

Haggling for majority government intensifies



WM Correspondent

The latest somersaults being displayed arrogantly by the political leadership indicate that the country is again on the verge of a majority government instead of national consensus one.

The attempts made by the major political parties to comply with the request of president Ram Baran Yadav to form a consensus government by July 12 proved just a mumbo-jumbo.

As such, the Constituent Assembly (CA) has already fixed the date for prime minister's election in the

Legislature-Parliament on July 21. The experiences of the last two years have clearly corroborated the fact that the concept of majority government can, in no ways, resolve the political crisis marring the country.

However, the political leaders, grossly obsessed with power and privileges, are again indulged in myopic arithmetic games to engineer a majority government.

The frenzy race for prime ministerial birth has begun among and within parties.

Amongst the parties, UCPN

(Maoist) chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal, Nepali Congress (NC) parliamentary party leader Ram Chandra Poudel and UML chairman Jhala Nath Khanal are at the forefront to grab the top post.

In the meantime, Maoist vice-chairman Babu Ram Bhattarai, NC senior leaders Sher Bahadur Deuba and Kul Bahadur Gurung are other

names pronounced for the post of premier though they are not at the frontline.

In fact, the tendencies shown by the parties right after the resignation of caretaker Prime Minister Mandhava Kumar Nepal were not in tandem with the urgent need for a consensus government to reenergize the sluggish peace process.

A day after the PM stepped down, the NC insisted it should be allowed to lead the current outgoing coalition.

The Maoists also began consultations with other parties to head a majority government.

The other parties said that the former rebels could enjoy an opportunity to again ascend to the power corridors if they brought a concrete plan for the integration and rehabilitation of the ex-Maoist combatants.

Wooded by the offer, the Maoists also made public a work plan regarding the same.

However, the NC and UML gave a thumbs down to the plan.

The second biggest party NC has claimed the next premiership more

loudly citing the failure of the two successive governments led by Maoists and UML respectively to deliver the required results.

The NC is likely to field Poudel as a new Prime Ministerial candidate as he garners support of majority within the party and also by the virtue of being the parliamentary party leader.

All the same, the other parties are not sure about who should be forwarded for the post of Prime Minister from their respective sides.

The UCPN (Maoist) is also amplifying the decibel of its demand that it being the largest party reserves every right to lead the new government. And, the party, no wonder, has already ventured into actions to garner required support to form a majority government under its command.

The third largest party UML, which is seemingly in favour of consensus dispensation, is however marred by internal strife over the shape of the next government.

The UML has been a divided house and the intra-party rift has further widened following the resignation of Nepal and omission of senior leader

K.P Oli as coordinator from the dialogue committee, formed by the party to tide over the current political deadlock.

UML chairman Khanal is sensing the possibility of garnering support from both the Maoists and the NC to elevate himself to the post of Prime Minister.

However, Nepal and Oli are seeking to strengthen the current coalition by galvanizing the other parties including Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (Upendra Yadav) into backing it.

Peritently, Deputy Prime Minister Bijaya Kumar Gachchhadar is also not less aggressive as far as claiming the post.

According to him, it is now the legitimate turn of the Madhes based parties to steer a new government as the three big parties have already proved incompetent in this regard.

However, the likelihood of Madhesi parties forming the new government is very slim.

With the persistent inability of the political parties to rise above the parochial and partisan interests, the prospects of logical conclusion of the constitution writing and processes are also being blurred at a breakneck pace.

Maoists must understand it!

WM Correspondent

The flippancy being exhibited by the political leadership towards the efficacious management of ex-Maoist combatants has also triggered several social problems.

The recent detection of involvement of Maoist central committee member and commander of PLA's Fifth Division based in Rolpa, Kali Bahadur Kham, in serious crimes attests to this fact.

According to the police, Kham was masterminding behind the robbing of some Chinese businessmen in the capital. Similarly, the police have implicated him in more than one crime and have furnished a number of proofs to corroborate their claim.

The Chinese were looted in the pretext of selling Yarchagumba by a racket allegedly run by Kham at gunpoint. Kham however denied his involvement in the incident saying that

only money was his and the non the Yarchagumba.

Kham is also the same person who was implicated in the abduction, torture and subsequent killing of businessman Ram Hari Shrestha.

After Shrestha died of torture at the Maoist Shaktikhor camp in Chitwan, his wife Ramila Shrestha had filed a formal complaint against Kham as the murdered.

However, the Maoist party later reached an agreement with Shrestha's family to absolve Kham of the crime. Interestingly, the party later elevated criminal Kham in the party hierarchy to Central Committee member.

The recent crime committed by Kham is strictly an outcome of impunity that the Maoist party is encouraging for the sake of petty political benefits.

It is high time the UCPN (Maoist), being the **[Cont. on page 6]**

WM correspondent

The government and the United Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) are again at loggerheads.

Lately, the government launched a tirade against the UNMIN for its work-plan prepared for the integration and rehabilitation process of Maoists' ex-combatants.

The UNMIN's plan has chalked out the ways to accomplish the process within 60 weeks.

The UNMIN however termed it a non-paper not a formal proposal scripted on the basis of discussion with parties and stakeholders to set a realistic timeframe to complete the process.

But, the government claimed that the UNMIN's proposal is maliciously aimed at assisting the intention of the Maoists to prolong the completion of the process.

The major ruling parties-the NC and UML-are saying that the completion of process should take place within as short span of time as possible.

The government on July 12 denounced the latest move on the part of UNMIN in its letter sent to UNMIN chief Karin Landgren stating

implicitly that only the special committee for integration and rehabilitation of Maoist combatants has exclusive right to oversee the process not any other body.

Not surprisingly, this prompted the UN to try to rationalize the non-paper proposal prepared by the UNMIN.

During a daily press briefing at UN headquarters in New York, Farhan Haq, Associate Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, claimed that the dossier is based on consultations with the main parties.

"The ideas the UNMIN has shared with the parties are part of that discussion and are intended to facilitate advance thinking and planning of the implementation of integration and rehabilitation of former Maoist combatants once political decisions are made by the parties. The completion

of UNMIN's arms monitoring mandate, in large part, is contingent on the parties agreeing on a plan to address the future of the Maoist army personnel," added Haq.



Last

month, UNMIN had distributed the

'Hypothetical Timeline for Integration and Rehabilitation of Maoist Combatants'

to leaders of

three major political parties-UCPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress and CPN-UML-for discussion. NC leader Ram Sharan Mahat and Maoist leader Barsha Man Pun, who are also members of the special committee, had also taken part in the discussion.

The 60-week work plan talks about secretariat under special committee, finalization of rehabilitation package, labour market survey to give combatants different options, detailed plans for integration including rank

harmonization, choice of security forces for combatants, rehabilitation options and packages, management of arms, vacating of cantonments and bridging training for combatants who join the security forces.

Be that as it may, the latest row over the work-plan depicts the negative vibes that already existed between the ruling parties and the UNMIN.

Previously, they had also locked horns over the information related to the combatants.

The government had raised serious question over the "impartiality" of UNMIN in last March alleging that it failed to undertake its monitoring job effectively.

The government had loathed at the UNMIN for its refusal to share confidential information related to combatants with it.

Referring to the distasteful approach adopted by the government and ruling parties towards the UNMIN, UN Under Secretary General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe had also termed the dismay expressed by them against UNMIN "cheap shots and " and 'boring arguments.' **[Cont. on page 6]**

Economy in a fix

WM correspondent

That the political parties have never displayed a scintilla of sincerity and prudence towards the economic prosperity of the country goes without saying.

Once again, it has been crystal clear with the recent presentation of an advance budget instead of a full-fledged one for the new fiscal year.

Due to the persistent political wrangling, the caretaker government had to present the advance budget through a special bill, which allowed the government to spend Rs. 1.10 billion for the current fiscal year.

As per the related constitutional provision, such government can introduce advance budget that allows spending of a third of the budget spent in the current fiscal year.

The amount earmarked by the advance budget can be spent only to give continuity for the existing development projects, pay salaries to the government staffs, debt repayment and, for expenditure of constitutional bodies including president's office, office of Prime Minister, judiciary and other constitutional bodies

The country is in dire need of tax adjustment and fiscal measures to address the prevalent economic ills of the country. However, the government cannot change the tax rates through such budget.

With the country suffering a huge deficit in the balance of payment (BoP), trade deficit and alarmingly high inflation rate, the lack of a full-fledged budget can only be expected to further worsen the condition of the



already anemic economy.

Mainly, the delay in the presentation of the full-fledged budget

casts blight on the development projects and the generation of economically viable resources.

The government has to go for a long process for endorsing the budget from the parliament.

It takes at least one month for discussing budgetary particulars in the parliament whereas some 3 to 6 months are needed for getting approval from the National Planning Commissions (NPC) for the priority projects.

Then, the tender procedures related to development projects take another two months to complete.

Such time-consuming trend only mars the timely implementation of the development agendas.

The nagging lateness in the realization of development projects hamstrings the economic growth.

The country pathetically failed to achieve anything significant in the

economic front over the last two years due to the delay in budget presentation and implementation, triggered by political wrangling and myopia.

The economic growth in the current fiscal year is expected to confine to 3.5 percent against the anticipated rate of 5.5 percent while the previous year saw a growth of mere 4 percent less than the set target, according to the Economic Survey 2010 released by the government.

The stunted growth had shattered the optimism of achieving a double-digit economic expansion after the end of a decade long civil war.

Successive governments over the last three years sought to bring the budget before the beginning of a new fiscal year. **[Cont. on page 6]**

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Editor : Prem Kumari Pant

Sub-Editor : Nirjal Dhungana

Prithvi Man Shrestha

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Printed at : Dhimle Printing Press, Dillibazar

Email: weeklymirror@ntc.net.np

weeklymirror@gmail.com

Editorial

Titanic challenges that lie ahead

The people have assigned the political parties with the momentous task of reorienting the entire political, economic and social fabrics of the country. So, the broader collaboration among the political parties is must to inoculate the country against any possible disaster during its sensitive transformation.

What must be confessed is that the political parties have indeed fought for propelling the country towards the path of democratic republicanism.

A nascent democratic republic order can attain healthy maturity only if the concerned political forces work in tandem realizing the fact that any permanent mishap in their team spirits will amount to the total collapse of the country.

There are high sounding slogans that sovereignty has been transferred into the hands of the people. Nevertheless the reality is that the people have become all the more helpless and ignored with sovereignty ruling supreme in the game of power. The onset of such a bizarre situation has made it difficult to ascertain if the parties are committed to the values and norms of democracy with conviction.

In fact the concept of national consensus is the only viable tool to successfully tide over the titanic challenges that lie ahead. However, the tragedy has been that political leaders and activists seem more gravitated towards gaining political mileage in a flagrant manner. Things have worsened to such an extent that even moral values have assumed different interpretations along party lines and partisan affiliations.

In fact this alarming situation has arisen only because Nepal's political sector is badly impoverished insofar as the national viewpoint is concerned and the situation cannot be improved until our politician rises above such consideration.

Undoubtedly, the media sector of the country is incessantly asking the government to prove its presence with the law and order situation going downhill at a breakneck speed.

The leeway being enjoyed by the certain group to proceed with their unwarranted activities also corroborates the fact that the state has been severely failed to maintain the law and order situation.

It is also crystal clear that the country is reeling under the yoke of rampant corruptions and crimes. In fact, the menace of corruption is so profuse that it does not need to cite any particular incident to substantiate its vicious presence.

More disappointing is the fact nobody involved in these heinous crimes has so far been brought to book. The Terai has entrapped in the vortex of violence with dozens of identified and unidentified armed groups indulging in various activities tantamount to crime.

Of course, the swelling flow of remittance in the country is helping to buoy up the shaky economy of the country.

Nevertheless, the eroding of the confidence of business community due to the volatile political scenario can well pose a grave challenge to the country's economy.

The political instability coupled with the upward spiral in criminal activities is not only deterring the potential investors to pour their money in any business venture but also forcing those who have already invested in the country to scout new markets outside the country. Some multi-national companies operating in Nepal are also said to be fed up with the dismal business climate in the country. And, they may decide not to leverage their investment in Nepal anytime.

As such, the probability of the country's economy to take a nosedive cannot be overlooked.

It goes without saying that the sway foreigners hold over the majority of powerful political leaders is swelling substantially with the intensification of bickering among the major political parties.

On the other hand, the middle class of the country appears apparently jittery about their future owing to the myriad anomalies besetting the political and economic sector of the country.

As of today, the country is not witnessing a mass migration of intellectuals but that situation is not so far if the country continues to falter in a morass of uncertainty.

Literacy, learning and the learned

Dr Pramod Dhakal

Although I live amidst many friends who keep great interest in literature, my life was dominated by the study of sciences and engineering. Reading and writing to me were for the pleasure of knowing something scientifically important, and never for the purpose of pure pleasure. I was forced to reevaluate my views after I attended an International Festival of Nepali Poems in Boston, organized by leading Nepali literary organizations, on July 3, 2010. I unexpectedly enjoyed the program and came out with an admiration for the literary talents of my friends. Through poems, they expressed great sorrow, frustration, and disapproval of what is happening in contemporary Nepal and demonstrated their unflinching love for the people and place of their nativity. A sense of appreciation for literature was suddenly espoused on me and I wished if there was some avenue to channel the creative energy of our friends for achieving some great goal for Nepal, although I could not envision any specifics.

The effect was such that, while one of my friend was singing a children's song to her daughter this morning, my mind was drawn into listening to it very carefully. This was unusual in a sense that until now I paid shallow attention to poems and songs. As she was singing, her daughter was giggling, at times profusely. It made me wonder how an one year old could so thoroughly be engaged and be laughing in hearing a song! The wondrous part was that the wording of the song was very complex for an one year old, which said, "The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round, all through the town!" Thus I felt that I had a moment of discovery, and the faces of my literary friends and the poetry competition of the weekend kept on flashing in my mind.

There was a complex English grammar at work in making this song. Each verse was a complete sentence following correct grammatical rules. The whole song was made up of grammatically difficult and non repetitive sentences. What repeated were the musical rhythm and the grammatical patterns of the sentences. The song made distinction between many prepositions like in, on, out, up, down, open, and close; phrases like "round and round", "all through the town" and "move on back"; and many dozen forever useful words. I was at awe to imagine that children are able to remember this complex song purely because of its rhythmic nature.

good music, and fun filled and easy to relate to story. I did not matter that it involved a large set of vocabulary, and a very complex and adult worthy grammar. It is unbelievable how much grammar could be taught through one song, if it were to be composed with a pure motive of soliciting learning of language, grammar, and foundational vocabulary on children. Moreover, it is unlikely that the children will forget such songs because they would have sang them thousands of times at an early age when their brains circuits are forming at a prolific speed.

I am writing this article with a profound happiness in knowing that it would be possible to teach the entire Nepali language grammar to each and every child through children's songs before even they step into Grade One. We could set aside the books of grammar only for reference by adults when they take university level education. All grammar needed until high school could be taught through nursery rhymes that are carefully crafted with an exclusive goal of making children proficient in the language. Thus, through this article, I urge all Nepali literary friends and artists to develop a type of teaching Nepali grammar, complete with rules (the syntax) and the meaning they could carry (the semantics) through children's songs. Those songs would then be sang, memorized, and internalized by children before they step into elementary school. The mission is to replace the book of Byakarna (grammar) with a book of songs that parents could sing to their children who will learn them without ever knowing that they are actually learning a complex language and its grammar. This would be like teaching Gyana (knowledge) through Bhakti (singing of devotional songs) or teaching of religion through hymns.

I personally struggled for decades before I finally learned that every individual in the world possesses almost infinite amount of content (the raw information) that could be converted into formal knowledge if we are able to organize that information with the use of syntax (the rule) and semantics (the meaning). Only by adding rules and then convention to extract the meaning out of them, we become able to convey knowledge and information from one person to another, clearly and unambiguously. I have been convinced for some time that a society can reach the zenith of learning and innovation if all its

citizens master the art of combining the knowledge-content, syntax and semantics to express ideas and information in a way that what is told and what is understood become one. Such ideas and information represent pieces of formalized knowledge, which the originator could very well acquire through one of many possible means of learning. But for long, I was struggling to find a way to achieve that. Only today and that also accidentally, I was able to open up my eyes and gain clear confidence in bringing a revolution in literature, learning, and innovation in Nepal by linguistically empowering children well before they reach school age. We shall no longer fail Nepali children in learning.

That the singular goal of education ought to be learning, Nepal need not fear whether or not its education will compare with best institution in the world. The very nature of learning would take care of that problem. The lackluster performance today of Nepalese institutions stems from resorting to memorization or rote learning, when the desired goal ought to have been pure learning. The day it becomes a national priority to unleash learning in children, the nation would emerge as one of thinking citizens who could solve even the most difficult of political, social, and economic problems that we have come to create. However, we can never be sure if rote learning will bring such result because the goal is so poorly defined as getting degrees and jobs, instead of creating them. Today, we have been failing most of the rural children not because they lack an ability to learn but because we could not create an opportunity for them to learn. And there can be no other intervention greater than the intervention through especially designed children's songs.

Be they rich or poor, all children are equally free of family obligations in their preschool age. Thus they have about five years of time completely available to master learning by doing and imagining. They have no shame in doing anything including singing. Therefore, this vast amount of time must be utilized to instill a complete grammar, base vocabulary, desire for inquiry, and moral values to children through songs that are especially designed and developed for them by a group of experts in grammar, child psychology, language, literature, and music. Then the children should start hearing those songs from the time they are in their mother's womb. This

way even illiterate mothers become near literate through songs by the time babies are born and babies' brains are already trained to catch those songs with ease. Thus by the time these children reach Grade 1, classes would be full of children who are already well conversant and already inspired for learning.

In sum, let songs tell many different types of words, sentences, grammatical conundrums, and moral stories in a memorable and fun way. Let the full syntax and semantics of a language, including all pronunciations, be learned by children before school. Let children learn the most difficult and the most essential tool of learning, the language, without ever knowing that they are actually learning it. Let the songs be full of questions whose answers may or may not exist. The idea would be that children would learn how to ask right questions as and when they need. Let the very songs tell how all great learning, and mastery of crafts comes through great devotion and repeated practice. Whether it be about learning how to walk, talk, and think by a child or building of a wall by adults, the mastery is the product of devotion and practice. Let those songs be source of learning and the catalysts for all future learning. Let Nepal be a country of best children's songs in the world and let the world beg to translate them in all different languages of the world! Let there be a literary revolution in Nepal! That is the request I make to all the learned literary workers. Through you, let there be literacy and learning among all children of Nepal before they are old enough to know it.

At last, I should say that it is easy to dismiss these ideas as "not new". As I was sharing my thoughts with a literary friend, I was given an impression that so many good quality children's songs have already been written in Nepali and more are coming every year on the strength of Nepali literary institutions. This is equivalent to saying that a country is sure to land on moon given that some space institutions keep on generating scientific inventions. The reality, however, is that success comes through management of a great missions rather than through management of a great institutions. To reach a great literary feat, we need a great literary mission for which we all contribute deliberately. Therefore, I request that the great works of our learned people be driven by this great mission of creating a leading country in literature by hard-wiring literary rules, vocabulary, and composition in children's brain before they enter schools!

UN is not clean-three are skeletons in their cupboard

Malin Abeyatunge

Hunger strike by a patriotic political front NFF lead by a Minister of the cabinet Wimal Weerawansa (he had since given resignation to save face of the Government and now it is reported that Wimal and his party colleagues have given up the hunger strike after President Rajapaksa's intervention) against United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) Ban-Ki-Moon's interference in Sri Lanka domestic affairs had hit the head lines in the world print media. UN as well as its UNSG are perturbed over the peaceful demonstrations opposite the UN Office-Colombo (UNO) by NFF. It's sacrosanct of the UN Charter to protect the Right for "Freedom of Expression". That's what the protesters were doing against UNSG Ban-Ki-Moon. So, why should either UN or Ban-Ki-Moon or its officials make such a hallababoo when UN is there to protect "Human Rights" one of which is freedom of expression. Surly, LTTE supportive Tamil Diaspora had demonstrations and protest umpteen number of times opposite the UN Office in Geneva over the years inconveniencing public but did UNO record any objections during these protests? How come they didn't utter a word against those demos and protests?

I doubt that UN is free from immunity that no one or country should protest against UN wrong doings if any. Already Nepal has found fault with the UN that UN is trying to interfere with the negotiations that's taking place with Maoists outfit. UN should practice what it preaches and allow the protesters to manifest their anger against Ban-Ki-Moon's unilateral decision on Sri Lanka, in a peaceful manner. The protesters were not after any personal vendetta against Ban-Ki-Moon. It is a protest of his arrogance to appoint a three member panel without the approval/consent of the UN Security Council or UN

Human Rights Council ignoring all that protocol. He has no doubt become a puppet of some western countries, Human Rights Organizations like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, ICG and the Tamil Diaspora who had infiltrated into UNO's inner circles who are heads of many UN Agencies.

However, the UN Office in Colombo (UNOC) and it's Agencies have not acted with impartiality and integrity in the past. It came to a point that UNOC has been branded as a "Den of Tamil Tigers". There have been many instances where some employees have been suspected of having leaked certain secret intelligence information to LTTE.

In the Past, UN has blundered when Ex UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, conveyed condolences to the family of a LTTE terrorist leader Kaushalyan who was killed by the armed forces. (Former SG Kofi Annan was taken for a ride by the staff in UNOC).

Then Alan Rock in a subtle attempt to appease LTTE terrorists blamed the GoSL for liaising with para military group without being able to substantiate his allegations. He was never heard after that. Then the Human Rights Commissioner for Children Radhika Coomaraswamy did not take any concrete action against LTTE for kidnapping children for their child brigade other than making naive requests. Newly appointed Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillai played the same game by blaming the armed forces but kept mum on LTTE's atrocities.

When Sencholith training camp was bombed, UNICEF-Colombo and UNICEF head in New York Joanna Van Gemen immediately issued a media release blaming that the Sri Lankan Air Force has

bombed a orphanage/ two day First Aid Training Camp (all these were as interpreted by LTTE and Tamil Net) without any proper investigations. Unfortunately, UNICEF had to eat its own words as subsequently LTTE indirectly acknowledged that it was a training camp for women cadres and not a girls school.

UN officials had a taste of curry from LTTE artillery along with the Ambassadors of US, Canada, Italy, Germany and Japan on their visit to evaluate the resettlement situation in the East. This was a ploy to get UN to send a peace keeping mission (This was in the air at this time). Hence, no explanation was called by these visiting distinguished visitors including some UN officials from LTTE, but accepted a fake apology from LTTE.

These were low level instances where the UNOC and it's Agencies have at various times acted partial towards LTTE and against the Sri Lankan Government and its armed forces. Let me remind some incidents that happened in the international scene against Sri Lanka.

Firstly as I mentioned above, former UNSG Kofi Annan sent his condolences to the family on the death of a Tamil Tiger leader Kaushalyan killed by Government armed forces. Then comes another drama of UN. Sir John Holmes -former UN undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs was having a phone conversation with one Interpol fugitive Kumanan Pathmanathan alias KP of LTTE discussing ways to call for a ceasefire by the Government to give oxygen to LTTE. This was arranged by LTTE's God Father Eric Solheim through UNSG's chief of Staff Vijay Nambar from a toilet in the BIAirport (BIA). One writer called it "Toilet Diplomacy" by Vijay Nambar. So the UN's international affairs have gone

down to the level of "Toilet Diplomacy".

Then there was Human Rights Chief Naveen Pillai who was parroting Tamil Net website blaming the Sri Lankan Government the appalling conditions in the IDP camps. Following suite of the western block to keep her top job, she too started parroting their view demanding an international probe into the war crimes against Sri Lanka. As usual she was loosely parroting the Tamil websites blaming the GoSL that rapes, abductions and disappearances are daily happening in the welfare camps without any substantial evidence. When all these human rights violations and atrocities were happening under the jackboot of now dead Prabhakaran she was deaf, blind and mute.

I have reiterated the above facts just to mention that UN Officials are not that clean, impartial and always had double standard. Similarly this action by UNSG is also an application of double standard as he is deaf, dumb and blind for what's happening in Iraq and Afghanistan. On his own without the consent or approval by the Security Council or UN Human Rights Council abusing the protocol and appointing three member panel should be condemned and hence the Sri Lankans launching protests one after the other against Ban-Ki-Moon is justifiable and nothing but exercising one of the human rights which is "freedom of Expression" which should not be a matter for the UN to get perturbed or annoyed as it is an organization to reinforce Human Rights when and where it's violated.

These events and incidents show the dishonesty and double standard of UN operations in Sri Lanka. At the same time, Sri Lankans appreciate very much the good work done by them but those good work is nullified with some of the bad eggs of the UNOC in Colombo and some of its agencies.

Why community forests in Nepal are not functioning well?

Very surprisingly within the month of June, I have read as many as 96 news headings in several daily newspapers on the forests and/or forest governance

Dr Indra Prasad Sapkota

these recommendations for the betterment of community forests. For example, recent Nobel laureate Elinor

Ostrom has put forward eight designed principles and argued them as the prerequisites for the success in governing the common pool resources (CPRs). They are: i) clearly defined boundaries; ii) graduated sanctions for appropriators who do not respect community rules; iii) congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions; iv) collective-choice arrangements allowing for the participation of most of the appropriators in the decision making process; v) effective monitoring by monitors who are part of or accountable to the appropriators; vi) conflict-resolution mechanisms which are cheap and easy of access; vii) minimal recognition of rights to organize (e.g., by the government); viii) organization in the form of multiple layers of nested enterprises, with small, local CPRs at their bases (for the large sized CPRs).



failure. All news headings were about the deforestation, forest degradation and corruption in community forests. I have encountered this number of news headings via internet; and the number may have rather increased if I could have had time to look at several weekly newspapers. Being a community forest worker for almost 21 yrs, and having a very good faith on the theory related to the 'devolution of power', several questions came into my mind regarding our future forests. Therefore, I am now trying to discuss here why community forests are not functioning well in Nepal.

As in other developing countries, devolution of management rights of forest resources from centralized government to local users group has widely been experienced in Nepal for three decades, when national forests were progressively handed over to community forest users group. Under a strong legal framework, the government handed over certain sections of national forests to self-organized local institutions bringing together traditional users of the forests. This has become a major forest policy in Nepal, and seeks twin roles of poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation. As of January 2010, a total of 1.66 million households organized into about 15,000 community forest user groups (CFUGs) managing about 1.23 million ha of forests in Nepal.

Despite these exciting figures in hand, we have been experiencing many irregularities in community forests. This is so because we often overlook the research recommendations made by several scientific studies in relation to the devolution of power; and we don't make effort in real sense to incorporate

different wellbeing statuses of users has also not been clearly delineated. We lack the information on the rules and 'symbolic policies' in favor of their vested interest. Both institutions manipulated these 'symbolic rules and policies' in avoiding the graduated sanctions- the prerequisite principle, which should have already been enforced on appropriators who do not respect community rules. These both institutions have been interpreting these policies and Laws with the motive of resource capture, where they largely worked together to get 'additional benefits' out of forests. Whenever a regulatory body asks them to furnish the evidences and/or bases of their practices, and to identify the reasons for impunity, they both often pinpoint to each other and present each other as a law violator. The local community blames the local government for not cooperating them to fully enjoy the autonomy given by the Forest Act; and often they index these 'symbolic post Act policies' as responsible for the deforestation in community forests. On the other hand, the local government has often blamed the Act as a strong instrument in favor of community that stops them to work effectively in regulating the Laws and order in the community forests.

The 'partial devolution' and a 'mingling power sharing' have actually resulted this unwanted situation on forests and forestry, as customary management rights have been assigned to the local community, but a set of 'symbolic rights' still remains with the government at the same time. In other words, State's weakness in making the local community responsible, its unwillingness in identifying community's stewardship over the resources, and its failure in maintaining the graduated sanctions for the appropriators who often violate the community rules are major responsible factors behind this worst situation.

Therefore, now the time has come to correct the mistakes made by both sides, and to join hand together with real forest users in making these two very important Ostrom's principles compatible with the community forestry practices in Nepal. First, we should encourage the local users in enjoying devolved power with full momentum for positive changes; and we should always strengthen the local government to help control the impunity. The new forest policy, which is on the way to be formulated should clearly borderline the roles and responsibilities of the local users and the local government. These both institutions are inevitable, and also deserve clear and crystal roles to play for long and enduring success of community forests in Nepal. Any school of thoughts driven by 'institutional displacement' will again cause the downfall fate of Nepalese forest resources- perhaps even serious than today.

More importantly, the boundary especially on roles and responsibility between the government and community institutions have not been clearly defined. Most of the post forest Act-1993 policies and directives imposed by the government are manipulative; and has been launched in controlling the community forestry operations. These policies in author's eye are just 'symbolic' in nature as most of these policies have not been widely consulted during the formulation process. These manipulative and largely 'symbolic policies' actually worked as barriers to effectively implement the devolution of management rights in community forests. So far, in the existing practices of community forestry, devolution has been abused by forest administration to extend control over the people and resources, by using forest users committee.

This scenario has actually resulted in several devastations in the history and legacy of forestry practices and forests these days. The local administration and local community both have actually defined community

~ National news ~

SSB atrocities in the border

Excesses by the Seema Surakchya Bal (SSB) or Indian Border Security Force personnel has increased in the bordering region of eastern Nepal.

Following reports of the same from the local people, a team led by Assistant Chief District Officers of Ilam, Panchthar and Taplejung districts visited the affected areas.

During the meeting, the locals shared the excesses they were facing from the SSB officials.

The SSB jawans enter Nepali villages with arms and threaten us, local Ratna Baniya of Chyangthapu, Paanchthar said.

Likewise, the SSB jawans also forcibly take their share of the ghee, cheese and chhurpi produced in Nepal and taken to the Indian market centres, local Yogesh Rai said.

Water level in Koshi raises indicating danger

The red light at Koshi Barrage has started indicating a sign of danger following heavy floods in Saptakoshi River caused by the daily rainfall in the eastern hilly districts for the past few days.

The flow of water in the river that crossed 166,601 cusecs on Monday morning has reached 173,000 cusecs in the afternoon.

However, even if the red light has started to light since yesterday, there is no risk of disaster yet, said security person Raju Yadav deployed at the barrage.

It is said out of the 56 gates of the barrage, 32 have been opened since this morning following the increasing water level in the river.

The flood that gushed to Paschim Kusaha after breaching the eastern embankment two years ago had caused a huge loss. The embankment was breached due to the delay in opening the gates despite an increased water level.

Similarly, the increasing water level has started cutting three metres in the lower part in between spur No. 11 and 12 at Pulthegaunda, said engineer Mohan Bhattarai at the Water Induced Disaster Control Office Biratnagar.

However, there is no risk of disaster at the village despite inundation, he said. Spurs constructed at Pulthegaunda by the Nepal Government require maintenance but can't be repaired yet due to lack of budget.

Locals deprived community forest facilities

The families who were removed from the extended area of Shuklaphanta wildlife reserve and subsequently rehabilitated in other places have been deprived of facilities they are entitled to get from community forest.

Altogether 350 households, who were provided 10 Kathlhas each and rehabilitated by the Reserve in Simalphanta before a decade, have been denied of their rights when the community forests nearby hesitated to incorporate them as members.

Saying the community forest could not incorporate more members in less area, the forest office-bearers are reluctant to include them as members. With this, they have been deprived of access to firewood, timber, stones and other development works, said Dhan Bahadur Chaudhary.

He further said they have been frequently calling on the office-bearers of Nageswor community forest and environment community forest and informing them in writing about the problems they are facing.

There are reserve and community forest in the vicinity of our settlement but they are panicked for not getting chance to use the forest resources, they added.

"Those living near the community forests have right to be the member but they can get membership once the general assembly endorsed the agenda to this effect", said Chairperson of Environment Community Forest Pushkar Singh.

NC central committee overrides Mahasanti decision on presidential term

Nepali Congress (NC) Central Working Committee (CWC) has suspended a clause about limiting the presidential term in district committees to a maximum of two terms in its proposed statute passed by the Mahasanti meeting last year.

A CWC meeting of the party held at party headquarters, Sanepa Tuesday scrapped the provision on presidential terms paving way for unlimited presidential terms in the districts.

NC general secretary Bimalendra Nidhi told media after the meeting, the CWC suspended the clause on presidential terms paying heed to the feedback from many district committee presidents.

If the clause on limiting the presidential to two is implemented, about 35 district committee presidents of the party cannot stand for the position again in the upcoming general convention.

The 12th general convention of the party is scheduled to take place from August 26 to 30 in Kathmandu.

'Possibility of NC-led majority government high'

Nepali Congress (NC) acting president Sushil Koirala has claimed that the possibility of formation of a majority government under his party's leadership has grown tremendously.

Speaking at a programme organised by Banke district chapter of Press Union in Nepalgunj Tuesday, Koirala said that the possibility of formation of a majority government under the leadership of other parties looks slim as NC has emerged as a strong party to stake its claim to government leadership.

He said that as both UCPN (Maoist) and CPN (UML) have failed to guarantee peace and timely constitution during their reign, the responsibility to ensure the same has now fallen on the shoulders of his party and that the party would deliver.

Hinting at the alleged involvement of Maoist activists in the murder of a district leader of UML Chhabil Karki few days ago, the top NC leader said that if the Maoists don't stop engaging in violent activities, all blames for the failure of peace process would go to the former rebel party.

197th Bhanu Jayanti observed

The 197th Bhanu Jayanti (birth anniversary of Bhanubhakta Acharya, the first poet of Nepali language) was marked in Nepal amid various literary programmes on Tuesday.

Over 100 literateurs and poets from Gorkha, Lamjung, Tanahun, Kaski, Dhading and Kathmandu gathered in Chundi Ramgha of Tanahun, the birthplace of Adikabi Bhanubhakta Acharya, to celebrate the 197th birth anniversary of the Adikabi, state-owned news agency RSS reported.

According to Bhanu Birthplace Development Committee, Chundi, a poetry competition and recitation of poems in Bhanubhakta's style were held Monday.

Nabinraj Dahal, acting director of

the committee, said a team of poets and literateurs accompanied by a troupe of traditional instrument players left for Shikhar Kateri, the birthplace of Bhanubhakta, this morning.

Participants of the morning rally garlanded the half-size statue of Bhanubhakta.

A tributary meeting, speech and cultural procession based on the Ramayana penned by Bhanubhakta have been planned for the afternoon while there will be deepawali in the evening, according to chairman of the committee Sribhakta Acharya.

Meanwhile in Kathmandu, Modern Multiple College organized a poetry symposium to mark the 197th birth anniversary of Bhanubhakta.

At the programme, Yadav

Bhattarai, Thakur Sharma, Rameshwor Matridas, Tulsii Prasad Bhattarai, Basanta Kumar Sharma Nepal and Ram Prasad Dahal, among others, recited their poems.

Dahal, who is also the chairman of Dayitwa Literary Foundation, highlighted Bhanubhakta's role in the development of Nepali language.

College principal Tulsii Prasad Bhattarai said the state has ignored literature and called the state to be serious to promote literature.

Government felicitates 48 personalities

The government felicitated 48 personalities for "continuing to make significant contribution" in the field of linguistics, arts, literature, culture, drama, music and other fields of

national importance on the occasion of "Bhanu Jayanti" on Sunday in the capital.

Organising a programme, the government felicitated 8 persons with the National Talent Prize for their contribution in four different streams and 40 persons from the five development regions with Regional Talent Prize.

The National Talent Prize and Regional Talent Prize winners were awarded certificates and Rs. 100,000 and Rs. 50,000 each respectively.

On the occasion, caretaker prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal said though the society might not give much value to arts, culture, music, literature and language, the government is always ready to extend its support for its development.

Kirats: The lion-hearted people of Nepal

Introduction

Kirats, one of the earliest inhabitants of Kathmandu valley, boast a glorious history of gallantry and rich cultural heritage. Kirat means the lion-

Mani Nepali

the lord of heaven, who made a little trip to the Kathmandu Valley in human guise. It is also believed that he was a

facts clearly provide evidence that Kirats are an ancient ethnic group of Nepal.

Religion and culture

The Kirat follow their own traditional Kirati religion distinctly different from Hinduism and Buddhism. Sumnima and Paruhang are worshipped as primordial parents. Sikataku Budo, Walmo Budi, and Jalpa Devi, among others, serve as Kirati deities. The rais are nature worshipers who perform Sakela puja which includes dancing and singing. The dance is called Silli and mimics the movements of birds and animals during their migration. The performance of Sakela puja is led by the Nakchong (the Rai priest) or by the head of an important family in his absence. During Sakewa puja instruments such as the dhol (or dhela), the jyanta, the bow and arrow, the chindo, the yak tail, and the cock and hen are used.

They follow their holy scripture called Kirat Mundhum, which is also known as Kirat Veda. They are true nature worshipers and practice Animism and Shamanism, believing in their primeval ancestors, Sumnima Paruhang. They give high honors to labor and the time of cultivation. Their Sakela Festival takes place during rice planting time and harvesting time, which are called Sakela/Sakewa Uvauli (during planting season) and Sakela/Sakewa Udhali (during the time of the harvest). Kirat Limbus believe in the Supreme God Tagera who is a symbol of supreme knowledge.

Challenges and Achievements

The Kirats have undergone many ups and downs during the course of history. A widespread cultural conflict took place involving Tibetan migrants. The entire Himalayan region was known as the Kimpurusha desha, a phrase derived from a Sanskrit term used to identify people of Kirat origin. These people were also known as nep, to which the name nepala is believed to have an etymological link. From around the 8th century, areas on the northern frontier of the Kirat region

began to fall under the domination of migrant people of Tibetan origin. This introduced Tibetan Buddhism among Kirats. The Kirats ruled the entire Sikkim, which was the home of Lepcha Kirat, but they lost their control later under the influence of Tibetan Buddhist Lamas. The far eastern region of Nepal was historically known as Limbuwan for a short period of time.

Rupinhang, who was born around 1704, was the Limbu society's first literary figure and reformer. He is also regarded as the harbinger of Limbu revival. He was believed to be an incarnation of legendary Sirijonga. He was the one who revived Kirat script and literature. That is the reason why this script is also known as Sirijonga script. He collected, composed, and copied huge amounts of Kirat literature pertaining to history and cultural traditions. In doing all of this, Sirijonga laid the foundation for a Kirat ethnic revival. This Sirijonga, who was believed to be the reincarnation of the first, was apparently martyred in 1743 for the sake of this script by the Sikkim Lamas, who tied him to a tree and flung poison arrows at him. The script was named "Sirijonga" in his honour by the Limbu scholar Iman Singh Chemjong in 1925.

He is revered in Kirat society for his contribution to fighting the Tibetan Buddhist cultural dogma by preaching that acquiring broad cultural knowledge and experience was the key to the revival and enrichment of a community.

Language

Kirat Rai speak their own language that falls in the Tibeto-Burman language family. They have more than 32 different languages and dialects. A lot of written historical evidence is lost due to the ruthlessness of the next rulers - Lichchavis, Mallas, and the Shah dynasty. The Rai are divided into many different sub-groups - Bantawa, Chamling, Sampang, Dumi, Jerung, Kulung, Khaling, Lohorung, Mewahang, Rakhali, Thulung, Tilung, Wambule, Yakkha, Yamphu, Sunuwar, Ambule, etc. Some groups number only a few hundred members. Every sub-group speaks a different language. They use Sirijonga scrip as mentioned above.



hearted people or people of a lion nature. It also means mountain people. There is an indigenous ethnic Kirati group in Nepal. Dhimal, Hayu, Koch, Thami, Tharu, Chepang, and Surel ethnic groups also consider themselves to be of Kirati descent. This means that they are really courageous fighters. They have their own language, religion, and culture. Their customs are very rich and colorful with artistic ornaments made of pure gold and precious stones. The Kirat people are concentrated mainly in the eastern hilly part of Nepal extending over several districts.

History

Very few people know that the Kirat dynasty was the longest reign of rulers in Nepal. They have ruled 1,250 years according to the history of Nepal. The First Kirat King Yalambar defeated Bhuvan Singh, the last of the Ahir Kings, the second dynasty to rule Nepal after Gopal. Yalambar is associated with many interesting legends, and it is said that he had a meeting with Indra,

legendary fighter and wanted to take a side in the Mahabharat war but was slain before he could intervene.

It is stated in Nepal history that 29 Kirat kings ruled Nepal. Among these kings the 7th king Jetedasti is important because Gautam Buddha visited Nepal during his rule. Emperor Ashoka of India adopted Buddhism after the bloody Kalinga battle. He spent the rest of his life spreading Buddhism. He visited Nepal during the reign of the 14th Kirat king Sthunko. Emperor Ashoka visited Lumbini, the birth place of Buddha and erected the historical pillar and inscribed the evidence that it is the true birth place of Buddha. Ashoka visited Nepal and made four famous stupa. His daughter Charumati married a Nepali nobleman and later converted herself as a Buddhist nun and lived in Charu Bihar, which is now Chababil or Chabel.

The Hindu scriptures give great honor to Kirateswar Mahadev (great God in form of Kirat) who roamed the forests of Kathmandu Valley. All these

Why do 400 million people have a Facebook? Is your child one of them?

Are human beings in developed and not so developed societies so alienated from each other that they need to communicate with strangers on internet? How many hours do internet-addicted children spend on Facebook, MySpace or Twitter pushing information about themselves out into cyberspace for all eternity? There must be some statistics somewhere on this.

Talking about statistics how many hours do kids spend speaking in a meaningful way to their parents or family? Or are they brought up from almost Day 1 watching Baby TV, graduating to Discovery Kids then on to Nickelodeon and then Disney Channel? Then comes the big leap to Facebook and eventually they crawl into the "gimme" disease.

In all these scenarios the entertainment is provided by the corporations or to put it in real terms - components of the Global Corporate Empire. We all know that the GCE loves kids - as future consumers.

"Let's go and grow some vegetables in the back yard, Johnny!"

"Dad, are you insane? I gotta see what Mandy is doing with her new iPod. By the way can I have a Blackberry for my birthday? Everyone else has one. They are so useful I could get on the internet no matter where I am and I could send emails from every country

Arturo Rosales

in the whole wide world. They're really cool, dad."

This may be a caricature the modern drama - but it is a reality, nonetheless - of western society today.



It's also one of the tragic losses for family, real friendship and community in a world of corporate-dominated life.

Some say that parents have a responsibility to control their children's time on television and the internet. It's a bit like inviting strangers to visit with our children behind closed doors and at the same time to control their activities. The normal difficulties inherent with good parenting are challenging enough without allowing

corporations to enter the privacy of our homes, introducing God-knows-what-values to our children, undermining our authority as parents and bringing new conflicts between us and our kids!

Of course I'm aware of the peer pressure that has always existed among the kids who have and those who do not. But in the past it was a pretty dress or a pair of sneakers. The internet has introduced a whole new kind of competition among kids. At the risk of sounding over dramatic, we wouldn't allow our child to have a firearm just because their friend has one. Ok, the video games, social networks and chat rooms are not a

cocked pistol. But what silent risks exist for our children behind that closed door when they are on the computer and we're chilling out in front of the tube with that after work drink at our side?

Now if your kids are among the 400 million people who use Facebook watch this 4 minute video which is fact and not conspiracy theory. Why is the CIA at the top of the pyramid when it comes to Facebook? Old Arturo says, c'mon dad and mom, bring your kid back home from the wilderness of the real world and witches on the internet, spend time with them, play board games with them, listen to them, take walks in nature together, turn off the television, read together, plant a garden if you have a back yard and if you don't, get them to put a tomato plant in a pot and watch it grow. Help them with their homework, find out where they've really been tonight, learn to apologize to them when you've been wrong, hug them - really! Tell them stories about your childhood and about their grandparents, aunts, uncle and cousins. Let them get to know you and find out what wonderful people they really are. It's not easy in this system that demands so much of our time and energy, leaving us with fatigue at the end of the workday. But it does come down to our priorities for what's really important. It's about the very meaning of our lives - and theirs.

~ National news ~

Nepali national among soldiers killed in Afghanistan

One of the soldiers killed in Helmand province of Afghanistan Tuesday was a Nepali national working for the British Army, NATO has confirmed.

Three soldiers with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) were killed when an Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier opened fire at them at a security base shared by ANA and ISAF in the southern province of Helmand.

Issuing a press statement Tuesday, NATO said, three ISAF service members died following an attack in southern Afghanistan today.

Two of the deceased soldiers were British nationals and one was a Nepali national, NATO spokesperson said.

NATO has not revealed the identity of the killed soldiers. Meanwhile, the British Embassy in Kathmandu has expressed grief over the deaths. Issuing a press statement Wednesday, the embassy said, "It is with sadness that the British Embassy announces the death of a Gurkha and two British soldiers, serving with the 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles in Afghanistan, early on Tuesday morning, 13 July 2010.

22 parties take big three to task for failing to reach consensus

A meeting of 22 smaller parties Tuesday passed a 'condemnation note' against the major three - Unified CPN (Maolist), Nepali Congress (NC) and CPN-UML - for their failure to reach a consensus in the process of forming the new government within the two deadlines given by the president.

According to Keshab Mainali, chairman of Chure Bhawar Rastriya Ekta Party, the 22 parties passed condemnation proposal against major three parties for not being able to narrow down their differences for the sake of consensus.

"We agreed that the major three parties are responsible for creating the present political turmoil by lingering the remaining tasks of peace process and constitution writing," he explained, emerging out of meeting.

22-party meeting held at the parliamentary party office of Terai Madhesh Loktantrik Party (TMLP) in Singha Durbar also concluded that major parties were taking statute drafting for granted and that they were involving in a nasty tug of war over the leadership of the new government.

According to Mainali, the fringe parties also decided to urge NC, UML and UCPN-M to continue efforts for consensus to install a new government at the earliest possible time.

Current FY sees completion of just two hydro projects

The current fiscal year (FY) saw the completion of only two hydro projects in the country.

According to the Economic Survey released by the government, only Patikhola (0.996 MW) and Seti Second (0.979 MW) were completed in this year.

The supply of electricity is not in tandem with its fast increasing demand, thus the country has long been reeling under the yoke of power outage.

During the last FY, the number of customers had risen by 10 percent to reach 1,677,000 while in this FY the number of the same increased by 12 percent to surge to 1,879,000.

If the supply continues to fall short of the demand, the country will be bound to face the load-shedding of more than 16 hours a day.

As per the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), the supply of power is 70 percent less in the peak period of the demand.

The two hydropower projects completed this year belong to the private sector.

The survey poignantly states that not a single project was commenced by the government in this year. Similarly, no project under construction saw the light of the day during the period.

The coming FY will see the completion as well as power generation from projects like Hewa (5.4 MW), Siuri (5 MW), Aankhukhola (7 MW), Maikhola (2.4 MW) and Lower Piltuwa (0.99 MW). All these hydro ventures are being undertaken by the private sector.

In this FY, the consumption of electricity by the industrial sector, households, commercial sector and other areas is expected to stand at 38.10 percent, 41.70 percent, 6.66 percent and 13.44 percent respectively.

Meanwhile, the government is all set to develop the country's oldest Farping Power Plant (FPP) into a 'Hydroelectricity Museum' and promote it as a tourist spot. Installed in 1911 at Farping of Kathmandu, this project coined the Nepalese history of electricity generation with a rated capacity of 500 kW.

NEA last month celebrated the 100th year of power generation in Nepal keeping in view the first energy produced from FPP.

समानता, स्वतन्त्रता र न्यायको लागि
आफ्नो अधिकारप्रति सजग र सचेत
होऔं ।



नेपाल सरकार

सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय

सूचना विभाग

Region:

Legal aspects of Sino-Pak nuclear deal

Dr. Raja Muhammad Khan

Upon his arrival at Toronto, to attend the G 20 moot, the Indian Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh sought a clarification from Pakistan regarding the Sino-Pak Nuclear Deal. Being a sovereign State, Pakistan rejected the demand for the clarification. The Foreign Office spokesperson, Mr. Abdul Basit retorted the statement by saying that, "Sino-Pak nuclear deal is for peaceful purposes and no country should have any objection. International community knows Pakistan is facing terrorism and energy crises. Nuclear deal with China is crucial to the economic development of Pakistan." Earlier United States has also sought similar clarifications from Pakistan and China, but those were rejected by both countries, being prejudiced in nature.

Nevertheless, in spite of scrappy misperceptions, China has elucidated 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 is '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. Chinese Foreign Ministry has amply clarified in a news briefing that, "the civilian nuclear cooperation between China and Pakistan is in line with each side's international obligations. It is for peaceful purposes, and is under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

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". The states objecting the deal perhaps overlook the fact that, Pak-China Nuclear Deal was concluded in 1986, once 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 3/4th progresses had already been made on the deal between Pakistan and China. Therefore, neither of the two is applicable in case of this deal. However, if US pressurize China to follow the current rules of the NSG, even-then, there is precedence available in the form of 'Indo-US Nuclear Deal-2005', later finalized in 2008. The agreement provides the sound basis for opening a door for such like deal in the future too. Indeed, after setting precedence by itself, there should have been no legal and moral grounds for the US or its strategic ally, India to object the Sino-Pak Nuclear Deal.

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 Shahbaz

Yaquub 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 and origin of NSG, it is worth mentioning that, 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. NSG was created in 1975, to regulate and standardize the nuclear trade, in reaction to Indian misuse of nuclear material. Legally, the creation of NSG is not governed through an international treaty, but is an international cartel of nuclear technology suppliers. On September 6, 2008, the NSG granted a waiver to India, allowing it to have civil nuclear technology and nuclear fuel from other countries. With these concessions, India became the only country having the nuclear weapons, which was non-signatory to NPT, but allowed to undertake the nuclear trade with rest of the world. The waiver allowed India, "both trigger list and dual dual-use items (including technology), waiving the full-scope safeguards requirements of the NSG guidelines." It also allowed India for bi-lateral agreements and regular consultations. Now the question arise, if India, the primary nuclear proliferators, could be given such a concession by the NSG, why Pakistan be deprived from it.

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.

Unfortunately, because of its being the sole super power, both IAEA and NSG were unable to sustain the US pressure for easing their rules 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. To limit this all, there is a requirement that India should establish a Civil Nuclear Liability Regime. Since the damages caused by the Bhopal accident have not diminished fully, therefore, human right activists and labour organizations are likely to react very seriously.

The question arises that why Pakistan should be deprived of such a deal, once it is in the dire need of energy. Its industry is dying for the want of energy. Electricity is available to less than 50% of its over 170 million population. In spite of a very poor record of accomplishment of its nuclear energy usage, did Pakistan or Pakistani intellectuals have ever objected its nuclear deal with a number of other countries. India concluded the biggest nuclear agreement with the US in 2005, through Indo-US Nuclear Deal. Through this deal, it would have enormous nuclear facilities for the civil purposes and its current reactors and nuclear material would remain dedicated for the nuclear weapons.

Apart from the Indo-US Nuclear Deal, in December 2009, India clinched a historic civil nuclear deal with the Russian Federation. The deal aimed at ensuring the transfer of nuclear technology and an uninterrupted supply of nuclear fuel to the Indian nuclear reactors. Under the deal, Russian Federation will set up four nuclear reactors in Kudankulam area of Tamil Nadu State and one in the West Bengal area. This deal is unique in the sense that, Russia would not stop the supply of nuclear fuel and material, even if India opts for the conduct of future nuclear tests. In the case of 123 agreements, US has specified that in the event of any new nuclear test by India, nuclear cooperation will be scrapped. Besides, nuclear deal, in December 2009, India and Russia also concluded a 10 years military and technological cooperation agreements, commencing from 2011. These agreements would help in enhancing the operational capability of Indian defence forces in the days to come.

More recently, India and Canada also concluded a nuclear deal, during the visit of Indian Premier to Canada on May 27, 2010. According to deal, Canada will assist India in the establishment of nuclear reactors, as well as import of uranium to India. This deal also includes cooperation in the management of nuclear waste and radiation safety. As declared by Indian Premier, Dr. Manmohan Singh, that the deal "breaks new grounds in the history of bilateral cooperation in the sector and committed themselves to the ratification of the agreement and completion of all remaining steps necessary to ensure its early implementation". In a joint statement issued after the meet, the leaders also underscored the potential for mutually beneficial civil nuclear cooperation and trade. With these worldwide nuclear deals in its credit, how can India point a finger on Pakistan for a very smaller deal of two nuclear reactors with China?

In the wording of Indian Defence analyst, C. Raja Mohan, India has serious reservations against the Sino-Pak Civil Nuclear Deal. India has already communicated these

reservations to the China through its diplomatic channels. Indian establishment even links the routine visit of General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani with the deal. After having gone through most of the Indian literature, reports of their think tanks and analysts, it appears to me as if they all have a unanimous view point that China should not strike a civil nuclear deal with Pakistan to fulfil its energy needs. This is the limit of a narrow-mindedness of a nation of 1.3 billion. They cannot accept their smaller neighbours like Pakistan to live with ease and in opulence. If this is the state of minds of the Indian intellectuals, one can easily reach out the mental state of its political leadership, who are elected to reach the assemblies on the anti-Pakistan slogan and promotion of Hinduism in India and its export to rest of the South Asian countries.

As far as the US is concerned, it otherwise cannot afford to object this deal for a long, 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 losing 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?

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?

However, in spite of Indo-US pressures and a propaganda campaign by Indian and Western media on the Sino-Pak Nuclear Deal, there has been no reaction on the Sino-Pak Nuclear Deal, in plenary meeting of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) held in New Zealand towards the end of June 2010. This is a clear indication of the fact that, NSG is well aware of the legality of the deal and heed no attention to the uncalled for propaganda by some of the global actors. Indeed, the major global powers have a responsibility in this regard. They must realise that, their discriminatory policies are promoting negative impacts at the international level; therefore, they need to adopt the even-handed approach while dealing with the South Asian nuclear-armed rivals.

New horizon of friendship

Ali Sukhanver

UN is simply the care-taker of the US' interests in the world; it is the most common comment on the working of the UN. All time supporting US strategies and policies, the UN is continuously losing its credibility and repute. Particularly most of the countries in the South-Asian region are of the opinion that they must stop looking towards this world organization for the solution of their internal and external problems.

The prejudice attitude of the UN has compelled various countries to search for their new friends and sympathizers which could be helpful and supportive to them at every crucial juncture. As a result of this chauvinistic behaviour of the UN, we can find new formations and new groups of countries emerging out of this dismal situation. It is nothing but the consequences of the narrow-minded approach of the UN that today Pakistan, Iran and China are painting a new picture with the colours of closeness and friendship based on needs and requirements. Iran is providing natural gas to Pakistan and China is enhancing its nuclear ability; simply a relationship based on caring and kindness. As a result of these favours showered on Pakistan, it would become very easy for Pakistan to release itself from the cruel clutches of the US dependence. If the UN loses its importance, the world is likely to be divided and sub-divided into smaller groups and fragments. The situation would lead to the 3rd world-war in case there increases a clash of interests at a larger scale. The UN is supposed to play an unprejudiced role acceptable to all. It must speak for all, for Israel and Iran, for India and Pakistan and surely for the people of Kashmir and those of Palestine. UN has shown its eagerness in imposing sanctions on Iran but it never thought of the people of Gaza who are passing through the worst phase of their life.

As far as the new tri-angle of relationship between Pakistan, Iran and China is concerned, it would be very unjust if we don't give the credit of this growing cordiality to the USA because it is none but the USA which has made these three countries realize the need of getting closer. The main leading factor which pushed these countries closer to one another is the issue of the nuclear energy. Different attempts to crush the Iranian nuclear program, a lot of allegations and suggestions to put a check on the nuclear research work of Pakistan and different objections laid on the Chinese nuclear behaviour compelled these countries to think of tomorrow. The US-India civil nuclear deal added salt to injury and ultimately these countries came to the conclusion that they are sailing in the same boat in a very stormy and unfriendly ocean.

In the last week of the previous month the Washington Post reported with reference to the Obama administration that USA has decided to object to the Sino-Pak civilian nuclear deal at different forums. According to the details of this deal, china has planned to establish two atomic reactors in Pakistan. The US experts say that the deal appears to be violating international guidelines forbidding nuclear exports to countries that have not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or do not have international safeguards on reactors. The Obama administration was very much hopeful to raise successfully its objections regarding this deal in the 46-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) meeting which was held in the last week of June in New Zealand. Unfortunately the US expectations could not come up to the mark because China categorically rejected any kind of objection in this regard considering it interference in its internal affairs. Moreover China expressed its resentment over the US objections by saying that a country like US has no right to criticize the Sino-Pak nuclear deal because it has itself finalized the same kind of deal with India a few years back. According to the media reports such stern attitude of China has widened more the already widening distances between China and USA. By raising objections on the Sino-Pak civil nuclear deal, USA has tried to kill two birds with one stone. On one hand it has tried to please India and on the other hand attempted to exert a pressure on China showing it that the USA is keeping an eye of check on every move made by it.

Same is the case with Iran. The US has ever been trying to pressurize Iran with reference to its nuclear program. According to the New York Times, President Obama signed into law new unilateral American sanctions on Iran that go beyond the penalties imposed by the United Nations last month as he tries to escalate the pressure on Tehran to halt its nuclear enrichment program. The new law, passed by Congress on overwhelmingly bipartisan votes tries to further restrict investment in Iran's energy sector and cut off financing for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps that oversees nuclear and missile programs. It also cracks down on federal contractors that do business with Iran. The New York Time reports the statement of Mr Obama at the bill-signing ceremony in the East Room, "With these sanctions, along with others, we are striking at the heart of the Iranian government's ability to fund and develop its nuclear program. We're showing the Iranian government that its actions have consequences. And if it persists, the pressure will continue to mount, and its isolation will continue to deepen." The US sanctions on Iranian nuclear program are being taken as a continuation to the sanctions imposed on Iran by the UN on 8th of June, 2010.

As a result of these sanctions, Iran is likely to face serious consequences. These sanctions would directly affect the economic fiber of Iran including its energy infrastructure which is already badly in need of investment. According to the western media, The US sanctions against Iran include blacklisting companies like the Post Bank of Iran, the engineering firm Javedan Mehr Toos and five entities claimed to be fronts for Iran's largest shipping company. American companies are prohibited from doing business with designated Iranian companies and individuals and they are warned that their assets in US would be frozen if they do otherwise.

The writer is defence, strategic affairs analyst.



The Future of the U.S.-Japan alliance

The United States and Japan commemorated the 50th anniversary of their security alliance last month with an uneasy sense of ambivalence. On the one hand, the sheer fact that the alliance, firmly rooted in the common interests and shared values of both countries, has persisted for so long is reason enough to celebrate. The U.S. and Japan, in addition to being democracies, are the world's top two economies and two of the largest funders of multilateral institutions. They share a long list of common objectives, from ensuring that China's rise is peaceful and deterring a nuclear North Korea to policing global sea lanes and addressing issues like climate change and human rights.

The alliance is also vital for both countries, albeit for different reasons. For Japan, the alliance has been essential to its security posture, since no other Japanese ally is committed to defending the island country in the event of an armed attack. For the United States, it has provided a means to maintain U.S. forward bases in Japan, both to deter wider regional crises and for operational use in the event that one does arise. The alliance has also allowed the U.S. to maintain a close relationship with a country not only at the heart of Asian security issues, but one that has also made significant contributions to global security, from reconstruction in Afghanistan to aid during the 2004 Asian tsunami to anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden.

Yet several trends in Japanese politics have also added strains to the alliance. These tensions became evident in the months after the

Prashanth Parameswaran

Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) historic election victory last year, which ended the five-decade long hegemony of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). The problem is not that the DPJ's victory illustrates uncertainty in Japan about the validity of the U.S.-Japan alliance, or about the value of Japan's broader relationship with the United States. As Michael Green pointed out, the 2009 election was primarily about domestic political and economic reform, rather than foreign or defense policy. Public opinion polls and surveys in Japan show historically high support for the alliance, and continued uneasiness about China and North Korea.

The issue is simply that political changes in Japan may make it much more difficult for Washington and Tokyo to make necessary adjustments in the relationship, which has been periodically redefined in the interest of both parties since the 1960s. But with four prime ministers in the past five years, Japan has had a recent shortage of strong leaders able to reshape the alliance in the way that Ryutaro Hashimoto did in the 1990s or Junichiro Koizumi did in the early 21st century. Other developing trends in Japan, such as the increasing power of local governments over the central government or the DPJ's proposed plan to put politicians -- instead of experienced bureaucrats -- in charge of foreign policy issues, can also complicate decision-making, as was seen with the Futenma base issue. Japan also faces daunting demographic challenges in the upcoming decades that could further

undermine its economic growth, leading some to now wonder whether the country might turn inward in response.

These challenges are by no means inevitable or insurmountable, and some of them will sort themselves out as Japan evolves. For all its strains, uncertainty about China, North Korea and transnational threats will probably continue to drive cooperation between Washington and Tokyo in the near future. Yet even if Japanese politics remain in a state of flux, there are some tangible steps that the United States and Japan can take now in order to navigate through the challenges ahead.

Much of the focus should be on overcoming the perception that the alliance is "structurally strong but operationally weak," as Yoichi Funabashi, the editor-in-chief of Japanese daily Asahi Shimbun, put it at a recent Center for a New American Security conference. Japan currently ranks 149th in the world in terms of military expenditures as a percentage of GDP, despite repeated North Korean provocations and China's blistering military modernization. Even if the country's consensus 1 percent ceiling prevents dramatic increases in defense spending, Tokyo can maximize scarce resources focusing on procurement reform, and ease political constraints by passing fresh defense legislation that gives it more latitude in deploying its Self-Defense Forces. Meanwhile, the United States should lead efforts to conduct an overall bilateral threat assessment and strengthen discussions on extended deterrence,

in order to reaffirm the importance of the alliance and to reassure Japan about its security concerns.

Yet while traditional security gets much of the press, it is only one part of a complex and deep bilateral relationship. More focus must be placed in other spheres like development cooperation, climate change and human security, where Japan can play a sustained and significant leadership role. More discussion is also needed about how both countries can help shape the emerging regional architecture in Asia, both bilaterally as well as with India, Australia and key ASEAN countries. Finally, equal attention needs to be given to revitalizing bilateral economic cooperation, including moving towards an eventual bilateral free-trade agreement, as Japan hands Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye have counseled.

Fifty years into the U.S.-Japan alliance, policymakers in Washington and Tokyo can take comfort in the fact that both countries have sustained such a deep and broad bilateral relationship, one that has played a crucial role in preserving peace and stability in Asia. But the two sides must not waver even in the face of current and future political and economic uncertainties. The United States must continue to have a robust Asia policy with the U.S.-Japan alliance at its core, and Japan should be persistent in its efforts to realize the full potential of its regional and global contributions and leadership. To expect anything less would be to deny Asia and the world the advantages of arguably one of the most important and successful bilateral relationships in history.

~ News ~

'Advance budget is detrimental to the economic well-being'

The business community and economists have on Tuesday warned that the failure to come up with a full-fledged budget will ultimately debilitate the country's overall economic growth.

While speaking at an interaction on 'Delay in Budget and its Impact in Country's Economy', organised jointly by Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and Society of Economic Journalists of Nepal (SEJON) on Tuesday, economists said that the concept of advance budget would only widen existing trade deficit, stifle revenue mobilisation and hamstring the investment plans of the private sector.

Stating the advance budget is too meagre to address the burning economic issues, economist Dr Biswombar Pyakurel accused the political leadership of grossly overlooking the economic development of the country.

This is the second time in three years that a full-fledged budget has been delayed.

Economist Dilli Raj Khanal said as the country is already reeling under the huge balance of payment deficit and decline in foreign currency reserves, delay in full-fledged budget would only deepen the economic crisis.

Kush Kumar Joshi, president of the FNCCI, said the absence of concrete programme and policy of the government in the special budget has depleted the confidence of the private sector regarding investment.

"Investors are in a dilemma whether to invest or not as there is no concrete programme and policy of the government in the special budget," Joshi said adding that trade deficit would further widen in the next fiscal year.

"The government has completely ignored the demand on the part of the private sector to bring stimulus packages to address the growing trade deficit issue, industrial insecurity and load-shedding," added Joshi.

On the same occasion, finance secretary Rameshwar Khanal said that delay in budget announcement will discourage both domestic and international investors, and without investment there cannot have economic growth.

He added that the lack of a full-fledged budget will affect the government's plan to provide incentives and facilities to production and agriculture sector for import substitution and accomplishing the three-year plans.

Half the paddy fields in Midwestern region barren

More than half the land used for rice plantation in Midwestern region has remained barren due to the lack of enough rains and irrigation facilities.

Most farmers in the Midwestern districts depend on monsoon rains for rice plantation as only small amounts of land have access to irrigation. Almost all the land except those which have irrigation facilities is barren till mid-July.

In the previous years, farmers used to complete rice plantation by mid-July.

According to Agriculture Development Officer Kamalkant Jha, only 15 percent of the land used for rice plantation has been planted so far. Rice is planted in about 35,000 hectares of land in the district.

Likewise, only 14,000 hectares out of 45,000 hectares used for rice plantation in Bardia have been planted. Only the fields in 11 VDCs of Rajapur area that have access to irrigation have been planted.

Agriculture officer in Dang said, plantation has taken place in only 15,000 hectares out of 38,000 used for rice plantation.

Monsoon has just started. Plantation in most of the land is yet to start, said agriculture development officer Bhanu Bhakta Bhattarai.

The situation in the hilly districts including of the region including Jajarkot, Salyan, Rukum and Surkhet is not different. Most of the farmers, who depend on monsoon rains for rice plantation, haven't started rice plantation as mid-July.

Monsoon started late in the country this year. Generally monsoon used to start towards the end of June in the previous years. However, it has not become fully active even in mid-July this year.

Price of rice continues to increase

The price of the rice has increased by some Rs. 3 to 10 per kg with the beginning of monsoon season this year as well, reported quoting rice traders.

According to Nepal Retailers' Association (NRA) and Small Traders' Association (STA), the price of the rice has skyrocketed within the period of one month.

Purusottam Manandhar, vice-president of STA said that the price has surprisingly increased in Ashar while the price was favorable in Jetha month.

During the month of Jetha, the price of the Sona Mansuli rice was Rs. 800 per 30 kg while it has increased to stand at Rs. 1,125 this month.

Whereas the price of the Mansuli has also increased to stand at Rs. 1,225 per 25 kg from the earlier Rs. 1,065.

The price of the rice has been continuously increasing with each passing day, said Manandhar. He said that since no one has yet protested the hike in the price of the rice, the price has been skyrocketing daily.

Pabitra Manandhar, president of NRA said that the rice imports from India has stopped which has caused increase in the price of the rice in Nepal. Before there used to be illegal imports of rice from India but now due to the strictness in the border areas, the trend has stopped to a great extent, he added.

According to the government records, the price of the rice has just slightly increased during the 10 months till Baisakh. The price of the rice in the local market was Rs. 31.50 per kg which has increased to Rs. 35 in Baisakh.

Friendly "siege of China"? U.S. submarines reach Asian ports

Three of the largest submarines of the US Seventh Fleet surfaced in Asia-Pacific ports last week, the South China Morning Post reported Monday.

The appearance of the USS Michigan in Pusan, South Korea, the USS Ohio in Subic Bay, the Philippines, and the USS Florida in the strategic Indian Ocean outpost of Diego Garcia was a show of force not seen since the end of the Cold War, the paper said, adding that the position of those three ports looks like a siege of China.

The report came as the US and South Korea announced early June a joint military exercise in the Yellow Sea amid mounting tension on the Korean Peninsula.

On June 28, South Korea

Li Jing

postponed the anti-submarine drill, originally planned to run last month, to July, to ensure US attendance, globalbasearch.ca reported.

Beijing has objected to the proposed war game that may involve US carriers. General Ma Xiaofan, deputy chief of general staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), said that the location of the drill is very close to China's territorial waters.

Xu Guangyu, a senior researcher at the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, told the Global Times that the alleged military operation would not only escalate tension between the two Koreas, but also exert negative influence on Sino-

US military relations.

"The joint military drill is not an irreplaceable measure for Washington to support Seoul on punishing Pyongyang over the alleged torpedoing of the warship Cheonan," he said.

"China's position on the Yellow Sea issue demonstrates its resolution to safeguard national rights and interests," said Xu Guangqian, a military strategist at the PLA Academy of Military Sciences. "It also reflects that China is increasingly aware of the fact that its strategic space has confronted threats from other countries."

Meanwhile, the US strengthened its relations with other allied countries in

the Pacific region by conducting another war game.

The Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC 2010), which is hosted and managed by the US Navy, launched June 23 as ships, aircraft and military personnel from 14 nations poured into Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to participate, suite101.com reported.

The exercises will be conducted until August 1.

Meanwhile, Russia's Vostok-2010 military exercises in Siberia and the country's far east kicked off June 29 and will continue until July 8.

Analysts suggest that the concentration of military drills at the current time is not just a coincidence, but represents the uneasiness of some regional powers amid the rise of China.

the woes.

It should be noted that the garment exports to the US dropped to zero level last month basically because of political disorder.

The industrial contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) has reduced to seven percent from 11 percent. The alarming downturn in labour intensive ventures amounts to aggravation of the already vicious unemployment problem.

The inflow of remittance, which has largely been helping to buoy up the shaky economy, has also shrunk in the recent days.

"If these anomalies go unchecked, the economic meltdown is unavoidable," caution experts.

Who is...

The ruling parties were also utterly unhappy over the repeated incidents of the Maoist combatants being spotted with UN tagged weapons in the name of providing security to the Maoist leaders.

Many chose to term the ceaseless chilly relations between the ruling coalition and the UNMIN as a manifestation of the desire of India to see the early exit of India.

It does not need a specific prove to state that the South Block wants its long standing hegemony in Nepali politics to continue without any interruption from any international body like UN. And, the repeated onset of serious incongruities

between the government and the UNMIN has much to do with this fact," believe some experts.

Maoists ...

largest party, sincerely committed that they would abide by the rule of law. Otherwise, the price it has to pay is sure to be unbearably high.

The party must either disown Kham publicly or cooperate with the law enforcement authorities to book him.

In major robbery cases, ex-Maoists combatants as well as those security personnel who have already left their job have been found to be involved.

That's why, while deciding on the integration and rehabilitation process of the Maoists' ex-combatants, this issue

must not be overlooked.

As the ex-fighters are largely cut off from the society, their rehabilitation in the society should be carried out in way that prevents them from indulging in any violent activities and crimes. The failure to do so amounts to inviting a new social disorder.

Economy in...

But, they failed severely in this regard thanks to political stalemate that has been stifling the country's potentials to prosper.

When the country industrial sector has bled to anemic owing to power outage, frequent strikes, labour dispute and disruption of distribution channels, the budgetary delay is only adding to



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International :

Harsh new US penalties against Iran

US President Barack Obama signed into law last Thursday Congressional legislation against Iran that has the potential to heighten tensions, not only with Tehran, but America's European and Asia rivals.

The legislation broadly targets foreign banks and corporations doing business in Iran and sets out unilateral US penalties against those that do not fall into line. Companies could be denied access to the US Export-Import Bank, restricting their ability to sell into the US market, or denied US government contracts.

The Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act requires the US Treasury Department to bar access to the American financial system to any foreign bank conducting transactions with Iranian entities blacklisted by the UN or the US government. The list includes some major Iranian banks, the Iranian energy sector, and businesses associated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

The legislation provocatively targets foreign companies selling refined petroleum products, such as gasoline and diesel, to Iran, including producers, insurers and those involved in transportation. While Iran has huge reserves of oil, its energy infrastructure and refining capacity are badly rundown due to a lack of investment, forcing the importation of gasoline.

Washington has accused Tehran of seeking to build nuclear weapons. Last month the US and its European allies pushed a fourth resolution through the UN Security Council, imposing new penalties on Tehran over its refusal to shut down its uranium enrichment facilities and halt the construction of a heavy water research reactor. Following the UN resolution, the European Union (EU) foreshadowed further tough sanctions against Iran, including a ban on investment in its energy sector.

The Iranian regime has repeatedly

Peter Symonds

denied it has any plans to build nuclear weapons, and denounced the UN and US sanctions as illegal. Under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which Iran has signed, countries have the right to develop any aspect of the nuclear fuel cycle, including uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing, for peaceful purposes. Iranian nuclear facilities, including the Natanz uranium enrichment plant, are subject to regular International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections, which include a stock take of enriched uranium to ensure it is not used for military purposes.

The US legislation goes far further than the proposed EU sanctions and the UN resolutions, to which Russia and China only reluctantly agreed under pressure from Washington. Any significant restriction of the sale of refined petroleum products to Iran could impact heavily on its economy. Although Tehran has been building up its strategic reserves and is cutting back on imports, Iran still buys an estimated 25-30 percent of its gasoline needs on the international market.

The ramifications of the laws are even wider. Democrat congressman Ron Klein told the Wall Street Journal: "Foreign companies are going to have to make a choice: Do they want to do business with us or with the Iranians?" By threatening to penalise foreign banks and companies for activities that are not banned under UN resolutions, the law will inevitably fuel international resentment and intensify frictions.

Last week the French oil company Total ended sales of gasoline to Iran and Spain's Repsol pulled out of a development contract with Royal Dutch Shell for Iran's South Pars gas field. Total CEO Christophe de Margerie told an economic forum: "We do not think an embargo on the delivery of petrol products is a good way to settle differences of a political nature." He

complained that "too many things are politicised these days".

In the US, the National Foreign Trade Council and the US Engage alliance of companies and associations also raised concerns, particularly over possible penalties against US parent companies for violations by their foreign subsidiaries. In a press statement, council president Bill Reinsch warned: "We are deeply concerned about the timing of this legislation and its unintended consequences for legitimate global commerce."

Total is just the latest company to pull out of gasoline sales to Iran. Over the past six months, Russia's LUKOIL, India's Reliance Industries, Malaysia's Petronas, Royal Dutch Shell and the Swiss firm Glencore, each announced a halt to sales. At the same time, several major Chinese corporations, including the state-owned China National Petroleum Corp and China Petroleum & Chemical Corp, reportedly increased their sales to Iran earlier this year.

Under the legislation, the US administration can waive penalties on countries, such as China, that backed the UN resolution against Iran. If Obama look action against Chinese oil companies, tensions would escalate between Washington and Beijing, which only agreed to support the latest UN sanctions if Iran's energy sector were excluded. China imports roughly 15 percent of its crude oil from Iran and has signed several major agreements to develop energy projects there.

The new US sanctions point to the motivations underlying Washington's continuing threats and provocations against Iran. American banks and corporations will be largely unaffected, as Washington has effectively blockaded Iran economically for more than three decades following the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. But the penalties will impact on US rivals, including close US allies such as

Germany and Japan, that have substantial economic interests in Iran.

The Wall Street Journal pointed out last Thursday: "Among those that could face legal challenges and fines are Japan's Big Three Banks-Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc., Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group and Mizuho Financial Group Inc- as well as European firms such as Commerzbank Bank AB and Deutsche Bank AG, all of whom have businesses inside Iran." Japan's oil and gas producer Inpex Corp also has significant interests, including a 10 percent stake in the Azadegan oil field in southwestern Iran.

Iran not only has huge oil and gas reserves but is strategically located between the key regions of the Middle East and Central Asia. The nuclear issue is simply a convenient pretext for Washington to apply pressure in a bid to fashion a regime in Tehran that is more conducive to US ambitions for regional domination. The Obama administration's overt support for the oppositional Green movement inside Iran, following last year's presidential poll, had the same aim.

There is a dangerous logic to US attempts to choke off gasoline supplies to Iran. As several articles in the US press have pointed out, even if major foreign corporations pull out of the gasoline trade with Iran, Tehran will still have access to refined petroleum products at a price-through various black markets operating in the Persian Gulf. If financial penalties fail to stop gasoline supplies and bring the Iranian economy to its knees, a clamor in the US for a military blockade is certain to intensify.

Like his predecessor Bush, President Obama has repeatedly refused to rule out military action against Iran, including air strikes against its nuclear facilities. Any attempt to enforce an economic blockade of Iran through military force-regarded internationally as an act of war-would create an explosive situation in the Persian Gulf.

Afghanistan : The "Graveyard of Empires"

By Felicity Arbuthnot

"He uses his folly like a stalking-horse,
And under the presentation of that,
He shoots his wit."

("As You Like It", William Shakespeare, 1564-1616.)

As Britain's new Prime Minister struggles with reality and attempts to dress abject defeat up as resounding success - and whilst ordering the troops to leave Sangin, delusionally calls it: "Consolidation", a very brief return to the whole woeful Afghan disaster seems timely. As Iraq, a course embarked on blindly by his predecessor Charles Anthony Lynton Blair, in blind, puppy-like determination to obey His Master's Voice.

It seems some serious lobar affliction strikes those who enter No 10 Downing Street. But not since its previous incumbent stated: "I'm a pretty straightforward sort of guy", has such a departure from reality occurred as David Cameron declaring today: "Any suggestion that British troops have been beaten in Sangin and are retreating with their tails between their legs, is not just wrong, it's disgusting."

Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. In another (nineteenth century) British folly in Afghanistan (where they again met their match in Sangin, in spite of: "better guns, better communications, better everything...") Sir Lepel Griffin, wrote to The Times:

"This policy consists in spending a quarter of a million annually on a post of defence and observation which defends and observes nothing, and on the maintenance of a road which leads nowhere".

How history repeats

On the death of the three hundredth British soldier, Britain's new boy Prime Minister opined:

"The truth is that we are there because the Afghans are not yet ready to keep their own country safe... That's why we have to be there. But as soon as they are able to take care of security... that is when we can leave." Here, on planet earth, they seem to be doing pretty well at defeating invaders in "their own country."

General McChrystal is sacked, General Petraeus has fainted, David Cameron's flight was diverted on his last visit to Afghanistan, due to the base he was going to visit being under sustained attack. He turned tail, so to speak, in mid-air and fled, whilst committing others to potential death sentences.

The sign at the entrance to the British base at Sangin reads: "Welcome to Sanginrad." The name of David Loy's excellent new book on Afghanistan, from which the Lepel Griffin quote is taken, is: "Butcher and Bolt." A recent newspaper heading read: "We can beat something in Afghanistan - a retreat."

Tony Blair has failed to cover up one monumental folly, and may yet be charged with war crimes. International law experts, worldwide, are working on it.

David Cameron should take heed and be big enough not to compound another. Defeat in an invasion which should never have been undertaken or enjoyed, is writ large.

For politicians to continue to ignore that, is to - willfully - have uncounted more British, "coalition" and Afghan deaths, more grief and indeed more global hate, generating, maybe, more bombs on home soil (subway, airport, iconic building) haunt their tenure, retirement and, indeed, the rest of their lives.

Finding the exit in Afghanistan

In the two weeks since Gen. David Petraeus was nominated to be the new commander for U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan, continuity has been the dominant theme in describing what his replacement of ousted Gen. Stanley McChrystal represents. After all, Petraeus literally wrote the book on U.S. counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine, which McChrystal tried to apply in Afghanistan over the past year. It only seems natural to expect that Petraeus will maintain the same approach.

But continuity is the worst possible option for U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, because it would mean maintaining a strategy that appears increasingly unlikely to succeed. Instead, President Barack Obama should use the change in command to modify his goal, from "winning" the war in Afghanistan to laying the political and military groundwork for withdrawal.

Failure to clearly identify which of these two paths would define the U.S. mission has been perhaps the Obama administration's greatest strategic failing in Afghanistan.

In March 2009, Obama declared that his goal in Afghanistan was to defeat, dismantle and disrupt al-Qaida, and pointedly noted that "dictating" Afghanistan's future was not in the cards. But McChrystal's strategy, laid out only months later, was predicated not only on protecting the Afghan people, but also on providing "a secure environment allowing good government and economic development to undercut the causes and advocates of insurgency."

Even after the administration's lengthy Afghanistan review last fall, the gap between Obama's stated goal and

Michael A. Cohen

McChrystal's ambitious strategy remained unresolved. The president's 18-month timeline to begin drawing down U.S. troops and his order to McChrystal not to occupy territory that couldn't be turned over to Afghan security forces by June 2011 suggested a more minimal goal of stabilizing Afghanistan and speeding the path toward withdrawal. But McChrystal's military forays into Taliban-controlled and Pashtun-dominated southern and eastern Afghanistan and his emphasis on U.S.-led nation-building spoke to a different aspiration.

Indeed, under McChrystal, the U.S. and NATO mission was to both out-fight and out-govern the Taliban - in short, to "win" in Afghanistan. But victory has not been in the cards in Afghanistan for a very long time. With polling indicating that Americans are soured on both the war and Obama's stewardship of it, the focus must shift to protecting U.S. interests while leaving Afghanistan as stable as possible after our withdrawal.

If this is indeed the goal moving forward, Petraeus might be the best man for the job. In Iraq, he showed himself to be a military leader willing to adapt to changing circumstances on the ground, rather than remaining slavishly wedded to military doctrine.

For example, in Afghanistan, McChrystal put in place highly restrictive rules of engagement that constrained the ability of coalition soldiers to call in airstrikes, or even shell targets, unless they were absolutely certain that no civilians were present. While consistent with the Army's field manual on counterinsurgency, the approach contrasted with the COIN tactics that

Petraeus applied in Iraq. As Pete Mansoor, Petraeus' executive officer in Iraq, noted recently, "hearts and minds had nothing to do" with counterinsurgency warfare there. Instead, the focus was on using the "stick" of military force - rather than the "carrot" of good governance - to separate insurgents from the population.

Indeed, in Iraq, the number of air sorties involving the use of munitions jumped from 229 in 2006 to more than 1400 after Petraeus took over command in 2007. The number of detainees rose by 50 percent between February and August 2007. And Iraqi civilians killed from air strikes went from 252 in 2006 to 943 in 2007. If fewer Iraqi civilians were being killed overall, that had more to do with increased ethnic enclaving in Baghdad and reduced militia violence than with changes in U.S. tactics.

In Afghanistan, while the number of civilians killed by U.S. soldiers has declined, roadside bombings, assassinations and suicide attacks have increased significantly. And many of these attacks are occurring where U.S. troops are located - Afghanistan's southern and eastern regions. Indeed, U.S. military operations have created the worst of both worlds: continued violence against Afghan civilians and no significant rollback of Taliban momentum. Paradoxically, if Petraeus relaxes U.S. rules of engagement in Afghanistan, civilians may find themselves at greater risk of being harmed by U.S. soldiers, but still safer overall. That could bring the conflict closer to a political resolution.

Obama would also do well to take a

page from Petraeus' past willingness to make deals with unsavory actors in pursuit of U.S. interests. In Iraq, the U.S. military joined forces with insurgents when the latter became willing to turn their guns on a common enemy. The same difficult decisions may become necessary in Afghanistan, particularly as the Karzai government increases its political outreach to various Taliban elements - like the Haqqani network, which maintains a loose affiliation with al-Qaida.

Indeed, accepting a political role for key Taliban leaders is perhaps the most important and overdue shift required in U.S. strategy. Recent statements by CIA Director Leon Panetta that the Taliban must be prepared to "surrender" their arms do not provide a genuine starting point for negotiations. The only red line that should matter to U.S. policymakers is that there be no al-Qaida sanctuary in Afghanistan. In addition, the U.S. should make clear that it is prepared to maintain a military presence in Afghanistan, albeit a small one, until the threat of a Taliban military takeover of the country has abated. Everything else should be left up to the Afghans themselves. Protecting U.S. interests and finding a way out, rather than crafting the perfect political deal, must be the overriding goal of U.S. policymakers.

With the change of military command, Obama has a unique opportunity to clarify U.S. goals for Afghanistan and put in place a strategy to end what has become America's longest war. The only road forward for U.S. policymakers is not one that ends in ticker-tape parades, but instead one that can lead us to the light at the end of the tunnel.

India rejects US sanctions on Iran

On Thursday, India and Iran began a two-day meeting aimed at increasing bilateral cooperation in the economic sector

US restrictions on investment by third countries in Iran's energy sector can have a direct and adverse impact on Indian companies and India's energy security, reported Prensa Latina.

On Thursday, India and Iran began a two-day meeting aimed at increasing bilateral cooperation in the economic sector, which can be considered as a challenge to the unilateral sanctions imposed by Washington to Tehran.

According to a press released issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting falls within the regular contacts scheduled by the Indian-Iranian Joint Commission and is headed by Iranian Minister for Economic Affairs and Finances Seyed Shamseddin Hosseini and Indian Foreign Minister S. M. Krishna.

Talks are being held a few days after New Delhi denounced the extra-territorial nature of the US unilateral sanctions on Iran for allegedly defying international norms about its atomic programme, suspected of developing atomic weapons.

"We are justifiably concerned about the extra-territorial nature of certain unilateral sanctions recently imposed by individual countries," said Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao.

Rao said "Iran is a country extremely important to India from the perspective of energy security" and an entrance door to the main markets of Central Asia.

On Friday, US President Barack Obama signed a bill imposing harsh sanctions on Iran that includes cutting off Iran's access to refined petroleum imports, including gasoline and jet fuel and bans US banks from doing business with foreign banks that provide services to the Revolutionary Guards. The bill will also deny companies that supply Iran with refined petroleum products access to US markets.

Threat to Russia? Ukraine-NATO Military Drills

Ukraine-NATO Sea Breeze military exercises will begin in Ukraine's Black Sea region later on Monday.

The land phase of the drills, which will focus on fighting sea piracy, will be held at a military training area in the Nikolayev region, while the sea drills will take place in northwestern Black Sea.

The exercises will be held until July 23. Ukraine will be represented by a naval infantry battalion and five Coast Guard vessels.

Sea Breeze drills have been conducted in Ukraine since 1997 and involve troops from NATO countries on rotation basis.

In 2009, the Ukrainian parliament defied then-President Viktor Yushchenko and refused to approve the exercises. This year, Ukrainian lawmakers voted in favor of the drills, which will see the participation of some 3,000 military personnel from at least 15 countries.

Ukraine will also host this year a series of other international military and peacekeeping exercises, including Ukrainian-U.S. Rapid Trident 2010, Ukrainian-Romanian Cossack Steppe 2010 and Ukrainian-Polish-Lithuanian-Canadian Maple Arch 2010.

Hariti Temple of Swayambhu

By Min Bahadur Shakya*

I. Introduction:

Anyone who visits Swayambhu Stupa in Kathmandu cannot miss the glorious Hariti Temple, a two story pagoda-style temple that houses the goddess Hariti, or Ajima. The whole temple glitters with gilded structures

provided by the generous charity of various donors out of deep faith and devotion to Hariti / Ajima. Just above the temple's entrance are three gilt brass toranas arranged in an array. The main torana depicts the Five Protectress deities of the Pancaraksa mandala. The two gilt roofs were supported by finely made struts and gilded metal plates which depict the sixteen offering goddesses (sodasa lasya pujadevi), interspersed between the gilt latticed windows below the struts.



The main entrance of the temple is flanked by two metal lions together with two Nepalese flags. Above the entrance of the temple are three brass torana depicting the Five protectress deities of Pancaraksa mandala. The two gilt roofs were supported by artistic tonals/struts and gold-gilded metal plates depicting 16 worshipping deities.

On the ground floor of the temple prayer wheels are fixed on railings to facilitate the devotees in rotating them. This contains the essence mantra of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara - "Om mani padme Hung.". Beneath the prayer wheels are a series of metal oil lamps surrounding the temple itself.

II. Importance of the deity:

Hariti / Ajima is worshipped as a protectress deity of Swayambhu. She can bestow powers (pacification: shanti, abundance: pausti, subjugation: vasi, accomplishment: Siddhi) upon devotees, counteract evil omens, exerts control over evil and can also punish those who desecrate Swayambhu Mahacaitya. Being a consort of Pancika, the Great Yaksha Jambhala, the deity of wealth, she can also eliminate the poverty of devotees who have faith in and devotion to her.

Her abode is said to be the Jewelled Base (ratnapitha) upon which Swayambhu Stupa was erected. This is mentioned in a ritual text used as for ritual offerings (New:chahayekug) to Hariti, which has the following hymn to the goddess:

*Ratnapithasthita devim
gauravamasahagrabham
isadvasita vadagnani namami
jagalmohinini*

*pancanam sataputranam
parivaramhotsavam
buddhasana sthita devim haratim
pranamamyaham.*

Furthermore, the scripture dedicated to Mahamayuri Devi, one of the Five Protectress Deities (Pancaraksa devi), speaks of Hariti thus: "She resides in the pavilion named Sarvatobhadravimana at the city of Suci Gandha in Pataliputra. Hariti celebrates a festival with her large



family consisting of 500 daughters and 500 sons-in-law. The demoness Hariti possesses tremendous miraculous power and divine strength, far outstripping any of the 1000 Yakshas in her family." Only five of these children are usually portrayed; they are considered to represent all the children. They are:

1. Dhana Bhaju: Carried on the right lap
2. Dhana Mayaju: Cradled in the left lap
3. Vansi Bhaju: Snuggled on the right lap
4. Vansi Mayaju: Snuggled on the left lap
5. Jilan Bhaju: Placed on the ground next to the lap

Wherever there is a painting or a sculpted image of Hariti, these five children are conspicuous.

Mother Hariti serves as a chief Dharma Protector of Swayambhu Mahacaitya. She also travels by air, from house to house, in the course of her duties. As such, local people have deep faith in her. This is proved by the growing pride of spirit-mediums in the present day. Some say the spirit-mediums are obsessed by Mother Hariti herself: some say she deputes one of her children, either Lata Bhaju or Dhanabhaju, to possess the mediums. We cannot dismiss this phenomenon as completely groundless if we understand the degree of faith and influence that Mother Hariti commands. Of course, some facts about Mother Hariti remain shrouded in mystery. For this reason, there has been no decrease in the number of people who believe in the awesome influence - real, demonstrable, or apparent - of Mother Hariti.

III. Iconography of the deity Hariti:

The deity Hariti is the consort of Pancika, the great Yaksha Jambhala. She has two robust breast to feed her numerous children. According to Pancaraksha Sutra, she had five hundred sons, five hundred daughters and five hundred sons-in-law. Yet she is generally seen with five children: two in her lap, one on her back, one under

her armpit and one near her legs. She is away depicted in sitting posture and seems to be very powerful within the yaksha community. She is regarded as the protectress of children as well as the Swayambhu region. Also regarded as a dakini, she visits different places and takes care of children under twelve years of age. She can bestow accomplishments, counteract evil omens, exerts control over evil and also can punish those who desecrate Swayambhu Mahacaitya (Stupa). Being a consort of Jambhala, the deity



of wealth, she can also eliminate the poverty of devotees who have faith in and devotion to her. Her abode is said to be Ratnapitha, i.e. the treasure of jewels over which Swayambhu Stupa was erected and stands as it is day.

IV. Hariti as a healing deity:

Local people call Hariti by different names. She is called sometimes :

1. Hariti Mother
2. Ajima
3. Mayju Deva
4. Harati Mahayakshini
5. Harati Vajrayakshini
6. Sitala Maju
7. Swayambhu Samraksika Dharmapali ('Protectress Deity stationed to protect Swayambhu')
8. Dhakvasikvama macapayasi ('Obsolutely Attached to Children')

She is sometimes called Ajimadya, i.e., Grandmother goddess or sometimes Sitalamaju, the deity of smallpox. Those who are afflicted with this disease generally go to Hariti temple to present a ritual offering in order to cure it. A few decades ago, when Kathmandu/Nepal was not yet declared as a smallpox free zone, people flocked to the Hariti temple to present their ritual offerings (New: Chahayekug) to effect an instant cure. For this they had to register their names a few weeks earlier to the officiating Buddhist priest, usually Buddhacharyas from Swayambhu region.

Now that smallpox has disappeared from Kathmandu Valley, people visit Hariti to cure various diseases like the so-called 'space diseases' afflicting children under twelve years of age. When this happens people hasten to dedicate some sort of offering in the form of 'Kisal', i.e., a clay pot with some rice grains and a betel nut. Sometimes the recovery is instantaneous.

V. Hariti in the form of Spirit Possessor (Deo-Ma):

In Kathmandu valley there are a number of healers locally called Mata (mother). They are considered the very embodiment of the deity Hariti. When they are possessed by Hariti or sometimes by her children. These

'Matas' can perform healing, make astrological predictions, subdue witches, dispell evil omens occurring in the household and alleviate the social problems.

VI. Legend on the Origin of Hariti:

At one time when Lord Buddha was residing at Rajgir near Patna, a powerful female Yaksha was creating much trouble and causing suffering to local people by stealing their children and devouring them. She used to gather at least 500 children daily to feed her large family and thus local people were greatly terrified and were in a state of despair and distress. As the Lord Buddha was residing near Rajagriha at Vulture peak Mountain. At that time, people rushed to that place of requesting the Buddha to protect them from the demon, the Great Yakshani Hariti. Buddha then consoled them by saying that he would definitely subdue Hariti and proceeded to visit Hariti's residence. He took her dearest and youngest daughter and concealed her in his alms bowl. When Hariti came back to her residence and could not find her beloved daughter any where, she searched here and there, even in the mountains and seas, but of no avail. She lamented and cried bitterly for the loss of her beloved daughter and finally she approached the Buddha to find out where her daughter was. At this the Buddha admonished her saying that since children are dearer to every parent, it would be unwise to cause suffering to people by devouring their children. Buddha instructed the Yaksani Hariti about the value of compassion. Hariti accepted Buddha's instruction heartily and made a commitment that she would never again harm or steal children, but instead protect them in future. At this Buddha returned her daughter to Hariti and made her a guardian of the Buddha's doctrine. Henceforth, she refrained from killing children and any sentient beings whatsoever and became a protectress of them.

When Shakyamuni Buddha was giving a discourse on the origin of Swayambhu Stupa to a host of his Bodhisattvas and disciples, Hariti, the great Yaksani, appeared in the assembly of the Buddha's disciples near the Manjushree Hill. After the conclusion of the Buddha's discourse Hariti paid homage to Lord Buddha and requested permission to uphold the Buddha's doctrine by serving the Self-existing Primordial One, (Swayambhu) the Great Guru Manjushree and Guru Shantikar Acharya. Lord Buddha, perceiving her pure intention gave her permission to serve Swayambhu stupa and ensure the welfare of children. Since then, she has been residing in the Swayambhu region serving as a protectress of the doctrine of Buddha.

VII. Aspirations and deeds of Hariti:

There is a traditional folk story about Hariti Devi. At the onset of the Degenerate Age, Guru Shantikara invoked all the deities to conceal the Swayambhu Jyotirupa, and raised a stupa over the hidden flame to protect it from evil. Many protector gods from the ten directions, such as Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshvara, Indra, Yama, Varuna, Kuber, Agni, Nairitya, Yaju, Isana, Candra, Surya and Yama, together with gods from heavens like the Tusita, Nirmanarati, Paranimitta Vasavarti, Brahmoparsadya, Brahmakayika, Brahmapuruhita, Mahabrahma, Paritabha, Apramanaha, Abhasvara, Sudarsana and so on, descended to this particular place to take part in the consecration to the best of their ability, within the limits of their respective jurisdictions.

At that time, the golden usnisa Cudamani spire that crowned the Caitya, spontaneously offered by Aparimita Taghagata Himself, began to droop downwards. When the dignitaries

and onlookers saw this, they were utterly astonished. Guru Shantikara was flabbergasted: "I have built Swayambhu Mahacaitya with the help of so many gods and goddesses, but try as I might, this spire cannot be straightened out. Sometimes it droops to the left, sometimes to the right." As he was at a loss to understand the cause, he once again plunged into a deep meditation, and inquired Lord Swayambhu.

Highly pleased, Lord Swayambhu replied, "O Shantikara! The spire is skewed for no other reason than this: Hariti Yakshini, who has been dwelling here to serve the Swayambhu Mahacaitya, was accused by you of eating meat. You thought of driving her away. Hariti Maha-yakshini has already pledged to settle in Swayambhu forever, never shifting from this holy place, so that she may devote herself to serving Swayambhu. This is the reason why the spire could not be set right. When Hariti's desires are fulfilled, this spire will be rigidly fixed in the place, and no further obstacles or

instructed, fulfilled every wish of Hariti Maha-yakshini, saying "What duties would you like to carry out at this place? Please don't be idle." In response, Sri Hariti Maha-yakshini pledged herself to the following activities:

1. I will patrol and protect the three watches of every night, wherever there are images and paintings of Lord Buddha.
 2. In compliance with the instructions of past Buddhas, I will keep on protecting Bahis, Vihara and such places from the obstacles and hindrances of Mara.
 3. I will look upon other children with the same degree of consideration as I have for my own children.
 4. I will serve Swayambhu Dharmadhatu Vagishvara with utmost devotion, and zealously look after and monitor this place.
 5. I will travel through the sky to wherever ceremonies associated with Buddhism are being conducted, and serve them.
- Overjoyed at the earnest pledges of Hariti Maha-yakshini, Shantikara gratified her with the methods of the



problems will arise.

"So, O Shantikara! Since her favourite place is nowhere but this ratnapitha, prepare and properly serve her with ritual food and drink. Delegate suitable tasks to her, as well. If you succeed in doing this, the spire shall be made upright, and a boon will be promised for the country."

Hearing the divine message of Lord Swayambhu, Guru Shantikara was beside himself with joy and, as

high tantras of the Vajrayana, and subsequently instituted the custom of 'Ritual Sacrifice' (chayayek bali puja) intended to bring success to the donor's every act, and to pacify the country. This custom has lingered even to the present day, leading to a daily increase in the dignity and glory of the Swayambhu area.

* Director- Nagarjuna
Institute of Exact Method
niem@wlink.com.np

ADMISSION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS IN PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF PAKISTAN

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan invites applications from Nepalese nationals for admission in professional institutions of Pakistan under Pakistan Technical Assistance Programme (PTAP) and Self Finance Scheme (SFS) for the forthcoming session 2010-2011. The available facilities with minimum qualification are as under-

P.T.A.P./FINANCE	
A. Medicine/Dentistry:	MSEC (English, Physics, Chemistry and Biology) or its equivalent qualification with at least 75% aggregate marks in Punjab and 70% elsewhere. Additionally, selected candidates will be required to qualify SAT and TOEFL/IELTS of their own as a pre-condition for admission in same institutions.
B. B.Sc Engineering	MSEC (English, Physics, Chemistry & Mathematics) or its equivalent qualification with at least 80% aggregate marks.
C. D. Pharmacy	MSEC (English, Physics, Chemistry & Biology) or its equivalent qualifications with at least 80% aggregate marks.

The maximum age limit set by Pakistan Medical & Dental Council for admission in MSEC/SFS is 25 years. Application forms will be available at the Embassy of Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan from 19th July to 28th July 2010 on payment @ NRS 200/- per form. Last date for the submission of applications is 2nd August 2010. The entrance examination will be conducted on 2nd August 2010 (Saturday) at 08:30 A.M. at Redlion Hotel, Lazimpat, Kathmandu. List of selected candidates will be displayed at Embassy reception on 22nd August 2010. Note - Candidates to bring original material and clipboard for the examination.

Embassy Section
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Kathmandu
Telephone Numbers: 4373117, 4374024