

SPOTLIGHT

August 22-28, 2008



POLITICAL ALLIANCE

Fickle And Flimsy

INSIDE

Kosi River: Flood Of Sorrow

CRIME: Emergence Of Organized Syndicate

NIBL: Expanding Service

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मात्र रु.१ मा
“आफ्नै बचत खाता”
सम्पूर्ण अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरको सेवा सुविधा सहित ।



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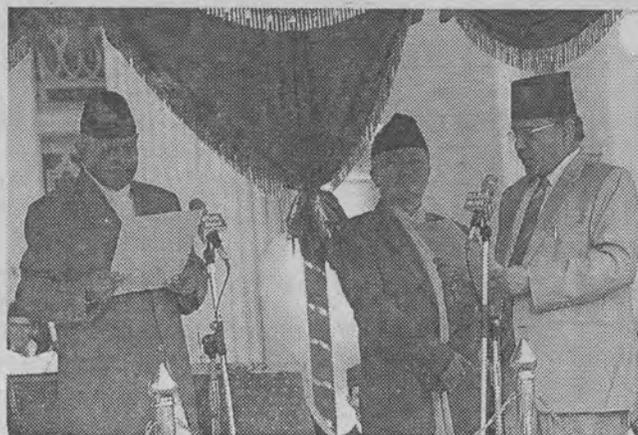
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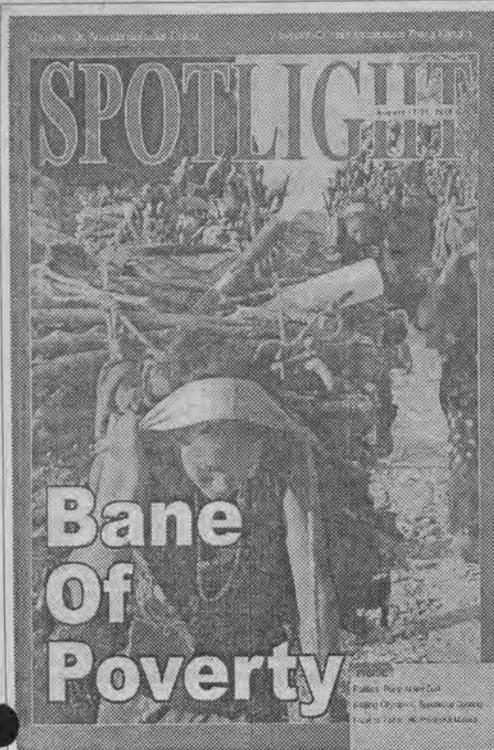
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The Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal has also made history. A rebel leader with a very humble origin, he has been sworn in as the first elected executive Prime Minister of the tiny but sovereign independence country of Nepal, which has, most recently, been transformed into a democratic republic from a traditional monarchy. His elevation to this eminent position could be quite controversial to many patriotic Nepalis. But the unusual haste shown by the powers that can make or mar the destiny of weaker and smaller nations has sealed his fate, for the time being, by their unrestrained acclamation. Instead of being elated by the unexpected euphoria generated by this sinister machination, the democrat turned rebel must try to delve into the deep and hidden significance behind this manifestation of sudden goodwill. Still infamous for possessing a totalitarian bent and unflinching devotion to Stalin and Mao, whether he will be able to transform himself into a modern liberal democrat, if he is to survive politically for a longer time, has become a million dollar question. But his recent squabbles for defense portfolio, if anything, is a clear indication of the partisan and anti-national tumults nagging his beliefs. If Dahal falls an easy victim to such unholy and pernicious ideologies, the large number of Nepalis who might be pinning their faith on his clean and unsullied administration would not only be disillusioned and totally frustrated that they wouldn't hesitate to look for an alternative. Besides, Prachanda must be fully aware which way the political breeze blows in Nepal and under what circumstances storms and tornadoes occur. Perhaps, he has not yet forgotten that his partners in the government were bitter adversaries during the election of the President. What must have happened to make them change their mind so soon should not be very difficult to guess. If he is a wise and sharp politician he will not fail to take lessons from what happens across the world and how far will he succeed in his wishful thinking. Even the history of Nepal of the last six decades must teach him unforgettable lessons. As such, if Prachanda wants to achieve even one small mite of success as a proud Prime Minister of a sovereign independent country, he must learn to walk on the razor's edge. If not he will also belong to the category of "also ran". And this demands a very large heart, an open mind, a truly patriotic character and unassailable integrity. He must not have missed the trends in Nepali politics that have sprouted like rainy mushrooms after the events of April 2006. As a Prime Minister, will he be able to draw together a country which has started displaying unbridgeable fissures along ethnic and regional lines? More so, when big powers keep on fanning the fire. This widening rift between the Nepalis living in the plain land of Terai and the hilly regions, aggravated by the continued machinations of the invisible forces, visible only to seeing eyes, requires very astute and truly statesmanlike handling to close. This is difficult but not impossible. For this Prachanda will have to invite his critics not sycophants for advice and guidance. His failure to rise up to the occasion will spell further disaster for the country. And the one factor that could arrest this disaster is at the point of being humiliated and incapacitated. The attempts to integrate the Maoists combatants into the Nepal army would be the greatest folly Prachanda would be making. He might have thought of that as a rebel leader. But as the Prime Minister he cannot afford to be partisan. The Maoist combatants must be given the options of (1) going back to their homes (2) go for higher education (3) given opportunities of foreign employment and (4) formed into an autonomous security forces of Boundary Defense Force (Seema Rakshak Dal). But they must not be integrated into the Nepal army. The Nepal army Chief must stand his ground. This could be the first crucial test for Prachanda's patriotism. Since it is too early to express one's reaction we will reserve our comments for the time being. But our best wishes are for Prachanda. Hope he will gracefully accept our hearty congratulations on his assumption to the High office of Prime Minister of Nepal.

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



Grim Reality

After reading your cover story (Bane of Poverty August 15-21), I came to realize the gravity of the situation of girl trafficking in Nepal. There is no doubt that girl trafficking is a problem related to economy rather than anything else so called non-governmental organizations have been projecting. Instead of spending huge amount of money organizing seminars, the program should be focused on how to generate employment and economic opportunities in the remote parts of Nepal. If a man or woman does not have enough to eat, he or she can take any risk for survival.

*John Admas
Montreal Canada
Via Email*

of labor ministry and NGOs working in surveillance. As a resident of Butwal, I booked ticket (to fly overseas) from New Delhi but I was badly harassed in Sunauli border even though I was travelling with my father. It is really pathetic to describe the way they treated me when I had followed all legal course to come here. Except the few cases, overwhelming majority of traffickers use illegal ways to cross the border. But, most of the women crossing the border through legal ways have to face humiliations and difficulties. All girls who intend to cross the border are not going to brothels.

*Sakuntala Gurung
Doha, Qatar
Via Email*

Power at any cost

At the end, CPN-Maoist which waged ten years of struggle to establish communist republic is finally in power through the parliamentary maneuvering. One wonders why they destroyed infrastructures and killed more than 15,000 people in the name of People's War if they had to end up like this. If their intention was just to go to power, Maoists did not have to launch such a deadly and destructive war, which has completely devastated Nepal pushing it to the point of brink. The recent political maneuvering showed that what Maoist wanted was the power at any cost. The ideology and all other issues were just rhetoric.

*Laxman Chand
Via email*

Disappointing Figures

The cover story Bane of Poverty (August 15-21) was interesting. It was very disappointing to know that every year almost five to seven thousand women are trafficked. Every day some women crossing the border are rescued by border police and volunteers of Maiti Nepal, a non-governmental organization. Of course, Maiti Nepal's volunteers have been doing important job by sending back the innocent and illiterate girls from falling into the trap set by traffickers. Intercepting girls and sending them back to their home is one part of the story. Is there anybody concerned about helping them by creating employment opportunities back home? As long as we cannot create the conducive environment in rural parts of Nepal, one cannot solve the problem of girl trafficking.

*Sachin Sharma
Via email*

Closing Is Not An Option

I am very frustrated to read the news analysis like you produced in Bane of Poverty. I don't think closing all avenues for foreign employment for women can solve the problem. In a liberalized world,

the government should provide equal opportunity for women to go wherever they want. Nepalese foreign labor act discriminates between man and woman. If a man wants to go for foreign employment, he doesn't need to pass through many hassles. However, a woman has to face all kinds of legal scrutiny to get the permission. Even after seeking all clearance, one has to face difficult hurdles created by so called NGOs like Maiti Nepal whose volunteers treat all women going abroad as sexual products. Along with creating employment opportunities in rural parts of Nepal, the government should open the foreign employment market to Nepalese women removing all the hurdles created to discourage them. If there are legal protections and legal means, nobody wants to go through illegal route risking their own life. We need to change our mindset.

*Jamuna Gurung
Dubai Via Email*

One Sided Tale

Your story is one sided as you took the side of NGOs working in the field against girl trafficking. I had a very bitter experience of security officials, officials

Northern Tone

Chinese ambassador Zheng Xianglin has once again proved the sophistication of mandarin culture. Although China has greatly supported Nepal in her economic development, ambassador Xianglin has not boasted it. His opinion showed that he is much more concerned about Nepal's territorial integrity, sovereignty and economic prosperity. China always backs Nepal whenever she is in crisis. This time, too, Xianglin repeated his government's commitment towards Nepal.

*Om Rana
Via Email*



Prachanda Elected PM With 464 Votes

Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has been elected as the first prime minister of republic Nepal by securing majority votes on Friday's (Aug 15) election. Prachanda – supported by 20 parties in the constituent assembly – managed to bag 464 votes in his favor when the proposal to elect him as PM was put before Constituent Assembly (CA) members. On the other hand, 113 CA members – the Nepali Congress members – voted against Prachanda. According to CA chairman Subas Nemwang, 577 CA members took part in the election. Following the election, Nemwang said that the CA session will now remain suspended till another decision. Earlier, NC candidate Sher Bahadur Deuba lost the race for prime minister. Deuba – the three-time former prime minister – managed to bag only 113 votes in his favor when the proposal to elect him as PM was put before Constituent Assembly (CA) members, Friday evening. On the other hand, 438 CA members voted against Deuba. According to CA chairman Subas Nemwang, 551 CA members took part in the election. Later talking to reporters Deuba said that he congratulates Prachanda for winning the election. "We will decide on extending our support or opposition based on how his government performs in the coming days," said Deuba. *Compiled from reports*

NC Expresses Concern Over 'Independence' Of Army, Judiciary And Bureaucracy

As it prepared to stay in the opposition, Nepali Congress (NC) has

expressed serious concern over the 'independence' of army, judiciary and bureaucracy under Maoist rule. Speaking at the Constituent Assembly (CA) and proposing the name of Sher Bahadur Deuba as the party's candidate for prime minister, NC vice president and outgoing Minister for Peace and Reconstruction Ram Chandra Poudel doubted Maoist intention. "We are concerned over the independence of army, judiciary and bureaucracy," he said indicating the presence of Maoist army in cantonments. Speaking ahead of the PM election at CA, Friday (Aug 15), Poudel also took swipe at Maoists for forging alliance with UML and MJF for government formation. "When we forged alliance with MJF and UML during presidential election, they termed it as unholy alliance. Now it has become holy alliance. Everything, I suppose, is holy under red flag," Poudel said. Likewise, Bimalendra Nidhi, general secretary of NC, also accused the Maoists of failing to forge national consensus. "They called us for power-sharing negotiation. But they were never ready to negotiate portfolios like Defense, Home and Finance," he charged. He also accused the Maoists of not sticking to earlier understanding. "There are at least 2100 people whose properties have not been returned by them," he said. *Compiled from reports*

Transporters Call Off Strike

Transport operators and workers have called off their strike going on in the eastern region for the last seven days. The announcement of withdrawal came after a meeting between senior Home Ministry officials and representatives of the association transport operators and workers' unions on Saturday (Aug 16). The transporters and the government signed a six-point agreement according to which the latter would address the security concerns of transportation workers and provide with Rs 1 million to the family of driver Krishna Khawas, who was murdered by an unidentified gang in Sarlahi. A few days after the murder, transporters and workers had gone on an indefinite strike, throwing transport services as well as the supply of consumer goods

completely out of order in Mechi, Koshi, Sagarmatha and Janakpur zones. Before sitting for talks with the Home Ministry officials, they had announced nationwide transportation strike for an indefinite period starting Sunday. *Compiled from reports*

Anti-Miss Nepal campaigners meet PM

Members of the Maoist-affiliated All Nepal Revolutionary Women's Association met their party chief and Prime Minister elect Pushpa Kamal Dahal and discussed their campaign against Miss Nepal contest scheduled to be held next month. The delegation members told the Prime Minister that they were determined to disrupt the contest, and sought help from the government for their move. In response, the Prime Minister said he was positive about the demand of women activists and assured he would discuss the matter with leaders of other parties. Association's leader Amrita Thapa Magar who led the delegation told reporters that her organization had vowed to disrupt Miss Nepal contest. The women activists have described the beauty show as being socially unacceptable and as a tool to exploit the contesting women for commercial gain. Women organisations of some other parties including Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) have also joined forces with the association. Recently, the women activists had padlocked the office of Hidden Treasure, the organizer of the show which sponsored by Indian multinational company, Dabur Limited. Despite protest by women activists, the organizers have said they would not suspend the show, but there might be changes in the pattern. *Compiled from reports*

Fifty-Six Civil Servants Killed In Terai

In the last few years of unrest in southern Terai region, around 56 civil servants have been killed. This was revealed at a program held by Nepal Civil Servants Organization, Tuesday (Aug 12), in the capital. According to general secretary of the organization, Punya Dhakal, they have been killed by various armed outfits operating in the region. He

said that morale of government employees were down as security organs have not been able to nab the killers. At the program, chief secretary Bhojraj Ghimire said that the issue will be discussed with the Home Ministry.

Compiled from reports

Finance Ministry Releases Money To Pay PLA

The Finance Ministry, Tuesday (Aug 12), approved the proposal to pay the outstanding salaries of last 14 months to Maoist PLA combatants in cantonments. The Ministry has made available Rs 84 million for the purpose. As such, 19618 PLA combatants will get Rs 42000 each. The Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction had sought the approval of Finance Ministry to pay outstanding salaries to the combatants.

According to Shyam Sundar Sharma, spokesperson of the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, the process to pay the money to PLA combatants will be started within this week. *Compiled from reports*

NFC Seeks Rs 320 Million To Transport Food

The Nepal Food Corporation (NFC) has sought Rs 320 million to immediately transport food to 18 districts of far and mid west, which are reeling under food shortage. According to Kantipur daily, the NFC is preparing a special plan to transport food to those districts and has asked for money to use for transport subsidy. Based on the geographic location, the NFC will use surface as well as aerial route to transport the food. Spokesperson of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies Gyán Darshan Udas said that the Ministry has already corresponded with Finance Ministry regarding NFC's request. Sundar Raj Sharma, acting deputy general manager of NFC, said that as per the plan, the NFC will send 90,500 quintals of food to those districts.

Compiled from reports

Dual Pricing In Diesel

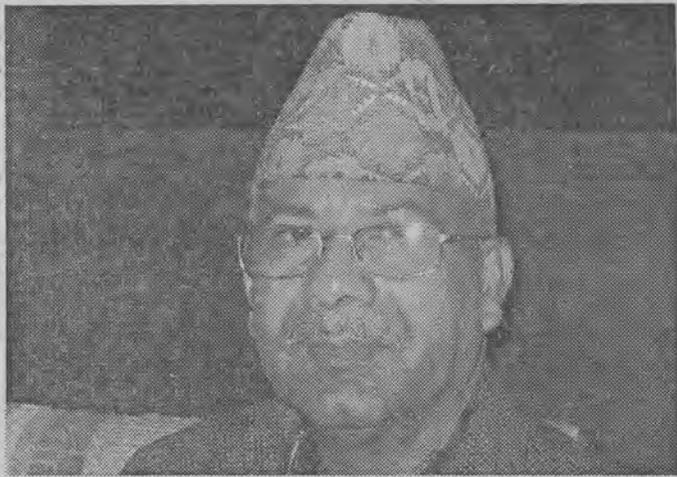
The Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has decided to invoke dual pricing system in diesel. Except public transport and goods carriers, all the others will need to pay Rs 80 per liter of diesel. This is more by

Rs 10. For the time being, the new decision will be applied in Kathmandu valley where seven petrol pumps have been designated to sell expensive diesel. According to NOC, diesel will be sold to hospitals, press, schools/colleges, banks, hotels, and

diplomatic agencies through these pumps. "Based on the implementation here, the system will be expanded," said Purushottam Ojha, Secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies. At present, the NOC still suffers loss of Rs 15.9 per liter when selling diesel at Rs 80 per liter. It expects this loss to come down when the Indian Oil Corporation sends the new price list of petro-products on August 16 since the petro price has come down in international market in last few days. As per the action plan of the government, in the second phase similar dual pricing system will be implemented in kerosene and cooking gas. *Kantipur daily reports*

NC TO Explore Option Of Reviving NC-UML-MJF Alliance

Concluding that the Maoists have failed to forge understanding to form the government of consensus, Nepali Congress (NC) has decided to explore the option of reviving the alliance among NC, Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF). The central committee meeting of the NC, Wednesday (Aug 13), decided to hold talks with UML and MJF on Thursday for this purpose. On the question of whether NC will field its candidate for prime minister, NC leader Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat said, "We will reach the decision regarding fielding the candidate from NC or other parties after holding talks with them." After the Maoists refused to provide Defense Ministry portfolio to NC, the latter has decided



not to join the Maoist-led government. Most of the NC leaders have said that it was not proper to let the Maoists handle the security-related portfolio since the peace process had not yet been taken to logical conclusion. On Thursday, parties need to file nomination for their prime ministerial candidate. The Constituent Assembly (CA) is set to hold the election of PM on Friday. *Compiled from reports*

Security-Related Portfolio Should Go To Other Parties: Nepal

At a time when Nepali Congress (NC) and Maoists are engaged in a duel with both demanding defense portfolio in the new government, a senior leader of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) has said that the portfolio should go to third party. "Most of our party leaders think that it is not appropriate to give Maoists the security-related portfolios," Madhav Kumar Nepal, former general secretary of UML, told reporters, Tuesday (Aug 12), after the meeting of the standing committee of his party. "We also urge the NC and the Maoists to end their fight over defense ministry. Security-related ministries whether it be Home or Defense could be given to other parties," he said. Nepal, however, added that UML will support the formation of new government led by Maoists but also not excluding the NC. "We cannot support only Maoists or only NC. We will join a government if it is formed on understanding," he said. *Compiled from reports* ■



Member CA and Chairman of Khetan group Rajendra Khetan handing over Check to PM Prachanda for Maternity Ward of Patan Hospital

AN INCREASED NUMBER OF SECURITY PERSONNEL from Nepali Army (NA) will provide cover to prime minister elect Pushpa Kamal Dahal. According to reports, around 140 NA personnel under the command of Lt Colonel Arun Pal will provide security for Baluwatar- the official residence of the PM. Earlier, only 80 NA personnel used to be deployed for security at PM's residence. Apart from NA, personnel from Nepal Police and Armed Police Force (APF) will also provide security to the PM. The newly elected PM is expected to shift to Baluwatar after he takes oath of office on Monday.

POLICE CAPTURED FIVE INMATES among the 54 who fled the Siraha district prison after a jailbreak on Wednesday (Aug 13) evening. Police arrested Pramod Pradhan, Bindeshwor Sada, Kameshwar Yadav, Amiri Saafi and Umaruddin Miya from Saraswar village and the bank of Kamala river during a special search operation launched the same night. Fifty-four prisoners had fled after taking policemen who had entered the jail for a regular counting. Police has fired over 50 rounds while trying to control the fleeing inmates. Prisoner Sonalal Yadav of Bikaspurdhur was killed in the shootout. Police said some of the escapees were senior leaders of different armed outfits in Terai. CDO Balkrishna Panthi said the jailbreak seemed pre-planned and there were some security lapses. Security has been beefed up in the district and operation has been launched to search for the escapees. Panthi said probe was on into the jailbreak.

INDIAN AMBASSADOR RAKESH SOOD has said Nepal has made history in the recent times. In his message on the occasion of 62nd Independence Day of India, Sood said, "In the recent months and years, Nepal has been witness to history, nay, it has made history." He also reiterated India's support to Nepal in the days ahead. "As Nepal writes a new chapter in its history, India and Indian people remain committed to contribute in all possible ways to meeting the challenges which Nepal faces on the road ahead of transformation to a peaceful, stable and prosperous country," he said. Since 1950, India has been extending economic and development cooperation to Nepal. At present, India is assisting in over 290 large and small projects in all districts of the country at an outlay of Rs 23 billion.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS STARTED THE PROCESS to build

a fast track road linking Kathmandu with Terai. The Ministry of Works and Physical Planning has selected two willing foreign investors to build the 77-km long Nijgadh (Bara district) - Kathmandu road keeping in view the proposed international airport in Nijgadh. According to joint secretary at the Ministry Kamal Raj Pandey, out of three investors who submitted the Letter of Intent (LoI), the government has selected Reliance India and Landmark Worldwide of South Korea for final screening. The Ministry will now urge them to forward formal proposal based on which the final investor will be selected. "If everything goes as planned, the construction of the road will begin within one to one and a half years," said Pandey. The

proposed four-lane road from Chobhar in southwest of Kathmandu to Nijgadh will follow the Bagmati river. The estimated cost of the project is around Rs 56 billion and will be constructed on the basis of Build Operate Own and Transfer (BOOT) model. The investor will own and operate the road for 30 years after which it will be handed over to the government. It is expected that through this route, one can reach Nijgadh from Kathmandu within one and a half hour.

SECRETARY AT THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, Commerce and Supplies Purushottam Ojha has left for the United States, Wednesday (Aug 14), to lobby for waiver of custom duty and market access. He said that a new phase of lobbying will be carried out to convince the US government on duty free access to ready made garments and other exports of Nepal. A delegation including Chief Secretary Bhojraj Ghimire and representatives of Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), Garment Association of Nepal (GAN) and Trade and Export Promotion Center will leave for the US soon. The team will attend the Magic Show - expo of readymade garments - in Las Vegas on August 17-18. Subsequently, they will fly to Washington DC. After the termination of Multi Fiber Agreement in 2005, the exports of garments from Nepal have plummeted drastically leaving the once lucrative export sector high and dry. ■



Traditional festival of Gaijatra being observed

LARGE DAMS AT THE CENTRE OF CONTROVERSY

▪ - AB Thapa

Dams are at the centre of controversy, dispute, and even violent confrontation. There are many reasons largely related to the scale and scope of the dams and the impacts. It is argued that while huge dams are meant to create energy and clean water, the poorest communities are the losers in the race for the rewards in too many countries.

Recently the World Commission on Dams has published a report "Dams and Development". The report provides in-depth information on dams related issues.

Nepalese People Misled

Politicians, planners and entrepreneurs in Nepal are seen telling the local people that their livelihood would be greatly improved by implementing large hydropower projects such as the West Seti, Karnali

Chisapani, Tama-Kosi, Kali-Gandaki-2, Buri-Gandaki, Andhi Khola projects, which are storage type projects. Is it really true that the people would be better off after the implementation of large storage dam projects? Or it is completely a false assurance. Let us see what the river basin

residents of Canada are saying now thirty years after the implementation of the Columbia River storage dam projects.

Basin People in Canada Bitter About Projects

Columbia River dam projects have provided enormously large benefits to Canada. Apart from the direct power benefits generated at hydropower stations in Canada, that country received from the USA a big sum of money in return for flood control benefits to accrue to latter. On top of it, Canada is receiving in perpetuity from the USA in return for providing the water storage 50% of the additional power generated at 11 downstream hydropower station in the USA. Despite the fact that Canada took full advantages of the Columbia River dam projects, the people living in the Columbia river basin are still feeling deep resentment at the way they were treated.

In 1967 an American resource economist had predicted that the Columbia River Treaty would provide an economic "shortfall" for the Columbia Basin. Today that loss is

considered incalculable. If negative environmental and social impacts are considered the effects on the region are even more aggravated. The Basin bears the symptoms of the negative Treaty impacts with lower development and economic growth in many parts of the Basin, particularly those areas affected most directly by

the reservoirs. The resentment and bitterness over how the region was treated thirty years ago is still in the minds and memories of many Basin residents.



Apart from the direct power benefits generated at hydropower stations in Canada, that country received from the USA a big sum of money in return for flood control benefits to accrue to latter. On top of it, Canada is receiving in perpetuity from the USA in return for providing the water storage 50% of the additional power generated at 11 downstream hydropower station in the USA.

The Treaty dams created four reservoirs flooding 60,000 hectares of land in the Columbia Basin. Included in the flooded land were dozens of small communities and thousands of acres of farmland and harvestable forest. The reservoirs damaged a regional fishery already crippled by the loss to other dams on the Columbia River. The flooding destroyed precious wildlife habitat and turned pristine natural lakes into huge fluctuating industrial reservoirs. The Arrow Lakes reservoir can rise and fall seven stories in height at the beach at Nakusp. During recent drought years Valemount residents had to drive more than twenty miles on lake bottom from their community dock on the Kinbasket reservoir to find water. As well as destroying potential wealth the reservoirs have acted as barriers to resource development in parts of the region. But perhaps the worst impacts were the human costs. Thirty years ago more than 2,300 Basin residents were uprooted and moved from their homes and, in many cases, their

livelihoods to make way for the reservoirs.

Victimization of Native Americans

Dams take a set of resources- a river and the lands along its banks, generating food and livelihood for local people; and transform them into another set of resources- a reservoir, hydropower and irrigation, providing benefit to people living elsewhere. There is a sense therefore in which large dams export river and lands, removing them from the productive domain of one community to make them available to another.

Grand Coulee provides a vivid example. Native Americans were physically displaced by a project that provided power to industry and households in a city some 250 km away. Furthermore the water and land that had previously supported their livelihoods was dammed and diverted to provide white settlers with irrigated farming

Basin People of

Lesotho Suffering

Lesotho became a water exporter when the Katse dam - Africa's highest dam and the first in the massive Lesotho Highlands water project - began sending water through miles of mountain tunnels to South Africa's industrial

heartland. However, the promised development benefits for Lesotho have proved elusive. In fact, the country has suffered as its fragile mountain environment has been degraded and native fish and plant species have been pushed towards extinction. At least 27,000 people in the Highlands have lost their homes, fields and other vital resources as a result of the project. A further 150,000 people downstream have had their drinking water, farming and fishing affected by reduced river flows.

Grand Inga Project

The jewel in the crown that companies from around the globe are eagerly eyeing is the Grand Inga, the world's biggest dam project, proposed for the Democratic Republic of Congo. At an estimated cost of \$80bn, Grand Inga will be in one of Africa's least stable regions. Its price tag does not include distribution networks needed to supply energy to the long-suffering people of that country. It is being predicted that the mining, timber and other industries will be the main beneficiaries, while poor farmers who depend on the river's flow of the water and nutrient-rich sediments will be the losers.

Reservoirs and Agriculture in Nepalese Hills

The valley bottoms of all major rivers are extensively cultivated, with paddy, maize, cereals, pulses, mustard etc

being the most common crops. Reservoir formation would eliminate these cultivated lands. There will be enormously large loss of agricultural production

Large Number of People Evicted

The areas to be submerged by the proposed storage reservoir are densely populated. Even according to 1979 UNDP study about 47,000 people would be displaced to implement the 360 MW Kali-Gandaki 2 storage project. Similarly according to 1979 UNDP study about 22,000 and 14,000 people would be displaced if the 180 MW Andhikhola and 460 MW Buri-Gandaki projects respectively are implemented. These are the storage projects selected by the Government to implement in near future.

Earthquakes and Dams

The geotectonic lines in Nepal which determine the

At an estimated cost of \$80bn, Grand Inga will be in one of Africa's least stable regions. Its price tag does not include distribution networks needed to supply energy to the long-suffering people of that country. It is being predicted that the mining, timber and other industries will be the main beneficiaries, while poor farmers who depend on the river's flow of the water and nutrient-rich sediments will be the losers

geological structure of the Basin consist of two major thrusting faults; the Main Central Thrust (MCT) and the Main Boundary Fault (MBF). These faults extend in an east-west trend across Nepal, acting as the major division between formation groups. The formation of a large reservoir overlying a tectonically active and faulted areas would lead to an increase in seismic events.

Reservoir-induced seismicity (RIS) is a widely recognized but little understood phenomenon that has occurred near at least 200 reservoirs; 32 of those cases had quakes larger than 4.0 magnitude on the Richter scale. The biggest quake from RIS is thought to be a 6.3 quake from Koyna Dam in India in 1967.

In Conclusion

Large dams are unique among major infrastructure projects in the scope and manner in which they affect the pattern of access to resources, and their distribution across space, time and social groups. They are generally justified by national or regional macro-economic benefits while their physical impact are locally concentrated, mostly affecting those within the confines of the river valleys, and along the river reaches. ■

NEIGHBOURS

Olympian Diplomacy

As it gets a new president and a new prime minister, Nepal is caught in the traditional rivalry between the big neighbours – one more time

By SUSHIL SHARMA

In his congratulatory message to the newly elected Nepalese prime minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, the Indian prime minister Man Mohan Singh extended invitation to him to visit India "in the near future."

Singh said he would be "happy to receive (Prachanda) in India at the latter's earliest convenience."

The "invitation" came minutes – literally – after a two-third majority of the constituent assembly voted Prachanda to power, on Friday.

Two days later, on Sunday, Prachanda received another invitation. This time from the Chinese prime minister Wen Jiabao. To attend the closing ceremony of the Beijing



Chinese Ambassador Zheng Xianglin:
A another player

Olympic games.

The Chinese ambassador who met Prachanda at the latter's Naya Bazar residence to deliver the invitation would not comment. But the Maoist leaders were quick to confirm the invitation.

As Prachanda instructed foreign ministry officials to make preparations for the tour to the land of Mao, he had a surprise visitor at his Naya bazaar residence on Tuesday morning. The high-profile ambassador from the land of Gandhi.

The message from the south, according to a senior Maoist leader, was clear: a no no to Prachanda's China visit ahead of a tour to India.

Said the chief of the international relations department C.P.Gajurel, "India suggested that it would be good if Prime minister Prachanda did not rush to China so early."

There has been no immediate comment from the Indian government, though.

Following a similar suggestion president Ram Baran Yadav had cancelled plans to entertain the Chinese invitation to attend the opening ceremony of Beijing Olympics, according to reliable sources.

But Prachanda apparently has other ideas. "The visit is still on," said Gajurel, four days before the prime minister's planned Saturday departure for Beijing.

"Because the invitation to a new Nepalese prime minister was long pending and because he would not engage in programmes other than attending the Olympic closing ceremony, we have decided that Prachanda would go to Beijing".

If Prachanda went ahead with his plan, he would be setting a new precedent in recent history of Nepal. The first head of government to make



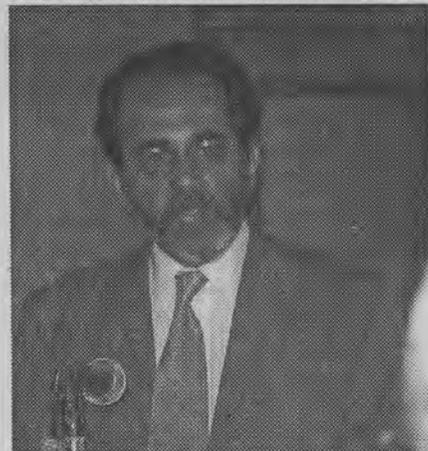
PM Prachanda : In great game

the northern neighbour his first foreign destination. The southern neighbour has monopolized the privilege so far.

No prime minister has ever gone to China ahead of India, although another communist prime minister had set a sort of precedent. Thirteen years ago.

Prime minister Man Mohan Adhikary of the minority UML government went to Denmark to attend a UN social summit, ahead of an official visit of India.

The minority government of the UML fell nine months after it had



Indian Ambassador Sood: A player

secured a vote of confidence by a thumping majority in the-then 205-member parliament.

The Maoists too got a huge majority support last week. But left to themselves, they too do not have a majority in the 601-member constituent assembly. ■



People affected by flood: Untold miseries

FLOOD

Kosi Disaster

As a result of ignoring the warnings issued by experts, the Kosi river over flanked to embankment affecting the lives of thousands of people

By A CORRESPONDENT

“It was so powerful as a huge volume of water washed out everything in less than a second and we didn’t even have time to think about our property. We had only heard about the devastations due to flood in Kosi from our forefathers. This is the first time that I too experienced the flood of Kosi. As the flood entered our house, we fled in a hurry without taking anything,” said Bijaya Sada, 40, of Haripur in Sunsari district of eastern Nepal.

Along with Sada, thousands of other flees home in panicky after the news break out of the flood of Kosi. People lost everything just in minutes. “From a farmer with two cattle goats and some quintal of rice, we turned into a pauper with land covered by water and sand and house is beneath the water,” said Sada. As the water level continued to rise,

people were panic-stricken deserting the village and running away in search of a safe shelter.

“There is a panic in next village which is little east from our village. Everybody wants to leave home,” said Sada. As rainfall continues in many parts of eastern and central hilly areas, there is possibility of much bigger flood in coming season. There is already a hole in the embankment,” he said.

According to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, the monsoon will continue till second week of September.

Generally, water level in Kosi rises during the last days of monsoon. This flood is not because of flood as the present water level about 120,000 cusec meter is normal flow. There were over one million cusec meter of water in 1965 flood. As its catchments area expand from

Shivapuri and Phulchoki to eastern Nepal, it carries the large volume of water during this period.

Built about six decade ago, Kosi barrage and embankment are already becoming useless. Some experts have been issuing threats of possible devastation the river is going to trigger but authorities have not paid attention.

“A very grave physical condition is building up in the lower reach of Kosi river. If it is not checked on time then it would soon trigger a new cycle of Kosi floods causing enormous damages to the environment that would affect millions of people,” predicted Dr. A.B. Thapa in his article published in Spotlight. “At present big quantity of sediments have already deposited upstream of the Kosi barrage. The river bed has risen up significantly. Now there is a growing danger that in one of the big floods the Kosi might outflank its bank and start to flow towards the east. After that a vast area of land would once again come under the grip of Kosi floods.” (See WECS Bulletin Marh 1997).

Dr. Thapa has been constantly warning the government about the grave consequences of Kosi flood in the life of common people through the write-up in Spotlight.

Experts argue that a vast tract of land to the north of Ganges would be affected by the Kosi floods caused by the breaching of the eastern embankments. The breaching of embankments would be accompanied by a shifting of the river course to the east.

“In the absence of major engineering intervention, the shifting of the Kosi to the east is sure to take place. But nobody knows exactly when it is going to happen. The outflanking process could be sudden and almost unexpected. The people would be completely taken by surprise. So the losses could be quite high. It should not surprise us to find the destructiveness of the future of Kosi floods similar to that of Huang Ho,” writes Dr. Thapa, who is regarded as an expert on Kosi.

“Kosi is a braided river. After shifting to the east, the main course of the Kosi would not be confined into one channel for a long period. It would be

shifting. Most of the old river courses that might have already turned into a dead channel would again become active and would be carrying high flows during the floods.

What Dr. Thapa, who writes on water resources, predicted a long time back, is appearing true. Known as the river of sorrow, in the past Kosi used to wreak havoc in the eastern part of Nepal and many parts of Bihar. After construction of embankments along the river and construction of Kosi barrage, the situation had slightly improved.

After remaining silent for decades, Kosi river has once again wreaked havoc inundating six Village Development Committees and rendering 10 more at risk. After the damage of embankments built in eastern part, the swollen Saptakosi River entered into the villages leading to displacement of more than 30,000 people. The flood also damaged properties in India also.

Sunsari district administration office said five persons have gone missing. "Thousands of residents of Sripur, western Kusaha, Haripur, Basantapur, Ghuski and Laukahi VDCs were displaced by



Kosi River Course: Swinging like a pendulum

floods," said Durga Prasad Bhattarai, chief district officer of Sunsari. "Crops worth tens of millions of rupees were also destroyed and four dozen cattle were swept away. More than 10 VDCs of western Sunsari are at risk of inundation."

Two dam spurs – spur no 1210 and 1290- were damaged. The erosion started on Sunday night (August 17) and the spurs crumbled on Monday afternoon. Sripur, Haripur, Basantapur and Ghuski were completely flooded while over half of western Kusaha and Laukahi have also

local administration were busy in rescue operation throughout the day.

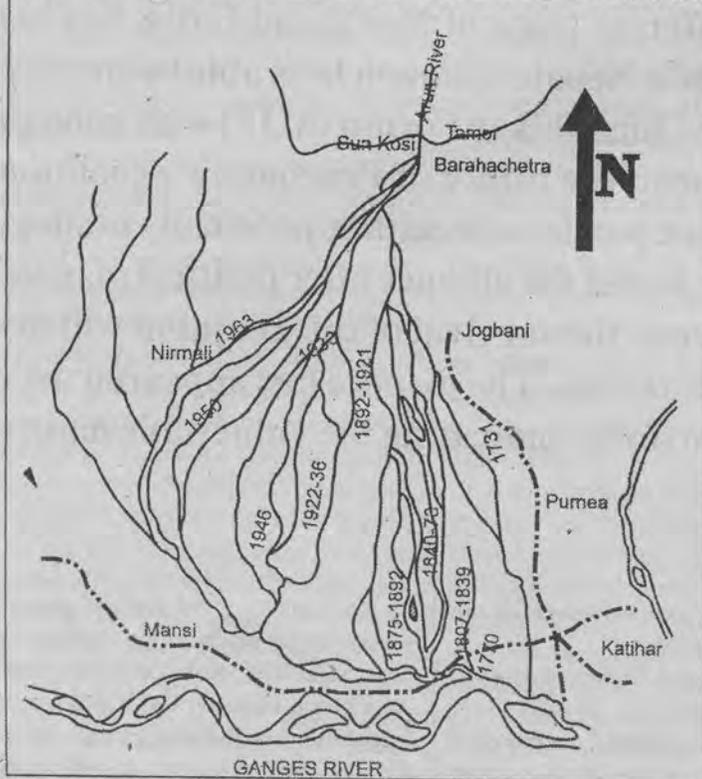
Most of the displaced have taken refuge on the banks of the canal and along the highway in makeshift tents. Many displaced were sheltered in public school in Inaruawa.

All the elderly people living in Saptrai district not far away from the Kosi River would not have much difficulty in recalling that some 60 years ago the channel of Kosi River flowing across the Sunsari district from north to south was gradually shifting laterally from east to the west. River debouching into the terai plain at Chatara and joining the Ganges River near Kusella in India had already laid waste about 500 square miles of lands in Nepal alone. The embankments built to protect the life and property of millions in India and Nepal might have already outlived their usefulness.

According to a study, Kosi carries enormous quantity of sediments estimated at 120 million cubic meters along with 52 billion cubic meters of water. This is a high volume of sediments. The Kosi River had already shifted from east to west over 120 kilometers in the last 200 years.

Fortunately, the embankments built a few decades ago temporarily helped to check the lateral shifting of the Kosi. Very soon the embankments would be ineffective to control the Kosi floods and a large number of Nepalese and Indians have to face a grave situation as Kosi is known for its might. ■

Shifting Courses of The Kosi River



Source: Mukherjee

been in inundated. Over 2000 houses have been water-logged.

According to chief district officer, the flood also swept away portions of the East-West highway, leading to obstruction in transport. Army personnel and police along with

MAOISTS-UML-MJF ALLIANCE

Fickle And Flimsy

From a most wanted terrorist with red corner notice issued around the world by Interpol, Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, who spent almost three decades of his life hiding in different parts of Nepal and India, has become the first prime minister of republic Nepal. Although he is able to forge an alliance with CPN-UML and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) with enough strength to form the stable government, the future of Prachanda's coalition looks very fickle and fragile as alliance parties are neither politically homogeneous nor ideologically close. As they joined the alliance after political maneuvering through seen and unseen powers, the survival of this coalition will depend upon how it will balance their interests. The dispute has appeared over the matter of allocation of cabinet portfolios indicating the vulnerable nature of the alliance

By KESHAB POUDEL

At the gathering of more than one thousand people at Rastrapati Bhawan in Shital Niwas Maharajgunj, in the swearing-in ceremony on Monday (18 August), newly elected prime minister and Maoist leader Prachanda took the oath of office and secrecy and begun

new journey in a power game as the chief executive of Nepal.

After taking oath from president Dr. Ram Baran Yadav, Prachanda's responsibility has shifted from merely a populist rebel leader to a person responsible for the country surrounded

by two Asian powers and the country where the overwhelming number of population live below the poverty line. As a prime minister, Prachanda has to face these two challenges - external as well as internal - none of which are going to be easier.



PM Prachanda takes oath of office from president Dr. Yadav: Long March

Although he appeared joyful at the time of swearing in ceremony, Prachanda has to face uphill task in leading this rainbow coalition of heterogeneous interests and ideologies. He will need to spend maximum amount of time and energy in keeping this coalition together.

"I cannot explain how I am feeling in words. After completing ten-years-long insurgency and three years of peace process, we are now at the center of power," said Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda in his brief encounter with journalists after taking over charge in Singh Durbar.

From a dreaded terrorist with red corner notice issued by Interpol who had to hid in different places in India and Nepal to escape the net of police in the past, Prachanda has set a history by becoming the first elected prime minister of Republic Nepal.

CPN-Maoist leader Prachanda, whose party holds the authoritarian ideals, was elected as PM with overwhelming support by the Constituent Assembly on Friday (15 August), the day when Nepal's southern neighbor and world's largest democratic country was celebrating her 62 independence day, haling the success of democratic experiments and practices in India.

Interestingly, a group of Indian political leaders led by Sharad Yadav attended the oath taking ceremony of Pushpa Kamal Dahal. "We are grateful to

take part in the ceremony as an invitee of Maoist leader Prachanda," Yadav said.

Prachanda secured two third votes on Friday's (Aug 15) election. Prachanda – supported by 21 parties in the constituent assembly – managed to bag 464 votes in his favor when the proposal

to elect him as PM was put before Constituent Assembly (CA) members. On the other hand, 113 CA members – the Nepali Congress members – voted against Prachanda. According to CA chairman Subas Nembang, 577 CA members took part in the election.

Although first president of Nepal and follower of liberal democratic party Dr. Ram Baran Yadav was elected in a neck to neck competition, Prachanda, a leader of a party following outmoded authoritarian ideals, was supported by 21 parties out of 25 parties represented in the Constituent Assembly.

Maoist Efforts

After emerging as the largest party in the CA election, Maoists have made several attempts to forge alliance with various political parties. Initially, they negotiated with CPN-UML for a long term alliance but it was broken at the last minute when Maoists refused to support CPN-UML candidate Madhav Kumar Nepal as president and instead nominated Ram Raja Prasad Singh as its candidate.

Reacting to Maoist decision, CPN-UML, Nepali Congress and MJF formed a new alliance to challenge the Maoist candidate. Three party alliance candidate Dr. Ram Baran Yadav and Parmananda Jha were, thus, elected as president and vice-president, respectively. This three party alliance's candidate was also elected as a chairman of Constituent Assembly.

But during the prime ministerial election, the alliance was broken and a new three party alliance came into being with NC out and Maoists in. Although the new alliance between CPN-Maoist, CPN-UML and MJF was surprising and unnatural for many, it is an outcome of well orchestrated design.

"This alliance will complete its full term writing the constitution and holding the election according to it," said prime minister Prachanda. "We are committed to pursue the policy of consensus. We also need the support of Nepali Congress to take the peace process to its the logical end."

Fickle Alliance

This alliance is fickle and fragile in the sense that the alliance partners are neither politically nor ideological close. Even CPN-UML and CPN-Maoists, though both are communists, have ideological differences. However, MJF is a party organized on the basis of regional sentiment not any political ideology.

If one sees the history of the rise of MJF, one can easily trace its anti-Maoist flank. It emerged with the sole objective of ousting Maoists from terai belt. But now whether it was a mere coincidence or a calculated risk, the MJF has decided to join the government under the leadership of Maoists.

Everybody including Maoists seems to have forgotten what had happened in Gaur nearly two years ago when 39 Maoists were brutally killed by the followers of MJF.

There were several clashes between the cadres of MJF and Maoists in different parts of terai. After taking MJF as its partner, Maoists have opportunities to expand their eroded influence and vote bank in Terai where many see the rise of Madhesis as a cleansing operation against Maoists.

The marriage between the Maoists and MJF is very unusual as MJF is a non-ideological party following the primitive trend of ethnicity. However, Maoists have a ideologically-oriented cadres-based party. A myth of militancy is there with them along with ultra leftist political slogans. While working together, there is every chance of spread of leftist ideological contamination in the none-ideological regional party.

The incident of Gaur was the event of emergence of MJF and decline of Maoists in terai. Now they are together in the government.

But since they are not bonded by any political program and ideology, there is possibility of breaking of their coalition at any time also. Their base of unit is now power and this basis is always fragile.

"This alliance will complete its full period," said CPN-UML leader Ishwor Pokharel. "Our firm commitment is to bring a new constitution and provide the relief to the people."

In the last four months after the election of CA in April 10, 2008, there were efforts at making and breaking of alliances. From the alliance of NC, MJF and CPN-UML to CPN-Maoist, many alternatives were searched. The alliance of NC, CPN-UML and MJF did not last even a month.

History of Alliances

Following the reinstatement of parliament by Supreme Court in 1996 and fall of first minority communist



Khanal, (left), Prachanda and Yadav: Three-in-arms

government, Nepal had experimented with number of opportunistic alliances. NC-RPP and NSP alliance replaced the minority communist government. Then came RPP (led by Lokendra Bahadur Chand) and CPN-UML alliance. Again, there was an alliance of RPP (led by Surya Bahadur Thapa) and Nepali Congress.

After the split of CPN-UML, then came an alliance of CPN-UML and Nepali Congress which held the last parliamentary elections in 1999.

The politics of alliance again came to the fore after the split of Nepali Congress in 2002. Nepali Congress and CPN-UML formed the coalition government in 2004.

After April, 2006, there was the emergence of seven parties alliance,

which lasted till the recent amendment of the interim constitution.

The size of the country also determines the life of coalition and political stability. In India, the last BJP led National Democratic Alliance with 23 political parties completed its full five years. The recent United Progressive Alliance of about dozen political parties led by prime minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh is in the last days of completion of its five year tenure.

However, Nepal has a different scenario. Though number of coalition parties is very small, they cannot survive for a long period of time to give a political stability.

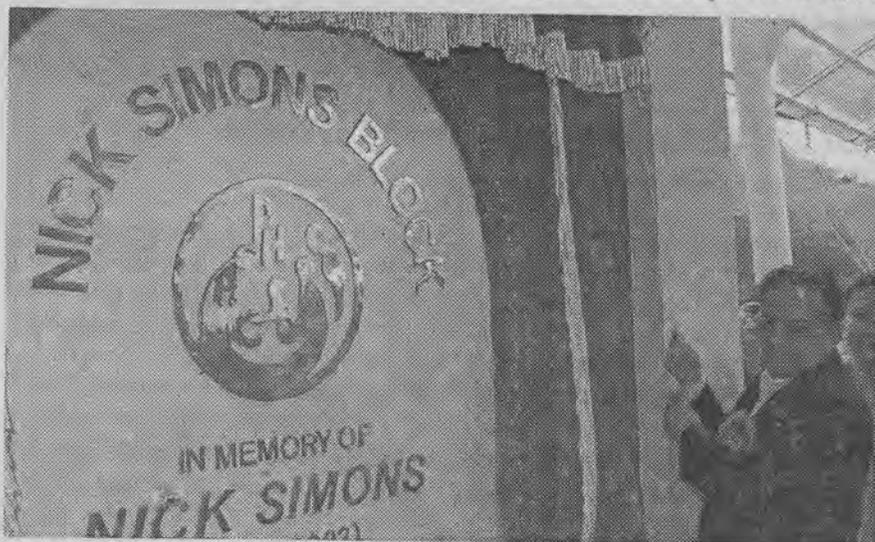
Koirala's Attempt

After the election of CA, political leaders searched for various alternatives. Out going prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala was also a front runner. From Prachanda to Dr. Baburam Bhattarai and Ram Bahadur Thapa Badal, their names were floated as candidate for prime minister. Alliances were broken one after another. The course was settled after Prachanda was placed in the power and Nepali Congress was pushed to opposition.

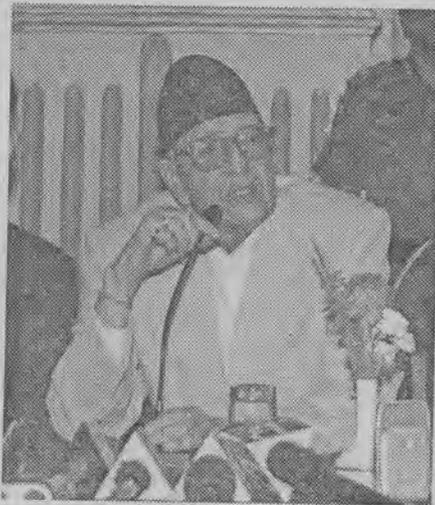
"Prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala has played a role of statesmanship in the last three years by bringing the Maoists to the mainstream politics," said Hari Sharma, former political advisor of prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala. "Given the present circumstances, I don't see any possibility of his coming back to domineering position."

Koirala is an ambitious person

SPOTLIGHT / August 22, 2008



PM Prachanda : Marching to development



GP Koirala: 'Humiliated and Isolated'

relentlessly seeking power. It took four months for him to leave the official residence of Baluwatar after his party was roundly defeated in the CA election. He had made attempts till the last minute to prolong his tenure – sometimes knocking at the doors of Madhav Nepal and sometimes meeting with Madhesi leaders. All went in vain.

Koirala, who sacrificed his political ideals and values for the sake of power, was ultimately thrown away in the dustbin.

Future of Nepali Congress

As a liberal democratic party, Nepali Congress has challenges as well as opportunities. Its challenge is to play a role of responsible opposition and its opportunity is to regain its position as the liberal democratic opinion maker of the country. Whatever was done during the leadership of Girija Prasad Koirala for

sheer game of power was motivated by personal interest. Now Nepali Congress has to correct opportunistic alliance.

Will there be a chance for survival of democratic party like Nepali Congress? "A very bitter experience are there with Bhutan and Sikkim. Bhutan preserved its independence but didn't get democratic system. Sikkim got a democratic system of governance but at the cost of its national independence. Amazingly, Nepal is also at the cross roads of its destiny at this time. Will it have both - nation's independence and democratic forms of governance?" asks a political analyst.

Rise of CPN-Maoist leader Prachanda as a prime minister indicates that Nepal seems to have more chances to tilt towards non-democratic forms of government led by CPN-Maoists.

By a nefarious design of unseen power and to some extent short-sighted leadership of its own, Nepal has been passing through a very critical political course. Not only is the democratic party like Nepal Congress, Nepal's own existence is under threat. "There is a lurking threat upon Nepal's interlinked sovereignty and democracy both. Nepal has enormous good will in the developed west but none will risk their friendship with India to help Nepal. There is only one power which may effectively counter any expansionist design not merely for the sake of Nepal but for its own vital security interest for its own soft belly," said the political analyst. "As long as Nepal is linked with the soft bellies of two big neighbors, it may suffer much in terms of instability but it may never lose

its national identity. So far as the democracy is concerned, it is dependent upon the maturing condition of the country as well as the quality of leadership."

In the history of Nepali politics, Koirala, who held a posture of diehard anti-communist, established himself as the leader who handed over power to communist twice. In 1995, Koirala dissolved the parliament where Nepali Congress had absolute majority and called fresh elections paving the way to form the minority communist government under the leadership of CPN-UML leader late Man Mohan Adhikary.

This time, too, when he took the oath as arime minister from revived House of Representatives, Nepali Congress and democratic forces had majority in the parliament. When Koirala handed over power to Maoist leader Prachanda, his party is in minority with less than 20 percent seats in parliament.

What the outgoing prime minister Koirala contributed in the last leg of his political career is the transformation of Nepalese political process from a traditional oriented liberal democratic majority to a parliament majority of authoritarian communists and emergence of regional, ethnic dominated groups.

Pushed to opposition, Nepali Congress has already declared that its support will be based on the performance of the government. "We will decide on extending our support or opposition based on how the government performs in the coming days," said out going prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala who did not attend the oath taking ceremony. Koirala reportedly boycotted the oath taking ceremony because he was not invited as a special guest.

This is a very difficult period for Nepali Congress but there are enormous opportunities for it as well. NC can correct the mistakes committed under the leadership of Koirala and bring back the NC to its old glory. As a sole opposition party with liberal democratic credentials, Nepali Congress can revive its lost image through correcting its wrong policies.

As the current alliance is flimsy and fickle, Nepali Congress is still in the center-stage of power, in its role as a shadow government. ■



Maoist victims : Demanding compensation

“Cabinet Formation Has Been Delayed Due To Technicalities”

- Jhal Nath Khanal

Even three days after the prime minister took oath, coalition partners are yet to agree on portfolio distribution. The decision of CPN-Maoist to deploy PLA for prime minister's security has sparked a new controversy. Amid these disputes, CPN-UML general secretary JHAL NATH KHANAL spoke to SPOTLIGHT on Tuesday evening. Excerpts:



How do you see the recent decision of CPN-Maoists to deploy People's Liberation Army for prime minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda's security?

The news regarding the deployment of Maoist PLA for PM's security came out in various newspapers. If that is true, it is very unfortunate.

Have you discussed the matter with prime minister Prachanda?

I have raised the question of Maoist PLA deployment with prime minister Prachanda. However, the prime minister said his party has not taken such decision.

When will the new cabinet be formed?

The cabinet formation will be completed by (Wednesday) tomorrow. After prime minister Prachanda's visit to flood affected areas in Kosi barrage (Wednesday), we will finalize the list of ministers.

Why has it been delayed for such a long time?

It was not because of political reasons but just a matter of technicalities. We will settle all the differences.

It is reported that there is dispute among CPN-Maoist, CPN-UML and MJF on key cabinet portfolios. What do you say?

We have already settled the question of portfolio allocation when we decided to forge the three party alliance.

If that is so, why have the three parties not been able to announce the cabinet?

It is again a matter of technicalities.

When will the Common Minimum Program (CMP) and code of conduct for ministers be announced?

We have already finalized them and we will announce the CMP on the day when our ministers join the cabinet.

What does the CMP include?

It includes some relief packages and the policies and programs of the government.

Given the delay in the cabinet formation, common people have already started wondering how long such shaky coalition will continue. What do you say?

This government will complete its full term. The government will complete its main task of writing the constitution within two and a half years as stipulated by the interim constitution.

As Nepali Congress has decided to be in opposition bench, how will be the relations between CPN-UML and Nepali Congress?

We have made all out efforts to bring NC in the government to make it a national government. We had even pressed the CPN-Maoist to give defense portfolio to them. However, it could not materialize. I think Nepali Congress will support us in the process of drafting the new republican constitution of Nepal. We worked together for a long period of time and we will continue to work with all the parties.

If the NC decides to join the government, will the Maoists let them have the ministry of their choice?

Our party will welcome any decision of Nepali Congress to join the national government. We can discuss the matter of portfolio with Maoist leadership. ■

However, it could not materialize. I think Nepali Congress will support us in the process of drafting the new republican constitution of Nepal.



PM Prachanda: Cautious welcome

INT'L REACTION

Warm Response

The newly elected PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' receives a warm response from international leaders

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

For a leader who was till a few years ago a wanted terrorist with Interpol notice against him, Prachanda has come a long way.

Soon after he was elected as the prime minister of Nepal, India, United States, European Union, United Nations, China and Japan have extended congratulations to him.

The Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh conveyed his felicitations and congratulations, stating, "On behalf of the Government and people of India, and on my own behalf, please accept my felicitations and congratulations on your election as Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal."

Singh said, "I look forward to working with you to further develop the bonds of good neighborliness that unite our peoples and nations, and to deepen the friendly relations that so happily exist between our two countries. We in south Asia share linked destinies, and are engaged in a common struggle against poverty, disease and hunger. India will continue to stand by the people and government of Nepal in consolidating your peaceful democratic transition and in your developmental efforts."

The Indian PM has also said that he looks forward to meeting with Prachanda in the near future and "would be happy to receive you in India as our guest at your earliest convenience."

The message from the US, however, is loaded. It has congratulated "the people of Nepal and their Constituent Assembly" on the election of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

"We hope that election of the Prime Minister removes the last barrier to speedy formation of a government, constructive action on key issues facing Nepal, and a start on the difficult but necessary task of drafting Nepal's new constitution," says the message from the US, which has been harboring doubts about the Maoists' policies.

"The United States will continue its strong support for peace, democracy, human rights and development in Nepal. We look forward to working with the new government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal and building upon the historic ties between our peoples," it further stated.

Chinese premier Wen Jiabao, too, extended congratulations and best wishes to newly elected Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

"China and Nepal are traditional friendly neighbors and friendship between our two peoples runs a long course. Over the past half-a-century China-Nepal relationship has always maintained a sound and steady development and is regarded as an example of friendly cooperation," states the message sent by Jiabao.

The European Union Heads of Missions in Kathmandu has welcomed the election of the Prime Minister stating that it ends "a period of uncertainty and paves the way for government formation."

"We look forward to the new Government delivering to the people to meet their expectations for a prosperous future and taking forward the peace process, including through creating the environment for the drafting of a constitution that secures peace, stability and democracy. The EU stands ready to support the new Government in this work."

Likewise, Japan has also extended congratulations to Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda. "At this important period, the Government of Japan sincerely wishes that the peace process will continue through the concerted efforts of all the political parties so that the happiness and prosperity of Nepali people will be realized as soon as possible. The Government of Japan always has a firm commitment to the democratization process, for peace and prosperity in Nepal. At the same time, the Government of Japan keenly hopes that the new leadership would be able to accomplish the major task of drafting New Constitution by consensus among all political parties."

The UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon also congratulated Dahal. "Secretary-General warmly congratulates Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) on his election as the first Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Nepal," a statement by UN said. Ki-moon also has called on all parties to cooperate with the new government in order to carry forward Nepal's peace process.

Even as Prachanda is basking on the glory of his victory, the international community has given enough indication on how they want him to immediately start picking up the pieces to rebuild the country without veering away from the peaceful, democratic path. ■



Police at press meet: Busting one gang

ORGANIZED CRIME

Ominous Signs

Even as they busted one of the members of the gang that kidnapped daughter of a leading neurosurgeon, police point at ominous signals of evolving organized crime syndicate in the capital

By SANJAY DHAKAL

When the police held a press conference last week to announce the capture of a member of a kidnapping gang that had abducted daughter of neurosurgeon Dr. Upendra Devkota, the attending press corps were amazed at seeing the video footage of what it said was the residence of the ringleaders.

The modern bungalow fitted with branded furniture and furnishing was more like a house of a millionaire businessman than a criminal.

Welcome to the world of organized crime syndicate, which the police have said, is spreading its tentacles within the capital valley rapidly.

Amid weakened policing capacity – due to excessive political interference, lack of resources and equipment and thoroughly disturbed environment of rule of law – the criminals are forming organized syndicate.

“The organized crime has taken roots in the capital. If they are not controlled soon with the cooperation of people, police and government, they can turn

into mafia like we have seen elsewhere,” said chief of Metropolitan Crime Division Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Upendra Kanta Aryal. “These organized gangs work in planned manner, they study beforehand the legal loopholes and ensure they can get away with the crime.” He said that kidnappers of Dr. Devkota’s daughter, too, had spent Rs 1.5 million and studied his family for three months before executing the crime.

One example of the expanding organized crime is the increasing cases of abduction for ransom. “There are many kidnapping cases. But due to fear the kidnappers sow among the family of victims, very few approach police. And without active cooperation of people, we cannot control such crime,” said chief of Crime Investigation Department at Police Headquarters Additional Inspector General Keshav Baral.

AIG Baral said that after they arrested Amar Tandon – a ringleader of another kidnapping gang – a few months, they had thought that the

abduction racket had ended in the capital. “But we were wrong in assuming that crime would end after arresting one or two criminals. This became clear with the abduction of Dr. Devkota’s daughter,” he said.

Last week, police arrested an alleged kidnapper of the daughter of Dr Upendra Devkota. Hem Bahadur Magar ‘Hemanta Gore’ of Dhankuta who allegedly kidnapped the 10th grader from her house at Bansbari two weeks earlier, was presented before media at Nepal Police Club Wednesday (Aug 13) evening. He was arrested from Nakkhu, Lalitpur.

Police said Magar was a member of the kidnapping ring that had released the 15-year-old girl after her family reportedly paid hefty sum (Rs 13 million) in ransom.

The involvement of organized crime syndicate was evident as police recovered two pistols and 33 rounds of bullet, Rs 2 lakh 43 thousand cash, two plastic hand grenades, police uniforms, one car, four motorbikes, one scooter and canyoning ropes from kidnappers.

“They were arrested based on the information that we received. We located the flat in which the victim was kept hostage. We also identified the kidnappers and arrested one of them,” said SSP Upendra Kanta Aryal at the press meet.

Officials said four other members of the kidnapping ring are at large and that the police department is preparing to issue red corner notices against them along with Rs 50 thousand bounty for their arrest.

Meanwhile, Dr. Devkota, who was present at the press meet, urged general public to cooperate with the police to end such crime from society. “Instead of seeking the help of legitimate authority, if we try to buy our safety from local dons, then such incidents will never end,” Dr. Devkota said.

Praising Nepal Police for their efforts and efficiency, Dr. Devkota urged all to advocate for better facilities for the police. “Had Nepal Police had the latest equipment on locating telephone calls which only costs around Rs 40 million, they could have nabbed the kidnappers within moments,” he said briefing how his family had voice-recorded the calls made by kidnappers seeking for ransom.

Dr. Devkota also said that he was not going anywhere outside Nepal because of this episode. “I hope this will be the last such crime,” he added. ■



Refugees: New Life

REFUGEES RESETTLEMENT

New Life

The IOM has said it has already resettled 3000 Bhutanese refugees

By A CORRESPONDENT

The resettlements of Bhutanese refugees have proceeded earnestly.

Till now, over 3,000 Bhutanese refugees, who were languishing in UNHCR-administered camps in eastern Nepal, have been resettled in the US, Denmark, Australia and other countries under the third country resettlement program.

An official at the International Office for Migration (IOM), which is playing a key role in the resettlement process, said that the process is continuing smoothly and as planned.

"So far, altogether 3,247 Bhutanese refugees have been resettled in various countries," he said. Among them, 3,034 were taken to the US, 102 went to New Zealand and 19 headed for Norway. Likewise, 13 and 62 others were taken to Denmark and Australia respectively, while 17 refugees were resettled in the Netherlands.

"Although the resettlement process

was objected to by a certain group of refugees in the beginning, the process is underway without any obstruction now," said Govinda Koirala, a staffer at IOM. "If everything goes as planned, all the refugees of one of the camps will be resettled in new countries by the end of December this year."

Many other refugees, who are waiting for their turn after already sending over some of their kin, said that they were now upbeat as those relatives were sending back positive messages from abroad. "I was worried as my younger brother, who was not very experienced with the outside world, was chosen for the resettlement," said refugee Hari Dhakal.

"But now he tells me over the telephone that he already has a mobile phone and computer facilities, and we are hopeful of a good life out there. An IOM official also claimed that the resettlement process is becoming easier due to the positive messages from those

already resettled abroad.

More than 108,000 Bhutanese refugees have been living in seven camps in Jhapa and Morang districts since 1992 after the Druk regime launched its ethnic cleansing.

The third country resettlement was started after the governments of Nepal and Bhutan failed to resolve the 17-year-old impasse. ■

INDIAN LEADERS IN TOWN

At the invitation of Maoist leaders, a delegation of Indian political leaders were in Kathmandu this week. They arrived in Kathmandu on Sunday.

The four-member delegation headed by Janata Dal (United) leader and chairman of Indo-Nepal Parliamentary Forum, Sharad Yadav, held talks with leaders of different parties on various dimensions of Nepali and Indian politics during their stay in Kathmandu.

Talking to journalists in New Delhi before flying to Kathmandu, Yadav said his team would urge Nepali leaders to draft the new constitution on consensus.

Reports said the delegation had received the go-ahead from South Block. The team members had held an extensive meeting with Indian foreign secretary Shiv Shankar Menon before setting off for Nepal.

During the two-day stay, Yadav's team held separate meetings with Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, UML general secretary Jhala Nath Khanal, coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum Upendra Yadav and Nepali Congress president and former Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala.

The Indian leaders also forwarded Indian premier Dr Manmohan Singh's invitation to PM Dahal for a visit to India. ■



Buddha Air: Financial Boost

IFC SUPPORT

Enhancing Air Capacity

IFC supports Nepal's Buddha Air to enhance efficiencies and tap growth opportunities

By A CORRESPONDENT

International Finance Corporation (IFC), a lending arm of the World Bank Group, is supporting Nepal's Buddha Air Private Limited, as the airline expands capacity and adopts new fuel efficiency methods that will reduce operating costs significantly. IFC is providing a \$10 million long-term loan to help finance the expansion.

"With IFC's support, Buddha Air can focus on optimizing growth opportunities to strengthen our operations in the face of rising oil prices and a rapidly evolving competitive landscape," said Birendra Basnet, Manag-

ing Director of Buddha Air.

"Infrastructure investments are a priority for Nepal's economic growth. We are pleased to support the development of the aviation sector, which is vital for the country," said Anita George, IFC Infrastructure Director. "This project fits well with IFC's strategy for Nepal and the wider region. It is heartening to see that Buddha Air has transitioned from a start-up to a profitable airline over the past decade."

Air travel is the most reliable source of domestic transportation in Nepal, because the country's mountainous terrain makes building roads difficult

and expensive. It is also the lifeline of the tourism sector.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, Nepal's GDP growth is expected to rise from 6.8 percent in 2008 to 7.9 percent by 2018. Given the increasing contribution of travel and tourism to the economy, the aviation sector will become more important and grow exponentially. There is also high potential for growth in the mountain-flight segment that caters to about 10 percent of international tourists arriving in the country. Buddha Air plans will focus on expanding this key segment.

According to a press release by the World Bank, IFC has previously invested \$62.7 million in four Nepali projects—two in hydropower generation, one in tourism, and one in a leasing company. IFC's investments in the transportation sector amount to \$500 million. Airlines that have received IFC loans include India's Jet Airways, Kenya Airways, and Russia's Siberia Airlines.

About IFC

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, fosters sustainable economic growth in developing countries by financing private sector investment, mobilizing private capital in local and international financial markets, and providing advisory and risk mitigation services to businesses and governments.

IFC's vision is that people should have the opportunity to escape poverty and improve their lives. In FY07, IFC committed \$8.2 billion and mobilized an additional \$3.9 billion through syndications and structured finance for 299 investments in 69 developing countries. IFC also provided advisory services in 97 countries. ■



NIBL: Larger reach

NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK

Making Difference

In a very short period, Nepal Investment Bank establishes itself as one of the most credible banks providing quality service of international standard

By A CORRESPONDENT

Led by Prithivi Bahadur Pande, Chairman and Chief Executive Director of Nepal Investment Bank Ltd, the management of NIB has shown that Nepalese, too, can run commercial bank with the level of international standard.

Nepal Investment Bank Ltd has been moving ahead aggressively on all fronts. It has established itself as a leading commercial bank in Nepal with international recognition. According to the bank, the total deposits of the bank as of Asadh end 2065 stood at Rs 34,451 million - a growth of 40.69% over the last year.

"Our strategic focus is to build the Bank into a preferred provider of financial services known for its innovation, service and excellence, and creating value for our shareholders," said Pande.

Total loans and advances as of Asadh end stood at Rs 26,996 million - a growth of 56.17% over the last year. Similarly, total investments stood at Rs 6,874 million. The non-performing loan of the bank is well within the control at 1.12%.

"The Bank has issued a total number of 138,358 Debit/Credit card to its customers. The total customer base of the Bank as of Asadh end 2065 stands at

165,649. The net profit of Bank during 2007/08 stands at Rs 696 million," said the press release.

Run purely by Nepalese management, Nepal Investment Bank continues to be in profit and it also distributes bonus to its shareholders annually.

When Pande took over the management of Bank, the country was passing through a very difficult phase of insurgency. But even during such politically unstable and chaotic situation, Pande showed courage to work in Nepal to support Nepal's overall economic situation.

Pande organized a team that has been successfully serving Nepal. In its process of expansion, Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. opened its 19th branch in Battispatali.

Inaugurated by Pande, the Battispatali branch is the eighth branch of the bank within the valley and 19th branch in the country.

The branch will be linked through ABBS (Any Branch Banking Services) to all other 18 branches of the Bank. The key services provided by the branch include 365 days banking, foreign exchange, retail banking, import, export, letters of credit and guarantees, remittance and credit facility.

Along with other facilities, the Battispatali branch will have also safe deposit lockers for the convenience and security of customers within the Battispatali area. To provide a 24 hour banking facility to its clients, the Bank has installed an ATM at the branch premises. The bank has currently installed 34 numbers of ATMs across the country with few more to be installed soon, making the Bank the leader in the industry.

According to the press release, the Bank is working on a strategy of expanding its branch network and providing exceptional banking services within all major business centers of the country. In the coming future, the Bank has plans of opening up branches in Gongabu, Boudhha, Surkhet, Palpa, Hetauda and Dhangadi.

In the coming years, it plans to have presence in the remote hilly markets like Jumla, Lukla, Jomsom and other potential markets as well. According to the Bank, within the next two to three years, it plans of having over 30 more branches spread across the country. ■

West Seti Hydroelectric Project

The West Seti Hydroelectric Project (WSHEP) is a 750 MW storage scheme proposed by West Seti Hydro Limited on the Seti River in the Far Western Development Region (FWDR) of Nepal. The Project consists of a dam and storage reservoir, an underground power station, a switchyard and 400 kV double transmission line for exporting the electricity to India.

The Project is classified as Asian Development Bank environment category A primarily due to the magnitude of resettlement and the adverse impacts on land use and terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem. Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC) prepared a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in seven volumes in between 1996 and 2000. Government of Nepal (GoN) approved EIA report in 2000. The EIA includes an Environmental Management Action Plan and Resettlement Action Plan.

The major structures of the Project are a 195 m high concrete faced rock-fill dam, 2060 hectare reservoir area, 6.7 km headrace tunnel, underground power station, 620 m tailrace tunnel, reregulation weir, switchyard, 20.3 km permanent access roads, and 132.5 km 400 kilovolt double-circuit transmission line in Nepal; as well as permanent accommodation for up to 200 operation and maintenance staff. Power Purchase Agreement has been done with Power Trading Corporation, India and at flat tariff of US \$ 0.0495/kWh up to 50 percent paid in the US dollars.

Power will be evacuated from the Project via 230.5 km 400 kV transmission line. The initial 132.5 km of this line will be located in Nepal, running south from the switchyard to Attariya then west to Mahendranagar, with the final 98 km heading southwest in India to join the Indian electricity transmission grid at Atamanda, 22km north of Bareilly.

The project will generate power from a head of 259 m, created by running the headrace tunnel across a river bend of the Seti River and thus diverting water

around a 19.2 km river section. The peak generation flow will be 330 cubic meter per second. The reservoir, having a total storage capacity of 926 million cubic meter of live storage and 640 million cubic meter of dead storage will inundate 25.1 km of Seti River and a total of 28 km of five main tributaries.

An estimated 1,579 households and 12,914 individuals will be resettled from the project site, with the majority of these requiring resettlement from the reservoir flood zone and no-habitation zone. The displaced households will be resettled to project relocation sites in the Terai compensating their lands and properties. The WSHEP has a plan to develop Terai resettlement sites on cultivation land purchased from larger landowners. In addition to compensation for asset losses, the Project supports resettlement and the restoration of livelihoods through the payment of various allowances, which include an evacuation/shifting allowance, household and business displacement allowances, cultivation disruption allowance for non-displaced households, rehabilitation allowance for vulnerable households, and rental stipend for tenant households.

A significant project livelihood improvement benefit would be the allocation of additional land to an estimated 38 percent of the households that are resettled to project relocation sites in the Terai who have land entitlements less than the defined minimum subsistence landholding. The project provides compensation for all affected household assets, and community resources and buildings, based on compensating for losses at replacement cost. The Project restores or improves the living standards and livelihood of all those affected and provide resettled households the direct economic benefits.

The Project establishment would definitely involve the loss of private land permanently required. The land, comprising irrigated and rain fed cultivation land, is valued at \$ 4.31 million based on the appropriate price of land in the project

area districts. The value of agricultural production that will be lost from this acquired land is estimated to be \$ 1.55 million per annum.

The projected budget of the WSHEP is US\$ 1.12 billion with investments from Snowy Mountain Engineering Corporation (26 percent), Asian Development Bank (15 percent), China National Machinery Import Export Corporation (15 percent), Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services Ltd (15 percent), Special Purpose Vehicle (14 percent) and Government of Nepal (15 percent).

Besides 10 percent free energy, Nepal gets other direct benefits as energy royalty of 2% of the total project revenue over the first 15 years and 10% thereafter, capacity royalty of NRs 100/kW per year for the first 15 years and NRs 1000/kW thereafter, export duty of 0.05%, forest leasehold and land taxes, corporate tax on profits in accordance with Electricity Act 1992 and project dividends as a 15% shareholder.

The project is a build-own-operate-transfer scheme, through which West Seti Hydro has a 30-year generating license that will provide about 24.5 years of generation before full ownership of the project is handed over to the government. WSHEP will create 6,000 jobs during construction positions and 200 permanent positions. The constructing company SMEC signed memorandum of understanding with GON on 7 July 1994 for the development of WSHEP. However, only after 14 years i.e on 1 June, 2008, the West Seti Hydro Limited applied for generation license and transmission license to construct WSHEP, which is expected to begin in near future.

Seen as the backbone of development of people of the FWDR of Nepal, with the operation of the WSHEP, people from affected areas would be benefited from job opportunities, education, health, drinking water, electricity and other aspects of development.

Source: *Hydro Nepal, Issue No 3, July 2008, URL: erg.com.np*

“I congratulate Prachanda who has joined the mainstream politics after twelve years of insurgency for being elected as Prime Minister.”

Sher Bahadur Deuba, former prime minister and senior Nepali Congress (NC) leader who was the only opponent Prachanda faced at the election of PM in Constituent Assembly (CA).

“When the alliance among NC, UML and MJF was forged to elect president, they (Maoists) termed it as unholy alliance. Now how come the alliance among Maoists, UML and MJF has become holy? I guess under the red flag everything becomes holy.”

Ram Chandra Poudel, vice president of Nepali Congress (NC), speaking at the Constituent Assembly (CA).

“When vegetable is mixed with cow dung, it becomes unholy, impure. Take the cow dung out and put in ghee, then it will become pure.”

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, senior leader of Maoists, speaking at the Constituent Assembly (CA).

“The UML will still continue to work for the national understanding.”

Jhalnath Khanal, general secretary of the Unified Marxist Leninist



(UML), speaking at Constituent Assembly (CA).

“We share the apprehensions of parties like Nepali Congress on the parallel institutions and army kept by the Maoists.”

Upendra Yadav, coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), speaking at Constituent Assembly (CA).

“They called us for power-sharing negotiation. But they were never ready to negotiate portfolios like Defense, Home and Finance.”

Bimalendra Nidhi, general secretary of NC, accusing the Maoists of intentionally keeping out NC from the alliance.

“Nepali Congress play an active role in constitution-making.”

Arjun Narsingh KC, spokesperson of NC.

“Most of our party leaders think that it is not appropriate to give Maoists the security-related portfolios.”

Madhav Kumar Nepal, former general secretary of UML.

TRANSITION

ELECTED: Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda,’ as the first prime minister of republic Nepal, by securing majority votes on Friday’s (Aug 15) election. Prachanda bagged 464 votes (out of 577 total votes) in his favor when the proposal to elect him as PM was put before Constituent Assembly (CA) members.

DEFEATED: Nepali Congress leader and former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, in the election for Prime

Minister. He only bagged 113 votes.

CALLED OFF: Strike in the eastern region, by transport workers, after an understanding with the government.

LEFT: Purushottam Ojha, Secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, for the United States, to start new phase of lobbying for market access facilities.

FLED: Fifty-four prisoners from the Siraha District Prison after overpowering security. One inmate was killed while fleeing. Five others were captured by

policemen, subsequently.

CAPTURED: Hem Bahadur Magar ‘Hemanta Gore’ of Dhankuta, one of the kidnapers of daughter of leading neurosurgeon Dr. Upendra Devkota, by the police.

WITHDRAWN: Digambar Jha, general manager of Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC), from NOC and brought to the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, by outgoing Minister Shyam Sundar Gupta.

RESIGNED: Yagya Murti Banjade, Attorney General, from his position.



NEPAL-INDIA MUSICAL CONCERT

Sitar Sandhya

The performance of Sujat Hussain Khan, a renowned Indian musician known for his mastery in sitar, thrilled the valley denizens

By A CORRESPONDENT

For many Nepalese, the sound of Sitar is not new as most of the Nepalese classic music is not complete without it. But only a few people realize the power of sitar and its beautiful sound. This was evident when Ustaad Sujat Hussain Khan played the instrument in Kathmandu last week.

Khan produced perfect sound when he combined sitar with Tabla and vocal. That was also the main attraction of Sitar Sandhya. Khan's team included two tabla musicians Sudhir Pandey, and Arunagshu Chaudhari and Guitarist and singer Ajan Khan.

Khan started by performing a sole performance on sitar. When his sitar was supported by Tabla and Guitar, it became more thrilling. And when the Sitar sound was combined with song, along with Guitar and Tabla, it produced a magical melody.

The power of his classical music was so strong that it captured the hearts and minds of audience gathered at Tribhuvan Army Club. The evening was made

memorable by the variety Ustad Khan presented. Sometimes the music from his sitar soothing and calm, while other time it was very vibrant.

"Indian culture is very vast and deep and it sure is making news everywhere. Be it Indian color or Indian music or Indian designs- all are just in vague," said Ustad Khan who had performed here around 20 ears ago.

Organized by Indian Embassy, Indian Culture Center and B.P. Koirala India Nepal Foundation, the show was coincided to mark India's 62nd Independence Day.

Supported by Nepal's renowned Sitar performer Dr. Dhrubesh Chandra Regmi, the two hour Sitar evening was full of extravaganza. Although two countries, Nepal and India, have separate political identity, people of these two countries have many common elements to share. The classical music is one of them. The joint concert performed by Indian musician Khan and Nepali musician Regmi depicted the

commonalities in music and culture.

"I was born and brought up in Shimla, so I have this connection with the mountains. I find Nepali music and culture and tradition so similar to India that I never feel that I was always from home whenever I am here," said Ustad Khan.

In the past few years, the visit of India's top musical groups helped bind these cultural ties much closer. Sitar Sandhya also reminded the audience about their common classical musical history.

Hailing from northern India, Sujat Hussein is one of the best musicians of classic music particularly in Sitar. In his performance, one can find touchy combination of sounds from various strings of Sitar. The whole moment of his concert was completely joyful.

He started to play sitar at an early age of three and went on to show his program at the age of six. Nominated for Grammy Awards in 2004, Khan has displayed how classical music has a greater relevancy even in this modern musical age of western domination.

Nepali musician Dr. Dhrubesh Chandra Regmi and Pramod Upadhyaya also produced excellent music in Sitar and Tabla. Renowned Nepali sitar player Dhrubesh Chandra had been trained by India's well known Sitar player Uma Shanker Mishra during his study period in New Delhi. Regmi has already received two important awards in classical music.

Khan showed sitar too has its own peculiarity of music which one can test. One of the music he played was his famous composition from the Album RAIN which was a joint music album of Indo-Persian musical instrument.

Nepali musician Dr. Dhrubesh Chandra Regmi and Pramod Upadhyaya also produce excellent music in Sitar and Tabala. Renowned Nepali sitar player Dhrubesh Chandra trained by India's well known Sitar player Uma Shanker Mishra during his study period in New Delhi. Dr. Dhrubesh Chandra Regmi has already received two important awards in classical music.

Playing sitar with Khan, Nepal's classical musician Dr. Regmi also showed how Nepal has so many commonalities in musical instrument and music. ■

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