

## Petty interest continues to prevail



### WM correspondent

The country's political market has again been rife with gossip about the change in government.

The hubbub to this effect triggered after a section of media reported the UCPN (Maoist) had asked Nepali

Congress (NC) president Girija Prasad Koirala to lead the new government.

Some NC leaders have also said that their party is ready to drive the new dispensation if the Maoists and the UML formally let them do so.

The Maoists are obviously longing

for the early collapse of the incumbent wobbly coalition.

In fact, they also proposed a new government led by them in the High Level Political Mechanism (HLPM).

But, the possibility of the formal rebels again ascending to the power

corridors is tenuous, to say the least.

Earlier, the NC central committee had said that it would snub every move aimed at dislodging the current UML-led government.

Now, there has been discourse within the NC about the probability of

the new government.

Some experts speculate that the latest gesture on the part of the NC might be their subterfuge to prevent the UML from practicing "monopoly" in fulfilling key constitutional posts.

The NC is accusing the UML of trying to act in a monopolistic manner to fulfill the key constitutional posts.

The current government has failed to make concrete progress towards scripting a new statute even though the time is running out for the same.

The day-to-day political squabbling for petty interest is dimming the prospect of the ongoing peace process reaching to its logical end in a timely fashion.

## Tibetan refugees adopting new subterfuge against China

### WM Correspondent

Nepal adopted stringent measures in some sensitive routes of Rasuwa district to bar the Tibetan refugees from reaching Tibet via the district.

However, the anti-Chinese Tibetans have started to use new routes to reach Tibet.

After the government maintained tight vigilance on two border points of the district adjoining Tibet-Nagthali and Bhalungkhola, the refugees are using only Sanjenkharka to fulfill their purpose.

According to reliable sources, they have also changed the route to reach Sanjenkharka.

The refugees are now using the western routes like Betrawati, Mailung and Diprangkharka to reach Sanjenkharka.

Earlier, they were using Tamjungkharka of the Gallang village development committee to reach Sanjenkharka via the Thamachet camp in the eastern side.

Their other two route to reach Nagthali and Bhalungkhola was the

Thuman VDC.

The traditional route to enter Tibet is the Rasuwagadhi-Timure route where Nepali security personnel are deployed now.

There is also the presence of Chinese security at the traditional border point as well on the other side of the border.

The Tibetans are relying on the new route to avoid presence of police and army in Dhunche.

While using the new route, they move from Betrawoti and cross the

Trishuli River. After that, they head towards Mailung and Diprangkharka to reach Sanjenkharka, the foothills of the Ganesh Himal.

Then, they go through Jageshworkunda and cross Bhotekoshi River to end up to the Thonsa village of Tibet.

In fact, the Tibetan refugees are not only changing their routes but also their tactics in dealing with the Nepali local people residing along the northern border points of the country.

[Cont. on page 6]

## Shield national interest

### WM Correspondent

The growing belligerence between the UCPN (Maoist) and New Delhi has prompted the former to warn the Indian company GMR to withdraw from the Upper Karnali hydropower project.

The project has been considered promising amidst the paralyzing hours of power outage the country is currently undergoing.

On the other hand, the Indians residing along the bordering areas

between Nepal and India had ventured into agitation saying that the UCPN (Maoist) defamed the Indian national flag during its protests against Indian expansionism.

Luckily, the people of the bordering region of the both countries later exchanged warmth via flowers.

It is the flagrant seizure of Nepali territories unleashed by the Indian establishment since long that has triggered the possibility of jeopardizing

[Cont. on page 6]

## Will economy gain energy?



### WM correspondent

The country's economy could keep itself afloat with the flow of remittance again increasing even though exports continue to plummet.

The remittance grew by 15.03

percent to Rs. 100.73 billion in the first six months of the current fiscal year against Rs. 87.56 billion recorded during the same period last year.

There were anxieties over the

state of the economy when the remittance, the main source of foreign exchange reserve, posted a much-lower-than-expected growth of 6.6 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year.

The latest rise in remittance however is not as high as 65.9 percent growth recorded in the first four months of the last fiscal year.

A tardy remittance growth, augmenting gold imports, and excessive lending especially in real estate and gold have been the major components behind the balance of payments deficit of Rs 20.49 billion.

Apart from rise in remittance, the stringent measures adopted by Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) to discourage lending to real estate and gold imports are also expected to ease the ongoing cash crunch in the banking system.

The country has imported gold worth Rs. 33 billion during the first six months of the current fiscal year although it was just worth Rs. 8.76 billion during the same period last year.

Now, the banks have stopped importing gold and subsequently the price of the yellow metal has increased by more than Rs 1000 in 10 gram.

The control in the breakneck rise of gold imports was, however, necessary to stop further slide foreign exchange reserve as well as to mitigate the ballooning deficit of BoP.

The central bank is optimistic about some indicators that show some improvement in the liquidity situation.

The repo rate (the rate of interest banks pay to NRB to get funds) declined to below 10 percent by the end of January against around 13 percent in the first week of January.

The discount rate (the interest rate that NRB pays to banks to get funds from them against treasury bills) has also mitigated lately.

In fact, the liquidity crunch has also prevented businesses from getting loans at low interest rate, thus eroding their competitiveness.

Banks and financial institutions have increased the interest rate on lending saying their cost of funds had magnified as they were paying a higher interest rate.

Bankers believe that the cash

crunch will not vanish so easily since the central bank has failed to inject promised amount of liquidity.

Lately, the central bank injected just Rs 5 billion citing a low repo rate on the part of banks although it promised to pump Rs 10 billion to ease the crisis.

It is also feared that the shortage of notes might trigger since the notes printed with the image of king cannot be used after mid-July 2010.

Lack of seriousness on the part of politicians, bureaucrats and bankers are responsible for the onset of the current crisis.

The recent symptoms of economic crisis should force them to realize that there should be a proper balance in exports and imports and the country should not always rely on remittance to fuel the imports, according to economic experts.

Similarly, the banks and financial institutions ought to act with acumen rather than with myopic speculations, they view.

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Editor : Prem Kumari Pant

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Prithvi Man Shrestha

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Printed at : Dhimle Printing Press, Dillibazar

Email: weeklymirror@ntc.net.np

weeklymirror@gmail.com

## Editorial

### Evolution of Maoists

The decision of the recent Maoist party's Standing Committee Meeting to focus on completing the peace and constitution drafting processes indicates that the top leadership of the party has developed propensity to practice open politics.

The meet endorsed the Baburam Bhattarai's line (in favour of the peace process) over that of Mohan Baidya 'Kiran', who advocated a "people's revolt".

The latest gesture on the part of the largest political party of the country, UCPN (Maoist), can safely be construed as its realization that significant gains will be achieved through peaceful politics.

The Maoists had been pretty engrossed in subterfuge and stratagem to weaken other political forces. However, they appear to have felt that setting clear political goals, communicating them clearly to the public and engaging directly with other political forces could prove far more effective to rule the roost.

The former rebels relied on the efficacy of conspiratorial politics when they were weaker than the other parties and their political line was effectively blurred in the public's eyes.

The party had spent for over a decade in an underground armed movement against the state. As such, there were major misgivings within the party structure that the party was compromising too excessively in the course of the peace process with the other political forces.

The "two-line struggle" between the so-called hardliners and the moderates of the party was the corollary of the general communist thinking that the parliamentary parties are the "enemy".

It goes without saying that the Maoists have expanded their organisational machinery and their contacts with sections of the population as well as broader social forces.

Similarly, the party's prudent second-generation leaders have begun to develop an aptitude for the subtle negotiations involved in the politics of open competition.

The party stalwarts must fathom the fact that their political goals can be best achieved by acting in tandem with aspirations and needs of general population.

Pertinently, the steps being taken by the Maoists to reaffirm the national independence and sovereignty should not subdue with any ulterior motive.

The evolution of the Maoist party as a nationalistic and pragmatic force will not only further consolidate them but also it will help the long imperiled nation.

# At last formation of HLPMP in Nepal

By Prakash Bom

The fundamental concern should have been whether the formation of High Level Political Mechanism would overrule the electoral proceedings of Constituent Assembly given the disposition of political leaderships and politics of main political parties. Nonetheless, if its authority overrides Parliament proceedings then it will obviously undermine the people's supremacy.

In last sixty years democratic practice Nepal has reprehensibly undermined the rights of elected representatives in Parliament without crucial democratic discourse whether under one-party or multi-party political systems. The elected representatives in the Parliament have not yet cultivated the culture of taking full responsibility of legislation.

Formation of the cabinet after the historic Constituent Assembly elections, for example, should have been from within the elected representatives of Constituent Assembly as per the people's aspiration for a new Nepal. But that did not happen because the first government cabinet under Maoist leadership appointed coalition members who were unelected.

As a result, the incumbent government under UML leadership now has been formed with the majority of cabinet members from unelected politicians who have been made leaders through nepotism and favoritism. Many among them are irresponsible and often need to be tabbed with their rash behavior against people's aspiration for peace and Democracy.

For instance, the defense minister Bidhya Devi Bhandari's statement against Maoist army integration, which challenged the decision of the Special Committee under the leadership of the Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal. As

per the defense minister, Defense Ministry and Nepal Army are not obliged to accept the decisions of Special Committee.

Besides the government, Nepal Army had to refrain itself from defense minister's statement. Nepal Army made it clear that it will accept Special Committee's decision on Maoist army integration provided their integration is based on individual combatant's qualification rather than on block or battalion basis integrations.

As per the statement, Nepal Army seems confident with its military institutions and professionalism that it can train and blend in no matter how politically indoctrinated Maoist combatants are. At this point, it should not be the headache of defense minister or any other political party leaders. Surely, HLPMP can play a constructive role in army integration provided UML led government maintain accountability and is capable to prevent those unelected cabinet members who blow it up out of proportion.

The unelected cabinet ministers like Bidhya Bhandari and Sujata Koirala have no accountability to people and nation. Particularly, Sujata Koirala is trying to develop a career in politics for power. It seems as if the most of unelected cabinet ministers like Sujata Koirala will try to become high ranking minister of the cabinet if not Prime Minister of Nepal even though they know that they have no self-integrity and are not competent.

As watchdog, HLPMP can monitor the political behavior of such cabinet members, who are unelected and have no sense of accountability to people and nation, if they speak out against

peace process out of proportion.

Therefore, unelected cabinet members by no means should be included in HLPMP. However, it is necessary to include Prime Minister in HLPMP representing cabinet because UML led cabinet lacks coordination due to out of proportion statements of ministers like Bidhya Bhandari's against army integration and Sujata Koirala's against federalism.

For instance, who influenced the tongue of Bidhya Bhandari to speak out of proportion against the integration of Maoist combatants into Nepal Army should be the question of self-integrity of Bhandari as a Defense minister if it means nothing to UML leaderships to exercise party-favoritism.

It is obvious that Bidhya Bhandari belongs to the recently bubbled-up "rightwing UML Camp" of KP Oli, who has ideological tie with the rightwing camp of NC under Susil Koirala's leadership to strongly oppose army integration.

It is clear that their opposition is shortsighted because the only hope for peace and stability in Nepal is Nepal Army, which has institutional capacity to change politically indoctrinated combatants into professional army. Above all, it is neither UML nor NC nor Maoist nor those bigmouth royalists who oppose army integration into Nepal Army can transform politically indoctrinated combatants into professional army. To be precise, the institutional integration processes as such is not a merger in which Maoists combatants are allowed to keep their battalions as it is in Nepal Army. But, it means absorbing Maoist combatants into Nepal Army and that absorption depends on the individual combatant's qualification for military training,

which can transform politically indoctrinated combatant into professional Nepal Army personnel.

Therefore, those who oppose army integration processes as defined in the 2006 Peace Accord are traitors not less than Maoists who attempt to integrate their combatants in bulk to keep their battalions intact within Nepal Army. Maoists have therefore failed to earn the trust of rest of other political parties in Constituent Assembly, which cost them cabinet. As such it is worth to doubt that Maoists have a tentative plan to capture state, which is next to impossible under the barrel of gun.

Since peace process has been derailed badly, the formation of "High Level Political Mechanism" is indispensable to reinvent a sense of national unity in the political level. Those who opposed, for example UML rightwing leader KP Oli, above all is a collaborator of New Delhi establishment and ruling elites, who like to exploit Nepal as a commonwealth of India.

Therefore, it is very important to redefine India's one-way relationship with new Nepal. The new constitution of Nepal must stand firm with its national integrity. It has to be clear to all political parties that India has politically taken unnecessary advantage of common cultural heritage.

It is a time that Nepal should not spare a minute to unite for its national integrity and economic prosperity that up till now has been at the mercy of New Delhi's elites. Nepal must defend its national integrity for the economic prosperity. If all unite from political party level to local community to global Diaspora Nepal ought to be a prosperous nation. The ultimate goal of all Nepalis on the face of earth is to be prosperous.

## Bad governance bleeding banks !

### WM Correspondent

Recently, Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) initiated action against the two chief executives and other 10 officials belonging to the two development banks.

Managing director of Birgunj based Public Development Bank (PDB) Kunj Bihari Kayal and Chief Executive Officer of Infrastructure Development Bank Limited (IDBL), Banepa, Indra Humagain, and other two directors of the two respective institutions, among others, have faced a charge of fraudulent activities.

The central bank has also asked the police to treat the offenders as per the banking offence act.

According to a NRB investigation, Kayal sanctioned loans amounting to Rs. 260 million against the cheque of fake bank accounts.

Likewise, Humagain is accused of issuing loans of Rs. 15 million to Kayal in an unscrupulous manner.

A director of PDB was also found to have illicitly taken loans from his own bank.

Right after the media exposed the fraudulence, the depositors made a rush to withdraw their money from the banks.

Both the banks were in good stead. However, the disclosure of their respective financial dishonesty has forced the general depositors

to raise serious doubt over the efficacy of the entire banking system.

Currently, the country's banking system is facing acute liquidity crunch. The depleting people's faith on banking system is also cited as a major cause behind the onset of the cash crunch.

The bankers as well as the central bank have so far failed to assure general depositors that their bucks are secured in the banks and financial institutions.

That's why: the people are less inclined towards trusting such institutions with their money. They are either holding cash by themselves or making investment in other areas including real estate and gold.

"The recent banking scandal has not only indicated at pathetic governance in the banking system. It has also eroded the faith of people in banks and financial institutions," said experts.

The case of the Nepal Development Bank (NDB), which is now being liquidated, had already given ample space to raise questions over the integrity of the banks and financial institutions.

The poor corporate governance subsequently led to the debacle of the NDB.

A major task of the central bank is to promote healthy development

of financial system in a way that benefits depositors.

However, the same does not seem to be taking place.

Nepali bankers often claim that the banks compared to other businesses are the most transparent organizations practicing adequate level of good governance.

Since the banks are basically a public entity and deposits they accumulate occupy more than 80 percent of total financial resources, their claim does not sound that much sensible if not absolutely illogical.

The acts related to banks accord first priority to ensuring interest of depositors rather than that of shareholders and promoters.

The banking system is also reeling under the liquidity crisis as the banks floated credits excessively without caring the status of deposit mobilization.

As per the banking norms, the credit/deposit ratio of any bank should be at least below 80 percent.

However, the same of most of the bank has surpassed 90 percent. This also contributed to the ongoing liquidity crisis and the banks have been forced to stop further lending.

The country's two oldest banks with huge government stakes- Nepal Bank Limited (NBL) and Rastriya Baniya Bank (RBB)- are

yet to recuperate from their alarming financial ailment.

The then government initiated financial reform program to reenergize these banks some eight years back.

However, their capital fund is still effectively negative.

The two banks had also become the victims of bad governance as the billions of loans they floated had not been recovered yet.

Interestingly, some of those who took loans from these banks with malicious motive were found to have put even river-banks as collateral.

The two banks are in dire need of Rs. 24 billion to get back into healthy shape.

It was nothing but the bad governance that propelled the NRB to launch intervention in Nepal Bangladesh (NB) bank four years ago.

The NB's promoters took loans from their own bank against the banking norms but didn't pay back which eventually wrecked havoc with the financial health of the bank.

Now, it has recovered a significant portion of its loans from its promoters.

These evidences clearly show the Nepali banking system is lagging behind in practicing corporate governance in a true sense.

# Mission of Lumbini Bauddha University

## Introduction:

Lumbini Bauddha University is a brainchild of the First World Buddhist Summit held in Lumbini from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1998 A.D. (2055 V.S.) about ten years ago. After

## Prof. Dr. Khadga Man Shrestha

Centre for technical and academic development. It should have service of Institutional Development Specialists, Curriculum Development Specialists,

networking system.

The University badly needs grants, lump sum aid for buying electrical and electronic equipments, Television sets and others to develop the above facilities.

Transportation facilities for the University staff and students are the other basic requirements of the University. Local transport agencies provide limited transport service in between Bhairahawa and Lumbini. This service does not fulfill the needs of University teachers and students. Local Transport Agency should run separate transport services at the request of the University or some vehicles should be made available by local or foreign agencies or donors as machinery grants to the University.

Dormitory facilities are the prerequisites of the University staff, students and teachers. In the absence of those facilities, LBU cannot be run in the isolated place.

Construction of a Meditation Center, Sports and Recreation Centers are the other needs of the University. University teachers and students need such facilities in any circumstances. Initiatives of local and foreign donors are requested for this in Lumbini.

LBU badly needs a well-equipped Health Center for serving the teachers, staff and students. It may be taken as one of the basic needs of the University. Co-operation of donors is imperative in this regard.

## System Approach for the Fulfillment of the Challenges

The Lumbini Bauddha University Act of 2004 A.D. makes provision of Nepal Government's financial assistance to University as one of the sources of fund. The other reliable source of funding is the income of the University from the fees of the students and income generated by the University by conducting research on serene spiritual aspects of religion and philosophy. As we all know that Buddhism is the teachings of the Buddha, the researches on Buddhism and its philosophy revolve round the archaeological, historical socio-economic and cultural life of Lumbini, Kapilvastu, Ramgram Devadaha and the Buddha's way of life based on *Prajna, Sheel and Samadhi* (wisdom, discipline and concentration). It could be either on Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist economy, Buddhist value system, Buddhist meditation, Buddhist practice of different schools of thought, Buddhist astronomy, Buddhist medicine, rites and rituals, Buddhism and the different ethnic groups, their way of life, Buddhist polity, Buddhist ethics, value system, Buddhist way of healing sickness, Buddhist languages and literature etc. Government agencies private and public agencies could provide funds for sponsoring such research programs that foster the

sense of peace, co-operation and co-existence as well as academic development.

LBU is seeking support of the Buddhist countries of the world in terms of Buddhist expertise, Institutional Development Specialists, Curriculum, Textbook and Resource Development Specialists, experienced archaeologists, human resources as well as Instructional Material Development Specialists. This University being a specialized University, its specific approach needs specialized expertise. This University would like to train its teaching and management staff to run the University in standard way. It is trying to collaborate with standard Universities of the world in Buddhism by conducting educational and cultural exchange programs. This University is striving its best to retain its capable, efficient and qualified staff by providing best possible perks and benefits.

## Develop Lumbini Bauddha University as Buddhist Interaction Centre:

This University is also trying to develop Lumbini as Buddhist Interaction Centre, Centre of Excellence of Buddhist Studies among the Buddhist scholars of the world by attracting foreign Buddhist scholars and well-disciplined Buddhist students from different countries. It is believed that the University will be a Centre of Excellence in Buddhist Studies in the world with all facilities. It will also enrich the University.

This University will be developed as well as equipped Buddhist Learning Center teaching the Buddha way of life to establish world peace and serenity of individuals. It will establish a fund for sponsoring the teaching learning activities of the University. A Permanent Fund established for it will serve the purpose.

The University will explore hidden treasures of Buddhist sites and develop a well equipped Archive and Meditation Center in Lumbini for serenity and solace of mind.

## Develop Lumbini as the Fountain of World Peace;

It is thus obvious that Buddhism is only a solution for world peace and serenity of individual. Who so ever gets to understand the teachings of the Buddha will be able to bring his or her mind to peace. World peace is possible only when the peace of mind of the people of the world is available. LBU is that Centre which will purify mind of the people by providing wisdom, which illuminates his or her mind. Thus learning Buddhism means learning the guidelines for the whole life. Buddha way of life, thus is only a solution for peaceful mind. The teaching of Lord Buddha is taken as religion of peace which consisted of noblest and great ideals. It is taken as Universal Medicine for peace and serenity in the world.



the promulgation of an ordinance relating to LBU, Lumbini Bauddha University came into existence on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004 (14<sup>th</sup> Marga 2061 V.S.) prior to the Second World Buddhist Summit held in Lumbini from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004 A.D. 2061 V.S. Following the Second People's Movement of 2006 A.D. (2062-63 V.S.) the Legislative Assembly of Nepal adopted an Act relating to the establishment of Lumbini Bauddha University (LBU). The statutes of the University are envisaged to run it at public level. As such, it is neither private nor government University. It is a public University to be operated in specialized way.

## Challenges of Lumbini Bauddha University

LBU being an out come of the aspiration of the Buddhist scholars of the world, its implementation would require international co-operation for being established at public level.

The nature of University being universal, it invites students' rather talented students from around the world. To cater the needs of the very talented students, the University needs providing fellowships to the needy students.

The University requires genius, devoted and talented Professors specialized in Buddhism. Visiting Professors from world-renowned Buddhist University should provide their experience and expertise for the academic development of the University.

Retention of experienced, renowned Professors in the University is a Herculean task of the University in the preliminary stage of development. Provision of convenient quarter, family allowance, library and vehicle facilities as well as other benefits needs ample resources. For this the University needs grants and government assistance.

The University needs Resource

Evaluation Development Specialists, and Resource Development Specialists in its initial stage of development. The University would face such challenges only when local or foreign grants are provided to the University.

Sponsorship of students by charity grant of local and foreign donors could be one of the attractions of the University. Development of University in an isolated pilgrimage shrine of Buddhism where students would not be able to attend University from their respective residences is not feasible. Student dormitory is a must in the basic infrastructure of the University. Such facilities should be the part and parcel of the inbuilt facilities of the University. It also needs local and foreign assistance.

The other challenges which the University face are the development of a well equipped Buddhist Library, Buddhist journals, magazines, standard books and other source material should be widely collected.

The other requirement of this University is the establishment of an archive of Buddhist art and artifacts. Local, national as well as foreign Buddhist arts and artifacts are to be available here in the LBU archive. It should be within the reach of resource scholars and teachers.

The University should have a Publishing House for printing necessary resource materials. It should be attached with Information Center of the University. Students of the University as well as teachers should have access to Internet service where they trace resource materials and download the information they get in computer relating to Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy. The Publishing House of the University will also publish University Bulletin, journal, books etc for the benefit of the students and teachers. It will establish linkages with different publishing houses for necessary resources and have

# Desperately searching for an able and steady governor

## ■ R.K. Regmee

Picking up a Governor for Nepal Rastra Bank on time appears to be a very serious problem for the government. Had it not been so, the name of the successor of Bijaya Nath Bhattarai would have been announced by January-end, the day he officially quits the position at the end of his term.

Although the post of NRB Governor in Nepal is highly important, it is not given due respect by politicians. As a result the NRB, which has to act as the Central Bank of the country, is often destined to receive "visiting governors," appointed for pleasing political masters of a given time.

In the past ten years it saw the faces of eight governors including Tilak Rawal, Dipendra Purush Dhakal, and Dipendra Bahadur Chhettri. None could complete their tenure of five years. Some of them

had brilliant plan to shape NRB into a real Central Bank with vision, tools, and resources for steering the country's economy in line with modern trends. The same remained unimplemented because of their transitional hang about in the post.

Acting Governor Krishna Bahadur Manandhar, who usually serves as bridge governor to facilitate the process of changing of top guard at NRB, could also not have enough time to show his performance. Mr. Manandhar had, however, privilege of initiating the currency note as Acting Governor, a rather unique feature in democratic economies.

As the whole country is looking forward to the appointment of new governor, the ninth in the decade, experts reiterate the need to provide a stable leadership in NRB for presiding over the economy with a sense of

confidence and vision. In absence of a stable leadership, the current crisis cannot be tackled, they point out.

NRB should steer the economy, the financial sector, monitor the activities of all banking sector and also provide advisory to the government. This cannot be expected from a governor who is in the mindset of visiting fellow in the top NRB post. Although all governments, particularly the Finance Ministers, know this fact perfectly well, they are not prepared to provide a stable governor to the NRB.

The trend of picking up the new governor will more or less follow the past practice, say experts, asking people not to expect much from the government. Since the key political parties are campaigning for their own candidates, the selection committee has not been able to perform properly in hunting of

able persons to lead NRB. The financial sector of Nepal is in a mess at present. The increasing number of banks, over 200 financial institutions, nearly 400 savings and loan cooperatives operating in the country require a stable and informed leadership from the NRB.

The new Governor will not have comfortable life. The person will have to tackle problems caused by series of factors such as parallel economy, balance of payment deficit, decreased remittance, steady decline of Nepse, reduced industrial production, decreasing sense of economic discipline among players of economy and growing labour movement.

Will the new face have patience, and innovative thinking to take all these promptly right away from the time of inaugural entry into Baluwatar Office of NRB?

## ~ National news ~

# Suicide tops women mortality

Preliminary findings of a year-long study on Maternal Mortality and Morbidity of Nepali women of reproductive age (15-49 years) has found that suicide as the single leading cause of death among women of that age group in the country.

The study by the Family Health Division (FHD) of the Department of Health Services with funding support from UK Department for International Development (DFID) and USAID was carried in carried out in 8 districts—Baglung, Jumla, Kailali, Okhaldhunga, Rupandehi, Rasuwa, Sunsari and Surkhet with a total population of 3,298,319, comprising 12 percent of Nepal's population. The total population of women between 15-49 years was 86,000.

The study, carried out between 13 April 2008 to 13 April 2009, tracked changes in maternal mortality in the country since 1998, when the last such survey was conducted.

According to the report entitled "Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Study, 2008-09: Summary of Preliminary Findings", suicide was far in the lead, accounting for 16 percent of deaths, with the second leading cause, accident, accounting for 9 percent. Haemorrhage and eclampsia were the only maternal causes featuring, at 2.5 percent and 2.3 percent respectively, ranked eleventh and twelfth. This suggests that, despite improvements over the last decade, at least in management of post-partum haemorrhage, these complications still need focused attention.

The finding that suicide has emerged as the leading cause of death in Women of Reproductive Age (WRA) has shocked researchers and policy makers although some women activists have commented that the findings are not surprising, given that cases of suicide mostly remain underreported in Nepali society. In the 1998 study, suicide had ranked as the third single cause of death.

There's also a heartening aspect in the findings. Maternal mortality rate in Nepal has improved substantially since 1998, from 539 per 100,000 live births to 229 per 100,000. A substantial reduction in the MMR, to 281 deaths per 100,000 live births was also indicated by the 2006 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey.

The report says that the shocking finding that suicide was reported as the leading cause of WRA deaths (16%), a steep increase from 1998, when it was ranked third (10%), highlights the urgent need to address this issue, which has received little attention since its significance was first noted in 1998. Research is needed to improve understanding of the circumstances and contributory factors of these tragic events, to guide interventions. Analysis of verbal autopsy data indicates mental health problems, relationships, marriage and family issues are key factors. It is also noteworthy that 21% of the suicides were young women, aged 18 years and under, indicating that youth is a factor to be investigated.

The report notes that there have been significant improvements over the past 10 years in access to routine and life saving care and prevention of maternal deaths. The findings also align with the NDHS 2006 MMR estimate, which indicates Nepal is on track to meet the fifth millennium development goal. This is a major achievement in a resource-poor setting that has suffered from political instability over much of this period. However, the stories of the hundreds of women who died during this study period are evidence of many issues that remain to be tackled.

# US sets condition for military aid to Nepal

The United States government has set various conditions for military aid to Nepal saying no military aid should be provided until its Secretary of State certifies such conditions are met.

Budgetary appropriations for 2011 tabled by US President Barack Obama at the US Congress mentions, military aid to Nepal should be provided only on the recommendation of the Secretary of State.

The proposal has set various conditions including transparency of defense budget, capacity building of defense ministry staff, facilitation of integration of Maoist combatants to the Nepal Army and the army's commitment to reconciliation, peace and stability for military aid.

The other conditions set by the US government for military aid are, the army should redefine its defense mission and bring out constructive plans to resize it.

The US government has been demanding for independent investigations on rights violators in the army including the recently promoted Lt General Toran Jung Bahadur Singh and Major Niranjana Basnet.

USD 5.5 billion has been earmarked under the 'Foreign Military Financing Program'. Most of it is proposed for Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Bahrain and Pakistan.

However, this new provision will not affect financing for any humanitarian issues and reconstructions works where the army is involved.

Obama administration had stopped military aid on December 16, last year alleging the army of not investigating independently the charges against HR violators.

US is the fourth largest donor to Nepal Army after India, China and the UK. According to a senior army officer, the US provides aid worth about USD 1.2 million. Although it's not a big amount, the US decision to stop military aid will have symbolic impact, he said.

Its aid mainly comprises of high-level trainings it provides. It provides 'International Military Education Training' to about two dozen army officers every year. Likewise, it bears the cost of Counter Terrorism Training and National Defense College Course.

# China to achieve development and stability in Tibet

China has made plans to achieve leapfrog development and lasting stability in Tibet Autonomous Region in



a bid to ensure China's development as a whole.

Chinese President Hu Jintao and other senior leaders attending the fifth meeting on the work of Tibet, from Jan. 18 to 20, agreed that more efforts must be made to greatly improve living standards of the people in Tibet, as well as ethnic unity and stability.

In his speech, Hu attached great importance to the work of Tibet, saying it was a pressing task in carrying out the Scientific Outlook on Development,

building a well-off society in an all-round way, establishing a national ecological protective screen and realizing sustainable development.

(CPC) Central Committee's policies towards Tibet in the new era were totally correct, suiting to national condition, Tibet's actual conditions and the fundamental interests of people of all ethnic groups in Tibet.

Hu said the principal contradiction for Tibet, as for the country as a whole, remained to be between the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people and the backwardness of social production.

However, Tibet faces a "special contradiction" between people of all ethnic groups and the separatist forces led by the Dalai clique, he said.

These contradictions had made leapfrog development and lasting stability major themes of the work of Tibet, he said.

Hu said China would unwaveringly adhere to and improve the Party's theories and policies towards nationalities, as well as the system of regional autonomy of ethnic groups in Tibet.

While vowing to take substantial measures to ensure "normal order of Tibetan Buddhism", Hu said the awareness of being part of the Chinese nation and being law-abiding citizens must be constantly enhanced among cadre and the masses in Tibet.

Hu urged all the Party members to further realize the strategic significance and pressing needs of the work of Tibet.

During the meeting, senior leaders also meted out plans to develop Tibetan-inhabited areas in Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai.

The Communist Party of China

development of Tibet in the next decade.

He said by 2020 the per capita net income of farmers and herds people in Tibet should be close to the national level.

Tibet's capacity to provide public service and infrastructure must also be comparable to the nation's average by 2020, through more government investment and better management.

Hu said greater emphasis must be put on the improvement of the livelihood of Tibetan farmers and herdsmen, a better coordination of social-economic development, Tibet's capacity of self development, and environmental protection.

He stressed Tibet's significance in ensuring China's national security, and efforts in building the region into a strategic reserve of natural resources, an agricultural production base, a land with unique culture and a world-class tourism destination.

In order to further improve the livelihood of Tibetan people, more government budget will go to public services, such as education, medical services, telecommunication, and social security network that covers both urban and rural residents.

Other senior leaders attending the meeting included Wu Bangguo, Wen Jiabao, Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang and Zhou Yongkang.

Premier Wen Jiabao said priorities should be given to people's livelihood, social services, infrastructure, industries with regional features and environmental protection.

(Xinhua)

## News :

### Cabinet approves President's India visit

The Council of Ministers (CoM) has approved President Ram Baran Yadav's three-day official visit to India - the first ever foreign visit of the first President of Nepal - scheduled to start from February 15.

A meeting of the CoM Wednesday approved the President's India visit along with the members to be included in the visit. It has finalized a 27-member team to accompany the President to India.

The team will include tourism minister Sharat Singh Bhandari, secretary at the foreign ministry, secretary at the President's office, the President's advisors and representatives of state-owned media, Nepal Television, Rastriya Samachar Samiti and Department of Communications.

President Yadav will meet with Indian President Pratibha Patil and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, among others during his India visit.

The President's foreign visit had been delayed for some months as there was no functional Vice President to take over the former's charge during his absence. Erstwhile Vice President Parmananda Jha was rendered defunct by a Supreme Court decision over the oath he took in Hindi.

However, less than two weeks before the President's visit, the position of the Vice President is yet to be filled or made functional due to ongoing controversy.

The parliament has passed a resolution motion to reinstate Jha as President, but no further action has been taken.

### UML politburo passes party statute

The politburo of the ruling CPN (UML) passed the party's statute as well as chairman Jhala Nath Khanal's political report presented at the 8th general convention held in Butwal 11 months ago.

A meeting of the UML politburo passed the party statute after the party establishment accepted K.P Oli faction's demand that the elected chairman be authorised to appoint only five percent of the total number of elected central members.

Likewise, politburo adopted Khanal's political document, which had courted controversy during the general convention, with some amendment.

Party's influential leader Oli had tabled a 19-page proposal, seeking correction to the draft of the statute, opposing the leadership's intervention in some district committees. The Oli faction went on to form parallel committees in Kathmandu and few other districts after the party top brass ordered dissolution of the existing committees.

Meanwhile, speaking to reporters after the politburo meeting, senior UML leader and Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal said he was confident that the internal dispute in the UML would soon be resolved.

Nepal said the report on resolving the dispute is being discussed and that the leaders would arrive at an understanding soon.

UML leaders are divided on a number of issues including the President's move in the army chief case, the federal structure and integration of Maoist combatants in the army. Besides, some UML leaders have been vocal against the current 22-party government and prefer a coalition inclusive of the Maoists.

### Bhattarai snubs demand for state restructuring commission

Maoist vice chairman Dr Baburam Bhattarai Wednesday dismissed the voices in favour of a state reconstructing commission for determining the country's federal structure.

Speaking at a book launch programme in the capital, Bhattarai said those demanding such a commission do not want timely promulgation of the constitution and they are plotting to derail the constitution-drafting process.

"There is no point demanding such a commission at this time," he said, "No commission can be above the Constituent Assembly." The parties that opposed the Maoist proposal to set up a restructuring commission much earlier are pointlessly making this demand now, he added.

The Maoist leader also claimed said the 14-state federal structure proposed by his party, which was passed by the State Restructuring Committee of the CA, is a scientific one.

A number of parties in the CA including Nepali Congress and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum have opposed the draft passed by the CA committee. Some UML leaders have also been speaking in favour of a state restructuring commission even though the party voted for the draft.

### Tharu body burns down copies of CA drafts

Tharu Kalyankari Sabha (TKS), a representative body of indigenous Tharu community, burned down copies of the drafts prepared by 11 different committees under the Constituent Assembly (CA), demanding multiple states in the plains in order to ensure rights of indigenous people living in Terai.

The TKS has been saying that there should be more than two states in Terai unlike what has been proposed in the draft passed by the state restructuring committee.

Addressing a gathering following a protest rally at Naya Baneshwor, TKS general secretary Raj Kumar Lekhi described the draft on state restructuring committee, which proposes 14 states, is unjustifiable.

# Obama provokes war Against China and Iran

By Shamus Cooke

The possibility of yet another U.S. war became more real last week, when the Obama administration sharply confronted both China and Iran. The first aggressive act was performed by Obama's Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, who "warned" China that it must support serious economic sanctions against Iran (an act of war).

Clinton said: "China will be under a lot of pressure to recognize the destabilizing effect that a nuclear-armed Iran would have, from which they receive a significant percentage of their oil supply."

The implication here is that China will be cut off from a major energy source if they do not support U.S. foreign policy — this, too, would equal an act of war.

A more direct military provocation occurred later when Obama agreed to honor a Bush-era military pact with Taiwan, a small island that lies off the mainland coast of China, and is claimed by China as its own territory. Taiwan has been a U.S. client state ever since the defeated nationalist forces fled there from China in the aftermath of the 1949 revolution. Taiwan has remained a bastion of U.S. intrigue and anti-China agitation for the past six decades. Obama has recently upped the ante by approving a \$6.4 billion arms sale to

Taiwan, including:

"... 60 Black Hawk helicopters, Patriot interceptor missiles, advanced Harpoon missiles that can be used against land or ship targets and two refurbished minesweepers." (The New York Times, January 30, 2010).

The same article quotes a Chinese government official who responded, accurately, by calling the arms sale "... a gross intervention into China's internal affairs, [and] seriously endanger[ing] China's national security..." In 1962, When Russia supplied missiles to Cuba, near Florida's coast, the U.S. interpreted this to be an act of war.

China responded harshly to the Taiwan arms deals, imposing "an unusually broad series of retaliatory measures... including sanctions against American companies that supply the weapon systems for the arms sales." These U.S. arms manufacturers are giant corporations who have huge political influence in the Obama administration, and are likely to further push the U.S. government towards an even more aggressive response.

Obama's policies against China have been far more aggressive than Bush's, making a farce out of his campaign

promises of a more peaceful foreign policy. Obama's same, deceitful approach is used in South America, where he promised "non-intervention" and then proceeded to build military bases in Colombia on Venezuela's border, while giving a green light to the coup in Honduras.

Hillary Clinton also threatened China about internet censorship last week, while Obama consciously provoked China by agreeing to talks with the Dalai Lama, who advocates the removal of Chinese influence from Tibet.

Still fresh in the memories of both the U.S. and China is the recent trade flare up, when Obama imposed taxes on Chinese imports; and China responded with protectionist measures against U.S. companies, which brings us to the heart of the matter.

The attitude of the U.S. government towards China has nothing to do with the Dalai Lama, internet censorship, or human rights. These excuses are used as diplomatic jabs in the framework of a larger, geopolitical brawl. Chinese corporations are expanding rapidly in the wake of the decline of the U.S. business class, and Obama is using a variety of measures to counteract this dynamic, with all roads leading to war.

This grand chessboard of corporate and military maneuvering reached a dangerous standoff yesterday, with the U.S. military provoking Iran. The New York Times explains:

"The Obama administration is accelerating the deployment of new defenses against possible Iranian missile attacks in the Persian Gulf, placing special ships [war ships] off the Iranian coast and antimissile systems in at least four [surrounding] Arab countries, according to administration and military officials." (January 30, 2010).

The same article mentions that U.S. General Petraeus admitted that "... the United States was now keeping Aegis

cruisers on patrol in the Persian Gulf [Iran's border] at all times. Those cruisers are equipped with advanced radar and antimissile systems designed to intercept medium-range missiles." Iran knows full well that "antimissile systems" are perfectly capable of going on the offensive — their real purpose.

Iran is completely surrounded by countries occupied by the U.S. military, whether it be the mass occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan, or the U.S. puppet states that house U.S. military bases in Arab nations. Contrary to the statements of President Obama, Iran is already well contained militarily. Iran's government — however repressive it may be — has every right to defend itself in this context.

It is possible that these aggressive U.S. actions will eventually force Iran's government to act out militarily, giving the U.S. military the "defensive" excuse it's been waiting for, so the tempers of the U.S. population can be cooled.

A separate New York Times editorial outlines the basic agreement on Iran shared by the Democrats and the Republicans. It says:

"It is time for President Obama and other leaders to ratchet up the pressure with tougher sanctions."

And:  
"If the [UN] Security Council does not act quickly, then the United States and Europe must apply more pressure on their own [Bush's Iraq war strategy]. The Senate on Thursday approved a bill that would punish companies for exporting gasoline to Iran or helping Iran expand its own petroleum refining capability [another act of war]" (January 29, 2010).

The U.S. anti-war movement must organize and mobilize to confront the plans of the Obama administration. Obama's policies not only mirror Bush's, but have the potential to be far more devastating, with the real possibility of creating a wider, regional war. Iran and China are far more militarily capable than puny Afghanistan or Iraq; the consequences of a war with either will cause countless more deaths.

## US to deploy 18,000 troops to Afghanistan

The United States is sending 18,000 more troops to Afghanistan by late spring, as part of a 30,000-strong force already promised by President Barack Obama. The troops are being deployed later than expected. The remaining 12,000 will be sent to Afghanistan in the summer, with most in place by August.

At present there are 70,000 US troops in Afghanistan. The extra troops have been sent to take part in a large offensive against Taliban fighters. The highest US officer Admiral Mike Mullen says the Taliban have reinforced their positions in most Afghan provinces.

The US Congress has set aside an extra 130 billion dollars for the mission. President Obama has requested another 33 billion dollars.

The training of Afghan troops to defend their own country is a major priority, but commanders on the ground complain that there is a shortage of trainers, in particular from their European allies. US troops are due to withdraw in July 2011.

## सुरक्षित मातृत्व सुरक्षित आधार



नेपाल सरकार

सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय

सूचना विभाग

Region :

## February 5 : The Kashmir solidarity day

By M Raza Malik

Pakistanis, here and across the globe, have been observing 5<sup>th</sup> February every year since 1991, as Kashmir Solidarity Day to convey the message that at this time of trial they are with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have been rendering matchless sacrifices, for the last 63 years, to secure their inalienable right to self-determination, promised to them by the international community.

The people of Pakistan are bound to express solidarity with their Kashmiri brethren, as they share common cultural, ideological, geographical and emotional ties, which have fastened them into one unity for centuries. There is no denying of this historic fact that the Kashmir dispute is the unfinished part of the partition of the Indian subcontinent and peace in the South Asian region can not be established without resolving it in accordance with the Kashmiris' aspirations.

President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, while addressing a joint session of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Assembly and Kashmir Council in the Assembly Hall on January 05, said that settlement of the Kashmir dispute was vital for regional peace. "As world attention is on Pakistan, then together with Pakistan, the world has to talk about the Kashmir problem as well because only then can peace be brought to the region," he said. "We cannot de-link regional peace from peace in Kashmir... we have highlighted this thinking in the world and will keep projecting it," he added.

The President maintained that Pakistan and India should learn to live in peace. "We know that we cannot change our neighbours but they (India) should also know that they can also not change their neighbours." He hoped that the people of Kashmir would succeed in their struggle.

In order to realize the importance of the Kashmir Solidarity Day one needs to understand the history of India's occupation on Kashmir, which dates back to the partition of the Indian Subcontinent. According to Partition Plan in 1947, the Indian British Colony was to be divided into two sovereign states: India comprising Hindu-majority areas, and Pakistan

constituted by the Muslim-majority areas of Western provinces and East Bengal.

The partition plan had given the princely states the choice to accede either to Pakistan or to India, considering their geography and demography. As Jammu and Kashmir was a Muslim-majority state, with 87% Muslim population, it had a natural tendency to accede to Pakistan. But the then Hindu ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh and the Indian National Congress by announcing Kashmir's accession with India under a well thought out conspiracy sowed the seeds of destruction of the future of the Kashmiri people. India landed its paramilitary forces in the territory by totally violating the partition plan and against the wishes and aspirations of the Kashmiris.

Right from October 27, 1947, the day when Indian forces landed in the occupied territory, the people of Jammu and Kashmir never accepted India's illegal occupation of their motherland and they have been struggling to liberate it from Indian subjugation. Their liberation struggle forced India to seek the help of the international community to settle the Kashmir dispute. On January 1, 1948, sensing the defeat to its forces, it approached the United Nations Security Council, which in its successive resolutions, accepted by both Pakistan and India, promised that a free and impartial plebiscite would be conducted by the UN and the people of Kashmir would be given the opportunity to decide their future themselves.

On October 27, 1947, the first head of the Indian state, Lord Mountbatten, is on record having said that since the 'question of accession [of Kashmir] should be decided in accordance with the wishes of the people of the state, it is my government's wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir... the question of the state's accession should be settled by a reference to the people.' The first Prime Minister of India, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, whose government took the Kashmir dispute to the United

Nations, on June 26, 1952, told Indian parliament, "If... the people of Kashmir do not wish to remain with us, let them go by all means; we will not keep them against their will, however painful it may [be] for us."

Despite these pledges and commitments by the Indian rulers, the people of Kashmir keep on suffering atrocities at the hands of the occupation troops and their miseries continue unabated. One of the most awful aspects of the Kashmir dispute is the fact that India had taken the dispute to the United Nations itself but later backed away from the promises, it had made before the international community, to resolve the dispute over Kashmir and to let the Kashmiri people chose their destiny by themselves.

It is very lamenting that India claims itself to be the biggest democracy of the world but it continues to suppress the democratic rights of the Kashmiri people with military might. It also describes the Jammu and Kashmir as its integral part in total contrast to the UN resolutions, which describe Jammu and Kashmir as disputed territory. Furthermore, the most deplorable aspect of the picture is that while Pakistan demonstrates considerable flexibility in the dialogue process, Indian intransigent approach remains the biggest hurdle in the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

History stands testimony to the reality that despite exhausting all its resources, India has failed to deter the Kashmiris from continuing their struggle for securing the right to self-determination. Its forces have broken all the records of human rights violations in the occupied territory. Indian troops have martyred over ninety-two thousand civilians in occupied Kashmir, killing thousands in custody. These killings rendered more than twenty five thousand women widowed and over one-lac children orphaned. The troops have molested around ten thousand Kashmiri women during the past 20 years and have constantly been using the molestation of women as a tool to suppress the Kashmiris' spirit of freedom. The whereabouts of

thousands of innocent Kashmiris, disappeared in troops' custody, are yet to be revealed. But all these cruelties could not refrain the Kashmiris raising their voice for freedom from Indian bondage.

Thousands of people in occupied Kashmir poured into streets during the second half of 2008 against the transfer of Kashmiris' land to non-Kashmiris and in 2009 following the rape and subsequent murder of two Kashmiri women in Shopian in May. They conveyed a strong message to India and the international community that the human rights violations would continue to occur in the occupied territory as long as Indian troops were present there.

To reaffirm their political, moral and diplomatic support to the people of Kashmir like always, this year too, Pakistanis will hold conferences, seminars, demonstrations and various functions. These activities will be aimed at highlighting various dimensions of the Kashmir dispute besides the state terrorism unleashed by India in the occupied territory would be projected in a factual manner. The observance of the day is also intended to remind the international community that it has a moral obligation to play its role in resolving the dispute over Kashmir in accordance with the Kashmiris' aspirations.

The fact is that the hearts of the Pakistanis throb in unison with their Kashmiri brethren. They feel not only the pain of Indian state terrorism against the Kashmiris but also their sufferings due to natural disasters, the glaring example of which was witnessed after the devastating earthquake of October 2005. The world observed how massively the Pakistani people transported relief goods and provided aid for the rehabilitation to the people in the calamity-hit areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

In the nutshell the 5th of February is a day to pay tribute to the unique sacrifices of the Kashmiri people, who have been carrying on their struggle of freedom with devotion. The observance is also intended to convey India that it cannot hold on Kashmir against the will of the people for long and that it will have to give the Kashmiris the right to live freely.

## Taliban take on the US's surge

By Syed Saleem Shahzad

ISLAMABAD - At the major international conference on Afghanistan in London last Thursday, Afghan President Hamid Karzai called on the Taliban to take part in a *loya jirga* (assembly of elders) - as a start to peace talks.

The Taliban are widely reported as having responded that first they want all of the more than 110,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan to leave the country by 2011.

Asia Times Online, however, has learned from well-connected sources in Afghanistan who have been directly involved in backchannel negotiations with the Taliban that there is an important nuance to the Taliban demand. That is, the United States must put an immediate halt to its plans to send a further 30,000 troops to Afghanistan before withdrawal begins in 2011.

In return, the Taliban would be prepared to open up a channel of dialogue



with the Americans, through Saudi Arabia, while at the same time taking measures to reduce the level of hostilities in the country.

The key issue boils down to one of trust, that is, whether the US would be prepared to only send in replacements for previously deployed troops, given that the surge in forces was meant to be a cornerstone of its counter-insurgency plan as a means of softening up the Taliban before talks could begin in earnest.

"Washington has to focus on out-of-box thinking to resolve this conflict in Afghanistan," a Kabul-based contact told Asia Times Online on the condition of anonymity. "The Americans desperately want an exit strategy but they cannot announce it outright because if they did so, the Taliban would overrun any government they left behind. The Americans aim to invite the Taliban to join the political process, but the bitter fact is that the Taliban do not believe in elections at all. They want the reinstatement of their Islamic Emirate that was dissolved by the Americans in 2001. Despite all the military engagement, the Taliban's strength is growing and the losses of the Western coalition are increasing," the contact said.

This view is reflected among the Western coalition dealing with Afghanistan, in that there is a consensus that the US needs to find an exit strategy that would not leave the Taliban, with or without al-Qaeda, in too strong a position. There is a belief that the Taliban could be controlled through a dispensation operated through Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Pakistan.

"This pattern of thinking actually began in August 2007, when Saudi Arabia decided to tackle the situation from its roots, and that was al-Qaeda," Jamal Ismail, a senior Arab journalist, told Asia Times Online. Ismail is one of the few journalists to have interviewed Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders on several occasions and he has reported on Afghanistan and Pakistan for the past 30 years.

"Prince Bandar bin Sultan [a former Saudi ambassador to the US] quietly came to Pakistan and the then [Pervez] Musharraf administration arranged for him to travel to Miranshah [the tribal headquarters of North Waziristan in Pakistan]. Earlier, a message had been sent that he aimed to see Osama bin Laden or Dr Ayman al-Zawahiri. However, only Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, a middle-ranking al-Qaeda leader, came to see him," Ismail said.

This was not a good beginning, since al-Qaeda had scornfully rejected all proposals of a ceasefire.

Nonetheless, although the US and Saudi Arabia projected that they would not deal with the extremist elements of the Taliban and al-Qaeda, off-the-screen negotiations began with the real players - Taliban leader Mullah Omar and al-Qaeda.

In early 2009, the Americans pushed Saudi Arabia to start negotiations with the Taliban leadership and Saudi intelligence chief Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz al-Saud started speaking to Mullah Omar through the Taliban's supreme commander, Mullah Bradar.

However, after Barack Obama took over the presidency a year ago, Mullah Omar took it as an affront that on the one hand Washington aimed to engage the Taliban through Saudi Arabia for peace, while on the other hand it planned to continue all efforts to defeat the Taliban.

By mid-2009, Prince Muqrin was told point blank that Mullah Omar had decided to discontinue all communication and negotiations. That was a major setback for the Obama administration, which could see the rising tide of the Taliban in Afghanistan and was aiming for a quick political face-saving exit strategy.

After the aborted second round of the Afghan presidential elections in November last year that resulted in Karzai being re-elected, the US reopened discussions with the Taliban to get them to stop attacks on government buildings and installations in Kabul. The US wanted to present this at home as a major political victory. The Taliban were discussing the issue when Obama announced the decision to send a further 30,000 troops into Afghanistan.

The Taliban again halted all negotiations and early this year carried out a major attack on government buildings in the heart of Kabul, near the presidential palace.

Asia Times Online contacts claim that in an effort to get the dialogue process back on track, the US is considering the Taliban's demand on stopping the troop surge in Afghanistan, with the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan lined up to work out an arrangement that would keep the Taliban and al-Qaeda under control in any US exit plan.

Should the US agree to the Taliban demands, there is no guarantee that the Taliban would stick to their word. This is the US's dilemma.

## China rebuts Dalai Lama's claim

A Chinese central government official Tuesday dismissed the Dalai Lama's claim as being "legal representative" of Tibetans.

"The Chinese government and the government of Tibet Autonomous Region under its leadership are the only representatives of Tibetans," Zhu Weiqun, executive vice minister of the United Front Work Department (UFWD) of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, said in a statement to media at a press conference.

Du Qinglin, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, met with the Dalai Lama's private representatives, Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen, last week in Beijing. Other officials, including Zhu himself, held a whole day's talk with them.

"The so-called 'Tibet government-in-exile' composed of those who defected to India and gathered there absolutely violates China's laws," Zhu said.

The private representatives

"have no legal status to discuss with us the affairs about Tibet Autonomous Region," Zhu said.

"They are only the Dalai Lama's private representatives, so they can only talk about the prospect of the Dalai Lama, at most, the prospects of a small party around him."

The talks were suspended for more than a year after the meeting in November 2008.

"The major reason lies in the fact that they (the Dalai Lama side) openly declared to cease the contacts and talks with the Central authorities," Zhu said.

He suggested that the Dalai Lama side correct their mistakes rather than repeat the contents in the Memorandum, which the central government had rebutted at the previous talks, and use tricks to "explain" it.

But he said the viewpoint confrontation also "had some upside" as it let both sides know what exactly their differences were and how wide the differences were.

"It helps the Dalai Lama realize the position he has been in."

The central government wanted

to "give the Dalai Lama a chance to correct his mistakes" by holding talks with his envoys, Zhu said.

However, he said, the talks were not without result, as the central government arranged trips for the envoys to visit central Hunan Province to better understand the country and the ethnic autonomy policy.

Such a move would be both irrational and harmful, he said. "If a country decides to do so, we will take necessary measures to help them realize this."

Chinese authorities said Monday that the door for contacts and talks remains open to the Dalai Lama, but no concessions would be made on issues concerning national sovereignty.

During the meeting, Du had pointed out that issues concerning China's territory and sovereignty were non-negotiable and no concessions would be made on those issues, the statement said.

Du said the so-called "Greater Tibet" and "high-level autonomy" violated China's Constitution and only if the Dalai Lama completely

abandoned such claims, could there be a foundation for contacts and talks.

Tibetan people cherish peace and stability. It is no use to cheat them and act against their will. The activities of infiltration and provocation, which are doomed to fail, will only create barriers for the talks and isolate the Dalai Lama and his followers.

The central government had been consistent and clear in policy concerning the Dalai Lama, Du said. "The door for contacts and talks is open, and the policy has not been changed so far."

The Dalai Lama "should profoundly reflect on his words and deeds," Du said.

"It won't be a way out to seek 'Tibet independence' or 'independence in a disguised form' through violence or non-violence," he told the Dalai Lama's private envoys.

Tibet will keep to its own path with or without the Dalai Lama, said a Chinese central government official Tuesday.

(Xinhua)

# Arms sale : A wrong decision

Ignoring repeated solemn representations made by China, the U.S. government on Friday notified Congress of its nearly 6.4 billion-U.S.-dollar arms sale

China's internal affairs, seriously undermines China's national security and her national unification cause, and thus inevitably casts a shadow on China-U.S. relations.

relations.

The cross-Strait relationship has started to walk on a path of positive interaction.

The U.S. has said repeatedly that

China-U.S. relationship has maintained forward-moving development, while common interests and cooperation between the two countries have continuously expanded.

That not only brought concrete benefits to the peoples of both nations, but also contributed to world peace and development.

Obviously, the current good situation in China-U.S. relations is a result of no easy effort, and both nations need to take extra care of it.

The global financial situation has been improved, but uncertainties remain.

It requires China, the United States and the international community as a whole to make continuous efforts in a coordinated way.

China-U.S. cooperation is indispensable in solving counter-terrorism, nuclear nonproliferation, climate change and other major international and regional security issues.

The age of our times needs healthy, stable and developing China-U.S. ties.

Defying such a historic trend and making such a wrong decision that undermines China's core interests and the overall situation of China-U.S. cooperation, can't be viewed as a wise action by any responsible government, no matter if it was influenced by residue of the Cold War mentality or the pressure of certain special interests.

China recently has made several solemn representations to the American government on the arms sale issue, asking the U.S. to fully assess the serious damage caused by the sale and to take China's concerns seriously and stop the transaction.

Otherwise, the sale will cause seriously negative effects on China-U.S. exchanges and cooperation in important areas, and ultimately will lead to consequences that neither side wishes to see.

If the U.S. continues to ignore the solemn position made by China and is determined to make the wrong decision to sell arms to Taiwan, it ought to take all the responsibilities for any serious consequence caused by such a decision.

(Xinhua)



package to Taiwan.

The sale is a wrong decision, which not only undermines China's national security interests and her national unification cause, but also once again hurts the national feelings of the Chinese people.

Moreover, it also will cause serious damage to the overall cooperation and relationship between China and the United States.

Frankly speaking, U.S. arms sales to Taiwan have become a chronic disease that has been disturbing China-U.S. ties for a long period of time.

In the August 17 Communiqué jointly issued by China and the United States in 1982, the U.S. said clearly it intended to gradually reduce the sale of arms to Taiwan both in quality and quantity, leading to a final termination of such sales.

Although those words are crystal clear, this time the U.S. once again stubbornly made a wrong decision to plan a new arms sale to Taiwan, seriously violating the principles of three Sino-U.S. joint communiqués, especially those of the August 17 Communiqué.

Such an act violently interferes in

The Taiwan issue is closely related to China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, her core national interests, and the national feelings of the 1.3 billion Chinese people.

The China-U.S. Joint Statement points out that "the fundamental principle of respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity is at the core of the three Sino-U.S. joint communiqués that guide China-U.S. relations.

"Neither side supports any attempt by any force to undermine this principle. The two sides agreed that respecting each other's core interests is extremely important to ensure steady progress in China-U.S. relations." The words are still echoing but the U.S. government broke the promise and acted in a way that seriously undermines the core interests of China.

As a result, it is totally reasonable to suspect the sincerity of U.S. pledges on "respecting each other's core interests." With efforts made by compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, recent years have witnessed more frequent cross-Strait dialogues and exchanges, and closer cross-Strait economic and trade

peace between both sides of the Taiwan Strait is "in the interests of the United States" and it welcomes peaceful development of cross-Strait relations.

It has also said, many times, that it hopes both sides of the Taiwan Strait strengthen their dialogues and interactions in economic, politics and other areas and establish a more positive and stable relationship.

However, while the entire picture of the cross-Strait relations became brighter, the U.S. made a new decision on an arms sale to Taiwan.

The decision not only runs counter to the mainstream will of pursuing development and cooperation among the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, but also exposes the U.S. usage of double standards and hypocrisy on major issues related to China's core interests.

China and the United States, both world powers, have broad common interests and important responsibilities in a series of major issues related to peace and development of each nation and all mankind.

Despite all the ups and downs over the past 30 years, the overall

Kanchanpur.

New Delhi is increasing leveraging its SSB to grab the lands of Nepali nationals residing along the bordering areas.

Nepal has been pathetically cheated in almost every treaty reached with her southern neighbour.

The successive pacts on water resources were also a clear manifestation of the Indian stratagem to formally capture the rivers of Nepal.

Indian ambassador to Nepal Rakesh Sood recently blamed Nepal for opposing the 1950 Treaty without giving any alternative solution to the same.

Of course, the Nepali political leadership has never ever initiated

any national discourse on the said lopsided treaty.

Not surprisingly, the Indian side is capitalizing upon this flippancy of Nepali politicians to bar Nepal from taking independent decision on arms imports time and again.

The controversial Mahakali Treaty has also only facilitated the Indian establishment to fulfill its ulterior motive to capture the Mahakali River.

India has long been reluctance to implement the Pancheswor hydropower project at the cost of Nepal.

According to experts, the Maoists must also mobilize strong public opinion in favour of Nepal's genuine interest in their struggle for national independence.

~ News ~

## Govt preparing to ban import of inverters

The government is preparing to ban the import of inverters citing aggravation in the ongoing power crisis due to overuse of inverters. The energy ministry has written to the supply and commerce ministries to stop the import of inverters Tuesday.

Talking to select journalists at his office Tuesday, energy minister Prakash Sharan Mahat said, we have begun the process to ban import of inverters to prevent the power crisis from worsening.

People are charging batteries using inverters when there is power. This has forced us to increase the load shedding hours. So, we decided to ban the import of inverters for the welfare of those who can't afford to buy inverters.

The ministry has also instructed Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) to stop all leakages. Currently there is a leakage of about 27 percent including technical and non-technical.

According to Shersingh Bhat, director of load dispatch centre at (NEA), 20 percent more power is consumed when it is used through inverters. There is no meaning of load shedding when people start using inverters, he said.

NEA has also mentioned load shedding could be reduced by up to two hours a day at the present rate of supply and demand if the use of inverters is curbed.

Meanwhile, NEA has started importing 30 MW power from India this week. 15 MW power is imported through the Katajya-Duhabi transmission line and another 15 MW is imported through Ramnagar-Gandak transmission line.

The additional electricity is imported at the commercial rate of Rs 10.72 per unit with India's Power Trading Corporation (PTC).

## CIAA bars KMC officials from visiting Japan

The Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) has warned Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) not to send five persons including leaders of the three major political parties to Japan.

The visit has been stopped as it puts additional financial burden to the state coffers at a time when the budget, policy and programmes of the metropolitan is yet to be passed and that it is without an elected body, mentions a press statement issued by the CIAA.

Although, there is a provision that officials visiting a foreign country at the government cost should take permission from the finance ministry, they have not taken the permission.

Those who had planned to visit include Nepali Congress CA member Dhyani Govind Ranjit, Maoist leader Dongol, CPN (UML) leader Basanta Manandhar and two KMC officials.

They were planning to visit Japan for a Photo exhibition.

The commission had also stopped KMC officials to visit US in May last year citing the same reasons.

## Bird flu detected in Pokhara

Tests conducted in a sophisticated lab in London have confirmed suspicion of prevalence of bird flu, the Avian Influenza H5N1 virus, in Pokhara.

Spokesperson at the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Dr Hari Dahal told the media Wednesday, all six samples collected from the poultry farm of a local farmer Gyan Bahadur Khadka tested positive to the H5N1 virus when tested at London's Weybridge Lab.

The samples were sent to London after they tested positive to H5 virus in a test in Nepal. Health authorities had collected the samples for test after about 100 chickens and 38 ducks in Khadka's farm died earlier in January.

Meanwhile, the government has formed a committee headed by Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives Mrigendra Kumar Singh Yadav and directed it to take necessary measures to control the spread of the disease.

A cabinet meeting held Wednesday evening also decided to deploy a Rapid Response Team (RRT) immediately to the affected area and put the area under close surveillance to prevent further spread of the disease.

About 10,000 chickens, ducks and other birds in the area could be killed to prevent the spread of the disease. Dr Dahal said, the ministry is planning to ban movement of poultry products to and from the affected area and that the government is hoping to bring the disease in control within a week.

## British Army chief in Kathmandu

British Army Chief General Sir David Julian Richard arrived on a six-day official visit to Nepal Thursday at the invitation of Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) Chhatraman Singh Gurung.

British Army chief Richard will meet President Ram Baran Yadav, Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, defense minister Bidhya Devi Bhandari and CoAS Gurung during his visit.

He will also visit Nepal Army's training centre for UN peace missions in Panchkhal, Kavre, British Gurkha Welfare Centre in Pokhara and Area Welfare Centre in Kathmandu.



## Tibetan ...

They are grossly engaging themselves to rope the local people into assisting them.

Moreover, the refugees are trying to get help from the poor local people by way of temptations.

It is crystal clear that India, America and other western countries are furtively orchestrating anti-China activities in Nepalese soil.

It is being increasingly felt that even India can well use the Dalai Lama card to bargain with China.

Naturally, China is also very sensitive about the anti-China activities in Nepal. The frequent visits of Chinese officials to Nepal are primarily focused on curbing

such activities.

Nepal has provided shelter to the Tibetan refugees on the basis of humanity and it is simply unpalatable to see them involving in political activities here.

China is moving forward at a blistering pace to carve its distinct image in the global arena. And, the northern neighbour's growing concern about its national security is here to stay.

## Shield ...

the people-to-people relations between the two countries.

The Indian Seema Suraksha Ball (SSB) has exhibited appalling ruthlessness towards the Nepali people dwelling in the bordering areas like Banke, Kailali and



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International :

# Bases, missiles, wars: U.S. consolidates global military network

**A**fghanistan is occupying center stage at the moment, but in the wings are complementary maneuvers to expand a string of new military bases and missile shield facilities throughout

By Rick Rozoff

Second, they supply troops and military equipment for deployments to war and post-conflict zones whenever and wherever required.

and to test new weapons and weapons systems in real-life combat conditions. Not only candidates for NATO membership but all nations in the world



Eurasia and the Middle East.

The advanced Patriot theater anti-ballistic missile batteries in place or soon to be in Egypt, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates describe an arc stretching from the Baltic Sea through Southeast Europe to the Eastern Mediterranean Sea and the Caucasus and beyond to East Asia. A semicircle that begins on Russia's northwest and ends on China's northeast.

Over the past decade the United States has steadily extended its military reach to most all parts of the world. From subordinating almost all of Europe to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization through the latter's expansion into Eastern Europe, including the former Soviet Union, to arbitrarily setting up a regional command that takes in the African continent. From invading and establishing military bases in the Middle East and Central and South Asia to operating a satellite surveillance base in Australia and taking charge of seven military installations in South America. In the vacuum left in much of the world by the demise of the Cold War and the former bipolar world, the U.S. rushed in to insert its military in various parts of the world that had been off limits to it before.

And this while Washington cannot even credibly pretend that it is threatened by any other nation on earth.

It has employed a series of tactics to accomplish its objective of unchallenged international armed superiority, using an expanding NATO to build military partnerships not only throughout Europe but in the Caucasus, the Middle East, North and West Africa, Asia and Oceania as well as employing numerous bilateral and regional arrangements.

The pattern that has emerged is that of the U.S. shifting larger concentrations of troops from post-World War II bases in Europe and Japan to smaller, more dispersed forward basing locations south and east of Europe and progressively closer to Russia, Iran and China.

The ever-growing number of nations throughout the world being pulled into Washington's military network serve three main purposes.

First, they provide air, troop and weapons transit and bases for wars like those against Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq, for naval operations that are in fact blockades by other names, and for regional surveillance.

Last, allies and client states are incorporated into U.S. plans for an international missile shield that will put NATO nations and select allies under an impenetrable canopy of interceptors while other nations are susceptible to attack and deprived of the deterrent effect of being able to retaliate.

The degree to which these three components are being integrated is advancing rapidly. The war in Afghanistan is the major mechanism for forging a global U.S. military nexus and one which in turn provides the Pentagon the opportunity to obtain and operate bases from Southeast Europe to Central Asia.

One example that illustrates this global trend is Colombia. In early August the nation's vice president announced that the first contingent of Colombian troops were to be deployed to serve under NATO command in Afghanistan. Armed forces from South America will be assigned to the North Atlantic bloc to fight a war in Asia. The announcement of the Colombian deployment came shortly after another: That the Pentagon would acquire seven new military bases in Colombia.

When the U.S. deploys Patriot missile batteries to that nation - on its borders with Venezuela and Ecuador - the triad will be complete.

Public relations requirements dictate that concerns about the well-being of the Afghan people, "a stable and secure Afghanistan" and "regional cooperation" be mentioned, but the meeting will in effect be a war council, one that will be attended by the foreign ministers of scores of NATO and NATO partner states.

The Brussels meeting and London conference highlight the centrality that the war in Afghanistan has for the West and for its international military enforcement mechanism, NATO.

During the past few months Washington has been assiduously recruiting troops from assorted NATO partnership program nations for the war in Afghanistan, including from Armenia, Bahrain, Bosnia, Colombia, Jordan, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Ukraine and other nations that had not previously provided contingents to serve under NATO in the South Asian war theater.

Almost as many NATO partner nations as full member states have committed troops for the Afghanistan-Pakistan war.

The Afghan war zone is a colossal training ground for troops from around the world to gain wartime experience, to integrate armed forces from six continents under a unified command,

the U.S. has diplomatic and economic leverage over are being pressured to support the war in Afghanistan.

## Central And South Asia

After the U.S. Operation Enduring Freedom attacks on and subjugation of Afghanistan began in October of 2001 Washington and its NATO allies acquired the indefinite use of air and other military bases in Afghanistan, including Soviet-built airfields. The West also moved into bases in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and with less fanfare in Pakistan and Turkmenistan. It has also gained transit rights from Kazakhstan and NATO conducted its first military exercise in that nation, Zhetyu 2009, last September.

## The Black Sea

The year after Romania was brought into NATO as a full member in 2004 the U.S. signed an agreement to gain control over four bases in Romania, including the Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base. The next year a similar pact was signed with Bulgaria for the use of three military installations, two of them air bases. The Pentagon's Joint Task Force-East conducted nearly three-month-long joint military exercises last summer in Bulgaria and Romania in preparation for deployment to Afghanistan.

In December the Jerusalem Post quoted an unnamed Israeli defense official as saying "The expansion of the war in Afghanistan opens a door for us."

Meanwhile, recent months have seen several senior NATO officials travel to Israel for discussions that reportedly focused on, among other things, how Israel could help NATO troops fight in Afghanistan.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the first Arab country to provide troops to NATO for Afghanistan. It has a partnership arrangement with NATO under provisions of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members.

In a September 17 briefing, Gates said...the United States has already formed a Gulf missile defense network that consisted of PAC-3 and the Aegis sea-based systems. The exact system soon to be deployed in the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean and afterwards the Black Sea.

In addition, the UAE has ordered the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, designed to destroy nuclear missiles in the exoatmosphere.

## Baltic Sea

Poland's Defense Ministry revealed on January 20 that the U.S. will deploy a Patriot Advanced Capability anti-

ballistic missile battery and 100 troops to a Baltic Sea location 35 miles from Russian territory.

In the middle of January the U.S. conducted Beverly Bulldog 10-01 exercises in South Korea which "involved more than 7,200 U.S. airmen at Osan and Kunsan air bases and other points around the peninsula in an air war exercise" and "about 125 soldiers of the U.S. Army's Patriot missile unit in South Korea...."

On January 14 the new government of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama ended Japan's naval refueling mission carried out in support of the U.S. war in Afghanistan since 2001. However, pressure will be exerted on Tokyo particularly by Hillary Clinton, to renege on some capacity.

If support for the war in Afghanistan is linked with deployment of tactical missile shield installations in Israel and Poland, in the first case aimed at Iran and in the second at Russia, the case of Taiwan is even more overt.

Almost immediately after announcements that the U.S. would provide it with over 200 Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles and double the amount of frigates it had earlier supplied, with Taiwan planning to use the warships for Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System upgrades, the nation's China Times newspaper wrote that "Following a recent US-Taiwan military deal, the Obama administration has demanded that Taiwan provide non-military aid for troops in Afghanistan...The US wants Taiwan to provide medical or engineering assistance to US troops in Afghanistan that will be increased..." Dispatching troops to Afghanistan would be too gratuitous an incitement against China (which shares a narrow border with the South Asian nation), but Taiwan will nevertheless be levied to support the war effort there.

With the quickly developing expansion of the Afghanistan-Pakistan war into an Afghanistan-Pakistan-Yemen-Somalia theater, NATO warships are in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean and the U.S. has stationed Reaper drones, aircraft and troops in Seychelles.

After the 2003 invasion of Iraq the Pentagon gained air and other bases in that nation as well as what it euphemistically calls forward operating sites and base camps in Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

In less than a decade the Pentagon and NATO have acquired strategic air bases and ones that can be upgraded to that status in Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania and Romania.

The January 26 Chief of Defense session of NATO's Military Committee with top military leaders of 63 countries attending - while the bloc is waging and escalating the world's largest and longest war thousands of miles away from the Atlantic Ocean - is indicative of the pass that the post-Cold War world has arrived at. Never in any context other than meetings of NATO's Military Committee do the military chiefs of so many nations, practically a third of the world's, gather together.

That the current meeting is dedicated to NATO operations on three continents and in particular to the world's only military bloc's new Strategic Concept for the 21st century - and for the planet - would have been deemed impossible twenty or even ten years ago. As would have been the U.S. and its NATO allies invading and occupying a Middle Eastern and a South Asian nation. And the elaboration of plans for an international interceptor missile system with land, air, sea and space components. In fact, though, all have occurred or are underway and all are integrated facets of a concerted drive for global military superiority.

~ News ~

## Wen pledges support for Copenhagen Accord

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has reiterated his country's support for the Copenhagen Accord and China's commitments to addressing climate change.

In separate replies to letters from Danish Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Wen said the Copenhagen Accord resulting from the UN climate change conference in the Danish capital last year laid the foundation for advancing international cooperation on climate change and pointed the direction for future negotiations.

The document reflected the political will of all parties to actively tackle climate change, upheld the dual-track negotiating mechanism of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, and reaffirmed the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" for developed and developing countries, Wen wrote in the letters dated Friday.

He said China would do its best to honor its commitments on climate change, including a reduction of carbon dioxide emission intensity per unit of GDP by 40 to 45 percent by 2020 against 2005 levels, an increase to 15 percent of non-fossil fuels in the country's total primary energy mix by 2020, and an increase of 40 million hectares of forest and 1.3 billion cubic meters of forest volume by 2020 from 2005 levels.

Wen said China will continue to play an active and constructive role and work jointly with the international community for a meaningful conclusion of the Bali Roadmap negotiations at the Mexico climate talks with a comprehensive, effective and binding outcome that will reinforce the implementation of the convention and the protocol.

(Xinhua)

## Thousands in Tokyo protest US military presence

Thousands of protesters from across Japan marched Saturday in central Tokyo to protest the U.S. military presence on Okinawa, while a Cabinet minister said she would fight to move a Marine base Washington considers crucial out of the country.

Some 47,000 U.S. troops are stationed in Japan, with more than half on the southern island of Okinawa. Residents have complained for years about noise, pollution and crime around the bases.

Japan and the U.S. signed a pact in 2006 that called for the realignment of American troops in the country and for a Marine base on the island to be moved to a less populated area. But the new Tokyo government is re-examining the deal, caught between increasingly adamant public opposition to American troops and its crucial military alliance with Washington.

On Saturday, labor unionists, pacifists, environmentalists and students marched through central Tokyo, yelling slogans and calling for an end to the U.S. troop presence. They gathered for a rally at a park - under a banner that



read "Change! Japan-U.S. Relations" - for speeches by civil leaders and politicians.

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has repeatedly postponed his decision on the pact, with members of his own government divided on how to proceed. Last week he pledged to resolve the conundrum by May, just before national elections.

"The Cabinet is saying that it will announce its conclusion in May. For this reason, over the next few months we must put all of our energy into achieving victory," Cabinet minister Mizuho Fukushima said at the rally, to shouts of approval from the crowd.

Fukushima - who has a minor post in the Cabinet and heads a small political party - wants the base moved out of Japan entirely. Hatoyama's government must appease such political allies to maintain its majority coalition in parliament, and the public are increasingly vociferous on the U.S. military issue, even outside of Okinawa.

"I'm against having troops here. I'm not sure we can get them all out, but at least some of them should leave," said Seichiro Terada, 31, a government tax collector who attended the rally.

Terada said he traveled from his home in the central prefecture of Shizuoka, which hosts a Marine base at the foot of Mt. Fuji.

The deal with Washington calls for the Marine base in a crowded part of Okinawa to be moved to a smaller city called Nago. But last week residents of Nago elected a new mayor who opposes the move, ousting the incumbent that supported a U.S. military presence.

On the other side of the debate, a steady stream of U.S. officials have petitioned Tokyo to follow the agreement and maintain American troop levels in Japan, with U.S. Ambassador John Roos on Friday calling them "front-line forces" in case of emergencies or security threats.

# The Context of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts of Nepal

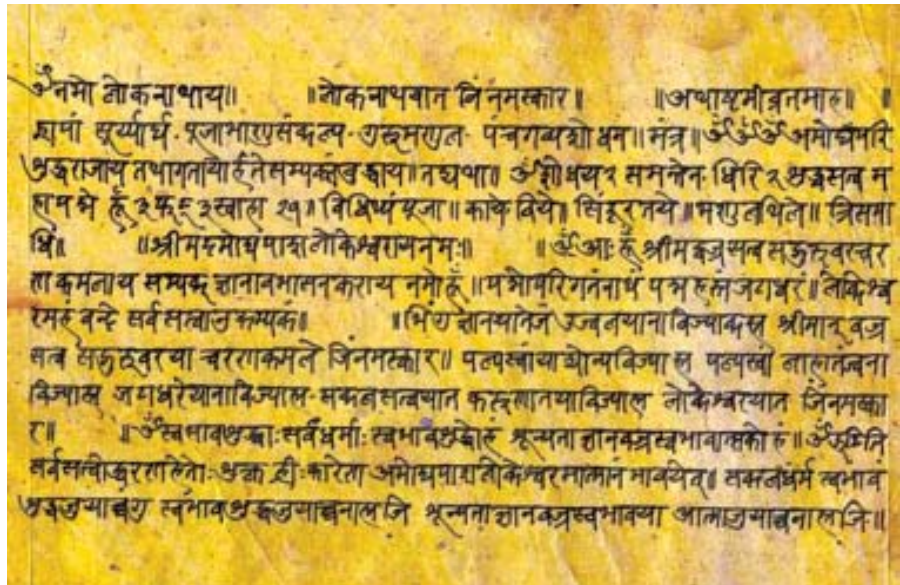
Nepal's contribution in the development of Buddhism is enormous. No other countries in the globe are comparable in

rendered most significant contribution in the development of Mahāyāna tradition. The fact that entire body of Buddhist Sanskrit

that Nepal holds even today. Although a few Sanskrit manuscripts have been the world. As a matter of fact, thousands of Buddhist scholars studied and worked on

London, Bodleian Library, India Institute at Oxford, University of London, British Library, British Museum, India Office Library, Osmolian Museum in London, Library of Congress, IASWR – N.Y. (now defunct), Japanese universities such as - Tokyo, Taisho, Toyo, Tohoku, Kyoto, Tokai, Ryukoku, Komazawa, Risho, Bukkyo, Hanazono, the Toyo Bunko and the Buddhist Library, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Societe Asiatique and Centre Civilization de Indienne in France, University of Berlin, university of Hamberg, Oriental Institute – St. Petersburg, Schoyen Collection, Norway, various monasteries in Tibet, and Lu shun museum and other research centers, Universities and institutes in China. Thus, Nepalese manuscripts exist in various countries at present.

Sanskrit manuscripts and titles of Sanskrit Buddhist texts. In fact, Buddhist manuscripts preserved in Nepal are very important asset to disseminate knowledge without which study of authentic Mahāyāna Buddhism is not possible. The themes of manuscripts are other important aspects. Buddhist literatures preserved in Nepal cover wide range of themes. These manuscripts are



the context of Buddhist manuscripts. This contribution itself lies in the preservation of enormous body of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts written in Newārī scripts (*Pracalit, Ranjanā, Bhujimola, Kumola* etc.) in full texts in tact for more than ten centuries in Nepal, which now provides opportunity to the world to study authentic Mahāyāna Buddhism. This is the priceless gift of Nepal to the world community. As a matter of fact, Nepal's role in global Buddhism is prominent.

manuscripts written in Newārī scripts, which has more than 1200 separate books of Sūtra, Vinaya, Tantra, Mantra, Dhāraṇī, Stotra, Purāna, Jātaka, Avadāna, Pujā, Vidhi, Vidhāna, and other profane title categories) of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhist tradition preserved since thousand years, among other things, attest Nepal's contribution in the development of Buddhism. The literary tradition is the most significant aspect of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

recovered in Gilgit, Gāndhāra and various part of Central Asian region, however, they are fragments only. On contrary, Buddhist texts preserved in Nepal are abundant and full text in contents. The expansion of Mahāyāna tradition in

Nepalese Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts. Consequently, Buddhist scholars in many countries have done significant works on Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts. Thousands of titles on have already been published around the world in various forms taking a larger

The Muslim invasion of India in the 12<sup>th</sup> century has direct relationship with the development of Buddhist manuscript culture in Nepal. As the fugitive Indian monks took shelter in Nepal to escape Muslim invasion, Nepal became a great meeting point for Indian and Tibetan Buddhist Masters. For over thousand years, Nepal received a steady flow of cultural influences from India directly connected with Buddhism. Finally, it helped Nepal to turn into a repository of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts. Buddhism as a body of knowledge and a scholarly tradition among other things such as religious or philosophical traits developed through passing varied historical and regional contexts

Buddhism has two literary traditions – Pālī and Sanskrit literature. Both the traditions hold enormous texts in the entire body of sacred literature. Sanskrit Buddhist texts are prominent in the Northern Buddhist countries where as Pālī is the language of Theravada Buddhism prevailing in the Southern countries. The Muslim invasion of India provided ample opportunity for Nepal to develop a large corpus of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts. From the very beginning, Nepal had established relations with Nālandā, Vikramūḷa, Odāntapūrī and other eminent Buddhist communities. After the Muslim invasion in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a large number of expatriate monks from Northern India arrived in



Northern countries encouraged the visiting monastic to procure Sanskrit manuscripts in Nepal and take to their countries. With the growth of Buddhism in those areas, Buddhist scholars translated Sanskrit texts into local languages. Consequently, a vast corpus of Buddhist literature exist in Tibetan (Kangyur and Tengyur), Chinese (Chinese Tripitaka and Agamas), Korean (*Taejānggyong* <Tripitaka Koreana>) and Japanese. All these literatures are translated from original Sanskrit texts. However, in some places, local

share in the development of knowledge. The scholarly as well as philosophical and religious value of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts finally led to their movement out of Nepalese. Hodgson alone collected 381 bundles of Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts which contained 200 independent titles. His collection contained thousands of volumes of manuscripts. However, he distributed his collection to Asiatic society of Bengal, India Office Library and Royal Asiatic Society in London, Societe Asiatique and Prof. Eugene Burnouf in Paris,

Library. Finally, entire manuscripts were transferred to the National Archives. It is a very good manuscript collection in Nepal. Similarly, Āsā Archive (Āsā Saphū Kutūh) is a public manuscript archive in Kathmandu. It also has a very good collection of Sanskrit manuscripts. In addition, there are other libraries which also contain Sanskrit manuscripts. The works and activities of the Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Method (NIEM) in Lalitpur, is very significant. NIEM is a Buddhist institute which has constantly been engaged in digitization of Buddhist Sanskrit texts as well as Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts. It's Director Mr. Min Bahadur Shakya, a renowned Buddhist scholar in Nepal, has devoted his efforts to create scanned copies of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts scattered in individual and Vihara collections.

Tibet have rendered enormous contribution in this field. This writer has assumed that more than 2500 titles have already been published in the form of books, articles, text critical remarks, reviews, research reports, seminar proceedings, catalogues, translations, Ph. D. and M. A. theses and so on until now. On the other hand, the repositories of manuscripts contributed to the publication of hundreds of catalogues in Nepal and abroad. The publication of scholarly works on manuscripts and catalogues of manuscript holdings corroborate their religious and academic values. Based on these aspects of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts, Nepal's contribution in the development of philosophical and scholarly tradition of Buddhism is incomparable. Literary tradition of the Buddhist Newārīs is the most remarkable aspect of Nepalese Buddhism that has greater value in the entire philosophical and Cultural aspects of Mahāyāna/ Vajrayāna Buddhism around the world in general and Northern Buddhist countries in particular.



particularly in the countries where Mahāyāna tradition is predominant. Thus, the huge mass of literary resources and contents of Buddhist Buddhism has played most prominent role in the development and expansion of scholastic tradition of Buddhism. Nepal, as the centre of Buddhist intellectual tradition, has

Nepal, who later contributed in the proliferation as well as study of Sanskrit Buddhist texts in Nepal. It led Nepal to turn into a warehouse of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts. The preservation of Buddhist Sanskrit literature in the form of manuscript folios written in Newārī scripts is the greatest and most precious property

Buddhist Masters also wrote apocryphal Sutras which are equally important in local Buddhist traditions. After Brian H. Hodgson has discovered Nepal as the warehouse of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it drew attention of the entire Buddhist and Sanskrit scholars around

and Oriental Institute in St. Petersburg. Later, many collectors procured manuscripts in Nepal which they took to their countries. At present, Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts are deposited at the Royal Asiatic Society – Calcutta, Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies – Sarnāth (Vārānāsi), Royal Asiatic Society –

Due to the significance of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts to study and practice Buddhism, researchers have constantly been working on philology and other pertinent aspects of Nepalese manuscripts. Similarly, this researcher has also been concerned with preparing a bibliography of works based on

[\*Dean- Lumbini University, Kathmandu, Nepal] [drsthapa5721@yahoo.com](mailto:drsthapa5721@yahoo.com)