

National consensus government is mandatory



WM Correspondent

After much posturing and haggling, Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal finally succumbed to amplifying voice for his resignation from various fronts especially the main opposition United CPN (Maoist).

Nepal chose to relate his announcement of resignation to his "unwillingness to see the country remain

hostage to indecision" and, in technical sense, pave the way for the formation of a national consensus government as demanded by the Maoists.

Premier Nepal announced to quit from his saddle in a televised address to the nation after a nagging delay of one month.

Given the failure on the part of Nepal in every front to deliver, his

continuous obsession with power was widely thought to be disastrous to the country. In this light, it was more than irony to see him boasting about the performance of his government during its 13-month long tenure while announcing his resignation.

Basically, he grossly failed in both the two cardinal topics of the nation-leading peace process to a logical end

and promulgating a new constitution in a timely manner.

During the tenure of Nepal, the political incongruence reached to its peak as the parties were more engaged to fulfill their rapacious desire to pocket the petty political benefits.

The political imprudence and myopia magnified to such a degree that the parties brazenly defaulted on their

commitments to produce a new statute by the previously set deadline of May 28, 2010.

It is not a blurred reality that the India factor has long been dictating every political equation in Nepal due, primarily, to myriad deficiencies of the country's political leadership.

As such, political experts smell a rat in the latest political development of the country too.

"Apart from the inter-party squabbling, the intra party discord has also intensified viciously in these days. So, the prospects of formation of a national consensus government in an environment of trust and cooperation appear to be slim," they opine adding, "India has long displayed a great degree of agility in pitting one political group against another to capitalize upon the political fluidity in Nepal."

According to them, if the southern neighbour continues to hold sway over the pattern of Nepali politics by cashing in on the divided mentality of the country's leaders, the meaningful formation of national consensus government will just be a distant dream.

Obviously, the mandarins of New Delhi had a big role in immature collapse of the then Maoist-led government as well as the subsequent formation of the outgoing coalition. Such being the case, New Delhi cannot be expected to remain idle if its betes noires i.e. the Maoists get an

opportunity to lead the new national consensus government.

Likewise, it is also suspected resignation of Nepal, which came out of the blue, is not actually gravitated towards resolving the prolonged political deadlock.

If Nepal was morally serious about early end of political quagmire, he should have resigned on May 28, the day his government failed to ready the new constitution.

As such, there is an ample space to sense something unscrupulous and uncanny in the sudden resignation of Nepal.

Be that as it may, what should be well understood is that the best option to replace the outgoing government is a national consensus government led by the largest party in the CA, UCPN (Maoist).

The ball now in the Maoist court and it should take on the onus of building consensus.

All the parties should not be oblivious of the fact that the formation of a majority government rather than a national consensus one will, in no way, augur well to the political future of the country.

If they ceaselessly indulge in petty and parochial politics thereby prompting foreigners to meddle more severely in the country's internal affairs, the national interests will also continue to be marred.

How Dahal will douse it?

WM Correspondent

United CPN (Maoist) chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal has lately aired emotionally charged bemoaning that he is being cornered by his own party flock.

This came after media reports that three party stalwarts Mohan Vaidhya, Dr Baburam Bhattarai and Ram Bahadur Thapa have ganged up against Dahal for his "monopolistic tendency" in the party.

"The voices of my close aides resemble that of foes. It is a challenge of today and it is also connected with the plights of the nation," he said while speaking at a public function.

Dahal is considered to be agile enough to cash in on the differences between the two opposite factions with the party-one led by Bhattarai and another by Vaidya- for his personal political gains.

Political pundits say that Dahal displays a great deal of political dexterity to pit the one faction against the other to maintain his leadership.

The remark made by him a few months back that India was backing Bhattarai for the post of Prime Minister was deemed as his tactics of divide and rule.

Bhattarai had termed Dahal's comment as an attempt to assassinate his character.

The three leaders are believed to have teamed up to abort the dream of Dahal to again elevate him to the premiership.

Maoist chieftain tabled the policy of remaining in opposition if he was not allowed to become Prime Minister in the recently concluded politburo meeting.

However, the proposition could not see the light of the day owing to the joint attempts made by the three leaders.

If the alliance between the three continues, the clout of Dahal within the party may fade away at a breakneck speed.

No wonder, Dahal not only expressed dismay over his derision by

his own people but also related it with a plot to put the party in a fix.

The new political posture adopted by the three key Maoist leaders has certainly posed a great challenge for the Dahal's dream to continue to rule the roost.

The consistent intensification of internal discord in the largest party also gives enough room to doubt whether an external power like India or other elements are plotting to split it.

The sharp ideological antagonism between Vaidya and Bhattarai had earlier given birth to the possibility of split of the party, that ultimately propelled Dahal to capitalize upon the situation in his favour on the pretext of keeping the party integral.

Now, with the recent volte-face in the pattern of the groupism in the party, there seems a very little space for him to play with the differences to strengthen his position.

It is yet to be seen how he will tame the irked leaders.



Chinese media delegation meets Nepali leaders

WM Correspondent

A Chinese media delegation from Yunnan Province visited Nepal from June 25-27 and met with Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal and other top political leaders in the country.

In their one-hour long interaction, the delegation members and PM Nepal discussed various bilateral issues pertaining to mutual benefits.

The delegation also expressed its keenness to scout other potential ways to further solidify the cooperation between Nepal and China in various areas of mutual interest.

The delegation, which landed in Kathmandu at the invitation of The Weekly Mirror, also held discussion with UCPN (Maoist) chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal, CPN (UML) chairman Jhala Nath Khanal and Nepali Congress parliamentary party leader

Ram Chandra Poudel during their stay in Nepal.

The six-member Chinese delegation was led by Xu Tiyi, Editor and Vice President of Yunnan Daily

Tian Jing, associate senior editor and vice director of Chief Editors' Department in YDPG, Liu Hong, associate senior editor and director of foreign propaganda department of

Internet Information Center in YDGP, Li Hongzhi, associated senior reporter of foreign propaganda department of Yunnan daily, Wang Zhe, assistant director of Yunan Society for China-

representative, YNCICE..

The team also visited the Lumbini, the birth-place of Buddha during their visit in Nepal.

Yunnan Daily was established on

largest circulated and most-widely read newspaper in Yunnan Province today. Under the authorization of National General Administration of Press and Publication, Yunnan Daily set up the Yunnan Daily Press Group in June 2001, which has 11 newspapers, 4 periodicals and 2 websites now.

11 newspapers: Yunnan Daily, Spring City Evening News, Dianchi Morning Paper, Mass Consumers' paper, Weekly Digest, Spring City's Mobile Phone paper, Yunnan Economy Daily, Ethnic Times, Yunnan Legal Daily, Yunnan Science-Technology Paper, Oriental Times.

4 Periodicals: Dagan Weekly, Socialism Forum, Influence, Car and People

2 Websites: Yunnan Net, Yunnan Daily Net



Press Group (YDPG).

Other members of the team were

Yunan Daily, Yang Zelin, associated senior reporter and vice director of



India Cooperation and Exchange (YNCICE) and Henry Wang, business

4th March 1950. After 60 years' development, Yunnan Daily is the

R.No. BA. 39/027/028

Published by : Weekly Mirror Publication (P) Ltd.

Editor : Prem Kumari Pant

Sub-Editor : Nirjal Dhungana

Prithvi Man Shrestha

New Plaza, Ram Shah Path, Kathmandu

Tel No. 4412074, Fax: 977-1-4412410

Printed at : Dhimle Printing Press, Dillibazar

Email: weeklymirror@ntc.net.np

weeklymirror@gmail.com

Editorial

Maoists in a fix

The divided mentality amongst the Maoist stalwarts has been strikingly visible with party chairman Puspita Kamal Dahal emotionally lamenting that has lamented his own people had cornered him for raising the issue of nationalism.

The three key Maoist leaders Dr Baburam Bhattarai, Mohan Vaidhya and Ram Bahadur Thapa have come together against the "self centric and hedonistic tendency" of Dahal.

Referring to the launch of derisive remarks and seemingly strong ganging up against him by his own flock, Dahal further complained he had faced all round opposition including from those considered close for raising the issue of nationalism and liberation of Nepali people.

Dahal said, although it was normal for others to corner him while raising the issue of nationalism, such behavior from those considered close to him had hurt him.

Dahal's close aides Baidhya, Bhattarai and Thapa united got miffed with him and decided to alert him on his alleged ambitious and individualistic nature after Dahal flatly denied to give option for the post of the Prime Minister even at a time when the party was in a position to lead a national consensus government

Maoist chieftain also chose to define the latest form of schism in his party as a broader plot to enfeeble it.

Be that as it may, the intensification of internal strife in the structure of the party, on which the largest number of people placed their faith during Constituent Assembly (CA) polls, will bode ill for not only it but for the whole country as a whole.

Obviously, the comparatively huge electoral support the Maoists garnered can safely be ascribed to their public commitments that they would come up with a radical vision to reorient the country's poor socio-economic fabrics for a greater good.

It must also be admitted that the huge number of people also banked upon the former rebels with hopes and expectations that they would not display a comprising attitude on the issues correlated to the country's national interests.

The core support group of the Maoists comprises of the marginalized, the poor and those who are genuinely concerned about the independent and sovereign status of the country.

Of course, the Maoists could not garner a required majority to propel the country towards the path as per their vision. And, they were also unable to continue to steer the coalition government led by them owing to various internal and external factors.

It is a fact that the party has also failed to exhibit a required degree of political prudence as a main opposition.

The Maoist leadership must realize that if it is sunk in the vortex of schism amidst the current transition period, the party will have to incur a big political loss.

As such, the former rebels should be highly conscious to bury their hatchets in a very sincere and wise fashion so that it will help the entire country to smoothly proceed forward.

They also must not forget the fact that the division amongst the parties amidst the political fluidity would also further encourage the foreigners to intervene in the country's affairs more viciously at the expense of the country's national interests.

The Bravest Nepalese Gurkhas

Hari Prasad Shrestha

Gurkhas have been part of the British Army for almost 200 years. The Gurkhas who have fought since the times of Queen Victoria till Queen Elizabeth II, there's no noteworthy memorial in Britain. The Gurkhas are now based at Shorncliffe near Folkestone.

In a landmark ruling on 30 September 2008 the High Court in London decided that Gurkhas who left the Army before 1997 did have an automatic right of residency in the United Kingdom. In line with the ruling of the High Court the Home Office is to review all cases affected by this decision.

On the 29 April 2009 a motion in the British House of Commons by the Liberal Democrats that all Gurkhas be offered an equal right of residence resulted in a defeat for the Government by 267 votes to 246, the first, first day motion defeat for a government since 1978. Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat leader, stated that "This is an immense victory for the rights of Gurkhas who have been waiting so long for justice, a victory for Parliament, a victory for decency." He added that it was "the kind of thing people want this country to do".

On 21 May 2009, the Home Secretary Jacqui Smith announced that all Gurkha veterans who retired before 1997 with at least four years service would be allowed to settle in the UK. The actress and daughter of Gurkha corps major James Lumley, Joanna Lumley, who had highlighted the treatment of the Gurkhas and campaigned for their rights, commented: "This is the welcome we have always longed to give".

The number of the Nepalese Gurkhas, serving in the British Army has been sharply reduced from a World War II peak of 112,000 men, and now stands at about 3,500. During the two World Wars, 43,000 young men lost their lives.

Gurkha, also spelled as Gorkha, are people from Nepal, who take their name from the eighth century Hindu warrior-saint Guru Goraknath and from the hill town of Gorkha from which the Nepal had expanded.

"Better to die than be a coward" is the motto of the world-famous Nepalese Gurkha soldiers who are an integral part of the British Army. They still carry into battle their traditional weapon - an 18-inch long curved knife known as the kukri.

Gurkhas are best known for their history of bravery and strength in the Indian Army's Gorkha regiments and the British Army's Brigade of Gurkhas.

The Gurkhas were designated by British officials as a "Martial Race", which means thought to be naturally warlike and aggressive in battle, and to possess qualities of courage, loyalty, self sufficiency, physical strength, resilience, orderliness, the ability to work hard for long periods of time, fighting tenacity and military strategy.

Prince Harry lived with a Gurkha battalion during his 10 weeks in Afghanistan. Historian Tony Gould said Gurkhas have brought an excellent combination of qualities from a military point of view. He said: "They are tough, they are brave, they are durable, they are amenable to discipline."

Former Chief of staff of the Indian Army, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw once famously said about Gurkhas: If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or he is a Gurkha Professor Sir Ralph Turner, MC, who served with the 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles in the First World War, wrote of Gurkhas:

"As I write these last words, my thoughts return to you who were my comrades, the stubborn and indomitable peasants of Nepal. Once more I hear the laughter with which you greeted every hardship. Once more I see you in your bivouacs or about your fires, on forced march or in the trenches, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun. Uncomplaining you endure hunger and thirst and wounds: and at the last your unwavering lines disappear into the smoke and wrath of battle. Bravest of the brave, most generous of the generous, never had country more faithful friends than you."

The Gurkha war cry is "Jai Mahakali, Ayo Gorkhali" which literally translates to "Glory be to the Goddess of War, here come the Gorkhas!"

The word Gorkha is derived from the prakrit words "go raksha" (Sanskrit gau-raksa, literally "cow-protector"). This was used by Guru Goraknath, the spiritual leader of the Gorkhas, the name given to his disciples.

During World War I (1914-18), more than 200,000 Gurkhas served in the British Army, suffering approximately 20,000 casualties, and receiving almost 2,000 gallantry awards. The number of Gurkha battalions was increased to thirty-three, and Gurkha units were placed at the disposal of the British high command by the Nepalese government for service on all fronts.

During World War II (1939-45), there were ten Gurkha regiments, with two battalions each making a total of

twenty pre-war battalions. Following the evacuation of the BEF from Dunkirk in 1940, the Nepalese government offered to increase recruitment to increase the total number of Gurkha battalions in British service to thirty-five.

After Indian independence and partition in 1947 and under the Tripartite Agreement, the original ten Gurkha regiments consisting of the twenty pre-war battalions were split between the British Army and the newly independent Indian Army. Six Gurkha regiments (twelve battalions) were transferred to the post-independence Indian Army, while four regiments (eight battalions) were transferred to the British Army.

The principal aim of the Tripartite Agreement was to ensure that Gurkhas serving under the Crown would be paid on the same scale as those serving in the new Indian Army. While the difference is made up through cost of living and location allowances during a Gurkha's actual period of service, the pension payable on his return to Nepal is much lower than would be the case for his British counterparts.

Two light infantry battalions of the Nepalese Army are also manned by Gurkhas:

Shree Purano Gorakh Battalion established 1763

Shree Naya Gorakh Battalion established 1783

The Gurkha Contingent (GC) of the Singapore Police Force was formed on 9 April 1949 from selected ex-British Army Gurkhas. It is an integral part of the Police Force and was raised to replace a Sikh unit which had existed prior to the Japanese occupation during the Second World War.

The Gurkha Reserve Unit is a special guard force in the Sultanate of Brunei. The 2,000 strong Gurkha unit is made up of British Army veterans. The unit functioned primarily as a praetorian guard that protected the sultan, the Royal Family and oil installations.

Ethnically, Gurkhas who are presently serving in the British armed forces are Indo-Tibeto-Mongolians. Gurkhas serving in the Indian Armed Forces are of both groups, Indo-Tibeto-Mongolian and ethnic Rajput. Gurkhas of Tibeto-Mongolian origin mostly belong to the Limbu, Gurung, Magar, Tamang, and Kiranti origin, many of whom are adherents of Tibetan Buddhism and Shamanism, albeit some groups have come under some Hindu influence.

There have been twenty-six Victoria

Crosses awarded to members of the Gurkha regiments. The first was awarded in 1858 and the last in 1965. In addition, since Indian independence in 1947, Gurkhas serving in the Indian Army have also been awarded three Param Vir Chakras.

Major Dhan Singh Thapa of the 1/8 Gorkha Rifles won the Param Vir Chakra for his heroic actions during the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict. The 1st battalion of the 11 Gorkha Rifles was involved in Operation Vijay where Lt. (acting Captain) Manoj Kumar Pandey won the Param Vir Chakra for his gallant actions.

Gurkhas keep to their Nepalese customs and beliefs, and the brigade follows religious festivals such as Dashain, in which goats and buffaloes are sacrificed.

The selection process has been described as one of the toughest in the world and is fiercely contested. Young hopefuls have to run uphill for 40 minutes carrying a wicker basket on their back filled with rocks weighing 70lbs.

Twenty eight years ago, the British and the Argentinians fought over the Falkland Islands and turned, the otherwise peaceful and serene South Atlantic into an inferno. The Malvinas were claimed by the Argentinians and the British. The conflict began on April 2, 1982 after Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands. Britain's PM Margaret Thatcher sent a task force which resulted in the death of 1,000 people, after which the Falklands (Malvinas) were liberated on June 14, 1982 by the Gurkhas.

Although the British government has allowed entering country to the retired Gurkhas, but the sick, penniless and adult dependents of Gurkhas turning up in Britain may suffer a lot, where charities can do little to help them. In Nepal, discussions have begun whether Nepal should allow its citizen to be recruited in the British and Indian armies? People, who support the motion, they say that Gurkhas have been an integral part of the world warriors history, which is subject of great dignity and pride for the Nepali people. People, who are against the motion, they say that recruitment in army of other countries should be stopped as fighting for the sake of other nation has no positive implications for Nepal. Despites some controversies over recruitment, still young men have big attractions as it has provided employment, prestige, pride as well as better future for the Gurkha's dependents.

The jumble of pre-budget times

By R.K.Regmee

Thousands of job-seeking youths - over 40,000 - wrote a rather sad commentary recently without using pen or pencil on the state of Nepali economy in pre-budget times. As they waited for hours in over a kilometer queue outside Dashrath Stadium in Kathmandu for days together to collect forms for Korean language test, one of various prerequisites to apply for jobs in South Korea, their dehydrated and undernourished faces spontaneously expressed problems facing Nepalis in earning living at the grass-root level.

Farmers' plight for getting fertilizer just on the eve of monsoon season and famine like situation in some districts in Far-West accompanied by unavailability of drinking water in urban areas painted the real picture of the current state of economy. The scenario mirrors, among other things, policy makers' lack of vision for using youth power in nation-building, driving agro sector in a productive way and steering the urban development.

Rather contrasting with the scene is the political panorama in which the decision makers of the day - the top politicians - are enjoying arm-chair

politics while calculating their move in posh hotels and resorts for protecting their ego-centered self-interest in power-politics. The problems of people are simply talking themes for them. They do not take them as performing agenda. The politicians, it seems, have been rather blinded by the aggressive demand for Prime Minister's resignation and witty denial of the same.

Political panorama

Premier Madhav Kumar Nepal is looking for auspicious time to save face while exiting Singha Durbar amidst backing of parliamentary majority. His party-boss Jhalanath Khanal is busy advocating for his entry into the high chair while criticizing MKN for his failure in year-long rule. Maoist Supremo Prachanda is working out ways to block the passage of fellow comrade Dr. Baburam Bhattarai to Premiership by emphasizing the need for UCPN-Maoist to continue role of opposition in parliament. Nepali Congress leaders Paudyal and Deuba - the so-called duo-are planning ways to bypass each other for heading new version of MKN-type coalition government sans Maoists.

Leaders of small parties are making their presence felt for grabbing as much place in future government as possible.

This has created political chaos which has in turn produced utter confusion in economic landscape. The continuity of the majority coalition government, like in the past 12 months, is in question reminding one of the unsolved puzzle. The support that MKN-team enjoys in the highest elected body Legislature Parliament rules out any sort of discontinuity but the outside parliament opposition-politics is being built up in a way that might compel his fall any time now. Forgotten in the political mess are the economic woes Nepalis face day in and day out. Missing in the jumble are the policies and measures designed to address them.

Politics of the day has victimized Nepali economy over the years. In the past three years the economic concerns remained in the back yard. As a result of this living normal life is being further complicated day by day for working Nepalis because of high

market price and unavailability of goods.

Bureaucrats attached to Finance Ministry, in the meanwhile, take pride in finishing the draft of 335 billion rupee-budget for the next fiscal year. "We had to battle hard to bring the document that figure from the demanded estimate of 500 billion rupees," they claim.

The MKN-government does not know whether it will be able to present the policies, programmes and budget worked out under its directive for fiscal 2010-11. Its dream of being the first leftist-led government to give the country two budgets in two consecutive years may not come true. With UCPN-Maoist already declaring "We would not allow the MKN team to present the documents in the parliament," the immediate future of Nepali economy hangs in the balance. Does that political party know who it is that will be choked by that action: the government of the day or the people of Nepal?

Will the MKN team, then, resort to ordinance for clearing the passage for policies, programmes and the budget? Will it not mock at the norms of parliamentary practice? June 23, 2010.

Linking water, conflict and peace

By Dan Smith

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Water is a basic condition of life. We depend upon it for daily use, for agriculture, for industry and infrastructure. A shortage, an excess and deficient quality can all undermine welfare, impair human security, hold back economic development and in some circumstances generate conflict.

The London-based Foreign Policy Centre has published Tackling the World Water Crisis, an edited collection of articles in which mine looks at the peace and security issues around water.

Here are some components of the general context:

- 1.2 billion people lack access to clean drinking water;
- 2 billion don't have adequate sanitation;
- the combined population of "water-stressed countries" today is reckoned to be about 2.4 billion;
- by 2015 it's thought that about 120 countries will be water-stressed;
- Southwest China had its worst drought in a century this year affecting 24 million people;
- the Gobi Desert is expanding by about 2,500 square miles each year and its edge is now only some 40 to 45 miles from Beijing, which frequently suffers severe dust storms;
- a barely reported drought in the Sahel right now affects 10 million people;
- at the current rate of consumption and with no improvement in water retention or new sources, some estimates indicate India is on course to exhaust its freshwater supplies by the middle of this century;
- some analyses indicate Yemen's capital Sana'a will run out of water around 2017.

These enormous pressing problems explain why the issue of water is not an environmental issue but a fundamental feature of the global political landscape. Or, to put it differently, they explain why an initially environmental issue is a fundamental political challenge.

World population today is about 6.8 billion. It is expected to be about 9 billion by 2050. Feeding people is one of the biggest challenges the world community faces in the next half century. To do that will require efficient and creative management:

- to find better ways to store and move water so there is less waste,
- simultaneously to increase the productivity of agriculture so as to use less water in producing more food,
- to involve ordinary people and their communities in identifying the problems and making the decisions that affect their lives,
- and to arrive at equitably shared solutions to common problems so as to minimise conflict risk.

If management of resources and risk is deficient, the consequent problems could be overwhelming - both in the sense of overwhelming poor countries and in the sense of overwhelming the international system's ability to cope.

As when thinking about the relationship between climate change and conflict, it is misleading to think in terms of a simple causal relationship.

The problem is not that water scarcity or climate change more generally will cause violent conflict, plain and simple. Rather, the problem is that water scarcity or climate change more generally will interact (and, indeed, already are interacting) with other features of the social, economic and political landscape to increase the risk of violent conflict.

It is where poverty is rampant and governance is weakest and most arbitrary that the risks are greatest and management of them is least effective.

More importantly, pressure on water resources is likely to grow over the next 40 to 50 years as the world population continues to grow, urbanisation proceeds apace and more countries, by dint of succeeding with a high growth economic strategy, enter the water-intensive phase of development that China and India are now in.

As the globe warms, the consequences for water are what most shape the impact of climate change on people and societies.

Warmer air retains more moisture than cooler air, which produces a nasty two-sided effect. Many dry areas are, broadly speaking, likely to become drier because the air will more efficiently hold water and deny them their rainfall; meanwhile many wet areas will, broadly speaking, get wetter because when the air is ready to dump its water on them there is more water in the air to fall as rain.

Overall, then, climate change will increase water scarcity in some places and increase water excess in others. Both effects are capable of diminishing food security. In different places, the precise effect may be extended drought or an intensification of the monsoon into a shorter period, or less dramatic variations that are nonetheless significant for agriculture.

At the extreme, even a rich country like Australia has seen rice production decline sharply. In South and Southeast Asia, rice production faces long-term risks of catastrophic proportions, which would have deeply damaging effects for the societies for whom rice is a staple food.

From these effects on food security and livelihood security, there follows a

train of knock-on effects - the consequences of consequences - with which regular readers of mine are now familiar.

It is worth picking out one point of the discussion of conflict effects - the importance of thinking about consequences at different levels.

So-called water wars are one thing (so-called because it is axiomatic that no war ever has a single cause, so what might look like a water war when viewed through the lens of water scarcity may look like a completely different kind of war if viewed through the lens of bad governance, ethno-national difference, regional power politics, individual leaders' political ambitions etc). But the destabilising effects of climate change and its water impacts might lead in a different direction.

If water deficiencies are linked to insecurity and conflict risk, it follows that good water management is a part of peacebuilding, and peacebuilding can be a part of good water management. Both are essential components of human security.

Issues of climate and water management are thus issues of peace and governance: like so much else in development, it is a serious error to let them drift into the category of technical problems that can be quickly fixed.

What is required instead is the slow work of building peaceful states, making it possible for ordinary people in their communities to play their part in the mass of small-scale actions that will be the primary motor for solving the problems of water management.

Neither technical nor top-down fixes will meet the bill. But experience in a variety of places is beginning to offer grounds for optimism that small-scale practical solutions can be mobilised and can work.

The PM -resignation issue: A puzzle or a circus?

R.K. Regme

Nepali politics have been orbiting round the issue of resignation of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal for over a year with passionate zeal. It could not see the light of the day even when the person himself - MKN - expressed willingness to quit by a recent specific deadline. The issue had locked Nepali politics this time last year and it is about to do so now in the form of paralyzing parliament once again.

The exit failed to materialize not because of public preference for MKN but because those who sought it appeared pressing it only as a tactical measure for their politics but not meaning to get it. Had Maoists really desired it, the single largest party in parliament would not have been highly divided or indecisive on the puzzle: suggesting their version of replacement for MKN to the satisfaction of fellow party leaders.

If the anti-MKN lobby inside CPN (UML) had genuinely opted for the ouster, it would not have collectively asked MKN in a circus-type drama, to postpone exit for the time being. There was no point for Nepali Congress to delay the Premier's departure in the excuse of its upcoming convention or internal row over Prime Ministerial candidate if it had really fancied Singha Durbar - power.

To witness the key Nepali political forces being bolted by a single issue of one person's resignation for such a long time could be nothing but discouraging. It signals poverty of their political mind besides dwarfing their historical achievements. It also shows shallowness of their political

creativity. A normal parliamentary way to close the chapter for good would have been a motion of vote of no confidence against MKN. Or, the Prime Minister himself could have gone for a pro-active measure: the vote of confidence for his government.

When the whole resignation-issue is deconstructed it would emerge as a well designed strategy not to allow Nepal to concentrate on nation building efforts for realizing economic progress in myriad fronts. It appears to have aimed at involving politicians of both ruling and opposition parties in petty issues and, thereby, disabling them and the government of the day to pursue national development schemes for realizing the dream of New Nepal.

Adverse impact

The negative impact on the country of what could also be termed as Resignation-Politics is highly worrying. Because of continuous political instability, Nepal has failed to gain from the ongoing three-year Interim Plan. She has also lagged behind in creating a suitable atmosphere for similar Plan slated to be implemented by July 17, 2010. The preparation for Nepal Tourism Year 2011 is in mess. All the achievements scored by private sector in the economy after economic freedom of 1990s are being pulled down in a rather silent but systematic way.

Areas such as hydro-power, airlines, education - from School to Plus Two to higher education - infrastructural development, transport and hotel business have been

compelled to squeeze under one pretext or the other despite possessing high prospects for progress and development. The country's dependence on donors for finance and also for political consultation is on the rise in an unprecedented pace.

Various urgent tasks of post-conflict times - integration of Maoist combatants, addressing the need of conflict - victims, finishing the peace building works - remain unattended. The mission of People's Movement II looks pale in the very turf of those who structured it. The trends of disturbing law and order, weakening bureaucracy and mortifying various institutions of the country appear dominant. It appears there is an undercurrent to fail the country. Top politicians appear not feeling it in the heat of personalized political squabble.

Silver lining

One of two positive aspects of the issue is: it did not allow opposition politicians-Maoists to resume conflict-time violence activities. It kept them engaged around a sort of arm-chair politics, table-talks, dialogue, and speechifying. The same could be taken as a process of democratizing a force committed more to fighting than dialoguing.

Even the chain of occasional aggressive street protests and peaceful but hot strikes that they organized to oppose the government also had smooth landing in the process like compromise or agreement or consultation of self-

evaluation and the like. The remarkable point to be noted in this is that they did not carry violent flavour of conflict-era. The resignation issue-separated a political force that spent over a decade in underground violent politics from the act of violence.

Another equally appealing yield of the Resignation-issue is the grouping of over 20 parties with a number of competitive ideological diversities among themselves and multiple internal divisions. When analyzed in the past-experience of Nepali politics this task of keeping them under one roof for over a year looks incredible. This is, however, not to refer to it as the best example of coalition-culture in Nepali politics. Far from it!

The negative impact, when weighed against the silver lining, would demonstrate that the country has continued to lose significantly like in conflict-times. The mode of multiple loss because of the slow-poisoning -type-instability fueled by the PM-resignation issue is definitely devastating. The infection has spread in all fronts of the nation. Allowing it to dominate Nepali politics some more time would be tantamount to speeding decaying process in the country.

The need today is to cap the issue by immediately offering a viable way out of current deadlock to facilitate the country to return to stability and thereby concentrate on nation building task. Will the politicians - ruling and opposition - who would find parliament disturbed next week for reasons of re-demanding PM resignation and re-snubbing the same care to be responsive to that need?

~ News ~

Good relations with all countries: PM Nepal

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal said Nepal has equal and intimate relations with all countries having diplomatic ties.

Addressing the 63rd Anniversary Programme organized by the Nepal Council of World Affairs in the capital June 28, PM Nepal reiterated that Nepal



does have good relations with all countries, as our country has maintained the relations on Panchasheel principles.

Nepal establishes diplomatic ties as per the UN Charter, concept of the non-aligned movement, Panchasheel principles and international law on peace and its values, and exercises the foreign policy accordingly, he said.

The PM said the foreign policy of Nepal, a country with a long and unbroken history of political independence and national sovereignty largely reflects continuum and encompasses a fine blend of principle and pragmatism with a view to protecting and promoting our national interest in the changed political context in an increasingly competitive and globalizing world of the twenty-first century.

Similarly, he said Nepal got UN membership in 1955 and has been playing significant role on peace building with Nepal armies' participation since then. Nepal is the sixth nation sending maximum peace keeping soldiers in the UN across the world, he reminded.

In the last UN general assembly held in the US, Nepal had special and active participation. Similarly, Nepal's participation in the Copenhagen summit on climate change rendered world attention.

According to the Prime Minister, Nepal was charting numerous agenda which draw global attention on the problems and challenges the LDCs facing, which would be presented in the fourth conference of the LDCs being held in Turkey next year.

Moreover, PM said he was working for the logically promptest settlement of the peace process, and always making efforts to create the environment congenial to forge national consensus among political parties.

On the occasion Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Sujata Koirala reiterated the equidistant relations with all diplomatically tied countries. For some years, Nepal has forwarded the concept of economic diplomacy, she added.

Chairman of the organizing body, Tika Jung Thapa shed light on Council activities and urged the political leaders to immediately reach the peace process to the logical end.

With the initiative of the experts from diplomacy, administration, journalism and academic sector, the Council was established 62 years ago in order to study and research on various aspects of world affairs.

Nepal firm on one China policy

Minister for Information and Communications Shankar Pokhrel has said Nepal is committed to One-China policy. There is no any hidden interest in the Nepal-China friendship, he made it clear.

Minister Pokhrel was speaking at a programme organized in the capital June 29 marking the 35th year of the airing of Nepali language service in the China Radio International (CRI), and also the reception to the newly elected members of the CRI's Listeners' National Council through the Fourth National General Convention.

China seems most intimate in terms of Nepal's stability and governance which is an exceptional friendship, Minister Pokhrel said, adding that there are lessons galore to learn from China.

He acclaimed the respect and devotion to labour in China which had attracted multinational companies for investment there.

Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Qiu Guohong said the relations between Nepal and China were established not only because of shared mountains and rivers but also in the people to people level.

The honour China bestowed to Nepali sculptor Araniko is always unforgettable, said culture expert Satya Mohan Joshi.

Also speaking on the occasion were litterateur Govinda Bhatta, and treasurer of China Study Centre Prasad Upreti.

The CRI previously called 'Peking Radio' in 1941 is the first radio producing programmes in maximum number of languages and time.

The CRI listeners had formed a club in Chitwan in 1984 which formed its council in 1996.

Black commando made public

The indigenous Tharu community today made public the National Liberation Army also known as Black Commando at Duhabi in Sunsari June 29.

Members of the Black Commando have been trained for exerting pressure for securing ethnic liberation and constitution writing, according to the Tharu community.

Commander of the Tharuhat Army, Sagen Chaudhari said the Black Commando has been trained as the Fourth Battalion of the Tharuhat Army that can fight strongly for securing ethnic liberation.

Leaders of different ethnic organizations, speaking at the function organized for making public the Black Commando, expressed concern over the lack of possibility of the constitution-writing completed in the extended time also.

Terrorizing the democratic space

By Gladson Dungdung

We live in the largest democratic country in the universe and also clap for it. But unfortunately, the Indian State has been terrorizing the democratic spaces of the villagers especially the Adivasis, Dalits, poor, women and children. Our honourable parliamentarians do not only table the policies, programmes and budget but they also table money in the Indian parliament and nobody is punished for defaming our largest democracy. Now the Raj Sabha (Upper House) has become heaven for the corporate houses. We have more than 100 billionaires in the upper house including Malya, Ambani and Kedi. In these circumstance, if we have to protect our democracy we must rationalize that why 77 years old Adivasi woman Hiramani walked in the city for justice, who had born before existence of the Indian State but not satisfied for last 63 years under Indian rule.

In the midst of hide and seek between the Sun and the Cloud, the environment of Jaipal Singh Stadium in Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand was very tense on June 25, 2010. The reason was, the "Operation Green Hunt Virodhi Nagrik Manch" (Citizens Forum against Operation Green Hunt) had called for a rally and mass meeting against the cold blood murder, rape and torture of innocent villagers by the security forces in the ongoing so-called anti-Naxal operation codified as "Operation Green Hunt". The forum has been intervening on the issues of the police atrocity since inception of the OGH. As a result, the police have declared it as a Maoist organization, which is of course, the outcome of Chidambaram's theory of democracy, which describes as 'this side or that side'. Therefore, whoever questions the Operation Green Hunt is considered as a Maoist, a Maoist supporter or at least a sympathizer of the Maoists.

When the Senior Superintendent of Police (Ranchi) Pravin Kumar came to know about the Forum's rally and mass meeting, he started a special operation against the forum. On June 18, the Police caught Jitendra Singh Munda of Nurtidih village of Tamar block, while he was returning from Ranchi to his village by bus carrying pamphlets of the Forum for distribution. The bus was also seized and the driver, assistant driver and conductor were taken into the police custody. In the evening, the SSP held a press conference in the city with smiling face, telling the media about how the police succeeded in arresting some Maoists. Jitendra Munda was asked to hold the pamphlets of the forum for the media show. The SSP declared the forum as a Maoist Organization, its pamphlet as a Maoist literature and also challenged that he would not let the rally and mass meeting take place on June 25 in Ranchi since it is an event of the Maoists.

The Forum's members were quite upset on the SSP's baseless propaganda and action against the forum. The senior members of the forum rejected the SSP's claim through the media. They also decided to meet the Adviser of the Governor R.R. Prasad and discuss on the matter. On 22 evening, when the weather was cool, a delegation comprising of 7 members entered into the holy chamber of the Governor's Adviser. He welcomed with smiling face and asked what should he do for the delegation. The convener of the Forum Stan Swami told him, "Your police have made us Maoists therefore we are here." "Please don't tell this", R.R. Prasad humbly requested. He immediately called the Director General of Police (DGP) Neyaz Ahmed to his chamber. When the holy ritual of introduction was over, he questioned, "Is there really any problem in the operation green hunt?" Indeed, the question reveals the fact that how each and every person who is with the system has worn the sunglasses made of P. Chidambaram & co. Therefore, no one wants to see the pain, suffering and agony of the innocent villagers who are being humiliated, beaten, raped, tortured and murdered by the security forces.

However, when the delegation submitted him some black and white papers related to facts & figures including the case of cold blood murder of Jasinta by the security forces, he patiently heard the delegation. The delegation members also told him that how the Police have been attempting to terrorize the democratic spaces. The security forces do not allow people's protest against the operation green hunt, they advocate for the corporate interest and also torture the villagers who oppose the force land acquisition for the corporate sharks. The police are portraying the Forum as Maoist organization, its reading materials as the Maoist literature and also threatening the bus owners who lend their buses for the Rally. After hearing the plea, R.R. Prasad order for a high level inquiry on the case of Jasinta and also show the green signal for the rally and mass meeting. However, he refused to give a written permission and kicked the ball into the DGP's court by saying that the DGP will look after the matter. He strongly said, "We are not waging war against our own people therefore we have different views from the central government as far as the anti-Naxal operations are concerned". Ironically, the scenario is completely different at the grassroots.

According to the holy words of the DGP Neyaz Ahmed, his police have been carrying out normal operations against the Maoists and he hates to call it the "operation green hunt". "We can not hunt the people only animals are hunted", he said. After hearing, so many complaints about his gunmen, he was upset but assured the delegation for having the rally and mass meeting but he put a condition that there should not be any violence. However, he said that he would confirm it only on the next day. In the evening SSP Pravin Kumar called Stan Swami over phone and asked him for a written permission. Finally, all the rituals, which of course called legal procedures, were accomplished after running from pillar to post and final green signal for was given to the forum for rally and mass meeting.

In the morning of June 25, nearly 100 Security Forces comprising of RAF, JAP and Local Police were present in

Jaipal Singh Stadium much before the arrival of the villagers. As soon as the time was passing, the police vehicles started rushing to the venue one after another apart from the Security Forces were present in the venue. It was 12 O'clock in the afternoon, a young man entered into the stadium with a camera in hand. He introduced himself as a crime reporter of a national news channel. We just laughed but he didn't understand. We questioned him, "Do our rally and mass meeting come under the purview of your 'crime reporting'? He smiled and responded, "Only my boss knows because he has assigned me this job". We were shocked to see specially the electronic media's interest. They never come to cover our programmes without invitation. Of course, we had informed the print media about the event but not electronic ones. Perhaps, their bosses sent them to cover the event as it comes under the purview of "crime" in their holy definition. Obviously, the media also consider us as the Maoist supporters.

After a few minutes, another police vehicle stopped in front of us. A police officer started question us one by one. The questions were - who are you? What do you do? Where do you come from? He questions and writes something in his diary. Indeed, it was very clear that the police know nothing about us though the media had published several reports regarding our work, which reveals the fact of how intelligent are our intelligence agencies. Though we were told that the security forces were there for our protection but of course, it was not. All of them had come with the prejudices in their minds and heart that the Maoists have called for the rally and mass meeting. They had taken for granted that we all are the Maoists or at least their supporters.

Amidst, we got phone calls from two senior members of the forum - Xavier Soy and Ramesh Dey who are based at Kuchai and Kharsawan in Saraikela-Kharsawan district respectively. Both of them described how the police terrorized the democratic rights of the people of Saraikela-Kharsawan district. The Superintendent of Police of Saraikela-Kharsawan, Abhishek threatened both of them several times for raising questions against the "operation green hunt". On 24 of June, SP Abhishek called Xavier Soy over the phone and told him to abstain from the rally and mass meeting. He also threatened him for lifetime imprisonment if he doesn't obey his order. On the next day, when Xavier Soy was almost ready to depart for Ranchi, a police vehicle carrying 20 police personals reached to his home at Shiyadh village in Kuchai block at 7:30 in the morning. He was stunned to see them.

The officer in charge of Kuchai police station, A. K. Thakur told him not to take any villager to Ranchi. When Xavier Soy started speaking against the violation of democratic rights of the

villagers, the officer in charge threatened him by saying, "If you don't hear me, you will be stopped at Arki, Tamar or Bundu police stations and sent to Jail". 1 bus that was standing at Xavier's courtyard was taken to police station. The police stopped 9 buses (3 buses at Khilari, 6 buses at Siadih) which were bringing about 600 villagers for the rally and mass meeting from Saraikela-Kharsawan district. The police also captured 2 buses bringing people for the meeting from West Singhbhum district. They were detained by the police in Tebo Ghat for five hours. As a result, they could not participate in the rally and mass meeting in Ranchi, which is a clear violation of the Constitutional rights of the people. The paramilitary forces and local police were deployed across the state to prevent people from participating in rally and mass meeting. The Jharkhand police wanted to show that they have mass support for the operation green hunt and only few people are opposing it.

Finally, about 400 villagers turned out for the rally, which was very small in number as 5000 people were expected for the event. However, the number was very small but not discouraging. At least, 200 people turned out to challenge the unjust rules of the mighty guns. It was 1 O'clock in the afternoon, the villagers started walking in the city. "Stop killing the innocent villagers in the name of cleansing the Maoists", "Withdraw the Operation Green Hunt" and "Protect our human rights" were the overwhelming slogans raised by them.

By the time it was drizzling, I saw an old Adivasi woman walking with the support of a stick and raising slogan with enthusiasm like a young woman. She smiled and said, "I'm sure, I was born in 1933 and I'm walking for justice". Her name is Hiramani Lakra. She is 77 years old, lives with her family in a village called Sidrol, which falls under Khirji block in Ranchi district. She walked nearly 5 Kilometers in the city shouting slogans and raising hand against injustice. She also heard the speakers patiently in the mass meeting. At the end, when Stan Swami asked a question, "Shall we go ahead with the fight or end here?" She was the first who raise her hand in support of the fight for justice, which of course, will continue till the humiliation, rape and torture stopped by the security forces.

We live in the largest democratic country in the universe and also clap for it. But unfortunately, the Indian State has been terrorizing the democratic spaces of the villagers especially the Adivasis, Dalits, poor, women and children. Our honourable parliamentarians do not only table the policies, programmes and budget but they also table money in the Indian parliament and nobody is punished for defaming our largest democracy. Now the Raj Sabha (Upper House) has become heaven for the corporate houses. We have more than 100 billionaires in the upper house including Malya, Ambani and Kedi. In these circumstance, if we have to protect our democracy we must rationalize that why 77 years old Adivasi woman Hiramani walked in the city for justice, who had born before existence of the Indian State but not satisfied for last 63 years under Indian rule.

The most relevant questions are, does the Indian democracy have space for the decent voice? The word "No" is meaningless in the Indian democracy? Or the "No" of the marginalized people is meaningless in the Indian democracy? Of course, without "No" the democracy is meaningless but do the people of ruling classes understand it and respect the decent voices? We must understand that we all are equal as the citizens of India irrespective of our race, caste, sex, religion and so on. Therefore, the Indian State should hear the decent voices instead of terrorizing the democratic space with the power of Guns.

Beijing sees window of opportunity in South Asia

Iain Mills

In 2003, China formulated the "Peaceful Rise," a foreign policy framework for how it would re-emerge as an influential player in the new multilateral order. The most recent demonstration of how Beijing is putting this vision into practice is the ongoing four-nation tour to South Asia and the Asia-Pacific by China's vice president and potential future leader, Xi Jinping.

Xi has visited Bangladesh, Laos, New Zealand and Australia, with a separate visit to Myanmar promised in the near future. Taken together, the deals he has signed on the tour shed light on China's principal strategic objectives in one of its key foreign policy arenas. Beijing's emphasis on regional development further demonstrates the potential of its economy-first approach to diplomacy, which seems not only to meet key national objectives, but is also greatly strengthening its geopolitical standing and influence throughout the Southern Hemisphere.

China overtook India as Bangladesh's largest trading partner last year, and Dhaka was the first stop on Xi's itinerary. There, the Chinese delegation finalized a series of infrastructure, defense and trade deals, including components of a road, rail and port network that will give China direct access to the Bay of Bengal. Alongside the recent agreement to redevelop North Korea's Rajin port, which allows Chinese access to the Sea of Japan for the first time in more than 100 years, Beijing has substantially reduced its logistical dependence on a small number of Indian Ocean shipping lanes long seen as a vulnerability by Beijing's strategists.

China's interest in Bangladesh and Myanmar is also heavily influenced by a desire to secure its southwestern border, and an effort to control water and other resources in southern Tibet. Economic ties with the two states also help create strategic buffers with India, and the most eye-catching deal announced last week -- plans for China to launch two Bangladeshi telecommunications satellites -- will have been duly noted in New Delhi.

Xi's second stop was Laos, a small neighboring state that serves several strategic functions for China. The exploitation of Laos' own resources is becoming economically viable for Chinese companies. The country also occupies a key position in China's trade routes with Southeast Asia, particularly in terms of access to the Mekong River. The retreat of traditional investors in Southeast Asia, above all South Korea and Japan, due to the financial crisis has been exacerbated by Vietnam's ongoing currency devaluation and political instability in Thailand. China seems well-positioned to take up this slack, and is becoming increasingly economically embedded in the region.

The next leg on Xi's tour, New Zealand (NZ), meets Beijing's needs for coping with another major domestic priority. NZ has one of the most productive agriculture sectors in the world, and food security is an issue of huge concern for China, as it struggles to support a growing population on farmland that is decreasing in size and quality. The two countries established the NZ-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA) last year, which will eliminate tariffs on 96 percent of NZ exports to China by 2019. The agreement has the potential to fundamentally realign the NZ economy. As Trade Minister Tim Groser pointed out, in the FTA's first year, the \$600 million increase in bilateral trade was roughly equivalent to total NZ trade with Indonesia, during a period of declining exports to most major markets. China is also lining up investments of around \$1 billion in NZ dairy firms as it seeks to increase quality and efficiency in its own agricultural industries.

Xi's last stop was Australia, where an enlarged Chinese delegation discussed areas of cooperation, such as infrastructure, resource exploitation (including the proposed Australian mining "super tax"), and energizing the recently resumed discussions for an Australia-China FTA. As evidence of China's attempts to increase its international "soft power," Xi was keen to stress "people-to-people" ties. The two countries signed \$8.8 billion of economic deals, which will result in a greater presence for Chinese telecoms and mining companies in Australia, the acquisition by China of significant energy and mineral resources, and yet another port-access deal in Oakajee, Western Australia.

Last year's Rio Tinto corruption trial does not seem to have had a lasting impact on either governmental or business relations. Beijing is said to be pleased with the non-confrontational way Canberra handled the episode, and even before the trial began, Rio was negotiating a huge deal in West Africa with Chinese metals conglomerate Chinalco. China is already Australia's largest trading partner, and the mutual benefits of expanding this relationship are clear to both sides.

The results of Xi's tour yield benefits for China, as well as genuine economic opportunities for partner nations, and suggest the strengthening of new patterns of interaction throughout South Asia and the Asia-Pacific. China's steady accrual of strategic advantages is the result of a clear policy agenda and reflects a growing sophistication in Beijing's diplomatic and economic missions. Xi's agenda reads almost like a nation-state version of a survival checklist: secure territorial integrity; secure food, water and other natural resources; secure routes of access; seek both to cooperate with and hedge against powerful neighbor. Early plays in the "Peaceful Rise" were sometimes met with skepticism, but it has become increasingly apparent that domestic stability is indeed Beijing's top priority, and finds expression in its southward-facing foreign policy.

Evidence suggests China's expanding regional influence is creating wide-ranging benefits, from its controversial but seemingly decisive intervention to stabilize Sri Lanka -- a move primarily motivated by maritime interests -- to the new economic possibilities it brings to the table. South Asia is a key strategic arena for Beijing due to its diversity and richness of resources as well as its vital geographical function in China's trade and security concerns, and the Chinese are in for the long haul.

Moreover, with India failing to outline a comprehensive response and U.S. strategy complicated by its presence in Afghanistan and questions over its credibility in the region, when Beijing looks south, it must surely see a window of opportunity.

हाम्रा हरेक कदमहरू राष्ट्रिय स्वार्थबाट प्रेरित हुने संस्कृतिको विकास गरौं ।



नेपाल सरकार

सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय

सूचना विभाग



Region:

India must revisit its anti-Maoist policy

An Indian peasant movement for the rights of the poor farmers and landless labourers, which started in Naxalbari village in West Bengal in 1967 turned violent due to improper handling by Indian political, bureaucrats, military bosses and intelligence agencies. In April this year alone, 77 Indian security personnel were killed in a Maoist attack. Another major attack took place few weeks back on May 17, when Maoists detonated a landmine targeting a bus in Dantewada district in which around 35 persons, including Special Police Officers (SPOs), were killed. The third attack in a row occurred few days back causing heavy casualties. Reports are being intentionally overflowed by the worthy Indian politician in New Delhi, which suggests that a powerful Indian lobby is proposing military action against Maoists. Irrespective of the fact about results of the proposed military operation, the primary question remains, can this happen by the end of this year? The answer is NO, as Indian military cannot dare to take up such assignments. However, if ever this folly is committed, there would be string of revolt against Indian union in every second Indian state. Due to the same fears and apprehensions, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is under tremendous pressure to consider the point: whether to send in the military to crush growing Maoist insurgency or leave the issue for time to decide. The Indian Armed Forces have already expressed their reservations for a military operation rather it seems likely that a good numbers of personnel may refuse to obey any such order against their own national.

If we recall, since early 1970s, the Indian intelligence agencies had been pursuing a strategy to engage Maoists elements in neighbouring countries, outside the Indian boundaries, in order to keep them away from the Indian centre. Resultantly, in mere couple of years, the decades-old movement not only gained strength in neighbouring countries but also made inroads growth into cities as well as rural areas. Today, at least 32 Indian states are affected by Maoist violence. Despite such a

grave situation, the Congress party has history that it opposed military against the militant left-wing Maoist movement. It is being alleged that Congress fears that military action against Maoists will lead to a loss of votes from Congress grass-roots support base but it is not the whole truth. Being a mature party, Congress leaders are well aware that India is not a country but a subcontinent, where coercive methods to bring various nationalities under one flag are not going to work. In case of a military offensive against Maoists, large-scale civilian deaths and injuries would occur which will create a perception in various Indian states that Indian government is against its own people on the grounds of their faith, race and political affiliation. One fears that it may also lead to 1857 like situation where all opposing centrifugal forces would assemble under one banner to get rid of artificial union between different nationalities. It is pertinent to mention here that unlike Pakistan where the union of different races in on the basis of ideology of Pakistan in which due consideration is also given to the minorities, Indian pillars rest on artificial concept of secularism.

Keeping the same bitter reality in view, recently, Indian Home Minister P Chidambaram made a fresh offer to hold talks with Maoists if they announce suspension of violence even for just 72 hours. He said complete suspension means there should not be any attack on infrastructure, any land mine blast or any targeting of telephone towers. It is a good opportunity for the Maoists to consider the offer seriously as this time there is no humiliation sort of thing like unconditional surrender and lying down of the arms. Interestingly, the Home Minister made this announcement: a day after Maoists blew up a bus killing at least 36 people near Dantewada in Chattisgarh. Although New Delhi has not officially admitted that it halted operations against Maoists but ground sources have reported "calm down" in the operational areas. In another development, Chhattisgarh Chief

Minister Raman Singh in his recent statement said that Maoist insurgency is the worst form of terrorism in India. While criticizing those who showed sympathy towards the Maoists, he said, "If they are not terrorists then who else is? In full public glare they kill people in villages, they ambush and kill security personnel, they trigger IED (Improvised Explosive Device) blasts in villages and on highways. If these are not acts of terrorism, then I would like to ask how you would define terrorism." Interestingly, Chief Minister Raman Singh talked ill about Maoists but he is not in the favour of use of air strikes against them on the grounds that it may result in major collateral damage. He is of the view that military helicopters should not be used for any purpose other than rescue and relief operations. New Delhi must understand that Maoists cannot announce suspension unless the centre changes its stubborn attitude by giving a deaf ear to their grievances and issuing irritating statements like the one issued by Chhattisgarh's Chief Minister. Things can only work, if the Indian security forces cease all its operations and movements of personnel for mere two weeks or so and extend an honest offer for unconditional talks. In such a scenario, definitely, there is going to be a positive response from Maoists' side. Even if talks fail, at least, there would be a hope for better tomorrow. Conditions like "Complete suspension means there should not be any attack on infrastructure, any land mine blast or any targeting of telephone towers" should be avoided at all cost. Maoists, who had past record of only targeting security personnel and strategic assets, need to understand that there are still some men in New Delhi's politics who are ashamed about India's past brutalities against Maoists and want to compensate them. It is a good opportunity for the Maoists to consider the offer seriously as this time there is no humiliation sort of thing like unconditional surrender and lying down of the arms. Even if there are no chances of success in talks, there is a need for a continuous dialogue process

with Maoists and other such aggrieved elements in India. One wonders that it has been proved that the two persons arrested with a huge cache of explosives in Sonbhadra district in Uttar Pradesh in the first week of June 2010, were not Maoists but then why Indian Police is claiming possibility of their involvement in supplying explosives to Maoists. Such allegations coupled with fake encounters are the main hurdle in the peace negotiations with Maoists.

It is on record that last year when ex Indian Air Force Chief was asked why the Indian Air Force was not employed in countering insurgency and terrorism when the rest of the world was using it, he replied: "It is Government policy." Today Washington and Tel Aviv are instigating Indian Armed Forces to compel the Indian government to change policy on use of Air Force and Army against Maoists. Sources close to inner circles of decision making authorities in Indian government have intimated that there was a debate on the issue despite agreement in principle early this year for military action against Maoists. Those who are against the suggestion by US and Israel for military action against Maoists are right because if Israel and Washington are using Air Force, it is not against their own people but innocent Muslims in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. One wonders, can Air Forces of US and Israel dare taking same action against Jews and Christians anywhere in the world? Today India is in one piece because so far it has not hunted down Maoists, Tamils, Muslims and Hindutva elements. The genocide and atrocities by Indian military in Indian held Jammu and Kashmir is an exception, probably because many India do not consider Kashmiris as Indians and want to annex Jammu and Kashmir state in Indian union as revenge from Pakistan. Killing own people may be fun for some of the mentally sick soldiers but still there are wise people in Indian government who realize that Maoist are no one else but their own people. Unless Indian government revisits its anti-Maoist policy, the biggest Internal Security challenge to India in the shape of Maoist movements cannot be settled down.

US officials consider that countries that have not signed the NPT so far cannot be granted the facility. The super power is perhaps overlooking the aspects that India is also a non-signatory to NPT. US also consider that, "Additional nuclear cooperation with Pakistan beyond those specific projects that were grandfathered in 2004 would require consensus approval" However, Pakistan and China rejects these, since it is like, "the pot calling the kettle black". Indeed, "US had not only violated the NPT, but had also violated the Hyde Act 2006, (by finalising a similar deal with India regarding cooperation on nuclear energy for peaceful purposes)." Since the Pak-China deal would be under the IAEA safeguards, therefore, there would be no legal hurdle in its finalization. In the mean time the Chinese Foreign Ministry has clarified that the deal is in accordance with the international law, therefore, rejects the Indian and American objections.

Hampering Pak-China nuclear deal

Dr. Raja Muhammad Khan

In the wake of ongoing misperceptions, China has clarified that it will provide nuclear reactors to Pakistan under the years old nuclear deal. As clarified by Qin Gang, the spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, that the, "the nuclear cooperation between the two countries was for peaceful purposes and are "totally consistent" with its international obligations and safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency". Under the deal, "China will export two nuclear power reactors to Pakistan in a USD 2.375-billion agreement.

New Delhi and Washington objects that this deal will breach the international protocol, regarding the trade of nuclear equipment and material. U.S also object that this deal will overstep "the guidelines of the 46-country Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which bars nuclear commerce between Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) members like China and non-member states like Pakistan". Indeed, Pak-China Nuclear Deal was concluded in 1986, when China was neither the member of NSG nor it had signed the NPT. China signed the NPT in 1992 and became the member of NSG in 2004. By 2004, almost ¾ progresses had already been made on the deal between Pakistan and China. Therefore, neither of the two is applicable in case of this deal. Furthermore, the "Indo-US Nuclear Deal-2005" later finalized in 2008, provides the precedence, and actually has opened the door for any such like deal in the future. Indeed, after setting precedence by itself, U.S has no legal and moral grounds to object the Pak-China Nuclear Deal.

United States otherwise cannot afford to object this deal, as it has lot of stakes attached to China or Pakistan. Chinese consent is essential for imposing the enhanced sanctions on Iran, currently underway. The issue of North Korean nuclearization and security threats it is posing to other regional countries like South Korea cannot be resolved without the assistance from the China. On the economic fronts, US stakes are quite high. Economists' view that the falling US economy has been sustained by China largely, as US is biggest trade partner of China at the global level. As regards Pakistan, United States cannot stay a day in Afghanistan without the active support of Pakistan. It is otherwise loosing the Afghan war and need Pakistani assistance more than earlier. Otherwise, on the issue of Indo-US Nuclear Deal, China did not oppose as a member of NSG. Now, once China is providing only a friction of that to Pakistan, why should US obstruct it?

Pakistani Foreign Office has rejected the Indo-US concerns over the Pak-China civil nuclear deal. The spokesperson said that, "Pakistan-China civil nuclear cooperation is going on for years. Our cooperation is under the relevant IAEA safeguards. Therefore concerns, if any, are misplaced". While tracing the history of Pak-China Civil Nuclear, it is pertinent to note that, a Comprehensive Nuclear cooperation Agreement between Pakistan and then Foreign Minister Sahibzada Yaqub Khan and his Chinese counterpart in the presence of Chinese Premier and PAEC chairperson Dr. Munir A. Khan signed China on September 15, 1986 at Beijing. The salient clauses of the agreement include that, China would construct four nuclear plants in Pakistan namely; Chasma 1, 2, 3 and 4 by 2011.

Regarding the mandate of origin of NSG, it was created after the nuclear test of India in 1974, once India diverted the fuel meant for the atom for peace to its weapon programme. If India, the primary proliferators, could be given such a concession by the NSG, why Pakistan be deprived from it. Indeed, India got this by US to counter the China. About its legality of NSG, it was created in 1975 to regulate and standardize the nuclear trade, in reaction to Indian misuse of nuclear material. Its creation was not through an international treaty, but is an international cartel of nuclear technology suppliers.

US officials consider that countries that have not signed the NPT so far cannot be granted the facility. The super power is perhaps overlooking the aspects that India is also a non-signatory to NPT. US also consider that, "Additional nuclear cooperation with Pakistan beyond those specific projects that were grandfathered in 2004 would require consensus approval" However, Pakistan and China rejects these, since it is like, "the pot calling the kettle black". Indeed, "US had not only violated the NPT, but had also violated the Hyde Act 2006, (by finalising a similar deal with India regarding cooperation on nuclear energy for peaceful purposes)." Since the Pak-China deal would be under the IAEA safeguards, therefore, there would be no legal hurdle in its finalization. In the mean time the Chinese Foreign Ministry has clarified that the deal is in accordance with the international law, therefore, rejects the Indian and American objections.

Both IAEA and NSG bowed to US pressure for easing its clauses for the Indo-US Nuclear Deal, but now creating hurdles for Pakistan. Indeed, in contrast to the 123 Agreements, the Pak-China deal is meant for the power generation only. However, the 123 Agreement, "exempts nuclear reactors from IAEA safeguards allowing sufficient fissile material to make around 280 warheads per year.

This is in addition to India's ongoing programme of 13 fast breeder reactors. As such, it is a misnomer to call Agreement 123 as "US-India Civil Nuclear Deal". It is indeed US-Indian collusion toward nuclear weapons proliferation programme." Following the 123 Agreement, India, and US has signed another agreement on nuclear fuel reprocessing to further augment the deal. According to the deal India will be allowed to recycle the US spent nuclear fuel. The agreement would enable the participation of the US firms in India's rapidly expanding civil nuclear energy sector.

Apart from the precedence set by the Indo-US Nuclear Deal-2005, the Pak-China deal has the legal cover. It was concluded much earlier than the China became the member of NSG or NPT. Moreover, it is under the IAEA safeguards, hence has nothing to do with the proliferation of nuclear material. It is purely meant for the production of nuclear energy. Pakistan's energy shortages are known to the world. It is facing worst energy shortages of its history. Being a traditional ally, US should have catered for the Pakistan's energy needs. Instead of herself providing the facilities to Pakistan like India, she should not become a hurdle in the provision of this facility by China. In its entire history, Pakistan has been doing everything for the US and West, what did they do for Pakistan is a big question mark?

- The writer is an IR analyst.

Nepal's political leaders' unfair endeavors

Why can't the majority trust the Maoist chairman Puspa K Dahal, "Prachand" to let him become the second time Prime Minister under the current political crises? It has become apparent that the nation cannot spare a second chance for him. Yet the United Maoist party has failed to find another candidate, which could have been indispensable if the Maoists would have implemented one of the three-point agreements of May 28 to lead the national consensus government.

The political challenge for the nation at this point is to find a leader who can lead a national consensus politics to represent an all-inclusive unity government as a Prime Minister. Such a leadership is vital without which neither the drafting of constitution nor the peace processes can be fairly carried out to lay cornerstone for the peace and the rule of law.

How the fate has favored the Prime Minister MK Nepal since he joined the underground Nepal Communist party Marxist & Leninist despite his politics of double standard, for example, accepting the monarchy as a communist even after the royal massacre and even desired to become the Prime Minister of Nepal under the rule of the former king Gyanendra!

The bad luck of losing election of the Constituent Assembly from both booths could not prevent MK Nepal in Nepali politics from becoming the Prime Minister of the majority based coalition government! But, unfortunately he appeared as if he has been more self-content with the position than his serious about the nation's political crises. Perhaps leading a majority based coalition government he cannot campaign for the consensus government, which has become indispensable.

The question is now that if the main political party with a simple majority in the Constituent Assembly cannot lead the consensus government then which political party should take the opportunity? The UML leadership has failed as a second to the Maoists in majority in the Constituent Assembly.

Now the Nepali Congress party (NC) as a second to the Maoists in majority in the Constituent Assembly should be tried, if the fresh leadership, but not the rotten, can emerge through the current Parliament practice.

Now at this point if NC chooses its rotten leadership such as the former Prime Minister and the leader of NC S. B. Deuba, who has been the Prime Minister three times

with the legacy of Pajero-culture and later politically disqualified by the former king Gyanendra!

It should be very severe that with due respect, the NC leader S. B. Deuba cannot lead a national consensus based government. If he could then it would be historic assuming he has transformed himself radically by eliminating gaps between his private and public life style. As a matter of fact, he should have been retired by now if he had something to counsel new generation of leaders in his party.

Now for the nation it is not the question to support a particular leadership but to find one who is to some extent capable of undertaking responsibility of the national consensus government, which is crucial for the outcome of the peace and the new constitution.

The nation should give it a try with the Parliamentary Party leader of NC Ram Chandra Paudel clearly following the principles and upholding a democratic process. As per the current Parliament practice the PP leader should be the right candidate for the Prime Minister.

Above all, the nation has not yet tried a leader like Ram Chandra Paudel from whom people can expect at least some responsibility

towards national consensus government formation. The ongoing unfair endeavor of the main political parties for the position might definitely jeopardize the national interest for peace and drafting a new constitution for the power of greed and selfishness of individual leaders in the political parties.

The peace and drafting of the new constitution are the national agenda and without peace and the foundation of the rule of law rights and liberty of people will not be protected for justice. The prosperity and happiness of people in a democratic society rests on the rule of law that renders justice.

The justice depends on how the nation's elected law makers render the salute to lay the foundation of the rule of law. It is beyond the politics of power in the interest of certain political parties' ideology or party agenda or individual party leaders' power in the politics.

It needs vitally consensus of all parties small or large but not the majority rule. The majority rule of coalition governments has so far obstructed the peace process and the constitution drafting. It will be big mistake if again parties try to form a coalition government in majority due to the political leaders' unfair endeavor for power.

Prevalence of torture, a reminder of the weaknesses of the institutions in Nepal

Since the last International Day in Support of Torture Victims, it is unfortunate that little concrete measures have been taken to put an end to the practice of police torture in Nepal.

Even if there has been a noticeable amelioration in the behavior of the security forces and a decrease in the number of torture cases reported since the end of the conflict, stories remain explicit regarding the persistent use of torture by police forces in Nepal.

In July 2009, two men were beaten in front of a crowd in Morang District, the police officers then threatened the victims, the human rights defenders and the witnesses in order to escape the prosecution. In February 2010, police inflicted torture on 18-year old student in Kathmandu and kept him in detention for 28 days, refusing to provide him with appropriate medication despite court orders. Thirteen days later, in the same police station, two women and one man were seriously beaten up for two days in order to compel them to confess a crime. During the same month, in Panchthar district, the police beat up four men accused of having stolen pipes from a construction site until they confess the theft and then left them to be beaten up by a crowd. One of them was kept in illegal detention for nine days before being brought before a judge following pressures from NGOs. A father and a son who were arrested at the same time died following the torture inflicted upon them in police custody. In June, Sanu Sunar, a 46-year-old Dalit man was also tortured to death by police inspectors who wanted him to confess to a theft which in reality, he had never committed.

The wide range of cases and victims demonstrates that men and women alike, regardless of their age, are likely to be subjected to torture in almost all police stations across Nepal. Torture continues to be routinely used as a tool to extract confessions or to punish persons who are accused of having committed a crime. Worryingly, the fact that some of these torture episodes have taken place in front of a crowd or that in some cases the public has even participated in the beatings, says a lot about the extent to which torture is viewed as an acceptable practice in Nepalese society.

As at least three people have been tortured to death in custody since the beginning of 2010, it is high time these figures of atrocities act as a wake-up call. The persistence of this practice and the unaccountability of the perpetrators further diminishes the trust of the people in the State's ability to

protect their rights and cultivate a peaceful, stable and just society.

The existing legal framework is such that the victims of torture find themselves deprived of any recourse to adequate justice. The UN Convention against torture mandates Nepal to adopt legislative measures to prevent acts of torture (Article 2) and to ensure that victims of torture have access to legal remedies and redress. Despite the Article 26 of the 2007 Interim Constitution which outlaws the use of torture and makes provisions for the punishment of the perpetrators according to law, such legislation is yet to be adopted, consequently protecting the perpetrators of torture as they cannot presently be prosecuted for this crime.

The need for the criminalization of torture is eluded by the existence of the 1996 Torture Compensation Act. This is an unacceptable attempt to justify the absence of criminal sanctions against the perpetrators of torture and to maintain the impunity protecting them: the fact that law makes provision for the compensation of the victim should not, under any circumstances, be considered as an acceptable alternative to the prosecution of the culprits.

The accumulation of torture cases has allowed the AHRC to acknowledge the persistence of a disturbing pattern, one that points at the Nepalese institutions' inability to provide justice to their victims. Police obstructions and judicial negligence often act as insurmountable obstacles in the way of torture victims seeking redress.

The absence of a witness protection mechanism leaves the complainants vulnerable to intimidation and ill-treatment. Following the torture to death of Dal Bahadur and Bikram Gyanmi Magar, the father and the son who died in police custody in February, an agreement was forced upon the victims' family by the public and the police vaguely promising prosecutions for the perpetrators and compensation for the family. The National Human Rights Commission saw its investigation obstructed by locals. The police also tried to manipulate human rights NGOs into not publicizing the case. Eventually an FIR was prepared but following pressure from the police and the public the names of the three alleged perpetrators were removed from the report.

The risk is further aggravated by the absence of any independent body in charge of investigating cases of torture. Cases of torture are investigated by policemen who belong to the same police station as the alleged perpetrators, creating a direct conflict

of interest between the outcomes of the inquiry.

The widespread use of torture in Nepal adversely affects two of the most important challenges the Nepalese society is facing today: the consolidation of its democracy and the pacification of the country. There are numerous reasons why torture is an unacceptable practice in a democratic society. There is an intrinsic philosophical opposition in the rationale behind the use of torture by police forces and the principles on which the legal system of a democratic society is grounded on, the most prominent of which being that a suspect must be treated as innocent until proven guilty and that all the citizens are entitled to a fair trial. The practice of police torture in which a citizen - the police officer, elevates himself to a position where he is the inquisitor, the judge and the hangman of another citizen contradicts this requirement of democracy as well as poses a direct threat to the idea of equality of all citizens before the law.

In a country struggling to establish long-lasting democratic institutions to guarantee the stability of the society, the practice of torture cannot be upheld. The police administration is one of the state institutions which operates the closest to the citizens, it carries the main values of the society and it is the organization which has been entrusted to fulfill one of the prime duties of the state: guaranteeing the security and the protection of the citizens. If the policing system is seen as a threat to the security of the citizens, the trust in the whole state's institutions is affected. If the state proves unable to prosecute police officers guilty of having inflicted torture and to provide justice to the victims, it is the whole accountability of the state system which is put at stake.

The credibility of the justice institutions is damaged when statements extracted under torture are admitted as evidence in a trial or when police refuse to abide by a court order to provide monetary compensation or medical care to a torture victim, which is regularly the case. This makes a mockery of the Article 116 of the Interim Constitution which states that court orders are to be binding to all.

This very phenomenon prevents the few legal provisions existing to protect the citizens, from actually protecting citizens from police abuses. The Article 24 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal mandates that an arrested person shall be presented before a judge within 24 hours after his arrest. Nevertheless, there are still

instances in which detainees are kept in illegal detention for several days after their arrest, therefore increasing their risk to be inflicted with torture.

It is therefore mandatory to take immediate action to put an end to the police use of torture and to ensure the accountability of all the state institutions, a necessary first step toward their strengthening and democratization. The issue must be addressed at several levels. At the level of national legislation, a law criminalizing torture should be adopted without delay, in accordance with the dispositions of the interim constitution of Nepal and the internationally accepted definitions of torture. The law should also allow the prosecution of those who have allowed the act of torture to take place. The loopholes within the Torture Compensation Act should be bridged and the 35-day limit should be extended. It is mandatory to establish an independent and impartial body, with effective powers and sufficient budget, in charge of conducting the investigation into the allegations of torture.

At the judicial level, measures should be taken to ensure the protection of the victims of torture and of their witnesses, including the systematic transfer of detainees complaining of ill-treatment or torture to another place of detention within a limited period of time. Judges have a crucial role to play in the prevention of torture by systematically testing the voluntary nature of a confession. Those who do not abide by court orders to provide torture victims with financial compensation or medical assistance should be prosecuted. It is also the duty of judges and doctors to ask the detainees about the treatment they have received while in detention and sanction the perpetrators accordingly, depending on the degree to which they tortured the victim with more serious cases of torture resulting in more severe punishments.

More than anything, a change in the police practices is required, human and financial resources should be invested in the criminal justice system of the country to develop the investigation skills of the police officers. Higher ranking officers have a key role to play in the circulation of the idea that torture is not acceptable and should strongly condemn this practice.

Eventually, the Nepalese media have a key role to play as well by continuing to largely diffuse cases of police exactions and abuses to foster the public rejection of the practice of torture.

Source: *Asian Human Rights Commission*

~ News ~

Thai government, LDT sign agreement

The Royal Thai Government and Lumbini Development Trust (LDT) have signed an agreement for the construction of Thai Garden, Pavilion, Chaitya, Pond, Dharma-Chakra and Rock Garden in Lumbini Monastic Zone.



The Royal Thai Embassy in Kathmandu held a signing ceremony of the agreement on 22 June 2010.

His Excellency Maris Sangjiampongsa, Thai Ambassador to Nepal, as a representative of the Royal Thai Government, and Venerable Acharya Karma Sangbo Sherpa, Vice Chairperson of LDT, together inked the said agreement.

Maha Supoj Kittiwanno, Secretary of the Royal Thai Monastery Lumbini, the Royal Thai Embassy's officials and local staffs, a representative from the Thai Airways International Public Co., Ltd. in Kathmandu, also attended the signing ceremony held at the Embassy.

Another struggle for peace: Prachanda

Chairman of the UCPN-Maoist Pushpa Kamal Dahal said the activities of the political parties in the government have indicated that it was now time to struggle again for peace and stability.

Releasing an audiovisual CD, 'Matribhumi' (motherland), a collection of songs on liberation, Chairman Dahal stressed that struggle was essential for building a new Nepal.

He claimed that the struggle for national interest, even if waged at an adverse situation, would be successful.

The nationalistic and democratic powers have now been worried over the issues of nationalism, sovereignty and border security, he said, adding that myriads of challenges were ahead to face for an epoch-making change in the country.

Literary critic Hari Govinda Luintel expressed his view that the CD prepared by artist Maila Lama will play a significant role on the transformation of Nepali society by ending social evils and aberrations.

Aristi Lama informed that the songs collected in the CD have depicted the plight of the self-esteemed Nepali people are in when attacked by traitors and foreign meddling.

The CD has dovetailed various nine songs in topics like 'safeguard of motherland', 'liberation', foreign interference in Susta, and others.

Budget session still uncertain

Chairman of the Constituent Assembly (CA) Subash Nembang said the forthcoming budget session was under incertitude, as the big three political parties have failed to implement the May 28 agreement.

Addressing a programme organized June 29 on the occasion of the general assembly of the Former Parliamentarians' Club Nepal, and Parliament Day, he said the dispute among the big parties regarding the implementation of the three-point agreement has made people doubtful and disappointed.

Parliamentary Party leader of the Nepali Congress, Ram Chandra Poudel expressed his views that the experts and intellectuals affiliated to the Club should initiate discussion with those attacking democratic norms and values. Present conflict is whether to run the state on democratic values or on the basis of arms, he added.

Minister for CA, Parliamentary Affairs and Culture, Dr Minendra Rijal said present challenge is how to make the country stable seizing it out of political chaos.

The myopic views of the UCPN-Maoist was the obstacle to the present political course, he said, adding that the recent views of the Maoist leaders are worrisome.

Former Speaker Taranath Ranabhat said the extended term of the CA should be fully utilized to make the constitution. The Club should be made inclusive and multi-sectoral and the former parliamentarians should also be involved in the constitution building.

Other speakers at the programme were Shree Maya Thakali, Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Ram Hari Joshi, and Hom Raj Dahal.

British govt. to curb entry to non-European workers

The British government is to limit the number of workers entering the UK from outside Europe.

The British coalition government is to hold consultations to limit the migrants from outside the Europe.

According to a press release issued by the British Embassy here today, the details of how the final limit will be delivered will be agreed following a 12-week consultation with businesses.

However, the press release made it clear that the Nepali students and Gurkhas are not affected by the interim limit or the consultation.

The British government welcomes the views of Nepali businesses and the Government of Nepal on the proposals in the consultation document, it said.

Insecurity hits rock-bottom

WM Correspondent

It was the trend of the decade-long insurgency when the Village Development Committee (VDC) secretaries would resign en masse succumbing to then Maoist rebels.

Now, it seems the country is again witnessing the same mania owing to the multiple wayward armed and unarmed organised groups operating across the country unfettered.

They are harassing the VDC secretaries and even threatening to murder thanks to the weak law and order situation.

This week, all VDC secretaries of Dolakha, Parbat and Bardiya resigned in masse because of the threats issued by such groups.

The secretaries of Bhojpur, Sankhubasbha, Khotang, Sindhupalchowk, Kavre, Dhading and Myagdi districts had already announced to quit their job together.

The resignation spree has come at a time when the government joyfully claimed that the law and order situation has significantly improved while reviewing the performance of government during last one year.

It is ironic to see the government grossly overlooking the cold-blooded murder of media entrepreneurs, businessmen and other people while slating about the state of security under its rule.

This time, the mass resignation of district-level officials has come from both

the hilly and terai districts.

The VDC chief administrators of various Terai districts including Sarlahi, Siraha and Dhanusa have also resigned on a mass scale.

Various ethnic groups are involved in creating the situation of mass eviction in the hilly region while various gun-toting groups are responsible for triggering manic resignation of VDC secretaries in Terai.

Given the severe absence of the people's representatives at the local level, VDC secretaries are the persons solely responsible for distributing the funds the VDCs receive from the center and they also are ones for managing the sums collected locally.

That's why: they have been the

focal point of various extortionist gangs.

They must have to give donations to such gangs otherwise the nature of consequences will be hard to cope up with.

With their mass resignation, the works such as birth and death registration, recommendation for citizenships and other administrative and local development works will be badly affected.

They might also choose to carry their duty from their district headquarters.

However, the question is how secure the district headquarters will also be.

Despite the rapid augmentation of insecurity and disorder across the country, the politicians are happy to serve only their own hedonistic interests.



San Miguel BEER

International :

US, Russia fail to grip Kyrgyz helm

By M K Bhadrakumar

If the Central Asian state of Kyrgyzstan were to be the illmus test, the United States' "reset" ties with Russia appears only selectively genuine. Kyrgyzstan is a perfect case for the two powers to agree to tactical cooperation, as there are significant common interests - and yet that is not happening.

The Kyrgyz statehood is dissolving

Blake lavishly massaged Tashkent's political ego, effusively commending its entire approach to the Kyrgyz crisis: "Uzbekistan's leadership and initiative have saved many lives and mitigated the suffering of thousands of vulnerable people." He was speaking from a soil where the Uzbek government had

rotating post of the chairman of the OSCE. Kazakhstan is hard-pressed to choose between the CSTO and the OSCE.

Also, there is a deeper US game plan. The attempt to revive the OSCE comes at a juncture when Russia is insistently advancing its own proposal

Ministry spokesman said, "China has taken note that the CSTO has convened a meeting to discuss the situation in Kyrgyzstan and acknowledges its efforts to maintain peace and stability in Central Asia."

Chinese involvement in the Kyrgyz crisis has so far been limited to providing humanitarian assistance while flying out almost 1,300 Chinese nationals from the riot-stricken region of Osh. But Beijing will be uneasy about the US's diplomatic maneuvering in a neighboring country so very vital to China's security in the medium and long term.

A report in The Global Times newspaper quoted a Chinese Central Asia expert, Sun Zhuangzhi, expressing misgivings that Moscow and Washington might reach a deal over Kyrgyzstan that could "involve some of China's interests in Kyrgyzstan in that swap".

The Global Times also featured an editorial exclusively focused on the Kyrgyz situation titled "China's role in stabilizing Central Asia". The editorial asserted, "China cannot limit its role to just evacuating Chinese citizens and offering humanitarian assistance." It should also be consulting members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) - the grouping of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - "and taking measures to restore order and normality".

The editorial made a specific suggestion that "a meeting convened by foreign ministers of neighboring countries is not only an option but could be a first step to signal that China does not intend to sit back while the situation unravels in its neighborhood. A stable Central Asia is in China's interest."

The influential daily pointed out that Osh in southern Kyrgyzstan is "but just a little over an hour by flight from Urumqi" and that a Balkan-type crisis "would be a nightmare to China". Urumqi is the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, where Beijing is acutely sensitive over the possibility of unrest among the Uyghur population.

Beijing can be expected to counter the US strategy to project the OSCE into the security vacuum in Kyrgyzstan. Beijing's first choice lies in a Moscow-led CSTO initiative, while it also harps on a role for the SCO "to help stabilize the situation and bring order" to Kyrgyzstan.

The Global Times editorial concluded:

Without any historical baggage of association and inability to influence the politics of nations in the region, China has been quite detached. But with economic cooperation gaining, whether China should stick to the policy of remaining detached and what would best ensure peace and stability in Central Asia are questions that need pondering.

Viewed in the above perspective, the statement issued by the SCO on Monday assumes much significance.

The statement identified that the ethnic strife was engineered with the intent of arousing a Kyrgyz-Uzbek "confrontation". It was hopeful that the situation would stabilize "at an early date". More important, it banked on the "wise Kyrgyz people" to safeguard peace and stability - implying outside intervention isn't a crying need. Finally, it expressed grave concern over the situation and pointedly said that "the stability of the situation in Kyrgyzstan is of great significance for peace and stability in Central Asia".

The SCO has put its hat into the ring, reiterating its pivotal role in the collective security of Central Asia that no outside power can afford to overlook.



and Sunday's referendum on constitutional reform may only aggravate the crisis and further splinter the ruling class. The Kyrgyz implosion impacts on regional stability, given the drug mafia and the militant Islamists waiting in the wings. Ethnic strife is opening the floodgates.

The United States and Russia have a congruence of interests to see Kyrgyzstan does not break apart. Yet, neither has the will to assume responsibility to stabilize the rudderless state.

The only way out lies in collective security. But then, that is also the most contentious issue. Who should lead the stabilization process in Kyrgyzstan?

The choice obviously falls on the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the regional body comprising Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. But Russia has a problem. A CSTO operation would tax Russian resources as it would be essentially Moscow's operation in manpower and material terms and Moscow would be bankrolling it. The prospect has no takers in the Russian public and political elites. Second, the CSTO lacks a rapid reaction force. Third, a profound question arises insofar as the legitimacy of the Kyrgyz interim government on whose request the CSTO would be deployed is yet to be clarified.

Fourth, there are genuine risks of intervention degenerating into a quagmire. Finally, there are CSTO member countries - Uzbekistan, in particular - that feel uneasy about the precedent that any CSTO intervention in Kyrgyzstan creates.

This final point explains why Washington has mounted a diplomatic charm offensive toward Tashkent, which it once despised as a pariah regime: Washington is passionately courting Uzbek President Islam Karimov.

United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton telephoned Karimov and "exchanged opinions on potential solutions to the crisis", with Clinton assuring the Uzbek leader that the unrest in Kyrgyzstan and the plight of ethnic Uzbeks "remain high on the US agenda" - to quote the Uzbekistan National News Agency. Clinton delegated Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake to visit refugee camps in the Uzbek region of Andizhan in the Ferghana Valley.

suppressed a bloody uprising five years ago, much to the chagrin of Washington. The irony was complete when Blake voiced from Andizhan the US demand for "an international investigation by a credible international body" into the mayhem in Kyrgyzstan.

Ethnic clashes in southern Kyrgyzstan have left more than 200 people dead and over 2,000 injured since violence broke out in mid-June after president Kurmanbek Bakiyev, now in exile in Belarus, was driven from power.

Blake has a focused mission. The geopolitical reality is that Washington deduced the implications of the Kyrgyz crisis for the US base in Manas in Kyrgyzstan. United States policy consistently viewed the CSTO as the vehicle for Russian domination of post-Soviet space and Washington counts on Tashkent to circumscribe the Moscow-led alliance's interventionist potential in Kyrgyzstan.

The US has mooted the Organization for Security and Cooperation for Europe (OSCE) as the appropriate vehicle of intervention by the international community. The inter-governmental OSCE is a surprising choice. It was born 20 years ago with the signing of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe in November 1990, and amid high expectations that in the post-Cold War setting it would carry forward the pan-European vision of security within the Euro-Atlantic area as indivisible.

But the OSCE - which has a membership of 56 states - failed to honor that promise and ended up as an afterthought in the Euro-Atlantic region's security deliberations. Moscow increasingly objected to the West's propensity to use the OSCE for propaganda purposes under the garb of human-rights and election-monitoring functions or media freedom. So, why is the US proposing the OSCE for Kyrgyzstan?

On a propaganda plane, it highlights the failure of Moscow and the CSTO to assume responsibilities in Kyrgyzstan. Indeed, Moscow has become the butt of ridicule in the Western media as a bombastic regional power. Two, the CSTO gets debunked as an organization that puts on vainglorious airs but in reality lacks substance. Three, the US hopes to drive a wedge between Russia and its closest Central Asian ally, Kazakhstan, which currently holds the

for a new European security treaty, which the US interprets as an effort to sideline the OSCE (and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization).

Arguably if the OSCE is available as the forum within which a new security partnership involving Russia, Europe and North America becomes possible, what indeed could be the raison d'etre of Moscow's proposal for a new security treaty?

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the OSCE's special envoy for Central Asia, Kimmo Kiluinen, did some smart kite-flying in Bishkek. He claimed that the OSCE is leading talks with European Union (EU) foreign ministers on beefing up security in Kyrgyzstan.

"What I think would be really useful would be to have a certain international police force operation to offer technical advice, and maybe the presence of international police here [in Kyrgyzstan]. That would create an atmosphere of trust," he said.

Kiluinen claimed that EU foreign ministers were already discussing the option of using police to provide crisis-management support.

The EU has since clarified that for the present it is merely reinforcing its delegation in Kyrgyzstan "to make sure there is enough expertise on the ground", but the fact remains that the ball has been set rolling.

This comes at a time when CSTO secretary general Nikolai Bordyuzha is heading for Bishkek. The CSTO said in a statement in Moscow that a working group would evaluate the situation in Kyrgyzstan and "assist in law enforcement ... Further proposals will be developed for the CSTO member states to help the Kyrgyz security forces in localizing and suppressing unrest and preventing extremist violence."

The Russian position continues to be that the Kyrgyz authorities should stabilize the situation themselves. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said this week, "The essence of the problem lies in the fact that the Kyrgyz authorities must stabilize the situation on their own, and that external assistance should be limited to only those forms that suit the Kyrgyz authorities themselves."

In the entire US-Russia shadow play over a collective security initiative in Kyrgyzstan, one constant that works in favor of Moscow's approach is the stance taken by China. Beijing supports the CSTO initiative. A Chinese Foreign

Obama and McChrystal: The Generals Need a Lincoln

■ Eric Sterner

Watching a president dismiss a senior general inevitably calls to mind Abraham Lincoln, who during the Civil War sacked generals left and right until he found one who served his purposes, and Harry Truman, who famously fired Gen. Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War.

Unlike his predecessors, who removed generals either for their performance or due to disagreements over policy and strategy, President Barack Obama let Gen. Stanley McChrystal go because McChrystal had permitted a command environment that led some of his staff to crudely dismiss the president's advisers. As if to underscore the continuity in policy and strategy, Obama appointed Gen. David Petraeus as McChrystal's replacement. Petraeus, credited with turning the Iraq war around and generally having a better ear for politics, was instrumental in the 2009 policy review that produced the strategy that McChrystal was executing in Afghanistan.

The commentary on McChrystal's removal has focused on civil-military relations and the domestic political implications for Obama's national security image. Obama's defenders, who range across the domestic political spectrum, cite Lincoln and Truman and the principle of civilian control of the military. But those who focus on McChrystal's impolitic comments as justification for his departure risk missing the larger point - namely, the contradictions and fecklessness of a policy that created the frustration on the ground to begin with, and which led some members of McChrystal's staff to vent their feelings to a Rolling Stone reporter.

Nothing in the Rolling Stone article suggested that McChrystal or his staff questioned the president's right to set policy or strategy, or even that they disagreed with the policy and strategy as articulated by the White House. Instead, the comments seem to reflect frustration with the administration's tolerance of political maneuvering, both in Washington and Kabul, that runs counter to that strategy's effective implementation.

First, the president himself announced plans to begin withdrawing forces from Afghanistan in July 2011, sending the signal to a range of factions in Afghanistan and Pakistan that they should begin maneuvering for position after the U.S. withdrawal. After all, why sign on for the American governance project if your local warlords will still be there in two years, but the Americans will not? While the president hedged his comments, numerous administration officials have in recent weeks firmly reiterated it, reinforcing the deadline in the hearts and minds of the very people America needs to commit to its agenda.

Second, the U.S. civil-military team in Afghanistan is clearly dysfunctional. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, an accomplished former general who commanded in Afghanistan, notoriously sent two cables to Washington second-guessing McChrystal's operational plans and trashing Afghan President Hamid Karzai as an unreliable partner. In the former, he overstepped his bounds. In the latter, he raised a moot issue. The United States does not get to choose foreign heads of state any more than it gets to choose its enemies. The memo's leak appears to have been calculated to undermine McChrystal's July 2009 strategy review and troop request in Washington. Since then, the embassy has reportedly resisted the military's near-term reconstruction efforts, preferring long-term projects that will not demonstrate results in a militarily useful timeframe, even as the administration provides fewer reconstruction resources than the ambassador's team believes necessary.

Third, the Rolling Stone article raises the question of the role played by Richard Holbrooke, an accomplished and distinguished, if somewhat temperamental, diplomat and the president's special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Is such a role even necessary? The president already has a secretary of state, a secretary of defense, an ambassador (normally the president's representative in the country to which he or she is posted), a national security adviser, a regional combatant commander (at CENTCOM), and a commanding general in the field. With that many cooks in the kitchen, no wonder they cannot all get along. Worse, like Eikenberry, Holbrooke is reportedly on poor terms with the Afghan president, which ought to preclude his utility as a special representative.

Quite simply, the war in Afghanistan is not going as well as the president had hoped because the administration has been unwilling to shoulder the burdens of its strategy. That would entail creating a unified command structure, imposing unity of effort on the tools of American power, and committing to victory - however one defines it. Instead, the administration prefers to dump those burdens on the United States military, which did not unilaterally reverse the negative trends in Iraq and cannot unilaterally do so in Afghanistan. Until the president truly embraces the strategy he has announced and provides the resources required to achieve the agreed upon end-state, the frustration on the ground in Afghanistan will only find new outlets, while victory slips further and further away.

During the American Civil War, President Lincoln was cursed with several poor generals, some truly atrocious ones, and more than a few superstars. Lincoln tolerated all sorts of behavior from them in the hopes of finding someone who shared his commitment to winning the war and his willingness to do what it took to achieve victory. He ultimately found such a military partner in Ulysses S. Grant, about whom he famously remarked when Grant was under political attack, "I can't spare this man. He fights."

Obama had a fighter too, but opted to remove him. Fortunately, in Petraeus, Obama has another fighter. Now the president must take full responsibility for the war and give Petraeus the Lincoln he needs.



Tourism sites in Mid and Far Western Nepal

The Bardia National Park

The Bardia National Park is the largest and most undisturbed wild area of the Terai region of the Nepal Himalayas. Similar to Chitwan park, but with a drier climate and a more remote location, Bardia encompasses 1,000-sq-kms of riverine grassland and sal forests.

The Terai or lowland hills and

was declared a wildlife reserve in 1976, first measuring 134 sq miles and expanded in 1985 to 374 sq miles.

Natural Beauty of Bardia National Park

Today's Bardia National Park is bordered to the south by the Babai River, to the north by the Shiwalik or Churia Hills, to the

Fauna in Bardia National Park

What makes a visit to Nepal's Bardia National Park particularly special is not just its large and intact habitat area and its isolated location, but also the presence here of one of the last known herds of wild Elephants in South Asia. The herd, numbering less than two dozen, roams these remote jungles in western Nepal.

The largest of the herd is affectionately called "Thulo Hati", which means "Big Elephant" in the Nepali language. Seeing these wild Elephants greyish-white bulk rising above the morning mists and hearing them trumpet across the jungle clearing is one of the most remarkable wildlife experiences to be had on our planet.

Bardia also boasts the greatest number of deer species in Nepal. The six deer species found in the park are: Chital or spotted Deer with its ubiquitous white spots on a brown coat; Hog Deer; similar to but smaller than Chital; Sambhar, the largest Deer on Indian subcontinent with a shaggy coat and thick antlers; Swamp Deer;

migrants arrive, depart or pass through.

Jungle Safari In Bardia National Park

To view the wild Elephants, you ride on the backs of specially-trained elephants, each guided by a driver. As you sit in a padded wooden platform on the Elephant's back with your camera ready, your Mahout steers the Elephant through tall grass. Mists rise off the nearby river, and you spot a mother Rhino leading her baby down to the river for a drink. Monkeys chatter and birds call in the nearby trees, signaling that an elusive Royal Bengal Tiger is stalking Deer through the high grass. It's a very special experience - a unique experience out at Bardia - unlike any other wildlife setting in Nepal.

Khaptad National Park

Khaptad National park is the Nepal's newest park area which is situated in the middle hills of the Far-West of the country, where the districts of Bajhang, Bajura, Doti and Achham meet and captures the area of about 225 sq kms. The Khaptad National park offers a challenging yet rewarding experience unlike any other protected area in Nepal, because of its remoteness has kept this area untouched by the tourist. This national park is well known for its religious vale as well as its natural beauty. Besides its religious importance, Late Khaptad Baba spent some 50 years for mediating and worshipping and became a renowned spiritual saint, the park is rich for its natural beauty from where we can see the Mt. Api and Saipal Himalaya ranges.

The Khaptad National park consists of about 22 open patches of grasslands, Khaptad daha (lake), flora consisting montane sal, pine and alder species, Fir, Oak, Birch and rhododendron as well as 135 species of flowers, along with medicinal herbs (about 224 species). The park offers about 226 bird species and among the common are impeyan pheasant (dhanphe) Nepal's national

Dolpa

Dolpa is a truly isolated corner of Nepal, bordering the Tibetan plateau and is located inside the Shey Phoksundo National Park. Trekking in Dolpa provides you with panoramic views of Kanjiroba peak, Phoksundo Lake and

Rara Lake trekking

This is popular destination for a trek in Western Nepal. The route is very much off the beaten track and affords glimpse of culture and scenery very different from those in the rest of Nepal. Rara is a high altitude clear lake ringed with



valleys of southern Nepal, nowhere over 1,000 feet in elevation, extend all along the

west by the Girwa River (a tributary of the Karnali), and to the east by a section of the East-



Indian border. The Terai once supported a healthy wildlife population in a habitat of 25-foot high elephant grass and dense hardwood forests, but had very few people, due to virulent malarial mosquitos.

Bardia was a royal hunting reserve of Nepal's Rana rulers from 1846 to 1950. In Nepal, wildlife lost whatever protection the royal hunting

West Highway which bisects the park. The Terai is only in the southwest corner of the park. Much of Bardia is on the southern slopes of the Shiwalik Range where the hills rise to over 4,000 feet.

From the base of these hills, the park slopes gently over highly porous ground for several miles to the rivers of the Gangetic plain. At Chisopani

Barasingha; and reddish-colored Barking Deer, the park's smallest Deer.

Other large mammals are: Gaur, the largest wild oxen in world; wild Boar, an omnivorous black-coated creature with large tusks; the agile sloth Bear, a shaggy black bear with a distinctive white "V" on its chest; Blue Bull or Nilgai, the largest Antelope on the Indian subcontinent; and Himalayan Tahr. Serow and Goral, two goat-Antelope members, are also found. Small mammals include: Langur Monkey, Rhesus Macaque, Jackal, three species of cats (jungle, leopard, and fishing); yellow-throated Marten; Mongoose; and Indian Otter.

Two species of crocodiles swim in the Karnali, Girwa, and Babai Rivers - the blunt-snouted Marsh Muggler and the fish-eating gharial with its long thin snout. These creatures share the water with the fresh-water Gangetic Dolphin. The Karnali also supports the great mahseer, which weigh up to 90 lbs, an angler's prize catch.

Birds are the park's most conspicuous fauna with over 300 resident and migratory species. Avid bird-watchers will want to visit the park in November or from February to April when



Dhaulagiri massif and rewards you with the opportunity to observe some of the area's abundant wildlife including the snow leopard, blue sheep, musk deer, Himalayan Thar and many more. On the whole, Dolpa is scenically and culturally

pine spruce and juniper forest and snow capped Himalayan Peaks. It is a good choice if you are bird watcher or desire something close to a wilderness solitude.

Rara the largest Lake in Nepal is in the high elevation



attractive, providing high passes, rare flora and fauna and sweeping views enriched by the traditional Tibetan culture.

The Dolpa trek is one of the hardest in Nepal, and takes you through beautiful pine and

towards the north west of Nepal. Only a few number of trekkers done this trek to experience it's unique culture and dramatic landscape with some historically important place on the way.



reserve conveyed when the Rana rule ended in the 1950's. A well-meaning malaria eradication program in the 1950's and 1960's opened the terai for settlement, and transformed about 75% of the native Terai to agricultural land. Wildlife populations declined with the combination of increased settlement and widespread poaching. Bardia

Gorge, the swift-flowing Karnali River emerges from the Shiwalik Range onto the broad plain and flows purposefully through the semi-tropical jungle. Where the terai braids out, small riverine forested islands form. Wildlife frequent these oases - maybe you'll be as lucky as we once were to spot a wild Elephant swimming trunk-deep across the river to reach the island.



bird, koklas and kalij pheasants and many types of partridges, flycatchers, bulbuls, cuckoos and eagles. The park also provides habitat for some 20 different species of animals, common ones including barking deer, wild boar, Goral, Leopard, Wild dog and jackal. This, BKhaptad National park is consider as Special Park because it represents one of the few remaining mid -mountain ecosystems in Nepal Himalaya.

juniper forest before emerging at the lake Shey Phoksundo. This lake, with its impressive blue colour is featured in "Himalaya" or the "Caravan", the Oscar nominated movie is truly associated with the lifestyle and the culture of the people living in this region. This trek is most suitable for those who are exceptionally fit and prepared to face the full challenge of the Himalayan wilderness.

Rara Lake lies at 2980 m., the greatest lake in Nepal and Rara National Park enhances the attraction of trekkers. The Rara National Park is known as the home of Himalayan black bear, Red panda, Chorals. This trek is nature's paradise for botanists, naturalizes and birds watchers. The trek begins with flight to Jumla and exploring the Himalayan vegetation, different kinds of birds and wild animals.