

## Arrest disarray



Rahul Singhaniya (centre), son of murdered media entrepreneur Arun Singhaniya returning back after death ritual of his father in Janakpur on Tuesday. (Inset Arun Singhaniya)

### WM Correspondent

The brutal assassination of yet another media entrepreneur Arun Singhaniya, which came in less than one month of the murder of media

baron Jamim Shah, has further evoked a chill of fear in the country's media industry.

Singhaniya was publisher of Janakpur Today and chairman of

Radio Today.

A year back, Uma Singh, journalist associated with Radio Today was also horrendously murdered.

The series of unabated assaults

against the media professionals has exposed the gross inefficacy of the state's security measures.

Editors of the major media condemned the murder of Singhaniya. Terming the killing of him was a fearsome form of cowardice and criminalities, the editors said they would never surrender press freedom which has been established as the legacy and symbol of people's rights.

The editors also blamed the government's insensitive passivity and total lack of accountability for helping criminals to boost their intent that media would deviate from its duty amidst increasing insecurity.

Similarly, an unidentified gang opened fire at Lajimpat on Tuesday targeting the owner of Bharatpur Medical College Nagendra Pampad. Pampad, however, managed to escape unhurt.

The latest incidents have also given ample space to suspect whether the much-hyped special security plan is just a subterfuge to hoodwink general people.

Although the incidents of violence were on decreasing trend for the last

few months ago, the law and order situation has suddenly started to exacerbate nowadays.

Apart from the media fraternity, the businessmen based in Kathmandu are being threatened by various armed groups.

The nefarious gangs are using tools like email, letters and telephone calls to issue threat to the business community by asking for hefty amount.

More than seven well-known businessmen from the Marwari community have received threatening calls from both national and international criminals.

The community lately warned that they would be compelled to quit if the government failed to beef up security to protect their lives and investment.

Some believe that the government's failure to nab the culprits of the murderer of Shah has only contributed in boosting the morale of the criminals.

The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), the apex

organization of Nepal's business community, stated that they would think of establishing their own arm unit if the government failed to arrest disarray in security with the sense of urgency.

What is most worrisome is that even the Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal expressed his helplessness to address the increasing threats against businessmen.

NCC (Nepal Chambers of Commerce) president Surendra Bir Malakar told the media that the insensitivity on the part of the government towards the alarmingly deteriorating security had made the business community highly pessimistic.

Between 2006 and 2007, about 70 businessmen were abducted and most of them were freed after they paid hefty ransom.

Realizing this fact, the government must reverse the declining law and order situation to inject the much needed sense of security in both the business community and general people.

## Major priorities in the doldrums



### WM Correspondent

Despite repeated talks among major political parties to settle the ongoing political stalemate, there has been any positive result.

The festering deficit of trust is attributed to the prevalent political imbroglio, which is responsible for myriad of anomalies besetting the whole nation.

The parties are so indulged in fulfilling their respective myopic interests that they are increasingly shying away from coming together for the sake of urgent national priorities.

The non-Maoist parties harbor anxiety that the Maoists are plotting to capture the state power by mobilizing the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

It is this apprehension that has propelled the non-Maoist parties to gang up against the Maoists and clamour for the early integration and rehabilitation of the PLA.

On the other hand, the Maoist stalwarts are maintaining that it will be foolhardy to complete the integration process until the drafting of a new constitution is guaranteed.

The formal rebels are more inclined towards changing the current coalition in their favour.

Maoist supreme Puspa Kamal Dahal has time and again claimed that the scripting of a "people-oriented" stature is simply impossible if his party continues to remain outside the government.

As the political parties seem more obsessed with fulfilling their parochial interests, the timely draft of a new constitution and logical conclusion of the peace process is becoming elusive, to say the least.

## Precarious planning

### WM correspondent

The manual passport, to be issued beginning from April 1, will no longer be valid for the international immigration.

Unfortunately, the government has till now not decided anything concrete to fulfill this obligation, set by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

If the country misses the deadline, Nepali migrant workers, apart from others, will suffer heavily. Every day some 600 Nepalis leave the country for foreign employment.

Undeniably, the country's shaky economy, which is keeping itself afloat owing to remittances, will also receive a major blow with obstructions in the departure of Nepali migrant workers.

The inflow of remittances has been very important to sustain the disproportional rise in imports and widening balance of payment of the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already cancelled the bidding process for printing machine readable passport (MRP) in an abrupt manner.

And, the seemingly shady proposal forwarded by Minister of Foreign Affairs



Sujata Koirala to award the contract of printing MRP to Indian government owned agency invited flak even due to security reasons.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) directed the government to revive the cancelled bidding process instead of awarding the contract to the Indian agency that offered US \$ 4 for printing each passport.

The four companies that were initially short-listed during the bidding process for printing the MRP include Gemulto Oy (Finland), Sagem Securities (France), 3m Technologies (Singapore) and Aberthur Technology (France).

Strangely, minister Koirala has grumbled that she would not comply with the order of the PAC to revive the bidding process.

She ambiguously argued, "Nepal must fulfill its political commitment to the southern neighbour".

Koirala seems so hysterically eager to please the southern neighbour through the contract of MRP that she had totally failed to justify her decision to nullify the due bidding process.

On the other hand, a Malaysian company has forwarded a proposal to print one passport at US \$ 3.75 and an Indonesian company has offered US \$ 3.50 for the same.

But, the foreign ministry has not held any discussion regarding these relatively inexpensive offers.

The cabinet has decided to allow the foreign ministry to hold any bilateral and multilateral discussion regarding the MRP as the time is running out to meet the April 1 deadline.

The PAC decision is however clear that the contract should not be awarded to India.

The foreign ministry is now in a fix over whether it should comply with the PAC or the cabinet.

There should be no iota of doubt that lack of proper planning on the part of foreign ministry has triggered the unwarranted MRP row.

## Looming economic crisis

### WM Correspondent

It was expected that the cash crunch in the banking system would ease with the increment in development expenditure beginning from mid-February.

But, the liquidity crisis continues to dog the banking system as the development expenditure has failed to pick up a required pace.

Institutional depositors such as Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) are demanding more interest rate from the banks. New lending is virtually zero. Inter bank lending rate is as high as 11 percent. The banks with limited

treasury bills are finding it hard even to get money from the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB). The new banks have limited treasury bills.

Despite strict measures on gold import, there has not been any desirable result.

The excessive of import of the precious yellow metal has been the major factor behind the augmentation of the balance of payment deficit, which is now as high as Rs. 19 billion.

It has been assumed that the gold imported in Nepal is being increasingly smuggled to India due to price differences between the two countries,



which has subsequently barred the flow of the Indian currency back to the Nepal's banking system.

Likewise, it is also suspected that the Indian currency of 500 and 1000 denominations have not flowed to the country's banking system as the banks don't accept such notes and they are stored with individuals.

Amidst such a grave situation, the government has failed to appoint even a governor of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) to systematize the major economic and financial components.

A recent NRB supervision report found out the inability of many banks

to manage liquidity properly has resulted in the emanation of various anomalies in the country's economy.

Exports continue to go downhill whereas imports are surging causing a huge trade deficit of Rs. 128 billion, which is more than double of Rs. 61 billion recorded in fiscal year 2007/08.

Inflation is augmenting ceaselessly. Specially, the prices of food items have skyrocketed, making the lives of ordinary people more difficult.

The steps taken by the finance ministry and the NRB to tide over economic disorder have failed to yield significant results so far.

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Editor : Prem Kumari Pant

Sub-Editor : Nirjal Dhungana

Prithvi Man Shrestha

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Printed at : Dhimle Printing Press, Dillibazar

Email: weeklymirror@ntc.net.np

weeklymirror@gmail.com

## Editorial

# Energy crisis

The country's economy is reeling under the yoke of prolonged load-shedding hours.

Production of industries in the Birgunj-Pathlaiya Industrial Corridor has been hit hard by the 11-hour load-shedding imposed by the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

Production in the corridor nosedived by 80 percent compared to the past due to alarming load-shedding.

There are over 200 small and big industries in the corridor.

Industrialists are suffering a loss of over Rs. 100 million in a day due to this crisis.

During the last fiscal year, load-shedding caused loss of a whopping Rs 7000 crore in production capacity. Likewise, the year saw a transaction of inverters and batteries worth Rs 3 billion. No surprise, it also wrecked havoc with the already fragile economy.

However, hydropower experts still believe there is still a huge potential for the world's second largest country in water resource to exploit the same to completely eradicate the perennial power deficit.

According to them, the government to pencil a fine tuned separate policy to permanently tide over the reoccurring energy crisis.

The demand of electricity in the dry season stands at 1000 MW. Similarly, the production of 2000 MW is required for the next 5 years and for the coming 20 years, the country demands 5000 MW of electricity.

During the dry season, the production of electricity plummets by more than a half in comparison to the rainy season.

Currently, some 11 hydropower projects with capacity to generate 1200 MW within 5 years are under construction.

The construction of two projects, the 1000-MW Kaligandaki and the 127 MW Damauli Seti should be commenced at the soonest in order to resolve the problem of load-shedding.

Different hydro-power promoters have already acquired licenses for various projects along the Kaligandaki.

The country has also begun to receive some US \$ 10 billion for the construction of many hydro projects that include, Upper Karnali (900 MW), Arun (900 MW), Tamakoshi Third (800 MW), Upper Marsyandri (600 MW), Kaligandaki Third (250 MW) and Likhu (120 MW), among others.

According to hydro experts, the storage of huge volumes of water during the monsoon season with dams built in open and flat areas in the foothills of the high Himalayas, with the water to be used during the dry season by hydro-power projects located in the lower regions can also address the acute power shortage.

The country faces acute power shortage mainly in the dry season as all the hydro-power projects except Kulekhani are built on the run-of-river model.

With the help of such storage, even the existing run-of-river projects can perform like storage projects to some extent, the experts argue.

In the light of this backdrop, it can be said that the prudent approach to harness the immense water potential can shield the country from a devastating darkness

# Economy in the lurch!

By Prem Kumari Pant

At present it has become a very common state policy of obtaining loans from other countries and multi-lateral agencies and also from internal resources through circulation of debenture of loans.

Revenue generated from the public is the main source of income for the government. Receiving of dividend from public enterprises, grants, issue of money and national debt are the basic sources of public revenue. National debt is basically the instrument of fiscal policy. The government adopts this policy to bridge the gap for deficit, financing, maintain equitable distribution of resources, repay the debt and to meet contingent expenses. Government cannot raise national debt without seeking the approval of the parliament. The government should follow certain legal provisions, rules and regulations for collection of public debt. Actually national debt is not desirable and it has negative effect over economy if government raises it. The debt is desirable only if it is invested in productive purposes and nothing more.

The constraints of foreign loans have created quite complicated and burdensome problems for the poor nations that are marching along the line of planned economy, although they are not deriving the desired fruits from the same. Developing countries are so badly pressed under the burden of foreign loans that even the amount of interest payable on the principal amount itself has become bigger than what their whole income amounts to. The tragedy has been assuming still graver dimensions because of the mounting burden of these loans almost every year.

If we analyze the situation in Nepal, she has been paying the principal and interest of past debt continuously. The government has plan to pay Rs. 19.01 billion (6.65 %) of total budget this year to foreign donors.

The government, on the other hand, borrows money from internal sources and pays heavy amount for repayment of interest and principal on another. All these activities only add up to the burden of public debt. Nepal's internal debt has crossed over Rs. 120 billion.

Nepal is one of the world's least developed countries. Although the public borrowings are aimed at development purposes, they have been directed towards unproductive sectors and purposes in reality. National debt is required to increase productive capacity of the nation. This kind of loan is desirable for mobilization of internal resources, to promote savings, to meet deficit financing, among others. But this seems to be only to follow the tradition and meet contingent expenditures. The burden of public debt is increasing every year. Generally, when any country would default on payment, cannot repay debt according to contract schedule or should raise debt for debt repayment then it is going to be long trapped. Due to the problems like long-term repayment schedule, misdirection of debt, devaluation of Nepalese currency in terms of dollar interest, cost of external debt has also been mounting. If national development and growth of the economy as projected by the plan is easily attained this amount is not a big problem. Contrary to this, if the problem of the economy including political problem remains as it is, the burden of public debt will be matter of headache and nation may lose her credibility.

Alarming, recurrent expenditure has been going up in recent years. This happened due to a lack of proper financial system in the conflict-hit economy. Donors are concerned that external assistance is being siphoned-off to no-development sector, which demands that the system of service delivery have to be thought again.

When we try to discuss the rapidly deteriorating economic condition of the country our minds get stuck to one very

prominent factor which can most appropriately be regarded as the main cause of this painful situation. It is the lack of political will to face the problem.

It would be wrong to presume that we so badly lack in means and resources, which can bring about healthy readjustment in the situation. Our resources are enormous and so is the case with means. But misuse of the same has reached such a stage that they are appearing to be only inadequate to meet the challenges.

There is, of course, no denying the fact that Nepal has been obtaining considerable amount of assistance from various friendly countries and international donor agencies in its lofty task of national development. But the point is to what extent these assistances, loans and grants have been utilized on the implementation of development tasks and what portion of the aid is being utilized on the maintenance of the advisors and technicians provided to us from the donor countries. The statistic compiled with regard to these aids clearly reveals that a huge portion of these aids has been spent on meeting different expenditures of the foreign advisers and technicians. The difficulty on the part of Nepal is that it cannot object to these practices only because of it being the beneficiary country.

There may not have been much economic miracles in the rest of the country but the improvement in the living standards of the ruling political class have been breaking taking.

The scarcities and market prices have both played havoc with the government doing nothing except in consolidation and aggrandizing the personal prerogatives, perks and economic gains without caring even the least for those in whose name they are enjoying the bumper crops of democracy. Political parties leaders must put their right hand in their heart and ask themselves the question

whether their tactics are going to serve any cause of the country and people. But the tragedy is that while loans and aids have been flooding on the country, the return is almost zero.

Economic growth rate is an ultimate calibrator of the overall economic performance of a country. It is highly intertwined with the existing level of macroeconomic infrastructures such as employment, productivity, technology, prudent financial system and so forth. Sustained development of such infrastructures is essential in pursuing and accelerating the growth rate; however, it needs considerable amount of time, patience and energy coupled with the strongest unified determination of all concerned sectors including governing and opposition political parties, executing government and private industries.

Macroeconomic indicators of Nepal are currently reeling under the yoke of sustained political instability, energy crisis, frequent strikes and unfavourable weather conditions.

In the past five years, the average 2.14 percent GDP growth rate of Nepal has been well below 70 percent of South Asian average of 7.26 percent - the lowest among other South Asian countries. The highest GDP growth rate of 14.86 was secured by Afghanistan even during the conflict years especially due to flooding of foreign money. Another country which was too hit by insurgency-Sri Lanka, also maintained its average GDP growth rate of 5.7 percent.

GDP is used to measure total economic activity in a country and considered as a yardstick for measuring economic achievements. The indicator is highly related with the productivity outcome which, apart from other technical factors, is affected by social attitudes towards works, work ethics, unionization and perhaps most importantly, trainings.

It is important to remember that

## Political milieu of the country

*Nepali people are literally eager to see the political parties working in unison to lay the groundwork for a peaceful and prosperous country.*

*To harbor yearning for a better future after being dismally disregarded for long is absolutely justifiable. Particularly after the restoration of democracy in 1990, the political parties ceaselessly deluded the poor denizens to quench their gluttonous appetite for power.*

*Thus, the post 1990 political scenario was fraught with the filthy competition amongst the major parties to brazenly bamboozle the country and its people to relish the luxuries of power. Top of all, the already despondent and suffered people had to reel under the yoke of bloody conflict for a decade.*

*However, the more or less successful accomplishment of historic event of the CA election has renewed the sabotaged hope of the people that the better days are waiting. But, unfortunately, the lack of a common and clear vision amongst the major parties about the country's future political course is not a good omen.*

*The way the parties are behaving has given rise to a political uncertainty coupled with a constitutional crisis.*

*It appears apparent that every party is indulging in self-centric agendas and interests. The fear that the people's aspirations for peace and prosperity might once again get ridiculed is looming large.*

*Barring aside the incongruence besetting the national politics, the country is falling in the quagmire of economic problems.*

*With the export business at its lowest ebb, the trade deficit is just getting more vicious. Manufacturing industries are fast losing their competitive edge and the import volume is declining at an alarming rate.*

*The flow of business investment has taken a nosedive and the trend of Nepali youths going outside to seek menial jobs is accelerating.*

*In order to annul all these plights, the synergistic and collective endeavour of major political actors is mandatory. But, the same appears elusive, at least for now, with the prime parties diverting more energy and time towards the relatively petty issues.*

*Needless to reiterate, the country is now in dire need of coherent, compromising and concentrated tendency of political parties. The onset of a very deep discord between the parties will only inimical to the entire endeavours aimed towards propelling the nation towards the path of sustainable peace and prosperity.*

*The vacuum of the sense of common goal and purpose amongst our political tycoons is the prime reason for a host of problems dogging the nation. Despite knowing the fact that the nation might face a big disaster if a new constitution is not drafted in a stipulated time frame, the political parties are still indulging themselves in dirty politics.*

*The saggingness of Nepali leaders to forge an understanding on any prickly issue unmasked the lack of their earnestness to proceed with constitution-drafting process in time.*

*If the chieftains of parties continue to worship power and position as their ultimate goal, the nation is sure to plunge into an irreversible disaster, forget about writing the new constitution before the May 2010 deadline.*

Nepal's labour force, in most cases, not only lacks well qualified technical training but also is highly influenced by politics. This is not to argue that labour unions should refrain from ideological inclination; but, should rather be seriously considering the extraordinarily declined output of industrial performances due to series of protests, bandhs, chakka jams, strikes, extortions, abductions and so forth. Industrial performance guarantees job sustainability and employment growth. For an agrarian economy like Nepal where agriculture provides employment to about 76 percent of the 2.6 million population, it accounts for more than 32 percent of the GDP.

Nepal has historically been poor in equitable development of physical infrastructures including transportation and telecommunications that are essential for economy to grow rapidly; and, on top of that the decade long insurgency has virtually damaged a significant proportion of the existing ones. Sustained political instability has, time and again, shaken the business confidence of local businessmen and foreign investors are found reluctant to invest in Nepal. As a result, total unemployment rate in Nepal still stands at 12 percent. According to the latest Labour Force Survey 2008, the underemployment in urban area stands at 50 percent. However, the bigger trouble is the consumer price inflation, which is now hovering around 11 percent. Despite decrease in inflation to single digit for three months, it also went up to double digit for last two months. Earlier, the inflation had remained at double digit for continuous 15 months.

Remittances is, the money sent back home by the Nepalese abroad, contributing about 30 percent of their total earnings, is the primary source for most of the households. But, the recent decrease in the growth in remittance flow has caused havoc in the banking system leading to liquidity crunch. Their bad practice of excessive lending against deposits is also responsible for cash crunch facing the banking system. Even after the injection of Rs. 23 billion by Nepal Rastra Bank, the banks are still feeling hit and have failed to lend to the projects.

The country's trade deficit is rising alarming in the recent days with increased imports and decreased exports causing balance of payment deficit of Rs. 19 billion in first five months of the current fiscal year. There is no environment for booming exports. The export industries specially garment, carpet and others are facing numerous problems including lack of electricity, strikes and labour problems. Garment entrepreneurs say they are not risking taking order from the buyers due to uncertain situation at home for demanded garments.

The nation has been marching along the path of planned development for more than 53 years. Notwithstanding this phenomenal record in the planned development sector our achievement are not at all commensurate with the huge investments made in the implementation of these plans. Rather on the country, the demand for foreign aid has continued to mount. The plans have been completed and the success thereof is judge on the basis of the assumption of the disbursement and spending of the full budget allocated for them. The result of this practice is that our dependence on other has continued to increase and the economic condition of the country also continued to deteriorate in a manner far out proportioning the development investments. It will not be any exaggeration to maintain that the number of those countrymen who were compelled to live below the subsistence level has now been increasing day by day.

The main need therefore is to bring about a basic change in the entire policy of implementation the economic growth programs. The major stress is to be laid on improving the indigenously available resources.

# The architect of Adivasi misery

The India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who is also known as the architect of modern India, once said, "Dams are

By Gladson Dungdung

the tribal development. But does his panchsheel work for the Adivasis? Of the folk songs and dances of the Adivasis were romanticized to some



the temples of modern India." According to him, the big dams would address the issues of hunger and poverty of India. Unfortunately, the big dams only created pains, sufferings and sorrows to the owners (mostly the Adivasis: the indigenous people of India) of the lands, which were submerged by the temples of modern India. Similarly, the big steel companies like Heavy Engineering Corporation, Bokaro Steel Limited, and the mining industry created only misery for the Adivasis. Consequently, the Adivasis became landless, daily wage labourers and servants of the bigwigs after losing their land, forest, water and other livelihood resources.

Ironically, the architect of modern India did not create space for the Adivasis in their own modern country. He only inspired them to add more sufferings to their lives for the sake of national interest, saying, "If you are to suffer, you must suffer in the interest of the country." Perhaps, the Adivasis never knew what that meant, because they have always suffered for the national interest but never enjoyed the fruits, or given place in history or remembered in the holy land of martyrs in the Nation's capital. Needless to say, the architect of modern India did not even bother to count the people who have suffered. Nearly 50 million have sacrificed everything for the national interest: Among them 40 percent are Adivasis, 20 percent are Dalits and rest 40 percent are the people of other backward classes. Indeed, the elites have never suffered for the national interest as they are born only to enjoy the fruit. And of course the country protects them in every manner possible.

However, when the issues of the Adivasis are discussed, Nehru is always remembered for his 'Panchsheel for tribal development', which is also called the five pillars of

course, it does not. In fact, Nehru himself went against the principles of Panchsheel and so did the Congress party and other Indian rulers. The history suggests that some policies were made only to close the Adivasi mouths. According to Vincent Ekka of the Indian Social Institute, whenever the Adivasis protest against unjust policies of the state, they are given a taste of the fruit, like some rights on paper, to keep them muzzled like dogs. Obviously, Nehru's Panchsheel is the best in principle but the worst in practice as it was made for keeping Adivasis silent.

**Non-imposition:** The first pillar of Panchsheel says that the Adivasis should be allowed to progress according to their own pace and understanding of the situation. In principle, it seems to be very good but practically, the Indian government went against it. The most important question is, how can you ask the Adivasis to go with their pace and understanding if you snatch their livelihood resources in the name of the national interest and then do not provide them with support? The idea of Nehru was just like a day dream. The fact is the Adivasis' indigenous method of development was never counted by people of the mainstream society. The corporate development model was imposed on them instead. The Indian rulers never walk their talk for the Adivasis. In the last 6 decades, many policies have been made, which displaced, dispossessed and deprived the Adivasis from their livelihood resources and rehabilitation was never a concern for the government. They were much too concerned about the corporate houses.

**Respect of tribal customs:** The second pillar of Panchsheel also did not work because the Adivasi tradition, culture and customs were never accepted by the Aryan invaders. Only

extant - but the tradition, culture and ethos, which are based on community living, equality for all and a need-based economy were always neglected, depicted as vulgar and destroyed in many ways. Similarly, the Adivasis religion was never recognized by the Indian constitution - though, many other religions emerging much later in India, were. As a result, thousands of the Adivasis accepted other religions, and religious unity was created among them and thousands of their sacred groves were destroyed in the name of 'development'. Where is the principle of Panchsheel buried?

3. Development of tribal youth: The third pillar speaks about the leadership of the Adivasis. But the fact of the matter is the Adivasi leadership is not acceptable to the so-called people of the mainstream Indian society. For example, history proves that the Adivasi legend Baba Tilka Manjhi was the first man to fight against the Britishers in 1780 and subsequently hanged, but he was not recognized by historians of the mainstream. Similarly, other Adivasi leaders: Sidho-Kanhu, Birsu Munda, Fulio-Jhano, Nilambar-Pitambar and many others fought against the British government but they, too, were not given their deserved space in India's history. Therefore, the Nehru's third pillar doesn't make any sense to the Adivasis. As far as the Adivasis are concerned, they have always groomed, inspired and promoted youth leadership in their community.

**Simplicity of Administration:** The fourth pillar of Panchsheel seems to be very good idea as the Adivasis' strong traditional system of self-governance (TSG) exists even today. The Britishers were not able to destroy it, so they accepted it and made laws for its protection and promotion. Ironically, the rulers of modern India, including Nehru,

did not accept the Adivasis' TSG. Instead, he preferred the voluntary agencies for carrying out development work in the Adivasi regions. The Adivasis' traditional self-governance was not accepted precisely because it was a biggest threat to the authorities of Indian rulers. Though the Indian constitution has some provisions for the Adivasi regions as 5th and 6th schedules, there was never any attempts to strengthen their traditional self-governance. In fact, the Indian rulers wanted the Adivasi regions under their control - so they imposed legislation - Forest Acts, Laws to protect wildlife, land-related Laws, mining Acts and various civil as well as criminal laws. Finally, they captured the natural resources of these regions and exploited it as much as they could.

**Emphasis on human growth:** The fifth pillar of Panchsheel emphasizes human growth in terms of living standards, which is appreciable. But as far as the Adivasis are concerned, they are not even accepted today as human. They are always portrayed as uncivilized, sub-human, demons, forest-dwellers and mindless people. The Aryans invaders never treated the Adivasis as equal human beings. The Adivasis are always racially discriminated, exploited and dispossessed. The question is, if you take away the livelihood resources of Adivasis without providing them alternatives, discriminate against them and treat them like sub-humans then how can you expect their human growth? The Adivasi regions lack education, health facilities, drinking water, sanitation and shelter - even today, due to the deliberate inhuman treatment of Adivasis by the Indian rulers.

Undoubtedly, Nehru is the architect of modern India, but it is also the fact that his modern temples of India, industrialization process and corporate model of development are the main reasons for the Adivasis' pains, sufferings and sorrows. Indeed, he is the architect of the Adivasis' misery. Today, millions of the Adivasis are struggling for their survival, as a result of Nehru and his Congress Party. Later on, the right wing and the left wing also added salt on the wounds. Therefore, now we (the Adivasis) must realize that no one can fight for us but we have to fight for ourselves. If we protect our natural resources today, we would be ensuring a better future for our children tomorrow. Before, we go for another movement against displacement, we must pray to our super natural God for not to forgive Nehru because he knew what he did to us. He created misery for us, he ensured that we must suffer and he turned our heaven into hell. His temples of modern India dispossessed us, his temples of modern India exploited us and his temples of modern India created graves for us.

Gladson Dungdung is a Human Rights Activist and Writer from Jharkhand. He can be reached at gladsonhractivist@gmail.com

# Nepal running out of time

By Dhruva Adhikary

Nepal's transition from a Hindu monarchy to a secular republic is not going smoothly, and not just over the fast-approaching May 28 deadline for the nation's new constitution. Nepal's three major parties are at loggerheads in the special assembly formed to draft the constitution over the structure of a proposed federal system. The opposition Maoists insist that federal states be created on an ethnic basis, while the ruling Nepali Congress party and its coalition partner believe the states should be formed on a geographic basis.

The Constituent Assembly was formed after a 2008 election when members voted overwhelmingly to abolish the monarchy and restructure the country into autonomous states. The powers of the last king, Gyanendra, had been steadily curtailed since a disastrous period of his rule ended in April 2006 amid a popular revolt.

In the Constituent Assembly the opposition Maoists, who form the largest block with 40% of the seats, favor an executive presidency, while the Nepali Congress and Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist are floating a parliamentary system.

At the same time, public opposition to the idea of federalism is growing, as seen in the successful anti-federalism campaign being carried out by the National People's Front (Rashtriya Janamorchha), a small left-leaning party.

"Federalism is a recipe for Nepal to disintegrate, like the former Yugoslavia," said Chitra Bahadur KC, the party leader. In his view, Nepal's marginalized peoples would be better served through greater decentralization. A successful general strike his party organized in January is forcing the assembly to listen to his concerns.

Another small party, the royalist Rashtriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal (RPP-Nepal), is calling for a national referendum on federalism, as well as on secularism and a restoration of the monarchy. It last week launched a general strike that brought Kathmandu Valley, which encompasses the capital and two other districts, to a standstill.

RPP-Nepal has only four members in the national assembly, but its protest campaign has attracted a wide following. Even the powerful Maoists were forced to cancel an important meeting due to the chaos and the RPP-Nepal's large rallies managed to block the entrance to Simha Durbar, the seat of central government.

The party also wants a referendum to address Nepal's status as the world's only remaining Hindu state, which was abolished in 2008 when Nepal became a republic. More than 80% of the population are from the Hindu faith, also known as *Sanaatan Dharma* (the eternal law).

Hinduism, the third-largest religion after Christianity and Islam, is known for its tolerance towards other faiths. Nepal, with a sizeable Muslim population, does not possess the type of religious rivalries seen in India.

This, however, is undergoing a subtle change. There are growing feelings that too much tolerance could impact on Nepal's Hindu way of life, especially if there is a lack of reciprocity from other faiths. The concern has grown since the proselytizing activities of Western groups that had entered Nepal in the garb of non-governmental organizations were exposed.

The Hindu backlash against Nepal becoming a secular state has grown since 2006 when the monarchy first fell and the state was established, but the leaders of some prominent political parties believe the recent popular movements may also be a power play by right-wing elements. And they are also jittery about a possible revival of the monarchy.

Kamal Thapa, who heads RPP-Nepal, denies that his party is working to restore the monarchy's absolute rule. "All our party believes in is the restoration of a ceremonial institution that provides a symbol of unity for a country that is known for its ethnic diversity," Thapa told Asia Times Online.

Thapa's ideas appeal to many, as the 2006 declaration that made Nepal a secular nation was made without consulting the people. The May 18 declaration was made in a parliament that had been restored through royal proclamation, and the person who made it, Girija Prasad Koirala, was sworn in as prime minister by Gyanendra himself.

That declaration was illegitimate and should have been challenged there and then, according to Bishwanath Upadhyaya, a former chief justice and the head of the panel that drafted the 1990 constitution. If the changes were the outcome of a mass movement or a revolution, it should have been documented as such, he maintains.

Instead, sweeping changes were abruptly announced by Koirala on the grounds of bringing the Maoist insurgency (1996-2006) to an end and bringing the rebels into mainstream politics at all costs.

Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal (popularly known as Prachanda) has now become one of two important figures who concede that the secularization of Nepal was a mistake. The other person is none other than the incumbent President Ram Baran Yadav.

Yadav made this clear to a controversial Indian holy man, Chandraswami, when he was on a pilgrimage to Nepal. Former prime minister Koirala purportedly evaded the question. Unlike rulers in Delhi, media reports indicate that India's Hindus want the religious identity of neighboring Nepal to remain unchanged. For them, too, this is an emotional issue.

If Nepal's secularization was a mistake, this could be rectified when Nepal receives its new constitution. There is no need for a simultaneous restoration of the monarchy, which ceased being the custodian of the nation's Hindus after the notorious palace massacre of 2001. Nepal could now learn to stand as a Hindu republic, not a kingdom.

# Declining economy and frightening load-shedding

The country's economy is being increasingly debilitated by prolonged load-shedding hours

Production of industries in the Birgunj-Pathlalya Industrial Corridor has been hit hard by the 11-hour load-shedding imposed by the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

Production in the corridor nosedived by 80 percent compared to the past due to alarming load-shedding. There are over 200 small and big industries in the corridor.

Industrialists are suffering a loss of over Rs. 100 million in a day due to this crisis.

During the last fiscal year, load-shedding caused loss of a whopping Rs 7000 crore in production capacity. Likewise, the year saw a transaction of inverters and batteries worth Rs 3 billion.

No surprise, it also cast light on the already fragile economy.

By Nirjal Dhungana

However, Gyanendra Lal Pradhan, a hydropower expert, thinks there is still a huge potential for the world's second largest country in water resource to exploit the same to completely eradicate the perennial power deficit.

Pradhan also prescribed the government to pencil a fine tuned separate policy to permanently tide over the recurring energy crisis.

"The demand of electricity in the dry season stands at 1000 MW," he says adding, "Similarly, the production of 2000 MW is required for the next 5 years and for the coming 20 years, the country demands 5000 MW of electricity."

During the dry season, the production of electricity plummets by more than a half in comparison to the rainy season.

Currently, some 11 hydropower projects with capacity to generate 1200 MW within 5 years are under construction.

He also believes that the construction of two projects, the 1000-MW Kalligandaki and the 127 MW Damauli Self should be commenced at the soonest in order to resolve the problem of load-shedding.

Different hydro-power promoters have already acquired licenses for various projects along the Kalligandaki.

Pradhan said that the country had begun to receive some US \$ 10 billion for the construction of many hydro projects that include, Upper Karnali (900 MW), Arun (900 MW), Tamakoshi Third (800 MW), Upper Marsyandi (600 MW), Kalligandaki Third (250 MW) and Likhu (120 MW), among others.

According to hydro experts, the storage of huge volumes of water during the monsoon season with dams built in open and flat areas in the foothills of the high Himalayas, with the water to be used during the dry season by hydro-power projects located in the lower regions can also address the acute power shortage.

The country faces acute power shortage mainly in the dry season as all the hydro-power projects except Kulekhani are built on the run-of-river model.

With the help of such storage, even the existing run-of-river projects can perform like storage projects to some extent, the experts argue.

In the light of this backdrop, it can be said that the prudent approach to harness the immense water potential can shield the country from a devastating darkness.



# China's measures on improving people's livelihood

Since the global economic crisis broke out at the end of last year, the Chinese government has timely implemented a stimulus package which stepped up financial support and policy incentives to improve people's well-being and stimulate domestic demand, in order to shore up economic recovery.

Here are the summaries of those measures:

— China has spent 728.46 billion yuan (107.13 billion U.S. dollars) to beef up education and medical system, social security, job promotion, affordable housing construction, and cultural development which had close bearing on people's lives this year. The investment was an increase of 165.33 billion yuan from a year ago.

— Some 293 billion yuan was invested in social security in the first 11 months this year, an increase of 17.6 percent year on year.

The basic pension insurance has covered 232.38 million urban residents, 27 provinces and autonomous regions, and four municipalities have started such pilot programs.

— China generated 10.13 million new jobs in urban areas in the first eleven months, and the urban jobless rate would likely reach 4.3 percent by the end of this year after 42 billion yuan was put into job promotion, up nearly 70 percent.

The government also offered college graduates incentives to work in rural areas and in small firms and told enterprises to provide them with internships. The jobless rural migrant workers also received financial support for starting their own businesses.

By the end of the third quarter, some 151.98 million rural migrant workers had found jobs outside their hometown. Employment rate of college graduates reached 83 percent by the end of October.

— China unveiled the long awaited medical reform plan in April which involved 850 billion yuan of investment by 2011 to provide universal medical service to the country's 1.3 billion population. So far, more than 1.2 billion people enjoyed basic healthcare service.

— In 2008, students in urban and rural areas started to enjoy nine-year compulsory free education. In early December, the State Council, or cabinet, decided to gradually waive tuition for needy rural students in government-funded vocational schools. Some 12 million teachers of primary and middle schools also received higher pays.

— The government invested 41.5 billion yuan to expand affordable housing construction amid the skyrocketing property prices in some cities. By the end of October, the government had built 277,000 units of low-rent housing, and another 1.36 million are under construction.

On Dec. 14, the State Council stressed to maintain "stable" and "healthy" development of the real estate market through increasing supply of affordable housing while curbing speculation.

— By the end of the third quarter, the disposable income of urban dwellers increased 10.5 percent year on year, and that for rural residents was up 9.2 percent.

## China model

Two experts debate whether China has a development model, what this model holds for the future and whether the nation needs to retool its development pattern.

**Zheng Yongnian: The paradigm and its future**

In 2009, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao stressed during a speech at Cambridge University that China has been a "learning state" since its reform and opening-up. "Learning" in this context has two connotations. It refers to learning from all countries around the world. China has been eagerly learning from international experiences, from

large countries like the US to small countries like Singapore. Though criticisms from the West will always exist, they have never dampened China's enthusiasm to learn. Learning also refers to drawing upon China's own experiences, positive or negative.

Over the years, China has built its own economic development model. It is a model of a mixed economy with the co-existence of different forms of ownership and with the government playing a balanced role of "invisible" and "visible hands." For thousands of years, China had a strong state sector and an equally strong non-state sector. The government played an important role through the state sector, especially during economic crises and in building up large infrastructures for the economy. This tradition remains today. The strength of the state sector was demonstrated during the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the 2008-9 global financial crisis.

Without a strong state sector, it would be impossible for China to cope with the crises so effectively. China's political model is equally important for the country's success. It has been effectively coordinating economic and political reforms to provide minimum social and political order for its economic activities. It is also building a socio-economic infrastructure for democratization.

Up until today, China's political and economic system has yet to be perfected, and the "China model" is evolving based on world and Chinese experiences. The model is still in the process of development and based on life experiences and lessons learnt. For example, while the financial crisis had led to a rapid expansion of the state sector, the government has had to channel more resources to the non-state sector. China's history shows that a crisis will ensue if the state sector becomes overwhelmingly dominant.

In the last 30 years, it was economic development at all costs for China. Within a short period of time, China has created an economic miracle, lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty - a record unparalleled in world history. But this single-minded pursuit of economic growth came with a huge price: environmental degradation, resource wastage, widening income disparity, polarization and rampant corruption.

The worsening social and environmental conditions have led many to take to the streets in protest. Social reform now increasingly tops the agenda of the Chinese leadership as economic development could not last if the consequences of economism are not corrected. Policy slogans like "scientific approach on development" and "harmonious society" are the product of such reflections.

Social reforms must lay an institutional basis for future economic growth. The previous three decades of economic growth generally came from economic reform and innovation. But with most of the potential of reform already exploited, the strength of the existing growth model is being exhausted. Launching social reform and constructing social institutions will be instrumental to transforming China into a consumer society that serves as another source of long-term growth.

In the past, China has established an export-led economy. With the outbreak of the global financial crisis, demand from the West has plunged, fully exposing the limitations of China's development pattern. China must build a whole set of pro-consumption social institutions (health insurance, social security, education and the environment) if it is to become a consumer society.

Social reform will also prepare China for political reform. China's reform process prioritizes economic and social reform over political reform.

Before democratization can be achieved, a basic state system has to be developed first. Effective democratic institutions require a certain level of social and economic development, and more importantly, various basic state institutions as infrastructure.

For a newly established democratic system to work properly, a sound set of state institutions has to be put in place and the democratization process has to be peaceful. On the contrary, if democratization takes place without a basic state system, anarchy, social dislocation and political infighting will follow. This has been illustrated in the democracy crises experienced by many Asian countries. Over the past 30 years, China has established a basic state economic system, but not a social system. At this stage, premature political democratization will only lead to political disturbances.

The financial crisis is an opportunity for social reform and the establishment of a social policy. China urgently needs new growth patterns amid the financial crisis, and expanding domestic consumption is the top priority. Implementing social reform and establishing social systems will not be an easy process. The establishment of social systems in today's developed world is often characterized by violent working-class movements and even revolutions. The transformation from a primitive market economy or capitalist economy into a modern welfare capitalist economy is an outcome of social reform.

A sound social system is an institutional foundation necessary for countries with a market economy to ensure market movements and social stability. China is no exception and effective political reform is the only way for China to build sound social systems.

**David Shambaugh: Is there such a model?**

During 2009 there was an upsurge in Chinese academic and journalistic writings concerning the question of a "Chinese model". Since last year Chinese intellectuals have been heatedly debating whether there is such a distinct Chinese model for development - and, if so, what are its contents and is it transferable for other countries?

This new interest inside of China seems to be heavily stimulated by the global financial crisis of 2008-2010. Compared with the global fiasco brought on by this crisis and the questionable economic ideology underlying it, Chinese thinkers have found greater faith in China's own development policies. The recent Chinese debate concerning the "China model" follows earlier such debates in the West, Africa, and Latin America about the so-called "Beijing Consensus."

My reading of the Chinese discourse in recent months on this question reveals that there is no agreement among Chinese scholars. Some think there is a model, some not. Some think it's exportable, some not. Yet others argue that it is a waste of time to even discuss a "Chinese model" for others, as China has too much to do to continue its development at home.

From my perspective, in order to assess whether there is such a thing as a "China model" the concept must be broken down into several constituent parts of China's development experience. In evaluating each part, one must ask if this is unique to China - or is it simply common among other newly industrialized countries (NICs)? If the answer is yes, then China's experience may constitute a partial or full "model" and may therefore be transferable.

First, I think China's political system is unique-but not transferable. The Communist Party of China (CPC) has indeed evolved a political system out of a classic Leninist/Communist/Soviet style system into a hybrid political

system today. This system still has many of the classic elements of Soviet Leninism, but allows for much more intra-party democracy, public participation at the local level, and puts great emphasis on meritocracy and competent governance. Only Leninist-style party-states (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Laos, Vietnam, Cuba) can learn from these Chinese political practices. It is different from Asian or African authoritarian systems.

Second, China's economic system is also a hybrid. It too still maintains many elements of the Soviet central planning and investment system. While the state sector of the economy has shrunk significantly (to approximately 30 percent of the national economy), this is deceiving-as the state remains the "invisible hand" dominating the economy - through state banks, state assets, state ownership, state manipulated prices, state cadres, and unpredictable state intervention in various economic sectors.

On the other hand, China's collective sector remains large (approximately 30 percent) and the private sector has boomed accounting for approximately 40 percent of GDP growth. Both the collective and private sectors have benefited from a close relationship to local governments (known as "local state corporatism"). Finally, the Chinese economic success has owed much to the introduction of free market mechanisms into the rural agricultural sector (with some state subsidies and price supports).

Are these elements of China's economic experience unique? Considered individually, no-considered collectively, yes. Are they transferable? Probably not-given the size of China, the continuing legacy of the "Soviet model," and the heavy hand of the central and local state in the economy.

Third, what about China's provision for social welfare as a component of its development model? Generally speaking, during the past 30 years, China has dismantled its social welfare state - leaving hundreds of millions of citizens without any or adequate provision of healthcare, unemployment insurance, cost of education, and a variety of other social services.

This is not a model to admire or transfer to other societies. What was good about the Chinese social welfare model before 1978 has been lost. Only by maintaining the world's highest household savings rate and drawing on hidden subsidies and family connections are Chinese citizens cushioned against these costs and unexpected personal catastrophes. This is a major challenge for China in the future: to rebuild its social welfare services.

Fourth, and finally, one can ask: does Chinese diplomacy offer a unique "model" in international affairs? Here, the answer is yes-at least rhetorically. China's concepts of the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence," "New Security Concept," "New International Order," "Strategic Partnerships," and "Harmonious World" are all unique and collectively do constitute something of a diplomatic model. Unfortunately, despite years - even decades - of promoting these concepts, they mainly fall on deaf ears abroad. Many countries do not wish to emulate and practice these concepts. The world is now more interested in what China does on the world stage, not what it says.

In sum, when considering these four factors, one must conclude that while there are some individual elements of China's development experience that are unique, they do not constitute a comprehensive and coherent "model" - nor are they easily transferred abroad. If anything, what is unique about China's model is that it flexibly adapts to elements imported from abroad and grafted on to domestic roots in all fields, producing a unique hybrid and eclectic system - this is China's real "model."

(Source: China Daily)

~ News ~

## Golden jubilee of Nepal, Pak diplomatic ties

Pakistani embassy here is planning to mark the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Nepal and Pakistan with various programmes in March. The two sides established diplomatic ties in 1960. Both sides had agreed to celebrate the golden jubilee of their formal relations last year.

Essay writing competition among Nepali students, golf tournament, single country trade exhibition titled 'Made in Pakistan,' cultural performance by a Pakistani singer and musical groups of Nepal and launching of book Gandhara civilisation will be the prime highlights of the celebration.

Similarly, launching of a book on common words in Nepali and Urdu languages, speech contest among Pakistani students in Nepal, Pakistan day celebration and inauguration of Pakistani-Nepal chamber of commerce are other programmes set by the embassy.

## Panel okays long-term population plan

A meeting of the National Population Committee held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Madhav Nepal this week endorsed a long-term population plan.

The 20-year plan formulated by Ministry of Health and Population aims at contributing to poverty alleviation through proper management of the population.

The plan includes nine different subject matters including analysis and evaluation of the population status, population and economic zones, migration, reproductive health, gender equality, women empowerment and decentralization, according to Health Minister Umakant Chaudhary. This was the second ever meeting of the committee formed 11 years ago to formulate the plan.

## House panel seeks arms details from govt

The state Affairs Committee of the parliament has directed the prime minister to furnish the details about the arms and ammunition purchased or received by the country after the Constituent Assembly election within a week.

The committee also drew the prime minister's attention to seek national consensus on sensitive issues like national security policy.

The committee also asked the prime minister, who is also the chairman of the Constitutional Council, to inform the committee about the recommendations for appointments in constitutional bodies after holding the meeting of the council.

The committee also asked the prime minister to take initiatives to sort out the differences among the political parties toward making new constitution and taking the peace process to a logical end.

Saying that the committee's attention has been drawn at the contradictions between the remarks of different ministers and formal statements of the prime minister, the committee asked the government to make its views clear and free from controversy.

The committee also drew the prime minister's attention to take encourage the morale of civil servants through transfer and promotion within the law and strictly implement the provision on compulsory service at the assigned duty station.

## Decrease in number of malaria patients

The number of patients suffering from malaria has decreased by 86 percent in Kanchanpur district which is one of the districts at high risk of malaria.

The decrease in the number of patients suffering from the tropical disease has been attributed to the use of mosquito nets treated in pesticide, spraying of anti-mosquito pesticide and implementation of public awareness programmes in an effective way.

According to the District Public Health Office, Kanchanpur, the number of patients suffering from malaria in the district in 2002 was 8,000 and it decreased to 4,300 in 2003.

However, the number of malaria patients increased in the district in 2004 as health services could not be extended in the rural areas in effective manner due to the conflict.

The District Public Health Office said the number of malaria patients in the district in 2005 was 10,091, five hundred and seventy-three in 2006, three hundred and forty-four in 2007 and one hundred and ninety in 2008.

Similarly, the number of malaria patients fell down to one hundred and fifty-nine in 2009 and not a single case has been found in 2010.

## Memorandum handed over to NHRC

The Ban Landmine Campaign Nepal has complained that the landmine and explosives could not be removed even after three years of the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord between the government and the UCPN-Maoist.

Campaign Convener Purnashova Chitrakar made the comment while submitting a memorandum to National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Spokesman Gauri Pradhan for creating pressure for the ratification of the Ottawa Treaty from state side.

On the occasion, Commission Member Gauri Pradhan said it is irresponsible of the government not to stop human loss in various accidents because of lack of abidance of the peace accord and non removal of the landmine by the state, and promised to request the government by studying the report for the ratification of the treaty.

Forty nations had ratified the Ottawa treaty of 1997 on March 1 on banning of use of landmine targeted against humans, its storage, production and trafficking as well as destruction, and have been included as the UN resolution.

People are either disabled or killed from such landmines and explosives laid by the army and the Maoists.

The NHRC was requested to pressurize the government to sign the treaty and not to lose the opportunity to side with peace and humanity from dillydallying on the same even as Nepal government has the responsibility from the minister level decision with concerned committees already formed.

Region :

## A threat to the South-Asian peace

The war against Pakistan's nuclear program seems more vibrant and more violent and certainly more popular than the international war against terrorism. These two wars are being headed by two different countries separately: one is the super power of today and the other is aspiring to be the super power of tomorrow. The most interesting fact is that both these countries, the USA and India are apparently fighting on different fronts but inwardly they have the same target: same aim and the same object: the one and the only Pakistan. It is a very common feeling in Pakistan that the US policies and the Indian conspiracies have joined hands together, simply to weaken Pakistan. On one hand USA is showing its concern over the safety of Pakistan's nuclear assets and on the other hand India is encouraging and strengthening the extremist elements in Pakistan to proceed towards these assets. Ironically India has completely ignored the safety of its own nuclear program in its heat and haste and this nuclear program has become a security threat not only to all her neighbors but to the total peace in the South Asia. Neglecting the safety of its already existing nuclear arsenals, India is trying to add more to its nuclear strength by doing more pacts and by starting new nuclear plans.

According to the media reports, on December 7, 2009, an agreement was reached in Moscow between India and Russia, under which India would get four more nuclear reactors from Russia. At the same time, in New Delhi, a US Commercial Nuclear Mission told the media that, under the US-India nuclear deal, a minimum of 12 plants would be set up, with the work on them starting in 2010-2011. Some other nuclear agreements of the same type were also reported by the media: most important of them were between India and France,

By Ali Sukhanver

Kazakhstan, Namibia, Mongolia and Canada. According to many impartial analysts, it would have been much better if India had concentrated upon the safety of its already existing nuclear assets instead of doing new agreements in this respect. The Kaiga incident is the worst example of unsafe and insecure nuclear program of India. The Kaiga Nuclear plant is located near one of the biggest Indian naval bases, Project Seabird.

As per details provided by the Indian newspapers, a few months back, the authorities hit the alarm button when the staff and workers at the Kaiga nuclear plant began to show above normal radiation levels. The investigators began to urgently comb the Kaiga nuclear complex for any signs of a radiation leak that could have exposed the staff to radioactivity. After the detailed examination of urine samples of more than 50 workers at the plant, they came to the conclusion that all the workers had used a particular water cooler. Surprisingly the cooler was locked and sealed and almost unapproachable to a common man. So the investigation team pointed out the hidden presence of someone who injected heavy water into the machine by using a pump. On the other hand, J. P. Gupta, the director of the plant, denied there was any security lapse and said the effect of the contaminated water was minimal. Among those affected were contract laborers who are hired out locally. The statement of Mr. Gupta seems showing that the lives of 'locally hired out' labourers are not important and it is nothing to be worried about if such labourers are affected by the contaminated water. There is another part of his statement which has added more irony to the situation. He said, "Whoever did it perhaps knew doping the water cooler would not kill those

who drank the water. It could have been intended to disrupt the plant's functioning."

The situation is not as simple as portrayed by JP Gupta. The addition of heavy water into the drinking water cooler means the addition of tritium-contaminated water to a drinking water cooler. Tritium is a radioactive isotope of hydrogen also known as hydrogen-3. It can be used as a booster in the making of fission bombs as well as thermonuclear weapons or hydrogen bombs. Tritium emits beta rays which, if ingested, can cause death, cancer and mutations. A one gram vial of tritium costs up to \$100,000. How is it possible for a common man to get hold of such a precious element? There must be someone having a full command, authority and approach in the supervisory or administrative crew of the plant. Unfortunately, the government of India tried to put a cover on the incident instead of bringing the inquiry report to the surface.

The present incident at the Kaiga nuclear plant is nothing new and novel; this plant has always been very mysterious with reference to different unexplainable happenings during the last many years. The death of an Indian Nuclear Scientist Lokanathan Mahalingam on June 12, 2009 is still one of such mysteries. Mahalingam was training young scientists and working in the simulator training division of the plant which is in fact the replica of the original plant. He had been working in the atomic plant for the last eight years. Reportedly, he was in possession of highly sensitive information. According to the Times of India one morning Mahalingam went for jogging and could never return. After a week's search, his body was found in the nearby Kali River and cremated before the results

of the DNA test were brought to light. The mysterious end of the scientist was reported on India's television channels on June 13. The channels asserted that the death of the nuclear scientist was nothing but a successful suicide attempt but the police could never find any suicide note. The Kaiga-staff is still of the opinion that the murder of Mahalingam was the artistic work of different Indian Intelligence agencies that were searching for the culprits involved in the past Uranium theft cases. Mahalingam might be one of the accused ones.

In such a horrible situation when radioactive elements are easily approachable, when even the nuclear scientists are involved in theft-crime of uranium and when the lives of the workers serving at nuclear plants are at stake, how can the nuclear arsenals in India be safe. In this horrifying situation it is highly objectionable if the countries like the USA provide more support and help to the incredible nuclear states like India. It is simply a paradox on the part of the US policy makers that they are all time worried about the nuclear programs of Islamic countries like Iraq, Iran and Pakistan but intentionally ignoring the underhand gimmicks going on in the nuclear programs of India.

President Obama and many of the other democratic leaders are often found stressing the need and importance of peace and prosperity of the world. It is their responsibility to keep a strict eye on the nuclear program of India if they are sincere in their desire for peace and prosperity particularly in the South Asian region. This world is looking towards them with dependent eyes for a bright future and a happy present. It would be certainly very disappointing if these peace-makers do not come up to the expectations of the world revolving around them.

Kashmir Watch, March 2

## Tibet official hails Panchen Lama's new position in top advisory body

A high-ranking official of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region on Tuesday applauded the new position of the 11th Panchen Lama in the top advisory body, saying people of all ethnic groups in Tibet feel happy for that.

"His participation in social activities and holding of social positions are of great significance for demonstrating the role of the living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism and encouraging more believers to participate in state affairs," said Hao Peng, executive vice chairman of the Tibet regional government.

He made the remarks while meeting with an international media delegation organized by the State Council Information Office.

The 11th Panchen Lama, Bainqen Erdini Oigiyjabu, one of the two most senior living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism, became a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the country's top advisory body, on Sunday.

On Feb. 3, he was just elected vice president of the Buddhist Association of China.

"Since he was enthroned in 1995, the 11th Panchen Lama has made great improvements in both Buddhist studies and cultural knowledge and has demonstrated the demeanour of a senior living Buddha in Tibetan Buddhism," Hao said.

"He is deeply loved by people of all ethnic groups in Tibet, and they are happy for his position in the CPPCC National Committee," he said.

"I hope he can carry forward the tradition of loving the motherland and religion, as the 10th Panchen Lama did, in his future participation in social affairs, and make greater contribution to development of Tibetan Buddhism," he added.

Bainqen Erdini Oigiyjabu was approved by the central government as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama in November 1995 after a lot-drawing ceremony among three candidates in the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa.

## Mass Detention of over 5500 Farmers in Ahmedabad

Farmers protesting Nirma Factory and Limestone Quarry in Mahuva detained: Chunibhai Vaidya, Veteran Gandhian, Kanubhai Kalsaria, MLA and SanatBhai Mehta, ex Finance Minister among those detained

Over five thousand farmers from the Mahuva area in the Bhavnagar district of Gujarat have been detained and prohibited from taking out a peaceful rally protesting the government's sanction for a Nirma factory and limestone quarry in their area.

The farmers were enroute to the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad, from where they intended to start a peaceful march to Gandhinagar to submit their petition, signed by 11,111 affected individuals in their own blood, when the buses and other vehicles they were using were stopped by the police. The farmers have been taken to Shahibagh in Ahmedabad and have been detained in police grounds. Several hundred protestors who reached the Sabarmati Ashram directly were also whisked away in police vans and blocked from taking out the march.

These farmers from Mahuva area in Bhavnagar district are protesting the decision by the Government of Gujarat to sanction a cement plant by Nirma Ltd, which includes 288 ha. of land for the factory and another 3000 ha. for a limestone quarry. Mahuva area has among the most fertile lands in Gujarat, where farmers grow three crops, and export dehydrated onions and numerous other fruits. Moreover, the numerous onion dehydrating plants (turnover Rs. 300 crore) & cotton gins (turnover Rs. 3,500 crore) provide employment to an additional 10,000 people in the factories.

The cement plant which the government proposes to build in the area will employ only 418 people for an investment of 2500 crore (Rs. 2.5 billion), but will end up devastating around 50,000 land owners, farmers & farm labourers, besides polluting the air and destroying the pristine coastal & inland ecology. It was only in the last few years that the Government had invested tens of millions of public money to construct structures for water conservation & prevention of salinity ingress in this very area.

The farmers of the area have been protesting the government policies for over a year, and have been facing the combined wrath of the government and company goons for doing so.

## POSCO: Tribal Dispossession, Environmental Destruction

Analytical Monthly Review, published in Kharagpur, West Bengal, India, is a sister edition of Monthly Review. Its February 2010 issue features the following editorial.

Orissa is the poorest State with an official estimate of 39.9 per cent of people living below the poverty line, yet in regard to proposed investment it stood at second position after Gujarat. According to ASSOCHAM Investment Meter, recorded investment proposals in Orissa reached Rs. 2,00,846 crore in 2009. The cause is the availability of rich mineral resources such as coal and iron ore along with cheap availability of manpower. Steel and power were among the sectors which attracted maximum proposed investments in the state.

So vast a project of necessity strains the nation's less than coherent institutional framework, and in the process illuminates today's ruling forces and the way in which they go about achieving their aims. The elements of the assault are familiar: dispossession of tribal cultivators and the despoiling of the environment.

## Federated Nepal

P.K. Pant

An amendment of the interim Constitution ratified on March 13, 2007, declares that Nepal will be turned a federal state, the process of restricting Nepal from its present unitary state into a federal system is unlike any experience elsewhere in the world. In other countries federalism was achieved from historically divided nations and in fact federalism has been a factor in unifying many nations. Switzerland consisted of many sub-national states into the present federated structure. In North America many states united to constitute present day United States of America. Australia and Canada are organized into a federal system within the commonwealth frame work. More than 500 princely states were amalgamated into present day Indian union.

The slogans of ethnic autonomy for the communities and about introduction of federal kind of government including formation of different liberation fronts are there to prove that certain political parties have lost their sense of direction and frame of mind. If necessary wisdom is not exercised in dealing with it prudently the whole nation will be engulfed in a cycle of death and destruction in the name of communal ethnic and linguistic regional and caste differences are allowed to develop, national integration would suffer heavily and different people would start to struggle for their separate sovereign states in the name of establishing their own identity. The factor of political geography engages our attention

when we find that the rebellious ethnic tribe very much thrives on the support of the alien.

More especially, small and vulnerable countries like Nepal should take measures to strengthen rather than weaken feeling of national unity, cohesiveness and integration. Many languages, dialects, religious faiths have contributed towards building up a one, unified and integrated Nepali society. What is also appalling is that a systematic plan is under way in our country too to disintegrate the national union in the name of federalism on the basis of regional, linguistic and ethnic considerations. History is testimony to the fact that a large number of Nepalese belonging to ethnic tribal sectors have made unusually unique sacrifices for upholding the cause of national unity and territorial integrity. Nepal is a country which has a very long history of communal harmony where all castes, religions and languages have throughout survived and flourished in an exemplary state of tolerance and co-existence.

In Nepal's case federated structure is being created out of a historically unitary state through the decision of the interim parliament. The aim of restructuring federated Nepal is to institutionalized effective democracy in order to uplift the living conditions of those on the social, ethnic, languages and economical margins. There are more than 103 ethnic and caste groups in Nepal who speak 93 languages.

In the course of history, Nepalese people have moved to different parts of the country and have lived amicably with a high degree of

interdependence.

But, much of the public discussion about what a federated structure will look like has confined to political leaders' speeches. The statistical realities as they exist in the different parts of the country have not been fully explored. The responsibility for structuring the state rests with the elected Constituent Assembly (CA) which will also draft a new federated Constitution.

This is where the leaders and intellectuals with sense of responsibility must act with visions just for one slip we will be in a abyss of death and destruction. The situation has taken such a turn that fresh debates should have once again started to decide about federalism how best the value of democracy can be respected and how best fundamental rights can be respected, protected and safeguarded under the democratic order. This hinges on the fact of people's attitude and belief towards the political institution and is product of several interrelated factors: historical, geographical and socio-economic. We should not come to a sudden conclusion without knowing the component of emotional attitudes and the tone and the temper of the people. Restructuring of the state on the basis of ethnicity, language will certainly pose a great challenge.

After reading views presented in Constituent Assembly and vision for the federated Nepal's new Constitution, it is difficult to assess, that there is a national need for an in-depth analysis, debate and discussion with respect of the federalism.

## 29 Billion to be spent through United Nations

A total amount of Rs. 29 billion is planned to be spent in the areas of peace building, human rights, sustainable livelihood and basic services under different 23 agencies of the United Nations (UN) during 2008-10. At an interaction programme organized here today on "Participation of students in development", Citizen's Campaign for Equality, Peace and Development (CCEPD) Coordinator Dr. Tirtha Raj Luitel informed an amount of Rs. seven billion would be expended in peace building area, four billion in human rights, seven billion in sustainable livelihood and 11 billion in the area of basic services.

The interaction programme was organized by CCEPD and Students' Parliament in the University organized the programme.

Stressing on the formulation of strategy that each donor organization would allocate 25 per cent of the total assistant amount in administrative, monitoring, training and assessment, he added the policy of distributing 75 per cent of the assistance directly by students to develop modern VDCs should be formulated.

He also made it clear as how college students could make significant contribution to modernize 4,000 VDCs with an annual amount of Rs. 65,000,000.

On the occasion, Japanese national Takasi Miyahara presented a plan to make Nepal a prosperous country within 20 years.

This amount has been spent in Nepal through 243 international NGOs affiliated to Social Welfare Council (SWC).

बरु खानु कोदो मकै बरु खानु फापर,  
घूस खानेलाई कानुनले लाउँछ दूतो भ्पापड ।



नेपाल सरकार

सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय

सूचना विभाग

# Child Labour : A hindrance in development

As we can see today child Labour is mushrooming in our country. Just like a plague which spreads in a place. It is so rampant in Nepal that it is becoming difficult for Nepal government to weed it out from the very Nepali roots. Child Labour is not only a hindrance in child's development but also a hindrance in nation's development. Children are universally recognized as the most important asset of any nation and child Labour, in the recent past, has evoked a great concern among all. Children have been the main focus of attention

## Social observer

especially after proclaiming the year 1979 as the International Year of the Child by the United Nation's General Assembly.

Child Labour can be defined as that segment of the child population which participates in work either paid or unpaid. Child Labour has also been defined as employment of children in gainful occupations, which are detrimental to their health and deprive them the chances of development. Child Labour implies the work of

children both in organized and unorganized sectors that are injurious to their physical, mental, moral and social development. Thus child Labour assumes the character of social problem. Child labour as defined by Homer Folks "any work by children that interferes with their full physical development, their opportunities for a desirable minimum of education or their needed recreation."

Causes of child labour are: Migration, Poverty, Preference of Employees, Introduction to Factory System, Broken Families, Population Growth, No scheme for allowance, Lack of enforcement of Laws, Perception of the parents/employers, Apathy of the Government, and Pledging of labour.

Most of us would be horrified to support a business that exploits children. Around the world today, some 250 million boys and girls between the age of 5-14 are exploited and work in the most hazardous working conditions, according to the International Labour Organisation.

In rural areas, the children begin to help their parents in the field at a very early age and school going is an exception rather than a rule.

It is in the unregulated factories and workshops that the worst evils of child labour are found. These factories and workshops are not covered under factories acts and there has been no separate legislative provision for them. Children 6 to 14 years of age work in carpet industries in Nepal.

Countless number of children are employed as domestic servants, workers in hotels, restaurants, canteens, wayside shops, hawkers, newspaper sellers, sweet and ice cream vendor etc.

The government considers child labour a necessary evil. As its total eradication is not possible, the government has only tried to improve their working conditions through reducing working hours, ensuring minimum wages and providing facilities for health and education. Attempts have been made to provide legal protection for children.

Child labour cannot be eliminated merely by introducing laws. Apart from statutory strict enforcement of statutory provisions, steps must also be taken to make jobs more safe, secure and healthy. Child is due to economic necessity. Hence, in the presence of poverty and starvation child labour cannot be eliminated. Hence, all efforts

must be directed at lessening poverty and improving standards of life. Hence, fixation of a minimum and fair wage and a scheme of social insurance for industrial workers can solve the problem to a very great extent. It was in this context that the ILO report on the protection of children and young workers aptly remarked that the problem of prohibition of child labour is inextricably mixed up with the problem of the maintenance of the child the provision of a living wage for all employed persons adequate to maintain the family at an adequate standard.

Education plays and important role in checking child labor. Hence development programmes for child labourers and their families must include education. Thus apart from making education compulsory up to the age of 16 years and free provisions must also be made for the education of child labourers so that they learn and also earn to support their families.

A minimum age for employment in any remunerative occupation outside the home must be fixed. The working condition of child labourers needs to be regulated through the introduction of the licensing system.

Punishments for Violation of Child Labour Act should be made more stringent.

Provisions should be made for monitoring the organized sector for prevention of child labour.

Major emphasis should be on education and training.

Medical Examination for all working children.

A maximum period of work per day and forbidding work at night.

Prohibition of certain types of Work for Children.

The law failed to protect children who are forced to earn a living because of the rural improvisation and struggle for existence in urban areas. Since poverty is not eliminated overnight, the pragmatic approach was to regulate child labour. So, let us pledge that we will join our hands together to eradicate this evil of child labour from our Nepalese society and make Nepal a better living place not just for the rich but for the poor as well. After all Right to Life is a Fundamental Right of every citizen of Nepal then why only few enjoy it? With our efforts and determination one day definitely Nepal will get rid of this evil and every child will have a tension free smile on his face. Let us bring back those smiles, happiness, security and zest for living which are lost somewhere.

## Rethinking International assistance for peace-building

By Jeevan Baniya

Nepal's peace-building was described as a success story within and out of the country – and international community including United Nations was praising the pace of the process. I was also one of those many who had a similar view. But paradoxically and unfortunately, the hopes generated then have been eclipsed and the peace-building process is standing now at the crossroad if we frankly acknowledge the fragility and the complexities associated with this process.

While various actors including the international community have gained open space to operate in the peace-building process after the People's Movement II, almost everyday we hear about seminars, workshops and other activities that are concerned with demobilizing Maoists combatants and providing training and so on and so forth. Around time this experts and project developers have been working hard to use up the aid money in Kathmandu valley – the city that never got seriously affected from the violent conflict even when the conflict was in the climax.

It is not strange that the peace-building discourse that has attracted donors, international peace experts and local elites, tend to direct the peace process to 'peace dividend' as they are focused only in Kathmandu valley to find remedy to the conflict dynamics and complexities that the country had inherited. The initiatives such as the workshops, seminars, interaction programs, discussions on policies that are limited in the capital seem very unlikely to build a sustainable peace in Nepal unless a holistic vision is adopted.

Although the peace-building practices came into effect since the then Secretary General of UN Ghaliboutros' 'An Agenda for Peace after the end of Cold War in 1992', and various empirical evidences and experiences so far have influenced international actors to rethink their policies and strategies for building peace in conflict or post conflict countries, the short-cut strategies employed in peace building process in Nepal indicate that it will surely fall short of creating sustainable peace in the country given the fact that the conflicts of the country are very dynamic, complex and multilayered.

It is worth mentioning however that the international community has played a considerable role in conflict management phase by facilitating the main conflicting parties in the past when the tides of conflicts were in the course of wiping away our faith of peace. And it is always the matter of appreciation that our well-wishers and international friends, who have come up with the idea to support the peace process with their funds and their knowledge, have somehow contributed in one or other way manage the conflict.

In Nepal's peace building process, assistance has come through various programs for the purpose of reestablishing and reconstructing the infra-structures destroyed and damaged during the conflict, which is also aimed at contributing to the management of Maoist combatants.

We find differences on how one should understand peace-building and there are various theoretical approaches developed – and the assistance of international community in Nepal's peace-building might have its own framework. But, considering the dynamics of the conflicts in Nepal, just limiting ones only in conflict management strategies is not going to be enough to establish long-term stability. Thus, it demands very serious and careful attention to better addressing the deep causes of conflicts that exist in Nepalese societies. Without addressing the underlying causes, just building up of relationship between top leadership of conflicting parties will not be enough. It is therefore a necessary task for all to work at the grassroots level. The actors need to orient their activities on the ground with local communities and people. There is an urgent need of regular interaction and assistance to local communities as they lack some capacity and skills to enhance the peace building in the country.

In other words, the policies and goals should be directed towards long-term peace-building; and to reach this end, building infrastructures in grassroots is a must. The country can not always rely on international actors for peace-building, hence, the country needs to enable the societies' potentials within Nepal so that they will resolve the conflicts effectively, as, they better know the sensitivity of their societies. Community-based bottom-up peace-building approach yields enormous potentials, which needs some back-ups from our true well-wishers.

Peace-building should be directed towards creating the favorable conditions where economic development and democratization can be realized. And, full democratization in the country is not possible without socio-economic reforms socio-cultural and power relation change. Thus peace building and conflict resolution should go together with solving main political issues, social problems and development.

In order to reach this goal, everyone should realize the historical facts as to why and how Nepalese societies are full of vices such as inequality, injustices, underrepresentation and disempowerment of large communities. And it is not difficult for our lawmakers and political parties as well as international community to understand the characteristics of these vices.

We can just live with the hope that the future course of peace-building will be directed towards holistic approach and international assistance will support it.

## Children as social victim

Every child has a right to live in an environment that is peaceful, safe, friendly and free from violence. However, it is a harsh truth that violence against children is prevalent throughout the world with varying degrees.

Violation of the children's rights to protection, despite being massive, is an under-recognized and under-reported phenomenon in Nepal. It is a barrier to children's survival and development, besides being a human rights violation. The children subjected to violation, exploitation, abuse and neglect are at risk of death, poor physical and mental health, HIV/AIDS, displacement, homelessness, vagrancy, and poor parenting skills later in life.

Most of the violence against children – whether inside homes, schools, care and justice institutions, the workplace or the community – is implicitly condoned and remains invisible.

Children can suffer abuse in a variety of settings, including at schools or in detention facilities. In addition, an estimated half million children are forced to work in prostitution, child pornography or similar activities. Many are forced, kidnapped, sold and deceived in these activities, or are victims of trafficking. In many different ways, children are vulnerable to multiple forms of violence that threaten their physical and psychological integrity. This is a constant phenomenon that knows no political, cultural, economic or technological boundaries.

Violence against children in Nepal is a neglected, and therefore an accepted, phenomenon. Violence against children is widespread, as it is justified as a natural consequence of illiteracy, poverty, population explosion, poor governance and lopsided government priorities.

Many children became victims of violence throughout the country. Most of these children were abducted for sexual purposes and sodomy. This is also the major reason that an increasing number of children are committing suicides.

The main reasons behind increasing violence against children are poverty, frustration, and lack of understanding and support from parents and teachers. Pointing out other factors that are responsible for the increasing violence against children. They include easy access to and availability of arms, the rise in the power of extremists, lack of accountability at all levels, and criminalisation of the society.

Violence against children may be divided into three broad categories – physical violence, sexual violence and psychological violence. Incest, corporal punishment, child marriages and child trafficking are some of the other types of violence against children.

Violence against children begins even before a child is born, as we see in the rising number of foeticide cases taking place worldwide and particularly in South Asia, including Nepal. Born a girl, the child suffers a whole set of abuse ranging from neglect and indifference to no access to basic rights such as education, recreation, love and care, nourishment, and healthcare. An early marriage, procreating before the body is ready for such a rigorous exercise, leaving home before she has outgrown her own childhood is the fate of little girl. Rape, molestation, acid throwing, assault, trafficking or girls is all too common.

Boys fare no better as far as abuse is concerned. Besides, verbal, emotional and physical violence is also part of their life.

## 1.25L suicides in '08, 14 every hour in India

India reported 14 suicides every hour during 2008 – a year, which saw a total of 1,25,017 people of different ages take the extreme step due to various reasons, ranging from family problem and illness to bankruptcy and poverty.

Though the year reported an increase of 1.9% over the previous year's (2007) total suicide figure (1,22,637), there was a marginal decline in suicide among farmers, a trend which has continued since 2006.

As compared to 17,060 farmers' suicide in 2006, the year 2007 witnessed 16,632 suicides which further declined to 16,196 in 2008. This decline is mainly due to lesser number of farmer suicides in Maharashtra, the worst state in terms of such incidents over the years. While 4,238 farmers in the state committed suicide in 2007, the

figure for 2008 was 3,802 with the Vidarbha region being the focal point of this reportedly debt-driven act.

The other states with a history of a large number of farmer suicide – Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh – however continued to see an increasing trend.

According to the latest data, compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) for 2008, Karnataka with more farmer suicides replaced Kerala in the list of top five states having the dubious distinction of reporting such acts over the years.

A definite trend was also noticed among different states which, perhaps, speaks volumes about the 'psychological state' of people than their actual difficulties.

Incidentally, it was not the comparatively poor states like Bihar,

Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, which witnessed suicides in higher numbers. The dubious distinction, in fact, went to the comparatively richer states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Poverty was surprisingly not the major instigator as more number of people committed suicide due to family (23.8%) and health problems (21.9%) than love affairs, bankruptcy or sudden change in economic status, dowry disputes and poverty.

Analyzing the suicide figures for 2008, NCRB observed that social and economic causes led most of the males to commit suicide whereas emotional and personal causes mainly drove females to end their lives. The overall male:female ratio of suicide victims for the year was 64:36. However, the proportion of boys:girls suicide victims

(upto 14 years of age) was 49:51.

Among the states, though West Bengal had reported the highest number (13.3%) of suicides during the year 2006, its share went down to 12.1% in 2007 and declined further to 11.9% in 2008. Five states – Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh – accounted for 64.6% of suicide victims in the age group 60 years and above.

The number of suicides in 35 mega cities reported an increasing trend from 2004 to 2007. But 2008 saw a decline – 13,071 from the previous year's figure of 14,336. Four metropolitan cities – Bangalore, Chennai, Mumbai and Delhi – reported higher number of suicides. These four cities together accounted for almost 45% of the total suicides reported from the 35 mega cities.



# San Miguel BEER

## International :

# The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Prospects for a multipolar world

By Rick Rozoff

Contrary to Samuel Huntington's concept of the allegedly inevitable clash of civilizations, the conclusion drawn in the SCO framework was that harmonized interactions between civilizations and their mutual assistance were possible.

The contours of an alliance of five non-Western civilizations – Russian, Chinese, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist – began to materialize.

The SCO is supposed to be a special world without a clearly defined boundary, a world spanning the entire globe.

The quadrangle of the new global entity – Brazil, Russia, China, and India – is already taking shape....The above and certain other formations are related to the SCO.

Three of the four members of BRIC are also members or observers of the SCO, as are four of the world's seven official nuclear states.

The SCO is a momentous organisation which occupies territory from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean and from Kalingrad to Shanghai.

It may become the second political pole of the world.

SCO members and observers also take in a stretch of Eurasia from the South China Sea to the Baltic Sea and from the Persian Gulf to the Bay of Bengal.

Iran was the intended victim of thinly veiled threats of US military strikes. In fact the granting of observer status to the nation in 2005 and Ahmadinejad's attendance at three successive heads of state summits – China in 2006, Kyrgyzstan in 2007, Tajikistan in 2008 and Yekaterinburg 2009 – played no small role in thwarting whatever plans the United States and Israel have nurtured for attacking Iran.

Leaders of SCO member states routinely deny that the organization is a military alliance or one in the process of formation or that it entertains plans to model itself after or to directly challenge NATO.

According to Brzezinski's theory, control of the Eurasian landmass is the key to global domination and control of Central Asia is the key to control of the Eurasian landmass....Russia and China have been paying attention to Brzezinski's theory, since they formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001, ostensibly to curb extremism in the region and enhance border security, but most probably with the real objective of counterbalancing the activities of the United States and NATO in Central Asia.

The SCO grew out of the Shanghai Five alliance of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan formed in 1996 on the basis of the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions to insure border demarcation and security in an area of the world thrown into turmoil by the precipitate break-up of the Soviet Union five years earlier.

Mutual concerns of the five nations also included cross-border armed extremism based in the Fergana Valley that takes in parts of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and the threat of violent secessionist movements often connected to it.

What alarmed SCO members as much as the preceding was the so-called Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in March of 2005 and what government authorities in Tashkent saw as a variation on the theme of regime change in Uzbekistan in May of that year, a month before the SCO summit and Western-backed "color revolutions" in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, only three months before that in Kyrgyzstan. The dominoes were falling with an increasing rapidity and

now were occurring on the Chinese as well as Russian borders. And in the very heart of the SCO community.

The 2008 SCO Summit was held against a background featuring major

Organisation provides us with a unique opportunity to take part in the process of forming a fundamentally new model of geopolitical integration.

It also recognized that no single,



changes taken place in the regional political situation. After the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and other direct military actions, the United States and other Western powers have basically completed integration of the world security pattern, launched offensives of "democratic reform" and "elimination of tyrannical outposts" in former Soviet states and the Greater Middle East region and started "color revolutions" one after another."

The heads of the member states point out that, against the backdrop of a contradictory process of globalisation, multilateral cooperation, which is based on the principles of equal right and mutual respect, non-intervention in internal affairs of sovereign states, non-confrontational way of thinking and consecutive movement towards democratisation of international relations, contributes to overall peace and security, and call upon the international community, irrespective of its differences in ideology and social structure, to form a new concept of security based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and interaction.

The heads of the member states are convinced that a rational and just world order must be based upon consolidation of mutual trust and good-neighborly relations, upon the establishment of true partnership with no pretence to monopoly and domination in international affairs. Such order will become more stable and secure, if it comes to consider the supremacy of principles and standards of international law, before all, the UN Charter. In the area of human rights it is necessary to respect strictly and consecutively historical traditions and national features of every people, the sovereignty equality of all states.

As an earlier quote mentioned, the SCO is composed of six member states and four observers representing a true diversity of cultures, civilizations, histories and political systems, from many of the world's oldest and most venerable traditions to some of its newest nations, from the world's two most populous states to Kyrgyzstan with slightly over five million citizens, and political structures ranging from secular to religious and multi-party to single-party. The internal demographic composition of the ten members and observers, excluding Mongolia, is also a rich tapestry of ethnic, national, linguistic and confessional pluralism and variety.

The Shanghai Cooperation

may join in the future."

The US counteroffensive was not long in coming nor was it limited to attempts at maintaining airbases in Central Asia.

It targeted the most populous new SCO observer state and that nation which can tilt not only the region but the world either toward Western dominance or a new multipolar international order: India. July 18, 2005 American President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh issued a joint statement on the Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear agreement that came into effect three years later and that permitted a waiver to be granted to India to commence civilian nuclear trade.

This was the economic enticement to lure India away from the SCO and closer security arrangements with Russia and China and begin the process of its orientation toward strategic military ties with Washington and its serving as the fourth pillar of an emerging Asian NATO along with Japan, Australia and South Korea. India as a full member of the SCO would insure the demise of global unipolarity, of bloc and power politics on the world stage and of Western domination on not only the military but the diplomatic and economic fronts.

India as a US military ally will perpetuate divisions in the world and hostilities in Eurasia.

An Indian analyst warned two years ago that "Washington is not interested in New Delhi's official admission to the nuclear power club because that would enhance the latter's influence in international affairs. An important objective of the Americans in the region is to turn India into a major factor capable of counterbalancing a rapidly growing China."

On August 1st of last year Georgian armed forces launched artillery barrages against the capital of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali, killing several people including a Russian peacekeeper. Only the preceding day a US-led NATO military exercise had been completed in Georgia and American troops and hardware remained in the country. Six days later Georgia, hours after its US-educated leader Mikheil Saakashvili announced a unilateral ceasefire, unleashed a full scale invasion of South Ossetia.

Russian forces beat back the Georgian offensive and decisively defeated an army that for years had been armed and trained by the Pentagon and NATO.

The Caucasus war was a double precedent. It marked the first time that a US and NATO proxy army had come into direct armed conflict with Russia and its defeat put the first dent in the West's post-Cold War image of invincibility.

The conflict in the Caucasus underscored the need for a multipolar world order. If NATO and even the UN are unable to settle this conflict, the SCO could well become a viable platform for resolving such problems....

The SCO should eventually start playing a new role both in and outside the Caucasus. What we see now is a real crisis of the idea of a unipolar world now that the US and its NATO allies pretend they are unable to get to the core of what's been happening in the Caucasus.

An even more forceful assessment is that which follows:

Changes in world politics that took place after the awakening of the Russian bear could open the SCO's doors for Tehran, which remains one of the key oil suppliers for China.

It may be possible to speak of an unprecedented consolidation of the countries of the Eurasian continent around Beijing and Moscow.

## ~ News ~

## Senior U.S. diplomats visit China to patch up ties

China on Tuesday urged the United States to work to push bilateral ties back to normal track as two senior U.S. diplomats came to Beijing with hope to ease tensions between the two countries.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg and National Security Council Senior Director for Asian Affairs Jeffrey Bader began their visit in Beijing from Tuesday to Thursday before going to Japan.

China's foreign ministry has so far given few details about the visit. The U.S. embassy in China has no plan to hold a press conference as usual.

"We will have a press release as soon as we get further information about the detailed arrangements," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said, declining to disclose whom the two U.S. diplomats will meet.

But Qin repeated at the regular news briefing that the responsibility of the setback of the Sino-U.S. relations lay with the U.S. administration.

"We urge the U.S. side to earnestly observe the principles laid down in the three Sino-U.S. joint communiques and their joint statement, respect China's core interests and properly handle sensitive issues, and work with the Chinese side to push relations back on a healthy and normal track," Qin said.

The United States angered China with its decision to sell arms to Taiwan and President Barack Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama regardless of China's objections. China has repeated that the U.S. move would severely harm its core interests.

Steinberg's trip was widely seen as a U.S. effort to mend ties with China at a time when they need to cooperate on a range of global issues, including the economic downturn, climate change and trade liberalization.

U.S. State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said Monday that the two sides would discuss "bilateral, regional and global issues" during the visit, which would be "an opportunity to refocus on the future."

Steinberg and Bader are expected to talk about the Iran nuclear issue as Western powers are weighing sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program.

But Qin said there is still room for diplomatic efforts and the parties should work to maintain and promote the process of dialogue and negotiations for a proper resolution of the Iran nuclear issue.

Also on Tuesday, a senior Chinese official said Sino-U.S. relations were experiencing a "spring chill" at the beginning of 2010 and suggested more cooperation and "less containment" in bilateral ties.

"The Americans need to understand that the China-U.S. relationship is like a car with two drivers. The Chinese and Americans both have wheels and brakes, so they have to talk with each other to drive the car forward on the right track," said Zhao Qizheng, spokesman for the annual session of China's top political advisory body.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said earlier that "a good China-U.S. relationship benefits both China and the United States as well as their peoples."

Wen said Saturday that China did not want 2010 to be "an unpeaceful year" for trade and economic relations with the United States.

U.S. responsible for retrograde Sino-U.S. ties: China advisory body spokesman

The United States should be responsible for the current retrograde bilateral relationship with China, said Zhao Qizheng, spokesman of the annual session of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Tuesday.

Zhao made the remarks at a press conference of the top political advisory body's annual full session, which will open Wednesday.

Two senior U.S. diplomats are to embark on a three-day visit to China this week, but will the visit break the deadlock between the two countries?

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James B. Steinberg and Jeffrey Bader, senior director for Asian affairs at the U.S. National Security Council, will pay the visit from Tuesday to Thursday.

The United States Ambassador to China Jon Huntsman said Monday that this year would be a good one for bilateral relations.

The two countries would "come together quickly" and "focus on global issues during the rest of this year," Huntsman said in an interview with Xinhua.

The United States expressed hope on Monday that ties with China will return to normal as quickly as possible.

There should be more cooperation and less containment in Sino-U.S. relations, which suffered a "spring chill" at the beginning of 2010, said a spokesman for China's top political advisory body here Tuesday.

Zhao Qizheng, spokesman for the third session of the 11th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), made the remarks at a press conference at the Great Hall of the People in central Beijing.

Zhao said since the two countries established diplomatic ties in 1979, the China-U.S. relations had developed rapidly with the volume of bilateral trade expanding more than 100 times as well as a lot of cultural, political and economic exchanges, which benefited both sides.

U.S. President Barack Obama seemed to have some new thinking on the relations, but two events, which happened during the first 20 days of 2010, had chilled the China-U.S. ties, said Zhao, referring to the Obama administration's arms sales plan to Taiwan and Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama despite strong opposition from China.

He said Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama "seriously disturbed" the Sino-U.S. relations, while the arms sales to Taiwan "seriously violated" three joint communiques between China and the United States and harmed China's national security and cross-Strait peace and stability.

The annual plenary session of the CPPCC National Committee will open Wednesday and more than 2,000 top political advisors are expected to make suggestions and proposals on state affairs.

The United States should be responsible for the current retrograde bilateral relationship with China, said Zhao Qizheng, spokesman of the annual session of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Tuesday.

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(Xinhua)

# An overview of Nepal's Sanskrit Buddhist Manuscripts in Japan



### Newār Buddhism

Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts of Nepal are exceptionally important in the study of Mahayana Buddhism. The Buddhist Newārs of Kathmandu valley have significantly contributed in the preservation of literary heritage of Mahayana Buddhism for almost 1000 years. The literary heritage of Sanskrit manuscripts is the most significant aspects of Newār Buddhism.

Buddhism of Nepal is the Vajrayāna tradition, which is literally called 'Newār

purest sources, are the Sanskrit texts from Nepal. This view is sufficient to know about the significance of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts of Nepal.

The literary resource of Newār Buddhism is the corpus of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts written in Nālandā, Vikramūla and other Buddhist centers. Nepal turned into the center of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts after the Muslim invasion of Northern India at the end of 12<sup>th</sup> century. Nepal has contributed to

most precious gift of Nepal to the world community. It has contributed to preserve Mahayana Buddhism in the most authentic form.

Japanese Interest on Manuscripts Due to the significance of Nepalese manuscripts, Japanese scholars and monks also look keen interest on them. Ven. Ekai Kawaguchi and Prof. Takakushu Junjiro realizing significance of Nepalese manuscripts paid attention to procure them during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They

### Prof. Shanker Thapa, Ph.D\*

manuscripts deposited at Tokyo University. It is now preserved at the Tokyo University Library.

**Catalogue of Matsunami Seiren-** Matsunami Seiren has edited a detailed catalogue of manuscripts of Tokyo University Library, (*Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Tokyo University Library*, Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1965). It has classified manuscripts according to Sūtra, Avadāna, Tantra, Dhāraṇi and (Eāstra categories which also provide primary descriptions of manuscript folios. Availability of Chinese translation is also indicated in each manuscript. It also gives information on how Tokyo manuscripts are related to manuscripts at the Bir Library in Nepal and those in the Royal Asiatic Society, Kolkata.

**Catalogue of the Buddhist Library-** Another important catalogue published in Japan is on the microfilm collection of Buddhist Library, Nagoya edited by Takaoka Hidenobu (*A Microfilm Catalogue of the Buddhist Manuscripts in Nepal*, Vol. 1, Nagoya: Buddhist Library, 1981). It was prepared with the aim of preserving Buddhist heritage of Nepal enriched by Nepal's historical, religious and cultural excellence.

attention on editing catalogues on native collections of Nepal. Mitutoshi Moriguchi has published a catalogue of Tantric Buddhist manuscripts of National Archive and Keshar Library in Kathmandu (*A Catalogue of the Buddhist Tantric Manuscripts in the National Archives of Nepal and Keshar Library*, Tokyo: Sankibou Busshorin, 1989). Another Japanese scholar Yoshizaki Kazumi worked on manuscripts of Asā Archive (Asā Saphū Kūthi). He has published three catalogues (with Tanaka Kimiaki, *Catalogue of the Sanskrit and Newārī Manuscripts in The Asā Archive* (in Japanese), Kumamoto: Kurokami Library, 1998; *A Catalogue of the Sanskrit and Newārī Manuscripts in the Asha Archives*, Kathmandu and Kumamoto: Cwasā Pāsā and Kurokami Library, 1991 and *A Catalogue of the Sanskrit and Newārī Manuscripts in the Asā Archives*, Part II, Kathmandu and Kumamoto: Cwasā Pāsā and Kurokami Library, 2002).

Japanese scholars meticulously studied and worked on Nepalese manuscripts. A large number of research Journals, Annual reports, Bulletins, Memoirs etc carried articles and texts of Nepalese Buddhist



Buddhism'. It is the continuity of Indian Buddhism in the Himalaya having close ties with Buddhism that lingered on in remote corners of Bengal and Indonesia. Its canonical language is Sanskrit but preaching of the religious matters took place in old Newārī. Newār Buddhism is a conservative tradition which always understood to be a part of the profound Indian tradition and sought authenticity from Indic precedents. Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, this tradition has undergone profound

changes within its structure. The major change occurred far is the ritual transformation of Buddhism itself ceasing the practice of celibate monasticism. As the religion of the Newār people, Vajrayāna tradition of Nepal has marked two important developments, firstly, the intellectual development leading to enhancement of profound Buddhist scholarship, and, secondly, the literary tradition that materialized proliferation and preservation of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts. Those texts preserved in Nepal are written in Newārī scripts. At the same time, a great deal of indigenous Buddhist texts such as *Puranas*, ritual songs, eulogies, hymns, stories, ritual books, rules of fasting etc. are also contributed by the Newār Pandits.



storehouse of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts, the authentic sources of Mahayāna/Vajrayāna Buddhism. Preservation of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts is extremely important to preserve authentic Indian Buddhism. The movement of Sanskrit manuscripts outside Nepal further contributed in the expansion of Indian Buddhism in the original form. For this, Nepal's Sanskrit manuscripts are extremely valuable.

Brian Hodgson, a great British scholar and British Residency official in Kathmandu (19<sup>th</sup> C) has revealed that Nepal is the warehouse of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts. He procured vast collection of such manuscripts and later distributed to various institutions in India, United Kingdom, France and Russia. Then after, foreign collectors drew their attention to procure Buddhist manuscripts in Nepal. Indian expatriate monks who visited countries in the North also carried Nepalese manuscripts with them. At present, a considerable number of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts exist in Tibet, China, Japan and some European countries. Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts are extremely important in the study of authentic Mahayana Buddhism. Those manuscripts are the

are the pioneers among the Japanese collectors of Nepalese manuscripts. Since then, several Japanese scholars worked on them. At present, a considerable amount of Nepalese manuscripts are deposited in various University libraries, archives and research centers in Japan. Buddhist Library in Nagoya alone has extensive collection of microfilms of Nepalese manuscripts. It is the most significant Sanskrit manuscript library in Japan. Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal now preserved in Japan are exceptionally important. They are the resources of authentic Indo-Newār Buddhism.

Not much has been written on Japan's contribution in the study of Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts available in Japan. Japanese scholars did comprehensive work on those manuscripts. Thus, they have rendered invaluable contribution in the study of authentic Indian Buddhism through Nepalese Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts.

Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts are now preserved in various places in Japan. Those include the libraries of Tokyo, Kyoto, Tokai, Taisho, Soka, Ryukoku, Bukkyo and Tohoku Universities, the Institute of Oriental Philosophy and the Toyo Bunko. However, the collection of Ven. Ekai Kawaguchi is considered significant and historical. Kawaguchi collected Sanskrit manuscript in Nepal and Tibet. He also translated several texts such as *Saddharmapundarika Sūtra*, *Vimalakīrtinīdeva Sūtra*, *Uṣṇīśādevī Sūtra* and *Guhyasamāja Tantra* into Japanese. Prof. Takakushu Junjiro who had accompanied Kawaguchi to Nepal also procured Sanskrit manuscript. His collection contains 180 volumes of manuscripts whereas Kawaguchi procured 390 books of Buddhist manuscript. Altogether, they handed over altogether 570 Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts to the Tokyo University Library in 1915. Buddhist Library in Nagoya is a fine Sanskrit manuscript library in Japan. Ven. Takaoka Sucho is the one who has realized the religious and academic significance of Nepalese manuscripts

### Catalogues of Japanese Collections

Hundreds of catalogues on Nepalese manuscripts have already been published in Nepal and abroad. Some of the catalogues published in Japan contain details on Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal deposited in Japanese collections. Japanese scholars also edited catalogues of Nepalese collections. There are several repositories in Japan, which did not publish catalogues of their holdings yet. Therefore, detail information on some collections is lacking. Taisho University, which is the pioneer in the collection of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist

### Catalogue of Tokai University-

Tokai University collection is also an important collection of Nepalese Buddhist manuscript. It contains Sūtra, Dhāraṇi, Sōtra, Avadāna, Tantra, Vīdhi, Stava and commentaries. Iwamoto Yutaka has edited annotated catalogue of the Tokai manuscripts (*Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of Tokai University, Proceeding of the Faculty of Letters 2 (Tokai Daigaku Bungakubu Kiyo 2)*, Tokyo: Tokai University, 1960).

**Other Catalogues-** In addition to aforementioned catalogues, some other catalogues were published by Kiyotaka Goshima & Keiyo Noguci (A

manuscripts written by Japanese scholars. The scholarly publications are the outcome of their interest in Sanskrit manuscripts. Their contribution obviously led to develop expertise on Indian Buddhism in Japan. Consequently, they have produced hundreds of scholarly works both in English and Japanese on varied themes of Indian Buddhism based on Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts. However, works published in Japanese have less access to the outside world although they are of greater academic significance. The contribution of Japanese Buddhist and Sanskrit scholars in the study of authentic Indian



manuscripts, also paid attention on Sanskrit manuscripts deposited at the Bir Library in Nepal. It has published a paper on this collection in the *Memoirs of Taisho University*.

Some of the important catalogues edited by the Japanese scholars include -

**Handwritten Catalogue of Kawaguchi-Takakushu Collection-** It is a hand-written catalogue of Kawaguchi and Takakushu collection, which gives information on Nepalese

*Succinct Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Possession of the Faculty of Letters*, Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1983) and Shinichiro Hori, ('Kamiya's Collection of Sanskrit Manuscripts from Nepal', *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 79, Nos. 40-41, 1991).

**Catalogues on Nepalese Collections-** Japanese scholars not only edited catalogues of Japanese collection of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts, they equally paid

Buddhism with the help of Nepalese Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts is most significant in Buddhist studies.

[\*DEAN, Lumbini Buddha University, Kathmandu, Nepal] (abridged version of the paper presented at the International Conference 'Buddhism in East Asia: Traditions, Changes and Challenges', 12-13 February 2010, organized by Department of East Asian Studies, Delhi University, New Delhi, India) drsthapa5721@yahoo.com