

Maoist not to lead the government

Red Star Reporter

Political situation in Nepal has changed. After the defeat of its candidate for president, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has decided to stay in opposition and not form a government under its leadership.

After the election of the President, Com. Prachanda, the chairman of CPN-Maoist, told journalists in a press conference that the Central Committee meeting had decided to stay in the opposition. Comrade Prachanda said: "Objectively, from a moral point of view, the result of the election for president has pushed our party into the opposition." He further emphasised that the party has the role of opposition because of the recent political equation that has developed, even though the party does not have an absolute ideological point of view on forming or not forming the government. He added that priority should be given to the coalition that attained the majority in the election for president. Even though, through the resistance of the masses, the election of a common person as head of state has created a favourable situation, there is a serious danger of counter revolution because of the recent political events and tendencies that have developed. The counter

revolutionary forces began to plot conspiracies when the CPN Maoist became the largest party in the CA. However, these parties are going to bear a heavy burden in the near future because of their notorious schemes to stop the Maoist from forming the

NC put into practice their scheme to end the cooperation between the parties. Forming a theoretical and practical equation, the reactionaries and parties of the status quo are trying to create a situation where the CPN Maoist will be forced either



Photo-Dinesh Shrestha

CPN (Maoist) Chairman Prachanda informs the media about the party decisions taken by the central secretariat and central committee members at a press conference in Kathmandu.

government.

By putting forward their 7 point terms and conditions to the CPN Maoist, the Nepali Congress tried to end the cooperation between the different political parties that started with the 12 point agreement. In the run up to the presidential election, the

to struggle or surrender. The decision of the CPN Maoist to stay in the opposition has energised the people. The domestic and foreign powers have failed to make the CPN Maoist a servant of their interests by allowing it in the government. At this time, the

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Nepal elects its first President

Dr. Ram Baran Yadav is the first president of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. He was elected on July 21, 55 days after the official declaration of the Republic of Nepal. Dr. Yadav has assumed the post after taking oath of office and secrecy from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Kedar Prasad Giri, at the office of the President, Shital Niwas.

Dr Yadav was a central leader of the Nepali Congress, and is from the Terai region of Nepal. Born on February 4, 1948 to the family of middle class farmers, Dr. Yadav received MBBS and DCP degrees from Kolkata (India).

Nepali Congress leader Girija Prasad Koirala desperately wanted to be the first president of Nepal. However, because of the Maoist stand



that the president should be from oppressed or disadvantaged groups such as Madhesi, Janajatis, or women; Yadav had the chance to make history and become the first President of Nepal. Although Yadav

defeated the Maoist choice for President, he would have never even got the chance if the Maoist had not taken this stand.

The movement to overthrow the autocratic Monarchy and establish a Republic in Nepal began over 60 years ago. In 1950, a three party agreement in Delhi betrayed the aspirations of the Nepali people and the monarchy carried on. In 1990, a popular people's movement had almost overthrown the monarchy, but some political parties compromised with the King and agreed to a 'Constitutional Monarchy'.

CPN-Maoist waged an armed struggle for more than 10 years to establish the Republic. The Royal massacre of June 2001,

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'Need for national unity'

1. First of all, our party, the CPN-Maoist heartily congratulates the President, Vice President, the members of the Constituent Assembly (CA) and the people for the accomplishment of a historical task with far reaching consequences as the election of the Constituent Assembly, the implementation of the Federal Democratic Republic and the in the presidential election.

2. In spite of the aforesaid historical achievement, our party feels the symptoms of a serious danger of counter revolution because of the recently developing political events and tendencies. Strange and undemocratic plots and a web of conspiracies have come into light since the CPN-Maoist was elected as the largest party in the country through the election of the CA. The CPN-Maoist was elected by winning the great trust of the masses from different communities and people, completely against the expectations of the status quo, the feudalists and the neo-tycoons. It was at this point the reactionary conspiracy began.

3. It is clear that the Nepalese people have given the historical responsibility to the CPN-Maoist for peace, change and leadership to write the constitution according to the aspirations and convictions of the 12-point understanding, the Peoples War and the Peoples

Movement. However, the mandate of the people was unexpected and unbearable for the feudal status quo and the neo-tycoons to accept. Consequently, instead of allowing the largest party to form government as per the established norms of democracy, the plots began to be hatched to prevent Maoists from forming a government, or even if the government were to be formed, their arms would be tied up, thus being unable to do anything for the people. For that, not only the arithmetic games put forward as a precondition against the spirit of the 12-point understanding, the Comprehensive Peace Accord and the agreement and co-operation, but also an immediate dissolution of the PLA and the destruction of the weapons had also been put forward, against the essence of the peace agreement. This so called caretaker government has even stopped providing allowances to the PLA since the CA election, along with out right offensive against the peace process and the delay in forming the new government. Now, the lives of the PLA soldiers are so materially bad, that if this situation continues for a long time, the limits of patience and endurance will be break down.

4. Having struggled promptly against the so called conditions that stand against peace, agreement and cooperation, and having maintaining necessary agreement in light to advance ahead, our party has been making efforts to find political exit one after another. Against the mandate of the election and the inclusive principal, the one mantra stand taken by yesterday's largest parties that the agreement can be made or break only if such and such person be made President has made the situation more complex and problematic.

5. At the time, after filing the candidacy of president and the vice-president, giving emphasis on the need of an inclusive and common candidate for the post of president by our party, a type of alliance was made among NC, UML and MJF which created the obvious danger of leading Nepalese politics backwards into the negative tendency of the past parliamentary period once again. The effort to give written legality to an unnatural, vengeful and non-political alliance creates stagnation in the natural political out-let, and can push the entire nation into a terrible calamity. This type of unnatural alliance will increase only mistrust, pessimism and wrath among the people, in place of trust, optimism and the hope. By creating the alliance, the interference by foreign reactionary forces is not only an attack upon national self-respect and independence. By returning the nation to conflict and making it a failed state, is it not also part of a master plan to turn Nepal into an international strategic play ground of different power centers?

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End of Seven Party Alliance

Kathmandu/The Seven Party Alliance-SPA has ended after two and half years, which was forged on November 2006 with the 12-point understanding made to end the Monarchy and establish Democratic Republic in Nepal through the constituent assembly. The SPA was even mentioned in the interim constitution and all the political process during this time was preceded as per the consensus of the alliance.

After the election the political balance changed in Nepal. Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) emerged as the single largest party and Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal (UML) became second and third respectively. After losing the election the NC showed its disinterest to continue the alliance and put forward seven terms which were to end it. The NC demanded to dismantle the People's Liberation Army and dissolve Young Communist League- a sister organization of Maoist. Even they wanted to form and oust the government with a simple majority against the two-third majority provision in the constitution. This was merely like changing the game-rule after loosing it.

The Maoist was not willing to end the alliance and the consensus political system. Maoist leaders opposed the NC demand

arguing that this will open the way to start of making and breaking of the governments like in 15 years period of multi-party democracy. But NC and UML didn't satisfy. After two months of vigorous talks, seven parties reached to the agreement and PM Koirala declared that he will resign. But as soon as he announced his resignation, Madhesi leaders started to disrupt the assembly. This was seen as the move of NC to stop Maoist reach the power. But after two weeks of various levels of talks, Madhesi leaders agreed to let the Assembly run.

Ultimately, the legislative session of the Constituent Assembly on July 13 passed the Fifth Amendment bill with a two-third majority. Of the total 449 members present during the voting, 442 voted in favour of the amendment while the rest went against it.

With the amendment of the interim constitution, the seven-party alliance (SPA) as mentioned in the interim constitution is effectively dead. The amendment paved the way for election of President, Vice-president, CA Chairman and the formation of new government.

The amendment of the constitution has changed the two-third majority provision and consensus among the seven political

parties which means the end of the consensual system that was exercised in Nepal for more than two years. In this way the majority system has initiated.

Although the major parties voted in favor of the major amendments, they were divided in the issue of including opposition leader in the National Security Council. The CPN (Maoist) and CPN (UML) rejected the government's proposal for opposition leader's space in the Council that is responsible for mobilizing Nepal Army. Nepali congress went against the Maoist and CPN (UML) in this proposal. Nepal Peasants and Workers Party voted against the government bill that was approved by the alliance.

Furthermore, the presidential election has ended the SPA alliance. The NC and the UML, the second and the third largest parties of the SPA respectively, made an alliance with the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum against the Maoist. These three parties, in a written proposal, agreed to support each other's candidates for the election of the President, Vice-president and Chairman of the Constituent Assembly. The Seven Party Alliance, which lasted for two and a half years, is now over.

Single madesh region:an anti FDR demand

The Madhesh parties (MJF, TMLP and other fringe parties) are continuously creating obstacles in the Constituent Assembly (CA). Because of their activities and demands, the formation of a new government and the writing of the Federal Democratic Republican (FDR) constitution are being delayed.

Is the issue of "one Madhes, one Pradesh" justifiable? Does it address the verdict and aspirations of all the people who live in the southern plains in Nepal? Does it follow the concept of FDR system? The demand of the Madhes parties is based on the concept of a unitary system of governance. It is a continuation of the old feudal governance in a new form. There

are peoples of many origins and indigenous nationalities that have lived in the Terai for a long time. Realizing and addressing these specialties and differences of the southern Terai plains, the CPN (Maoist) has already proclaimed autonomous regions to include all different nationalities and cultures. E.g.: Kochila, Mithila, Bhojpura, Awadh, and Tharuwan. This scientific conception of autonomous regions is now properly addressed by the concept of FDR.

Therefore, if the Madhes parties demand whole Madhes as one Region, they would be, knowingly or unknowingly, creating potential conflicts in the plains itself. Though they appear to encourage a conflict

between Madhesh and Pahad (between the people's of plains and hills); the possibility of a conflict between different Terai communities, coming from different regions and belonging to various nationalities and indigenous peoples groups, is a dangerous possibility. Moreover, it will be a clash between the ideas and concepts of FDR system and the unitary state system.

If Madhesi parties talk about Madhes movement, they should not forget that the people of the Terai region had fought for the FDR and not for the unitary structure of single Madhes. Therefore, they will be isolated and separated from the people of Terai if they ignore the actual Terai and its historical development.

Maoist not to

CPN Maoist must prioritise national independence and the struggle of the masses by consolidating its organisations. Because of the isolation of progressive forces by reactionary forces with old ideologies and tendencies, the writing of the new constitution has been pushed into the background. There is no possibility of writing the new Federal Democratic Republican constitution without the CPN Maoist.

The parties that used to work with the monarchy in the past have no other aim than to somehow be in the government and stay there. They have not been concerned with institutionalised federalism. They always played the dirty game of creating a provision to form and fail a government on the basis of majority and minority. They have created an unhealthy and unnatural coalition under the direction of foreign powers which are forcefully pushing the country back into conflict. This has taught the progressive forces to complete the revolution and has prepared the objective basis to advance towards a People's Republic.

Nevertheless, Chairman Prachanda has also classified that though there is no print to form government right away. The possibility could be arise in future if situation turns favourable.

'Special rights to Muslims'

Kathmandu/The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has vowed to ensure special rights for the minority Muslim community in Nepal. The party had played a key role in abolishing the 240-year-old Hindu monarchy and turning the country into a secular state.

Assuring that the new government will provide special rights to Muslims, CPN (Maoist) Chairman Prachanda told a gathering of the Muslim Mukti Morcha (MMM) in the capital that: "It is not enough to provide equal rights to the Muslims, but they should be given special rights as compensation for having been suppressed."

Prachanda, who is poised to lead the new government in Nepal, also promised to form a 'Muslim Commission' for the welfare of the minority community.

MMM leader Mohammad Kasim Miya asked the Terai-based Madhesi leaders not to categorise Muslims as Madhesis, alleging that the regional parties of the Terai wanted to deny Muslims their rights.

The majority of Nepal Muslims reside in the Terai-plains bordering India, and have shown their support for the revolution.

Future of PLA in question

The rightist alliance of NC, UML and MJF has put the future of PLA in question. Recently, a Congress leader said: 'Considering the mutinies in the armed police barracks, the integration of the PLA into the National army will be a disaster.'

From the beginning, the parliamentary parties have been giving excuse after excuse so as to not integrate the PLA into national army. The rightist alliance wants to liquidate the PLA and derail the peace process. In the PLA cantonments, there is always a lack of basic infrastructure-water, electricity, and buildings.

For the last three months, PLA soldiers have not received the rations and basic wages that they were promised and to which they are entitled. Endemic diseases are spreading but there are not adequate medical facilities. Conditions in the cantonments are getting worse everyday. By creating harsh conditions in the cantonment, the government is trying to cause disenchantment and frustration among the PLA soldiers.

The reactionaries want the PLA to disintegrate by itself. National and international reactionaries are trying to stop the Maoist from forming a government. When the rightist alliance government is in place, they will formulate ways to get rid of the PLA. If they try to get rid of the PLA, there will be resistance that may lead to civil war. The PLA will have no choice but take up arms again.

Journalists in agitation

Journalists cover news and reports of various factors including the agitation, strike of various groups. In Nepal, working journalists have to agitate for their professional rights time and time again. Working journalists of Nepal-1 Television are demanding a fulfillment of the previous commitments made by the management had made years ago.

After several weeks of agitation, the journalists' agitation had compelled the management to fulfill their various demands; to provide appointment letters; to increase the salary and provide bonus; to clear the remaining salary etc.

Various media organizations, including the Federation of Nepalese Journalists, have shown their support with the agitating journalists. They have demanded that the management should address the journalists' demand instead of locking their office.

Nepal-1 TV network is an Indian (Delhi) based private company. It has not even been legally registered in Nepal, but the network has set-up an office in Kathmandu producing and transmitting news and entertainment programs. Many journalists, intellectuals and ordinary Nepalese people see it as a form of hegemony from India. The station is accused of broadcasting anti-Nepal items also.

In an attempt to compel the TV authorities to fulfill their obligations, the agitating journalists submitted their memorandum to newly elected President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav.

Nepal elects

when all the family members of King Birendra were murdered further eroded the power of the Monarchy. The armed struggle uprooted Feudalism in the countryside. In November 2006 the Maoist and seven parliamentary parties agreed to a 12-points agreement to remove the Monarchy and establish Nepal as a Republic. In April 2006, a popular people's movement forced Gyandenra Shah to bow down. The first meeting of the Constituent Assembly on May 28 formally declared the end of the Monarchy and established the Republic in Nepal.

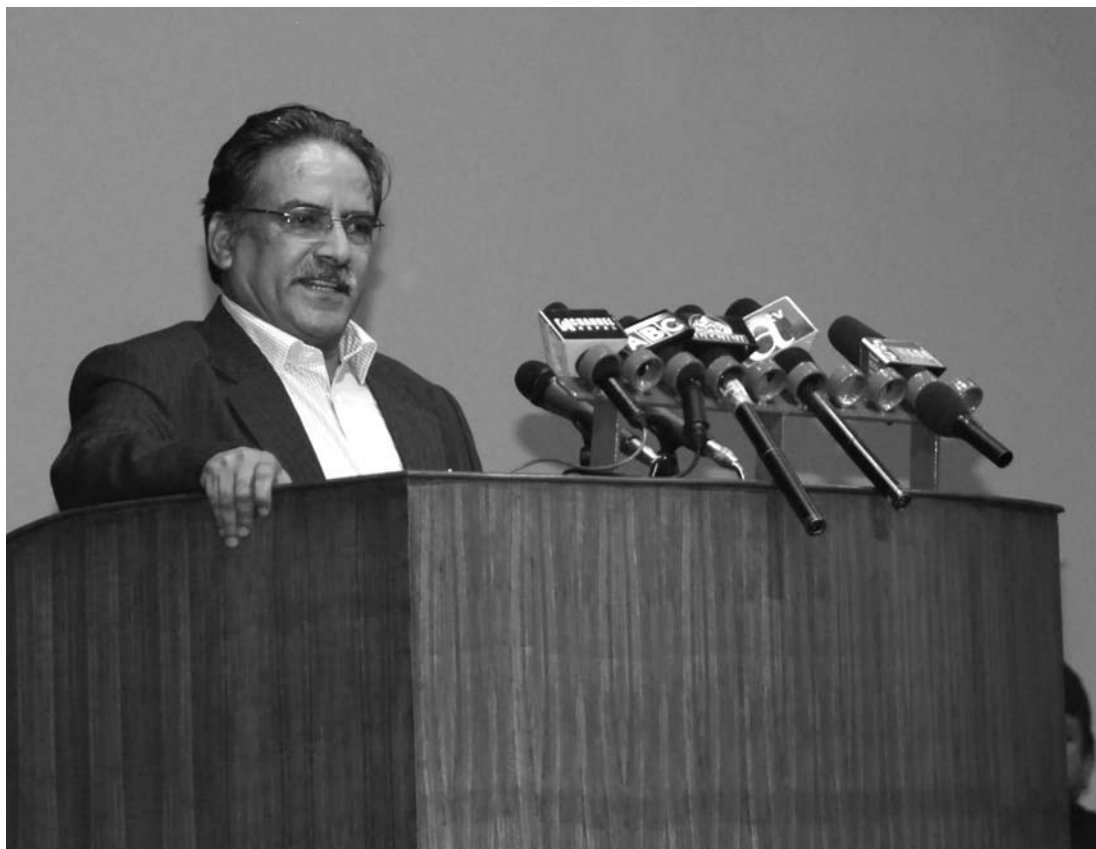
'Need for

It is a serious question. Now every self-respecting Nepali has to ponder upon this question with utmost seriousness. We consider that it is our responsibility to make the people aware of the domestic and foreign reactionary efforts to destroy the reputation of the CPN-Maoist which the Nepalese people, with much devotion, hardship, and sacrifice chose as the bearer of peace and change.

6. In the election of president and vice-president, if we take the political agenda into consideration, the progressive and inclusive ideas put forward by our party against the status quo has been victorious. Definitely, our party is proud of it. Due to the victory of our ideas, a favourable situation was created so the first president of the Republic of Nepal could be from the Madhesi community. However, we are strongly opposed to the harmful method of getting a majority by creating alike apolitical alliance. Nonetheless, the election of the president is over and our candidate has lost. The objective situation and the development of events have ended our claim to make a government under the leadership of our party. Objectively, the result of the election of the president has pushed our party into the opposition morally. Principally, we have no impartial view about whether to make the government or not, but our party frankly accepts the role of the opposition provided by the development of the latest political alliance. Our party will decide whether to support or not to support on the basis of virtues and vices of the alliance that has ratified its majority in the election of president.

7 The moves and intervention of foreign reactionary powers in the day to day political events of our country today has been increasing seriously. In this situation, the struggle for national unity, national sovereignty and territorial integrity has arisen as the principal struggle for the people. A comprehensive unity among leftists, progressives, patriotic, and democratic forces against all kinds of foreign reactionary moves and intervention is the demand of the nation today. Only a consolidated unity among all the classes, castes, and communities of Terai, Madhes, Pahad, and Himalaya can secure the freedom and self respect of the country. Therefore, our party humbly requests all of the Nepali people to unite for sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.

(Unofficial translation of the Maoist's statement issued on July 22)



'The real garden of many flowers'

- Prachanda, Chairman
Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

We have accomplished a long desire with this Constituent Assembly, which has true participation, representation and all the necessary characteristics. People used to describe Nepal as a garden of many flowers, but only one flower was allowed to grow while others were not even allowed to bloom. Instead, other flowers were crushed. Now, the process has started to make a real garden of many flowers comprising of different classes, castes, regions and communities of Nepal. The sacrifice, bravery and dedication of the best sons and daughters of the people have watered the garden of the Constituent Assembly.

For a long time, we dreamt of creating such a garden, we dreamt about the flower garden ensuring the rights of all the oppressed flowers, Madhesh, Tharus, castes and nationalities, women, Muslims, the oppressed regions and all poor workers, peasants and patriots, all blooming. Now, with the participation and presence of women, whether they are from CPN (Maoist), Nepali congress, CPN (UML) of any other party, I feel proud from an ideological and political point of view.

Despite our ideological differences; we feel that we share similar objectives and aspirations erected by those great martyrs. We have a common goal to build a New Nepal. I believe that united we can go ahead with the effort to build new state, because of the inclusive and proportionate representation in the CA. Because we stand on the same foundation of sacrifice, I feel that each of us is the leader of all, and all of us are the cadres of each party.

During the period of the election of the Constituent Assembly, the entire world was watching us. Some people, inside and outside the country, were confused. But, having powerfully responded to their suspicions, the Nepalese people have accomplished the CA election excellently.

Before this, we gave an excellent example to the world that the Nepalese people, the Nepalese parties and its leaders are capable of advancing the peace process on their own, through their collective effort and ability. We ourselves carried the peace process forward through the Comprehensive Peace Accord, the formation of the interim constitution and

the interim government. The world was amazed and encouraged at Nepal for its independence and self respect.

After the courageous and exemplary verdict of the Nepalese people in the CA election, which caught the world by surprise, we have not been able to seriously address the initiatives and aspirations of the people. Three months have passed and we have not been able to take the immediate initiative to seriously address the courage, initiatives and aspirations of the people.

Despite the clear mandate of the people, among the political parties, we are not able to agree and work together in making a new constitution. This is very serious. Symptoms of suspicion and hopelessness are now replacing the courage and hope of the CA election time.

Stagnation has set in the general process of CA. It has created a worrying situation everywhere. It is true. We know that we have successfully solved the distant strategic issues in a simple way, but we, sometimes, are so confused that we are unable to solve even the very simple and small issues. It is a wonderful type of contradiction. I think it is the dialectics

of the political development of society. This type of contradiction has its own rule and we are drawing it out naturally.

We are in the process of ending one era and starting another. The old ideas and working styles have not been able to free us, and the new ideas and working styles, born just recently, are not yet established. Therefore, it is a transitional period of epoch-making change. We should go ahead to find and follow the objective rules for a successful conclusion rather than worry. Although we are worried about the lengthy process, it has a positive aspect also. This long debating process has helped us to reach to the depth and breadth of the contradiction. At the same time, it has laid the foundation to speed the process of making the FDR constitution and taking the peace process to its logical end. The state will be a Federal Democratic Republic by the process of CA.

We have clearly put the provision in the interim constitution, and all of the agreements and understanding among the political parties to finalise all types of issues through the sovereign CA. The CA is the most powerful and most democratic

institution. Nobody is above it. The CA is the only platform that can settle all the issues of creating a state structure. We should be aware that the vigour and dignity of CA will not be split by anyone. All the issues and questions will be finalised by it without lessening the dignity of the CA.

We can give a model of peace to the entire world. This responsibility is upon our shoulders, we, the new generation. We have the opportunity to give another example by institutionalising the democratic system in a new way.

The opportunities before us present us with many challenges. Our ideologies, political tendencies, norms and values collide against each other. Therefore, we should all concentrate on finding a rational solution. In this meeting of the CA, I, as the leader of the largest party, want to repeat my commitment to federalism, the Federal Republic and the creation of a new constitution by bringing all the parties together.

(Excerpt from Maoist Chairman Prachanda's speech to Constituent Assembly meeting for the first time on 9th July).

Youth festival in Greece

The first international Youth Festival "resistance 2008" has concluded which was organised by Communist Organisation of Greece (KOE) in Athens (Greece). 19 parties and organisations had participated in the festival. More than eight thousands people had the opportunity to be informed by KOE and the foreign delegations about the struggles in Greece and all over the world.

On the festival, in the meeting about the overthrowings and revolutions of the 21st century, the Nepali representative, Chairman of the ANNISUR the student wing of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Lekhnath Neupane, informed about the great moments of the Nepalese Revolution and transmitted the thoughts of Maoist Chairman Prachanda and the other Maoist leaders.

At the end of the festival the delegates declared that they 'will keep on and intensify our resolute struggle against the common enemies of the working class, the youth and the peoples around the world.'

The Resistance 2008 Festival was a highly politicized event, which gathered dozens of foreign delegations from the Balkans, Middle East,

Europe, Africa, South Asia and the Americas and offered the participants a genuine internationalist and militant atmosphere.

The participants were Revolutionary Communist Youth (Argentina), Communist Party (M-L-M), {Bolivia}; Resistance Movement "23 September" (Bulgaria); Action-Congo (Congo); Democratic Youth Movement in Europe; Franco-Nepalese Solidarity Committee (France); Youth REBELL (Germany); Communist Party of Great Britain (M-L) Communist Organization of Greece; Left Formations of the Youth (Greece); Union of the Working People, (Greece); New Haitian Communist Party; Rete dei Comunisti (Italy); Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist); GML/Rode Morgen (Netherlands); Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Youth of Left Block / Bloco de Esquerda (Portugal); The Front for Rights and Liberties (Turkey); Federation of Socialist Youth Associations (Turkey); Youth of Revolutionary Proletariat (Turkey); Union of Maoist Youth (Turkey-N.Kurdistan); Progressive Labor Party (USA).



Lekhnath Neupane (Left) from Nepal in the first international youth festival organised by Communist Organization of Greece in Athens, Greece.

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 Office Address : Anamnagar, Kathmandu
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 Email : trs.nepal@gmail.com

EDITORIAL

Inevitable class polarisation

Two and half years ago, on November 2006, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and seven parliamentary parties reached a 12-point understanding; an agreement to end the monarchy and establish a republic in Nepal through the election of a Constituent Assembly. This understanding ended the monarchy and a Federal Democratic Republic was established; the historic CA election of 10 April 2008 elected the Maoist as the single largest party of Nepal.

There was a nationwide expectation among the Nepalese that the Maoist Party will form the government. Even the parliamentary parties themselves recognised the situation, although the CPN (Maoist) didn't have a majority to form the government alone.

Since the Maoist emerged as the largest party through the CA election too, the parliamentary parties began to plot conspiracies to stop the Maoist taking power. En line to this attitude, the two third provisions to remove the Prime Minister was changed; Maoist was forced to abandon the President betting this post against monarchy. Having done that, the parliamentary parties wanted to dissolve the PLA, abandon progressive land reforms and the restructure of Nepalese society. Finally UML broke away from the understanding of forming a government with the Maoist, and a coalition was formed between the NC, UML and MJF. This was an undemocratic, unnatural and vengeful action against the Maoist.

However, the first President of Nepal is from an oppressed nation, a Madhesi. This was possible because of Maoist policies and politics. Again, it is interesting point that the CPN UML and the CPN Masal, so-called leftist parties, lined-up with the Congress. It is an expression of the political degeneration of these parties to the level of parliamentary cretinism. Nevertheless, this is a potent example of how class polarisation is manifested at this critical juncture of history. Although they are different by name, the NC, UML, Masal and MJF are feudal and bureaucratic capitalists. They stand against the Maoist because it has been historically impossible to write one constitution that is suitable for two classes.

The people will understand it is not correct for the Maoist to join a government if nothing can be done to serve the people. The Maoist should form a united front with revolutionary, progressive and patriotic forces against the reactionaries, opportunists, and the forces of the status quo that want to drag Nepal backwards.

Does federalism eradicate discrimination?



■ Pampha Bhusal

Despite the fact that Nepal is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of 1991, there is still major discrimination against women. In the recent past, women were discriminated against in acquiring citizenship, in property rights, in access to education, employment, healthcare, reproductive health rights, marriage and other similar areas.

The right to citizenship was based on the citizenship of the father. For anyone who wanted to be a citizen of Nepal, it was the father and not the mother who had to be a Nepali citizen at the time of birth. Therefore, there was discrimination against the mother. Furthermore, there is also the trafficking of women, sexual abuse, discrimination toward women regarding access to healthcare and reproductive rights, access and right to education, access and right to employment, and in marriage and family life.

Discrimination is a serious and gross violation of human rights, and it is the root cause of injustice. If injustice is not addressed by legal and peaceful means, then it follows that the oppressed people will revolt. The decade long People's War (PW), launched by Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), was an example for the oppressed who had suffered too much injustice. The PW was not simply a class struggle in the terms of classical Marxism, but also a struggle against all forms of discrimination and injustice whether based on gender, regional, national and cultural discrimination. The Peoples War began as a struggle for equality and justice for all the people, regardless of their gender, nationality, region, culture and religion.

During the People's War, 40% of the combatants were female in the People's Liberation Army (PLA). During the war, many young females were attracted and joined the PLA. This was because the combatants, including the female combatants, were politically and ideologically involved at every level. The PLA, under the command of the party, fully recognized the essential role of females in society.

We take pride in belonging to a revolutionary Party that has freed Nepal from nearly two and a half century old feudal monarchy. During the period of armed struggle, we could meet hundreds of thousands of mothers and sisters living in appalling conditions everywhere in the country. We could hear, see and feel all of them. Many times, we were touched by their distressing and appalling way of life. Their distressed faces animated us to fight against the feudalistic regime led by the monarchy. Therefore, the People's War made women conscious of their situation, and helped them to organize and rebel. Women played a vital role not only in People's Liberation Army, but also in the organization, production, communication, and supply in the New People's Government that was exercised in 80% of the country. The participation of women's in the People's War ensured its success, and created an objective background for the Joint People's Movement against the monarchy.

The monarchy was defeated by the movement built on the foundation of the decade long People's War. After, the new constitutional process began and the new, more progressive and democratic interim constitution was created. After the dissemination of the Interim Constitution in 2007, the status of women in political life has substantially improved. Out of the 73 seats in the Interim Legislative-Parliament, which has a 33% constitutional provision for women, about 40% of the female members represented the CPN (Maoist).

During the peace process and the post conflict management, the government has become more sensitive towards gender, and

laws have been passed to eliminate all discrimination against women, including discrimination in the right to property. A resolution has been adopted to ensure at least 33% of the public offices are reserved for women. The Citizenship Act has been improved so that a child may acquire Nepali citizenship through the mother. The Interim Constitution of 2007 provides a parallel system of electoral process under which 240 seats are elected by First-Past-the-Post System (FPTP) and 335 seats are elected under the proportional representative system (PR). Out of a total of the elected members, at least 33 percent are reserved for female candidates. At present in the Constituent Assembly, out of 601 elected representatives, 191 deputies are females, which is the highest female representation of any legislative body in South Asia. This has taken place because of the impact of the PW and the proportional representative system proposed by the CPN (Maoist). The CPN (Maoist) alone has 73 female deputies out of 220, in the 601 Constituent Assembly. 23 out of the 120 Maoist female candidates won First-Past-the-Post election from many different constituencies, often defeating veteran parliamentary candidates.

The empowerment of women is impossible without their representation in other public offices in addition to the political bodies. The Civil Service Act-1992, after the recent amendment, guarantees that 45% of the positions will be reserved for females, as well as various ethnic groups, Dalits, Madhesi and people from backward areas. Similarly, the Government of Nepal has made a decision under which the Nepal Police, the Nepal Armed Police, and the Nepal Army have to reserve places especially for women. Moreover, the Government of Nepal has also told public corporations to review their employee rules so that an appropriate number of places are allocated to female candidates.

After the election of the Constituent Assembly, from the first

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U.S. military bases, economic sanctions and blockades pose a threat to peace, stability and development on every continent, even where they have not yet inflicted the enormous level of brutality and devastation that major U.S. wars have in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

In Iraq over 1 million have died. More than five million are refugees. U.S. occupation has laid waste to the entire country.

In already impoverished Afghanistan, the U.S./NATO occupation has brought not progress and development but even greater destruction and chaos. NATO has expanded military strikes to Pakistan and militarized the entire region.

Mass opposition to these occupations must grow and grow stronger. But international attention is needed also to stem Washington's "silent" interventions, which inflict pain and promise chaos.

Foreign troops on a nation's soil force a surrender of sovereignty. Foreign bases mean constant intervention in a country's politics and policies, whether these are publicly acknowledged bases or the semi-secret "privatized" U.S. bases called Cooperative Security Locations depending on "contractors."

Fight against U.S. bases and sanctions!

The U.S. maintains an intrusive network of military bases in more than 70 countries. New Collective Security Locations are being established in up to 100 other countries.

Today there are U.S. bases and CSLs throughout South and Central Asia along with U.S./NATO bases in almost every country of Europe-east and west. U.S. military presence and influence in Colombia is the greatest threat to peace and stability in the Western Hemisphere.

Countries that have resisted the basing of foreign troops and bases on their soil, attempted to pursue independent development or resisted the policies imposed by the IMF and international finance capital are increasingly targeted with severe forms of sanctions, economic dislocation and political sabotage.

In a world based on unequal and globalized trade, the threat of U.S. sanctions and blockades is a sentence of underdevelopment and hunger. Sanctions create wrenching economic dislocation and spiraling inflation that strikes the harshest blow on the most defenseless, the poorest, the oldest and the youngest-bringing

hunger, malnutrition, sickness and death.

The ever more hostile U.S. blockade of Cuba has continued for 50 years. U.S. sanctions-an act of war-hit Syria, Iran, Sudan, Somalia, Zimbabwe, North Korea, Serbia, and Myanmar among others. Washington's sanctions are also used to bludgeon others into submission—for fear of suffering the same fate as these U.S. targets.

U.S. military aid and technical assistance creates dangerous influence and causes aggression. U.S. military aid to Israel has fueled 60 years of aggression and suppression against the Palestinian people and neighboring countries that was not otherwise possible. It must be ended.

Washington also demands that the UN Security Council approve international strangulation of targeted countries. Similar U.S. pressure is placed on other countries, on international trade organizations, banks and lending institutions to participate in the economic sabotage.

It is past time to expose these policies before world opinion and mobilize the peoples of the world to combat these attacks on the

sovereignty of nations. This task is an urgent responsibility of the progressive movement world-wide.

Already, mass opposition to existing U.S. bases and the building of new bases and basing agreements is growing from Poland, the Czech Republic, to Philippines and Ecuador. Each of these separate movements deserves international support and solidarity.

All U.S. military presence must be removed from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and from the former Soviet Republics in Central Asia. The escalating threats of attack on Iran must end.

Each battle against sanctions deserves the same support. International solidarity is the best weapon against sanctions-enforced isolation.

Do you want to strengthen the international movement for peace, justice and solidarity? Do you want to help countries defend their sovereignty? Then take the first step.

Join the fight against U.S. bases and sanctions!

This is an appeal of the International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee. Ramsey Clark, President (Former Attorney General, USA) and Manik Mukherjee, General Secretary (Vice-President, All India Anti-imperialist Forum) issued this appeal on July 13.

Slogan of consensus! Practice of conflict!



■ Dharmendra Bastola

Never before in Nepal has there ever been a political action so opportunist as the action of the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of Nepal Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML). The actions of these parliamentary parties towards the election of the President provide the clearest evidence of how the bourgeoisie behave; if the interests of the bourgeoisie are in jeopardy, all their principles and democratic slogans go out of the window. The Nepali Congress, Social Democrat by principal and a feudal autocrat by practice, has been harping on about consensus. But it is this party that is driving Nepalese politics towards conflict. Thus, a general tendency of this Party has been to use consensus as a slogan while creating political conflict. The UML, a social-fascist party; socialist in word and fascist in deed, is tailing the NC.

Both the Congress and the UML have looked for consensus, but consensus for what? Is it the consensus to take Nepalese society progressively forward or to drag the nation back towards semi-feudalism and keep it in semi-colonial chains? Is it the consensus to eliminate feudal and bureaucrat capitalist production relations or to maintain the present outdated reactionary bourgeoisie dictatorship? The Nepali Congress and the

UML are not standing for revolutionary change; they stand to preserve the old reactionary state system. These parties are not looking for consensus; they are not looking towards a People's Republic; but for a dictatorship under the bourgeoisie.

Any consensus without clear destination or aim – the aim to abolish old production relations; to aim to establish a People's Republic; the aim to restructure and revolutionise political, economic and social relations and to build new Nepal; all these are futile, hollow and senseless chatter. This kind of consensus, which is against revolution, is against change and against building a new Nepal, has been the primary goal of the parliamentary parties. This tendency has been observable for a long time, and now it has come to the clear light of day in the election of the president.

Take the example of the seven-point demands on which the Congress had looked for consensus. These seven point demands can be summarised into three main areas. 1) the focus on keeping the Nepali army separate from the interests of the masses; 2), to prevent the Nepalese economy being restructured; 3) to prevent Nepalese society being established into national and regional autonomous republics. The Nepali congress wanted to build up consensus against the change demanded by the aspirations of the people, and to keep things in favour of status quo; to completely disarm the people of political rights and national sovereignty.

Only after having fulfilled these demands - these seven-point demands - would the Ne-

pali Congress be prepared to allow the Maoist to form a government. That is to say; they are calling for the surrender of the Nepalese people, they are calling for the destruction of the popular aspirations, and challenging the very basis of Nepalese sovereignty and national integrity. This is to strengthen the feudal autocrats and comprador bureaucrat capitalists, as well as serving the interest of the foreign powers. This kind of consensus has been rejected by the masses of Nepal. Needless to say, had the Maoist capitulated to those seven-point demands put forward by the Congress and the UML, perhaps, no objections would have been raised neither by the parliamentary parties, nor by any quarters of dominating powers. Let alone to seizing opportunity to form coalition government having compromised on few portfolios. No revolutionary party can compromise on principal, fall into the pit of bourgeoisie liberalism where ideological political values and destinations are capitulated for post and chairs.

What should be the consensus for? It is needed to abolish feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and to establish a new society. Most of the leaders of the parliamentary parties proposed that a government should be formed with consensus among the parties in the Constituent Assembly, so that the constitution can be written; the government will operate on the basis of the consensus. To do this, the parliamentary parties, especially the Nepali Congress and the UML, had proposed either GP Koirala of the NC or MK Nepal of the UML. Even inside their respective

parties, both of these leaders are regarded outdated, corrupt and lacking in any kind of new thought or ideas. Their tendency of national capitulationism and subservience to the monarchy came to the clear light of day during the period of the peace process. There could be no compromise; these corrupt old leaders could not be President of New Nepal.

The nation is in a period of political transition; a transition between the future revolutionary society and the backwards reactionary society; a struggle where the progressives trying to push the country into the future, and the reactionary establishment trying to drag the nation back to the past. Only by overthrowing these imperialist stooges can Nepal breathe freely.

Further, the filthy opportunism of these parties can be seen in their words and actions. When we proposed an inclusive candidacy for the posts of President and Prime Minister, the NC and the UML stuck to the names of GP Koirala and MK Nepal. But, as our party did not compromise, they proposed a Madhesi leader as presidential candidate. If UML was open to changing a candidate, there could be a coalition of majority. The opportunist UML, dancing to the tune of the NC, has thrown any hope of coalition with the Maoists into the dustbin.

The polarisation of political forces is not surprising. The equation that has developed shows that almost all of the parliamentary parties have not changed their pro establishment status quo political character despite a long struggle against the monarchy. These political developments must be

judged by class character. First of all, since at the very inception of the 12-point agreement with the parliamentary parties, there was room for alignment between the king and the parliamentary parties, this possibility was closed in the course of struggle. Imagine for a moment: What would have happened if an alignment between the king and the parliamentary parties had developed and our party was isolated then? Certainly, either the King would have written the constitution or the parliamentary parties. It would have been impossible for both to write a constitution with a consensus, although are from the same class; the feudal and comprador capitalist class. Thanks to the alignment between the parliamentary parties and the Maoist, the monarchy has been abolished, and the election for a president has been held. However, now, the crucial task is to write a constitution for the new Nepal. But can the Maoist and the feudal and comprador capitalist class write a constitution together? No, it is impossible. Either the parliamentary parties have to write the constitution or the Maoist has to write the constitution. In this context, the polarisation between feudal autocrats on one side and revolutionary, patriotic and democratic forces on the other was always predictable. This is what has happened on the eve of the election of the President.

Now the best way is to see; will the bourgeoisie write a constitution for the proletariat! Of course, this is impossible. The people must make a proper judgement on these outdated bourgeois leaders, and write their constitution for their new Nepal.

■ Laxman Pant

What does the word 'sovereignty' mean? It means 'the complete right to govern the country'. However, in the context of Nepal, it has a different meaning. It has been stated not only in the interim constitution but also in the previous constitutions that Nepal is a sovereign state. In formal and informal speeches or statements of previous Nepali government officials and leaders, it is repeated endlessly that Nepal is an independent and sovereign nation; that Nepal was never colonized by any Western European nation. These statements are correct in theory, but if we look at the practical life of the nation and its citizens, it is clear that 'sovereignty' is just empty rhetoric. The bitter truth is that the more feudal rulers harped on and on about 'sovereignty' and nationality, the weaker these things became. Similarly, during the three decades of the panchayat era and the decade and a half of the parliamentary democratic era, the two inter-related issues of nationality and sovereignty was weakened.

In Nepalese history, the heroic *Nalapani* battle stands as a testimony to the sensitive nature of the question of nationality among the people. One can say that democracy is a relative concept in comparison to nationality which is, in a sense, absolute. In other words, we cannot guarantee the same level of democracy to the former Nepali royal family as

On sovereignty

should be guaranteed to a common citizen, but at the same time if some Nepali prince or King is ill treated by a foreigner for being Nepali; it is a question of identity and dignity. Through the Constituent Assembly election, the Nepali people have deposed of the monarchy and brought an end to the Koirala dynasty, and dumped MK Nepal. The message is clear. It is not only that Koirala and MK Nepal were dislodged because they suppressed the democratic aspirations of the Nepali people, but also that they submitted before the rulers of Delhi. The present mandate indicates that the people of Nepal desperately want a break from the long tradition of submission of their sovereignty to the Indian rulers. The people want to reclaim their lost sovereignty. It is needless to mention here that neither feudalism nor the parties supporting feudalism are capable to defend the sovereignty of the nation, and only a revolutionary ideology can defend nationality and sovereignty of the nation.

Is it possible for a small and economically weak country like Nepal to defend its sovereignty and nationality when it is solely dependent on its big and powerful neighbour? Absolutely not. How can a country where the tradition of Gorkha recruitment still exists-the recruitment of Nepali mercenaries to fight

in the British and Indian Armies-claim to be a sovereign state? With an open and unregulated border, Nepal can never claim to be a sovereign nation. Dependency and sovereignty are opposed to each other. The fact that Nepal is not sovereign but completely dependent on India is clear especially if one looks at small and commonplace things. It is a common thing to see vehicles with Indian registration everywhere from Kathmandu to the remote mountainous regions of Gulmi. Except for a few Nepali petroleum tankers plying on the borders between India and Nepal, I have never seen a single vehicle with Nepali registration on the Indian roads in my three decades of living and travelling across different regions of India! The television channels of Kathmandu broadcast just a few Nepali channels compared with the amount of Indian channels. In the Indian cities like Delhi and Mumbai, home to tens of thousands of Nepali workers, a Nepali television channel is unthinkable. Similarly, in the news kiosks of Indian cities like Delhi and Mumbai, it is impossible to find Nepali newspapers published from Kathmandu, whereas one has easy access to many Indian English and Hindi newspapers on the streets of Kathmandu. This issue has been raised by the Nepali side to the Indian authorities, but

the bitter truth is that bundles of newspapers were sent back from Delhi to Nepal after Indian customs officials refused distribution.

Sovereignty cannot be safeguarded by speeches or newspaper columns, or thick volumes of books. Unless the country is self-reliant economically, the sovereignty of the country will mean nothing. Economy is the basic foundation on which rests the superstructure of politics and of state including education, art, literature and religion etc. This is a fundamental teaching of Marxism. Until Nepali citizens cease to work as domestic helpers in the metro-cities of Delhi and Mumbai, as menial labourers in Dubai and West Asia, there will be no change in the outlook or behaviour of foreign countries towards Nepal. Consequently, the sovereignty of Nepal is compromised.

Interestingly, some representatives in the parliamentary parties, on behalf of foreign masters, oppose the proposal of the CPN (Maoist) for abrogation of the treaty of 1950, and drawing up a new treaty with India on a different basis. It is not hard to understand the real motives behind their logic; that there is no guarantee that Nepal will benefit from a new treaty, as India can impose a more harmful treaty on Nepal if the old treaty is scrapped.

Everyone knows that the scarcity of food grains and other essential commodities in Nepal is, by and large, due to the open border and flourishing illegal trade across the border. This leads to hoarding and profit making through the creation of artificial scarcity. The Indian establishment and media tirelessly proclaim that Nepal is gaining more than India by the treaty of 1950, as millions of Nepalis are employed in India. This is a gross distortion. It is also repeated that India and Nepal share a special unique relation. Firstly, there is nothing that is 'special' or 'unique' in the relations between two sovereign nations in the present day world. The relations between two countries are always governed by politics and political realities of the times, and at the same time influenced by economic necessities based on panchasheel i.e. mutual benefit and cooperation. These necessities are not governed by religion, culture, language, or geography, nor are they based on sentiments. The new Nepali leaders must see that politics, not sentiments or any the other concern, are the foundations of the new Nepal.

Secondly, it is necessary to regulate the open border by introducing a passport-system, because an open border between a powerful and an economically weak nation is an obstacle to the sovereignty of the smaller country. Take the case of Bangladesh, Pakistan and even

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People's War and its effect in Art and Literature



■ Ishwor Chandra Gyanwali

The aim of the People's War (PW) was to establish the People's Republic of Nepal, and to end all kinds of discrimination by ending the 240 year old feudal monarchist system. Because of the objective was to abolish the differences and discrimination in Nepalese society, the class, caste, gender, region, dalits, indigenous, marginalised and the minorities actively involved themselves in the PW. These people took part in different aspects of the revolution in order to free themselves from semi-colonial and semi-feudal repression and exploitation.

After the initiation of the people's war, young people actively took part in the art and literature programs initiated by the CPN-Maoist under the banner of the Cultural troops. The People's War was a great process of liberation as it was necessary condition to create a new culture through the process of PW by uprooting the old and decaying in every sector of the society. Therefore, the cultural sector was one of the essential parts of the revolution. The

military war was cultural and the cultural war was the military war. The cultural transformation was impossible without armed struggle and armed struggle would not have succeeded without cultural transformation. The cultural struggle became an essential part of the class struggle.

The cultural troop proclaimed that political change has no meaning without the changes in the old culture, tradition, ideas, manner, character and vices of the individual and in the society that had prevailed for many years. This is why a big cultural military formation was formed during the PW period. It developed a new aesthetic that uplifted the aesthetic value of the PW, which we call the aesthetic thought of Prachanda Path.

Because the people's war was a total war, it was against revisionism, feudalism, expansionism and imperialism. It struggled for an independence and self respect against global imperialism. Because of the flag of proletarian consciousness, it was a continuation of the revolution and Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The armed struggle was a step towards socialism and communism towards a new People's Republic of Nepal. Therefore, it was the fusion of gun, pen and 'Maadal' (a Nepali traditional musical instrument). The ceaseless revolution is the

continuous celebration of the people.

We adopted the People's War in the sense of weeping while laughing and laughing while weeping. This brought a change in the aesthetic ideas about martyrdom and encouraged people to take pride on martyrdom. In this way, the process of connecting 'Maadal' and pen with the gun served the PW; it means the people are the nation. The cultural movement has played an important role in the PW. The sacrifice of 175 literary activists including the renowned Krishna Sen 'Ichchhuk', Chyangwa Lama, Masta Bista, Chunu Gurung, Sharada Shresta and others justify it.

The historical participation of youth in the sector of art and literature extended cultural organisations all over the country and even among the many Nepalese working outside of Nepal.

Thousands of youth joined the front and the formation of platoon, company and battalions were made. They sometimes, joined to sentry and ambush and some times worked as volunteers and the carrier of logistics and news. It spread the consciousness in remote villages and circulated ideology. It awakened those who were slept. Gave ideas to awakens, made walk conscious people and they gave energy to therefore sacrifice and build the culture of martyrdom. Because the art and literature is softer, simple and more beautiful

than the political speech; it awakened the poor, laborers and the people at the grass roots. These laborious people awakened and made themselves conscious with the first light campaign of art and literature. In the course of awakening people, the reactionary government made the plot of collective massacre, and comedown to brutal murder. Such inhumane massacres happened in Aneko of Kavre, Bhawang of Rolpa, Dagala of Achcham, Mudvara and Binayak of Doti.

These fronts of the war inspired to change tears to wrath then terror and fear. It instructed us to change blood into energy and pain into revenge. The exploitation, repression, differences and discriminations came out through art and literature during the war period and inspired and encouraged the people to become involved in the PW. Therefore, the art and literature in war period became the art and literature of peasants, laborers, workers, women, dalits, indigenous nationalities, servants and those people who oppressed by the state.

The cultural armies reached the dumb, the deaf and the disabled of the country and allowed them to hear, speak and walk. All the folk songs became revolutionary folk songs. People began to think. This was the immortal contribution of revolutionary art and literature; writers started

lecturing about revolutionary topics instead of giving lectures in campuses and universities.

Writers and cultural troops knocked on the doors of people who were previously inaccessible to literature with the flames of consciousness. This roused the work of writing. Consequently, fighters wrote reminiscences and experiences of the war with a gun in one hand and pen in another. They created many songs, poems, stories, memoirs, novels, dramas and articles from the battle ground. Many albums of songs, CDs, videos and documentaries have been made.

The literature of people's war is scattered in villages. The ideology spread through art and literature and made people revolt against the old and feudalistic social values. Along with the realization of literature and fighting for freedom, the regional (Veri-Karnali, Seti-Mahakali), gender, Madhesh, Dalit, indigenous nationalities and marginalised groups came to the forefront of politics after hundreds of years. This played an important role in ending the monarchy and establishing the Federal Democratic Republic. It has helped to transfer the society from traditional one to a new one.

(Gyanwali in one of the prominent progressive literary figures of Nepal. He is currently chairman of All Nepal people's cultural Federation and Nepal film Development Board)

Zimbabwe's crisis : legacy of colonialism and imperialism

The recent propaganda in western media describes Zimbabwe as a failed state ruled by a dangerous dictator. Accordingly, the source of all ills that are plaguing the country is said to be this tyrannical ruler and his one party rule. So, putting an end to the current regime, and imposing a Western-style democracy, is a highly important agenda for the liberation of Zimbabweans. Besides, in order to achieve these noblest of aims of western powers, an intervention on humanitarian grounds is demanded. As a first step, the west has proposed sever sanctions on Zimbabwe in the line of what we saw in Iraq before the infamous America's intervention to liberate Iraq's people from her rulers.

Most readers will know that it was white settlers who, in the 1890s, occupied the country that were to call Southern Rhodesia. Soon they laid foundations of the racially skewed land ownership that remains at the heart of its turbulent politics. In 1923, Southern Rhodesia was annexed to the British crown; its African inhabitants thereby became British subjects, and the colony received its basic constitution.

After the onset of self-govern-

ment in 1923, the major issue in Southern Rhodesia was the relationship between the European settlers and the African population. And, in 1930, Southern Rhodesia adopted a land apportionment act imposing that about half the total land area, including all the mining and industrial regions and all the areas served by railroads or roads, was reserved for Europeans. Most of the rest was designated as Tribal Trust Land, native purchase land, or unassigned land. Later acts firmly entrenched the policy of dividing land on a racial basis.

Similarly, measures were taken in political sphere to guarantee white settlers dominance. Property and education qualifications for voting were put in place. Although slightly modified over the years, they ensured a situation up to 1979 in which whites had 95% of the votes in national elections, while they were never more than 5% of the population.

During the mid-1950s, as the world was overflowing with national liberation movements, a Black Nationalist movement emerged in Rhodesia. The Zim-

babwe African National Union (ZANU) - closer to people's China-and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU)-closer to soviet Russia-both espoused an increasingly militant nationalism. ZANU came to be led by Robert Mugabe and drew on a largely Shona speaking majority, while Joshua Nkomo led ZAPU, supported primarily by the Sindebele speaking minority.

Problems in Rhodesia deepened after this, largely as a result of regional and international political pressure, African nationalist demands, and African guerrilla activities. Members of African nationalist groups were increasingly subjected to persecution and arrest. Nevertheless, guerrilla activity continued. Meanwhile, the British government had begun new consultations on the conflict. Negotiations that began at Lancaster House, in England, resulted in an agreement, on a new, democratic constitution, democratic elections, and independence. Following elections held in February, Robert Mugabe became the first prime minister and formed a coalition government that included

Joshua Nkomo. The independent nation of Zimbabwe was proclaimed on 18 April 1980.

When Zimbabwe gained independence, 46.5% of the country's arable land was still owned by around 6,000 commercial farmers. Mugabe accepted a "willing buyer, willing seller" plan as part of the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979, among other concessions to the white minority. As part of this agreement, land redistribution was blocked for a period of 10 years.

The Thatcher government had begun to deal with the land issue, as did her successor, John Major. But when Tony Blair took over in 1997, they simply dropped doing anything about it. Consider the implications of the long struggle; the nationalists, who had the repossession of land as a key objective of their struggle, were now being told by the British government that they were not going to go ahead with it. The Zimbabwean government waited patiently for more than 10 years, but the British government defaulted. And the Zimbabweans were left with no choice but to occupy the lands

that were usurped from them and therefore, rightly belong to them. Indeed, in the larger context of Africa it is a birth right to have land inherited from parents. This explains why local people love him and those conditioned by western training demonize him.

Of course, there are some things which President Mugabe and his colleagues have done are totally wrong - as the police beating of Morgan Tsvangirai. Mugabe minus his shortfalls, corruption and beating opposition members is still a true African hero. This is why very few African leaders are willing to raise a finger against him, and can also explain why the sensible ones have kept mum. He is a true Pan-Africanist, and a dedicated anti-imperialist who stands strong against forces of Western imperialism in Africa. This is why the West hates him and wants to see him out of power. Zimbabwe's sovereignty is in danger! There is a neo-imperialist project in the guise of humanitarian intervention in Zimbabwe; to introduce western style democracy and put a puppet regime that will cater to the needs of western powers.

Belated budget: can it be pro people?



■ Deependra Bahadur Kshetry

The usual date of budget speech regrettably slipped away. If this is taken as a token of change, it does not augur well. However, taking things positively it should be considered that people have become sovereign dismantling the almost two and half century old autocratic and family rule in Nepal. Politically, the shackles of monarchy are destroyed yet the proper shape is still in the making to ensure a just and economically vibrant country. People from all quarters of the community are eagerly waiting for the coming budget which is prepared in a political setting of federal democratic republic.

Political transition is taking painfully a long time. Skirmishes of this type has led to a situation that the ruling clique intends to obstruct changes in economic management in the footing of political changes which have heightened aspirations of different strata of people. Mild undercurrent struggle is in the offing between the advocates of status-quo and those wanting to embrace changes in order to restructure the economy making possible to catch up with the neighbouring countries. Thus the making of budget for the F/Y 2008/09 is progressing parallelly in two different quarters. The outgoing force, if the government has to be changed as per people's verdict, intends to make readout by the incoming authority the text prepared by it. While the incoming authority, by virtue of the philosophy it adheres, aspires to bring changes to accommodate the feelings of the populace. With the elongation of time to form the government, the old regime believes to achieve its goal of continuation of policies that have been in vogue for long. But the new force taking berth intends to introduce policies

that are amenable to the populace, the force of change.

Economic growth for the current fiscal year is projected to be around 5.6 percent contributed mainly by agriculture sector. Paddy production recorded hopping eighteen percent accompanied by other allied sectors such as fruits and vegetables. Favorable monsoon rather than human endeavour is believed to have contributed to such an achievement. Price rise still not at double digit, unlike in neighbouring India where more than sixty percent of Nepal's trade transaction takes place and naturally part of the inflation being imported. Foreign reserve remains at comfortable level allowing upto eight and half months level of imports of goods and services, mainly supported by remittance. Revenue growth towards the last quarter of the fiscal is recorded twenty four percent compared to last fiscal demonstrating thereby a position of achieving the goal. However, budget deficit is clearly marked viewed from the standpoint of excessive growth of recurrent expenditure in comparison to capital expenditure which is also claimed to have improved over the previous year. Macroeconomic fundamentals are boasted to have stabilised thereby emanating the signal of favourable climate for investment in the economy. Still around the corner comments are made about capital flight signaling the reaction of political change. Reality is that regulations at all fronts are so weak that apparent defiance of legal provisions even are either tolerated or passed unnoticed.

Against the above background budget is appear and the aspirations of the people also honoured. What else would be the expectations of the people of different strata of community to be addressed by the government? Honesty on the part of the decision makers and diligence of the bureaucrats in implementing policies would be on high priority. Good governance responding administration and fair dealing by the government machineries are some of administrative measures that the new government has to ensure. No direct relation-

ship of their government services seems to have established with the budgetary provisions but the aesthetic value attached within it has far reaching importance than the budgetary outlay. Allocation of resources to meet the basic needs such as drinking water, minor irrigation projects, school buildings and primary health care arrangements might be the areas with high priority. Besides, the regimented administration that promoted partisan rather than dispensing impartial treatment in the past requires rectification. Justice be dispensed on the section of people who are hitherto been discriminated by the state machinery be on relief providing or administering justice.

Unemployment problem among youth is the agenda to be listened to among all stakeholders. Skyrocketing market price either due to oil price hike or lack of overseeing mechanism of the State people seem to be waiting for respites.

Constraints confronting the shaping of the budget are among others political skirmish surfaced not due to philosophical issues but that purely administrative one. Formation of the government, portfolio distribution and electing the head of the state are extraneous factors that affect the shape, size and thrust of the political force responsible for tabling the budget. Since, budget is the document that entails not only the fiscal policy, outlays of the government expenditure, but also philosophy under which the protagonist wishes to lead the economy. Present structure of the constituent assembly and spirit to run the government is such that no particular economic philosophy finds predominance. Would this circumstance allow to accommodate the aspirations of the sovereign Nepalese people especially in the context of entirely changed political climate. Expectations of the downtrodden people, marginalized section of the population especially the landless, *kamaiyas* and conflict affected ones are the core issues to be dealt. Feeling that almost every need of the community should be tackled by the state provides unlimited

liability. Resources always stand main constraints in the developing world therefore deficit budget becomes the permanent feature of such nations.

Assessment of existing available resources and potentiality to add up gives coverage to expand the size of the budget. Revenue growth is at the right direction and further it could be improved by almost fifty percent with meticulous administrative reform measures including strengthening security measures in designated custom points. Similarly arrears due to government could also be recovered so as to keep the accounting system clean. Tapping or regularities in the system should also provide cushion to strengthen budgetary operation properly. Next important source to meet deficit is the foreign source including bilateral and multilateral agencies. Incidentally, donor agencies are learnt to have adopted the policy of providing grant rather than loans to Nepal. Usually the capital expenditure part is borne out of foreign source in the budget. Being at post conflict situations, huge need for reconstruction and rehabilitation of Nepal is beyond domestic financial resources. The overtures shown by the donors to support the peace process and award peace dividend to Nepalese people is encouraging provided the promises are translated into practice? Under this source resources sufficient to meet capital expenditure could be available in the form of grant and loan. Revenue target would be at modest growth and to quantify the amount it comes around the amount of fifty percent growth over what have been targeted to realize in this fiscal year. Still the resources required to meet the current expenditure, capital expenditure and debt redemption will require domestic borrowing not exceeding the agreed limit.

The budget, in order to break the past trend and at least indicate the direction towards which socio-economic changes have been envisioned, needs to address at least the minimum socio-economic requirements in rural areas. No high aspirations involving huge

amounts are ventilated by rural people except drinking water, minor irrigation projects, and micro-hydro electricity, education, health requirements. Employment opportunities are sought by almost all strata of people for which projects mobilizing labour force needs to be devised. Taming wild rivers by constructing embankments, land could be obtained to distribute among landless and squatters. Emphasis will be on to increase production out of the investment even at the short run. To provide employment opportunities labour intensive technique will be followed so that employment in rural areas is ensured at least for some time. Each VDC should be guaranteed to rural folks. Employment opportunities should be created in rural areas by encouraging them to be involved in the projects whichever are possible to implement. Women, marginalized section of the population will get positive discrimination so that their socio-economic status could be main streamed. To materialize the above requirements change in the traditional mind-set and the inherited behavior will not be sufficient but it requires relatively large size of the budget outlay.

By virtue of being its first budget submission after the state is declared federal democratic republic, the aspirations of the population naturally looks great. To meet the need, resources require to be analyzed and elicited. Reliance on external source alone is not congenial to create an independent economy to which every Nepali could boast. The mentality of delaying the formation of the government and eventually the budget preparation should be questioned. Break away from traditional path to create new ideas to demonstrate new, totally changed context needs to be monitors. Only when the state can employ the youth in bulk and encourage to work making source of income, at that time federal republic Nepali is on board to get help.

(Kshetry is a member of National Planning Commission).

On sovereignty

Bhutan. It is interesting that Pakistan (and Bangladesh too) was a part of un-divided Indian subcontinent till 1947. Immediately after the division of power in 1947, a passport system was introduced between India and Pakistan. Bangladesh and Pakistan share a far longer border with India than Nepal. The size of Muslim population living both across Indian and Pakistan borders, or the size of Bengali population living across Indian and Bangladesh borders, is far greater than the size of the Nepali and Indian population living across the borders. This is common in many other countries in the world that share the same religion, culture and language.

An end to economic subjugation is the basic condition and prerequisite for sovereignty. In our country, the political revolution is nearing completion. Whether the political revolution would be sustainable and institutionalized is dependent on whether Nepal can be self reliant and powerful in the economic sphere. This will be a decisive factor in the long term for safeguarding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country. The importance of an economic revolution as put forward by the CPN (Maoist) emphasises this decisive truth.

Federalism

meeting of the CA, we have successfully established the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal by abolishing the monarchy. It is a historical victory for the Nepalese People, a victory that will end the remnants of feudalism that exist in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. It will ensure the liberty and the equality of the laboring people, repressed caste, nationality, region and gender. The end of the patriarchal feudalistic monarchy and the establishment of Federal Republic have made the women happier than others. The end of the Feudalistic Patriarchal monarchy from the state has provided the equal status to women by ending the patriarchal legacy of the King and Prince there after in family, society and political parties.

So far as the emancipation of women is concerned, it is possible only after the liberation of working class. The liberation from all types of exploitation and repression is directly related to the liberation of working class. Therefore, federalism will help us to bring about major reforms by lessening discrimination and exploitation.

Bhusal is a central committee member of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

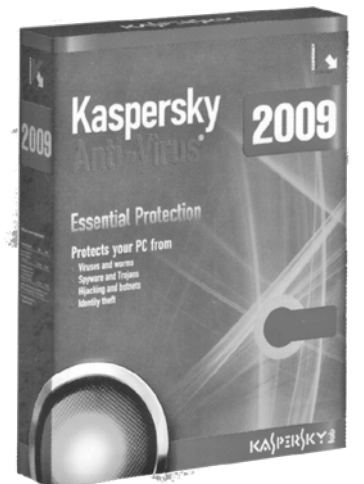
Kaspersky's newer version in Nepal

Kathmandu/Kaspersky, a leading developer of secure content management solution based in Moscow, Russia launched its latest version in Nepal on July 11th; antivirus 2009 and internet security 2009.

Kaspersky claims that the new antivirus engine has improved scanning speeds and HIPS technology and is able to block new malicious programs. Sagar International Techno Sys Pvt. Ltd is the authorised distributor in Nepal. Sagar International hopes to sell 50 thousand copies within a year in Nepal. The antivirus pack is Rs. 899 and internet security is Rs. 999.

Kaspersky states that the 'new security and browser setting feature scan the operating system and applications for

vulnerabilities, and provide options to enhance system security and significantly reduce the likelihood of a malicious program penetrating the computer'. Kaspersky has 200 million users worldwide.



Mao still lives amongst the Chinese

Govinda Acharya
(After returning from China)

32 years have passed since Mao-tse-tung died, but for the Chinese people he lives their memories. The Chinese people

local farmers greeted us and took us to the local Communist party office. We discussed with the party representatives, including the Chatang community Chair Nima.

After the discussion, we

a well-made house and enough food to eat. Every house has TV, a computer, a fridge, a washing machine, a car or motorcycle, and telephone etc. All of them had mobile phones. They had modern tools for farming and vehicles to transport milk and vegetables to the market. The farmers even had part time jobs in the town and city. The children went to a good school and there were education faculties for the elderly.

We asked some older members of the community what it was like 10 years ago. They said: "It's hard to compare the present situation with the situation we had 10 years ago. We didn't even have enough food to eat, no electricity, no school. We lived in very miserable conditions." The farmers of the Chatang community could not have imagined that their life would change in a short span of time.

In the community, we saw big portraits of Mao Zedong, the first leader of the Peoples Republic of China, in their common rooms. We wanted to know what they thought about Mao. We asked Nima why the people hang his portrait in their houses. He told us that Chairman Mao was one of the greatest leaders of the world.

"He was our liberator. Had Mao not been born in China, then there would have been no communist state established in China. Because Mao accomplished the revolution, modern

China was established and life of poor farmers like us changed a lot." Nima also added that Deng Xiaoping continued the transformation after Mao's death.

Nima also told us about the management system of the community. He said that eight sub-committees are formed to manage the community; the community party unit, the village association, the women wing, the youth league, the defence committee, the volunteer committee and the environmental protection committee. The representatives of the Communist party unit, women's wing, youth and village associations are elected among the members of the community, whereas the

remaining are nominated by the elected committee. Women's participation is more or less equal to the men.

The government of China allocates a certain budget to the community office. Education, health, and drinking water are guaranteed fundamental rights, and the responsibility of the government. Nima told us that the Chinese government has guaranteed the people food and shelter. He said the community set-up changed their lives and brought big changes. He thinks that the future of Chinese people is bright because of the pro-people policies of Communist Party of China.



The Chatang community Chairman Nima (Left) informs Nepali journalists about the condition of the community.

honour Mao not only as a great liberator but also as maker of fortune for China and the Chinese people.

Last month, four Nepalese journalists including me went to a beautiful town in Linchi, in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The

learnt about a community set-up in a town where 52 families (of 206 people) had constructed a commune. Their lives drastically changed after the commune was set up. We visited the commune and saw nearly every house: Every family had



After the community set-up, within 10 years time Nima built his own house.



The Young Communist League (YCL), a sister organization of CPN (Maoist), has been a matter of discussion from the date of its re-activation. The YCL has carried out various types of activities such as tackling corruption and crime, managing traffic, managing garbage in Various cities, supervising drug addicts etc. But after the election of Constituent Assembly, it has changed its activities. The League is now focused on collective farming with modern techniques, handicrafts and handloom production etc. The above picture is one of the handicrafts produced by the YCL cadres of Kapan, Kathmandu.

Pampha Bhusal attends Oslo Forum

Norway, a European country near the North Pole, wants to help Nepal with finance and modern technology. At the Oslo Forum of 2008, held from June 24-26, a representative of the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs expressed these views to Pampha Bhusal, the Minister for Women, Children and Social Welfare.

Norway is a beautiful country with rich natural resources including the sea, the thick forests, as well as petroleum and gas resources. There is also fertile land in Norway, but the fertility is limited by the extreme cold of the far north.

Norway wants to expand its relationship with Nepal in trade and tourism, as well as increase diplomatic relations. Norway is interested in investing in hydropower

and the processing of rare herbs found in the Himalayas.

The government of Norway has a developed and detailed plan to use the natural resources available in its country. Because of its developed mode of production, animal farming and plot cultiva-

country. These resources are used in an intelligent way.

The Norwegians argue that their petroleum will finish in about 100 yrs; but the sea will remain forever. Fishing will help the Norwegians keep their standard of life. We can draw lessons



Minister Bhusal interacts with different participants of the forum including ex-president of Iran Mohammad Khatami.

tion are used all over the country to great benefit. Norway has concrete and practical plans that are suitable to the resources of the

from the experience of Norway in developing Nepal, and using the great natural resources in an intelligent and fruitful way.