



Opinion:
Dipak Gyawali



Focus:
Dr. Ramhari Aryal



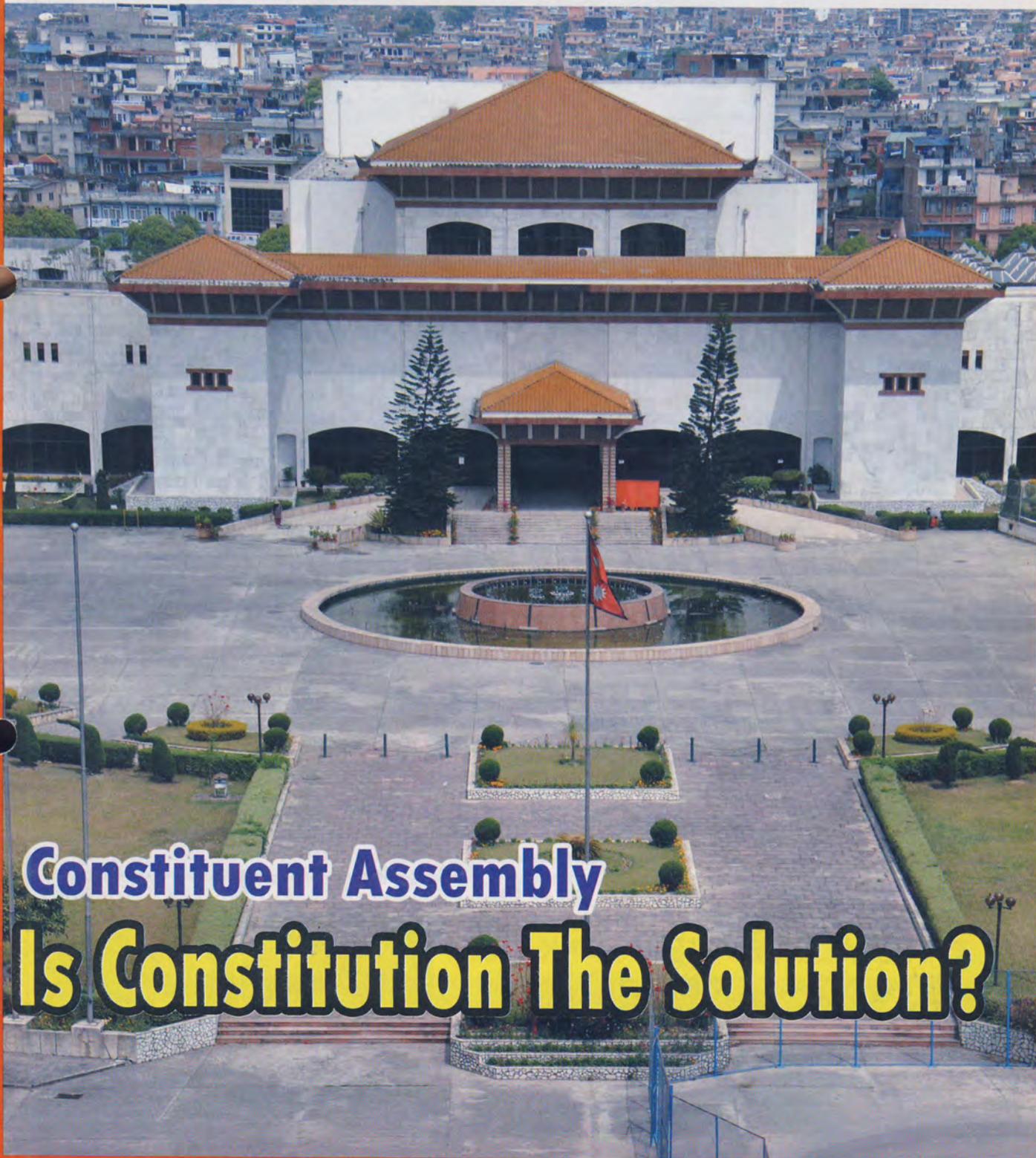
Viewpoint:
Dr. Tilak Rawal

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Constituent Assembly Is Constitution The Solution?

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From The Editor

As May 28 approaches, concerns over whether the new constitution will be promulgated by that deadline are naturally growing. Nepal has already experimented with six different constitutions in last six decades. None of them could survive for a long time. Therefore, one cannot predict how long the new constitution will last. Given the current disputes, it is also inevitable that the new constitution will land in controversy, once it is promulgated. In this context, we decided to look at the constitution making process and disputes involved in this week's cover story. The activities going on inside and outside the Constituent Assembly indicate that the new constitution, even if it is promulgated, may not give a durable solution to the long running political instability. Nepal's hard geostrategic realities are its two giant neighbors. Inside home, many voices of differences and dissents coming from a range of political and ethnic organizations have complicated the problems. Disagreements pervade from the top to the bottom of the constitution making process. Even in the best case scenario at the moment, the new constitution looks likely to face a fate similar to the one experienced by the previous six constitutions that Nepal experimented with before.

Writing a constitution is not a difficult task. The best constitution could be produced within a month as said by Professor Surya Subedi of Lloyd University of London. The difficult task is to make the document work for decades to come.

I would like to extend greetings to all our readers on the occasion of happy new year 2068.

Keshab
Keshab Poudel
Editor

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B'desh Marks Independence & National Day

The Bangladesh Embassy in Nepal observed the 40th anniversary of its Independence and National Day in a befitting manner by organizing various functions. The functions included the hoisting of National Flag, special prayer, discussions on the significance of the day, and a cultural programme at the Embassy premises on Saturday, March 26, 2011.

'Forty years ago, on this day, the greatest Bengalee of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh through the wireless of the then EPR at the first hour of March the 26th in 1971, when Pakistani occupation forces launched genocide on unarmed Bengalees on the fatal night of the 25th March, 1971,' the Embassy stated.



Ambassador of Bangladesh to Nepal Dr. Neem Chandra Bhowmik hoisted the national flag of Bangladesh. It was followed by recitation from Holy Quran, Bible, Gita, and Tripitak.

A discussion meeting was held at the embassy premises. Ambassador of Bangladesh to Nepal and other invited guests spoke on this occasion highlighting the significance of the day and contribution of Bangabandhu towards achieving the independence of Bangladesh.

A cultural programme was held to end the function. On this occasion a reception was held at Hotel Hyatt Regency in the evening. High government officials, professionals, artists, media persons, number of Nepali students, media persons, intellectuals, expatriate Bangladeshis, officers & staff members of this Embassy and their family members among others attended the above mentioned programmes.

German and US support to Tusha Hiti

German Ambassador Verena Gräfin von Roedern and American Ambassador Scott H. DeLisi today jointly inaugurated the water architecture projects of the Tusha Hiti and Bhandarkhal Tank at the Patan Royal Palace in Lalitpur, Nepal. The Tusha Hiti and Bhandarkhal Tank, exquisite examples of 17th century water architecture, are among the crowning artistic achievements of the Malla kings. The project to restore this stone sculpture is part of a larger effort of the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) to preserve the entire palace complex, which will reopen the courtyards, gardens, and other spaces to the public in 2012.

The German Government supported the conservation and restoration works undertaken in the years 2008 to 2010 through grants to KVPT totaling more than 11.6 million Rupees.

Since 1981, Germany has been supporting the preservation of cultural heritage across the globe as part of the Cultural Preservation Programme of the German Federal Foreign Office. The

programme is primarily designed to help developing countries build a sense of national identity, thus promoting the sort of intercultural dialogue between equal partners that is sought by Germany.

From the U.S. government, rehabilitation and preservation of this water architecture site was funded by a grant of \$86,700 dollars (about 6 million Rupees) through the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation to KVPT.

Nepal Law Commission Added Financial Acts In It's Website

Nepal Law Commission added all financial related acts in English with each amendment made by the government in each financial years. According to Udaya Raj Sapkota, Under Secretary of the Commission, the acts include VAT, Excise Duty and Income Tax Acts

Under Secretary Sapkota said that the commission is planning to add more acts related to financial matter. Nepal Law Commission's Homepage has 299 acts which are prevailing in Nepal. To read and download Nepalese laws, one need

to visit www.lawcommision.com

British Minister Says Visit Useful

British Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans Andrew Robathan completed his visit to Nepal after meeting high level officials, ex-Gurkha severcicemen and others.

'My first visit to Nepal has been very enjoyable and extremely useful. During my short stay, I have been privileged to meet many people including the Defence Minister, and Chief of the Army Staff, as well as members of British Gurkhas Nepal and the Gurkha Welfare Scheme. I was also pleased to exchange views with many representatives of Regimental and ex-Gurkha servicemen's organizations,' said Robathan.

Discussing Art In Kathmandu's Context

A discussion program on 'Contextualizing Art in the Kathmandu Valley' was held in Martin Chautari on 29th March, Tuesday. The keynote speaker was Kerry Lucinda Brown of Art History Department, Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond, Virginia, USA. Brown is a Fulbright Scholar and is here in Nepal for her PhD. Brown shed light on art history and her observations on the ancient art of the Valley. This program is a part of Art Discussion Series held every month in the hall of Martin Chautari.

Nepalese Army Chief Gurung Visits USA

Nepalese Army Chief General Chhetra Man Singh Gurung is busy meeting high officials in the United States of America. During his visit, General Gurung discussed with his counterpart several issues, including disaster management and role of Nepal Army.



Army Chief Gen. Gurung Meeting with American Lt. Gen. Charles H. Jacoby Jr. Director Strategic Plans and Policy

Indian Support To Various Schools

Ambassador of India Rakesh Sood inaugurated the newly constructed



campus building for Tansen Multiple Campus in Palpa District. An Indian grant assistance under the Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Programme supported the construction.

During his visit to Palpa District Indian ambassador Sood laid the foundation stone of school building for Shree Bhawani Higher Secondary School, Kusumkhola in Palpa District to be constructed with Govt. of India grant assistance of NRs. 2.34 crores under the Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Programme.

Similarly, Indian ambassador Sood inaugurated several projects constructed with Government of India's assistance of NRs. 4.67 crores under Nepal - India Economic Cooperation Programme.

In Kailali, Rakesh Sood, Ambassador of India, inaugurated the newly constructed school building for Shree Saraswati Secondary School, Beladevipur in Kailali District constructed with Govt. of India grant assistance of NRs. 3.33 crores under the Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Programme.

Human Rights Report Presented In Geneva

The United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms. Kyung-wha Kang presented the report of the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in Nepal at the 16th session of the Human Rights Council in

Geneva. The report is an annual submission focusing on the key human rights developments and challenges over the previous year and setting out the activities of the OHCHR office in Nepal, including its monitoring of the human rights situation and provision of technical assistance to state institutions and civil society.

New USAID Program

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) launched its Nepal Economic, Agriculture, and Trade (NEAT) Project with a panel discussion on Improving the Business Climate in Nepal on March 29 with key government officials, economists, businesspersons, and media. The two and half year NEAT program will help engage the private sector to improve the country's foundations for rapid, sustained, and inclusive private-sector led economic growth.

NHRC Concerned Over Blasts

The National Human Rights Commission has expressed its serious concern over the recent days' incidents of serial bomb explosions resulting in casualties in the districts including Rautahat, Banke, and Rupandehi.

'These types of terrorizing activities challenge the entire security system amidst the peace process and the constitution making process in progress in the country. Since placing explosives in public places and public transport is a grave human rights violation, NHRC urges the concerned group to immediately cease such activities that tend to terrorize the daily life of general public,' the commission stated.

Nepalis Honored For Fighting Trafficking

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission held a lunch reception in recognition of significant contributions by members of the community to raise awareness about

and combat human trafficking.

The honorees included representatives from the NHRC National Rapporteur on Trafficking and the National Women's Commission, police officials, business leaders, journalists, NGO representatives, and law students.

USAID Program Helps 800,000 Flood Victims

Through a bridge and road inauguration ceremony in Haripur VDC, Sunsari district, U.S. Ambassador Scott H. DeLisi, representatives of USAID, local government, and media celebrated the accomplishments of USAID's Flood Recovery Program, which helped more than 800,000 people in eight flood-affected districts of the Terai.

Designed to meet the long-term needs of the most flood-affected areas, this three-year program rehabilitated and developed small-scale infrastructure, increased farmer productivity and income, expanded the participation of youth and vulnerable populations in the development process of their communities, and improved awareness of sanitation, nutrition, and gender and protection issues.

The \$6.5 million program, funded by USAID and implemented by Fintrac Inc., was initially designed to respond to the 2007 floods in Kailali, Bardiya, Banke, Parsa, Rautahat, and Bara. It was subsequently expanded to Sunsari and Kanchanpur following the Koshi river floods in 2008. ■





Rajendra Shakya (Left) and Dhungana

GUNA GROUP: Chasing Gold Standards

From dealing with gold ornaments to city apartments, and from finance to flights, the Guna Group of business organizations is expanding its wings with the goal of reaching for the gold standards in Dedication pays. Rajendra Shakya, chairman of the Guna Group, a Nepali conglomerate, has shown it really does. In just one decade, Shakya has established companies, with big names and fames.

Shakya started off with his traditional business of making gold ornaments, but then, he also wanted to expand his wings in other sectors.

With intense efforts, Shakya diversified his business and turned it into the Guna Group of business organizations of Nepal.

"I am very happy that we have been able to transform and expand our business of traditional gold ornaments into a leading group of industries," said Rajendra Shakya. "The rapid progress of the company is due to its commitment to abide by the highest principles while doing the business- the integrity in commercial transactions."

The Guna Group is a conglomerate now active in many sectors of Nepal's economy and particularly renowned for its many successful housing developments. The group is also involved in other property developments, education, banking, finance, cinema and entertainment, jewelry, mobile communication, and cold storage.

As the demand for new houses is going up, the company has opened bookings for the GN apartments in Gwarko, Lalitpur, and announced launching the Fohora Complex, a fashionable shopping mall in Durbarmarg, Kathmandu.

Under the Guna Group, there are Guna Colony, KIST Medical College, Kathmandu Engineering College, KIST College, Guna Cinema Pvt. Ltd, Guna Jewelers Enterprises, Asian Foods Cold Storage Pvt Limited, Guna Mobile and Guna Airlines.

Established in 1998, the Guna Colony, the country's large and reputable company, involved in property development, has already completed housings like Stupa Housing, Sinamangal, Stupa Colony Buddhagar, Reliable Colony, Bhainsepati, and LP Apartment, Lazimpat. Three new projects like Bhainsepati

apartments, GN Apartments Gwarko and BN Apartment have already been launched.

Shakya's dream is to be established as the largest business group.

"Like our gold ornament business where we have been able to keep our integrity and reliability, we want to maintain the same standards in all our businesses. This will make us different."

Air Fare Comes Down By 20 Percent

The domestic private air operators have reduced air fares from 10 to 20 percent. "The previous increase in air fare had led to reduction in passenger flow by 30 percent. This reduction in price intends to lure back those passengers," said Prajwal Thapa, marketing manager of Guna Airlines. Even though the government policy states that air fare should be reviewed every two years, nothing was done for five years. The airline operators had increased fare by 30 percent only one and a half months ago.

'CG Paid Rs 5 Billion Tax'

The Chaudhary Group (CG) has informed that it paid around Rs 5 billion as taxes in the last one year. According to the information made available by the CG, three dozen companies under the group paid that amount of tax including VAT, excise, custom, income tax and special service charge. The CG is involved in food and beverage, consumer goods, electronic equipment, automobile, infrastructure development and financial services.

HBL in Solar Power

The Himalayan Bank Limited, in collaboration with the Winrock International, Alternative Energy Promotion Center and Janachetana Commercial Agriculture Alliance, launched recently a Solar Powered Energy Production System in Silinge, Kakada VDC, Ward No.1 of Makawanpur District, mainly inhabited by the highly deprived Chepang community.



Ashok SJB Rana, chief executive officer of the Himalayan Bank Limited, inaugurated the solar energy powered lights in Silinge. The solar power will help the community light their homes, use FM services and charge their mobile phones.



President's Questionable Intention

The constitutionally figure-head president Ram Baran

Yadav's style to act as an executive chief has alarmed the leftist parties. That his voice resembled that of Bijay Gachhadar, Rajendra Mahata and Mahantha Thakur,



President Dr. Yadav

who proudly claimed of India's blessings, has raised even more serious questions. He has been accused of indulging in invisible games to dissolve the constituent assembly and invite foreign interference. His activities over the past one month indicate that he is heading towards becoming a new king. Even more ominous is the danger of him becoming, knowingly or unknowingly, a pawn of India. During a recent visit to India, he met influential Indian leaders. The Indian importance to the visit of a ceremonial president was aimed at bringing him on board to impalement the Indian roadmap. In a meeting with reporters organized by Reporters Club he warned that any action that disregards the Congress and the Madhesi parties would not be constitutional. Earlier, he had warned that constitution based on a two-thirds support could be burnt by any party. He also told leaders of some small parties that the term of the constituent assembly should not be extended and that the people would not accept an extension. The president has on one hand been citing the Congress the Madhesi cards to rally against the present ruling coalition, he has also been lobbying for the dissolution of the CA even before it completed its task. It is obvious that both these agenda had been mooted by India through Surya Bahadur Thapa, Bijay Gachhchhdar, Mahanta Thakur and Rajendra Mahato. That a dignified person like the president should be seen endorsing it is a sign of serious danger. Nepal's constitution clearly provides for promulgating the new constitution by a two-thirds majority. It provides for an alternative

only if the two-thirds were not possible. That the new constitution by the May deadline is impossible now. But there is no alternative to make the constitution through the CA. But moves are afoot to not extend the CA at any costs and prevent the new constitution. It is against the backdrop of this conspiracy that the Maoists have suspected that the presidential rule will be imposed, CA dissolved and massacre carried out. The UML and the Maoists are bent on issuing a short constitution, if not a full-fledged one, and conclude the peace process including the army integration. The next few weeks will see a huge confrontation between those who want to save the CA and those who want to kill it. The president is leading the latter camp.

(Sanghu, April 4)

'Nationalist' Prachanda's Secret Love For India

It has been revealed that the Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', who claims to be a nationalist on anti-Indian plank, is so passionate about the same country. At one point, he said that India did not let him become prime minister, so the national independence struggle now is only against India. But he is now learnt to have secretly asked through a 'postman' to arrange for a visit to India. The opposition Janata Dal United chairman Sharad Yadav has disclosed that Prachanda had written to him about his desire to visit India. Referring to a letter sent through one of the advisors to Prachanda when he was prime minister, Yadav said that Prachanda has pleaded for help in improving the ties with the

Indian establishment. Yadav had conveyed Prachanda's desire to Prime minister Man Mohan Singh and Congress president Sonia Gandhi, but national security



Indian PM Singh and Prachanda

advisor Shiv Shanker Menon consulted with ambassador Rakesh Sood about it and the planned visit was aborted. Sood is dead against Prachanda's visit to India during his tenure. But Prachanda's 'postman' is again in Delhi with a second letter of his boss. (Tarun, April 4)

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The Word Lab

Revolutionary versus Evolutionary Nepal

By *DIPAK GYAWALI*



Bipolar disorder is a psychiatric name given to a condition where euphoric moments of elevated energy are followed by depressive downswings. If Kathmandu were a person, it would be diagnosed as having one, be straitjacketed and confined in a padded hospital cell.

This last month has seen more oscillations of 'good news: bad news' than what should be permissible by law for the health of its citizens. And one is not talking of the 'leaders have met to forge a consensus' trivia against which everyone is long immunized to expect more raw differences to emerge in the aftermath. It is instead good news that is followed by counter-factuals that are depressing, like the Supreme Court's finally cracking down on corrupt politicians. It had everyone elated one day, only to learn the next day that there was a longer list of even bigger fish that would never be caught. That is because the chief justice who initiated this clean-up is retiring in a month and the other party nominees in the bench are not expected to be as strict with their benefactor-nominators.

The good news is that the government declared an 'energy emergency' in a country facing 14 hours of power cuts a day for the last so many years. The bad news is that this very political combination of EhMaLeys and Maobadees had two years ago declared a similar 'energy emergency' and a 38-point program to tackle it as well as to generate 10,000



Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal

MW of electricity in as many years. It will be remembered in some historical footnote as a wholly ignored enterprise whose fate the current 'energy emergency-2' looks certain to share. The attempt to create an 'energy triumvirate' authorized to enter any house without warrant and to shoot occupants if resisted, to put those protesting bad hydropower projects in jail for five years, to cancel or award licenses at will by bypassing the Ministry of Energy, the NEA or the Water and Energy Commission are not measures that will excite the already wary national or international financial investors. And the main partner in the coalition, the Maoists have already declared at a press conference that they were not

consulted by the EhMaLeys finance and energy minister before making this declaration, that they disagree with some of its key provisions and (as became apparent at an interaction with their MPs) they suspect their other coalition partner the EhMaLeys of trying to use this crisis to promote their cadre's hold on hydropower licenses.

It was good news that Nepal's oldest institution, the Nepal Army was no longer treated as a pariah, at least by one major emerging super power. The bad news was that an aid agreement was signed with it, not by its ambassador and our finance secretary, but by the two army chiefs, albeit under a portrait of Prithvi Narayan Shah. Even more depressing to a liberal democrat, not a squeak of protest was heard from those civil society thekedars who have in the past cried themselves hoarse about 'civilian supremacy'. Maybe they ran out of their Western INGO 'inclusiveness and conflict resolution' munificence to buy candles for a vigil at the Maitighar Mandala! Nepal seems to be falling headlong into the post-colonial 1950s similar to Pakistan, Nigeria and Congo: democratic experiments conducted by less-than-democrat politicians leads to anarchy, the army steps in to restore order, and the kleptocrats quickly change colour and sides.

The good news is that the President has begun, like a headmaster, to call errant schoolboy politicians not doing their assigned homework to shape up. The bad news for Loktantra is that he is doing exactly what King Gyanendra had to do as head of state when the parliament had imploded and squabbling politicians were unable to bring the ship of state to even keel. Even worse news for the President is that King Gyanendra as king at least had the weight of tradition behind him, he had Article 127 of the constitution that an all-party consensus had activated for him to use, and he still had the 1990 constitution that he was committed to bring back on track through fresh elections. Ram Baran Yadav is distrusted by the Maoists for the Katwal episode, by the Sher Bahadur

faction of the Kangress for openly lobbying for the Koirala faction during the party convention, and by Jhalanath Khanal for being an 'active president' bypassing the prime minister in political consultations. He has no Article 127 for backup and the Interim Constitution is in tatters anyway; and there is no provision to call for an election of anything in it. And the office of the president has not managed to strike a single self-confident root that is not a desperate imitation of the sidelined monarchy. How he and the political parties will react to the May 28 Damocles Sword, and how the rest of the country will react is as wild a guess as it gets.

Such bipolar disorder is the result of an unfortunate infantile romanticism within a dominant faction of Nepali public thinking. Healthy open societies start with a problem, a realistic public assessment of the context within which the problem exists and a search for incremental solutions whose implementation is constantly monitored and corrected and which would not completely destabilize the system. This is the path of sustainable evolution. Unfortunately we suffer from revolutionary romanticism where an irresistible urge takes over the body polity to 'wipe the slate clean' and start re-drawing everything according to some fanciful master plan. In more revolutionary cases than one, global history tells us that the paranoia of the new political masters takes over, most of what is good of the old (but very little of the bad) is destroyed, and the new never gets built on the rubble of the past. This is where New Nepal is today, five years after the euphoria of 2006, stuck in a blind alley with a defunct Constituent Assembly and squabbling party warlords, even worse than 1958, 1997 or 2002.

An evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary thinking would have allowed us to balance the best of tradition with the most promising of incremental changes. The attempt to effect revolutionary change has left us

with ruins and rue. It would have been less destabilizing if in 1951 we had taken Padma Sumshere's 1948 constitution and simply improved upon it. In 1990, if just the word "partyless" in the 1962 Panchayat constitution had been removed, a more stable democracy resting on well-tested administrative and judicial foundations would have ensued and might not have seen the emergence of a bloody civil war that took 14,000 lives. In 2006, we do not need to speculate if appropriate amendments to the 1990 democratic constitution might have given us a more stable Nepal: the godfather of this federal republic Girija Koirala himself

admits as much in his just published memoirs.

The people-given mandate of the Constituent Assembly ran out in May 2010 and its self-extension has less than two months to go with no chance of it birthing a viable constitution. Is it not time to admit that the experiment of 2006 was a big mistake, that extending the term of the incompetent CA is pointless, that we need to go back to the democratic norms of 1990 and start evolutionary reforms from there? Yes, there will be a lot of red faces, national and international, but that is a small price to pay. ■

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Government in Controversy

By DR. TILAK RAWAL



Current government formed after the controversial seven-point deal signed between the chairpersons of UML and UCPN Maoist is still in an infant stage in that even after two months of its declaration pm Khanal is still struggling to get new members in from different parties including the one of which he is the chairperson. Nepali Congress (NC) expressing deep reservations on the two clauses related to the integration of Maoist combatants and heading the government by turn, has demanded scrapping of the deal. On this front of struggle, NC is joined by a number of party including a strong fraction of UML led by Nepal and Oli. NC is currently flooded with issues that it needs to agitate on as the controversies of one kind or the other have fully inundated the current dispensation. Of the numerous controversies created by the government in such a short period of time, the government idea about a supplementary budget for the remaining few months of the current fiscal has not only surprised but created serious doubts in the minds of observers about the intention of the authorities at a time when capital expenditure has taken a nose dive, revenue collection is likely to meet the annual target of Rs 216 billion and the government has more than Rs. 20 billion parked with the central bank. Further, nobody is prepared to believe that the supplementary budget will contribute towards taming high level of inflation, double digit since last 34 months, narrowing the trade deficit standing at record 27 percent of gdp and correcting the persistently negative balance of payment. Since the government has failed to provide answer to these queries raised from different quarters, opposition to this proposal of government is mounting not only from parties in opposition but from within UML itself. Rumours circulating in Kathmandu suggest that Maoists experts are working on the budget for the next three months, ignoring the concerned officials in the line ministry. DPM and in charge of finance and energy ministry read out in the legislative parliament a policy document on energy that, in addition to declaration of energy emergency, came up with an ambitious plan of four-and-a-half-year to deal with related woes. This plan talks about harnessing solar energy, installation

immediately of thermal plants to reduce power outage hours and encouraging swift implementation of hydro power projects through provision of funds from financial institution, subsidy and tax rebate. DPM Adhikari also told the house that he would soon place a bill on the related issues. People and parliamentarians were encouraged to learn about the energy document that appeared to have been written with inputs from line agencies and we had no reason not to believe that this would be different from previous declaration of energy crisis by then prime minister Prachand who had also promised to go for massive installation of thermal plants to solve

Analysts were in no mood to draw any line of analogy between then and now until it was reported by the press that the policy document was prepared in the ministry of finance completely ignoring the energy ministry

power problems. This declaration of Prachand thrown for public consumption without proper homework and consultations met with vehement opposition from UML, then coalition partner under whose jurisdiction fell then water resources ministry. Analysts were in no mood to draw any line of analogy between then and now until it was reported by the press that the policy document was prepared in the ministry of finance completely ignoring the energy ministry. Further, Nepal Electricity officials and unionists expressed their serious reservations about some of the provisions contained in the policy document. The idea of powering Singh Durbar by solar energy has become controversial, too. The infant government is dragged into controversy on this front, too. Finance secretary Rameshwor Khanal's resignation has pushed this seven-member government into the most serious controversy as Khanal, a man of integrity and professional skill, is believed to have major differences with minister Adhikari on the supplementary budget, action on tax (vat) evaders, massive transfer of ministry officials and over the appointment in the proposed energy commission. Gathering from whatever little is heard from Khanal from distant corners of Nepal, one is tempted to

conclude that his resignation at this point of time was not planned since long, despite his insistence. It is now crystal clear that he was feeling bitter about the way budget work was carried out by people that had hardly anything to do with the ministry. Further, Khanal was also unhappy, it is gathered, about Adhikari's reluctance to take tough action against fake vat receipt racketeers some of which are said to be resourceful enough to influence the decision of the government. This reported involvement of big business houses in the racket has further fertilized the suspicion of those who want to believe that the government was thinking of providing relief to the evaders through supplementary budget. Otherwise, where is the need for a new budget when we are already into the ninth month of the current fiscal. Khanal's resignation would not have received this kind of prominence and publicity had it been tendered in normal times when issues of national importance had not engulfed a government. Can we, therefore, blame him for what the main opposition party is doing in the parliament and what we are writing and speaking on the controversy? Why should one not believe that he resigned after PM Khanal and other stalwarts of UML jointly accused him of noncooperation?

Everybody with some sense fully understands that the current government led by UML party has come into existence as a result of cooperation provided by the number one party (Maoist) in the country following the controversial deal signed between the two parties. It should also be understood that people want the Maoists to see that the government works responsibly without indulging in serious controversies. It is understood that Maoists had serious reservations about this year's budget, which forced them into using muscle to prevent it from being read in the parliament. They should, however, not fail to understand that a supplementary budget for three months cannot be a good substitute of the full fledged budget at this point of time. They should concentrate on the budget for the next fiscal and try to bring it little earlier, unlike the delays last three years, so that capital expenditure also increases reasonably to induce economic activities. We are one of the most corrupt and poorest nations in the world.

(Dr. Rawal is a CA member and a former Governor of the central bank)

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Constitutional Conundrum

As May 28 draws closer, concerns over whether the new constitution will be promulgated by that deadline are naturally growing. The activities going on inside and outside the Constituent Assembly indicate that the new constitution, even if it is promulgated, will not give a long term solution to the long running political instability. Nepal's hard geostrategic realities are its two giant neighbours. Within home, the many voices of differences and dissents coming from a range of political and ethnic organisations compound the problems. Disagreements pervade from the top to the bottom of the constitution making process. Even at the best scenario at the moment, the new constitution looks likely to face a similar fate as the six constitutions that Nepal experimented with before

By KESHAB POUDEL

Now retired, Nepal's eminent constitutional lawyer Ganesh Raj Sharma five years ago predicted that Nepal would have to introduce many constitutions before the country stabilized and argued no constitution, the best or the worst, had a solution to Nepal's political problems.

Given Nepal's geo-strategic location between two powers, India and China, Nepal had a long way to go before it gained the constitutional stability, Sharma had said.

Writing a constitution was not a difficult task. The best constitution could be produced within a month as

announced by professor Surya Subedi of Loyed University of London. The difficult task was to make the document work for decades to come. Sharma used to assert that even the god would be doomed to fail in Nepal and no human was an exception.

Sharma's remarks never rang truer than today. A number of political and ethnic organizations have already declared that they will scrap the constitution in case it fails to protect their interests.

CA members Bishwendra Paswan and Sadural Miya Haq threw out the chair of

the Constitutional committee when it rejected their amendment proposal to incorporate in the new constitution.

"If the new constitution does not recognize the rights of Dalits and minority Muslims, we will burn its copies as soon as it is promulgated," said Paswan. "We will go for a long struggle against the state."

Minority Muslim's rights should be recognized in the constitution, demanded CA member Sradural Miya.

"If the CA ignores our demands, we will have no option other than to go for a rebellion," he said.



Constituent Assembly

These two smaller parties are not the only ones to challenge the future constitution. Other political parties and ethnic groups hold equally strong views.

"If the present constitution does not declare 'one Madhesh, one Pradesh', we will call a massive uprising in the Terai. In the state restructuring process, Madhesh should be given autonomy with the right to self-determination," said Rajendra Mahato, chairman of Nepal Sadbhavana Party.

Ethnic and regional groups in various parts of Nepal have been pressing on similar demands.

"The new constitution should recognize the rights of ethnic groups, local autonomy and right to self-determination," said Rajendra Lingden, leader of Khumbuwan Mukti Morcha.

Nepali Congress and CPN-UML have also similar tones. "Nepali Congress wants integration of Maoist combatants before the promulgation of the new constitution. If the constitution does not incorporate basic ingredients of

democracy, we will not accept it," said Arjun Narshing KC, spokesperson of Nepali Congress. "The new constitution must guarantee pluralism, loktantrik values, the right to speak, the rule of law," he said.

UCPN-Maoist has its own reservations. "The new constitution should establish the Federal People's Republic Nepal. We don't want a multiparty democracy as proposed by CPN-UML and Nepali Congress as people have already rejected their model of democracy," the party leaders harped.

These statements and remarks show that the new constitution is also not going to give a long term political solution and soon after its promulgation the countdown for another constitutional exercise will begin.

As experts see there is enough basis to write the new constitution, and in fact, the Constituent Assembly may promulgate Nepal's sixth constitution by May 12, 2011. But the question remains how long will it last or will all Nepalese accept the document?

Given Nepal's extraordinary geo-strategic position between Asia's two giants, Nepal will need to wait for securing constitutional stability. The recent indications in the Constituent Assembly and outside it showed the coming constitution drafted by CA will

face the fate of five previous constitutions.

According to Constituent Assembly Secretariat, CA held 107 meetings till so far. Interestingly, except the Committee to Determine the Bases of Cultural and Social Solidarity, the reports of all seven committees have disputes in them. There are still 78 disputes in the reports of six committees.

Although issues of basic fundamental rights like liberty, equality and right to life, right to property and freedom of expression were settled long time back, there are 11 disputes in the report of the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles Committee. There are 33 disputes in the report of Committee to Determine Legislative Organs and 4 disputes in the report of the Committee on Determination of Forms of Governance.

Although Nepal has a long practice of Independent Judiciary, there are 8 core disputes on them. There are 2 disputes in the report of Committee on Protection of National Interests. Most of the disputes are there in the report of Constitutional Committee.

From issues like the national animal to the national flower and the national flag and the national anthem, parties and groups have held divergent views. Nobody wants to budge from their stands.

"National flag and national animal

1. Nepal Government Act 2004
2. Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007
3. Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal 2015
4. Constitution of Nepal 2019
5. Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal 2047
6. Interim Constitution of Nepal 2063

should be changed in the context of a new secular Nepal. "Cow and national flag are symbol of Hindu Kingdom and new Nepal should not accept them," said UCPN-Maoist leader Dev Gurung.

A high level committee has already been set up under the chairmanship of UCPN-Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda to settle the disputes and start to write the first draft of the constitution. As the disputes remain unsettled, the Constitutional Committee on March 30, 2011 decided to extend the term of the dispute resolution sub-committee till April 14, 2011.

"There are now 30 outstanding issues related to 4 committees," said Nilamber Acharya, chairman of Constitutional Committee. "If they are settled, the core issues will be resolved, and we will draft the constitution in a month."

Thirty outstanding issues include five related to Committee on Determination of Forms of Governance, 11 related to Committee on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles, two related to the Committee on the Protection of National Interests and 12 to the Constitutional Committee.

The parties are yet to agree on the Preamble, constitutional amendment, name of constitution and miscellaneous issues. "I am still hopeful that the parties will produce the constitution by May 28. This is their obligation," speaker of the House of Representative told New Spotlight.

The disputed issues were settled six decades ago but parties and groups are raising demands indicating nothing will pacify them. The statements, remarks of politicians and all these disputes on the clauses of Nepal's sixth constitution show that the new constitution may be short lived even if it is promulgated by May 28.

Another eminent lawyer Kushum Shrestha also holds the opinion that Nepal's geostrategic location needs to be looked at in the process of constitution making. "Nepal, a weak but strategically important country between two powerful nations, has a significant list of sensibilities. These factors always contribute to the stability of Nepal's constitutional process," said senior advocate Shrestha. "There are certain fundamentals in the new constitution."



CA Building

American scholar late Leo Rose left us a very valuable book Strategy for Survival: Nepal's Case. "The constitution of Kingdom of Nepal 1990 has strands of seamless web and new constitution too incorporate these." "If we deviate from strands of seamless web, we will face unimaginable consequences," writes Shrestha in his article published in December 2006 in the bulletin of Civil Society Alliance for Political Reform (CiSAPR).

According to Shrestha, for a vibrant democracy, rule of law or constitutionalisation is a prerequisite. In writing the future constitution for Nepal, strands of seamless web including national unity, democracy and constitutionalism must be considered. A country like Nepal has to be prepared to face challenges coming from multi-language, multi-religion and multi-culture realities and compulsion of Nepal's geo-strategic position.

Our experiments in the last 60 years of modernization have shown that political turmoil and slogans of changing constitution were the reflections of our fate of life and no constitution will give real solution without factoring the geopolitical realities in a globalised world.

According to the noted constitutional lawyers, Nepal's two neighbors are cause of problems and they are not the solution at all. What Nepal has been facing is the continuation of a protracted conflict

between Asia's two giants. As there is no immediate hope for warming of their relations, Nepal will have to go through a very difficult phase. Whatever political and constitutional course Nepal takes, its status as an independent nation cannot be changed. "One of the advantages of Nepal is that it links India's vast land of Ganges plain with Tibetan Plateau that is a prerequisite for them," said the lawyer.

One may wishfully look for consensus among all political forces to promulgate the new constitution by May 28. For stability, Nepal needs a new development based on ground realities. As long as the situation in the region is hostile and hot, Nepal's constitution will continue to be at jeopardy. ■

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Has Democracy Collapsed?

By YUBARAJ GHIMIRE



The rule by a majority obtained through a fair election process is the main feature of democracy. In its conduct, the majority needs to stick to a set of principles, at the political and the party levels. In governance, it needs to adhere to the principle of accountability.

The absence of accountability in politics and governance is an anti-thesis to democracy. Minority voice or dissent within the party is another parameter for the measurement of democracy.

The practice and principles of democracy elsewhere entail a guarantee to certain freedoms and rights, namely, freedom of expression, right to own property, and right to uphold human dignity, among others. In the days to come, the right to a dignified livelihood, that essentially means the right against poverty and hunger, is likely to be included among the fundamental rights.

An independent judiciary free from any executive interference, and a free and fair electoral system, unaffected by money and muscle power, are essential ingredients of a truly democratic practice that we set out for during our democratic struggles.

Where are we in this journey that started in April 2006?

The beginning was full of euphoria, but commitment and character were lacking. Political vendetta and quest for revenge were the weapons that the neo rulers under the leadership of G P Koirala, of course with the support from the Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) and the Maoists, and with full backing from the international community, used against political opponents.

The rulers turned the country into a fief (birta)-as noted scholar Kedar Bhakta Mathema says- instead of a democratic state. The parliament, which was dissolved in May 2002, was revived by invoking the doctrine of political necessity four years later. It then turned into a crowd of 'yes men (and women)' with no institutional pride. Two leaders- Nepali Congress's G P Koirala and Maoist Chief Prachanda-enjoyed a position much above parliament deciding things in their room jointly and imposing the decisions upon the parliament.

Dictators always use the so-called representative bodies as a 'rubber stamp' and the collective willingness of that institution to succumb to individuals made democracy and democratic institutions weaker.

They were given the status above accountability. And gradually, they roped in some other parties-UML, Madheshi groups-and as per the composition of parliament (and later Constituent Assembly) and the government, and also began a system of distributing key positions among their loyalists and supporters. They did that all in the name of pursuing a

progressive politics and abolishing feudalism. The civil society, the media and the international backers were either meek in their response, or they started playing second fiddle in a way that was both against their expected roles as well as Nepal's sovereignty.

And worse, they never said democracy was facing its worst trial, much worse than it was during the Royal takeover.

Yes, King Gyanendra misinterpreted the constitution and took over. But the new dispensation totally attacked the principle of constitutionalism and democracy. Opposition was crushed as the first two leaders, then four parties-Nepali Congress, UML, Maoists and the Madheshi groups -became the self-proclaimed champion of 'politics of consensus' and that consensus became more powerful than the interim constitution or undermined the principle of constitutionalism.

The Supreme court has recently convicted a Nepali Congress leader and a former minister in corruption cases. But as the country turns into a 'birta' of four parties, not a single political leader belonging to the parties during the 'progressive regime' of the past four years has been booked for corruption, although everyone knows the scale of corruption and misappropriation of government funds in a discretionary manner were the largest ever for the country.

Democracy never got practiced in actual sense. The leaders and rulers of the past four years have refused to accept the system of accountability. Economy has almost collapsed. The country

prominently figures in the list of fragile states. And yet no accountability has been fixed for this colossal failure. Yet, some leaders are making dangerous statements that the country's sovereignty is less important than the peace process and constitution making.

The parliament, which is also a Constituent Assembly of 601 members, cannot survive indefinitely at the cost of taxpayer's money. It has neither debated the people's problems nor their general insecurity, price rise and other myriads of issues concerning them. It has lost faith and hope that the people reposed in it earlier. There are no signs that it will deliver a complete and democratic constitution. Nor is it likely to settle major issues or debates on federalism and its bases. The king was held accountable for what he did, and perhaps, what he did not do. But will these leaders and the House be held accountable for their collective failure?

It will be interesting to watch if even a single member of any party resigns on the call of conscience questioning the moral authority of the House and his or her own to continue being there? Absence of accountability and a politics sans morality will pave the way either for authoritarianism or anarchy. ■



Former King Gyanendra

RESIGNATION ROW

Can Of Worms?

Finance Secretary Rameshwore Khanal's sudden departure has opened a can of worms that threaten to harm, if not destroy, the government's credibility

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

When on March 29 morning finance secretary Khanal walked out of his office and went for a short hibernation, it was the proverbial last straw that had broken the camel's back.

To his close acquaintances, finance secretary Khanal used to express the growing disenchantment with the 'all-around corruption and greed'.

But, close sources have confided, enough was enough for him when, on that morning, he was hinted, on no uncertain terms, that his dissatisfaction with the manner the supplementary budget was being prepared and the policy direction it was adopting, was being perceived as 'non-cooperation' by the prime minister. **Runaway Secretary?**

Immediately afterwards, he put in his papers to the Chief Secretary.

He actually submitted two different letters to the Chief Secretary - one requesting two weeks long leave and another stating his resignation to be effective from April 13.



Rameshwore Khanal

As far as the deputy prime minister and finance minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari was concerned, all hell broke loose after Khanal's sudden departure and his subsequent silence.

What resulted in the theories of runaway secretary was his apparent hibernation and lack of knowledge about his whereabouts to even his minister and ministry colleagues.

Different media gave different spins to the story. The 'Freedom is so precious' line secretary Khanal posted on his Facebook wall before vanishing also unleashed numerous conspiracy theories.

The mud hit the fan. Smeared were the finance minister, prime minister, ruling coalition and even some business houses.

Stories of how Khanal was being pushed to loosen the pace at which the Ministry was conducting investigations on the billion rupees evasion of Value Added Tax (VAT) through the use of fake receipts by the minister under influence of business houses; to how Khanal's action against casino royalty defaulters and Unity scamsters had drawn ire from certain quarters had been pushed to front pages of the newspapers. **Government In Fire**

Four days after he left office, Khanal returned to the capital and remarked that it was his personal decision to leave office.

But much had changed by that time. Minister Adhikari had been forced to make public his whole-hearted support to actions against fake VAT bill users.

He even had to backtrack from the strong push he gave for supplementary budget.

"We are looking at various options regarding whether to bring in supplementary or full budget. But we will do so in consensus with political parties," he said.

On Monday, Prime Minister Jhal Nath Khanal himself was forced by the opposition Nepali Congress to address the parliament on secretary Khanal episode.

"The government had not pressured the secretary to resign. If he wants to come back, the door is open and we will ensure there is cordial environment for him to function," the prime minister said.

For the time being, secretary Khanal has ruled out that possibility.

But the episode did highlight the fact



Minister Adhikari

that despite secretary's Khanal's departure, it won't be easy for anyone to brush aside the ongoing investigations into tax evasion and/or engage in framing budget outside Ministry's realm.

Khanal must be taking respites from these facts.

But for PM Khanal and his government, the episode is a smack in the face especially given the volleys of public criticism questioning his integrity and claims of clean governance.

Change in China's Nepal Policy

The departing Chinese Ambassador Qiu Guhong during his farewell meetings with Nepalese leaders indicated that new **Qiu Guhong** developments are taking place in China's policy towards Nepal. While giving importance to over 2500 years old Sino-Nepal Relations, he informed that the bond of cooperation would be further strengthened in the areas of development, including hydro-power and infrastructure sectors, as indicated by high level visits and new commitments. According to sources, he categorically pointed out two major changes in China's Nepal policy during his meetings: First, a change from 'good neighborly partnership' to 'comprehensive partnership', and second, a shift from 'friendship level' to 'strategic level'. He however did not explain what these changes meant. The Ambassador, who had served only for two year and five months in Nepal, has been moved to Beijing for a more important strategic assignment at the External Affairs Ministry to look after 'border security and terrorism'. ■



Qiu Guhong

Sukute Meet Solidified UCPN-Maoist

By DINANATH SHARMA



The recent meeting in Sukute, Sindhupalchok, has been able to settle all political differences within the United Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist. This may be a major setback for feudal monarchists and foreign elements that have made all out efforts to weaken UCPN-Maoist. In a living party like UCPN-Maoist, it is natural to see some sort of differences of opinion but such differences cannot split the party as wished for by pro-monarchist and pro-reactionary forces. Of course, there were delays in the process of decision making in some stage, yet our party's standing committee meeting has taken a number of decisions including on the names to represent the party in the cabinet and the convention of Trade Union Federation.

One of the important aspects of the recently concluded standing committee meeting is that it conveyed the message that no one can split UCPN-Maoist which fought such a long people's war to secure the rights of oppressed, marginalized and ethnic communities in Nepal. Reactionaries, deposed monarchists and foreign forces can dream to see a split in our party. I don't think their dream will ever be fulfilled. All the political forces that joined hands to abolish monarchy and make Nepal a federal, secular democratic nation need to be cautious about hidden designs of feudal forces. Realizing all this, our party leaders gave a message that the sacrifice and contribution made by more than 15,000 martyrs will not be wasted.

From the very beginning of our party joining the peace process, some forces have made efforts to split our revolutionary party to block the reforms and change. However, our party leaders have been able to crush all conspiracies hatched against Loktantra. I am proud to say that our party leaders have strongly expressed their commitments to the unity of the party. Taking part in the discussions, they have pleaded the need for party unity. All of them know that any split in the party will harm not only them but the whole movement of Loktantra and republic. Nepal's traditional forces including monarchists are yet to accept the fact that their wish to restore the monarchy is just a day dream. People have already abolished the monarchy and no Nepalese wants to see this feudal

institution coming back. We know that monarchists and families of former King have been making efforts to come back. Our party's message of strong unity foiled all kinds of such possibility.

The standing committee meeting also suggested the way to overcome the disputes in trade union and labor problems. There are certain problems and misunderstandings in our trade union but it is not as bad as it was projected in the local media. Media have been making every effort to harm our party and encourage the split but one must not forget that our's is a revolutionary party and it was established on the basis of ideology. Unlike other parties, UCPN-Maoist workers and leaders have a long



history of sacrifice and struggle. This is the reason they know the ways to settle the problems.

Our standing committee meeting also reiterated the party's commitment to promulgate the new constitution of Federal Republic of Nepal by end of May. The party also decided to start the negotiations and discussions with all the major political parties. We will again talk with Nepali Congress leadership and urge them to join the government. We don't want extension of tenure of Constituent Assembly but want to have a new constitution in time. This is the reason our standing committee urged other political parties to support the efforts to write the constitution. Although we have a little more than two months left to write the new constitution but the time is still enough to write any constitution. What is required is the commitment from all the forces. If we delay the constitution writing process, it will benefit only the reactionary, feudal, monarchist and other hostile elements.

Since republic and federalism is our party's agenda, we cannot compromise with anybody on these. Our party is ready to go for necessary struggle against any move against republic and federalism.

The question of integration is a very important part of the peace process. Constitution writing is also another important element. Both the important components need to go side by side. We cannot pursue the integration without promulgation of new constitution. If we decide to integrate our People's Army, we doubt that the new constitution will be promulgated. Our standing committee has a clear cut message and stand on this. Our party is committed to peace process and promulgation of new constitution and we cannot unilaterally integrate our forces without promulgation of new constitution. Nepali Congress is unnecessarily harping on this agenda and creating trouble in the peace making process. At a time when all regressive and monarchist forces are hatching conspiracies against the achievements made by People's Movement II, Nepali Congress party's uncooperative stand is

supporting none other than such forces. As an ally of Janandolan II, Nepali Congress will ultimately support us and join the government to foil hostile activities of monarchists and feudal forces.

Our party has taken a clear stand since the Gurkha Plenum that if there is a necessity we will go for the rebellion. This official line was endorsed by the plenum and we abide by this decision. Along with this, our party also opened ways to send other voices of peaceful transformation to the grass roots level. There are no differences among out party leaders on this matter.

Of course, there are certain delays in expansion of the cabinet and announcement of new package for common and poor people of Nepal. The coalition has already expressed its commitment to bring relief package so that the marginalized and common people can feel relief.

(Sharma is a spokesperson of UCPN-Maoist. This is based on his statement.)



Nobody Can Marginalize Congress

By ANANDA PRASAD DHUNGANA

Nepali Congress has sacrificed everything to bring a long lasting peace in the country. However, some forces have been making efforts to marginalize NC from the mainstream politics. In the name of left unity, CPN-UML led by prime minister Jhalanath Khanal and UCPN-Maoist led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal are undermining Nepali Congress which brought the Maoists into the mainstream politics. Our late Girija Prasad Koirala had made a contribution to bring Maoists to the mainstream even by accepting their demands to hold the election to the Constituent Assembly. It is unfortunate that UCPN-Maoist leaders are now ignoring all these supports given them by Nepali Congress. As a party that symbolizes democracy, we are prepared to make any sacrifice and struggle for its cause. Our party has already fought several struggles in the last five decades to establish a democratic process in the country. Our party took the lead role to overthrow 104-year Rana Autocracy in 1951 and brought democracy in Nepal. Following three decades of struggle against Panchayat, our party restored democracy in Nepal in 1990. Our party took the lead in abolishing monarchy in Janandolan II. This means our party has a history of struggles. We fought with Ranas, Panchayat and King and now we are ready to fight with any forces which go against democracy.

Nepali Congress has made enormous sacrifices with UCPN-Maoist in the last four years. We accepted their demand of CA without any hesitation. After the revival of the House of Representatives, we accepted the demand to promulgate the interim constitution. We agreed to hold the elections of CA without integration of Maoist combatants. Is there any party in the world which gave up everything to bring an armed party into the mainstream? I don't think so. UCPN-Maoist has to understand this reality. Had Nepali Congress leader late Girija Prasad Koirala stood against Maoists, they would not get the benefits and political advantages they are enjoying now.

I don't think anybody can marginalize Nepali Congress Party which has a long history of sacrifices and struggles. This

coalition led by CPN-UML leader Jhalanath Khanal is not an exception. Since the formation of this coalition government, a conspiracy against democracy has started as the government has been making efforts to ignore the democratic values. This is the reason Nepali Congress has decided to remain in opposition to watch the activities of the coalition government led by CPN-UML leader Jhalnath Khanal.

Nepali Congress is serious about the present state of politics. By signing the seven point agreement, UCPN-Maoist and CPN-UML have made it clear that they will not accept the presence of other parties and the views of others. What do they intend now is to get a two thirds majority in CA and promulgate the new constitution at any cost. Of course, Nepali Congress too wants to see promulgation of new constitution by May end but we will not accept the constitution which doesn't have democratic ideals like pluralism, human rights, independent judiciary, press freedom and individual freedom. Along with federal republic, we want all other

My hunch says that the present two parties in power want to establish a tyrannical communist state in the country. By removing monarchy, Nepalese people have already given a message that they will not tolerate any kind of totalitarian and authoritarian regime.

democratic ideals in the new constitution. However, the seven point agreement between the two parties ignores this.

Nepali Congress has made it clear that it will not join the government as long as the pact signed between the two parties continues to exist. If Maoist and CPN-UML want our presence in the government, they must scrap the seven point agreement. This agreement is against the spirit of the interim constitution and peace process. How can two political parties say that they will mould the country into this or that direction? My hunch says that the present two parties in power want to establish a tyrannical communist state in the country. By removing monarchy, Nepalese people have already given a message that they will not tolerate any kind of totalitarian and authoritarian regime.

UCPN-Maoist is showing reluctance in the process of integration of their combatants. Nepali Congress has already

made it clear that there is the need to complete the integration process before promulgation of the new constitution. We have accepted all kinds of reasonable and unreasonable demands of the Maoist in the past but we cannot do similar kinds of things this time. Our central committee has already taken the stand that the integration of combatants is the first condition for the promulgation of the new constitution later. We are taking this stand because Maoists cheated us several times in the past. They have yet to return the property and land confiscated by them. Displaced people are yet to go back to their homes. There is a limit to everything. Nepali Congress has given everything. This time we are sticking to our demands that integration of combatants is the prerequisite to promulgation of the new constitution.

In the recent time, regressive forces and monarchists are gradually coming forth. I don't think they can make any changes and challenges to the present nature of state. Nepal will be a federal republican country and its secular image will not be changed. This is a fact now. In a democracy, everybody has the right to express views and pursue causes they believe in a peaceful manner. I don't believe that the monarchy will return again. Of course, former king, prince and princess are making various statements. Their statements cannot make any impact in the society. This is the beauty of a plural democracy.

Nepal's loktantra has been facing various challenges and threats but nobody can reverse it. People have already tested the fruits of democracy, liberalism. If you see the recent case of resignation of finance secretary Rameshwor Khanal, he also mentioned that he wanted to protect his own freedom from intervention. This is a good sign that democracy is taking deep roots in Nepal and nobody can uproot it.

But then the seven point agreement is based on the CPN-UML and Maoist wish to turn Nepal into a communist state. Leftists alone cannot rule this country. Even CPN-UML leader Bam Devji has already proposed a government of communist alliance. They want to see Nepali Congress out of politics. This is simply against the spirit of Janandolan II and the interim constitution.

(Dhungana is an elected central committee member of NC)

One Cup Many Cheers

By ABIJIT SHARMA



A final winning six from Indian skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni was what was needed for the Indian nation to erupt in joy.

It literally did erupt - across the country. Be it Mumbai or Mathura, Delhi or Dehradun, India was one in celebrating the grand victory with equal grandeur.

You might well have guessed by now that I am talking about the celebrations of India's World Cup win. Well, if you're one of those few who are not much into cricket or have missed out what has been happening lately (although that is highly unlikely with Indian News channels showing the celebrations over and over again), let me take you back to the evening of the 2nd of April. The stage was the World Cup, and the two actors were the Sri Lankan and the Indian cricket teams. In the jam packed stadium, people waited anxiously for India to score the winning runs. And 'captain cool', as he is famously known, turned that anxiousness of thousands into excitement by hitting the ball out of the ground; India were the new Champions.

The party had begun! In a matter of minutes the streets were filled with people from all walks of life. The World Cup had come back to the country after 28 years. Tri colors unfurled all over and people could be seen waving it everywhere, the dark sky brightened with lights of fireworks, the quietness of the night was perturbed by loud cheers and sounds of crackers. Cars and bikes came out in a rally, bare-chested men on top of

them shouting victory slogans. The TVs continued to show emotional players hugging each others, and News channels with cricket experts commenting how huge the victory was. Malls, pubs, parks and anywhere where there was a screen:

people jumped and danced around in euphoria. From President and Prime Minister to political leaders, congratulation messages started to pour in from all sides. Congress leader Sonia Gandhi came out after the victory and standing on her car door, waved to the crowd. Social networking site twitter was filled with tweets from Bollywood actors. It was a dream come true for the whole country.

No doubt the festivity in itself was remarkable. But another thing that truly stood out was the way in which the whole country especially 'notorious' Delhi, behaved itself. Looking at the magnitude of celebrations, it was obvious that it would not end without any unfortunate incidents, without a sour note. However, the city woke up to none of such news.

No road accident related to the jubilation was reported. In a city where at least 200 commuters are fined for drunken driving and five accidents are reported daily, only half the number of drivers were booked for drunken driving, that too who had nothing to do with the celebration, on that night. People who headed straight to the city's central hangout India Gate were in for a huge shock when they found police barricades on the way: the entry had been blocked causing the roads to be clogged with vehicles and people. But there was no anger even here. People were so filled with joy that they didn't seem to mind it a

bit. Even entry into another popular hangout Connaught Place had been restricted, but no one was complaining. People could be seen hugging even the policemen. Newspapers the next day were also free from news of burglary or any other unfortunate incidents.

Indeed, the win turned out to be more than a mere World Cup victory; it was something that united the whole of country, something that banded all the people together. ■



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"The State Has To Come In"

SUPACHAI PANITCHPAKDI

SUPACHAI PANITCHPAKDI, secretary-general of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNCTAD, was recently in Kathmandu to attend a workshop of least developed countries of the Asia Pacific Region. The workshop was organised in Nepal prior to the conference of Least Developed Countries in Istanbul. During his visit here, secretary general Panitchpakdi spoke to KESHAB POUDEL on various issues. Excerpts:

What do you say about this regional workshop?

Although the workshop is a small one with participation of all seven least developed countries of the Asia Pacific Region, this is the best workshop to discuss on the issues and agendas of least developed countries. Participants discussed on the right approach and were more open in terms of trade and industrialization. We want to encourage them to go on. We want the state - the national government - to play a strong role in driving this forward. Don't be afraid about the people or sometimes the state as meddling so much in these affairs. For instance, in several areas of productive investment, like paving roads, and building hydropowers, the state has to come in and stay before you can get the private investor to come in. So, this is my idea.

You have been here for some twenty four hours, now what changes do you see in Kathmandu?

The last time I came here was twenty-two years ago. I have seen from Swayambhunath Temple, down below the valley is more congested than I saw then. This comes with prosperity. One thing we are worried in Asia is that the process of urbanization has gone very fast. This will be seen as a new problem because if we fail to develop the rural areas we can see this kind of phenomenon of urbanization. This is what the Shanghai Expo last year in China showed - the theme was better city, better life. I hope that the government of Nepal will also deal with this issue.

What do you think Nepal should be doing as an LDC?

First, I would say Nepal, as a coordinator of LDCs conference, should

be instrumental in leading the process to determine the kind of agenda that will we be using for the next ten years. This is very crucial. I cannot say how far we can go but what I can say is that Nepal has many takers the process.

How well placed is Nepal to do so?

Nepal, being located in Asia, has been adopting the kind of policies which we will see the LDCs should follow. Which is to try to diversify. I don't think Nepal has much in terms of commodities. Some of the basic commodities in Nepal are sceneries and environment. What Nepal wants to do is in service areas like tourism and transportation. Nepal has been investing in the transportation sector because it is a landlocked country. I do see that Nepal together with some countries of the Asia and Pacific, is diversifying commodities. This should be important.

What other strategy will be important for Nepal to follow?

The other thing is the policy of openness. I know there is a debate in Nepal and other LDCs as to whether open trading system is good or bad. I would say that the open trading system theoretically is good for the country but on the basis of the assumption that the country must be well prepared for that. You cannot just say that such a stage in open trading system cannot do it. Nepal needs to preparedness and investment in the areas. Nepal needs investment in infrastructure, skills or human resources. The banking system needs to be friendly to provide loans to set up industries, offices and manufacturing firms.

What about FDI?

Nepal needs to have a Foreign Direct Investment policy that should be conducive to attract the investment in such sectors. You need to exploit what you have in your endowment. Nepal needs more assistance.

What are the challenges for landlocked nations?

Nepal is not only an LDC but also a landlocked country. You are blessed but also in a difficult position. Being an LDC and landlocked, it is very difficult. Nepal should discuss trade facilitation issues. This was in Doha agenda which benefits the country like Nepal. UNCTAD and



other UN agencies have been calling for this. LDCs should get early harvest of Doha. LDCs cannot wait forever. One of the early harvests of Doha agenda will be the trade facilitation support, that is an agenda that will help. Multi-model transportation agreement can help to reduce costs.

What programmes should Nepal follow now?

It normally sets forth the kind of action program that the both LDCs themselves and the international community have to follow in areas of finance, science and technology and investment. These are the key areas that have been actually dealt with. For this, this LDCs meeting is set forth. The assessment is that after the third decade of development with disparities in LDCs, although some progress has been made in some LDCs and some of them have been doing better than others, we find that most of the LDCs are still vulnerable. Their economy is fragile. Before the recession broke out in 2007-08,

How does Nepal need diversification?

LDCs need to be more diversifying. Along with commodities, you need to go for processing. For the countries like Nepal and Bangladesh, there are other commodities like tourism and textile. For Nepal, tourism is the area where it can diversify. We would like to see international community supporting LDCs efforts. Nepal has tremendous potential for tourism. This will be the second area for which we want to change Nepal. ■

NEPAL TOURISM YEAR

Too Tall A Target

Nepal expects to bring a million tourists in 2011

By MANISH GAUTAM

Nepal expects 265,000 and 100,000 visitors from India and China respectively during Nepal Tourism Year 2011. The target is to bring in a total of one million tourists. About 590,000 tourists visited Nepal in 2010.

In Visit Nepal Year 1998, the aim of bringing 500,000 tourists remained unmet when only 398,008 tourists visited Nepal.

Tourism has become a burgeoning industry, with millions of people worldwide on the move. But there are few takers that Nepal will be actually bringing one million tourists in 2011.

"The government was planning to buy new airbuses so we aimed at one million tourists," Sarad Pradhan of NTB said, "but the recent Nepal Airlines scandal has hit the tourism industry hard."

Nonetheless, Pradhan was optimistic as many new airlines started services for the tourism year.

Till the end of February, 2011, 16516 tourists from India flew in to Nepal. Likewise, 7396 tourists were here by air from China. Nepal has announced free visas for Chinese tourists in NTY 2011 and this too can increase their arrivals. However, this announcement was made some years back as well; but the government has to get around it this time.

Indian tourist arrivals grew 20.5 percent to 104,470 in 2010 from 86,696 in 2009.

The UN World Tourism Organization said China would become the world's fourth-largest source of outbound tourists by 2020 with 100 million overseas visits. And it is up to Nepal whether and how to grab the opportunity of bringing the tourists or let the industry slacken further.

The Annual Report of China Outbound Tourism Development 2009-10 issued by the China Tourism Academy has estimated that 54 million Chinese

travellers would go abroad in 2010, up from 47 million in 2009. In case of Nepal, Chinese arrivals were up 36.8 percent to 25,559 from 18,677 in 2009.

The existing air fares from China to Nepal are said to be the most expensive and even the route is a long distance one. So, this can be a major hindrance to achieve the target. However, the surface links need to be used much, which too can significantly, though not too much, increase the tourist arrivals.

If the government doesn't make a prompt talk with the China about the existing trail, the target to grab a pie from the Chinese tourism market seems farfetched or almost impossible.

But hope lingers as major tourist destinations of the country have seen a significant increase in the number of tourists in 2010. According to the Nepal Tourism Board, Indian tourists made up the largest segment visiting Pokhara last year. Tourists from India numbered 46,508 and China (9,501), too, had a significant contribution. Since, the comprehensive peace accord in 2006, tourism industry has seen a dramatic rise.

Ilam, too, has seen a rise in the number of Indian tourists. "There was a rise of tourists in the major tourist areas of Ilam: Sandakpur, Chintapuu," a source said, "and we can expect more Indians here because places of Ilam borders the places of India with maximum flow of tourists back and forth."

Having completed its 30 years of service Hotel Summit is optimistic about meeting the goal of NTY 2011.

"Our 90% of the rooms are packed and the flow of tourist is satisfactory," Rudra Shrestha, front office manager of Summit said, "but we must not confine ourselves in the limited resources instead the government has to explore more and bring new schemes."

Shrestha, however, said that



Tourist in Krishna Mandir

loadshedding has marred almost all the hotels of the valley and demanded a solution.

Royal Beach Camp (R.B.C), which looks after the adventure sports especially rafting, canoeing, too, is expecting increase in tourists. "There is a maximum participation of internal tourists in adventure sports. Nonetheless, we are expecting massive increase in the number of foreigners" a source from RBC said.

But what is NTB doing for the promotion of NTY 2011, especially in India and China?

"We have planned to promote NTY 2011 through the influential media of India," Pradhan said, "though we couldn't conduct promotional programmes in Shanghai Expo due to technical difficulties, we now have been conducting various programmes in China, right away."

The promotion done so far seems only a drop of water in the sea of tourism.

And the country is sure to see increment of tourists as the major political parties' promise of making Nepal a safe destination with no *bandh* and *chakkajam* has, indeed, been fulfilled as the country has seen a drastic reduction in the number of such strikes or protests in 2011. And this needs to be strictly maintained in the days ahead if the nation is to lure more visitors. ■



NEAT For Over Prosperity

By SCOTT H. DELISI

The launch of Nepal Economic, Agriculture and Trade Activity (NEAT) comes at a very important time. Improvement in the lives of all Nepalis will not happen unless and until the nation comes together to address the many economic challenges this country faces. The NEAT program strives to bring different sectors of the development community - the Government, private sector, and donors - together to improve the business environment, strengthen fiscal and trade policy, encourage competitiveness and exports in a number of agricultural commodities, enhance food security, and increase access to financial services. NEAT's ultimate objectives are to strengthen the foundation for rapid, sustained and inclusive economic growth, increase food security, and reduce poverty. A tall order, to say the least, but I believe that NEAT can help in all these areas.

Every day when passing by the Foreign Ministry, I cannot help but notice the long line of young Nepalis queuing up for passports in pursuit of jobs in the Gulf States, India, or elsewhere. It is a picture that troubles me. Not only does the nation lose the productive capacity and intellectual energy of its youth, but I worry about an economy built on remittances and custom revenues. In the long run this is neither desirable nor sustainable. Nepal can, and I believe should, be pursuing a different future. One where the youth of this nation can have the option of productive employment in their own country and one where the economy is driven by a private sector that is confident and dynamic.

While Nepal's balance of payments is positive, the country's trade deficit is negative and growing (it stands at Rupees 314.7 billion currently). Trends for Foreign Direct Investment are also not encouraging. Gross fixed investment which has remained flat since as far back as 2004, averages about 21 percent of the GDP, which is lower than the average for comparable Asian countries. Equally problematic, most of the investment goes toward replacing depreciated capital or toward asset creation, in areas such as real estate, and not toward "productive" investment in new businesses or factories. Worker productivity is an issue as well.

We can start to shift some of these less than positive indicators through increased productive foreign direct investment. However, the business

environment must improve first to make the possibility of increased FDI a reality. According to the World Bank, Nepal is the second-most difficult country in the region to conduct business, ranking better than just one country - Afghanistan; THAT is a very sobering assessment.

I do not accept, however, that Nepal needs to be defined by the challenges of labor unrest, power shortages or policies that discourage rather than incentivize private sector investment and growth. I believe instead that Nepal, working with its international partners, can usher in a new era of economic empowerment.

We know that economic growth that

NEAT's ultimate objectives are to strengthen the foundation for rapid, sustained and inclusive economic growth, increase food security, and reduce poverty. A tall order, to say the least, but I believe that NEAT can help in all these areas.

comes from increasing agricultural productivity is nearly three times more effective in raising the income of the poorest than increases in manufacturing or service productivity.

And we know what we have to do to increase agricultural productivity: we have to improve access to education, expand the use of better crop varieties, increase access to irrigation and fertilizer, develop infrastructure that connects the rural poor to urban markets, and create opportunities for farmers to add value to the commodities and cash crops they produce.

We need to help encourage trade and investment that can lead to lasting economic growth and diversification over time. To do that, we must focus on strengthening private markets, make it easier for entrepreneurs to do business, and develop effective public services and institutions.

At the end of the day, our goal, and more importantly, the Government's goal, should be to transform foreign assistance into foreign investment.

Conditions necessary for the private sector to flourish have to come from and be led by the Government. That means reducing red tape and regulatory inconsistencies and, fighting corruption and the bribe-seeking that can poison entrepreneurial activity.

At the same time, donors, including the US government, have to commit more seriously to evaluating our own programs, making sure our efforts really do build local capacity.

This shared commitment to responsible governance and accountability will help create an enabling environment for broader, truly transformative and truly empowering economic growth.

And make no mistake, that type of transformative growth is possible. Let me cite one example.

50 years ago, South Korea was a country on the brink. It was poorer than two thirds of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa and its people had an average life expectancy of 54 years. But by investing in agriculture, and adopting an aggressive, export-led growth strategy, South Korea became one of the world's fastest growing economies and remained so for forty years.

Today it has joined the club of rich industrial countries, is the world's eighth largest exporter, and its citizens outlive those in the United States. On top of that, South Korea, once a major recipient of aid, now provides aid to developing nations.

If we prioritize agricultural investment, design policies that encourage broader economic growth, and take seriously the concept of mutual accountability, we can, I believe, move Nepal forward on a path to lasting, empowering economic growth.

The U.S. Government working through the United States Agency for International Development remains committed to work with the Government of Nepal and the private sector to create new opportunities and ensure that sound macroeconomic and trade policies are in place to help the local economy flourish. NEAT will be central to our effort. It will work to build capacity, encourage judicious policy reform, stimulate agricultural exports particularly in high value crops, add value to Nepal's production, and help reduce poverty. I hope that you will join us in being part of Nepal's economic transformation and building a better future for the nation's young men and women. It will be well worth the effort.

This is the excerpt of the Statement delivered at the launching of Nepal Economic, Agriculture and Trade Activity (NEAT). Delisi is the U.S. Ambassador to Nepal.

"The Efforts Of CA Are Encouraging"

KRISHNA MAN PRADHAN

KRISHNA MAN PRADHAN, executive director of Nepal Law Society, has been working in the legal field for a long time. He has been actively involved in the constitution writing process over the last four years. As barely two months of the extended deadline remains for the Constituent Assembly to promulgate the constitution, Pradhan spoke to New Spotlight on various issues related to constitution drafting. Excerpts:

What is your view about the state of constitution making?

The tenure of the Constituent Assembly is coming to an end on May 28, 2011. In the last 10 months, 7 meetings of CA were held. The first phase work has been completed. All thematic reports have been submitted to the CA. But still there is no clear basis for preparation of the first draft. The CA members and political parties are trying hard to meet the deadline.

Are you happy with the situation?

The promptness shown by the Constituent Assembly (CA) for making constitution has to be appreciated. For the last four years, Nepal Law Society (NLS) and International IDEA have been collaborating with the Constituent Assembly Secretariat in supporting the constitution making process. Despite hard work, however, there are still some disputes on several constitutional issues that have hindered the smooth progress in constitution making.

How hopeful are you about accomplishment of the task?

Several steps have been taken to solve these issues and draft the new constitution. A high level political committee was constituted last year and now a subcommittee under the chairmanship of UCPN-Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has been working to settle the outstanding issues. Constituted in February 25, this five member dispute resolution subcommittee solved a number of core issues. This has helped the Constitutional Committee to draft the constitution.

Are there still disputed issues?

During the last 10 months, 180 disputes were settled but there are still around 108 issues that have to be resolved before the first draft of the constitution can be prepared by the Constitutional

Committee. On the basis of experiences, what I can say is that it is impossible to write the complete version of the new constitution within deadline. But I would like to request personally to the CA members that they promulgate a brief version of the new constitution within the deadline. They can do the remaining work by extending their tenure for six more months with a new calendar of operation. If CA members can convince Nepalese citizens that they are sincere, people will support them. But if the political parties extend the tenure without publishing the first draft and calendar of operation, it may invite chaos and trouble.

Will there be new constitution soon then?

The efforts made by CA members to write the new constitution are encouraging. They have now, at least, the basis for writing the constitution. But actually writing the new constitution fully depends on the environment of trust and consensus among the political parties. Although there are several issues that are creating hurdles in promulgating the initial draft, they can be settled through political consensus.

Where are the main disputes?

Except in the committee to determine the Basis of Cultural and Social Solidarity, the reports of all other committees have disputes in them. The most disputed issue is the form of governance: whether to go for the president as the head of state or whether to elect the prime minister from the parliament. There are still 4 disputes in the report about form of governance. Similarly, there are 11 disputes in the report of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles Committee, 33 disputes in the report of the Committee on Determining Legislative Organs, 8 disputes in the report of Judiciary Committee, 2 disputes in the report of the Committee on Protection of National Interest and 21 disputes in the Report on Constitutional Committee. To resolve these issues, the CC held 11 meetings between January 31 and February 16 and resolved some of them.

What is Nepal Law Society doing with regard to constitution making?

With the support from International IDEA, Nepal Law Society has published



a draft of the constitution with the involvement of 30 prominent constitutional experts of Nepal. Our report suggested that the president should be elected on the basis of adult franchise and the duty and function of the president should be explained in the annexes of the constitution so as to limit his role. Our suggestion is that the prime minister has to be elected by the majority of the MPs on parliamentary forms. Since the new constitution is going to be a consensus document, this system will help them.

How about the disputes on judiciary?

Debates have been going on as to how the judiciary can be made free from external disturbances, how can we make it function smoothly or without any political intervention. The subcommittee has so far resolved the disputes. The active initiative taken by the judiciary to maintain the rule of law is really appreciable in the present context. In order to retain an independent judiciary, the judiciary should be separated from legislature. Our draft has proposed that there should be the constitutional court which is led by the Chief Justice with four members, who are the experts on the constitution making and other judicial works. The constitution must make provisions for the nomination and appointment procedures so that the right person gets the membership. Among others, jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court has to be clearly marked so that the two don't overlap.

What about state restructuring?

State restructuring is another very sensitive issue. The State Restructuring Committee has proposed fourteen federal states. In our experience, even the committee has started realizing that fourteen states are not practical and this

has to be decreased. So, if these states are decreased to five then we can make practical working structures, give full authority to states and this can be implemented as well. There is also a big question on the local government bodies. There is a big gap between the local bodies and the federal state. In order to bridge the two, another provision can also be made. For example, merging around 4,000 VDCs to almost 1000 municipalities and also increasing 58 municipalities to 200 can solve the problem. We can also extend the number of wards to 30 from 9, in view of the size, population and geography.

What are new programs of the Society?

Nepal Law Society is now running constitution information centers in 8 different zones of the country and we conduct weekly discussion programs to disseminate the updated information on constitution making to the general public. We are planning to extend it to cover fourteen zones of the country.

What do these centers do?

All the people of Nepal will have access to information on the work done so far in constitution making, the gist of the major discussions and so on will be available to the people through the mobile teams. These teams include lawyers, experts and volunteers. We have also provided information through libraries and the local FMs. Due to time and resource constraints, though, we are still struggling to provide up-to-date information on time.

How have you been helping the CA?

We are helping the CA in two ways. First, we have been providing technical support in constitution making. Second, our support goes to create awareness about the constitution making to the general public. There is a perception that the CA members are just wasting their time and money among the commoners. In order to create awareness among the public, International IDEA, UNDP, USAID, and NLS are working together to show what is happening.

How useful have these centers become?

We have the capability to mobilise more than 10,000 people around the country when the CA sends the draft of the constitution to the people for study. These centers support Civil Relations Committee and Public Opinion Collection and Coordination Committee during the period of opinion collection. The role of Nepal Law Society is just that of a facilitator. ■

NEPAL LAW SOCIETY

Bridge Linking People

With its technical expertise and long experience in the field of constitution making, Society is contributing to act as bridge in the process

By A CORRESPONDENT

The gap between what the Constituent Assembly members are doing and what the common people think they are doing is growing in the absence of appropriate mechanisms for the dissemination of information.

The Constitution Information Centers have come to fill in the gap. They are making all kinds of information related to the work done by the Constituent Assembly and its members available to the people.

Students, engineers, doctors, lawyers, professionals, teachers, journalists, industrialists, civil society members, independent intellectuals and government officials in several districts are visiting the centers for information ranging from the reports of thematic committees to other documents prepared by the CA.

The centers mainly target Janajati, Madhesis, Dalits, marginalized communities, backward communities and women at the local level. Similarly, community leaders and members, civil society leaders, teachers and political party leaders are also the beneficiaries.

From publishing the draft of the constitution to organizing various other activities relevant to Constituent Assembly and Constituent Assembly members, Nepal Law Society has been supporting the process of constitution writing. NLS received the most valuable support from International IDEA to conduct these programs.

Although the Constituent Assembly is yet to prepare the first draft of the constitution, it has completed a lot of works in its three years tenure, thereby, preparing the foundation of constitution. However, people don't have easy access to the state of affairs.

During the whole process of constitution writing, NLS has played a role of support partner under the leadership of the Constituent Assembly Secretariat. This has made a lot of difference in the process.

The role of Nepal Law Society is not only confined to the capital. It has been

working in the process of dissemination of information through information centers established in various parts of the country.

These centers will play an important role when the Constituent Assembly prepares the first draft of the constitution. Nepal Law Society is expecting to mobilise necessary manpower to help disseminate the draft to the public and bring back their feedback to CA.

The tenure of the Constituent Assembly is coming to an end on May 28, 2011 and the first phase work has been



completed as all reports have been submitted to the CA.

"Nepal Law Society is now running constitution information centers in 8 different zones of the country and we conduct weekly discussion programs to disseminate the required information on the constitution making. We are planning to extend them to fourteen zones of the country," said Krishna Man Pradhan, the Executive Director of Nepal Law Society.

"We are helping the CA in two ways. First, we have been providing technical support in constitution making. Our second support is to create awareness about the constitution making to the general public. There is a perception that the CA members are just wasting time and money among the commoners. In order to create awareness among the public, International IDEA, UNDP, USAID, NLS are working together," said Pradhan.

These centers support Civil Relations Committee and Public Opinion Collection and Coordination Committee during the period of opinion collection. The role of Nepal Law Society is just that of a facilitator, said Pradhan. ■



WORLD VISION CHIEF IN NEPAL

Visit With Cause

President and Chief Executive Officer of the World Vision International Kevin Jenkins was on a three-day visit to Nepal between 20 and 22 March.

By A CORRESPONDENT

During his visit, he observed World Vision supported projects in Bhaktapur district. World Vision has been working in Livelihood, Education, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Early Childhood Care and Development and Education sectors in five Village Development Committees of Bhaktapur, namely, Changunarayan, Katunje, Nangkhel, ipadole and Sudal, including Madhyapur Thimi Municipality since 2001.

In Sudal VDC, the President met women farmers from Farmers' Field School. They shared their learnings in improved agricultural farming practices. He also viewed practical implementation of the integrated crop management process in the field. This was followed by a visit to the Jeetpur Drinking Water Supply System which was constructed with the involvement of the community people in partnership with a local NGO, ARSOW Nepal in 2008-2009. The drinking water supply system has provided 532 households with drinking water tapped through four spring water sources from the surrounding area and distributed via household taps.

Interacting with children from two child clubs, Sunaulo Bal Club and Saraswati Bal Club, Jenkins stressed on the need for children to display servant leadership in communities. He ended his field visit interacting with young

children and their mothers in Kopila Bal Bikas Kendra, an Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre in Balkumari, Madhapur Thimi Municipality, supported by World Vision. Jenkins also met and interacted with key Constituent Assembly (CA) members, Dharma Shila Chapagain, Aang Dava Sherpa and Chandra Kala Rai to discuss the need to incorporate child rights in the new constitution and highlight the call for a provision to establish a child rights commission or a child rights commissioner within the National Human Rights Commission.

World Vision has been supporting various activities of child rights' networks

'Nepal Is Richest'

Former chief of NEA, Arjun Bahadur Karki, who is now Joint Secretary at Ministry of Science and Technology

The per capita availability of water in Nepal is high above the average water availability per capita in the world. Even in the hydropower sector, Nepal's per capita potential is much higher than the average hydropower potentiality in the world. I don't claim that Nepal is the second richest in the world in terms of water resources, we definitely have to



like Children as Zones of Peace (CZOP) and Consortium of Organisations Working for Child Participation to ensure child rights in the new constitution of Nepal. One of the key activities has been working in collaboration with CA members to incorporate children rights in the new constitution that is being drafted. It is quite encouraging that some of the recommendations provided as experts' submission to the CA have already been incorporated. Almost 85 percent of the recommendations made to protect children's rights have been included in the draft of different thematic committees of the Constituent Assembly.

World Vision first started its development initiatives in Nepal in 1982 by donating funds to local groups for building hospitals and providing health care. In response to the 1988 earthquake, World Vision supported local non-governmental organisations in providing assistance to the quake affected people. Likewise, in 1993, World Vision helped flood victims through local partners. World Vision formally started its long-term development work in Nepal after signing both general and project agreement with the Social Welfare Council in 2001.

Over the past nine years, World Vision International Nepal has funded community development in all regions of Nepal and is currently operational in twelve districts of Nepal, namely Bhaktapur, Doti, Jumla, Kathmandu, Kaski, Kailali, Lamjung, Lalitpur, Morang, Rupandehi, Sunsari and Udayapur. In 2010, WVIN served around 239,782 people in Nepal through its community development, relief and advocacy programmes. ■

show evidence from science and mathematical logic, not in terms of hearsay.

Talk in terms of gross hydropower potential, China's three Gorges is generating 22,600 MW power. That is more than one fourth of power potentiality of Nepal.

But if you talk on the basis of per capita, Nepal is still one of the richest in terms of water availability for hydropower generation.

If you talk about the distribution of water availability over the period of a year, for 70 percent of the water, precipitation occurs four months in the year. ■



Cambridge Award Ceremony

CAMBRIDGE OUTSTANDING AWARD

Nepalese Toppers

More Nepalese students are coming out on top of the Cambridge examination results and earning Nepal an international repute

By A CORRESPONDENT

These schools had reasons to rejoice. Rato Bangla, Chelsea International Academy, ACE College of Management, King's College, Trinity International, Malpi Institute and Malpi International College saw their students securing excellent marks in the University of Cambridge International Examinations, A level and AS level.

Dozens more, Budhanilkantha School, the British School, GEMS Institute of Higher Education, Saipal Academy, A. J. Wild Institute of Advanced Studies and Rupy's international School also secured various positions.

According to a press release of the British Council and the University of Cambridge International, this year, three students from Nepal obtained the highest marks in the world and they received the prestigious top world award. Importantly, 30 learners received awards for exceptional performance in Cambridge examinations, including three world toppers and 26 learners who

attained the highest marks in Nepal in single subjects which are not so widely taken. Furthermore, learners have achieved the total highest mark in Nepal in a single subject.

Additionally, learners were recognized for High Achievement based on the outstanding performance in subjects which are not so widely taken. Furthermore, learners who have achieved the total highest cumulative marks across a number of subjects will celebrate their achievements. The winning learners outperformed thousands of candidates worldwide who sat examinations in Cambridge International AS and A Level subjects. So it is a tremendous achievement.

University of Cambridge International Examinations and British Council announced the winners of the Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards, Nepal. The awards celebrated the outstanding academic achievements of secondary school learners in Nepal in June and November 2010 Cambridge

Examination Sessions.

Vice president of Nepal Parmanand Jha, British Council Country Director Dr. Roberto Monro and Cambridge International Examination Regional representative Andrew Sortwell presented the awards to the students of various categories. President of Cambridge Educators' Association in Nepal (CEAN) Sudhir Kumar Jha gave a vote of thanks.

Ingroj Shrestha of Kathmandu Academy was the top in the world in Mathematics. Similarly, Byanjana Thapa of Rato Bangla School secured top in the world in Language and Literature in English in June session. Shitoshana Nepal of Rato Bangla School secured top in the world in General Paper in November.

Ujawal Paudel of Chelsea International Academy topped Nepal in Accounting, Economics and Mathematics. Mukesh Ghimire of Chelsea was best across four Cambridge Intentional AS level and secured first place in Nepal.

Likewise, Akash Kumar Gupta of Ace Institute of Management secured top position in Nepal in accounting in June session. Amigo Khadka of Malpi Institute was top in Nepal in business studies in June 2010 examination.

Sidhartha Moktan of Malpi International also secured top in Nepal in sociology in June 2010 examinations. Budhanilkantha School, Trinity International College, King's College, British School, GEMS Institute of Higher Education and British Council's students also secured highest mark.

By supporting to organize the program, Cambridge Educators Association in Nepal (CEAN) has helped to recognize Nepalese students' achievement made in international examinations. ■

नव वर्ष २०६८ को पावन अवसरमा
हाम्रा समस्त ग्राहकवर्गमा सुख, शान्ति,
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नेपाल टेलिकम
परिवार

Revisiting Civil Society

By DEVRAJ DAHAL



"Without civil society, democracy remains an empty shell; without civil society, the market becomes a jungle." Michael Ignatieff

The progressive life of general society is rooted in sabhya samaj (civil society) or the Homo cogitans (home of knowledge). It provides democratic impulse within societies to survive, and abide by the laws of their own existence. The spirit of civil society has, therefore, inflamed the spark of enlightenment values of freedom, equality, solidarity, ecological justice, and peace within citizens. These values stoke the free will of jagrat manushya (awakened human beings). As an agent of social change, the dharma of civil society is to de-traditionalize the general society and work for its continuous reforms and renewal. This helps to mediate the system and the life-world and removes the evils that divide them. The terrain of civil society is different from the general society as it espouses political character, group-opened, rationalized and cosmopolitan. It seeks to eliminate all forms of privileges from public life and public policy and opens up possibilities for citizens to become "cultural" and creative human beings liberated from noble savage (an idealized concept of uncivilized person).

People are not only place-bound individuals but also citizens and human beings entitled with constitutional and human rights. Their orientation to gyan marg (knowledge), karma marg (work and desire), and bhakti marga (devotion and feeling) other than self-interest defines their virtue and higher will. They resemble close to Immanuel Kant's critique of pure reason, practical reason and the judgment. Constant engagement of civil society in educating people about knowledge, life-skills, and resources helps them realize those rights and perform public duties. In Nepal, where the tradition of civility is ancient and embodies in the diversity of national life, modern civil society has to shore up the heritage of multiple nirwan (enlightenment) derived from Janak, Vedas and Gautam Buddha and internalize the utility of the rationalist and scientific tradition of modernity inspired by Immanuel Kant, who brought

philosophy to serve human beings. Raj Rishi Janak received the title of Videha (which means transcending the bodily self for spiritual enlightenment). Enlightenment is human beings' quest for a departure from ignorance, bondage and alienation. The project of emancipation formulated in terms of a future egalitarian society in response to the critique of current conditions of Nepal requires civil society's creative roles in building this post-conflict nation. The society's claim of state sovereignty and citizens' awareness about global enlightenment help contextualize policies and generate a common ground for the resolution of identity, ideological and interest-based conflicts. Civil

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society in such a context needs to cultivate the following strategies:

First, a way forward for social transformation requires Nepalese civil society to free itself from the nation's cycle of decadal political change. George Santayana has rightly said, "Those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it." Historical and cultural ignorance leads one to the blindness of contextual knowledge. This means firstly, civil society as an embodiment of reason and capable of achieving self-consciousness, must instill historical awareness of the need to respond to the changing aspirations of Nepalese citizens, not just the interests of the present generation but also to inter-generational justice. Secondly, civil society should broaden the binary code of politics steered by friend and foe and aim for a new social contract, a workable constitution owned by all citizens. The binary code of politics based on single unit determinism such as class, ethnic, gender, territorial, and ideological division is destabilizing as it does not establish democracy's optimal values of

the inclusion of the 'Other' but maximizes one at the cost of other. The transformation of working people into multi-classes-white, blue, and green collar workers, professionals, and self-employed citizens and unfolding of multiple identities offers the possibility to transcend the binary political mode. But emancipation of workers requires the production of the necessities of life. This helps to overcome alienation, necessity and dependence and gain freedom. Third, the historical crisis in Nepal's reformist politics reflects the weakness of civil society to uphold the golden mean of politics defined by Gautam Buddha - and the capacity of mediating agencies of society to open up reforms in each generation of citizens and the rational articulation of political life. Buddha rightly advocated 'the liberation of human beings through knowledge,' not through faith only. Fourth, the organic formation of civil society in Nepal is essential to free itself from barrowed existence and open a debate in the public sphere about the democratization of state power, economy, and international system and exhort the leaders to execute the people's mandate for a new constitution, remove gaps in governance between security and development and promote citizens' welfare to consolidate democratic gains. The democratic outcome presumes a qualitative transformation in the patterns of orientation, attitudes, values, and beliefs of citizens to inspire the hope and enthusiasm of the poor in the polity. A positive outcome of civil society's works can constructively contribute to the creation of a civic culture. Overall transformation of the political culture of the day, however, will demand habit-breaking, innovative and visionary policies rooted in the changing spirit of the yug dharma, the zeitgeist.

Second, national leadership in the various spheres of decision-making such as political leaders, citizens' representatives, planners, and policy-makers, need to open up their mind to social learning of the changing nature of citizens' rights in order to seek to institutionalize those rights, inspire civic participation, initiate socio-economic

reforms and institutional transformation. Institutional transformation does not come from the system; it comes from alternative leadership and vision provided by genuine civil society and grassroots organizations. The social pressure for institutional opening is broadening the social base of political parties. Good signs are now visible on the nation's horizon as the social movements of Nepalese citizens across the party lines are fostering inner-party democracy and representation of their interest in various layers of party committees and their articulation in constitution, laws, and policies. A rational collective action of civil society can restructure the nature of work and offer a favorable environment for citizens' demand for better working conditions, dignity, and standards of living. This will support the societal élan vital, the vital energy needed for broadening the public space and energy for state-building from below, constitutional stability, national security, rule of law, and supply of public goods. A genuine democratic transformation of the Nepalese parties, however, will also require arresting the 'social diversions' underway and synergizing all the centripetal forces and resources for a rational reconstruction of the future order.

Third, Nepali society has undergone a shift from *Gemeinschaft* (community governed by religion, custom and folk life) to *Gesellschaft* (society governed by rights, laws and contracts), hierarchical status to citizen equality and natural will to rational will driven by the forces of modernity. Federations of many civil society groups are struggling to moderate the hierarchal systems of production, appropriation, and control. The economy of tomorrow will be horizontal as it will remove the boundary between the worker and boss by a culture of partnership. But the key propellers of modernity, such as education, economy, technology, institutions, and leadership process are not yet sufficiently rationalized in Nepal to achieve a breakthrough. The civil society, in that context, has to play a proactive role in familiarizing itself with the vision of tomorrow's economy and the imperative of citizens to cope with it. A certain set of incentives for free collective bargaining and codetermination of public interest are preconditions needed for the equal development of multi-classes of Nepalese society and solidarity of citizens of both formal and informal

sectors. Social stability, moreover, requires bridging the gap between the knowledge class and the working class citizens for a shared future. Civil society in such a context can serve as a bridge between the two if it is capable of removing its own self-contradictions and enforce democratic accountability.

Fourth, confronting a cascading series of problems requires that all the 'systemic causes' be known in their entire context for resolution. Civil society has to take up the policy agenda of progress, climate change and post-conflict peacebuilding as they affect the citizens most and are important for building a viable future for Nepal. The solidarity of civil society with the general society at large can bring essential inputs for policy reforms. Similarly, the promotion of a strong public sphere for opinion and will formation can rectify subversion of the general will by the private interests of power, money, and media and radiate the trust across empirical divides

of the nation. It helps to bridge the gap between citizens in the informal and the formal sectors of the political economy by networking, widening, and deepening the possibility for inclusion, representation, modernization, and collective action.

Fifth, and finally, social transformation driven by the country's competitive position in the world economy cannot be strengthened without increasing the quality and productivity of economy, education and technological application to address the unmet demands of citizens arising out of new social stratification, new social formation, gender equality and new challenges and overcome the turmoil of modernity. In the changed context, civil society must strengthen its capacity for modernization and contribute to the modernization of Nepalese democracy, economy, and polity.

Dahal is a head of FES

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“We Get Various Kinds Of Help From IAEA”

Dr. RAMHARI ARYAL

Dr. RAMHARI ARYAL has served as the first secretary in the Ministry of Science and Technology for two years. A Ph.D in population, Aryal devoted most of his time to strengthen the institutional setup of the ministry. He pleaded Nepal's case before several organizations, including the International Atomic Energy Association. Dr. Aryal recently spoke to **NEW SPOTLIGHT** on science and technology policies and related issues. Excerpts of his interview compiled by **MANISH GAUTAM**:

What is the Ministry Of Science and Technology (MoST) for?

Science and technology are indispensable means to a nation's development. Every developed nation's secret is science and technology. Realizing this, the Ministry Of Science and Technology was established in Nepal in 2053 B.S. The irony is we don't value it enough. The MoST is under the shadow of priorities. Everybody should offer help to realize the potential of science and technology to contribute in the development of the nation.

What programs are the MoST favourites?

To promote science and technology, MoST has already organized a number of discussion programs with Nepalese scientists. It has also formed a think tank comprising scientists and people involved in this sector. Likewise, we have also felt a need for a new policy on science and technology. We have already sent a modified policy to the cabinet for its approval. I'm hopeful that the cabinet will endorse it. This policy covers ways to develop the field of science and technology, how to stop the “brain drain” and use the human resource back in nation's development.

After Japan's recent earthquake there has been a renewed debate in the field of atomic energy. In this context, where does Nepal stand, in relation to the IAEA?

The IAEA (International Atomic Energy Association) is an international

organization of UN system which looks after nuclear technology. It has 151 members, and Nepal is one of them. IAEA facilitates its member countries on the issues related to nuclear technology and also gives professional and technical trainings. Being a member of IAEA, we get various kinds of help from it. We have different projects in the pipeline. We are also discussing with them regarding how Nepal can benefit from the nuclear technology. I don't mean we will go for nuclear power. But nuclear technology can support other sectors like water resources, agriculture and so on.

Globally, Science and Technology receive the top priority. How long do we have to wait to do the same?

Priority in our nation's context means political priority. We need political orientation. Recently, we conducted programs involving the C.A. members. I am happy to know that many members showed interest in this field. After these programs, many of the members have started realizing the value of science and technology. Indeed, if we can create awareness about science and technology as the backbone of the nation's development, it can unleash the nation's potential with the involvement of youths. This also helps to make science and technology as the nation's priority.

How resourceful is the MoST?

The important thing is we have limited resources for development of science and technology in Nepal. Take for instance, Research and Development done by the MoST is lagging behind due to resources. If resources are increased and staffers are trained in accordance with the need of the country, we can work smoothly and bring results.

What do we need to encourage?

Research based policy has to be encouraged. The recent policy is based on older technologies and it lacks innovation. We need an innovative policy on science and technology. Until and unless innovative policy is made, development of any nation remains a

dream. We take policy making for granted and don't work hard on it. However, if an innovative policy seeks a little more amount than the past one, we should not hesitate investing in it.

What should Nepal learn from the world?

We are witnessing a rapid economic growth, even in our neighboring countries. This is happening due to the use of science and technology. It is unfortunate that we are unable to benefit from the progress made by our neighbors. Internally, we are unable to do any research. It's our nation's tragedy. But it's not a tough task if we work wholeheartedly. Once again the key stakeholders are the politicians who can play an important role.

We are hearing about a growing number of cyber related crimes and misuses of internet. Is our ministry aware of this?

Look, IT (Information Technology) has provided millions of job opportunities throughout the globe. Similarly, it has drastically transformed our day to day life. The government has laws and regulations to deal with misuse of cyberspace. In case of internet crimes, we have Cyber Governance Act which states that such crimes will be stopped. But internet is for ‘seeing’. Even if your son browses around his monitor, you cannot guess what he is doing. So, the main point is how much freedom should be allowed and how much not. But if its use disturbs the harmony of the society then we have to check it.

How much will be too much for the government to tolerate?

If one gets information from around the globe and sees it and learns from it, we have to leave him alone. If information and technology are misused to disturb the society and damage individual relations, we have to act, to regulate it. Good and bad exist everywhere. Being a human it's our duty to take the good part of things. We need to orient our children accordingly. But if one is apt to the bad part then it becomes rampant. Even the

developed nations are facing the problems.

What is the thrust of IT?

IT must be guided by “unreached to reach”, meaning everyone should have an access to it. Even the Civil Service examination should include IT. But the present load shedding has hampered the IT field. Another part is very few people have access to it.

Where does the Ministry of Science and Technology fit in, in case of Alternative Energy?

It’s not the question of where. Alternative energy has to be and was in direct relation with MOST for long time. After the Ministry of Environment was separated, the alternative energy was taken away from us. Had it been with us, we would produce better results. The whole country has been facing load-shedding and it will last for many years to come. In this context, alternative energy is cardinal. We need to go for various forms of energy. AE becomes viable and solar is the most important. Our country is not like Europe where the clouds hang around all the time. Hence, solar energy has to be promoted aggressively. Despite the potential for micro-hydro, we have not done much work. We have so much potentiality in AE and even donors are showing interest in it. We need to encourage it.

You lament that your ministry has not been accorded due priority. But what have you been doing to give the MoST what it deserves?

In order to strengthen this ministry, we have put forth some innovative programs such as biotechnology. Though the human population throughout the world is thriving, productive land is depleting. Then how can we supply to meet the demand of food and other materials to the population? Therefore if biotechnology is developed then with the limited producers more production can be done. Hence, we have focused our work on such things and have also aimed to establish a biotechnology center.

What about space programs?

We need to develop space technology for the overall development of the country. Looking at its importance, we have established an information center



regarding the events done in space and other valuable information.

Nepal has been using the nuclear technology in the country for a long time and there is a nuclear wastage. How do you look at it?

We are also studying about applying the nuclear technology in development and its establishment in Nepal. Most of the cancer hospitals have to work with radiations. But, where the disposable sources of radiation can be kept and what its demerits are, we don't know. We don't have a regulatory authority regarding the import and export of radioactive sources and its disposal. Thus we are advocating for a nuclear law and its active functioning. We have even proposed in

the parliament to be the member of ICGEB (International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology). We are in the process of revising the IT policy of Nepal which was dormant since its making in 2057.

What other initiatives are you taking?

We have done an MOU with Kyushu University, Japan, for the development of biotechnology in Nepal. We are working tirelessly for increasing our relations with the US energy department. And if we are committed to what we want do then we will have sufficient donors knocking our doors, but the problem is we don't devote ourselves much. ■

**We extend Greetings
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Earthquake Ethics

-By BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD



Earthquake issues have suddenly come in sharp focus now with pictures in our living room of the recent strong earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand and more recently in the north east coast of Japan. In Christchurch 100, 000 houses were damaged or destroyed. 60 to 80 % of the central business district including many historic and iconic buildings were ruined. But thank God they did not have a tsunami like the Japanese did. Both in New Zealand and Japan strict building codes were followed when the buildings that are now razed to the ground were originally built. With dubiously built high rise buildings going up at a rapid clip in Nepal, I shudder to think how these structures will withstand an earthquake of the magnitude that New Zealand or Japan recently experienced. Live and learn, they say. Unfortunately we may not live to learn.

One thing is for certain, it will be impossible to treat everyone who needs medical care after a severe earthquake in Nepal. Wherever there are functioning hospitals (many hospitals and nursing homes may be reduced to rubble), a triage team will need to be set up to determine how urgently the patient needs to be admitted to the hospital. The second question will be, are there adequate resources in the hospital to meet the need? For example crush injury of muscles (rhabdomyolysis) will be one of the commonest medical problem encountered after an earthquake as was the case in Haiti last year. Rhabdomyolysis leads to acute renal failure because the muscle protein is harmful to the kidneys. Depending on how promptly fluid therapy is started, dialysis (artificial kidney) may be necessary for the patient. Unfortunately dialysis is not commonly available in Nepal; so even though the patient may be alive, lack of needed equipment and expertise will conspire to work against the patient.

Many patients will arrive to the hospital with open infected wounds and fractures. Besides dealing with proper wound care and fracture repair, the patients will need appropriate antibiotics to fight sepsis which is common after this kind of a traumatic injury. In Haiti those who were rescued late and arrived to the hospital had maggots (fleas) in their wounds. Health care professionals not used to dealing with new and unusual problems will have to consult others, improvise and learn on the job. Another common problem will be crush injury leading to gangrene of the limbs which will need amputation to avoid the spread of gangrene. Amputation will be one of the commonest surgeries that will be carried out post earthquake as was also seen in Haiti.

Indeed the list of post earthquake medical problems can be a mile long. So, increasing awareness about earthquake preparedness is obviously very useful. Getting under a desk without running downstairs while the building is shaking will require willpower, but duck and seek cover is still the prevalent wisdom of the day. If outside, getting away from buildings and power lines is recommended, but this may be hard to do in the middle of Indra Chowk. ■

Our Youths Are Producing World Class Results

By SUDHIR KUMAR JHA



I feel really proud to be amidst a group of extraordinary achievers of the country. Firstly, I would like to congratulate all the young achievers for their splendid performance in the final examination of A-Levels. I would also like to congratulate and thank their teachers, parents and schools. My sincere regards to the Cambridge International Examination Board and the British Council, Nepal.

I understand we are here to celebrate but I would also like to share a little thought about education. I feel education is a critical determinant of the country's overall transformation which ensures progress in all the spheres of life. No doubt, it should be equitable, efficient, research based and practical. Hence, teachers should help children learn that inward and personal growth is directly linked to the outward development of one's surrounding. Further, school administrators, should build the schools where each individual's progress is linked to the collective good, thus discovering the key to widespread social development of the country. And whatever happens in our classroom today will reflect in the larger society tomorrow. I believe that Cambridge GCE A-Level has been able to cater to the need of global system of education in local context. The University of Cambridge has been ranked the world's top university in the 2010 university rankings league table created by QS, a global career and education network. The University has produced the highest number of Nobel Prize Winners of Science till date. Institutions affiliated to University of Cambridge here in Nepal are trying their best to make the whole learning much more interactive, collaborative and experiential to prove excellence in education.

Moving on to CEAN, it believes in positive interaction. Several motivating and self-help programs are being conducted at regular intervals. This year also we conducted trainings for teachers in ten different subjects. Many extracurricular events took place last week itself. We are further planning to have trainings for fresh teachers as well. Similarly, we are also thinking to conduct workshops for counselors, coordinators, administrators and principals in the near future. The second issue of CEAN Newsletter is with you. CEAN feels the need of Nepal Studies as a paper AS-level and wants to contribute for it as demanded by CIE and BC.

It is a great pride for us that our young minds have been able to produce world class results and it is not for the first time. This clearly indicates that our students are equally capable to compete in the global arena. Students, who in this early age can achieve this, are obviously going to be an asset for the nation tomorrow. I would therefore like to urge them to think and use their expertise for the overall development of the nation in the days to come.

(Jha is a president of Cambridge Educators Association Nepal and Principle of Chelsea International Academy.)

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