, the parties are yet to make new decision on it. The newly elected body has to discuss over the

utility of institution of monarchy in its first session. Since time immemorial, it has been the most significant continuity from the past. The newly elected body has to balance the pros and cons of its utility and legislate about its fate.

"This legislative body is not going to be a rubber stamp of any past decision. As it represents the sovereignty of the people with its fresh mandate, it cannot remain under duress from the seen and unseen centers of powers or irrational decisions of the past," said the analyst. "As it is going to consider things in a long term perspective, it has to evaluate the role of traditional institution maintaining traditional faith of the people as a stabilizing factor."

The election results showed that it was neither about the king against the people or upper cast Vs lower cast or Madhes Vs Pahad. Many members who actively took part in King's direct rule have won the election and some of them are contesting the election through proportional representation. Former regional administrator under King's direct rule Mrigendra Kumar Singh Yadav and former assistant minister under his direct rule Govinda Chaudhari won the election as candidates of Terai Madhesh Loktantrick Party and Bijaya Kumar Gachhedar - who was reportedly soft about King's direct rule - also secured victory from two constituencies in the election as a candidate of MJF.

Many people of hilly origin won seats from Madhesh contesting as candidates of major parties Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist. They won seats in all 22 districts of plain, which Madhesi parties wanted as a separate federal state. In some districts like Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchapur, Jhapa, and Udayapur, these parties swept the polls.

Similarly, many republicans including CPN-UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal, Home minister Krishna Prasad Sitaula and Dr. Shekhar Koirala, Mahesh Acharya also lost the elections. Republican leader Narahari Acharya won the election but at the cost of Nepali Congress which was virtually uprooted in many places.

The Pandora's Box of Constituent Assembly is now reality for Nepal and the country needs a sobriety in the decision making process on the part of the legislators as well as the political parties. ■



Jimmy Carter: Observing the Polls

OBSERVERS' REPORT

Clean Chit

The international observers including Carter Center and EU have endorsed the CA election process

By A CORRESPONDENT

Giving a stamp of their approval on the whole election process, the international observers including the Carter Center, EU Observation Mission, Asian Network for Free Election (ANFREL), have largely, unanimously, given similar initial reports.

Former US president Jimmy Carter said that the outcome of the Constituent Assembly election would "truly represent the aspirations of the people".

Speaking at a press conference, Saturday (April 12), he organized a day prior to leaving Nepal where he had come with a 60-member election observer team for poll monitoring mission, Carter also said that by conducting the elections peacefully Nepal has "set an example before the world".

"The Carter Center found that the majority of Nepali voters participated in a remarkable and relatively peaceful constituent assembly election on April 10, 2008. Preliminary reports indicate that the administration of this election was well executed, bearing testimony to the hard work of election officials and the determination of Nepal's people to ensure that their country continues on the path to sustainable peace and democracy," he said reading out from a statement issued by the center.

Saying that it essential for Nepal "to

remain calm, to await final results, and where there are disputes, to follow appropriate legal procedures", Carter said the center will continue to observe the district counting and national tabulation until they are complete. The co-founder of the Carter Center said that this election was important to "end the 12-years-long conflict, establish republican set up in Nepal and provide a new opportunity to the marginalized community", while congratulating the enthusiasm and determination of Nepal's people to help consolidate peace and democracy by participating in the election of a body that will write a new constitution.

"We encourage all Nepalis to remain actively involved in the drafting of the constitution to ensure that the process is transparent, accountable and inclusive," he said. Regarding poll-related violence, Carter said that not only the Maoists but other political parties were found equally responsible for it, insisting that the brutal killing of 7 unarmed Maoist activists in Dang shouldn't be forgotten or overlooked. He also flayed the policy of the current Bush administration not to engage in any sort of dialogue with the Maoists, and said that even if the party does "extremely well" in the polls the US should recognize it.

Meanwhile, the European Observation Mission has termed the constituent

assembly election as a crucial step towards an inclusive democracy in Nepal and said that so far it has met several international standards.

In a statement released in the capital on Saturday, EU said that on election day polling went smoothly overall, despite a limited number of cases of violence and attempts to disrupt the poll leading to the cancellation of voting in some polling stations. However, the campaign period was tense across the country and marred by incidents of intimidation and violence, it said. "I commend the people of Nepal for the largely peaceful way in which voting took place despite the difficult circumstances. Voters turned out in large numbers and showed a genuine commitment to an inclusive election," said Jan Mulder, Chief Observer, adding, "It is now our sincere hope that, as the counting process gets underway across the country, all political parties and their leaders will respect the will of the people and the rule of law by waiting patiently for the election results."

EU said that there were numerous incidents of clashes between members of political parties and, regrettably, a number of people were killed during the campaign period and that lack of law and order and poor security environment contributed to a general atmosphere of fear and intimidation and at times undermined the right to campaign freely.

"Freedom of speech in the media was generally respected but there were a number of assaults on journalists and one journalist was kidnapped during the final days of the campaign," the report further said. "The election commission was independent, largely transparent and conducted technical preparations efficiently but failed to address numerous complaints about breaches of the code of conduct related to partisan government employees, misuse of state resources and electoral violence." EU said its concern was the unclear appeals process and lack of a consolidated election act, although the legal framework has generally provided for a democratic and inclusive election process in line with international standards.

Meanwhile, among the domestic observers, General Elections Observation Committee (GEOC) has also issued a preliminary report stating that the election was held in largely peaceful and fair manner.

"But there were instances of pre-poll violence and violations of code of conduct," said Krishna Man Pradhan, member secretary of GEOC. ■

"They are Trying To Sabotage The Friendly Relations Between China And Nepal"

- Zheng Xianglin

Chinese ambassador to Nepal ZHENG XIANGLIN addressed a press conference recently expressing Chinese government's displeasure over demonstration by Tibetan refugees in Nepal. Excerpts of his statements:

On Demonstration

Every country has its own social order and regulation. Those people who didn't know the truth and came to our embassy and attempted to enter embassy, some of them even damaged the building of our embassy, I think in this regard the government of Nepal should take the full responsibility for that and provide safety to our embassy. Those people who came to our embassy have the support from behind including those organizations including the Tibetan Youth Congress and Tibetan Women Association. There are also some anti-China forces from foreign countries behind those organizations. We should be fully alert on that. For those ring leaders of political organizations, the government should take severe measures to contain them. The government should not allow them to conduct the political activities,

On Lhasa Incidents

All the incidents that occurred in Lhasa were masterminded by Dalai's clique. Even in Nepal, they damaged our embassy building. The government of Nepal has to take responsibility to protect our embassy in Nepal. Those people who came to damage our embassy have support from anti-China forces.

On Political Instability in Nepal

Regarding the link between the political situation in Nepal with those Tibetan protestors, I don't have specific information about that. I think you have better understanding and better observation on that.

On Tibetan Separatists

I think those separatist forces demanding Tibetan independence are only a very small group. Most of the Tibetans who live in Nepal love their country. They are deceived by some forces. They don't know the truth about this incidence. After realizing the truth, they will show their resentment to the rioters because these rioters have hurt so many innocent people including Tibetans. According to my

knowledge, a lot of Tibetans here, they are not expressing their feelings and opinions freely because those people are supporting the unification of China and show their love for China and they have been receiving threats and intimidation from these criminals. This is the reason why they are unable to speak their mind independently. There were some incidents that occurred in Boudha area where some shops of those Tibetans were smashed and burnt. I would like to request the government of Nepal to provide security to them. Dalai clique has been terrorizing people in the name of peace.

On Dalai Lama's Activities in Nepal

They have committed all the violence killing innocent people. There is unofficial office of Dalai Lama in Nepal. They have recently changed the name of this office to get the registration from the government of Nepal but it was rejected. This is quite correct decision of this government not to allow any office of Dalai Lama (to operate). However, those who previously worked with this office are still living in Nepal. Also they don't have official name but we have report that they are living and working in Nepal. They have been conducting a lot of frequent activities in Nepal very rampantly. I think Nepal government should take some measures to restrict their works and actions.

On Protests

In recent days, many Tibetans living in Nepal, including a lot of youth and women, who have no idea about the truth, staged protests in front of the Embassy and UN agencies, accusing the Chinese government of repressing and killing Tibetans. They even damaged the building of the Embassy. Their feelings are understandable because they don't know the truth. However, what's abominable is the Dalai clique and the organizations, some of whom are plotting behind and some of whom are conducting the protest on the spot, urging Tibetans to storm the Embassy.

On the Role of Foreign Country

I don't need to name foreign forces because you already know that and I don't want to name these sources. It is quite clear that these kinds of anti-China force do exist. They are trying to work as the camouflage of the Tibet's independence. They are trying to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and are also trying to sabotage the friendly

It is quite clear that these kinds of anti-China force do exist. They are trying to work as the camouflage of the Tibet's independence



relations between China and Nepal. So we hope that we can be highly alert in this matter. It is almost clear who is behind Dalai Lama's clique. Those international forces that have been supporting Tibetan independence will reach nowhere.

On Police Action

In recent days when some Tibetans tried to enter Chinese embassy, Nepalese police have handled them very carefully preventing them from damaging our embassy. Chinese government appreciates Nepal police efforts to control anti-Chinese activities and I would like to thank them on behalf of government and people of People's Republic of China.

On Foreign Powers

Certainly, there is a link between protestors in Nepal and foreign countries. These separatist forces are very small group. Majority of Tibetans living in Nepal know what is going on in Tibet. Even those innocent who were taking part in demonstration will oppose these forces once they are fully aware about the reality in Tibet. According to my information, many Tibetans

living in Nepal are not speaking because they are living under the threat of these Dalai clique and criminals. There is a conspiracy going on against China and some forces are active to disintegrate China. To fulfill their ill motives, Dalai's clique has been used by them.

On China-Nepal Relations

China and Nepal have a traditional friendship. I think, in general, Nepalese media applied justice in reporting recent incidents. I hope that in future you can continue to apply fairness to report what happens in Lhasa. Through fair reporting we can challenge those Tibetan separatist forces that are disseminating wrong information.

On International Pressure On Nepal

We know the government of Nepal is also facing a lot of pressures but Nepali government has shown that it will not allow anti-China activities from Nepal. We hope that centuries old friendly relations between the two countries will not be undermined by those forces. If someone attacks our embassy, it is the duty of Nepalese government to punish them. ■

There is a conspiracy going on against China and some forces are active to disintegrate China. To fulfill their ill motives, Dalai's clique has been used by them.

INT'L REACTION

Outside Perspective

The international community welcomes the smooth conduct of election and anxiously watches its results unfurl

By A CORRESPONDENT

The international community has expressed happiness over the successful conduct of the Constituent Assembly (CA) election. From UN to US and from India to UK, all of them have congratulated Nepal for the way the election has been conducted.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has congratulated Nepali people on peaceful election to constituent assembly. "The Secretary-General congratulates the people of Nepal on Constituent Assembly election which took place in a generally orderly and peaceful atmosphere," UNSG's spokesperson said in a statement Friday (April 11).

"He commends the Nepalese for their enthusiastic participation in this historic event and appeals to all parties to remain calm while awaiting the result," the statement reads.

The United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) has called on the political parties and leaders to accept the people's decision reflected through the Constituent Assembly (CA) election, which it said was conducted, by and large, in a peaceful and orderly manner.

"Political parties and their leaders now need to ensure that they accept the people's decision through this election, or where they have challenges in relation to the process to pursue these through the proper legal channels," states a statement issued by Special Representative of UN Secretary General and UNMIN chief Ian Martin.



Int'l observers: Green Signal

He said that this has been Nepal's most observed election, and in the coming days and weeks both international and national observer groups will be making public their findings regarding the electoral process, including preparations, polling and the post-polling process.

"UNMIN's electoral staff will remain in the regions and districts until the count is complete, and the monitoring of arms and armies will continue. OHCHR-Nepal human rights officers will continue their monitoring work from their five regional offices."

The Government of India has hailed the election as a "welcome and historic step" towards realizing the aspirations of the people of Nepal for a democratic future.

The spokesperson of the Ministry of

External Affairs of India issued a statement in New Delhi terming the election as a "happy outcome" which is a "product of the determination of the people of Nepal, with significant contributions by the political parties and the Election Commission of Nepal."

The statement further said that the Constituent Assembly provides a platform for the people of Nepal to

determine the manner of their governance and their future.

"As always, India will stand by the people of Nepal in the major tasks of democratization and development that lie ahead while building a stable, prosperous and peaceful Nepal," the statement added

The United States has said that the country has taken a huge step forward on the path of peace and democracy.

"The United States heartily congratulates the people of Nepal on their successful Constituent Assembly election on April 10. After nearly a decade since the last general election and more than half a century of demanding the opportunity to elect representatives to draft a constitution, the voters have spoken," states a press release issued by the US Embassy in Kathmandu.

"Despite pre-election violence and intimidation and the regrettable death of candidates and party workers, only a small percentage of polling stations will require re-polling. Overwhelmingly across the country men and women were able to cast their ballots in a peaceful and orderly way," it said, adding, "This represents an historic achievement and is a tribute to the courage of the Nepali people and the conduct of the Election Commission."

"Nepal has taken a huge step forward on the path of peace and democracy. In the days and weeks to come as the votes are counted, we urge patience and respect for the results," it said.

The United Kingdom (UK) has congratulated Nepal for holding "largely peaceful" election. "This was an important day in the history of Nepal," British Foreign secretary David Miliband said in a statement Saturday (April 12).

"While I was saddened by the instances of violence and misconduct that occurred, the Election Commission's reports of a strong voter turnout are encouraging, as are the positive assessments of the conduct of the polls made by the EU and other observer missions," Miliband said.

He further said that the International observers will continue to monitor the process during the period in which the votes are counted and results announced, while insisting that during this period, and as the Constituent Assembly (CA) is formed, "it is important that the political parties respect the will of the people and use agreed mechanisms to resolve any disputes."

"The UK urges them to work together to tackle the critical political and socio-economic issues facing Nepal, so that the people of Nepal can be confident that the future will be peaceful and prosperous. The UK stands ready to assist in building the new Nepal," he added. ■

SOUTH ASIA FALLS BEHIND IN MDG

South Asia will fall short on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), according to a joint World Bank-IMF Global Monitoring Report.

The new report warns that most countries in South Asia will fall short on the MDGs, a set of eight globally agreed development goals with a due date of 2015. Though much of the world, including South Asia, is set to cut extreme poverty in half by then, prospects are gravest for the goals of reducing child and maternal mortality, with serious shortfalls also likely in primary school completion, nutrition, and sanitation goals.

"I am particularly concerned about the risks of failing to meet the goal of reducing hunger and malnutrition, the 'forgotten MDG'," said Robert B Zoellick, president of the World Bank.

"As the report shows, reducing malnutrition has a 'multiplier' effect, contributing to success in other MDGs including maternal health, infant mortality, and education." The Global Monitoring Report: MDGs and the Environment-Agenda for Inclusive and Sustainable Development, stresses the link between environment and development and calls for urgent action on climate change.

The report warns that developing countries stand to suffer the most from climate change and the degradation of natural resources. Arguably, few regions in the world are more at risk from climate change in terms of adverse impact on the poor than South Asia and the region faces a large potential health risk from climate change through increased malnutrition, diarrhea, and malaria. To build on hard-won gains, developing countries need support to address the links between growth, development and environmental sustainability.

"Developing countries need more foreign aid and domestic resources to reach the MDGs. High economic growth and a stable macroeconomic environment remain essential for reducing poverty and increasing investment in health and education," said Dominique Strauss-Kahn, IMF managing director.

Progress toward the MDGs differs dramatically across countries, regions and



Farmer Women: Unchanged life

income groups, the report states. While most of the poverty reduction between 1990 and 2004 took place in East Asia and Pacific, South Asia would contribute the most to global poverty reduction in the next decade. However, South Asia is likely to fall seriously short in some areas, including primary education, gender parity in tertiary education and child mortality goals. South Asia will likely not reach the goal of halving malnutrition rates. In fact, South Asia has the world's highest incidence of child malnutrition and the child malnutrition rate in India is double the African average.

"Given South Asia's recent, rapid economic growth, lack of progress in reducing child malnutrition is all the more troubling," said Shanta Devarajan, chief economist of the bank's South Asia region.

"It points to the need for a concerted effort to attack the problem at its roots—including better water, sanitation, pre-natal care for pregnant women, and nutrition and healthcare for newborns." "This year's high level meetings in connection with the MDGs halfway point provide an opportunity to agree on priorities for action and milestones for monitoring progress," said Zia Qureshi, lead author of the report. (Courtesy: THT) ■

BOOK

On Upsurge In Madhesh

With the upsurge in Madhesh, Nepal's southern plain bordering with India, many articles and books have already been published analyzing various causes of the new.

By A CORRESPONDENT

The authors point that social and ethnic discrimination by the people of hilly region is responsible for all kinds of problems in Madhesh. As all parts of Nepal, terai is also a region of heterogeneous culture, language, caste and religion but they lived in harmony for a long time. The newly emerged regional groups and political parties believe that the state's oppression maintained these kinds of harmony.

Financially supported by aid agencies of western government and many charities, various reports published by local non-governmental organizations revealed that there is rampant discrimination and marginalization of Madheshis, Dalit and Janjatis by ruling elites.

Nepal's ethnic and religious issues took a new turn following the promulgation of Interim Constitution. Just a day after promulgation of Interim Constitution in January 2007, people living in southern plains suddenly came out in the streets under the banner of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum. Bordering with Nepal's southern neighbor India, the reason behind the upsurge in terai was reportedly against the century long discrimination by hilly people.

In the last one and a half year, many books have already been published analyzing various reasons behind the upsurge; but this is a first book which compiles articles and



**Madhesh Bidrohako
Nalibeli
(Description of Madhesh
Rebellion)**

**Editor: Bhaskar Gautam
Published by: Martin
Chautari, Thapathali,
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Supported by: DFID's
Enabling State Program**

Price: Rs.125.00

Pages: 212

research done by various authors.

Edited by Bhaskar Gautam who has also written a lead article, this book

tries to analyze different angles related to Terai upsurge. This book consists of all kinds of various views and articles written on the aspects of Terai's problems.

The first article about rebellion in Madhesh and Politics of Frustration by Bhaskar Gautam highlights various reasons behind the upsurge. Gautam sees radical transformation in the nature of state as solution for the crisis in Madhesh.

Similarly, Bijaya Prasad Mishra analyzes the historical perspective of Madhesi rebellion stressing the issues of eastern parts of Madhesh. Shalikram Sapkota and C.P. Singh analyze issues related to sudden riots of Nepalgunj. This article highlights the reasons behind the riots.

Ramrijhan Yadav's article on Role of Siraha and Saptari in Madhesh violence is another interesting article. Yadav, a journalist and political activist, sketches details about the role played by youths and other people living in two districts.

Ram Naresh Yadav's Madhesi uprising is also another interesting article. He discusses the rebellion in Sunsari and Morang. Another journalist late Birendra Kumar Saha's article on the role of Bara, Parsa and Rautahat in Madhesi agitation is interesting.

Published under the support of U.K's International Development Agency, DFID's Enabling State Program, this book is useful to understand the events of Terai's upsurge and agitation.

The articles included in the book look at various perspectives of terai agitation and its implications. From Nepalgunj riots to upsurge of mass uprising in various parts of terai region, authors have made in depth analysis.

This book is helpful for those who want to do research and further study on terai agitation and its implications.

“We will work together with not only the seven parties but also the new parties that will be established through this election and the old parties in existence in the forthcoming constitution making process.”

Prachanda, Maoist chairman, after his party emerged as frontrunner in the election results, at a press meet.

“The enthusiastic participation of the Nepalese people in the Constituent Assembly elections, through which they have emphatically reiterated their firm resolve not to compromise the nation’s existence, independence and integrity under any circumstance, is a source of satisfaction for us.”

King Gyanendra, in his New Year’s Day Message.

“We are very happy at the way the polls have been carried out despite doubts that were raised earlier.”

Bhojraj Pokharel, chief election commissioner, at a press meet held after the elections were carried out on April 10.

“I will work to ensure inclusion of women in all organs of the state.”

Pampha Bhusal, Maoist leader and winner from Lalitpur-3, after her results were declared.



“This is the victory of democracy. I have no complaints on my loss.”

Sushil Koirala, acting president of Nepali Congress (NC), who lost his seat in the election.

“We encourage all Nepalis to remain actively involved in the drafting of the constitution to ensure that the process is transparent, accountable and inclusive.”

Jimmy Carter, former US president, at a press meet.

“I commend the people of Nepal for the largely peaceful way in which voting took place despite the difficult circumstances. Voters turned out in large numbers and showed a genuine commitment to an inclusive election.”

Jan Mulder, Chief Observer of the European Union election observation team.

TRANSITION

DEFEATED: Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML); Sushil Koirala, acting president of Nepali Congress (NC); Sujata Koirala, daughter of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, Khum Bahadur Khadka, senior NC leader; Bamdev Gautam, senior leader of UML; KP Oli, senior leader of UML; Surya Bahadur Thapa, former PM and president of Rastriya Janashakti Party (RJP), have lost in the elections.

WON: Prakash Man Singh, vice president of NC, in the first result coming out of Constituent Assembly

(CA) election.

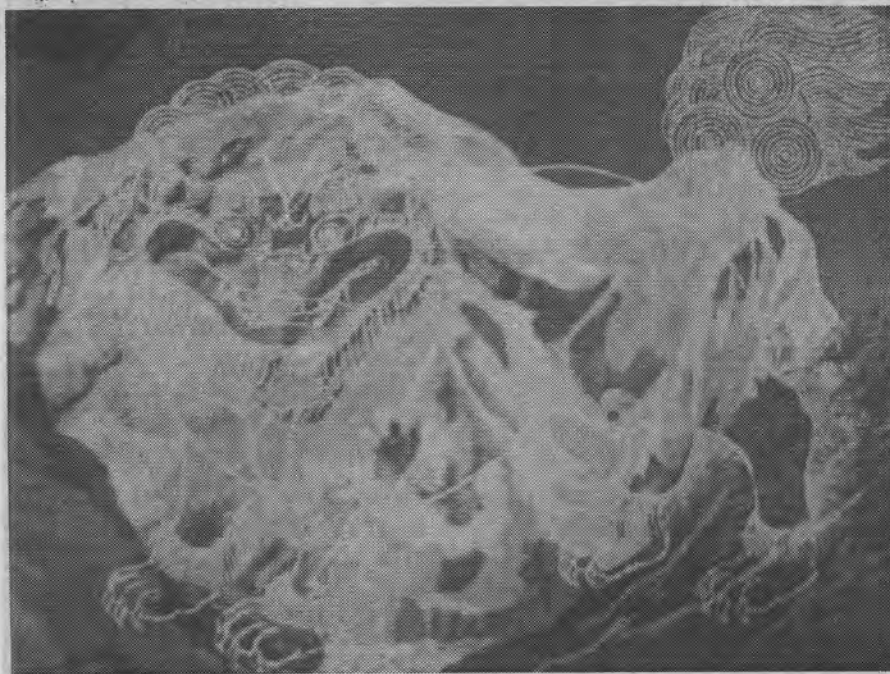
Prachanda, Maoist chairman; Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, senior Maoist leader; Dev Gurung, Maoist leader; Ram Bahadur Thapa Badal, Maoist leader; Barsha Man Pun Ananta; Maoist deputy commander, in the election.

Narahari Acharya, NC leader, Subas Nemwang, Speaker of the interim parliament, and Jhalnath Khanal, senior UML leader, won from their constituencies.

APPOINTED: The 16th AGM of Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies (NAFEA) elected Tilak Bahadur Ranabhat of Noor Opportunities Overseas Pvt Ltd as its

president for the next two-year term. Som Lal Bataju of SOS Manpower Service Pvt Ltd was elected first vice-president. Similarly, Bal Bahadur Tamang of Sky Overseas Pvt Ltd was elected the second vice-president and Kamal Dev Malla of Third Eye Overseas Concern Pvt Ltd was elected the third vice-president and Gyan Prasad Gaire of Rara Employment Pvt Ltd was elected the general secretary.

ARRIVED: Jimmy Carter, former US president and co-founder of Carter Center, to observe the CA election in Nepal. The European Union members of parliament, and Japanese MPs, to observe the election.



EXPOSITION

On Violence

Artist Loren Beven's paintings explain forms of violence

By A CORRESPONDENT

It is very difficult to describe the forms of violence as they have several facets. Whatever the facets of violence, they involve killings and devastation of human beings, nature and other such forms.

Every artist and poet has his/her own way of explaining the social reality, nature, religion, human behavior and other such forms. By closely observing all these incidents, artists and poets can explain what these events are all about.

In her exhibition, *Splatter Analysis*, artist Loren Beven dissects violence to give it a whole new meaning. Her various paintings depict

forms and contents of violence.

One cannot predict how violence occurs but human society has bitter experience regarding its implications. The violence has always terrible sign of devastation, destruction and trauma.

This is what artist Loren Beven's explains in her paintings. Exhibited at the wall of Siddhartha Art Gallery in Babarmahal, artist Beven opens her minds with the black humor of violence.

"It's interesting how violence leaves its mark and they become part of myths and our culture and that becomes part of our identity," said Beven. "I am interested in the fallout

from violence in different ways, like the lyrics of the songs we sing when military camouflage becomes fashionable."

In all her paintings, she uses different media and forms. One of her paintings was screen prints on aluminum. She portrayed king Birendra and Maoist leader Prachanda. The picture of king Birendra was of his earlier years.

There are also some collections of Nepali trekking maps with painted images of violence, some are twirling lyrics songs about violence like Mao said. And there is the hanging silver revolver with a black flag saying *paribartan* (change) on the barrel.

"I don't poke fun or criticize with interpretations of violence in a sarcastic way but rather shed another light on the topic through black humor," said artist.

According to the artist, black humor takes sheds of another light. It is supposed to enlighten and allow you to understand through humor. She constructs the remnants of violence, not as we know it but as we wear it in camouflage, hear it in the names of landscapes and trace it from the history.

Although her topic of painting is very difficult to explain, Beven is able to explain what she calls black humor. For the visitors, the paintings are worthy to watch. From nature to symbol and portrait of various faces, Beven depicts the forms of violence and its implications in society in her way.

Whether in the early face of the portrait of late king and queen Birendra and Aishwarya or Maoist leader Prachanda, Beven sees all of them differently. The exhibition will be on till April 23. ■

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