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The National Newsmagazine

SPOTLIGHT

Aug 31-Sept.06, 2007

CA Polls

Doubts

Persist

Politics : Haunted By The Past

Livestock Farm : Trading Losses

C.D.O. Regd No. 151/039-40
Postal Regd No. 20/660-61

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अब... १ मै रु. बचत खाता



नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंक बढी भन्दा बढी
नागरिकहरूमा बैंकिङ्ग सेवाको पहिलो अनुभव
एवं बाढी बस्न सकोस भन्नाका लागि सजोरब
प्रस्तुत गर्दछ्न्... **मात्र रु.१ मा**
“आपनै बचत खाता”

सम्पूर्ण अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरको सेवा सुविधा सहित ।



॥ जीवन्तका पहिला पलङ्क देखि नै बचतको बाढी
सुरक्षित भविष्यको सगढी ॥

सर्वकारको आदेशानुसार

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COVER STORY: Doubts Persist

With new pronouncements by the Maoists and their intention to launch agitation, doubts have persisted whether the CA elections will be held on time

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POLITICS: Haunted By The Past

History is repeating itself with the emergence of new kind of oligarchy in power

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INTERVIEW:

Dr. Bishwambher Pyakuryal
Renowned economist Dr. Pyakuryal talks about the fiscal implications of federal restructuring, among others

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SPOTLIGHT

THE WEEKLY NATIONAL NEWSMAGAZINE

Vol. 27, No 3, August 31, 2007
Bhadra 14, 2064

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Cover Design : Digi-Tech Scanning & Pre-Press Pvt. Ltd.
P.O. Box : 1655, Jwagal, Kupondole,
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Distribution : R.B. News Paper Traders
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Ph : 4232784, 2020247, 4244679
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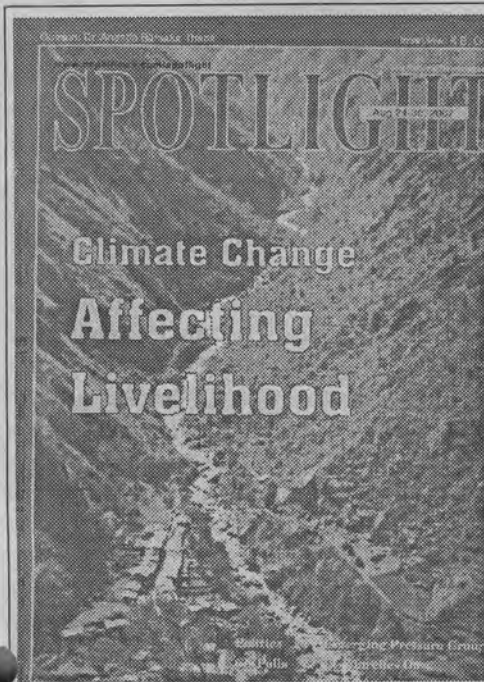
Printers : Printers World
Maitidevi, Kathmandu
Ph : 4423904, 4426520
E-mail : printerworld@wlink.com.np

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

The brazen denial of his statement to postpone the elections to the Constituent Assembly by Prachanda, the Maoist supremo, must be taken as a calculated move to test the pulse of politicians and ordinary Nepali people. Despite the fact that Kantipur T.V had shown him making that statement, viewed by millions within and without Nepal., does not it look mysterious why the Maoist leader chose to deny it? As a matter of fact, whatever the reason, Prachanda was right in stating that election, in the existing situation in the country, cannot and should not be held. Failing to stand by his own statement, Prachanda too has proved that he is not different than other politicians of Nepal . Integrity and honesty are qualities God forgot to instill in Nepali politicians when he made them. There is total lack of security through out the country. There is no law and order. Sister organizations of political parties that have no authority whatsoever, are ruling at many places throughout the country, collecting revenues and even customs duties and home ministry is shutting its eyes. Hundreds of thousands of displaced persons, due to more than a decade of insurgency, who have been thronging the capital and other urban places, have not been able to return to their homes. Most of them have no homes and no properties where to return. How can they exercise their votes when they cannot go to their constituencies? Hundred of millions worth of looted properties have not been restored to the legitimate owners and they are living like refugees in their own country, of course, without any help from the government. Thousands of *Pahadiyas*, who have been forced to flee their home in *Madhes* cannot go back for fear of losing their lives. Various groups of armed men are moving around freely, looting and abducting people. The government cannot control them. How can any sane man say that elections are possible, under these circumstances and they will be free and fair? As a matter of fact, when interim parliament was prorogued for the elections, the government should have resigned, making way for a neutral government that only could give comparatively free and fair elections. And this is the general democratic practice . Except the cronies belonging to the eight parties, the overwhelming millions of Nepalis have no faith in this unconstitutional government that has been behaving in the most authoritarian manner worse than the *Panchayati* governments. That this eight party government will conduct free and fair elections is an idea that only fools can entertain. They can fool only the international community and UN agencies, not the simple and patriotic Nepali people. Moreover, this eight party government is totally under the influence of foreign powers and has no moral justification to stay in authority even for one day. However, we do appreciate the over enthusiasm shown by the Election Commission. But, first thing must come first. The E.C must arrange for the refugees to return to their "homes," that the looted properties restored to their rightful owners, see that the situation in the *Madhesh* becomes peaceful and the *Pahadiyas* return to their homes, see that unlawful arms are nabbed and people do not fear for their lives and last of all restore the vestige of state authority throughout the whole country. Unless and until they can stop all such unlawful activities and establish the authority of the government how can they claim they are ready for elections? Except for hypocritical behavior, no political party and no interim M.P. is sincerely serious about the elections. They openly say "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush." Even the diehard Maoist commanders and leaders who have become so addicted to the parasitic life of luxury in a few month that they might think twice even to listen to their supremo, Prachanda, and give up their windfall- their new life style. To be quite sincere and honest, the possibility of the elections taking place is very very remote in the present circumstances. Prachanda was not only right but even prophetic. Why did he chicken out? May be, as a Nepali politician he is also endowed with the characteristic of Nepali politicians. It does not take a great effort to blab your tiny tongue. But it is quite different to honor it. It might even take a lifetime sometimes. But that is for honorable men.

Madhav K. Rimal

Madhav K. Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Agro Effects

The cover story "Climate Change: Affect On Livelihood" (SPOTLIGHT August 24) has exposed a totally new dimension of the consequences a country like Nepal is facing due to global warming. The responsible actors from all over the world must pay attention to the plight of nations like Nepal where poor farmers are paying a heavy price for the crimes committed by others. It is unjust and unfair that they are being penalized for no reason. It is only fair for the international community, particularly the developed societies, to come to the rescue of such people.

*Hitesh Shrestha
Kalimati*

Widen Coverage

The coverage of Spotlight Newsmagazine needs to be widened. Although it covers many issues, it hardly touches the issue on entertainment, life and youth issues. Being a national newsmagazine, it also needs to send its reporter to different parts of Nepal and cover all important issues from outside valley. I hate to read only political stories in Spotlight. I hope there will be more stories on development.

*Shankar Adhikary
Swayambhu*

Growing Reluctance

The recent comments made by Maoist leaders Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai indicate that they are reluctant to conduct the CA polls on time. It is evident that Maoists are acting hypocritical. The day after Prachanda said that the CA polls

should be postponed the government's spokesman Krishna Prasad Mahara said that anyone who tries to obstruct the CA polls should be punished. If this is true, then Prachanda should be the first one to be punished. Maoists always claim that they are the ones who convinced other parties to conduct the CA polls and proudly assert the CA poll as their main agenda. Paradoxically, they want it to be postponed. Moreover, they are inclined to disrupt the poll. The Maoists' plan to conduct strike from Aswin will certainly create more turmoil and affect the poll. The reason behind Maoist's reluctance to the CA poll is unclear. However, it is certainly clear that they are hypocrites.

*Jeevan Shrestha
Sydney, Australia via-email*

Real Consequences

The article "Climate Change, Consequences on Agriculture" has highlighted the adverse effect of

climate change on agriculture (SPOTLIGHT August 24). In recent years, global warming and climate change have become the burning issues. Agriculture has also been severely affected by changes in climate pattern. Although poorer countries like Nepal, and sub Saharan nations do not contribute much in global warming, these are the ones that are hardest hit by consequences of climate change. In recent years the percentage of land affected by drought has been increasing. Because of increase in temperature, the production of maize in Southern part of our country has decreased. People of our country who mostly depend upon agriculture have been affected. The problem is a global one. Therefore, it needs to be addressed by the global community. The faster it is addressed the better is for all of humanity.

*Norbu Sherpa
Lukla via-email*

On Water Issues

Thanks to water resources expert Ananda Bahadur Thapa, we get immense opportunity to read Nepal's water resources related issues. From flood related problems to hydropower projects, Thapa's articles are eye-openers. As water resource expert Thapa is raising many concerns, but the government seems to be ignoring Thapa's good advices and suggestions. If persons like Thapa's views are helpful to the country, the government should not hesitate to implement them.

*Karina Subba
London via-email*

NC Unity Efforts Continue

Continuing the efforts to unify the Congress, Prime Minister and president of Nepali Congress (NC) Girija Prasad Koirala met with president of NC (Democratic) Sher Bahadur Deuba on Sunday (August 26) in Baluwatar. The two leaders are reported to have agreed to announce the unity soon. PM Koirala urged Deuba to expedite the unification process by ignoring petty issues while Deuba replied that he would respond soon by discussing with his party leaders.

Leading dailies report

Panel Proposes

Nationalizing More Palaces

The cabinet team led by Home Minister has recommended nationalization of more royal palaces and forests. The group recommended nationalization of eight forests under the ownership of royal family, which were looked after by the army. Likewise, the group has recommended nationalizing Nagarjuna palace, Gokarna retreat, Diyalo Bungalow in Chitwan, Ratna Mandir in Pokhara and Hetauda palace. Earlier, the cabinet had announced nationalization of seven palaces based on the group's recommendation. *Leading dailies report*

Pokhara Hotels Fully Booked

All the leading hotels in Pokhara are said to have fully booked for this tourist season. Tourism entrepreneurs said that the peace agreement is the main reason for such an encouraging trend. "We have stopped reservation for the month of October, November and December. However, the situation is still gloomy for the small hotels," hotel entrepreneurs said. "All the 165 rooms in Fulbari Resort and Spa, a five star hotel, have been booked for this season," Dashrath Pandey, sales and marketing assistant manager of the hotel said adding that the rooms priced between \$150 and \$600 were reserved by European tourists. Shangrila Village Resort, another leading hotel in Pokhara, has also been booked by Japanese tourists, the hotel informed. Gupta Giri, assistant front office manager at the hotel said, "All 61 rooms were booked for this season; October to April.

Peace is the only factor for such an encouraging trend." The rooms in Shangrila Village Resort cost between \$70 and \$180. Gyan Bahadur Thakuri, a front office staff at Fish Tail Lodge said, "Five dozen rooms in the hotel are already reserved for the months October to February." Laxmi Bahadur Bhattarai, president of the Regional Hotel Association Pokhara, said that the small hotels have also encouraging reservation though they are not fully booked. "Small hotels have not received full booking", he said adding that peace could be a driving force for such an encouraging booking. He owns Pokhara Mountain Resort. "This tourist season should be very encouraging, if bandh, strike and chakkajam were not organized," said Basudev Tripathi, president of Visit Pokhara Year 2007 and member of Nepal Tourism Board (NTB). Tourist office Pokhara said a total of 94,799 tourists visited Pokhara in 2006. Nearly 60 percent of them came for trekking. Around 400 hotels in Pokhara have over 8,000 beds, according to the data of regional hotel association Pokhara. *The Himalayan Times daily reports END*

Maoists Pick Their Nominees For Ambassadors

Maoists have chosen their four ambassadorial nominees. Maoist leader CP Gajurel, who heads the party's international bureau, has said that the party has picked Pampha Bhusal as envoy-nominee for France, Hira Bahadur Thapa for Malaysia, Ajay Sharma for Australia and Bijaya Kanta Karna for Denmark. Bhusal is a central leader of the Maoists and Sharma is a regional bureau member. Karna is a teacher and Madhesi activist while Thapa was an acting foreign secretary during royal regime. Gajurel said that his party will present these names at next cabinet meeting. "We have tried to pick names from women, Madhesi and bureaucracy," Gajurel said. Earlier, Foreign Minister Sahana Pradhan had blamed the Maoists for the continuing delay in the appointment of ambassadors by not handing over the list of their nominees. *Compiled from reports*

Security Of Refugees Worries UN, US

The UN High Commissioner for

Refugees and the US have expressed concern over the security situation in the Bhutanese refugee camps, which has affected their preparations for resettlement process of the refugees. UNHCR has been administering the refugee camps and the US is a member of the core group to announce absorbing 60,000 Bhutanese refugees. The UN agency is ready to start identifying and referring cases to third countries for resettlement, but the process has not started because the UNHCR has said it wants continued political, logistic support and security measures from the Nepal government to initiate it. The UNHCR feels the need for the government to announce its policy on third country resettlement of the Bhutanese refugees in the camps. UNHCR Representative in Nepal Abraham Abraham, in an email response to queries, said that they are "deeply concerned" over increasing incidents of violence, threats and intimidation in the refugee camps. Similar views came from a US official working on Bhutanese refugee affairs. "Security is the main problem to begin resettlement process," the official said insisting anonymity. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) as the Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) is yet to establish its office in Damak of Jhapa. It will start operating as soon the agreement is signed with Nepal soon. Prior to beginning the process, the UNHCR would organize a mass information campaign to update all stakeholders about the process and inform the refugees about resettlement and all three durable solutions to enable them to make an informed choice about dealing with their future, Abraham said. The UN refugee agency feels that the government has started stepping up security to prevent the outbreak of more incidents. "We fully recognize and respect the many difficult political and security issues the government has to deal with, but we are confident that the refugee issue is high on the agenda of the government," he concluded. Meanwhile, Chairman of the Bhutanese Movement Steering Committee and rights defender Tek Nath Rizal on Saturday said that no pro-repatriation organization has

opposed the third country resettlement offer. "In fact, responsible groups of people who aspire to resolve the refugee problem have appreciated noble proposals from different nations, including the United States, as an alternative to repatriation," Rizal said in a statement. The statement said: "We have repeatedly stressed that the refugee families or individuals have every right to choose their destiny. We had only urged for clarity with regard to their future." "It must be made clear that there has been no opposition to the third country resettlement offer from any corner of the Bhutanese movement for repatriation and democracy," the statement added. *The Himalayan Times daily reports*

MJF Warns Of Agitation

The chairman of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) Upendra Yadav has warned of another agitation in Madhes if their demands are not fulfilled within a week. Talking to reporters in course of MJF's central committee meeting on Thursday (August 23), Yadav said if the demands are not fulfilled within a week, then agitation will be launched. He said MJF will not compromise on its demands for ethnic autonomy and proportional representation. He said that MJF will take part in Constituent Assembly elections but only after their demands are fulfilled. The MJF is going to make public the decision of its central committee on Friday. *Compiled from reports*

Absence Of Elections Will Endanger Legitimacy: Nepal

Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), has said that the European leaders told him that absence of Constituent Assembly elections on time will raise questions on the legitimacy of the government. Upon his return from ten-day visit to European countries, Nepal told reporters that European leaders including Norwegian minister Erik Solheim told him that they hope the elections will be held on time. On the issue of Maoists' agitation, Nepal said that a party in a government cannot talk

about taking "people's action." "They have signed the agreement to decide the fate of monarchy by the first meeting of elected CA. They have also signed an agreement to abolish monarchy by two-third of parliament if monarchy tries to derail elections. They must stick to those agreements. I hope they will not demonstrate a political betrayal by going against those agreements," he said.

Compiled from reports

UML Suspects India And The US

The Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) has concluded that the United States and India have advanced their interests by taking advantage of transitional phase. It has said that while the US has shown its interest to give continuity to monarchy, India is seeking to extract maximum gains by exploiting the transitional phase. In a document prepared for internal circulation by the party's school department, the UML has concluded that India is working to bring Nepal under its security umbrella, capture its natural resources and its market. Likewise, the party has also concluded that China is re-evaluating its traditional policy towards Nepal.

Kantipur daily reports

Shortage Of Air Tickets Hit Passengers Hard

Due to an acute shortage of international air seats, a 'critical' situation has come to grip the airlines industry. Even with 109 international flights per week with an annual capacity of around 12 lakh seats, the airlines have not been able to accommodate those wanting to fly from or to the country via any route. The situation is expected to continue for two to three months more. In particular, the Kathmandu-Delhi flights are totally overbooked.

"The problem of overbooked flights has actually been there since the beginning of this year, but in comparison, this is a bad phase we are currently facing," said Sangeeta Rana of Jet Airways. Jet Airways has a capacity of 154 seats and it is trying to bring another aircraft in October, she added. With the onset of the peak tourist season now, the situation is going to get worse. "The

number of Nepalis wanting to fly out of the country is increasing tremendously," Prabhat Chitrakar, ticketing officer, Jaya Travels, said, adding: "This is also a time when Nepali students studying abroad fly to various destinations, especially to India, which has added to the rush." In addition, a whole lot of Nepali laborers are flying to various countries in the Gulf and other Asian nations. The crisis was also caused as the Nepal Airlines Corporation (NAC) suspended all its international flights for almost ten days. NAC halted all flights on August 1 and resumed its flights with one Boeing on August 11. The airlines cannot make adjustments as they are bound by the Air Service Agreement with Nepal. Meanwhile, the government has granted air licenses to Silk Air (Singapore) and Etihad (UAE). The two airlines are set to begin their flights by the end of October. *The Himalayan Times daily reports*

YCL Joins Maoist Call For Agitation

A day after the Maoist chairman Prachanda issued the call for agitation, its sister wing has welcomed it and vowed to make their agitation successful. The president of Maoist-affiliated Young Communist League (YCL) Ganesh Man Pun has said that physical action cannot be ruled out in course of their agitation. Addressing a press meet on Tuesday (August 21), Pun said that YCL will "morally and physically" support the agitation program announced by the Maoist chairman Prachanda. The YCL has decided to hold rallies, demonstrations, and political strikes to support the Maoist agitation. "When the movement reaches to a climax then people may take even physical action (against regressive elements)," said Pun. He was referring to the statement by the Maoists in which they have said that "people's action" will be taken against such elements in course of agitation, which is set to begin from mid-September. In the past period of conflict, the term "people's action" was used by the Maoists to physically assault, intimidate, abduct or even murder opponents. *Compiled from reports* ■



PM Koirala receives reviewed report of Electoral Constituency Delineation Commission *Gorkhapatra*

THE CABINET MEETING, on Thursday (August 23), nationalized seven royal palaces including the Narayanity Royal Palace. Likewise palaces of Hanumandhoka, Patan, Bhaktapur, Nuwakot, Gorkha and Lamjung have also been nationalized. "In total, these palaces occupy 1533 ropanis. Narayanity palace now belongs to the government," said Minister for Information and Communication Krishna Bahadur Mahara. However, the King will be allowed to stay in the Narayanity palace till the fate of monarchy is decided by the first meeting of Constituent Assembly (CA). Apart from the Narayanity palace, which will be in the name of the government, other six palaces will be handed over to the Department of Archaeology for their historic significance. The cabinet has also frozen these assets and has directed land revenue offices to stop transactions of these properties. Earlier, the cabinet had formed a committee led by Home Minister Krishna Sitaula to nationalize the palaces.

THE CHIEF OF THE NEPALI ARMY (NA) has said that as a professional national army, the NA will never challenge the political and state authority. Addressing the two-day seminar titled "Democratic Transition and Nepalese Army Reforms," on Thursday (August 23), General Rookmangud Katawal said, "The National Professional Army can debate or discuss or express its opinions to the political masters on national security issues. But the national professional army cannot challenge the political and state authorities." General Katawal also said that NA as a professional army is not interested in politics. "Politics is not the job of a professional national army," he said. He said the NA will abide by the directives of the legitimate state authorities in every manner. At the program, which was organized by the NA, Minister for Peace and Reconstruction Ram Chandra Poudel said such debates during the transitional period would help in the democratization of the army.

BIRENDRA DAHAL ENDED HIS FAST-UNTO-DEATH, on Sunday (August 26), following commitments to respect press freedom by the Speaker, Home Minister and Information

and Communication Minister. On the fifteenth day of his strike, Dahal ended the fast issuing a statement that Speaker of the parliament Subas Nemwang, Home Minister Krishna Sitaula and Information and Communication Minister Krishna Mahara expressed commitment to respect press freedom. Speaker Nemwang, Sitaula and Mahara had reached the site of agitation in Sanchargram on Sunday to break Dahal's fast. Dahal had launched the agitation demanding that all parties represented in the parliament express their commitment towards press freedom. He sat in the agitation within the premises of Nepal Press Council after pro-Maoist Republican Radio Workers shut down the Radio HBC FM, where Dahal is a manager.

THE COUNTRY'S SOLE SECONDARY SHARE MARKET, Nepal Stock Exchange (Nepse), has adopted automated system by replacing the outdated Open Cry system. The automation of the stock exchange was inaugurated on Friday (August 24) by Finance Minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat. "Now we can avoid human error that was associated with the Open Cry system," said Pramod Bhattarai, a manager at Nepse. Besides, the automated system will also help control price-rigging in share transactions," Bhattarai added. The automation of Nepse was carried out by Comdaq Limited under a project financed by the Asian Development Bank. The Aries Group from USA was primary consultant to this project and Mercantile Office System (MOS) partnered with Comdaq Limited in supplying the advanced hardware needed to run the platform.

A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has said that there will be up to eleven hours of load shedding in winter days. Sher Singh Bhat, chief of the Load Dispatch Center of NEA, said that as total generation will not be able to cater to the demands, the load shedding is unavoidable. He said that during winter months, NEA will incur 354 MW shortfall between demand and supply. At an interaction with business community, he advised industries to close down for three days a week. He said there are plans to import 50 MW of power from India. But the import as well as generation in full capacity will only reduce the load shedding hours by two hours, he said.

THE NEPALI ARMY (NA) has started withdrawing the portraits of the King and the Queen from its office premises as per the directive of the Office of the Prime Minister. The royal portraits, slogans and quotes will be removed as per the instruction by the Office of the Prime Minister, the NA has said. The NA has also covered the big slogans eulogizing the monarchy outside the NA headquarters and Army Officers' Club with red clothe. The NA has said that since it would take time to erase the slogans, they had covered it up for the time being. "We are removing the portraits as per the order we received. We have instructed to remove the portraits from offices all over the country but in faraway places, it might take time (to carry out the instruction)," Brigadier General Ramindra Chhetri, spokesperson of the NA, told Kantipur daily. ■

“Our party considers it a regretful propaganda by which a remark made in a different context stressing on real Constituent Assembly election instead of a drama has been twisted illogically to infer (that our party wants) postponement of election.”

Prachanda, Maoist chairman, in a statement he issued two days after he faced scathing criticisms for suggesting deferring the election till mid-April next year to hold a 'real CA election.'

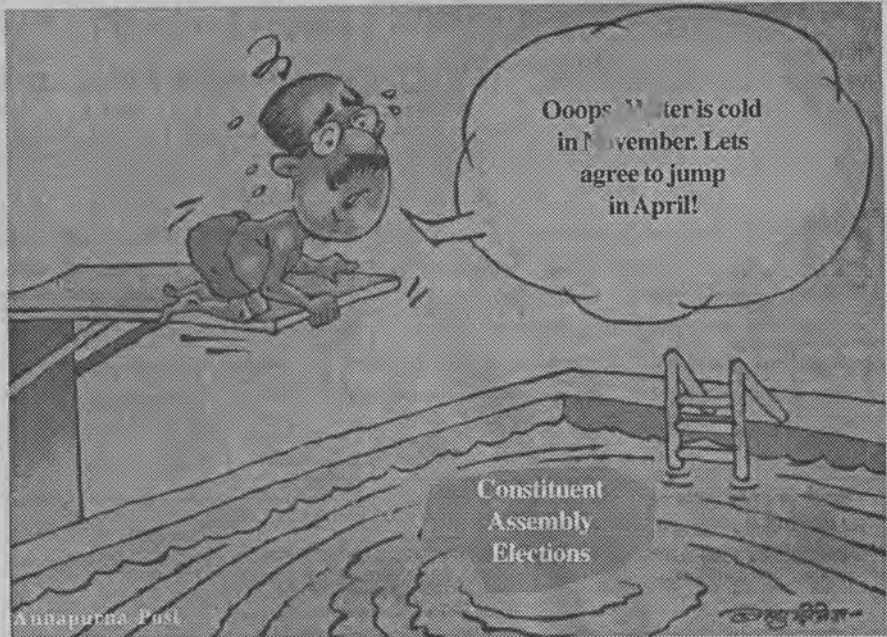
“We need guarantee of federal republic (before going for elections).”

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, senior Maoist leader, stressing on the holding of 'meaningful election.'

“I am confident that they (Maoists) will not turn their back to the people or get scared of going to the people for election.”

Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), urging the Maoists not to make comments sowing uncertainty towards election.

“We have already allocated Rs 4 billion from our internal resources for the purpose of November polls. International donors have poured in billions more. If the election is postponed again, how can we then ask for support from the international community?”



Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat, Finance Minister, saying that postponement of election is not only politically and morally but also financially objectionable.

“We came here (Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction) at 8 am and waited till 12 noon but no one from the government team came for talks. So we have concluded that this government is not serious.”

Upendra Yadav, chairman of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum, responding to media after the scheduled talks on August 21 could not take place, in Radio Nepal.

“Their agitation announcement has raised suspicions. The Maoist leaders must clarify. Personally, I would like to request them to withdraw their agitation.”

Krishna Prasad Sitaula, Home Minister, at an interaction.

“We are removing the portraits (of the King and the Queen from NA offices and barracks) as per the order we received. We have instructed to remove the portraits from offices all over the country but in faraway places, it might take time (to carry out the instruction).”

Brigadier General Ramindra Chhetri, spokesperson of the Nepali Army (NA), in Kantipur

TRANSITION

PROROGUED: The budget session of the parliament, by Speaker Subas Nemwang, as per the directives of the Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala.

COMPLETED: The second stage verification of People’s Liberation Army (PLA) of the Maoists at the Sindhuli cantonment, by the UNMIN.

SUSPENDED: The talks between the government and the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), indefinitely.

RATIFIED: The International Labor Organization Convention No 169,

ensuring fundamental rights for the indigenous population of the country, by the parliament.

CONVERTED: Patan Hospital into Patan Medical Science Academy, by the cabinet.

RETURNED: Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), after completing ten-day-long visit of European countries.

FORMED: The National Women’s Commission by the government. Nainkala Thapa will head the

commission, which includes Ratna Sherchan (Baglung), Dhan Kumari Sunar (Makwanpur), Amoda Shrestha (Kathmandu) and Manju Kumari YAdav Chaudhary (Dhanusha).

APPOINTED: Iswor Chandra Gyawali, as chairman of the Film Development Board. Shiva Lamichhane and Bipana Thapa, as members of the board by the Minister for Information and Communication.

Ram Sharan Karki, as executive director of Radio Nepal, by the Ministry.

DANGER OF GIVING AWAY RIGHTFUL INHERITANCE: NEPAL'S WATER RESOURCES

- By Dr. AB Thapa

"The present institutions (in Nepal) should be wary of giving away Nepali children's rightful inheritance". This is the remark of Mr. Paul D.

Terrell from Bechtel International who was advisor consultant to Multipurpose Karnali Project. He had expressed his concern in an article published in the journal "HIMAL" on Karnali High Dam Project. On top of it he had also said (a) Nepal can decide NOT to build the Karnali Project, but Nepal alone cannot decide TO BUILD the project, (b) Nepal should beware of unintentional "give away" in hydro development, and not rush to compromise the optimum development for the sake of a quick deal.

Nepal Can Decide Not to Build

Mr. Terrell has said that Nepal can decide NOT to build the Project, but Nepal alone cannot decide TO BUILD the project. It implies that our strongest bargaining chip is our right NOT to build the project. It indeed is the most powerful weapon to compel the adversary in bilateral talk to accept our terms and conditions. Canada had used this bargaining chip to compel the USA to concede and accept their demand in course of finalization of the Columbia River Treaty. Thus it would be our grave mistake if we believe that we can depend on a private company to negotiate on our behalf a fair deal with our neighbouring country on water resources projects.

Lately we were brainwashed by foreign multinational companies into sacrificing the downstream benefits. We were on the verge of handing over the mammoth Karnali High Dam Project to one of the multinational companies completely abandoning our right to recover a certain percentage of the downstream benefits to accrue to India from that project. The Karnali Project will have a storage reservoir about 39 billion cubic meters in volume which is greater than the volume of reservoirs of the Columbia River Projects estimated to be about 18 billion cubic meters. Two US presidents and two Canadian prime ministers were directly involved in the talks to finalize the downstream benefit issues. Negotiations had continued for many years.

Canada Refused to Compromise on Water Issues

The Progressive Conservatives' party Prime Minister of Canada John Diefenbaker was a nationalist. He took a firm stand on the Columbia River Treaty between the USA and Canada in defense of Canada's national interest. The Columbia River Treaty was signed at the White House in January of 1961. Over the course of the

following summer, the United States Congress held hearings in connection with the Treaty which ultimately led to its ratification. In Canada, the approval process was virtually halted. Canada realized after signing the Treaty at the White House that it did not meet the aspiration of the Canadian people. The Treaty effectively remained in limbo. Diefenbaker's government fell in 1963 election contest with the liberals. Soon after, a new government was formed under the leadership of the Prime Minister Pearson who was regarded politically close to the USA. But he too never compromised on water resources matters in dealings with the USA. Prime Minister Pearson agreed to step in to ratify the Treaty only after his meeting with the US President at Hyannis Port. In that meeting it was agreed that the Treaty would be implemented in a way which met the Canada's concerns.

Nepal Should Not Rush to Compromise Optimum Development

Mr. Terrell has cautioned us that Nepal should beware of unintentional give away in hydro development, and not rush to compromise the optimum development for the sake of a quick deal. Astonishingly about 15 years after the publication of his article in the HIMAL that carried his advice to Nepalese people, our government is now in the process of embarking on a stupid plan in defiance of the opinion expressed in the World Bank financed feasibility study report to implement the 300 MW Upper Karnali Mini Project completely ruining the prospect to develop the 4,180 MW Upper Karnali Storage Project which undoubtedly is the best among all large hydropower projects identified so far in Nepal.

Nepal might be able to get easily up to 50% of the total power in royalty from the private developers if they are properly briefed about the impressive advantages of the Upper Karnali Storage Project. By comparison with the mammoth 10,800 MW Karnali Chisapani Project the firm head of the Upper Karnali Project would be almost two times greater, though the length of waterway of both these projects would be almost the same. It can be derived based on Stage A Optimization Study Data of the World Bank financed Karnali Project study report that per KW installed capacity construction cost of the Upper Karnali Storage Project could be only about 70% of such cost of the project at Chisapani. It need not be explained that the firm power generation of the Upper Karnali Storage

Project operating at two times bigger head would also be two times greater from the use of same volume of regulated flow of the Karnali by comparison with the Karnali Chisapani Project.

Nepal might be justified to require that the private developer pay about 50% power in royalty. The total generation of the Upper Karnali Project could be about 10,000 GWh. Our country could get about 5,000GWh in royalty.

At present there is a big surge in demand for peaking power in India. The generation cost of such power could be about US Cents 12 per KWh. The amount in royalty from the developers could be as high as US\$ 500 million per annum if it is assumed that the electricity would be sold at a price of about US Cents 10 per KWh.

Big Surge in Demand for Peaking Power

At present India is experiencing an acute shortage of peaking energy. At the beginning of the Eight Plan, the total peaking shortage was 20% whereas the energy shortage was only 9% of the total power generation. The thermal and nuclear power stations are suitable to supply electricity to meet the base load demand of the system. It is not economic to use them to supply peaking energy. Gas turbines can be used to meet the peak load demand because of low specific investment costs and quick start up. However, the efficiency is limited due to the high exhaust gas temperature of the turbine.

India is making every effort to improve the hydrothermal mix for ensuring better system operating condition. However, the share of hydropower in the overall power generating capacity has steadily declined since the last few decades. The share of the hydropower in the overall power generating capacity was 50.6% in 1963. But few years before it has come down to only 25.66%.

Few More Cautions

Mr. Paul Terrell has cautioned us against excessive optimism over the building of high dams. He has highlighted some of the problems also. He has said "The major concern in building hydro dams is tectonics. The Himalas are seismically active and although this does not preclude building large dams, it certainly requires stringent design criteria, and the resulting structures may become relatively expensive". It is now a bitter reality that our government is on the verge of granting permission to a private developer to build 190m high concrete faced rock filled dam (CFRD) across the West Seti River for the generation of power because this type of dam is cheap to build. It should be noted that it is going to be the highest dam of this type so far built in the whole world. It is very strange that the Government has not cared to check by employing competent internationally known experts whether or not the proposed dam has been properly designed.

(Dr. Thapa writes on water resources)

HIV/AIDS Fighting Stigma

Worse than the disease itself, the victims of HIV/AIDS have to face social stigma and discrimination.

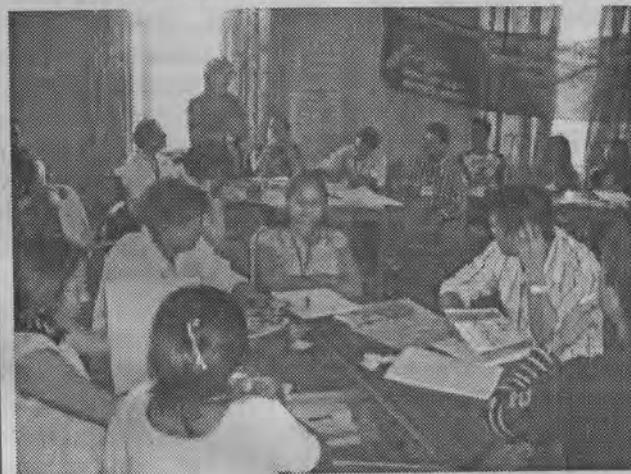
Because of lack of education and knowledge, people continue to associate the HIV/AIDS with social stigma and shame.

This has further complicated the already difficult situation by forcing the patients to go behind closets. Due to social stigma, shame and discrimination, people refuse to come out in the open if they are infected with HIV/AIDS – which means that the disease will continue to spread like a wildfire silently.

The most effective tool to tackle HIV/AIDS is the awareness and prevention. For that purpose, it is crucial to create an environment where patients do not face such stigma.

In order to create awareness in the society and root out the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS, Nepal Youth Society (NYS), an NGO, organized a five day training program by inviting concerned stakeholders.

The program was organized by NYS in cooperation with



World Vision International Bhaktapur ADP in Nagarkot from August 21-25.

According to the organizers, over three-dozen participants attended the program. They included carpet entrepreneurs, representatives of different government offices, representatives of different churches, journalists, teachers, community workers, and representatives of Districts AIDS Coordination Committee.

Nripa Raj Joshi and Gauri Shankar Pandey gave training and education on different aspects of HIV/AIDS to the participants.

"We wanted to create awareness about the disease and discuss ways to root out the social stigma and discrimination that the infected persons are facing," said Ganesh Man Pradhan of NYS. ■

NEPALESE POLITICS

Haunted By The Shadow Of the Past

Though the characters are different, Nepal's history of power struggle has repeated again

By KESHAB POUDEL

As it is said, history repeats itself. For many people, it is difficult to presume the recurrence of past but such is the reality in the life of many nations like Nepal.

What has been happening in Nepal resembles the power struggle of about 160 years ago. Difference between now and then is the characteristic of political leadership, clan, elites and nature of pressure groups.

Under the leadership of military commander Jung Bahadur, modern and unified Nepal's major political upheaval occurred in the form of Kot massacre in 1846 when a political crisis led to a sudden bloody confrontation, assassination of many leading officials and the emergence of a new dominant faction that moved to monopolize its control over the critical institutions of government. Along with establishing Rana oligarchy, the famous Kot massacre of 1846 curtailed Nepal's monarch's authority and power.

Similarly, the midnight pronouncement by King Gyanendra in April 24, 2006 was another turning point in the political history of Nepal. Although the nature of events and persons involved in the actions were completely different, the consequence is similar as it also diminished the role of monarch. Restored by the King under his own proclamation, the House of Representatives scrapped all powers, privileges and prestige enjoyed by the institution of monarchy.

Following April 24 mid-night proclamation, Nepal has seen many unusual and unprecedented political developments. In the name of mandate of Popular Uprising II, eight party governments have been legitimizing all their actions.

Oligarchy Of Different Form

Jung Bahadur, who took oath as a prime minister from King Rajendra, captured all the state power on the sword

through a Panjapatra (Palm document) at the mid-night in Kot massacre establishing himself as the sole authority of state.

Whether it is coincidence or repetition of history, Girija Prasad Koirala - a person with enough democratic convictions and personal history of a long struggle against autocracy - has made a history by leading the present political event which brought similar result like in 1846.

Some interesting events are there in the history of Jung Bahadur period as well as Koirala.

"The difference was that Jung Bahadur's period was of family oligarchy but Koirala's period is of eight party oligarchy," said a political analyst.

Belgium-based International Crisis Group's has also made an interesting observations on the political situation. "Warning of a 'new dictatorship' are exaggerated but the peace process has so far delivered an oligarchy of party leaders rather than a popular democracy. Party leaders have shown little appetite for pluralism: the interim legislature will have no official opposition, royalist parties may be excluded from the CA In any case, 'consensus' decisions will leave most power in the hands of party leaders," states the International Crisis Group's Policy Report 26, February 2007.

"Managing the transition in the palace roles may also present difficulties: political leaders have skillfully stripped royal powers comprehensively but gradually, with no single step sufficient to prompt backlash," writes the ICG.

"A handful of SPA and Maoist leaders have controlled closed-door negotiations; limited parliamentary scrutiny has not even extended to

recognition of opposition. The interim constitution has granted the prime minister and cabinet sweeping authority, subject to minimal checks and balances; the compromised independence of institutions such a judiciary has weakened the principle of separation of powers," adds ICG reports.

The description of 1846 Kot massacre presented by Leo E. Rose and John T. Scholz in their book Nepal



Statue of Jung Bahadur: Originator of oligarchy rule Profile of a Himalayan Kingdom is very much closer to the present political situation. Like in the present when leaders of eight parties have even disqualified politicians to join politics on the ground of their involvement in previous royal regime, many Bhardars (local ruling elites) were decimated after Kot massacre. Jung Bahadur took several gradual steps to take over complete control over government. One of the first steps was systematic suppression of Bhardar families.

Jung Bahadur Syndrome

Following April uprising eight party alliance, under the leadership of prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala suppressed a large number of sympathizers of royalists allowing RPP led by Pashupati Sumsher Rana and Rastriya Janshakti Party led by Surya Bahadur Thapa only a limited involvement in the parliamentary

politics. To isolate the King from military affairs, Jung Bahadur had taken control of all the senior army positions. Similarly, the eight party alliance enforced a new Army Act making prime minister as the Supreme Commander of Army.

“Some aspects of prime minister Koirala resembles Jung Bahadur Syndrome and, therefore, some harsh critics and cartoonists often compare his style with that of Jung Bahadur – who emerged into power as a daredevil having a military background. Koirala, on the other hand, has an activist background with enough of democratic convictions but the political circumstances of the country have forced upon him a political role resembling that of an autocrat,” said the political analyst.

In his book, *Tyabakhat Ko Nepal*, Ranakalin Akhira Tin Dashak (Nepal of That Time: Last three Decades of Rana) long experienced senior bureaucrat and diplomat late Sardar Bhim Bahadur Pande, describes how Rana prime ministers changed the seals one after another. Like Jung Bahadur who introduced Khadga Nishan against King's Lal Mohar, the eight party leaders have issued similar kind of stamp giving authority to the Speaker of the House of Representatives to ratify laws and other legal proclamations.

“Jung Bahadur was greatly concerned with systematic stability and adopted several measures to further this objective. Effective control over the military was an absolute necessity. This was achieved and maintained by the total monopolization of higher military ranks by the Rana sub-family faction dominant at any particular point in time. Neutralization of the royal family was also essential, and several strategies were employed for this purpose. The royal family was effectively isolated and lived under a virtual condition of palace arrest, being allowed to mingle with the elite or the general population only under careful supervision,” writes Leo E. Rose and John T. Scholz in the book *Nepal, Profile of a Himalayan Kingdom*.

“The King's power to veto any act of government by refusing to place the royal seal (lal mohar) on the document was

ended by the simple expedient of transferring control of the seal to the prime minister. Later, the prime minister concocted his own seal (khadga nishana), which was used for all but the most important documents,” write Rose and Scholz.

Nepal's Hard Reality

Situated between two most powerful nations, China and India, external factor remains decisive in Nepal's internal politics whether in the Kot massacre or the recent political development.

Signing twelve point agreement through a negotiated settlement covertly arranged by New Delhi, the present political alliance came to power. Maintaining the good rapport, Jung Bahadur too had blessings of imperial British India government. “Good rapport with the British India government was established by Jung Bahadur relatively early in his period in office and before coming to power, guaranteeing its support to India,” write Rose and Scholz.

As Rose and Scholz said, for Nepal to survive as a unified, independent state, some degree of stability was essential. Jung Bahadur restored stability overcoming anarchical and unstable situation. However, the recent regime change pushed Nepal from a relatively stable country to most unstable and chaotic - diversifying armed groups from one to dozens.

“It is a normal phenomenon for the foreign policy of any society to be strongly affected by domestic political and economic factors, and this is certainly the case in Nepal. But the reverse principle- namely, that international factors have a strong and often decisive impact on Kathmandu's domestic politics- is even more apparent. This is a painful fact of life for many Nepalis, and one that some of them would prefer to ignore. But despite intensive efforts over several centuries to isolate the country from alien influences of all kinds and to emphasize indigenous responses to new situations and challenges, the penetration of Nepal from outside is truly massive in scale and probably irreversible,” writes Rose and Scholz.

Despite taking complete control of



PM Koirala: Unbridled authority

power, Jung Bahadur did give some symbolic role to the monarchy including as head of state. However, leaders of eight political parties, through new Interim Constitution, suspended monarchy and made eight political parties the supreme authority.

“Country's peculiar characteristics evolved in a long process of change with continuity. There used to be regime changes in Nepal in the past as elsewhere by wars, court conspiracies or other ways of force or overthrow of regimes. Nowadays such changes are made through revolutions which are called revolution of 1951, Popular Uprising I 1990, and Popular Uprising II, 2006. They were in the pattern of bloodless revolution. That way since its integration in 1768, Nepal has gone through three various upheavals and changes of historic importance. Persons involved and purposes pursued by them are different but some basic characters remain almost similar,” said the analyst.

“Every nation has its own character with its own behavioral pattern in politics. What renowned writer Edward Crankshaw described in his book “Shadow of the Winter Palace” is completely based upon that concept. According to the author, what Lenin, Stalin and others did in new Russia after communist revolution as ruthless dictators was in a similar pattern and behavior like that of during Tsarist regime. The way the Peter the Great and his successor ruthlessly ruled the Russia, communists under the Stalin regime followed the same pattern but in a different garb,” said the political analyst. ■

CA ELECTIONS

Doubts Persist

Less than three months remain for the November 22 elections for Constituent Assembly (CA), but the usual festive-like environment that accompanies the run up to the election is totally absent. Leaders have broken world records in giving lip service to the election. But they have failed to actually translate their commitments into practice. The Maoists have sown further doubts by announcing agitation and murmuring about the need to defer the elections to have “real CA.” In the last one week, the Maoist pronouncements have given ample reason to the common Nepali people to question whether they will get to cast their votes ever. But since the alternative to not holding the election looks dangerously disturbing, the government and eight parties must gird up their loins to conduct a free, fair and credible election to put to rest the decades-old uncertainties haunting the nation

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

Its been almost one decade since Nepali people have voted their representatives to power. And fulfillment of their desires to exercise the democratic right in the November election still remains doubtful given flip-flops by political actors.

Unlike in April last year when the Election Commission (EC) had asked the government to postpone the polls (slated for mid-June) since they lacked electoral legislations and other pre-requisites, this time the EC has repeatedly stated its full preparedness in terms of technical and logistical matters.

However, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Bhojraj Pokharel has, time and again, reminded the political leaders to create a favorable

political and security environment for the November elections.

The security in Terai is yet to improve as various armed outfits continue to hold the common people hostage through their systematic violence and strikes.

The high level talks team of the government has been holding a series of negotiations with a number of organizations. Till date, they have sealed an agreement with only one organization – the National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NFIN). However, no sooner had the two sides sealed 20-point deal, different Janajati organizations in the name of Khumbuwan and Limbuwan Liberation Fronts have come to the scene accusing the NFIN of selling out the

issues of Janajatis. This showed the challenges before the government team.

Moreover, the political parties have yet to start visiting the districts and villages to campaign for the election.

As CEC Pokharel noted, the political parties have to play the crucial role in educating the voters about the significance of the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections. While the EC and INGOs can only provide technical education related with CA, the political parties have the role to educate the people on political aspects of the election. There is not much time left for them to take their agenda related with the restructuring of the state and other important constitutional matters to provide enough time for the people to

debate and make up their minds about the nature of new Nepal that they have been promised.

Barring the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), none of the parties have shown zeal to draft election manifesto and conduct electoral campaigns. Instead, the Maoists have announced agitation in this period.

Maoist Enigma

On Friday (August 24), Maoist chairman Prachanda dropped a bombshell hinting that they were game for postponing the election till mid-April next year.

For a party that has been able to catapult the CA as the national agenda, the remarks by Prachanda came as a shocker.

"We are in favor of real CA for which thousands of people of Nepal had made ultimate sacrifice. We cannot support when moves are made to hold election as if we are electing a parliament or National Panchayat (legislature of erstwhile Panchayat regime)," Prachanda said at the interaction with civil society representatives.

Prachanda went on to accuse that his party was being dragged to the election. "When there was a wave in favor of our party, the elections were put off under various pretexts. And when they think that our party has landed in trouble, the very same elements are now saying that election must be held at any cost," he said.

This statement clearly exposed the uncertainties and confusion among the Maoist leadership. They somehow seem to have deduced that they might not be able to fare well in the election.

The Maoists further created confusion when Prachanda rejected the comments two days later. Faced with blistering criticism for suggesting the postponement of election, Prachanda claimed he was 'misreported' by the media. Prachanda now claims that the same elements who deferred the election in June and who had never shown any interest to prepare the ground for the election this time, are now engaged in accusing Maoists of trying to put off the polls.

Meanwhile, in what is certain to



Prachanda addressing interaction: Flip-flop

Gorkhapatra

deepen the misgivings about Maoist stance on election, its senior leaders are airing conflicting remarks. Speaking at a same program on Sunday (an interaction on CA Polls and Role of Media), Information Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara and senior Maoist leader Dr. Baburam Bhattarai made dissimilar comments. While Mahara said that the election will be held at any cost, Dr. Bhattarai said they will support if only "meaningful election" is held.

"No one can stop the election now. If anybody tries to derail the election, all must unite to counter," Mahara said at the interaction. On the other hand, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai said that the meaningful CA election cannot be held without first declaring republic. Dr. Bhattarai even warned that his party could walk out of government anytime. He said that his party is not in favor of holding elections to give continuity to status quo.

"It seems that while the Maoists want the election to be postponed, they don't

want to be seen as causing this postponement. That is why we are seeing so much of contradictions in the statements of their leaders in recent days," said a political commentator.

Perhaps that is why the Maoists have put forth 22-point demands including the immediate announcement of republic, adoption of fully proportional representation election system, roundtable conference to resolve Terai issues, implementation of recommendations of Rayamajhi Commission report, resolution of issues of disappeared persons and so on.

The Maoists have said that their agitation will help in ensuring the CA election even as they have unveiled a series of disruptive programs like demonstrations, rallies, political strikes and "people's actions" beginning mid-September. As such, the Maoist intention regarding the CA election is anybody's guess.

Congress Unity Efforts

Another aspect that has also

contributed to the nagging uncertainty regarding the November election is the inordinate delay in the unification of two Congress parties.

Although the taskforces of two parties are said to have finalized about

broke down last week, the chairman of MJF Upendra Yadav warned of another agitation in Madhes if their demands are not fulfilled within a week.

Following their central committee meeting, Yadav, on August 23, said if the

election. The government and the eight parties need to express their unstinting commitment towards the polls without delay to cure the confusions that have gripped the ordinary public. ■



CEC Pokharel (left) with political leaders: "Create political environment"

Kantipur

the structure of leadership at the central level in the unified party, they are yet to agree on the district/local level and sister wings.

On Sunday (August 26), Prime Minister and president of Nepali Congress (NC) Girija Prasad Koirala met with president of NC (Democratic) Sher Bahadur Deuba to discuss expediting the unification process.

Being the largest political party with the longest tradition of following a liberal democratic ideology, the NC's lead is important in kicking off the election campaign across the country.

"But till their unification materializes, the Congress will not be able to go to election in a firm and committed manner," said the commentator.

MJF's Ultimatum

The Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), which spearheaded the Madhesi agitation early this year, has once again threatened to unleash movement in Terai plains.

As the talks with the government

demands are not fulfilled within a week, then agitation will be launched. He said MJF will not compromise on its demands for ethnic autonomy and proportional representation.

Yadav has warned that MJF will launch the movement from September 6 if their demands are not met within August 31.

As such, given the Maoist dithering and lack of resolution of various issues including the ones raised by MJF and Janajati organizations, doubts are still hovering over the November

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Foreign Employment

Women's Hardships

At a time when large number of female workers are going abroad, the time has come to enhance their skills

By A CORRESPONDENT

Shanti Kumari Syangbo, a resident of Golche Village Development Committee of Sindhupalchowk district, is now stranded in Kuwait. Having no money to come back to Nepal and since the visa is expiring in less than a month, Syangbo is now calling for help from concerned authorities to make her return possible.

Manju Lama, a resident of Makwanpur district has more painful story to tell as she is now living as a prisoner in Saudi Arabia Prison. Like Syangbo, Manju is also searching for someone who can pay for ticket for her return.

Syangbo and Lama are not the only women suffering from painful situations in their life. There are dozens of migrant women who have gone to foreign lands have been suffering from such situation.

Along with the painful stories like these, many women who have gone for foreign employment have also contributed a lot to Nepal and their family members back in the country.

Whether one likes it or not, the foreign employment is now a reality. At a time when the country like Nepal is not in a position to generate employment inside the country, foreign employment has emerged as good option for Nepalese women.

With the implementation of new Foreign Employment Act, the restriction placed on women for foreign employment has now been eased and the number of women going abroad is definite to increase.

Easing the legal restrictions imposed by previous law is not enough to promote and provide the security to women and other workers going for

foreign employment. As an initial step, basic training should be given to those Nepalese women seeking for foreign employment. "If we send women after giving them short term skill trainings as well as informing them about the local



Nepalis Women: Need for skill training

custom, law and other local issues of destination countries, vulnerability will decline and women's income will also increase," said Dan Bahadur Tamang, former president of Foreign Employment Association. "Just opening up the liaison offices will solve more than 75 percent of present problems."

The government must open the labor liaison office in all the country where Nepalese are currently working. "We are considering a proposals to open liaison office at least in all the countries of Gulf region," said Minister for Foreign Affairs Sahana Pradhan.

Compared to the men, women are more vulnerable in foreign employment for physical abuse. This is the reason why women workers need more protection in those countries where they go for work.

According to an estimate, women's

contribution in remittances is around 12 percent of total remittances in the country and this is going to increase in coming days as the new foreign employment act has eased past restrictions..

Because of legal restrictions imposed by previous foreign employment act, many Nepalese women who aspired to go to foreign employment chose illegal way to reach the destination. Since they were not allowed to fly from Kathmandu, most of these women who are now facing painful situation, had fled to the destinations from New Delhi.

"Had they been allowed to go in a legal way, most of these women would

not have faced such kind of situation," said Dr. Meena Acharya, a renowned economist. "Although some discriminatory laws have already been removed, we may still have to hear such painful stories for next few years as many women had gone there in the past in vulnerable manner."

As the number of women workers going abroad continues to increase, the country is yet to make any effort to train them and provide necessary support at the time of difficulties and crises.

At a program organized by Sancharika Samuha and UNIFEM, recently, minister, planners, experts and stakeholders related to the foreign employment had agreed about the need for protection as well as training for women who want to go abroad for employment. ■

“There Is A Need To Debate The Issues Of Economic Restructuring Of The State”

By Prof. Dr. Bishwambher Pyakuryal

Professor Dr. Bishwambher Pyakuryal is an eminent economist. He spoke to SANJAYA DHAKAL about the pertinent economic issues facing the country at this juncture. Excerpts:

There are talks of introducing federalism in the country. What do you think will be the fiscal implications of such move?

Unfortunately, we have not had extensive debates on the economic aspect of federalism. Everyone is content talking about political restructuring of the state but not the economic restructuring, which is equally important. There are some vital issues that must be debated before going for federalism. They include the exact nature of relations between the center and the state/province; means of exploiting and distributing natural endowments; ways of adjusting the various ecological divisions with different economic opportunities and so on.

Do you think federal units will be economically sustainable in our country?

There are various problems. Basically, over two-third of revenue goes to the central level at present. The volume of resource availability and capacity of our institutions and manpower are not going to change overnight just after the introduction of federal units. At present, the practice is such that the central level Ministry sends both resource as well as officers to carry out local level initiatives. Take for instance the internal resource generation capacity of the local bodies. In the five years between fiscal years 2057/28 and 2061/62, the center gave the grant of Rs 19.29 billion to the local bodies, whereas the latter could generate roughly Rs 1.5 billion on their own (through royalties, tourism fees, registration fees etc). Even the report of the Auditor General exposes this huge gap between their capacity to raise internal resources and their dependency on the center. This has led to the

loss in their capabilities.

What specific problems will arise in terms of their efficiency?

Clearly, there is a high dependency of local bodies on center at this point. They are losing capability as well. Their source of income is insignificant. And there is a big problem on their skills. There is not even good record-keeping system. These factors must be taken into consideration. We cannot simply divide the nation into federal units without enabling them with financial muscle. In a new structure, rights and responsibilities of the units must be set clear.

One and a half years have passed since Nepal entered into post-conflict phase. Has there been the much-promised peace dividend?

It is debatable whether we can actually call this period a post-conflict since we can see continuation of decentralized violence by various groups. I have not seen any peace dividend as yet.

How do you read the economic achievements so far?

At a time when we are talking about regional and global integration of economy, Nepalis are facing obstructions in movement from hill/mountains to terai. This is not an indication of cessation of conflict. Anyway, there has been estimation on best and worst case scenarios for Nepal. It is said that between 2007 and 2011, Nepal will attain 2.9 percent of growth if the conflict continues like now. If the conflict deteriorates (worst case), the growth could dip below 2 percent whereas if everything becomes alright (best case), then the growth will reach 4.88 percent.

What about the specific achievements or failures?

Although the economy looks stable, there are some serious problems lurking behind. One alarming aspect is the level and nature of capital

The volume of resource availability and capacity of our institutions and manpower are not going to change overnight just after the introduction of federal units.

expenditure. The government is upbeat about the huge increase in capital expenditure – which at first glance looks very positive development. But if you dig a little below the surface, you will find disturbing causes for the rise in capital expenditure. In fact, the capital expenditure has increased not because of investment in development sector but due to increase in non-productive expenses. For example, there has been huge expenditure on building and maintaining the cantonments. Likewise, the government is making huge amounts of payments to the Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC). The government has said that the capital expenditure has increased from 38.2 percent last year to 51.3 percent this year – but this is largely due to such unproductive spending. I think the government ought to have passed Special Act from the parliament to spend such huge amounts on those sectors.

How do the macroeconomic indicators look?

The inflation rate, which was at 9.1 percent in 2062, has come down in 2064 to 4.5 percent. However, in 2062 the high inflation was caused by hike in price of petroleum products. But, now the inflation rate has been suppressed by continuing with the subsidies on the fuel price. So, this is a suppressed inflation. I have already told you about the nature of increase in capital expenditure. Exports have declined, which is quite natural given the incessant bandhs, power shortage, labor unrest, insecurity, unfavorable investment climate and so on. Imports have increased but only the imports of luxurious goods have increased.

Can you elaborate on the export-import situation?

In the first eleven months of the fiscal year 2063/64 (2006/07), exports grew only by 0.8 percent compared with 2.9 percent growth the previous year. Last year, exports to India had grown by 5.5 percent but this year (first 11 months) it grew only by 2.8 percent. Likewise, exports to third countries grew by 2.8 percent last year and by only 2 percent in the first eleven months of this year. Imports have slightly increased. But the bulk of the increase in import is due to growth in import of vehicles and parts – that, too, luxurious cars and not the service trucks, which would have indicated growth in

transport sector, electrical equipment, computer parts, telecom, medicines etc.

How come the consumption has increased, then?

The consumption has increased due to increase in earnings from service sector, financial sector as well as remittance. Because of remittance earning, the foreign exchange reserve had been growing. But this year, the forex reserve declined by 1.68 percent while it had grown by 23.3 percent last year. This decline has largely been caused by appreciation of Nepali currency vis-à-vis US dollar. In the last one year, the value of dollar has depreciated by 13.3 percent (from Rs 73.45 per dollar in mid-June 2006 to Rs 65.4 per dollar now). The pressure on Indian currency is also growing. This year, the central bank has already spent US dollar to purchase Rs 57.36 billion worth Indian currency. Last year, the central bank had purchased Rs 39.27 billion worth IC by selling dollar.

Since you are also a member of the board of directors of the Nepal Rastra Bank, can you tell us about the financial sector reforms particularly in reference with the two state-owned banks?

The financial sector reforms program is going on fairly well. Of the two banks, Rastriya Banijya Bank (RBB) and Nepal Bank Limited (NBL), the latter is doing better now. But still there are problems in the Non Performing Asset (NPA) level. One thing I would like to clarify here is that in our agreement with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), we have pledged to continue reforms in these banks till they are ready for privatization. At this moment, the political situation does not permit us to go for privatization of these banks. Therefore, reforms will have to continue till we are ready to privatize them. In NBL, we have decided to bring in new management team with one or two top level foreign consultants recruited through IFA along with homegrown management team of Nepali professionals. ■



In fact, the capital expenditure has increased not because of investment in development sector but due to increase in non-productive expenses.

LIVESTOCK FARMING

Trading Losses

In a pre-dominantly agrarian country, little attention is given to develop commercial livestock farming that could go a long way towards alleviating poverty

By BHAGIRATH YOGI in Bhaktapur

Chandra Shekhar Sapkota may not be a typical Nepali farmer. But it would be naïve to suspect his commitment to practice commercial livestock farming in this predominantly agricultural country.

Sapkota first tried his luck dealing with the booming real estate business in Kathmandu in the late nineties. But as there was slowdown in the real estate business mainly due to the escalation in the Maoist insurgency, he decided to go for 'bangur palan' (farming of improved variety of pigs).

With an initial investment of over Rs five million, he set up a pig farm at Tathali VDC ward no. 8 in Bhaktapur district—some 12 km east of the capital, Kathmandu. After consulting with vets, he decided to raise pigs of Yorkshire variety expecting high yield. He not only provided employment for half a dozen local people, he also trained them in rearing fish at a pond and growing seasonal vegetables in his farm.

But he turned into a destitute person this summer. Dozens of his pigs died due to an "unknown disease" leading into a loss of hundreds of thousands of rupees. "I am devastated" he told us at his farm, adding, "I was more disappointed to look at the indifference of the authorities who thought that they had no job in helping out individual farmers."

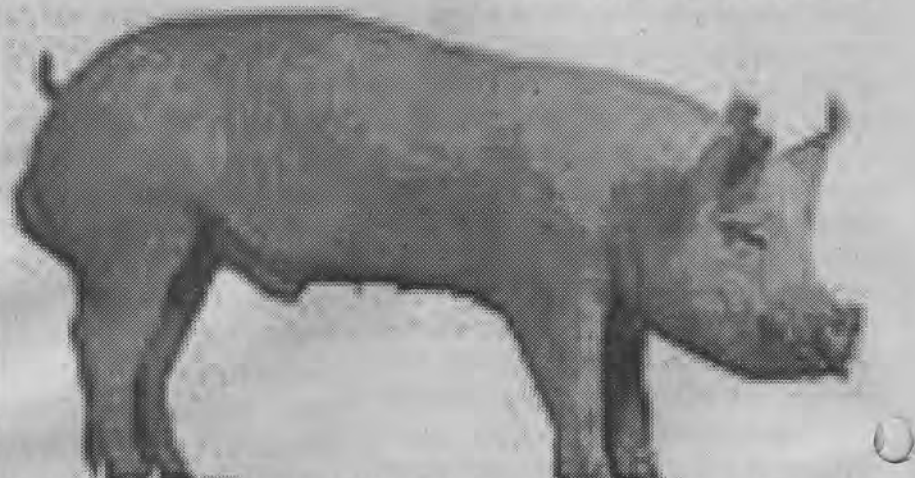
Of course, some officials tried to help. Acting chief of Central Animal Quarantine Office at the Department of Livestock Services Kathmandu, Dr. Balram Thapa, visited Sapkota's farm upon receiving a complaint that an "unknown" disease had resulted into deaths of hundreds of pigs in the area.

"Upon tests at our lab, we found out that the pigs had suffered from

CNN to visit his farm, find out the cause of the "mysterious disease" and encourage innovative farmers like him. "But even state-run Nepal Television refused to visit my farm when dozens of pigs were dying every day," he said.

Commercial livestock farmers like Sapkota complain that they are not getting adequate support from the authorities and that there is no arrangement to spread their risks. "I am still committed to continue my farming though a number of my friends have advised to do otherwise," he said.

Raising livestock for meat or milk is a major occupation for hundreds of thousands of farmers across the country. It is also a major contributing factor in rural economy. According to the Economic Survey of 2006/07 published by the Finance



A photo of Yorkshire boar : Problems include lack of quality feed, packaging and slaughter house

food-borne disease, which spreads during the time of monsoon. We advised for administering of broad-spectrum of anti-biotic and to stop contaminated food. The situation improved gradually," said Dr. Thapa.

Though the disease has been brought under control for now, Sapkota is still worried. He wants media organisations like BBC and

Ministry, milk production from cows and buffaloes is estimated to reach 1.351 million metric tons during the fiscal year.

The total meat production is estimated to increase by 3.6 percent totalling 227,000 metric tonnes during the year. Of the total meat production, 147,000 MT is expected from buffalo, 2,747 MT from sheep, nearly 45,000 MT from goats, 16,000

MT each from pigs and fowls and 231 MT from ducks. "The production of meat from fowl has increased nominally due to spread of the bird-flu in Bangladesh and the import restrictions," the Survey said.

Similarly, the annual survey of economic activities in the country said that the total production of fish in the country is projected to increase by 3 percent in FY 2006/07 compared to previous year and reach 46,800 pieces. Half of the estimated total production is expected to come from ponds and the rest from the natural sources, the report said.

The 20-year-long Agriculture Perspective Plan, unveiled in 1997, identified livestock development as a priority output sector and said it had tremendous growth potentials provided that other sectors (e.g. crops and high value commodities) exhibit rapid growth and an expansion of per capita income.

"Animal development activities are conducted mainly within the private sector and are largely demand driven. Therefore, the sector's development depends much on the private sector and on the rate of growth of per capita income in the country," the Plan—formulated by the then HMG/Nepal with the support of the Asian Development Bank—said.

Under the heading "Performance of Priority APP Outputs," an official document says that the APP expects the livestock sector's growth rate to accelerate from 2.9 percent in the initial five years before the plan (1992-95) to 6.1 percent in the last five year period (2009-15). Officials say farmers have started switching from traditional to more productive animals in the post APP period.

In Nepal, livestock rearing is much more predominant in the hills

than either the mountain or Terai. In order to achieve its broad objective of regional balance, the APP aims for significantly higher growth rates in the hills and mountains. The plan targets per capita livestock GDP to grow from Rs 814 in the Terai in 1994/95 to Rs 1,268 in 2014/15 by the end of the APP period. Correspondingly, the APP has targeted per capita GDP in the hills and mountains to grow from Rs 1,254 to Rs 2,600.

Officials say the government's investment in the livestock sector increased from Rs 295 million per year in the pre-APP period (1996/97) to about Rs 537 million per year in the post-APP period, implying an annual growth rate of about 22.8 percent.

Though latest data were not available to vet whether the government did spend as per its target, it would be safe to assume that performance of the sector remains less than satisfactory in the wake of lacklustre performance of the agriculture sectors over the past few years.

Experts say with the increasing demand for milk and meat products especially in the urban and semi-urban areas, there is good prospects of livestock farming in the country. But it may not materialise unless livestock produce are linked up with the market.

"Tie-up with the market is essential," Dr Thapa.

According to Dr. Thapa, the role of the government should be to facilitate, demonstrate, conduct study and analysis, and help in project formulation for the farmers. Farmers, on their part, say their problems are multi-fold. They include lack of credit facilities, lack of improved variety of breeds, lack of quality veterinary



Sapkota: Hurt By Indifference

services especially in rural areas and low standard of livestock extension and training services being provided by various government outlets.

Another problem being faced by Nepali farmers is that they have to compete with the agriculture produce subsidized by the Indian government across the border. "The situation is such that fish imported from Indian cities like Hyderabad are cheaper in Kathmandu than those produced in Janakpur," said Thapa.

But, again, in order to compete with the livestock produced in India or meet the growing demands of the marketplace, Nepali farmers have no other option left than to commercialize their production system.

"The time has come for our farmers to add value and adopt Good Veterinary Practices as well as Good Management Practices from Farm to Fork," said Dr. Thapa.

Until farmers like Sapkota are motivated enough to take up such practices, of course with the help of the concerned government departments, Nepali livestock farming – and the agriculture sector at large— would be trading losses, without any gains. ■

VC PUN TO FILE PETITION AGAINST UK GOVT

Victoria Cross winner Tul Bahadur Pun is filing a case against UK for showing discriminatory behavior towards Gurkhas. Two other individuals are also filing similar cases.

According to Kantipur, Padam Bahadur Gurung, central chairman of the Gurkha Army Ex-Servicemen's Organization (GAESO), stated that initial preparations to file the case have been completed.

Speaking at a program in Dharan Monday, Gurung informed that VC Pun, former Gurkha Major Man

Bahadur Rai and Bhim Bahadur Tumbahanfe will file the case against the UK government. Among the three, only Tumbahanfe has taken up British citizenship.

"Despite their sacrifices and contribution in many wars that they fought for the British government, Gurkhas are being made the target of discrimination today," Gurung said, adding, "We'll file the case to ensure equality." Earlier, on July 5, the British government had felicitated Pun who joined the British Army in 1940 and fought in Burma.

He won the Victoria Cross for bravery while fighting against the Japanese troops.

However, the British Embassy turned a blind eye to his selfless service, rejecting his visa request before granting it after public pressure from UK citizens and well-wishers. Pun, who is suffering from high blood pressure, gastritis, hearing problems, and impaired vision, had applied for a visa to get medical treatment in the country. The efforts and campaigns of GAESO and Howe and Co. Solicitors, and a media campaign by the British newspaper, Daily Mirror, helped to put pressure on the British government to recognize and award Pun's unflinching bravery and selfless service.

LAXMI BANK EXPANDS OPERATION

Laxmi Bank has opened fourth branch inside Kathmandu valley in New Road. The bank now has 10 branches across the country. "Strategically located at the heart of New Road, Laxmi Bank's "New Road Business Center" offers a full range of personal and business solutions and will serve as a full fledged branch that will include units of Trade and Credit Operations to support business and market expectations," states a press release by the bank.

"New Road has proudly represented Nepal's trade and commerce for several decades and we are proud to become a part of this honored community," says Suman

Joshi, CEO at Laxmi Bank. Laxmi Bank's entry into New Road market coincides with its 5th Anniversary.

"The Bank spent the first 5 years building strong business and risk management fundamentals, which are prominently reflected in the quality of its operations and balance sheet. We have undertaken a number of strategic initiatives the previous years, such as expanding our branch and distribution network, identifying new revenue sources through novel products and services etc, and 2007/8 is expected to be the year when we successfully leverage our past efforts and investments into achieving sound business growth," states the release.

"New Road is the trading center for both retailers and wholesalers and is the most economically active area in Kathmandu. It is therefore no coincidence that New Road has been identified as one of the major growth drivers to achieve our strategic goals for 2007/8 and beyond," Joshi said.

Laxmi Bank was established in April 2002. "During this short period, Laxmi Bank has emerged as a key player in both the retail and wholesale banking segments and prides itself as being a bank that operates under the highest levels of corporate governance, risk management practices that can be benchmarked with best international practices and has arguably the strongest IT credentials in the banking industry today," the release adds.

POLITICS

Changing Tones

If the recent political trends are any indication, there seem to be an emerging new political scenario. Although India had, covertly and overtly, backed the Seven Party and Maoist alliance against the royal government, of late the leaders of three major parties of alliance are expressing suspicion about Indian intention.

Just a week ago, Maoist leader Prachanda accused India of playing a role to marginalize them from politics, in Nepal weekly magazine. Likewise, CPN-UML's official document prepared for the internal discussion cautiously observed that India is trying to extract benefit as much as possible from the present unstable situation.

"Majority of Nepali people know there's big design on the part of Indian ruling class to extend its influence in Nepal and especially Madhesh. We are countering this as well", said Prachanda in his interview. "India did not do good. We feel, India has played a big role in minimizing our role in

terai. After we came to government, we didn't work that way (to work for Indian interest)."

Similarly, in a meeting with some of his party colleagues recently, even prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala expressed doubt over India's support in holding the elections for Constituent Assembly. Koirala reportedly said whether India would allow me to hold the CA elections. Although Indian Ambassador Shiv Shanker Mukherjee in his recent remarks stressed the need to hold the elections for CA on time, many still suspect India's role.

Interestingly, there is also a changing tone on UN's role. Those politicians, civil society members and foreign power - who defended United Nations as a sole guarantor of long lasting peace in Nepal- are suddenly questioning the role of United Nations Interim Mission to Nepal (UNMIN).

Not only Maoist leader Prachanda but his past mentors in India are now wary about UNMIN's growing role.

"There'll be no need for the UN to continue in Nepal if the Constituent Assembly elections do not take place," said Prachanda in Nepal.

In similar way, South Block officials are sending feelers through newspapers. In his recent article in Nepali Times, a New Delhi based Nepalese journalist quoting some unanimous south block sources disclosed that Indians want to see UNMIN pack its bag from Nepal.

Although Maoist leader Prachanda is very critical to India in his recent interview, his stance on UNMIN role is very much similar to what South Block officials have in their mind. South Block officials are so wary about growing UN role and they want to see the UN go back.

At a time when debate over whether to hold the elections for CA is continuing, there seems to be moves to make or break the alliance for the coming new political scenario in Nepal. Whatever kind of new alliance emerges, one thing is almost certain that Nepal's internal problem is becoming more complicated and political instability is set to prolong. Nepal's geo-strategic situation is such that two equally competent powers are on the two sides of the country. ■

GERMAN ASSISTANCE

German government handed over eight ambulances to the Ministry of Health and Population amid a function on August 24.

Speaking at the handing over ceremony, German ambassador Franz Ring underscored the importance of holding Constituent Assembly (CA) elections on time. "I would like to underline that it is of utmost importance that these elections take place as scheduled. Only elections can provide the necessary democratic legitimacy of the constituent assembly," he said.

Ambassador Ring expressed concern about the prevailing lack of security and called on all parties to work with the government in creating

a conducive environment in which campaigning and voting could be undertaken free from threats, intimidation and violence.

"The German government is also deeply concerned by the on-going violence in the Terai. It would be a catastrophe for Nepal, but also for partners in development like Germany if the elections could not be reasonably free and fair," he said.

"May I also express my deep concern about the continuing bandhas, enforcing shut down of schools, factories and shops, preventing private and public vehicles from plying the streets. Such action are neither peaceful nor democratic: It's coercion. I fear that the so-called

"peoples' action" to be launched very soon fall in the same category of undemocratic and unacceptable measures. All the parties involved in the peace process shall stick to democratic values and action."

He expressed German commitment to help Nepal in the peace process. "Germany has been able to react on the spot. We have been providing health services and medication, organising surgical camps in the cantonments, building access roads and improving water supply. All this to the benefit of the people in need, in the cantonments and in the surroundings." He promised a new project which is aiming in supporting the peace process will soon be started with the assistance of three million Euros.

BOOK

Poetic Expression

Renowned Nepali poet Shailendra Sakar describes his visit to America in a poetic way

By A CORRESPONDENT

Shailendra Sakar is not a new name in Nepali literature particularly in the area of poems as he has contributed hundreds of poems and many short stories and essays to the modern Nepali literature.

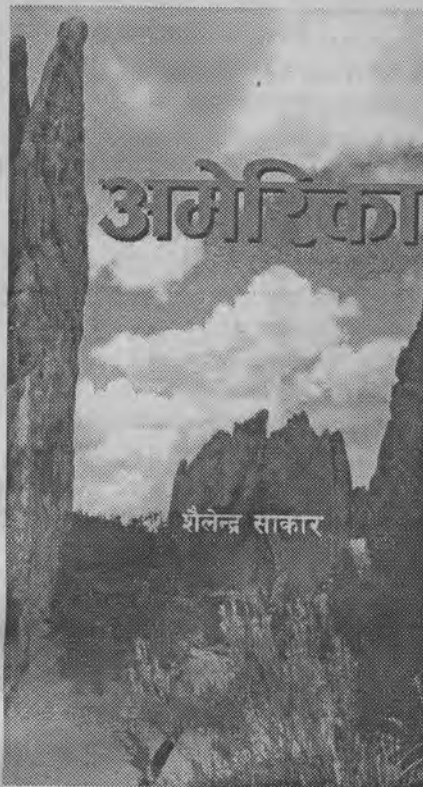
Based on his own trip to the United States and his observations, poet Shailendra Sakar wrote a book mixing poetic rhythm and essays. The book includes two parts, the first part consists of poems and second part is written as travelogue. The book is based on his visit to USA five years ago.

From east coast to mid-west and to west coast, poet Shailendra Sakar traveled all across the United States. He has dedicated the poems to his grand daughter who was born in the United States. In the book, Sakar deals with the nature, society and other aspects of American life.

A book written as a travelogue is always interesting to readers. It is useful for students, travelers and anyone interested in far away places and people. As a poet, Sakar feels the pulse of nature and its surroundings and puts them into words.

From highways to sky-scrappers and lives of average American as well as Nepali migrants who are working in bigger cities of USA, poet Sakar observes their life filled with difficulties and struggles.

The nature and beauty as well as diversity of the United States is very much in the mind of poet Sakar.



America

(Poem/ travelogue)

By: Shailendra Sakar

**Published by: Economic
Research Policy
Study Center**

**Distributed by: Oxford
International Publication,
Exhibition Road**

Pages: 144

Price: Rs.150.00 US\$ 5

His poems begin with the birth of his grand daughter in a different world and different continent far away from his own country. From Nebraska, Sakar also traveled to Colorado where he saw the beautiful mountains like in Nepal. The big stones of Boulder and people coming from around the world to ski in the mountain, Sakar describes them in a fitting manner.

One of the basic qualities of Sakar's poems is that he is able to grasp the situation and explain them through his poetry. There is the rhythm of words and spirits of the place. While reading Sakar's poem, one can get an idea about the American life. As a land of freedom, what Sakar observes is about human perceptions and their surroundings.

In thesecond chapter, Sakar's expression comes in a form of essay. He explains the life and challenges faced by Nepalese living in various cities of United States of America. Not all of them have happy life as is widely perceived. Some of them live in a very difficult situation.

From Nepal's renowned poets to the actors, he met all kinds of Nepalese living in the United States. Without offending anybody, Sakar tries to plead the cases of unfortunate people who have been living in the United States.

Of course, America is a country of opportunities but this is not true for all. There are challenges as well. Sakar's book is very interesting to read. It gives all different aspects of life in America.

As there are tens of thousands of Nepalese people who want to go to America for studies or work, the book can provide important education. It can help them prepare for the hardships that they are likely to face. ■

INDIA ON REFUGEE CRISIS

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said that India will work with Nepal and all concerned parties to resolve the festering Bhutanese refugee crisis, reports by Kantipur state.

"India will work with all parties, especially Nepal, in order to improve the state of refugees and find a solution that will ensure their dignity and well-being," Singh said in a response to a letter written by Indian lawmaker Ram Gopal Yadav.

India's Socialist Party's leader Yadav is demanding the Indian government to lead a tripartite initiative to facilitate a dignified repatriation of more than 100,000 refugees languishing at seven UNHCR-administered camps in Jhapa and Morang districts in eastern Nepal since 1990.

Yadav is associated with the Bhutanese Refugees Solidarity Group that supported the "long march" campaign of the refugees to their homeland a few months back. However, India did not give the passage to the refugees though they had come via India to Nepal.

The reports add that Kantipur had received a copy of the Indian Prime Minister's letter dated two weeks on Tuesday (August 21). This is the first time that any Indian prime minister has expressed serious concern over the issue in written form. Stating that the government is trying to find a common consensus with all parties in regard to human values, Singh said that India is encouraging both countries- Nepal and Bhutan- to come up with suitable solutions through peaceful negotiations so that the diplomatic relations between the two neighbors are not affected.

Yadav had also sent the copies of the letter to Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Home Minister Shivraj Patil. Mukherjee replied that "suitable solutions" would be found to the problem while Patil informed that they would think about the issue. The refugees of Nepali-origin were systematically evicted from their ancestral homes in southern Bhutan by the Druk regime in the late eighties and early nineties.

Meanwhile, Bhutanese organizations in exile including the National Democratic Front (NDF), the Bhutan Solidarity and Indian National Social Action Forum (INSAF) welcomed Prime Minister Singh's gesture organizing a joint-press conference here on Monday.

"This is a positive step from the Indian side," the Secretary of Advocacy and Foreign Department of NDF Narad Adhikari said. "If India implements what it said, it will create history," he added. "The concerned parties mean refugee leaders, Bhutan, Nepal and Indian governments. All of them should sit for talks and find a solution to the crisis at the earliest," the Front's Vice-Secretary Rajman Gurung said. "The Nepal government should immediately initiate talks with India over this."

Dr Sunilam and INSAF President Anil Chaudhari were also present at the conference, which came up with the decision to form a five-member delegation of senior Indian social activists. The delegation will come to Nepal to lobby with government officials and major political parties on September 4 for talks with India. The delegation comprises social activist Medha Patekar, senior Socialist leader Surendra Mohan and journalist Kuldip Nayer, Dewaprat Biswas of Forward Block and Dr Sunilam. According to Adhikari, the delegation will meet Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, foreign minister Sahana Pradhan, UML General Secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal and Maoist Chairman Prachanda and hand over Dr Singh's letter that would "form a basis for talks". ■

Book List

1. Bonded Labour (Kamaiya) in Nepal/2005
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ART EXHIBITION

Power Of Expression

Two artists Asha R Dangol and Adoiti Charkaborty Sadhu team up for an exhibition of their experiments in paintings

By A CORRESPONDENT

For an artist, there are various ways of expressing his/her feelings and observation of nature, human life, culture and so on. Some prefer pencil and paper, others take to canvas - but it is always a challenging task to express the feeling through any such media.

Although artists from other countries of the world have a long history of using ceramic for their expressions, it has just recently been adopted by Nepalese artists. The artists of Nepal have a tradition of using clay as a medium of expression but they are just confined to creating images of gods and goddesses. However, of late, a few people have started to use ceramic as a medium.

Young Nepali artist Dangol has made efforts to establish himself as an artist using the ceramic as a medium for expression. Dangol's forty art works made in ceramics, mixed media and acrylic are currently displayed at Siddhartha Art Gallery.

Artist Dangol, who used canvas for his paintings, now uses ceramic for his expression. The ceramic is expensive and difficult medium but Dangol has justifiably experimented with it.

Dangol has drawn his inner feelings through ceramic expression. He uses the colors to match ceramic and colors that reflect the emotions. There are also paintings drawn in

canvas. "This is for the first time when I got involved in different media," said Dangol. "I want to continue use this medium for my expression."

Unlike other paintings, one needs to have basic trainings and techniques to make paintings in ceramic. First, artist makes various sizes of ceramic then fills it with colors.

Ceramic paintings have to pass through various stages. It needs to be put in a chimney at a specified temperature.

Ceramic creations have unique qualities.

"Along with its high quality, ceramic paintings have longer life than others," said Dangol. "There are many complex stages involved in ceramic creations but I find more flexibility and choices."

Dangol has shown that he has different quality of expression. The mixing of color and imagination proves his creative talent.

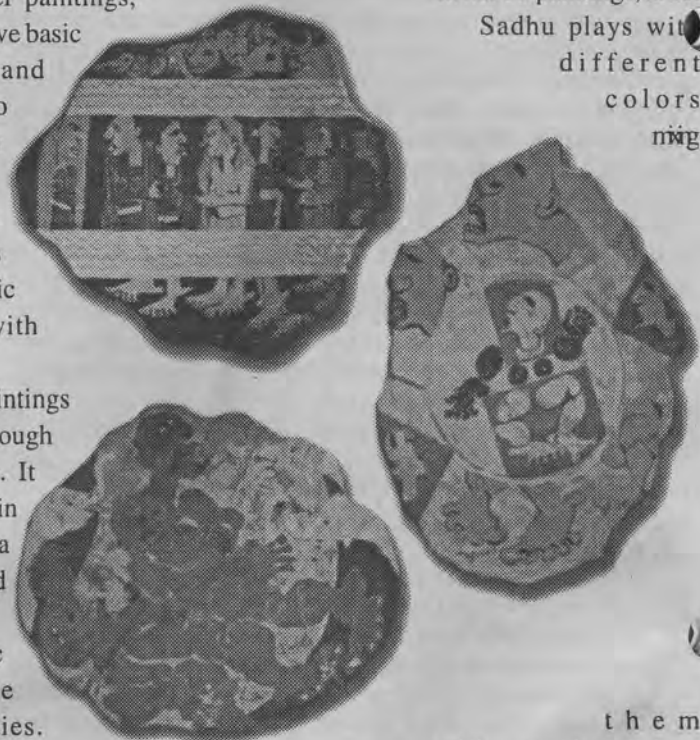
Adoiti Charkaborty Sadhu does not

require introductions as her paintings themselves speak volumes about her inner feelings. In her exhibition, Persistence of Memory, Sadhu shows her power of expression.

Inaugurated by Indian ambassador to Nepal Shiv Shanker Mukherjee, the exhibition of paintings of Sadhu will be displayed till 6 September. One of the basic characters of Sadhu's paintings is her imagination on various issues.

Although they seem to be complex in terms of use of color and theme, they bring out the true emotions. Born in Kolkata, West Bengal, Sadhu has been in Nepal since last 13 years.

In her 39 paintings, artist Sadhu plays with different colors mixing



them with each other. Although they are in abstract forms, the paintings give out meanings with powerful messages.

Sadhu uses oil paintings to describe situations. The experimentations in color is a unique aspect of her paintings.

The paintings of both the artist will be displayed in the Siddhartha Art Gallery till 6th September. ■

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