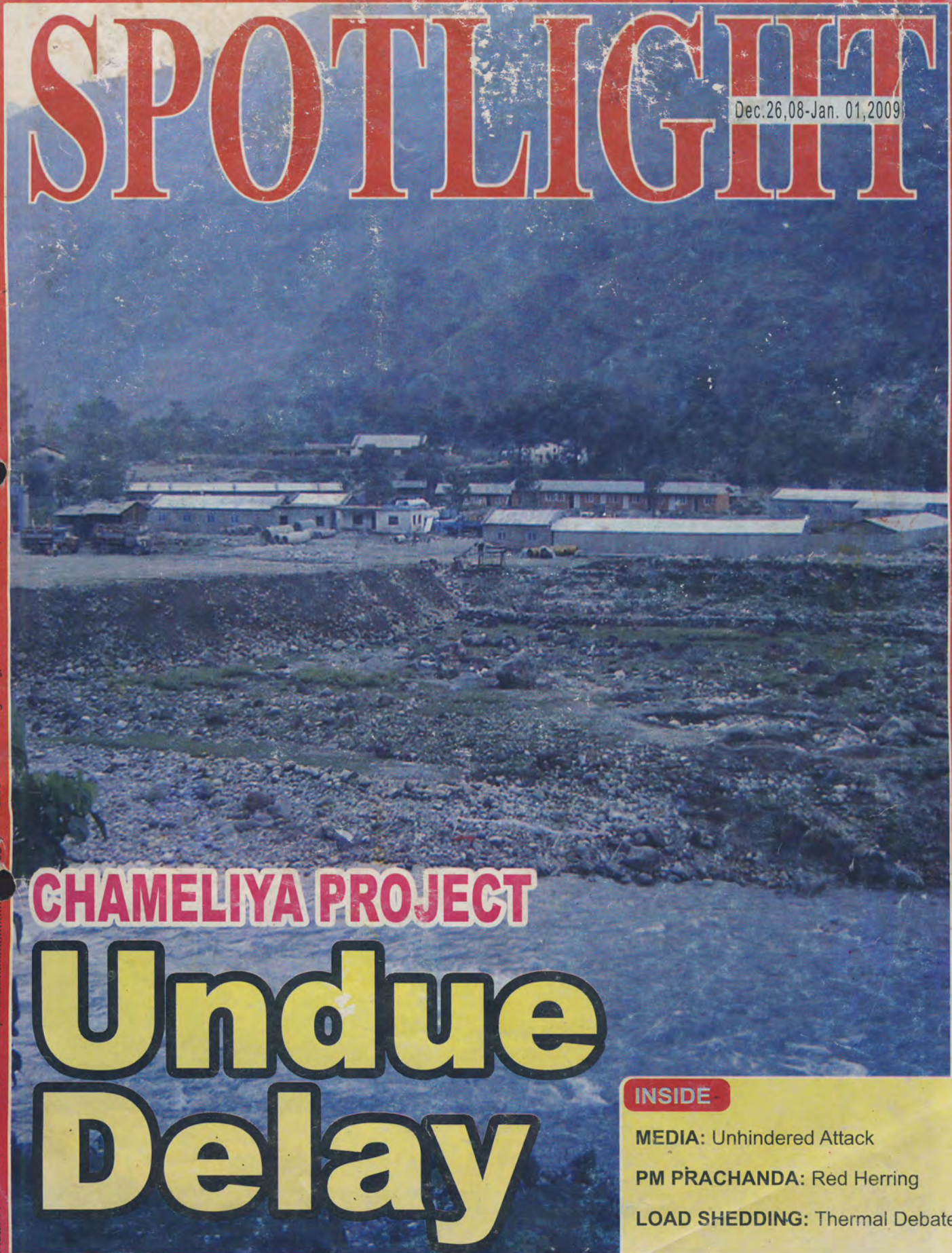


# SPOTLIGHT

Dec. 26, 08-Jan. 01, 2009



## CHAMELIYA PROJECT

# Undue Delay

### INSIDE

- MEDIA:** Unhindered Attack
- PM PRACHANDA:** Red Herring
- LOAD SHEDDING:** Thermal Debate

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- Suraj Singh Thakuri  
TV Personality/Director



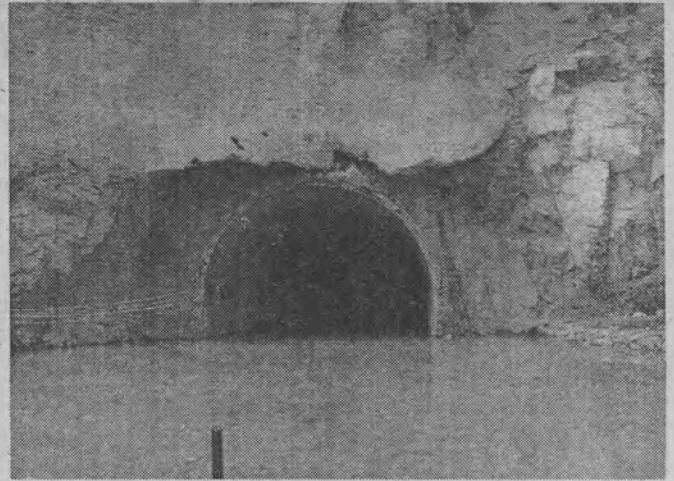
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**COVER STORY: Undue Delay** The Chameliya hydropower project promises to change the face of impoverished far western region but is getting inordinately delayed

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**ATTACK ON MEDIA:** The pro-Maoist workers conduct a daring action by vandalizing the office and assaulting journo and staffs of Himal Media

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**SPOTLIGHT**

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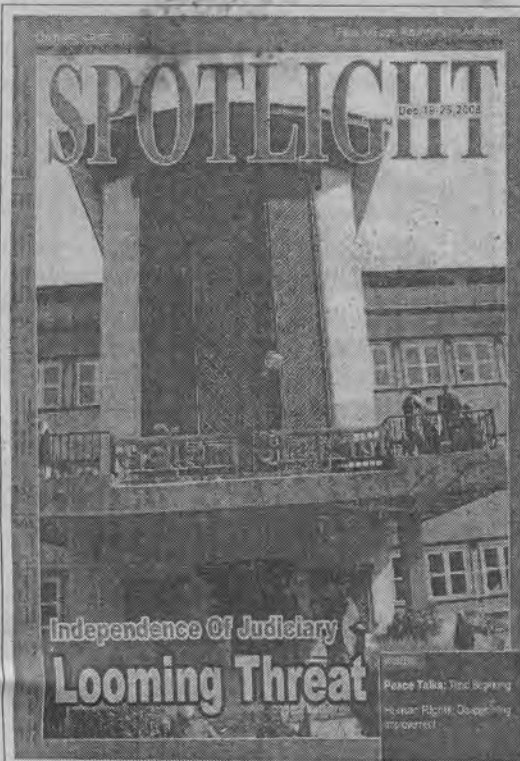
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**T**he unprecedented load shedding of ten hours a day that has gripped Nepal, especially the capital Kathmandu, seems to have very sinister implications. And the warning by the prime minister that it might be increased to even eighteen hours a day impelling the government to impose an emergency, smacks of some kind of premeditated scheme and has, in a way, substantiated the peoples' apprehensions. That it has made life most miserable to the capital-dwellers, apart from totally disrupting the social and economic activities of the nation, needs no emphasis. In a situation when the whole country is groaning under unimaginable chaos and lawlessness the pitch darkness that envelops Kathmandu for the greater part of the night has turned the city into an unsolicited boon for ruffians, thugs and looters. The poor city dwellers helplessly watch their poor homes being looted. The government acts even more helpless. How and where can they find security for their lives and properties the Nepalis don't know. The government, it is being reported, is planning on a rabid scheme of installing a diesel plant to produce 200 mega watt of power. The suggestion might look too loony to ordinary men. But, the seeing eyes cannot miss the extremely smart and wily move of turning a pauper into a wealthy man overnight. Whether it will spell ruin and disaster for the country is none of their concern. If the absence of an honest, dedicated and patriotic administration and partisan policies are the preface of the "New Nepal", the authors should go back to the jungle because the overwhelming poor Nepalis will never accept such perverse projects and policies. Poor Nepalis are very tolerant and will not lose their cool as long they are not driven to extreme. Not that they are not aware who is to blame for their miseries and misfortunes and how and why the fissiparous tendencies are spelling dangers for the nation's integrity. Since they know their limitations, they would never act in rashness. But no body should have any misapprehensions that they would permit any body to cross their "Lakshman Rekha" they have set for themselves. It is not necessary to remind any one how a Gurkha thinks and works when it comes to defend the values he prizes more than his life. And county's integrity is one and democracy is another. The votaries and defenders of independence and democracy, the regional or global policemen, would not fail to take note that democracy as well as her integrity in Nepal is in great turmoil and danger. And it is their utmost duty to come to her help. It is time that they have to prove to the world that they do practice what they profess. Indeed, they might have their own interests to look after. But, they cannot leave the smaller and weaker nations to become desperate. It might be even foolish to always believe that big and powerful nations, all the time, are guided by morality and uprightness. But it would also not be fair to think that the world is totally devoid of justice. As such, we would like to exhort all patriotic Nepalis to wake up and gird up their loins to face the extreme eventuality of saving their values, principles and legacies from going into extinction. Would they be willing to lose their identity too?

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





## Need To Be Vigilant

The cover story Independence of Judiciary: Looming Threat (December 19-25) was very interesting and eye opener to those who love the independence of judiciary. It is very unfortunate to say that the liberal democratic system will collapse if Maoists are allowed to recruit their own henchmen in judiciary. As you discussed, it is not a question of Sthapit or any individual, what is important is independence of the Judicial Council which recommends the name of judges for courts. You have rightly pointed out this serious matter and Maoist intention to all the readers.

*Dinesh Shrestha  
Via Email*

## Look At Provisions

The article regarding judicial council was very interesting as it pointed out the problem relating to constitutional provisions and independent judiciary. The reporter has done a good job to bring out the genuine issue for public concern. It is clear and known to all that the member of judicial council is not like the position of Attorney General which could be treated as sole representative of Prime minister. The attempts are launched under the vested interest from the politically indoctrinated groups in order to weaken independence of judiciary. They seem very dangerous and suicidal to democratic development. If the positions that are filled based on recommendation of prime minister but whose tenures are clearly governed by legal provisions provided by constitution or the act, are accepted as being PM's private privilege, there could be larger and greater negative impact on the many positions within state system which might create bigger turmoil in state affairs. So, if the reality of grave and great concern has not really been dealt with

self restraint and values and norms of democracy, the fatal effect could lead to collapse democratic set-up is certain. At the same time the wrong and corrupt minded leaders whose role were prominent in framing Interim Constitution, which lacked people's endorsement, have been providing fertile land for all these complications. The provision of hearing about the members of constitutional bodies including judges of the supreme court, is the most controversial issues among others in the interim constitution. It seems they drew the idea from US but they forgot that in the US, the nomination of president is the sole basis in their being picked up, that is why the approval of senate is relevant there whereas Nepal's case is not the same as the nominations are made on recommendations of other constitutional bodies. What one can expect out of all these developments is that the coming days and future of Nepalis will be more troubled and hardship.

*Chintit Nepali  
Via Email*

## True Face

By demanding resignation of Motikazi Sthapit, Maoist leaders have exposed their true face and commitments to liberal democracy. The hunger for power of former prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Nepal's southern neighbor are responsible for all these happenings in Nepal. Although Koirala who brought the Maoists in the mainstream of Nepali politics declared that there would be no more autocrats in the wake of signing 12-point pact with Maoists in New Delhi, India, he now seems to be desperate to overthrow Prachanda's regime after helplessly watching his anti-democratic acts. During his tenure as a prime minister Koirala, too, had not spared any time to violate all the constitutional means and values of liberal democracy. Koirala suspended the Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal 1990 through his declaration in a manner of military commander. Unfortunately, even leaders and officials of world's largest democratic country India applauded undemocratic ways. Those who backed terrorists into politics will have to face long term consequences. The recent act of Maoists is just a beginning showing how their commitments to democracy are.

*Rajan Lama  
Via email*

## Unending Problems

Although it was the Maoist party, which taught ways of capturing highways, now the government led by them has been facing similar kinds of problems. Anarchy eats its own mother. As Maoists have already planted enough seeds of anarchy, the siblings will eat their mother. This is their turn to take on the forces of anarchist. Maoist leaders have courageously encouraged the culture of killings, now they are going to be its next victim.

*Grima Lama  
Bouddha*



## UML, Maoists Agree To Appoint Nepal As CC Head

The two major coalition partners—CPN-Maoist and CPN-UML—on Thursday (Dec 18) reached an agreement to appoint UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal the coordinator of the Constitutional Committee (CC). The CC is the major among the 14 different committees formed under the CA. It has been bestowed the major responsibility of preparing the draft of the new constitution incorporating the ideas from procedural committees and the suggestions floated at the full CA meeting. The agreement concerning this was reached at a meeting between the two communist parties held Thursday at the prime minister's official residence in Baluwatar. The deal has also been described as the preparation for taking the former UML General Secretary onboard since Nepal is not a Constituent Assembly (CA) member. "We have proposed the UML to forward Nepal's name as the head of the CC and there was proposal for the same earlier as well," Maoist spokesperson Dina Nath Sharma said. Subsequently, the UML standing committee agreed to make Nepal the CC head. The CPN-Maoist had been asking Nepal to chair the CC and the High-level Political Coordination Committee formed to run the government. Nepal has already declined the offer to lead the latter. Likewise, the leaders of the two communist parties have also agreed to give full shape to the Army Integration Special Committee (AISC), Land Reforms Commission and Public Service Commission. According to a leader participating at the meeting, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has committed to fulfill the demands forwarded by the opposition party

Nepali Congress (NC). Compiled from reports

## NSU Goes On Rampage; 24 Injured

In separate clashes between the Nepal Students Union and the police in Kathmandu and Lalitpur districts, some 24 persons have been injured on Friday (Dec 19). Protesting against the attack on the NSU Poulchowk Engineering Campus Unit President Bikash Sedhain Thursday by the Maoist youth front Young Communist League (YCL), the NSU demonstrated at different places in the districts by burning tyres at the road and obstructing the traffic Friday. Earlier, the demonstrating NSU activists set ablaze a government vehicle and vandalized some others at Thapathali. The police barged into the Thapathali Campus and laathi-charged at the students injuring 12 including the Federation of Students Union president, Shreesh Sharma, injured. The irate students set ablaze a vehicle with the government plate (Ba 1 Jha 5443) in front of the campus and vandalized two private cars and some motorbikes.

*Compiled from reports*

## Maoists, UML To Form Taskforce To Fill Local Bodies

The two major ruling parties—the CPN-Maoist and the CPN-UML—agreed to form a task force to constitute the vacant local bodies. The meeting of top leaders of the two communist parties held at the Prime Minister's Official residence in Baluwatar on Friday (Dec 19) decided to form the task force soon including Minister for Local Development Ram Chandra Jha. The leaders also decided to hold discussion with the leaders of the main opposition party Nepali Congress (NC) apropos to give full shape to the Army Integration Special Committee (AISC). According to UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal, a three-party meeting is scheduled for today itself to discuss the NC's participation in the army integration body. Meanwhile, the meeting between the UML and the Maoists will be held tomorrow again to finalize the nomination

in the constitutional bodies, Maoist senior leader Mohan Vaidya said. Following the reluctance of the main opposition party Nepali Congress to participate in the AISC, the two ruling parties held consultations to bring in an alternative also. The AISC still has not got full shape as the NC refused to join it demanding equitable representation, reversion to the terms of reference prepared by the previous government and a clear definition of who are the major parties. The constitution says major parties will be represented in the army integration body, which will look after the integration of the Maoist combatants and their resettlement, but does not name them. In yesterday's meeting, the Maoists had put forth a proposal of either to reconstitute the AISC under the prime minister's headship or to include two representatives from the NC, as it is demanding, and one more from their party in the present committee. However, the UML said that the prime minister's direct participation in the AISC is not suitable. The meeting-discussed nomination in the constitutional bodies, implementation of the past pacts, and formation of the local bodies. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has said that he would talk to the NC that stayed away from the Constituent Assembly proceedings yesterday, demanding the implementation of the past agreement, to resolve the problem, according to a leader who participated in the meeting. *Compiled from reports*

## Hydro Sector Deal On Chinese Firm

Clean Energy Development Bank (CEDB) has signed a strategic partnership agreement with Northwest Hydro Consulting Engineers (NWH) - one of the world's leading hydropower consulting companies from China - to carry out various levels of engineering studies of hydropower schemes and help carry out techno-financial analyses of medium and large hydropower projects in Nepal. According to the agreement, it will help carry out different levels of engineering studies of hydropower schemes by pooling together the bank's in-house and local experts' knowhow and NWH's vast experience in this field. NWH will help carry out techno-financial analyses of medium and large hydropower projects



in collaboration with CEDB and local expertise, if need be. "NWH's experience and knowledge will be mobilized to the optimum," said the bank. The accord stipulates that NWH establish an office in Kathmandu manned by its competent and experienced staff. This arrangement will give prompt access to Chinese expertise in a cost effective manner. Additionally, the bank has arranged for facilities of providing both equity and debt financing to investors possessing hydropower licenses in various stages of development. Prior to the signing of this agreement, the bank signed an agreement with the Brahmaputra-Mekong Fund to invest up to \$100 million in the energy sector. Similar agreements have also been signed with FMO - an international development bank and Tridos Bank - both from the Netherlands. Also, the bank recently launched its first-ever Rs 250-300 million Hydro Fund for early stage projects. *The Himalayan Times daily reports*

### Nepal India Rail Services Agreement Amended

Nepal and India signed letters of exchange on Wednesday (Dec 17) to effect amendments to the Rail Services Agreement between the two countries. Secretary of Minister of Commerce and Supplies (MoCS) Purushottam Ojha on behalf of the Nepali government and Ambassador of India to Nepal Rakesh Sood on behalf of the Indian government signed the letters amidst a program Wednesday. The two countries had signed the Agreement in May 2004 allowing rail traffic to and from ICD Birgunj comprising containers moving in flat/box wagons and break-bulk cargo in covered wagons. Issuing a joint press statement after signing the letters, the MoCS and the Indian Embassy said the amendments to the agreement will open up the rail traffic in tank wagons for liquid cargo and flat wagons for bilateral break-bulk cargo. It will open the potential for transportation of crude and edible oil, petroleum products, and similar other cargo to and from ICD Birgunj in tank wagons and iron and steel products on flat wagons. The amendments also seek to simplify the procedures for customs examination and clearance of bilateral as well as transit cargos. The two governments have agreed to introduce these changes in response to a long-

lasting demand of the trade in both countries. This will increase the efficiency of transportation of bilateral and transit cargos, and boost Nepal's trade with India and other countries.

*Compiled from reports*

### High School Teachers On Strike

Teachers' Association of Higher Secondary Education Schools (TAHSES) launched a nationwide protest starting Wednesday (Dec 17) to put pressure on the government to fulfill their eight-point demand. The agitating teachers have demanded for the establishment of a commission to regulate their salary and other perks of the higher education teachers and for appointing five teachers equivalent to the level of a vice-principal post in all the higher secondary schools. TAHSES's demand includes allocation of national education budget and establishment of education service commission. The teachers have already announced other protest programs as well. As part of their first-phase strike, the school teachers, Wednesday, tied black band in their arms during teaching hours in high schools. They have also threatened to intensify their protest from December 19 if the government continues to remain insensitive to their demands. *Compiled from reports*

### CA Committees Begin Work

The Constituent Assembly (CA) has formally entered into the constitution-drafting process with the Constitutional Committee, the most important CA panel, opening debate on the drafting process. The first meeting of the Constitutional Committee was held soon after its members were administered oath of office and secrecy by CA Chairman Subas Nemwang at Singha Durbar on Tuesday (Dec 16). Members said the meeting chaired by the eldest member of the committee K.B Gurung - since the chairperson is yet to be elected - mainly discussed the procedures of statute-drafting. The 61-member panel comprises key leaders of the political parties represented in the CA including Prime Minister and Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Nepali Congress president Girija Prasad Koirala, CPN (UML) general secretary Jhala Nath Khanal, coordinator of Madhesi



Janadhikar Forum, Upendra Yadav, and president of Terai Madhesh Loktantrik Party, Mahantha Thakur. While most of the members were present at the swearing-in ceremony, NC president Koirala remained absent due to bad health. Briefly speaking to reporters after the committee's meeting, PM Dahal said the formation of CA committees and the first meeting of the Constitutional Committee were a clear indication that new constitution would be drafted right on time. "It's a proof that the CA is committed to complete the drafting process on time," he said. Likewise, CA chairman Nemwang described the committee's meeting as a crucial development as all the parties have cooperated in kick-starting the drafting process, and expressed confidence that new constitution would be written within the stipulated time. *Compiled from reports*

### Delay In Appointments In Constitutional Bodies

There has been a long delay in appointing heads and members of the constitutional bodies. The authority, which is authorized to make such appointments is the Constitutional Council. The Council has not met for a long time. On Tuesday, too, the scheduled meeting of the Council could not take place because one of its members, the opposition leader Girija Prasad Koirala could not attend on health grounds. The next meeting of the Council has not been fixed yet. There are vacancies in constitutional bodies like Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), Public Service Commission (PSC), Election Commission and so on. *Compiled from reports* ■



### Nepali journalists rallying against Maoist attack on Himal Media

**THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS TAKEN** a strong exception to the news reports that appeared in a section of Pakistani media alleging that Ajmal Kasab – the youth arrested for his involvement in Mumbai attacks – was once arrested in Nepal and handed over to India. In a statement issued by the Ministry, it has expressed profound dissatisfaction over a news item published in Pakistan's daily newspaper 'The News' on December 15 with the headline 'Ajmal Kasab kidnapped from Nepal before 2006.' The Ministry has said the news was baseless and was published only to negatively portray the image of the country. "The Ministry hereby refutes the news report in the strongest term and states Ajmal Kasab was neither arrested in Nepal nor was he handed over to any other country," the Ministry stated.

**THE BIR HOSPITAL HAS SUCCESSFULLY** carried out a kidney transplant operation. The hospital got the success following four years of unsuccessful attempt. This was the second attempt made in the hospital. Following the success of the operation, the Bir has become the second hospital in the country to successfully carry out transplant kidney transplantation. The hospital transplanted kidneys of two persons on December 12. According to the hospital, the health condition of those who donated kidneys and those who transplanted are normal in the last five days. Organizing a press meet in the capital on Wednesday, Bir Hospital officials said that a team of surgeons comprising of Dr Sandip Gulariya of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Dr Bijaya Kumar Sharma, Dr Damodhar Pokharel, Dr Biswajit Joshi, Dr Pukar Chandra Shrestha and Dr Paras Mani Shrestha had transplanted two kidneys in Bir Hospital on December 12. The team had carried out kidney transplants on Sujit Bhattarai from Jhamsikhel and Dawa Tamang from Okhaldhunga. Maha Laxmi Bhattarai (the mother of Sujit) and Kale Tamang (elder brother of Dawa Tamang) had donated their kidneys to the recipients. Bir Hospital had earlier in November 2004 made the first attempt to transplant a kidney on Pradip Chaudhari but it failed. "It is our second attempt after a four-year gap, and we succeeded. Now, we are determined to continue such operations in the days to come," said Surgeon Dr Pokharel, the head of Surgery Department at the Bir. Claiming the transplant was a 'teamwork', Dr Prabin Mishra said that entire staff of the hospital equally share the credit of success. "Even the Ministry of Health (MoH) has given us assurances of cooperation for its continuation," he said. Following the government's permission to carry out

kidney transplants in the country given on August 4 this year, the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH), Maharajgunj, had done a transplant operation successfully within a week. TUTH has carried out 15 kidney transplants to date. TUTH charges of Rs 350,000 for a transplant, compared with over Rs 1 million that needs to be spent if one goes to India for a similar surgery. However, it costs only Rs 250,000 at Bir Hospital, according to Dr Pokharel. According to the MoH, there are over 600 persons in Nepal who have undergone kidney transplant operations so far by going to India and other countries.

**A REPORT BY FINNISH FORENSIC EXPERTS** has stated that they found traces of human remains – minimum one male individual – from among the samples they took from Shivapuri to Finland lab for further tests a year ago. The samples were taken from Alle area in Shivapuri forest where the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had initiated investigation after receiving complaints that the site could have been a burial place for some of the disappeared persons. "The tests in Finland have confirmed there were human remains – at least of one male – from among the samples," said NHRC member and spokesperson Gauri Pradhan. "However, the report rules out the possibility that there could be mass grave in that area. No trace of human remains were found in other samples," he said. Pradhan said NHRC will now initiate further investigation to find out if the remains belonged to any of the 43 people said to have been disappeared from Bhairabnath and Yuddha Bhairab battalion of Nepali Army (NA) and whose whereabouts are still unknown. "We have submitted a technical report. From among six samples, we could successfully extract a DNA from one," said Professor Helena Ranta of University of Helsinki who along with Professor Pekka Saukko of University of Turku had conducted tests in modern facilities.

**RENOWNED LITTERATEUR RAMESH BIKAL** passed away at the age of 81 in the capital on Wednesday (Dec 17). He took his last breath at the Nepal Medical College in Jorpati at around 4.15 pm. According to family sources, Bikal was ailing from diabetes, asthma and hypertension since a long time. He had been hospitalized for 12 days. Bikal contributed immensely in Nepali story-writing sector. Footpath Ministers, Lahuri Bhainsi and Swana Bajyaa are some of his famous stories. His novel Abiral Bagdachha Indrawati is also popular among readers. The novel was made into a television serial as well. Bikal has published about one dozen books of poems. Besides writing, he was interested in painting and singing. He is survived by two sons and four daughters. ■



Chairman of China Study Centre Madan Regmi (Centre) hosting reception to welcome new Chinese ambassador Qiu Guohong (Left) Minister of Information Communication Krishna Bahadur Mahara.



# UPPER KARNALI DEVELOPMENT POLICY KILLING THE GOOSE LAYING GOLDEN EGGS FOR A MEAGRE BENEFIT

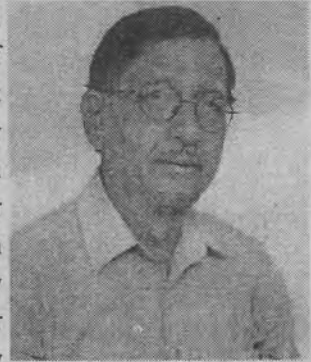
- Dr. A.B. Thapa

Until now the 10,800 MW Karnali Chisapani Project is regarded as the most attractive project among the mega-projects identified so far in Nepal for the generation of cheap peaking energy. As a result, several multinational companies are showing since a long time a great interest to acquire the right to implement this project. It might surprise many of us to know that the 4180 MW Upper Karnali Storage Project is even far more attractive. It is explained hereinafter why the Upper Karnali Storage Project would roughly be able generate almost half of the electricity generated by the Karnali Chisapani Project (20,800 GWh) only at one third cost of the latter. In other words the Upper Karnali Storage Project would be generating A NET ADDITIONAL 3,300 GWh electricity vis-à-vis what the Karnali Chisapani Project would be able to

generate for the same amount of investment.  
**Why Upper Karnali Storage So Attractive**

The Karnali river makes a big loop in its lower reach near a place called Asare. From here the river flows in the south-east direction for about 25 kilometers, after that the river makes a complete reversal in its direction. The river comes back to a point just two kilometers away from its earlier position near Asare. There is a drop of about 150 meters in Karnali river bed elevations between these two positions merely two kilometers away from one another. The project to utilize this bend for power generation is known as the Upper Karnali Project. There are very good sites to build a large storage dam at the beginning of the bend. Thus, it makes the Upper Karnali Storage Project far superior

to the 10,800 MW Karnali Chisapani Project in terms of per unit capacity investment cost because its hydropower station would be operating at a firm head two times greater than that of the latter though the total length of the waterway of both these hydropower plants would be almost exactly the same



**Large Cost Reduction at Higher Heads**

Of all the site characteristics, head is the most important. Design guidelines, 1989 approved by the American Society of Civil Engineers ( a document

*The Karnali river makes a big loop in its lower reach near a place called Asare. From here the river flows in the south-east direction for about 25 kilometers, after that the river makes a complete reversal in its direction. The river comes back to a point just two kilometers away from its earlier position near Asare.*

used throughout the world for the design of hydropower) has given some simple reasoning that would help to explain why the Upper Karnali project operating at a head about two times greater by comparison with the Chisapani hydropower could be built at far less per unit installed capacity cost. "Very simply if one doubles the head the quantity of water needed to produce a certain amount of energy is halved, Thus, for like site energy development the conduit area and reservoir volume are halved and further large cost reductions occur for powerhouse



*and machinery costs. This fundamental consideration is at the root of the large cost reductions that occur at higher heads."*

**Comparative Investment Cost of Upper Karnali Storage**

By comparison with the mammoth 10,800 MW Karnali Chisapani Project the firm head of the Upper Karnali Storage Project would be almost two times greater. It can be derived based on Stage A Optimization Study Data of the World Bank financed Karnali Project (Chisapani) Study report that per KW installed capacity construction cost of the Upper Karnali Storage Project could be only about 2/3 of such cost of the project at Chisapani. If such comparative cost reduction advantage is treated as additional bonus to accrue to Nepal on top of normal royalty to be received

from private developer then our country might be able to earn per year at present cost of peaking energy about US \$ 300 million as extra bonus which is

equivalent to gross value of the total annual production of paddy in the whole of country considered to be between 2.5 to 3 million tons at a price of about US \$ 100 per ton.

**Colossal National Loss**

The monetary value of the additional annual power generation of the Upper Karnali Storage Project vis-à-vis the generation of the Karnali Chisapani Project for the same amount of investment would be equal to the gross value of the entire paddy produced in the whole of Nepal each year. Unfortunately, despite repeated cautioning, our government is determined to kill the hydropower potential of the Upper Karnali Storage Project by allowing to build the relatively very small Upper Karnali simple diversion project to generate just 300 MW. The 4180 MW Upper Karnali Storage Project and the 300 MW Upper Karnali Diversion Project are mutually exclusive.

**World Bank Aided Report has Cautioned**

The overwhelming superiority of the 4180 MW Upper Karnali storage project among the large hydropower projects identified so far in Nepal is so obvious that the team of the consultants conducting the pre-feasibility study of the 300 MW Upper Karnali project under the

financial assistance of the World Bank must have been shocked by our ignorance. They found themselves duty bound to warn us to refrain from harming the 4180 MW Upper Karnali storage project. They have devoted a special chapter in the pre-feasibility report to caution us that the construction of the 300 MW Upper Karnali project would preclude the implementation of the 4180 MW Upper Karnali storage project.

**Excerpts from Pre-feasibility Report**

The World Bank supported pre-feasibility study has clearly explained that the 4180 MW Upper Karnali Storage Project and the 300 MW Upper Karnali Diversion Project are mutually exclusive. The relevant excerpt from the World Bank supported study report is presented below.

*"Even when assuming that the KR 1 A run-of-river*

*It can be derived based on Stage A Optimization Study Data of the World Bank financed Karnali Project (Chisapani) Study report that per KW installed capacity construction cost of the Upper Karnali Storage Project could be only about 2/3 of such cost of the project at Chisapani.*

*project (it indicates the small 300 MW Upper Karnali project) is a sunk cost, it will be seen that a single large power plant (4180 MW) associated with the major storage project is less costly than the combined cost of smaller plant at the same location (3532 MW) and a second power plant at the foot of the storage dam (348 MW) discharging directly into the KR 1A run-of-river project head pond. Based on this assessment, it appears that the later development of the major hydro storage project at Site KR 1 (4180 MW Upper Karnali Storage Project) would cause the KR 1A run-of-river project to be effectively discontinued. There may be limited opportunity for secondary energy generation during the periods of spillage".*

**Foreign Expert for Optimum Development**

Mr. Paul Terrell from the Bechtel International of the USA was Chief Advisor Consultant of the Upper Karnali Project study conducted under the World Bank financial assistance. Mr. Paul Terrell has categorically cautioned Nepal in his article published in the journal "HIMAL" that our country should never compromise optimum development for the sake of a quick deal. ■





Koirala : Back to fight

## MAIN OPPOSITION

# Gathering Strengths

*The Nepali Congress (NC) boycotts parliament demanding that the government fulfill its assurances*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**W**hen Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' came to the parliament on November 11 with a package of promises, very few had trusted him to his words.

That was why, when he promised to return seized properties and end military-style camping of YCL within mid-December, there was a big round of laughter from among the parliamentarians.

"Do not laugh this time. The government will also provide compensation for any delay in fulfilling its commitment of returning seized properties," he had then said.

But again, his assurances have ended up as laughing matter.

Apparently dumbfounded by the

attitude of the government, particularly that of the prime minister, the NC seemed a frustrated party.

"They always make promises and they always break them. We don't know what else to do," was the refrain of vice president of NC, Ram Chandra Poudel.

From Thursday (Dec 18), the NC has started to boycott the parliamentary proceedings.

"We are in a dilemma. The PM says that he is confused whether he is a PM or a rebel. Now, if the PM calls us for dialogue and we go to meet him, we are afraid that he would suddenly drop his PM's cap and wear that of a rebel and train AK 47 on us," said Laxman Prasad Ghimire, chief whip of NC parliamentary party, speaking at the parliament before boycotting it.

Subsequently, on Sunday (Dec 21) the NC PP meeting made a decision to continue boycotting the parliament till the PM clarifies his position regarding the fulfillment of his assurances.

"The PM seems to have enough time to run around inaugurating sundry programs. But he does not have few minutes to explain his position before the parliament that elected him as PM. Until and unless he clarifies the progress on the implementation of these promises, we will continue to boycott," said Ghimire.

## Progress on Special Committee

Meanwhile, NC leaders have claimed that there has been some progress in the matter of giving full shape to the army integration special committee.

The meeting between PM Prachanda and Dr. Shekhar Koirala on December 20 broke the ice.

"There has been some progress in this regard. There has been an understanding to have two members each from all major parties in the special committee. But it all depends whether the PM will actually implement it or not," Ghimire said.

According to him, the NC has also communicated that they are willing to join the committee that will be headed by the PM.

"That will involve pushing aside the current coordinator of the committee (deputy prime minister Bamdev Gautam). We will leave it to the government to proceed in a manner it chooses to in order to achieve this change in the committee composition," he said.

Even though the committee had been formed months earlier, it has not been able to proceed with its primary job of starting the process of rehabilitation and integration of the army - which will involve the management of the over 19000 Maoist combatants currently staying in seven cantonments spread across the country.

The integration of army has been regarded as one of the key aspect of the ongoing peace process. Its successful management will, indeed, be a milestone in attaining the durable peace.

However, lack of progress in the fulfillment of nine-point promises threatens to derail this progress and, once again, bring the Maoists and main opposition at loggerheads. That could mean death knell to the process of writing the new constitution, which does not appear possible without broader political consensus. ■





PM Prachanda : Facing challenge

## Change of Leadership

# Continuation of Instability

*The government and political system has changed from one to another, what remains permanent is the continuation of instability*

By KESHAB POUDEL

**I**f the government cannot fulfill the commitments made by it, CPN-UML will pull out from the government," said CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal. "The Maoist must fulfill the promises made by them."

"Maoists have been working as if this is their own majority government. If they don't listen to us, our party will pull out from the government," said foreign minister and leader of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) Upendra Yadav.

"Nepali Congress will continue to boycott the CA session till the prime minister Prachanda does not fulfill his assurances," said Laxman Ghimire, chief whip of Nepali Congress. "If they don't return seized property, what is the sense to be there in CA?"

With the visit of Indian external affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee in November followed by several high level visit of Chinese officials including its foreign minister, Maoist-led government feels shaken.

Although Maoists and other political parties have been making efforts to cover the contribution made by founder of Nepal, king Prithivi Narayan Shah, his explicit observation that Nepal is a yam between two boulders remain the evergreen reality.

"Thanks to its geo-strategic position, Nepal has been facing one or the other kinds of instability and change of government and system. The trend of instability in Nepal has brought the ragtag terrorists into power and the same trend is making it nervous. After completion of his hundred days in power, an outspoken Maoist prime minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has pointed out that external and internal forces have combined together to dislodge him," said a political analyst.

"In the politics of Nepal, it is not only the domestic political parties that are the key actors. There are also foreigners. From the face of it, it looks like Nepali political parties are bickering but underneath the whole world will be squabbling," said Prachanda, who himself had recently revealed that he stayed eight years in India out of 10 years of insurgency.

In explicit terms what he means is that behind all seen players of politics in Nepal there are hands of unseen power. "Whatever forms of government is promulgated and whoever may come to the power, the age old saying of king Prithivi Narayan Shah appears as a hard reality. Until there is amicable adjustments between Nepal's two big neighbours, the political instability in Nepal is a fact to live with," said the political analyst.

Whoever is in authority- monarch or reds, they face similar kind of geostrategic pressure. There is a very limited space to play. Though Maoist leader Prachanda has said he stayed eight years in Indian cities, he cannot ignore north's concern. When he started to oversee north's concern, there is reaction from south.

"A legendary figure of Nepali politic B.P. Koirala, who put his neck into risk while coming back to Nepal unarmed with a call of national reconciliation, visualized a patch of dark cloud over the

political sky of South Asia. He said that South Asia is going to be a zone of turmoil. When Koirala was fighting for democracy from exile, he saw that the whole area of Nepal was becoming zone of turmoil. To save the country from the crisis, he returned with the slogan of national reconciliation. B.P argued it was not only a question of democracy in the country but the very survival of Nepal as a nation was under a great threat."

"After more than thirty years that threat is much more imminent and dangerous. Even a terrorist tagged leader in power at present was alarmed by this threat in the very existence of the nation but the problem of the politicians in Nepal is not with the diagnosis of the situation but the lack of vision and skill to overcome it," said the analyst.

Late Leo E. Rose's observation in his book *Nepal: A strategy for survival in 1971* is very valid. "To Kathmandu, the current potentialities of external domination and subversions are not very different in kind- though they may be in degree- from those with which Nepali governments have had to contend for at least two centuries," Rose writes. "There is a basic similarity between King Prithivi Narayan Shaha's analysis of Nepal's role in the Himalayan area and his selection of tactics and that of the Ninth ruler in his dynasty, king Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev."

Although he tried to make the version of Prithivi Narayan Shah irrelevant and ordered his cadres to destroy the statue of Shah preaching publicly that Nepal has special relation with south, however, he could not stand by that for much longer.

As Rose writes, "Nevertheless there are choices to be made within this strictly limited frame work and the consistency displayed by widely different groups of decision makers over a long period is one of the more notable aspects of Nepal's history."

Recent visits of high officials of Nepal's two neighbours and the remarks given by them during their interactions show that Maoist leader Prachanda and his comrades have to walk very delicately while they are in power. The constitution may change the leadership but it cannot guarantee the political stability. The four statements of various leaders indicate coming instability ■

## LOAD SHEDDING

# Thermal Debate

*PM backs thermal plant to tide over grinding load shedding woes but experts disagree*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**P** rime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has said that the government has backed building diesel-run thermal plants as the short-term option to tide over the woes of load shedding.

"There could be 18 hours of load shedding in next few months. What will that mean? It will negate all our efforts including the effort to write new constitution. It will invite collapse," he said, adding, "That is why we have decided to go for thermal plants."

Addressing the sixth annual general meeting of Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), Friday, the PM said that though the thermal plants will be expensive, they can help bring down the level of load shedding to six/seven hours in three months from current ten hours a day.

"The thermal plants will have to be set up in different places like Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Dhangadi and they have to be set up nearby sub-stations," he said. PM Dahal also waxed eloquent about the way the government was functioning amid adverse situation.

However, experts have tended to disagree. Even as the government is looking at the possibility of generating around 200 MW from thermal plants to meet the power demand in the short term and tide over the load shedding woes, experts have said that building such plants are expensive and illogical.

They have said that to run such plants (200 MW) for even ten hours would require 700,000 liters of diesel - which will have to be carried by 70 trucks. Their cost will reach Rs 30 per unit.

"Such expensive power is neither in the interest of Nepal Electricity Authority nor in the interest of the nation," said Jibendra Jha, general manager of

production at NEA. According to experts only three units of electricity can be generated from one liter of diesel.

Speaking at an interaction program held at Reporters Club in the capital Friday, NEA managing director Uttara Kumar Shrestha was also of the opinion the government should shelve its plan of producing electricity from thermal plants and find a better alternative.



**Poudel** : Power for whom ?

"Thermal plants are very expensive and complex technology" he said, "as part of immediate and long-term solutions we should instead focus on repairing and then extending the [damaged] transmission line and building big hydro-power stations." The government had on Wednesday (Dec 17) decided to produce 200 MW of electricity from thermal plants.

Worse, there are also news reports that due to lack of repair and maintenance, the country's largest hydropower project Kali Gandaki A, too, could face shutdown. The 144 MW strong power project is facing problem in its first and third units. Each of the three units of the project produce 48 MW power each during peak season.

If the Kali Gandaki has to be closed down, then the level of load shedding could surge dramatically, say experts. ■



## CHAMELIYA HYDROPOWER PROJECT

# Undue Delay

Although the contribution of Chameliya Hydroelectricity Project will be nominal in terms of country's demand for power generation, it can bring about major transformation in the livelihood of people living in the far western region. From GDP to literacy, the project can bring all kinds of change. Even as the project has already completed over 30 percent of civil works including construction of tunnel, powerhouse sites and others, the delay in the process of decision making on selection of company to supply electromechanical, hydro-mechanical and transmission line is affecting the construction works. At a time when the government has already declared emergency in the electricity sector and agreed to install diesel power plant with the capacity of 200 MW, nobody understands the rationale behind not quickly pushing the Chameliya Hydroelectric Project, which will generate over 30 MW of power

By KESHAB POUDEL

"As soon as I received a call from my relatives that there are enough works back home in construction site of Chameliya, I returned from Indian city of Kanpur and headed to Gandi Gad," said Bharat Thagina, a resident of Baitadi district who was waiting for a bus in

Attariya, Kailali, 700 kilometers west of capital, to go to Gokuleshwor of Darchula district.

"There is a rush of people. I must be there within two days," said Thagina who worked as a laborer in Indian city of Kanpur. "If I find employment

opportunity back home, my preference will be to work here."

Like hundreds of other folks from many districts of far western region, there is a sort of gold rush as everybody wants to work in the project site.

Neglected and ignored by the central



**Chamaliya Tunnel : On trail**

authority for many years, Chameliya Hydro Electric Project is the first major project implemented in the hill of far western region.

As there are no major developmental activities going on in far western region, overwhelming population of region moved to India and other cities in Nepal for employment opportunity.

As it requires more people when the work will go on full swing, the project like Chameliya is definite to contribute to reduce the migration in the long run.

#### **Human Development Index**

Along with social change, Chameliya will also feed the power to central grid as well as enhance the power capacity of mid-western and far-western region. Prepared by Harka Gurung for Asian Development Bank, Nepal Regional Strategy for Development 2005 reveals some grim reality of Nepal.

According to the report, the total GDP

for FY 1999/2000 was estimated at Rs 330 billion, or 6.4 times that of 1984/85 in nominal terms. In regional distribution, the central development region had the lion's share with 47.2 percent while the shares of other regions were quite less - 20.4 percent for eastern, 16.5 for the western, 9 for the mid western and 6.8 percent for the far western development region.

The central development region leads with more than half of the total hydropower generation. The next region with such infrastructure is the western development region. The hydropower generation of east, mid-west and far-west is only 5 percent. In terms of generation, far west generates 16,000 kW or 0.3 percent and mid-west generates 13985 kW or 2.5 percent and while eastern region generates 11794 kW or 2.7 percent.

With the completion of hydropower

projects like Chameliya, the population of far western region will have power to light their bulb, which will, in turn, increase the literacy rate, health facilities and unleash many other benefits.

According to Census of 2001, the far western region has population of 211330 (9.47) of total population and literacy is just over 41.7 percent out of over 48.6 percent of Nepal. According to Nepal Human Development Report, which is prepared by UNDP, out of US\$ 1310 GDP per capita (PPP US\$), far western region has just US\$ 1079.

As such, Chameliya Hydroelectric Project has the potential of bringing in positive changes in the far western region, particularly, in the five remote hilly districts, which will be linked with each other with road and transmission line.

With the high level of poverty and low investment in development sector, Nepal's far western region is far behind





**Karnali River : High hope**

than three other eastern regions. Following the completion of Mahakali Irrigation Project few years ago, there was no major infrastructure project underway in far west.

#### **Construction on Progress**

As the work of civil construction began, more than 1000 local people, who were, otherwise, compelled to go to India and other urban areas of Nepal for their butter and bread, found employment opportunity nearby their homes.

The volume of work force is certain increase after the construction goes on full swing. This will inject the money in the local economy. Isolated from rest of the country, Baitadi and Darchula districts in the far west region, 900 miles west of Nepal did not have direct road link with the rest of the country till a few years ago. Thanks to the construction of road to Chameliya, now many villages of Baitadi and Darchula are linked to Nepal's east-west high way. The road from Baitadi to Darchula is now in operation due to the project. The project has already constructed 18 kilometer

access road from Gokuleshwor, the headway point of Darchula road, to Gandhi Gad of Kotpetara VDC.

Situated in Darchula district, far-western hilly district, Chameliya Hydropower project has already brought some benefits to the local population. The construction of road help them carry food stuffs from plain of south to food deficit districts of north. The completion of construction works for 33 kV Transmission line from Baitadi to Balanch and 33 kV and 11 kV substations at Balanch power house site is in progress. After the completion, the project will help to start rural electrification in the Darchula and Baitadi districts.

If everything goes smoothly as scheduled, Chameliya Hydropower Project will complete by 2011 producing much needed 30 MW power to Nepal's national grid.

But, the question is will it move forward and complete by time? As the government has recently declared a

emergency in Power and decided to bring many new projects, one can expect that the stalled selection process of Chameliya will move in fast pace.

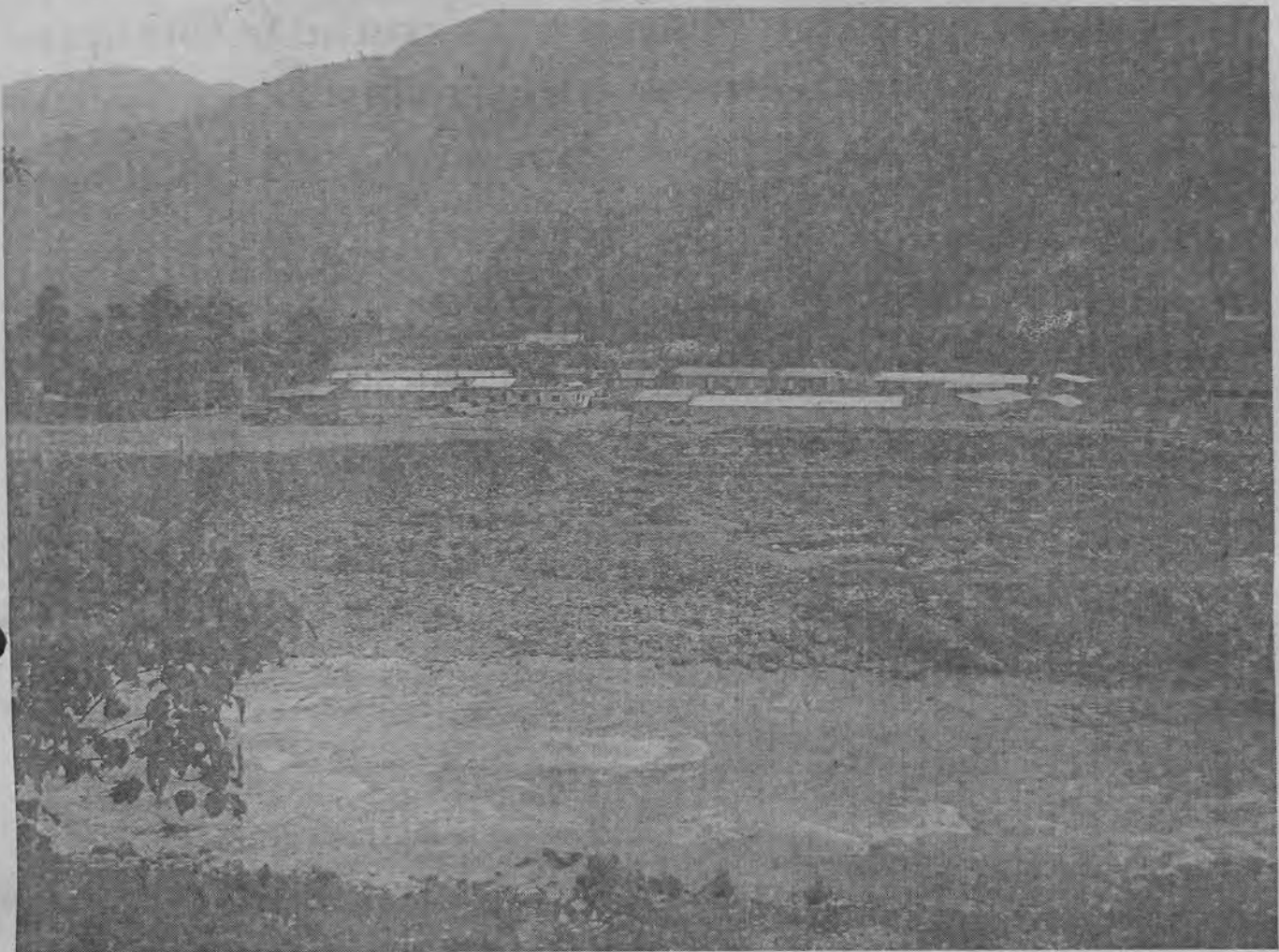
"The project will complete on time. Construction work is going very smoothly," said Keshab Raj Bhatta, Project director of Chameliya Hydropower Project. "The decision has already been taken about the appointment of Korean consultant and the tender process for transmission line and supplying of electro-mechanical and Hydro-mechanical is in final stage. Our higher management will take all the decision in accordance with the rules and regulations and in transparent manner."

Awarded to China Gezhouba Water and Power Group Company Ltd (CGGC), the main civil construction work has started since February 2007 and about 30 percent work has already been completed. According to the project, construction of 18 kilometer long access road has been completed and local transportation services are already in operation. The construction of camp facilities is about 30 percent complete.

Under an agreement between the governments of Nepal and Korea, the soft loan provided by Economic Development Cooperation Fund Korea (EDCF) will be used to construct 133 KM long 132 kilo volt transmission line from Chameliya of Darchula district to Attariya of Kailali. The transmission line will cross all five districts of Seti and Mahakali zone of far western region. The US\$ 45 million soft loan provided by Korean government is also used to buy hydro-mechanical and electro-mechanical components of Chameliya Project.

Preliminarily identified in 1991 by NEA, the project was given priority by Japanese International Cooperation Agency in its Master Plan Study of Upper Karnali and Mahakali basin in 1993. In 1996, feasibility study of the project (30 MW) was carried out by Nepal Industrial Development Corporation through METCON, a local consultant utilizing the South Asian Development Fund.

In 1997, NEA made review study of Feasibility Study Report and upgraded feasibility study. Some even questioned



**Chameliya River : High potential for power**

the rationale behind huge investment in Chameliya as there is possibility of lot of technical loss when it supplies power though 131 kilometer long transmission line. However, in terms of regional balance, this project is important to balance the disparities of investment.

"This project will bring all round change in the far western region particularly hilly region. The electricity generated by this project will also be used during the construction period of West Seti and Pancheswor," said Kirti Bahadur Chanda, former managing director of NEA.

#### **Korea's Involvement**

Korea has been involved in the project since 2001 when it supported the detailed study. Korea is the major financier of the project. In December 2001, detailed design and tender documents preparation work had been

completed by Hyundai Engineering Co. Ltd and Korea Water Resources Cooperation, a consortium consulting agency under the grant assistance of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in collaboration with NEA.

As per the contract made between the government of Korea and government of Nepal, Economic Development Cooperation Fund Korea (EDCF) shall provide a soft loan of US\$ 45 million to finance the foreign currency component towards the cost of consulting services, Electro-Mechanical Hydro-Mechanical and Transmission line.

For procurement Service and Equipment Supervision for Electro-Mechanical and Hydro mechanical equipment, Korean consulting firms were invited to participate and the selection of the consulting firms will be finalized in near future.

Although there are certain hindrances, the evaluation process of tender for the Electro-mechanical, hydro-mechanical and Transmission line works are in progress. The whole process for awarding the contract and commencement of the work is scheduled to be completed by this month.

With the total cost of 99.9 million dollars, the electricity generated by the project will be linked through 132 kV/ 131 kilometer long transmission line to Attariya in Kailali. It will produce 184.21 GWh annual energy. Specific energy cost will be 4.91 UC cent kWh.

At a time when the country's all resources are diverted to the eastern, central and western region, this is the first big hydropower project constructed in impoverished far western region. The project will serve to transform the livelihood of thousands of people of the region. ■



# “Stable and Sovereign Nepal is quite crucial to southern China’s security and stability”

-QIU GUOHONG

Newly appointed Chinese ambassador to Nepal QIU GUOHONG has already addressed a number of programs about Nepal-China relations. In a recent program organized by China Study Center to welcome him on Thursday (December 19), Chinese ambassador Qiu Guohong spoke to various issues regarding Nepal China relations. Excerpts of his statement compiled by KESHAB POUDEL:

## Upon Arrival

I arrived just a month ago in Nepal but I have a feeling that I have already spent my life in Nepal because I am very busy every day. I feel I have a full schedule in Nepal and I will have very happy life here.

## Curious About Appointment

Actually, my foreign language is Japanese and I was long engaged in North East Asian Affairs. So many Nepalese friends are quite curious about why I was sent by my government to Nepal. That is genuine query. Even I am surprised by that. My appointment to Nepal is totally a result of an accident. The reason to send me as a Chinese ambassador to Nepal is all because of Chinese consular general in Osaka had accident in China and some situation required me to come here. As a predecessor of that consulate general who had an accident, my boss asked me whether I was again willing to serve in Osaka. I told my boss that I had already worked there and it is better to go somewhere else.

## Appointment As Opportunity

My boss asked my immediate predecessors and former ambassador to Nepal Xianglin whether he would like to go Osaka. Ambassador Xianglin had been away from Japan for ten years, thus he responded positively and expressed his willingness to go there. Because he accepted the assignment in Osaka, I have an opportunity to be working in Nepal. I will tell you all in frank way that ambassador Xianglin regretted about his decision to leave Nepal later. He believed that his stay in Nepal was very comfortable. I should tell you all that after I came to Nepal I feel quite comfortable and it is worthwhile decision of my boss to send me here.

## Nepal as Important Factor

First, Nepal is very important to China. Friendly, stable, independent, sovereign and developed Nepal is quite crucial to southern China’s security and stability. We are very concerned about Nepal’s situation. Right now China-Nepal relation is in good shape but some elements don’t want to see this kind of cordial relations existing between us. When I was in Japan for quite a long time, I used to quarrel with some diplomats about Nepal. Now I am in Nepal and I do quarrel and even fight against those elements who don’t want to see good shape of China-Nepal relations. I feel I have a lot of work to do in Nepal. Second, Nepalese people are very friendly to Chinese people and Nepalese government attaches great importance to develop relationship with China. All these provided very cordial and genuine working environment for me.

## On Role of Nepalese

With the support and the help of Nepalese friends, I am quite confident that I will be able to further strengthen our good relations. Before I came here some friends told me that you might not have comfortable life in Nepal because Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world. After my arrival to Nepal, I found the reality is not like what my friends said. It is not only the weather which is quite fine and suitable for people but the people are so friendly and kind hearted.

## Kathmandu With Vigour

I also feel that the whole Kathmandu city is full of vigour and life. Day by day my love towards Nepal is getting much deeper. Despite the fact that this is my first time in Nepal and I have to learn from the very beginning, there are affections everywhere. I need support and help from Nepalese friends. I have already met numbers of Nepalese friends in the last one month and I will meet more Nepalese friends in future. I will work together with Nepalese friends to try to strengthen friendship between our two countries with a new height. I have made my mind open to the public on many occasions that I will focus my attention on such aspects during my tenure.

## On Exchange of Visits

I will try to enhance the exchange of visit that

*I also feel that the whole Kathmandu city is full of vigour and life. Day by day my love towards Nepal is getting much deeper. Despite the fact that this is my first time in Nepal and I have to learn from the very beginning, there are affections everywhere.*



includes the political exchange of high level visits between two countries and consolidate the China-Nepal friendship. For this I will stress high government level exchange of visits as well as exchange of visit of political parties between the two countries.

#### **On Prachanda's Visit**

When I was in China, I persuaded our government to arrange Nepalese prime minister Prachanda's visit at early next year as soon as possible. It is very difficult to arrange this visit. Because China has a very good and cordial relation with all countries in the world and that we have very limited quotas for receiving foreign dignitaries. The Chinese foreign ministry has only allocated two plus one seats for Asian leaders which mean we can receive just three leaders from Asia. The Asian Department of foreign ministry is in-charge of 22 countries in Asia. If we want to invite all the leaders from Asian countries to visit China, it will take more than ten years. When I was in China, I tried my best to seek this one seat for Nepalese prime minister Prachanda.

#### **Visit Was for Olympic**

My colleagues argued that Nepalese prime minister Prachanda already attended closing ceremony of Beijing Olympic; therefore it is impossible to arrange his visit so soon next year. But I said to my colleagues that Nepalese prime minister Prachanda had not visited China last time as the guest of Chinese government. Then, he was the guest invited by Nepalese Olympic Committee. In the end I succeeded in persuading my colleagues to invite Nepalese prime minister in China.

#### **On All Sphere of Relations**

I make position of Chinese government and ruling party very clear that China is willing to develop relationship with political parties, groups and other forces. Second, I will try to further strengthen the economic cooperation and trade between China and Nepal and bring it to new height.

#### **On Trade Volume**

China and Nepal have very cordial and friendly relations in terms of politics but the trade volume between the two countries is very low or just

*Then, he was  
the guest  
invited by  
Nepalese  
Olympic  
Committee.  
In the end I  
succeeded in  
persuading  
my  
colleagues to  
invite  
Nepalese  
prime  
minister in  
China.*





*Two governments should work out some favorable policies for promoting the trade. It is also very important to increase the trade channels and links between the two countries.*

around US\$400 million. I don't think this trade relation is consistent with such warm and friendly relations existing between the two countries. I would like to set the target neither too high nor too low but it needs to increase ten times of the current trade volumes. Definitely our two sectors need to join hands to further expand the trade. For example, the efficiency of the two governments related with the trade should greatly improve. Two governments should work out some favorable policies for promoting the trade. It is also very important to increase the trade channels and links between the two countries.

#### **On Economic Assistance**

As a neighbor of Nepal, China will continue working hard to provide our assistance for the economic development in Nepal to the best of our capacity. Now the Chinese government is giving grant assistance of 100 million RMB to Nepal. Though this figure is not huge but I have to point out that this amount of money ranks number two in China's grant assistance to developing countries only after the North Korea. I am not satisfied with this figure. I have made a lot of homework when I was in China. I believe China's grant assistance to Nepal will be increased. China's economy has also been affected by international financial crisis and China's fiscal income has registered minus increase since October. But I am also quite confident that no matter what kind of difficulty China is facing, our assistance to Nepal will never decline rather it will moderately increase. By the way, I would like to add that to help Nepal is to help China itself. If Nepal could achieve high economic growth, China's Tibet also will see high economic growth. I never believe that China's

grant assistance is just one way. I rather believe that it is two way assistance.

#### **People To People Contact**

I will work hard to promote people to people exchange. I think the relations between the people of two countries are most important foundation for two countries friendship. Although two countries relations remain cordial, the exchange of visit at the people to people level is not at large scale. There is one very popular saying in China that seeing is believing. I still believe that the people could have a better understanding and better feeling if we could have a direct contact and have opportunity to see each other. So the government can play vital role in enhancing the friendly exchanges between the people living in two countries.

#### **Role of Friendly Associations**

Friendly associations can play very vital role in promoting this relation. In future, I will work to create proper environment to exchange people's contact by using different channels and different methods. For example, between China and India and China and Pakistan, there are government level youth exchange mechanism. Every year one hundred youths visit each other's country. However, there is no such mechanism between China and Nepal. As an ambassador, I will work to establish such youth exchange mechanism between the two countries. We should also use different ways and channels to increase relations between political parties, friendly associations and business circles.

#### **On Tourism**

Every year 30,000 Chinese tourists are visiting Nepal. My target will be to add another zero taking it up to 300,000 within a few years. I don't think it is a large number in the context when more than 3 million tourists are coming to Lhasa. This year, the number will exceed five million. There is a phenomenon that many European tourists visit Lhasa after staying in Nepal. It is very unfortunate to say that those tourists who come to Lhasa seldom come to Nepal. If we could make package trip, it is quite likely that the number will go up as I said. I will try to figure out ways to further increase tourism between the two countries. Actually, I have a lot of things in my mind but I cannot deliver all of them. Some may think I cannot accomplish such a heavy task. If I will achieve some of the target in those areas, I will be quite satisfied. With the support and help from Nepalese friends, I am confident that all these things could be materialized and accomplished either during my tenure or my successor's tenure. ■

PM PRACHANDA

# Red Herring

*Prime Minister Prachanda now points at the invincibility of his government because of 'no other alternative'*

By A CORRESPONDENT

A week after he went around complaining that he was not being allowed to operate the government smoothly and that he sometimes thought of climbing down the power and rebel again, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has done a turnaround.

Now he is singing that the government he leads is invincible at least because, according to him, there is no alternative.

He has also turned the bogey of peace process and threatened that any move to dislodge his government would automatically disrupt the peace process.

He has said that the current government cannot be pulled down by anyone. "There is no situation of pulling this government down and forming another," PM Prachanda told a group of journalists, Thursday, in Baluwatar.

In an interaction with select group of journalists, PM Dahal said, "If this government is pulled down, there will be huge implications on the country." When asked to elaborate, he said, "The peace process will be blocked and constitution cannot be written."

He said that given the complicated nature of transition, the politics in the country was becoming multidimensional. "In the politics of Nepal, it is not only the domestic political parties that are the key actors. There are also foreigners. From the face of it, it looks like Nepali political parties are bickering but underneath the whole world will be squabbling," he said. "Just recently Surya Bahadur Thapaji (president of

told him that all his former followers have now become Maoists," he added. PM Dahal also told journalists that he was in a mood to bring out a white paper to highlight the problems facing the country and the government to enlighten the public.

He said in his four months in office, one and a half month was spent on foreign travel while one month was spent on managing internal dispute within Maoist party.

He also raised alarms that any



PM Prachanda with DPM Bam Dev Gautam : Walking on tight rope

Rastriya Janashakti Party) floated the idea of democratic alliance. Did this idea come from his mind alone or from elsewhere?" he questioned.

He said that his party had come forth with the slogan to unite republicans and nationalists because there were still threats from 'monarchists' and 'foreigners.'

In what turned out to be a frank tete-a-tete, he also added that there were conspiracies afoot to revive monarchy. PM Dahal said that Indian ambassador Rakesh Sood recently met with former King Gyanendra.

"When I asked him (Sood), he said he met with the former King. He told me that the former King inquired about his plan to travel to India to attend wedding of a relative," PM Dahal said.

"The former King is also said to have

problem on the Maoist party would have led to serious implications in the country.

The party had buried the problems after Prachanda incorporated parts of political document forwarded by his party colleague Mohan Baidya Kiran to come out with joint slogan of People's Federal Democratic National Republic of Nepal.

In a separate program, PM Prachanda also came down hard against what he called as some quarters intent at dismissing all the achievements made by his government.

"To say that this government has done nothing at all, will be like portraying a wrong picture which will lead us to wrong conclusion," he said addressing the sixth annual general meeting of the Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI). ■





A reporter of Himal Media attacked by Maoist : Media under threat

## ATTACK ON MEDIA

# Daring Action

*The pro-Maoist workers conduct a daring action by vandalizing the office and assaulting journos and staffs of Himal Media*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Since the last few months, the pro-Maoist workers have been staging relentless attacks against the Himal Media Private Limited – a renowned publication house that publishes Himal Khabarpatrika fortnightly magazine, Himal South Asian monthly and Nepali Times weekly.

On December 21, a few dozen workers affiliated with Maoists descended on the Himal Media premises in Hattiban, Lalitpur and resorted to mindless vandalism.

They injured 12 persons including editor of Nepali Times, Kunda Dixit.

Twelve persons including editor of Nepali Times Dixit, and chief executive officer Ashutosh Tiwari were injured in the attack.

“This is not a labour issue, this is a press freedom issue,” Dixit told reporters.

“They attacked because no action was taken against those perpetrators we had named earlier,” he said referring to earlier attacks against the publication.

The pro-Maoist workers have claimed that the magazine carried anti-Maoist pieces. Earlier, too, the pro-Maoist workers have been accused of threatening CEO Tiwari, and disrupting the distribution of magazine.

### Planned Attack

According to reports, on Sunday noon (Dec 21), around 50 cadres affiliated to Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, one of the labour union wings of the ruling CPN (Maoist), stormed the newsroom and printing press of the Himal Media Pvt Ltd at Hattiban, Lalitpur.

Accusing the media house of writing against Maoist-affiliated labour union,

the assailants beat up and injured CEO of Himal Media Ashutosh Tiwari, finance officer Bindira Shakya and journalist Dambar Krishna Shrestha. Altogether 12 staff and journalists were injured including Kunda Dixit, editor of Nepali Times, one of the publications of the Himal Media.

The assailants also smashed window panes in the Himal Media newsroom and vandalized its meeting room.

“This is a coordinated and deliberate attack on the press,” Dixit later told reporters.

He said chief of Maoist-affiliated Nepal Hotel Employees’ Union Ramesh Babu Panta and another Maoist cadre Ramesh KC were among the assailants.

In its latest issue, Himal Khabarpatrika had published a cover story about the growing militancy and intimidation chiefly by Maoist-affiliated labour unions.

The CPN (Maoist) is now heading a coalition government after the country was declared a federal democratic republic early this year.

This is the latest in a series of attack on Himal media. On October 25, this year, two men on a motorbike had hurled rocks at a car carrying Himal Media’s CEO, Ashutosh Tiwari.

Barely three weeks later (on Nov 15, 2008), a group of around 10 masked men entered the distribution office of Himal Media at Maitighar, Kathmandu and burned around 1,300 copies of Himal Khabarpatrika which were being read for distribution.

According to Himal Media, the assailants arrived on five motorbikes at around 9.45 pm, hooked off the landline and looted three mobile sets.

The attackers, some dressed in combat fatigues, took out bundles of the magazine, doused them with kerosene and set them on fire, according to the company.

Meanwhile, political leaders, civil society organizations and human rights bodies have all condemned the attack against Himal media and likened it with attack on press freedom. ■

# Disciplining Judges

- Dr. Trilochan Upreti

Where every sector of the society remained rampant violent, there was the lacking of the sense of responsibility and obligation towards the society, and one way demand for one's rights erupted. Consequently, there is a great deal of impunity in every sector in the society; the violation of laws, ethics and values of the Nepalese society seems to be so widespread that one may consider such violation as a rule rather than the exception. Then, naturally it begs a question of how to discipline the people, governmental agencies, politicians, civil society and also the judges for the operation of rule of law and how to curb the prevailing wider impunity elsewhere in the society.

Corruption remained a huge and complex problem hindering development and poverty eradication mission and wishes and aspirations of the people. There exist laws, institutions and political will of the government to fight with its teeth and nails but the level of corruption has been increasing day by day. Some argue that happens during a transitional period where the government people have priority in other areas, while others maintain that it is just a pretext in a bad governance system prevailing in the country. From the few past years, Nepal Bar Association, which is an umbrella organization of lawyers and also a part of judiciary, and members of the judicial and law society have been demanding the end of rampant corruption in judiciary. They have also called on for strike opposing and calling the end of it and held the corrupt judges accountable for their wrongdoing. Transparency International, civil society, media and political parties also show their finger on unchecked and increasing corruption in judiciary. In this context, making constitutional arrangement for the public hearing in a parliamentary committee to enable for getting appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court could be one of the reasons. However, this arrangement has received severe criticism insisting that it will curb the independence of judiciary, one of the major principles of a democratic constitution.

Justices are considered to be highly reputed, trusted and credible professional people and no one assume that they could be less efficient, not qualified and be blamed for any immoral conduct. However, we normally forget to perceive that they are also the members of our society.

There is also a dispute on the continuation of a member of the judicial council, which is responsible to discipline the judges for their wrongdoing, inefficiency and regulate their administration. This is about whether he should resign after the change of government, as he was appointed for four years term, as a trusted jurist from the earlier prime minister. But the new prime minister and the government is in place now. Morally, he could have resigned by now. Legally, unless he is unable to carry out his functions for any reason, or unless he tenders his resignation, there is not an easy option to remove him or compel him to quit the office. If he is to be removed from his office, there is a procedure for removal. That procedure is of impeachment, a similar procedure on the removal of a justice of the Supreme Court. This is a complex, disputed and difficult option in a given situation in Nepal. To date, despite some incomplete and failed effort, no impeachment procedure has taken place in Nepal. However, in western countries after the new government take office either every political appointment are automatically considered to be vacated or such appointees tendered their resignation. But here in Nepal, there is a serious problem whether such appointees should continue or they must resign so as to make easy to perform the function of new government. This is also a political question which must be resolved by politically by the political actors themselves.

In this contextual setting, it is reported in the media that the Judicial Council has proposed to make amendment in its Act, which provides the Judicial Council with an authority to recommend the Commission for the Investigation of the Abuse of Authority (CIAA) to prosecute judges on corruption charges. In the past, when the CIAA Act was discussed in the parliament, the issue of giving authority to CIAA to prosecute corrupt justices was discussed but this provision was omitted on the principle of the independence of judiciary. A separate provision was made in the Judicial Council Act to take action such as undertaking investigation on misdeed, lack of efficiency and the corruption and to take necessary action, based on the result of such investigation. However, the Judicial Council remained unsuccessful to take effective action against the guilty judges; and there is a strong demand from the society that the corrupt and inefficient judges should not be protected

in the name of independence of judiciary.

It may be important to note about the system or procedure followed in neighboring country India. A new Bill on the judges inquiry amendment has been submitted to the Parliament recently. The 2008 Bill is believed to provide for establishing a National Judicial Council to inquire into allegations of misbehavior or incapacity- the two grounds laid down for the removal of a judge of the Supreme Court (SC) and the High Court (HC). There is no provision in the Indian Constitution for impeachment against judges of the SC and the HC. Only one case of prosecution against the judge V. RamaSwamy was brought in May 10, 1993, which could not succeed for various reasons. He was charged for the trial before the Lok Sabha on charges of misuse of funds for purchase of 25 silver maces for brother judges and furniture, furnishings, carpets and electrical appliances, in excess of the permissible limit provided by the regulation. Recently, it has been reported in the media that the chief justice of India made a communiqué to chief justices of all high courts, Chief Justice of India Balkrishnan has recommended that any judicial officer who is "unfit, ineffective, incompetent or has doubtful integrity" may be retired from service. The Bill is expected to be passed by the parliament soon. A three member enquiry committee has also recently submitted its report on the money-on-the door of judge, a scandal indulging corruption, at Haryana was also submitted to the Chief justice of India.

It is beyond doubt that corruption is a major threat to the peace, prosperity, stability and economic development in our country. Therefore, no one, including the judge, should be left immune from their misdeeds. However, there should be a delicate balance between their independence and protection for their functions carried out in good faith. It is because that the principle of separation of power and check and balance and its inherent principle must be protected so that a functional and independent judiciary is in place who can deliver true justice to the people in time of need. One should not ignore the crucial significance of judiciary in a democratic society where the soul of the rule of law maintained by this great intuition should in no case be curtailed in one or another pretext. ■



## BOOK

# Telling Story

*Journalist Babita Basnet's story book reveals the trauma of conflict, human relations and challenges of journalist*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although Babita Basnet is neither a renowned story writer nor a litterateur, as a proud journalist she has seen many ups and downs in her 20 years in this profession.

From covering the trauma of conflict victim to atrocities, love and tragedy, journalist Basnet published her report with wide coverage.

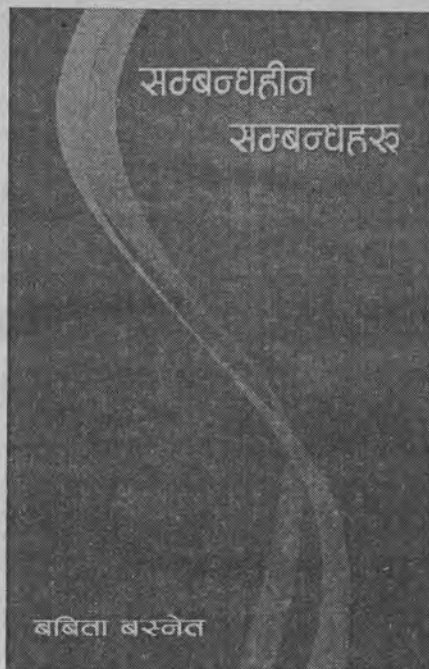
This is what one can see in her dozens of stories compiled in a book. Most of her stories were published in the past and some of the stories included in the book are unpublished. As a journalist, Babita can write only a fact based story in her work which is reflected in her stories as well.

Babita produces some very good stories of human society, individual, conflict and social surroundings. In all her stories, she tries to portrays various dimensions of society and social values.

Her fourteen stories are compiled in the book, all explain different situation and scenario. Her stories are full of life of human being, their actions, their behaviour but what is lacking in her stories are the theoretical perceptions. Thus, her theme is simple and her writing is simple.

She is successful to observe very complicated parts of human relations and presents them in simplistic manner. She observed the human happiness, desperation, tragedy and greed.

As a journalist, she also depicted a life of a wife of a journalist. She portrays the life of a wife of journalist of Nepal who is unable to meet any



**Sambandha Bihin  
Sambandhaharu  
(Relations Without  
Relationship)**

**By Babita Basnet**

**Pages: 114**

**Price: Rs. 200.00**

**Published by Mag  
Library**

financial demands of house.

As a journalist defending the cause of women, Babita also has seen other aspects of the human life. One can see her experiences in the book. Among others, the story titled Green Card is about the story of Nepalese youth who migrate to the United States hoping to have better life abroad. After landing, he encounters a number of challenges.

In her story Relations without Relations, Babita tries to deal with the complexities of human relations.

Unveiled by renowned literature critic Dhruva Chandra Gautam, during the program to launch her book, various speakers shed the light on Babita's stories. Although Babita is a journalist, she has shown that she has also capability to write good stories. One can find various expressions of society and social surroundings in her stories.

"Beside a hardworking and dedicated women activist who worked for the cause of gender issue, Babita proves that she is also a good story writer. Her stories are impressive as her characters are diverse and complicated," said Chandani Joshi.

Published in various times in the last many years in different literature and non-literature magazines and newspapers, Babita's stories are lively and they give the reality of the situation of the country.

"Babita is a very dedicated and good journalist. After reading her stories, I find literary personality in her," said Dev Prakash Tripathy, publisher of Ghatna Ra Vichar Weekly. "As an editor of the newspaper, her dedication is very much admirable."

Although this is her first effort, Babita has shown her potential to observe and explain the human feelings through story. ■

“In the politics of Nepal, it is not only the domestic political parties that are the key actors. There are also foreigners. From the face of it, it looks like Nepali political parties are bickering but underneath the whole world will be squabbling.”

*Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda,’ in an interaction with journalists, in Baluwatar.*

“We are in a dilemma. The PM says that he is confused whether he is a PM or a rebel. Now, if the PM calls us for dialogue and we go to meet him, we are afraid that he would suddenly drop his PM’s cap and wear that of a rebel and train AK 47 on us.”

*Laxman Prasad Ghimire, chief whip of Nepali Congress parliamentary party, speaking at the parliament before boycotting it demanding the fulfillment of assurances by the PM.*

“It is futile for anyone to harbor a dream that the Maoists will come down from the government and they can climb to power.”

*Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, Finance Minister and senior leader of Maoists, saying that the Maoists will stay in power for at least three years.*

“We have got one and half years available to draft this constitution. First we have to look at this time frame, second the new constitution has to be framed on the basis of the ‘tactics’ adopted by our party, and the third is all leftist, patriotic and pro-people forces have to unite. After that, Nepal will become a ‘people’s republic’ within one-and-half-years.”

*Mohan Baidya ‘Kiran,’ senior leader of Maoists, in Nepalnews.*



“If there is no One Madhes One Province, then there will not be one Nepal also.”

*Mahantha Thakur, chief of Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party (TMDP), in Annapurna Post.*

“It is the policy of Maoists to continue saying that Nepali Congress should not remain as opposition even as they make sure that NC is nowhere near to the government.”

*KP Oli, senior leader of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), in Annapurna Post.*

“The bar has concluded that the Law Minister has no legal or constitutional authority to demand Sthapit’s resignation.”

*Bishwo Kanta Mainali, president of Nepal Bar Association (NBA) – an umbrella organization of lawyers – stating that Law Minister Dev*

*Gurung’s instruction to Judicial Council (JC) member Motikazi Sthapit to resign undermined the independence of JC.*

“This is not a labor issue. This is a press freedom issue.”

*Kunda Dixit, editor of Nepali Times weekly, after a bunch of pro-Maoist workers attacked Himal Media and injured one dozen journalists including him.*

“Thermal plants are very expensive and complex technology. As part of immediate and long-term solutions we should instead focus on repairing and then extending the [damaged] transmission line and building big hydro-power stations.”

*Uttar Kumar Shrestha, managing director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), speaking at Reporters’ Club.*

## TRANSITION

**PASSED AWAY:** Ramesh Bikal, renowned senior litterateur, at the age of 81.

**APPOINTED:** Bamdev Chhetri, as the chairman of Agriculture Development

Bank Limited (ADBL).

**RE-ELECTED:** Dinesh Bhandari, as president of Nepal Transport Entrepreneurs National Federation.

**CONSTITUTED:** Fourteen committees under the Constituent Assembly (CA).

**APPOINTED:** Dinanath Sharma, as the spokesperson of CPN-Maoists, by the party’s central committee.

Post Bahadur Bogati, as the chief whip of Maoists’ parliamentary party, by the central committee of Maoists.



## SPANISH MUSICAL SHOW

# Music For All

*Well known Spanish musician and theater artist NARF- Francisco Perez Vazquez and Juan Jose Ramos Hermo play the music with perfection*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**A**mong all European or western musical instruments and musical traditions, Spanish music has its separate fame and its distinct identity. The Spanish musical instruments and musical rhythm are very popular in the world.

This was what the Spanish duo showed in Nepal's capital Kathmandu recently. The music performed by two musicians is perfect combination of words and music. The rhythm was so perfect that every one enjoyed the show. Unlike other things, the music has no boundary and no language.

Everyone understands music. This was what Nepalese music lovers found in the recently organized Spanish Musical show in capital.

They won the hearts and mind of Nepalese audiences who were gathered to listen them.

"We are very fortunate to be able to present them in Nepal. They are here to share music from Spain," said musician duo. "We see many Nepalese music lovers enjoying our show."

After twenty years in music and being a member of different rock bands, Fran Perez, an artist involved for many years in the realm of music and theatre started the NARF project in 2004.

According to organizer, this project broke boundaries and became one of

the most interesting musical adventures of the last decade in Galicia (North Western Spain). It is the new identity of a restless musician, who explores rhythm and harmony, a modern and seductive music language for a musician who is impelled by feelings. NARF's first album, "Directo en Compostela", was recorded with Marcos Teria (guitar) and Pepe Sendon (percussion and vibraphone).

*During all these years the links of this musician with Portugal and Africa have been tightening. Participating in the festival "Tan de Festa" in Tandel (Portugal) he met Cultural creators from Portugal and Portuguese – speaking African countries. It was there that his African adventure started.*

During all these years the links of this musician with Portugal and Africa have been tightening. Participating in the festival "Tan de Festa" in Tandel (Portugal) he met Cultural creators from Portugal and Portuguese – speaking African countries. It was there that his African adventure started. When he first arrived in Maputo (Mozambique) he developed Bumba, a crossover with the Mozambican percussion group Timbila Muzimba. But then, he also

recorded Quero Set tamber, a single with lyrics of the Mozambican poet Jose Caveirinha.

He had held concerts in London in three different occasions, performing at prestigious clubs where he captivated the audience with his music. He has also toured in Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique and Cuba getting impregnated with the rhythms from those countries.

He was awarded the 2nd prize in the Liet-Lavlut contest for musicians of Europe's minority languages, held in Ostersund (Sweden) in 2006 for his song Santiago. An Unstoppable composition activity during the last year results in a collection of many new turns that, getting himself accompanied by great band, expand the acoustic dimension that has always identified this musician. NARF creates

a new sound by adding percussion elements to electro-acoustic instruments, giving color to his original difficult to label style.

"NARF does never stop at a point and it always willing to show his new musical approach, as another manifestation of his unique style, with a scope on music in motion, based in his own roots and the mixing it up with rhythms from Cape Verde, Brazil, Mozambique and Cuba," said organizer. ■



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