

## Disarray continues to rule



WM Correspondent

It took one month for caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal to step down from his post after an agreement on his resignation was reached.

Not less bewildering is the fact even a month after his resignation, a new government has failed to see the light of the day.

This only demonstrates the vicious circle of incoherence and

procrastination that has long marred Nepal's politics.

Nepal's resignation was expected to give birth to the national consensus government but that possibility has virtually ended with the parties continuing to show brazen obsession with power and privileges.

The two rounds of elections to pick a new prime minister have already proved a ridiculous fiasco.

NC's parliamentary party leader

Ram Chandra Poudel and UCPN (Maoist) chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal are competing in the next round of election slated for August 2.

But, the prospects of the upcoming poll yielding desirable result are very dim.

The third largest party CPN (UML) and even the Mahesh based parties, the support of which is crucial to form a majority government led by either UCPN (Maoist) or Nepali Congress (NC), are most likely to remain neutral

in the next round of election.

NC leaders admit their candidate for the post of prime minister Ram Chandra Poudel will win the race if the UML decides to reinforce him.

Madhes based parties are also awaiting the UML decision in this regard.

However, the UML leadership, which has already withdrawn its candidate from the parliamentary battle for premiership, is sharply divided over the issue.

The two rival factions within the party one led by chairman Jhala Nath Khanal and another by K.P. Oli and Nepal continue to wrangle as far as the party's role in selecting new prime minister goes.

Khanal is determined to block Poudel from becoming Prime Minister while another faction is pressing for decision to support the NC.

Khanal is also suggesting both Poudel and Maoist chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal to withdraw their candidacy to create a climate for the formation of a national consensus government.

The Maoists are busy holding secret meetings with the leaders of other parties except the NC. But, they have so far also failed to garner required support to grab the helms of affairs.

The formal rebels are tenaciously trying to woo the Samyukta Loktantrik Madhesi Morcha (SLMM), the recently reconstituted forum of Madhes-based parties, into supporting them.

The Maoists should have to succumb to certain controversial demands forwarded by the SLMM if they want to lead the new majority government.

The SLMM appears to have been reengineered just to bar Jhala Nath Khanal from becoming Prime Minister although Madhesi Janadhar Forum Nepal led by Upendra Yadav had

pledged his party's support for Khanal before finally deciding to remain neutral as per the decision of SLMM.

The UML leaders sense the vested interest of New Delhi behind the sudden stimulation of the SLMM that has come in the wake of tension-fraught election for a new premier.

The Madhesi parties will of course not support the UCPN (Maoist) as long as it is possible because they are loyal to the Southern neighbour, which despises the proposition of Maoist-led government.

Even if they support the Maoists this will just be a manipulative move.

It will bring UML and NC together so that the Madhes-based parties can finally pull out of the government to form an alliance to press for their parochial interests.

If the parties fail to elect Prime Minister in the third time as well, it will lend credence to the Khanal's stance that the parties should go for changing the parliamentary working procedure regulation to allow others also to join the prime ministerial race.

Maoist vice-chairman Baburam Bhattarai has also adopted the same posture.

However, the chances of the NC, the establishment faction of UCPN (Maoist) and the Oli-Nepal faction of UML subscribing to this idea appear slim, at least for now.

## Be aware of foxy attempts!

WM Correspondent

Both UCPN (Maoist) and Nepali Congress (NC) are hell-bent to rope the Madhes based parties into supporting them to form their own government.

With the CPN (UML) adopting neutrality in both the two elections for a new prime minister, the Maoists and the NC are engaging themselves in a hectic competition to win the support of Samyukta Loktantrik Madhesi Morcha (SLMM), which was recently reenergized by four Madhes based parties.

The Maoists, as the largest party in the Constituent Assembly (CA), can form a majority government in a numerically comfortable manner if they obtain support from those leaders belonging to Madhes.

The NC, however, is obliged to please the Madhes based parties along with the UML leadership to grab the helm of affairs as its arithmetic

might be relatively weaker than that of the Maoists.

Both the UCPN (Maoist) and NC have supported most of the demands forwarded by the SLMM in their kind of dog-eat-dog competition for power.

Nevertheless, the two parties also have certain reservations vis-à-vis some demands of SLMM.

The Maoist party appears not to be comfortable with pluralism, the proposition of one Madhes one province and immediate fixing of the time frame for army integration.

On the other hand, the NC has not been able to support the SLMM's demands for autonomous Madhes provinces with the right to self-determinism, group-wise entry of Madhesi community in the Nepali Army and not forming state restructuring commission.

The SLMM seems to be inclined towards towards [Cont. on page 6]

WM Correspondent

The gross failure on the part of three major political parties-UCPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress (NC) and CPN (UML)-to elect a new Prime Minister for two consecutive times has also sent the intra-party strife into the stratosphere.

The ongoing political race to grab the much-coveted title of premiership seems to have triggered a great deal of spat amongst the rival coteries especially within the Maoists and the UML.

Implicitly indicating at the bid made by his own party chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal to become prime minister, Maoist vice chairman Baburam Bhattarai, in his recent interview with a national daily, said that the tendency amongst the leaders to satiate person ambition at any cost would bode pretty ill to the country.

No wonder, the loyalists of Dahal within the party termed Bhattarai's expression as a manifestation of ill-



intension aimed at blocking the Maoist chieftain from assuming prime ministerial berth.

The party's secretary C.P. Jairel also made complain about Bhattarai for



airing contradictory views to undermine Dahal.

The candidacy of Dahal for the post of prime minister was proposed by Bhattarai himself. [Cont. on page 6]

The two opposite factions within the Maoists one led by Bhattarai and another by hardliner Mohan Vaidya have long been engaged in a bitter verbal spat. [Cont. on page 6]

## New Monetary policy aims financial stability



WM Correspondent

The recently announced monetary policy for the current fiscal year has banned the commencement of new banks in order to improve the quality of banks.

Those willing to open commercial banks and those who want to upgrade their financial institutions into "A class" will have to wait for indefinite period. NRB governor Yubaraj Khaliwada made it clear during the unveiling of the policy that the central bank would continue to close doors for new banks and financial institutions (BFIs) until the economy takes a certain shape from the current financial volatility.

However, those banks and financial institutions (BFIs) targeting infrastructure development with the joint venture with foreign companies and with huge capital and superior technology will however be welcomed. There are already 28 banks in operation and other three are in the

pipeline. The central bank for the first time will encourage the system of stress testing in the Nepali banking system which would predict the impacts of economic ups and downs in the financial system.

The central bank has also prevented the promoters of BFIs with more than 1 percent share to take loans by putting more than 50 percent shares as collateral. Both the central bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have argued that this provision will help to strengthen the corporate governance.

Nevertheless, bankers have insisted that the promoters should be allowed to put their assets as collateral

if any bank accepts such collateral.

The policy, unveiled by the central bank, also bars the BFIs from making more than 10 percent of their total lending into the real estate sector. And, those BFIs which have already lent more than 10 percent should bring down the size of credits below 10 within the next two years.

But, the money go up to 30 percent for the housing sector as the maximum limit for housing and real estate sector has been fixed at 40 percent. It is reverse decision on the part of the central bank given that the real estate developers were free to get up to 25 percent loans while housing developers could only get up to 15 percent only. However, NRB officials said the

housing could be categorized even as land development for housing projects which has fallen under real estate so far.

The housing developers were demanding similar treatment and the central bank has addressed it. However they will also be affected because most of them are also involved in real estate trading as well.

The policy also sought to make balance of payment (BoP) positive at Rs. 9 billion this year which is currently negative by around Rs. 5 billion.

The BoP deficit reached to more than Rs. 22 billion, the record high deficit in the last 26 years. Even the growing remittance also could not sustain the BoP due to growing trade

deficit as a result of declining exports against soaring imports. That's why, the government and the NRB had to take import curtailing measures regarding the products such as gold and silver.

Likewise, the new monetary policy aims to maintain the inflation at 7 percent. It is doubtful if the central bank could be able to maintain price rise of goods and service at 7 percent because it has failed to maintain it at single digit for the last two consecutive fiscal years. NRB has also been maintaining that the economic factors such as bands, strikes and syndicates are responsible for high inflation.

With the political situation still volatile, the non-economic factors will again be major [Cont. on page 6]

R.No. BA. 39/027/028

Published by : Weekly Mirror Publication (P) Ltd.

Editor : Prem Kumari Pant

Sub-Editor : Nirjhar Dhungana

Prithvi Man Shrestha

New Plaza, Ram Shah Path, Kathmandu

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

Printed at : Dhimle Printing Press, Dillibazar

Email: weeklymirror@ntc.net.np

weeklymirror@gmail.com

## Editorial

### Savage debt burden and economic nationalism

It goes without saying that our politicians and their planners have systematically failed to harness ample of natural resources Nepal is blessed with.

This sustained failure can be attributed to their lack of vision caused primarily by their extreme aid dependency, a result of their neo-colonial mindset, inferiority complexes and the rent benefits accruing to them from aid.

The chronic mal governance we are facing is also a severe output of the overarching aid dependency. As politicians, planners and policy-bureaucrats continue to be spoon fed with alien ideas, money, material and machinations, the foreign aid goes to serve the global interests of foreigners not ours.

Despite the flow of billions of dollars on development assistance over the long period, it has pathetically failed to provide sufficient impetus to overcome the strong forces that keep people poor.

Our politicians are very much less concerned about their duties to national tax payers as they happily surrender to populist, vote banking politics that has eventually become the root causes of crime, violence, insecurity and the breakdown in the rule of law.

No doubt, Nepal is also a merely a clog in the wheel of development being propelled by the western industrial nations in their mission for universal liberal democracy, human rights and security from radical social movements, international migration, terrorism, and global warming.

This is the ideological weapon being unleashed upon the developing countries by the westerners to maintain the cultural dominations. The fact is underscored by the savage debt burden imposed in the name of tied aid.

Multilateral aid agencies are indulged in colonization through aid as they comfortably bypass the foreign ministries of the concerned countries and are not accountable in any manner or form to national parliaments.

Aid driven by its mission for liberal democracy and human rights has the distinction of creating inefficient state and semi-state institutions that have weakened individual liberties and choices. It is the market mechanism that makes the spirit of enterprise possible not the ever expanding roles of political parties, governments and foreign donor agencies.

Foreign aid has robbed Nepal of its competitive advantage through padding of costs and chronic delay mainly in the infrastructure sector.

In the quest for human rights the industrialized nations resort to non-governmental organizations, created and funded by them, to protect and promote human rights under the guise of "civil society" so as to ensure meek, compliant state.

To make the matter worse, it completely destroys the developing nations' social capital as traditional voluntary organizations are annihilated from the national socio-political scene.

As such, it is imperative to act as per the "economic nationalism" if we are to preserve democracy and sovereignty of Nepal in a real sense. The first act to start with economic nationalism is to set limits to foreign aid by developing one's won development and growth strategies.

## Asia shouldn't be swayed by West

Yin Jiwu

In a recent column on the US Foreign Policy website, Christian Caryl writes: "The Cold War was scary enough. Now try to imagine a nuclear arms race between China and India." Well, for generations that have grown up after World War II, the Cold War was indeed a nightmare.

But it seems the West has developed its own perspective on peace and order in Asia. It sees what it wants to see. And its tainted glasses make even the unwitting moves of China and India appear as deliberately planned plots.

Western defense analysts have coined a term "security dilemma". It refers to a situation in which actions by a state to strengthen its security, such as increasing its military strength or forming alliances, can make other states respond with similar strategic measures. This heightens tensions that could lead to conflict, even when neither of the sides wants it.

What Western analysts don't (or don't want to) understand is that most of the Asian countries emerged from centuries of Western colonial rule and plundering of their resources just five to six decades ago. East and South Asian countries have coexisted for millenniums and are now in the process of transition from the old to the new order. Disputes among countries over territories and/or regional leadership during this period is not uncommon and should not be seen as threat to anybody.

To some extent, a "security dilemma" does exist in Asia. But that does not necessarily mean China and India are engaged in (or could start) a nuclear arms race. Anybody who thinks so is suffering from "Cold War fever".

US President Barack Obama's conservative attitude toward his country's nuclear arsenal at the Nuclear Security Summit in April this year made his "dream" of a nuclear-free world nothing more than a "dream". The US has 2,100 deployed strategic nuclear warheads and Russia, 2,600. The two sides signed the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty on April 8, which if ratified would prevent each side from deploying more than 1,550 strategic warheads.

But the two countries are playing a "numerical game" by including the nuclear warheads they reduced earlier, giving an indication that they are unlikely to meet the target. More importantly, there's no certainty that their lawmakers will ratify the treaty.

Despite all this, Western analysts talk about a nuclear arms race in Asia. Just look at the US military budget, which is several times more than the defense spending of East Asian countries put together. Yet they hardly talk about Western countries' huge defense budgets and do not miss even half a chance to criticize or warn

against the dangers of a non-existent arms race in Asia.

The US reportedly used laser weapons to shoot down drones during a recent test, seemingly re-igniting Americans' passion for the "Strategic Defense Initiative" (Star Wars Project), propounded by former president Ronald Reagan. This shows that the biggest challenge to world peace is not the military development in Asian countries, but the US hegemony and its desperate attempts to become the deciding factor in international defense matters. Unfortunately, the US has not changed its fundamental foreign policy even after suffering the deadliest terrorist attack and a grave economic crisis.

The West should know that China and India share broad common interests in the regional and international arenas. They have complementary economies and increasingly close economic relations, and their bilateral trade volume is expected to reach \$60 billion this year.

The two countries, however, have to strengthen mutual trust by removing prejudices and misunderstandings. Occasionally, sensational comments on both sides of the border mislead peoples of the two countries. Most of the problems troubling Sino-Indian relations are the legacy of history, but they appear more complicated

because of a vicious cycle of misperception on the two sides.

Leading politicians and academics of the two countries have a vital role to play in strengthening mutual understanding. And true to the need, leaders of Asian countries have recognized the importance of maintaining regional stability, as can be seen in the frequent high-level exchange visits between China and India to establish a strategic and cooperative partnership, and maintain peace and achieve prosperity.

But a country has to build a solid social base, that is, it should enjoy popular support of its citizens, to advance its foreign policy. The absence of such support at home could affect bilateral relations. So, no matter whether it's China-India or China-Japan relations, the countries have to build a solid social base. It is here that the West plays a negative role by misinterpreting one country's harmless action as a threat for the other and sway public opinion.

The future of Asia, however, depends on the countries in the continent and they should ensure that the ghost of "security dilemma" that the West sees is just a nothing more than that. Asian countries must not be swayed by West's bias.

The author is a research fellow with the School of International Relations and Diplomacy, Beijing Foreign Studies University.

(Source: China Daily)

## Long stalemate after Maoist victory disrupts life in Nepal

Anup Kaphle

For a decade, he carried a 9mm pistol and battled government forces in almost every corner of Nepal as part of a Maoist insurgency that ravaged this majestic Himalayan nation.

A 2006 peace agreement and a surprising Maoist victory in 2008 elections earned the rebels' political party a central role in governing the country. But the Maoists and the Nepalese military and political establishment have been unable to

Liberation Army be accepted into the same national security forces they once battled.

But opponents, including some military leaders, argue that the rebels should be disbanded, permanently disarmed and sent back to their villages, fearing that they would undermine the military and the country's fledgling democracy.

At least 12,500 people died, and

monarchy.

The Maoists initially took power in the world's newest republic, in the high-altitude shadow of Mount Everest, nine months later the Maoists abruptly quit in a dispute over a decision to fire the army chief.

Since then, the Maoists and the ruling parties have been at an impasse -- including over the drafting of a new post-monarchy constitution. Both sides

several high-level military and political delegations to Nepal during the period when the Maoists were in power.

In camps across Nepal, the former rebels await word on their fate.

On a recent day at a camp in Jhyalungdada, a small village in western Nepal, about 900 foot soldiers passed the time playing chess and soccer, updating their Facebook status on shared laptops and having heated political discussions.

Dandapani "Dabin" Bhattarai, 25, who said he ambushed government forces all over the country during the insurrection, echoed the common sentiment here that the former rebels should be allowed to join the security forces en masse.

Critics have argued that allowing all members to join could be a destabilizing factor inside the 96,000-strong national army.

"I'll join the national army if all of us are integrated together," Bhattarai said. "But if they filter us and integrate individually, we will understand that their goal was to humiliate us after tricking us into signing the peace agreement."

Army officials say that they are not against the integration process as a whole but that they cannot recruit politically indoctrinated Maoists.

"No way that any political cadre can be integrated in the army. Before the integration starts, they must be disassociated with active politics," said Brig. Gen. Ramindra Chettri, spokesman for Nepal's army.

While the United Nations is nominally in charge of the camps, the Maoists seem to be in control. The combatants in the camps regularly receive robust military and physical training and intense political indoctrination.

Walking past the U.N. offices inside the camp, Ghimire pointed at a massive white container and said, "Our guns are inside those containers. But what the world doesn't know is we are the ones guarding them and we won't have any problems accessing them."



agree on a deal to allow the Maoists to govern.

The resulting deadlock has disrupted life in this nation of nearly 30 million people, and caused jitters from Kathmandu to Nepal's two giant neighbors, India and China.

The latest casualty was Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, who resigned three weeks before after failing to solve the political dilemma, including how to reintegrate the Maoists and their highly trained soldiers into Nepalese life and governance.

Maoist leaders are demanding that all 19,600 members of their People's

an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 were internally displaced, during Nepal's 10-year insurgency, which started in 1996. It began as a rebellion by a few dozen men influenced by communist icons Mao Zedong and Karl Marx, and grew into a national movement aimed largely at dislodging the country's centuries-old monarchy.

Under the 2006 peace accord, the rebels agreed to disarm under U.N. supervision and compete in national elections. The Maoists shocked the nation two years later by sweeping elections that ultimately led to the abolition of the 230-year-old

have set a deadline of next year for finalizing the document, but analysts said such deadlines are essentially meaningless in the current political environment.

If the Maoists and the ruling parties don't move on integration, constitutional issues and power-sharing, we will only be postponing the crisis," said Prashant Jha.

Concerns of a Maoist-led government have spread across the border to neighboring India, another democracy struggling with a violent Maoist insurgency. India was also rattled by China's decision to send

# In memory of late Ram Babu Tiwari



It has been two years since you physically left this material world to take eternal rest in the abode of Almighty. But your warm affection, unmatched vision, and strength to take a solid lead will continue to act as a guiding light for us.

Moreover, your kindness, cheerfulness, and compassion which have propelled us to live a meaningful life will always remain with us.

At this moment we once again commit to continue to step forward on the path you showed and pray Almighty for the eternal peace of your departed soul.

**Prem Kumari Pant**

*Editor/Publisher*

**The Weekly Mirror**

*President*

**Nepal-China Society**

# Fidel Castro predicts third world nuclear war

The 83-year-old Comandante has not appeared in public since 2006, when he underwent a major surgery on his intestinal system. After that, the process of devolution of power from Fidel to his younger brother Raul Castro had begun. In February of 2008, Raul officially headed the supreme government body of Cuba, the State Council. However, the new head of the country said that he always consults with Fidel on important decisions regarding domestic and foreign policy.

It is impossible to verify whether or not he really consulted with his brother. Fidel has not appeared in public. Sometimes rare footage from a hospital ward showing Fidel dressed in a sweat suit talking to his visitors would air on TV. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was the most frequent visitor. In addition, the official Cuban newspaper Granma would release articles signed by Fidel Castro from time to time.

The fact that the Comandante, who always had a soft spot for public speaking, avoided the public made many to speculate about critical condition of his health. Often these messages were distributed by the representatives of the Cuban exile community in the U.S., who fiercely hate Fidel. Several times messages appeared on line stating that the leader of the Cuban revolution has passed away.

Yet, it was too early to bury Fidel. As soon as the media released information about his worsened condition, the Cuban authorities or Hugo Chavez



Vadim Trikhachev

would state that the Commander was on the mend. Gradually, the elder Castro's health has become an element of the information war between his supporters and opponents. It is difficult to understand what the real state of affairs was since Cuba remains to be a fairly closed country.

Last weekend pictures were released showing Fidel visiting the National Centre for Scientific Research of Cuba on July 7. All employees of the institution immediately stopped working and rushed to greet the leader. In response, the legendary revolutionary made a short speech. Hispanic Internet was soon flooded with pictures of cheerful, absolutely calm Fidel who was strolling around the establishment without assistance.

On July 12, the Comandante finally

made a TV appearance in Round Table show. Castro Sr. was wearing a dark blue track suit and a dark plaid shirt. He looked cheerful, though his face was thin. Fidel spoke rather slowly, but with confidence. He did not use the speech notes prepared in advance.

The show was dedicated to the issues of the Middle East settlement and the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea. It is unlikely that the topic was chosen by accident. Fidel dedicated several recent articles in Granma newspaper to these issues, and now he was talking about them on TV.

The leader of the Cuban Revolution did not try to avoid harsh words in his speech. According to him, the policy of the U.S. and its allies against Iran and North Korea could result in a new world war, this time a nuclear one. Fidel

believes that the main reason for a new global conflict will be the situation around North Korea. But the first volley would be probably fired in another corner of Asia when the U.S. and Israel attack Iran.

According to Castro, the consequences of an attack on Iran would be disastrous for the Americans. All Iranians age 12 to 60 undergo military training. Castro said that the Americans would face the resistance they had not seen in Iraq. Iran has been preparing for this attack for 30 years, the Comandante emphasized.

Fidel pointed out that Iran has powerful air forces, navy and ground forces. He said that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps alone had a million people. He stated that he was confused as to why the U.S. had an impression that the Iranians would flee in the face of the enemy that wanted to destroy everything and openly spoke about it.

Fidel Castro's public appearance has proved that the rumors about sharp deterioration of his health are greatly exaggerated. Despite his advanced age and formal removal from power, he remains an active politician.

The Comandante demonstrated to the entire world that he had been keeping abreast of key international issues. He showed that he remained loyal to himself and still did not shy from criticism of the Americans who had been trying to overthrow him in the past 50 years to no avail. However, one may disagree with his opinion that the world is headed for a nuclear war.

## The unfinished race for Premiership

R.K.Regmee

The parliamentary battle that Nepalis witnessed on Wednesday's Prime Ministerial poll is in a sense unique and somewhat innovative in varied series of recent democratic exercises. It gave them a fresh taste of failure to elect a Premier in the first round in an unprecedented way and trying the second one for a decisive ruling.

Top leaders of Nepali politics - Prachanda, Poudel and Khanal - chose to fight for the post of Head of Government despite knowing well how their respective strength in Legislature Parliament would not be able to produce a clearly decisive election for them. The largest single party in the Constituent Assembly UCPN-Maoist and the second largest Nepali Congress, as expected, could not garner simple majority. They were far behind the required figure of 301.

Khanal opted out of race in final minutes. The CPN UML could not ensure two third majority-support- 401 in figure - prior to poll. It did not, therefore, allow him to compete: its members did not participate in voting either. Small parties played neutral. The nonparticipation might give them logic to join the second round for avoiding a situation of failing to pick up a man to lead the cabinet.

People in general feel sad to find the political parties unable to elect a Prime Minister in the first round at the Constituent Assembly. It has made them worried about their competence. They query: is CA being redundant? How can they expect peace and constitution from a House which goes so indecisive in crucial matters of forming a government?

### Critical analysis

A critical analysis of the key parties' approach to the election demonstrates various trends which could not be taken as healthy for nourishing nascent republican democracy. They always talk consensus but act against it. Their stand for petty interest of individual leaders and parties make a fun of their commitment to the cause of peace and constitution.

Making a show of competitive politics for the PM-post at this time suggests the leaders have not been able to study the sensitivity of limited time that the Constituent Assembly has for delivery. The initial trio-candidature actually insults the recent three- point-agreement. Small parties voiced this strongly in their observation in CA prior to voting and pursued a policy of neutrality towards the big three - UCPN-M, NC, and CPN UML.

The Big Three should have appreciated well the facts that Nepali politics is not in normal condition; it is in crisis; has just a little more than ten months to realize the mission of People's Movement II: peace and constitution would be impossible without consensus in CA: one month and a half extra time of CA has already been wasted; the second time failure to deliver constitution through the people-elected body could render the country a failed state.

The sort of tactical hobnob some leaders did to form one alliance for cornering another until last minute before the PM-election in Legislature Parliament indicates that top leaders are in what management experts say "aspiration trap". They appear to have forgotten the point that no party in CA should be ignored or isolated for making it productive. Segregation of any type or form would be as good as aborting the CA.

Analysts might explain Wednesday's indecisive election as a foregone conclusion and the direct result of what political scientists call "hung parliament." Leftist pundits take it as nothing but the expected wastes of parliamentary democracy. Socialists and democrats might describe it as some parties' indifference towards political co-existence. Intellectuals see in it effect of lack of coalition culture. One section of Nepali politicians is terming it as the upshot of foreign domination.

### Positive angle

It could be safely termed a democratic way of snatching power to govern. Some might prefer to call it a nonviolent pact of occupying the high chair of Singha Durbar. One politico in the CA premises said on Wednesday "it is a non-polluting exercise for grabbing Premiership." Many feel relieved to see the one time champion of violent conflict -Prachanda- combating quietly against two parliamentarians as per the rule and without weapons and armed cadres.

None emerged as winner on the day to fill the vacuum created after a 20-party-majority government resigned for the cause of consensus, peace and constitution. The opposition leader may have learnt a lesson: it is easy to chase a Premier in the public for 13 months but difficult to replace the man through parliamentary method. The venture, however, handed over a bonus (some more extra-time for ruling the country) to caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal. The unexpected gift should have compensated him for the loss of power.

The race made the political parties able to show a united face despite varied differences in them. Although the unity displayed is just like a dressing on top, it indicates the possibility of their coming together in times of need.

Moreover, the exercise offered the politicians some more experience in patiently practicing parliamentary skills. The same would be highly useful as they tackle in future complicated problems related to building peace and framing constitution.

## NATO should 'do more'

During her interview with the BBC on July 18 this year during her visit to Pakistan US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged Pakistan to 'do more' to counter terrorism. She elaborated, "There are still additional steps that we are asking and expecting Pakistan to take." In a threatening style, Ms. Clinton also stated, "there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that if an attack against the United States be traced to be Pakistani, it would have a very devastating impact on our relationship."

Meanwhile, US Vice-President Joe Biden has indicated during an interview with the ABC television, "Everyone knew in these summer months, when they (Taliban) can infiltrate from Pakistan under the cover of foliage and the rest and it is open that there would be more deaths."

Surprisingly, Afghanistan's National Security Adviser Rangin Dadaif Spanta has also called on Pakistan to "take serious measures against the militants groups" who launch attacks on Afghan targets from secure havens inside Pakistan. However, 'do more' maxim is not new one as it is part of old blame game of Washington against Pakistan. In this regard, Barack Obama, during his election campaign had very vocally said in his various speeches regarding Pakistan to 'do more' against the al Qaeda-related insurgents in the tribal areas - stated in a threatening tone during his first debate that if "Pakistan is unwillingly or unable to act, then we should take them by sending our troops to the safe-havens of FATA". In the past, Senator Carl Levin, the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee betrayed frustration with Pakistan's failure to eliminate militants' hideouts, suggesting that the government in Islamabad was not doing enough. But we cannot ignore these statements as politically motivated. Even US military and intelligence high officials have continuously been accusing Pakistan of cross-border terrorism and an increase of militancy in Afghanistan.

It is notable that Pakistan's armed

Sajjad Shaukat

forces have broken the backbone of the Taliban in Swat, Dir, Buner, South Waziristan and other tribal areas by sacrificing their lives. In the recent months, high officials of America and other western countries have been highly appreciating the military operations led by the Pakistan Army, donating million of dollars to Islamabad, while they have again revived old blame game of doing more against terrorism, including infiltration in Afghanistan. In fact, it is part of conspiracy against Pakistan. When military operations started on June 29, 2008, from Khyber Agency, Prime Minister Gilani had stated that there were "several enemies of the country" and "foreign hands were also involved in the acts of terrorism". Afterwards, Pakistan's military and civilian high officials have repeatedly indicated that India is supporting insurgency in Pakistan from Afghanistan. This fact has also been pointed out by Pakistan's Interior Minister Rehman Malik and ISPR spokesman Maj-General Athar Abbas. It is mentionable that more than 15,000 Indian troops are stationed in Afghanistan under the guise of supervising construction of road Jalalabad-Port Chahbahar project that has now been completed. Indian Border Road Organisation (BRO) is being used in facilitating weapons to the anti-Pakistan agents. While, New Delhi has officially declared 14 Indian consulates in Afghanistan, but on ground, has established 200 foreign offices and training camps where RAW officials with the help of Khad, are doing their utmost to destabilise Pakistan. Every mercantile shops run by Indians have a clandestine intelligence office. In Wakhan too, a religious madrasa of the Indian Muslim clerics is functioning under the patronage of RAW and Mossad. Very young boys including Afghans, recruits are mostly Uzbeks, Tajiks and Caucasians who also come from Central Asia, bordering Afghanistan. Thus more than 20,000 ideologically motivated terrorists and

suicide bombers have been trained in Afghanistan. Besides, they have also been made to learn Pashto and traditions of Pathans. They are regularly infiltrated into troubled spots of Pakistan. Posing as volunteers, they join the Taliban militants to fight against Pakistan's security forces. They have destroyed girl's schools, video shops and other installations, including brutal beheading of captured personnel. These miscreants also conducted a number of suicide attacks and bomb blasts in Pakistan, killing a number of innocent persons and personnel of the security forces.

It is noteworthy that during military operation of Bajaur, hundreds of Taliban, composed of Uzbeks, Arabs, Chechens, Tajiks had overrun a Pakistani outpost on a strategic hilltop in the Loi Sam area near the supply route commonly used by Afghan militants to aid their comrades, fighting against Pakistan troops from the Afghan province of Kunar. In that context, BBC had quoted Maj-Gen Tariq Majid pointing out that Pakistani troops have killed 1,000 militants in the Bajaur tribal area, including foreign fighters from Egypt, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.

In this connection, on July 17, 2008, USA Today wrote, "Afghanistan has been drawing a fresh influx of jihadi fighters from Turkey, Central Asia, Chechnya and the Middle East, one more sign that al Qaeda is becoming the most active front of the war on terror".

It is of particular attention that instead of Pakistan, Afghanistan shares a common border with the Asian Republics. So, all the foreign insurgents are entering Pakistan through Afghanistan which has become a gateway in this respect. Even the top leadership of al Qaeda is also in Afghanistan along with its headquarter. This fact could be judged from in-camera interview of al Qaeda leader, Sheikh Saeed with a journalist of Pakistan's private TV channel from Afghanistan on July 21, 2008.

Notably, Pakistan is the only nuclear country in the Islamic world. Therefore, India and Israel with the tactical support of America are creating instability in Pakistan. In this respect, Indo-Israeli lobbies are working in the US and other western countries in order to malign Islamabad. With the help of particularly American media, these lobbies are propagating that the next terror plan to attack the US homeland will be prepared in Pakistan.

On May 29, 2010, while quoting the US officials, under the caption, "Options studied for a possible Pakistan strike", The Washington Post disclosed: "The US military is reviewing options for a unilateral strike in Pakistan in the event that a successful attack on American soil is traced to the country's tribal areas...lies between the alleged Times Square bomber, Faisal Shahzad, and elements of the Pakistani Taliban have sharpened the Obama administration's need for retaliatory options." The Post further explained: "The US options for potential retaliatory action rely mainly on air and missile strikes, but could also employ small teams of US Special Operations troops already positioned along the border with Afghanistan." Nonetheless, to 'do more' and cross-border terrorism in Afghanistan are false covers by which the United States wants to attack Pakistan.

Returning to our earlier discussion, instead of Islamabad, NATO should 'do more' against the new brand of militancy. In this context, first of all it should seal off Afghan border with the Asian Republics from where the foreign fighters enter Afghanistan and reach Pakistan. Moreover, US must ask Karzai regime to close all the training camps and Indian consulates which are conspiring against the integrity of Pakistan. In this context, US should better pressurise Afghanistan instead of Pakistan to 'do more' against the insurgents.

The writer writes on international affairs and is author of the book: US vs Islamic Militants, Invisible Balance of Power: Dangerous Shift in International Relations.

असल बनौं, इमान्दार बनौं,  
सन्ततिलाई दिशानिर्देश गरौं ।



नेपाल सरकार

सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय  
सूचना विभाग

## Region:

# Kashmir the dispute that continues to rock South Asia

## The Conflict

A cartoon published in an American newspaper in 2002 showed former President George W. Bush sitting behind his desk in the Oval Office, utterly confused by a news report he was reading about India and Pakistan going to war over Kashmir. "But why are the two countries fighting over a sweater," he asked Dick Cheney, who stood by with his usual sly smile on his face.

Besides reflecting the intellectual capacity of the American president of the time, the cartoon was a realistic portrayal of the understanding that American leaders have generally shown of this longstanding dispute between Pakistan and India.

Protests against Indian rule in Kashmir erupted earlier this month after a 17 year old girl was killed by a police teargas shell (AFP)

The unresolved Kashmir conflict has rocked South Asia for six decades. It has created an environment of distrust and acrimony, forced the people to sink into poverty with bulk of the resources consumed by the war machines and claimed lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians, as well as soldiers who died in the three wars fought between India and Pakistan. India, whose forcible occupation of Kashmir in 1947 created the conflict, refuses to settle it. The other stake holders, the Kashmiri people and Pakistan, insist on a fair solution. The international community, including the US and the United Nations, played little or no role in diffusing it either. Consequently, the conflict has developed into one of the most intractable problems of international politics that remains a continuing threat to peace of the region.

## Indian Brutalities and the International Reaction

India has not hesitated to use brutal force to maintain its hold on Indian occupied Kashmir and suppress revolt. The US, UN and other international organizations failed to take note of grave human rights violations. They failed to provide any specific, actionable proposals for a permanent solution. All they extended were diplomatic courtesies, suggested vague formulas and generalities that are open to multiple interpretations.

Although the US considers South Asia to be a sensitive and strategically important region from its geopolitical, security and economic standpoint and has expressed the desire to see peace prevail, yet it has so far paid only lip service to finding a permanent solution. It would not chastise India for human rights violations, which would have attracted its immediate attention if these were taking place in a country that it had chosen to punish, for fear of displeasing or alienating India which it has aggressively been courting in recent years.

This situation was compounded by the Indian dreams of regional hegemony that led it to dismember Pakistan in 1971 and go on to become a nuclear power, which forced Pakistan to develop its own nuclear deterrent for safeguarding its security.

Consequently, India has consistently and blatantly refused to honor the will of the people, negotiate Kashmir's future status and stop the use of brutal force.

## The Conflict Leads to the First Kashmir War

In the wake of the August 1947 partition of British India that brought into existence two sovereign states of the Indian Union and Pakistan, the British left after having midwived the Kashmir dispute that has since bedeviled peace between the two countries. Essentially, the agreed principle that governed partition was that Muslim majority states to the east and west of British India would form Pakistan, while rest of the subcontinent was to form Indian Union.

Decisions by several Muslim rulers for accession of their states to Pakistan that had Hindu majorities (Hyderabad, Junagadh and Manavadar being cases in point) were rejected on the grounds that a Muslim ruler did not have the right to overrule the will of the Hindu majority population. But the decision of the Hindu Raja of the princely state of Kashmir, which was predominantly a Muslim majority state and should have acceded to Pakistan, was immediately accepted by the British viceroy and the Indian government, despite a popular Kashmiri

## Shahid R Siddiq

revolt against his decision. Although an agreement of non-intervention in Kashmir had been signed between India and Pakistan, the new Indian government sent troops into Kashmir at the request of the Hindu ruler to enforce the instrument of accession and forcibly occupy the territory, in disregard of the agreed principle of accession applied elsewhere.

This led to the first Kashmir war in 1947 between India and Pakistan. In 1948 India sought cease fire, taking the issue to the UN Security Council, which passed resolution 47 on 21 April 1948, imposing an immediate cease-fire along the line of actual control of territory by both parties and calling on them to withdraw their troops. It also ruled that "the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir will be made in accordance with the will of the people expressed through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations." The cease fire was enacted in December 1948, with both governments agreeing to hold the plebiscite in areas under their control. Ever since, India has been rejecting all resolutions of the Security Council and the proposals of the UN arbitrators for demilitarization of the region-all of which were accepted by Pakistan.

## The Security Council Steps In

Although the resolutions of the Security Council were regarded as the 'documents of reference' for a durable and internationally acceptable solution, no steps were ever taken for their implementation. This was because in technical terms these were not enforceable-not having been based under Chapter VII of the Charter. This allowed India to get away, dashing the false expectations of the Kashmiris as to the possible role of the United Nations as a facilitator of a solution to the Kashmir problem.

This injustice to the Kashmiri people was intrinsically linked to the veto privilege of the permanent members of the Security Council and the lack of unanimity between them for enforcement measures according to Articles 41 and 42 of the Charter. Their plight is similar to that of the Palestinians, in whose case also resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) that call upon Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories are not based on Chapter VII and have hence enabled the occupying country, Israel, to ignore them.

That the United Nations Organization follows double standards was clearly visible when it adopted compulsory resolutions in other conflict situations, such as in case of the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990-1991, where the US-a permanent member, having an interest in the matter, was able to force the hand of other permanent members to do its bidding.

The cease fire line between the Indian and Pakistani sides of Kashmir has since become the Line of Control and continues to be monitored by UN observers.

## India Annexes the Disputed Occupied Kashmir

Thereafter, ignoring the Security Council resolutions, disregarding the internationally accepted 'disputed' status of the state and defying the will of the people, India went on to annex Occupied Kashmir into the Indian Union through an amendment to its Constitution, claiming it to be an integral part of India. For its part, Pakistan continues to regard the part of Kashmir under its control as disputed territory and allows it self-rule. It continues to plead for a final settlement taking the position that the people of Kashmir on both sides must get the right to choose their future through self-determination.

## People of Kashmir Demand the Right Of Self-Determination

The people of Kashmir had begun to wage a struggle against the Hindu Raja's rule as far back as in 1931 and refused to accept Indian occupation from the day it was imposed in 1947. Their struggle has since intensified and they have called for accession of a united Kashmir to Pakistan. Rejecting their demand, successive Indian governments have tried to suppress the struggle by use of force.

Writing in Kashmir Watch of July 11, 2010, a Kashmiri academic, Dr. Manzoor Alam, urged world bodies like the Arab League, OIC, Asia watch, human rights organizations and the European Union to make a paradigm shift in their policies and move from 'mere condemnation' to throwing their political weight and resources behind the Kashmiris in their freedom struggle. "[W]e are talking about freedom from India which is our basic and fundamental right and this right was promised to us by Jawaharlal Nehru on June 26, 1952. We make an earnest and urgent appeal to the conscience of the world to act promptly to save Kashmir and her people. It is time for the United Nations to wake up to its responsibilities. It has to assume its duty in saving millions of Kashmiri lives. Enough is enough."

## Grave Human Rights Violations

Indian troops in combination with paramilitary forces and state police have let loose a consistent and massive reign of terror on unarmed civilians. Men, women, and children, young and old, are being indiscriminately killed, injured and maimed and women are being raped with impunity.

A recent report on Human Rights violations states that that between 1989 to June 30, 2010 the number of Kashmiris killed at the hands of Indian security forces stands at 93,274. Additionally, there have been 6,969 custodial killings, over 107,351 children have been orphaned, 22,728 women widowed and 9,920 women gang raped. In June 2010 alone, 33 people were killed including four children, 572 people were tortured and injured and 8 women were molested, 117,345 people were arrested and 105,861 houses or structures in the use of the communities were razed or destroyed.

Human rights groups blame the culture of impunity among security forces in Kashmir on a controversial 1990 national law granting soldiers the right to detain or eliminate all suspected terrorists and destroy their property without fear of prosecution. Critics call this provision a license to kill as it does not clearly define 'terrorists'.

The murky cycle of violence is picking up speed. The killing of innocent civilians draws protests in all nooks and corners of the state by enraged people which in turn provoke the security forces to indulge in more killing. More recently, the state has remained on a knife's edge since June 11, when angry protests began against the killing by Indian security forces of three 11th grade teenagers without provocation. This continues to happen also because the state or the federal government does not believe in explaining their actions or carrying out investigations and punishing those who use excessive force. Instead, the Indian government proudly calls all of these achievements as successful counter-insurgency operations.

To punish the Muslim population of Jammu and Kashmir for the uprising, the state machinery is economically strangulating it through the ruthless action of road blockades that have resulted in acute shortages of foodstuff, medicines and other critical items of daily use in the valley. Protestors were fired upon earlier this month, resulting in the loss of hundreds of innocent lives, including some prominent leaders.

## India Attempts Demographic Changes

Under a well thought out plan, India has brought about a demographic change in Jammu after the Hindu rule was imposed in October 1947. Muslims constituted 62% of the population there according to a 1941 census, a percentage that now stands in the 30s. The Indian government is now focusing on the Kashmir valley where land allotments to Hindus from outside the state are being made to encourage population transfer in order to reduce the Muslim majority.

## India Cold Shoulders Pakistan's Out Of The Box Solutions

Pakistan's willingness, as stated by Pakistan's former President Pervez Musharraf, to get away from old paradigms and launch fresh proposals for a just and durable solution, did not draw

any bold steps or a concrete response from India. Although he went so far as to say that for the sake of a settlement, options that are "unacceptable to either side" should be set aside and he went on to float the idea in December 2005 of a "United States of Kashmir" that would include all regions, India did not show any interest in engaging in a meaningful dialogue. India has continued hedging the core issue and has instead been raising peripheral issues one after the other as an evasive tactic. It has been demanding confidence building measures before any dialogue could seriously get underway but even these CBMs initiated by Pakistan did not prove enough. The track II diplomacy has also not been able to achieve much. This causes frustrations, not only for Pakistan but also among the Kashmiris, causing a very volatile climate, further raising the political temperature.

## In Search Of The Solution

After six decades of bloodshed and armed confrontation, Indian leaders should realize the impossibility of sweeping the issue under the carpet or keeping the Kashmiris subjugated through force, an option which has acquired an entirely new dimension due to India and Pakistan having become nuclear powers. It is now time that India should move, and move with sincerity, towards resolving the dispute with the following in mind:

(a) A solution must be pursued not only on the basis of bilateral approach involving India and Pakistan but also on the tripartite level that would take into account the wishes of the people of Kashmir.

(b) Kashmir must be treated as an issue of basic human rights, which forms part of the jus cogens of general international law. Kashmir is also an issue of religious rights and identity where the majority Muslim community has been adversely affected by the partition along the "Line of Control".

(c) Kashmir is not only a regional issue in terms of territorial claims by three states, including China, but it is, at the same time, a matter concerning the international community since it has implications for global peace and security. The nuclear potential of the three powers actually controlling parts of the disputed territory can simply not be ignored.

(d) The struggle of the people of Kashmir must not be confused with the so-called "global war on terror", which happens to be a superpower agenda that is alien to this conflict. Instead of falling in this trap and making this issue further intractable, India needs to understand the dictum: "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter."

(e) In the interest of finding a durable solution, India will have to move away from the police and military approach, or as India likes to put it, as "a battle against terrorists". Instead of dealing with symptoms, it must address the root cause of the conflict-the question of self-determination.

(f) Police brutalities, rape and other human rights violations will have to come to an end and have to be prosecuted with full determination and without bias. At the same time, deliberate attacks on civilians will have to be terminated once and for all.

(g) The legacy of the Security Council resolutions 38 and 47 (1948) as well as the resolutions adopted by the UNCIP in 1948 and 1949 cannot be discarded, in spite of the time that has elapsed since their adoption, as these have neither become obsolete, nor invalid nor have they been recalled by the Council at any stage. On the other hand, ten years after the initial resolutions, Security Council resolution 122 (1957) reaffirmed the same democratic principle as basis of a just solution. India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru is on record fully endorsing this principle when on November 2, 1947 he said: "We have declared that the fate of Kashmir is ultimately to be decided by the people. That pledge we have given [...] not only to the people of Kashmir but of the world. We will not, and cannot back out of it. We are prepared when peace and law and order have been established to have a referendum held under international auspices like the United Nations."

It is time for Indian present leadership to listen to its founding fathers, if it does not wish to listen to the rest of the world.

## ~ International news ~

### Pakistani passenger plane crashes

A plane of a Pakistani private airliner Wednesday crashed into the Margalla Hills in the Pakistani capital Islamabad and killed all the 152 people aboard.

The Airblue Flight ED-202, flying from the country's southern port city of Karachi to Islamabad, came down in the Margalla Hills at about 9:45 a.m. (local time), aviation officials said.

The Margalla Hills, the foothills of the Himalayas, are a series of small-elevation hills sprawling on the northeast part of Islamabad.

There were 146 passengers, including at least 20 women and seven children with two infants, and six crew members killed in the plane crash.

Shortly after the incident happened, a large number of rescue teams have been dispatched to the crash site.

Rescue teams have so far recovered 105 bodies from the site of the crash, said Major General Nadeem Ahmed with the National Disaster Management Authority, adding that the search operation, which was once suspended due to heavy rains, will continue into the night time. He said rescue teams faced problems due to bad weather.

A statement from the Airblue, to which the crashed plane belonged, said that the plane "crashed during poor weather and thick fog". Islamabad had been receiving heavy monsoon rains over the past two days.

"We regret the loss of lives and are investigating the exact circumstances of this tragedy. This will be presented as soon as possible," said the Airblue statement on its website.

Chief of Pakistan's International Airlines, Ijaz Haroon, said that preliminary investigation suggests that the pilot error may have caused the crash.

Most of the people killed in the plane crash are local Pakistanis. There are two Americans and one Somali reportedly killed in the crash too. The death of the two Americans has been confirmed by the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. However, the embassy failed to give further details about the two killed.

The Civil Aviation Authority has ordered an investigation into the crash. A five-member inquiry board has been set up and is headed by Abdul Majid Khawaja, the Chairman of Aviation Safety Investigation Board, Air Command.

Aviation officials at the Karachi airport said that the plane was declared fit for flight.

Information Minister Amar-uz-Zaman Kaira said that black box has been found which he said will help to determine real cause of the crash. He said the nation will be informed about the cause of the crash.

However, experts say that the black box will be sent to the United States for decoding and it will take at least two to three months before the report can come out.

### Iran defies fresh EU sanctions

Iranian officials said Wednesday that new sanctions will bear no impact on the country following European Union's (EU) fresh sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Wednesday that the sanctions against Iran over its sensitive nuclear program will have no impact on the country, local satellite Press TV reported.

Making the remarks at the inaugural ceremony of two projects in the southern Iranian gas-rich zone of Assaluyeh in Bushehr province, Ahmadinejad said "we do not welcome sanctions but we declare that Iran has mounted its efforts" to overcome the sanctions.

He advised foreign companies to abandon the imposed sanctions against Iran, otherwise "they will soon lose markets in other countries as well as in Iran," said the report.

EU foreign ministers on Monday approved tougher sanctions against Iran over Tehran's nuclear program, including restrictions on banking and insurance, transport and investment in new oil and gas fields or technical assistance to oil and gas development.

Head of Iran's Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi said Wednesday that EU's sanctions are a loss for Europeans and prevent their companies from cooperating with Iran, the semi-official ISNA news agency reported.

Boroujerdi urged the Iranian government to cooperate only with countries that do not take "illegal actions against Iran," according to the report.

### S Korea, U.S. wrap up joint military drills

South Korea and the United States on Wednesday wrapped up the four-day joint military drills.

The two allies continued with anti-submarine exercises in waters off the east coast of the divided Korean Peninsula on the last day of the drills, in which the two nations' troops practiced transporting logistical support for the soldiers when they face aerial, underwater and maritime threats from enemy.

Code-named "Invincible Spirit," the four-day naval and air maneuvers, starting from Sunday and involving 20 ships and submarines, 200 aircraft and 8,000 troops from the two nations, included anti-submarine drills, naval live-fire exercises, aerial training and computer-based simulation exercises.

It was the first in a series of similar joint exercises to be conducted in coming months, part of military "countermeasures" against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), who was blamed for sinking a South Korean warship with a torpedo in March, which took 46 lives of South Korean sailors. But Pyongyang denied any involvement.

Apart from the annual Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercises between Seoul and Washington, which will take place in the period from Aug. 16 to Aug. 26, the two allies will also stage joint military drills in waters off the west coast of the Korean Peninsula in September, and will conduct similar drills every month till the end of this year, in a bid to "prevent the warship sinking case from recurrence", local media reported, citing senior military sources.

In response, the DPRK on Tuesday said it did not fear "military threats" and "warnings" by the United States and South Korea, calling the war games, planned maneuvers for later this year and new sanctions threats against Pyongyang were "serious provocations" to the DPRK and "trude challenges" to the international community appealing for peace. Pyongyang also threatened a "retaliatory sacred war" against the show of joint military prowess.

China has also expressed its concern over the drills near the country, urging relevant parties to "remain calm and exercise restraint and not do anything to exacerbate regional tensions."

(Xinhua)

# A crying need for change

**Editor's Note:** When Hugo Chávez was re-elected president of Venezuela in 2006, he told us that "We must now deepen the revolution". He also told us that he did not know what the New Socialism of the 21st Century will look like tomorrow, only that we must solve problems from day to day and year to year, using the socialist model as our guide. President Chávez has always rejected top-down government and maintained that power must originate and stream from the bottom up. Those are not only words. The 1999 Venezuelan constitution and the Chávez government have been developing socialism structurally, systematically building institutions like communal councils which govern from below in a participatory democracy as opposed to following a representative democracy. The capitalist media has consistently portrayed Chávez as a dictator for one reason: He represents what frightens capitalists and what they abhor most - a radical power-shift to the bottom.

I OFTEN think that one of the tremendous tricks of capitalism is getting us to accept an absurd state of affairs as normal-inevitable even.

THE MARXIST tradition has not had a whole lot to say about exactly what socialism will look like. Why?

It's worth noting that Karl Marx was not the first socialist. As long as we've had class society, there have been people who dreamed of a better world, and the utopian socialists of Marx's day not only dreamed, but came up with elaborate blueprints of what their wonderful future world would look like.

The utopians had a lot of good insights, but ultimately, there were limitations to their approach.

First of all, they were what philosophers would call "idealists"--meaning that they thought the key to changing the world was the right idea of what to do. The problem is that a future socialist society needs more than good ideas. It needs the natural and technological advances that make it possible to produce the necessities of life and all the other things that people need and want. And it needs an organized human force that can create a new society.

## Intra-party...

However, there were assumed to have patched up their differences at least in the case of proposing Dahal as the next premier.

Bhattarai believes that the formation of a consensus government is simply sine qua non to accomplish the constitution writing and peace processes in a smooth manner.

He is also ready to take the reign of new consensus government of the political understanding for the same is achieved.

If the third round of election for selecting new prime minister slated for August 2 again proves a fiasco, the Bhattarai's party position might be strengthened.

But, the possibility of Bhattarai drawing more bitter blame from his anti-camp of sabotaging the party's effort to make Dahal Prime Minister is also equally strong.

Likewise, CPN (UML), that remained neutral in both the two ballots for Prime Minister, is also suffering internal bleedings.

When the faction led by K.P. Oli and Madhav Kumar Nepal is speaking in favour of supporting the NC to lead a new majority dispensation, another coler led by UML chairman Jhala Nath Khanal insists to go for a national

## Leela Yellesetty, Socialist Worker

To their credit, many of the utopians realized that simply having a good idea wasn't enough, so they tried to convince the wealthy to adopt their plans and commit themselves to constructing the socialist utopia. There was a problem with this, though--to the extent that these utopians involved helping out the poor and therefore cutting into the bottom line, the wealthy weren't all that interested.

As much as many of them sympathized with working people, the utopian socialists saw workers mainly as victims, and not as people who could run society for themselves. Rather, an enlightened ruler or a technocratic elite who know what was best would have to rule on their behalf, at least until the masses could be properly educated.

Marx and Frederick Engels took issue with this idea. Even if we accept that it's true that people need to be educated, he said we still have to ask: Who educates the educator? Rather than ideas developing in a vacuum in the minds of a few important individuals, Marx and Engels argued that people's ideas are shaped by the material conditions of the society in which they live.

Put another way, as Marx once wrote, human beings "make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past." That is, you have to start with the reality of how society is organized to try and understand how change happens.

Marx himself didn't come to his own ideas in a vacuum. He was living at the very beginnings of capitalism. That's not something we're often reminded of--how new capitalism is relative to human history. Not too long before, it was generally accepted that the king was appointed to rule by god, and the serfs did what they were told, and that's just how it was.

Capitalism marked a tremendous advance over this preceding system of feudalism. Yet even in its infancy, the antagonism between the working class

and capitalists was becoming apparent, leading to a wave of class struggle across Europe in 1848--just weeks after Marx and Engels' Communist Manifesto was published.

SO WHAT were the key insights that Marx and Engels put forward?

They were the first to find a material--not just a moral--basis for socialism. They maintained that capitalism produced, in the working class, its gravedigger--a class with both the interest and the ability to paralyze the system and create a new society, because the working class produces all the wealth that the capitalists siphon off.

Second, unlike all other classes in history, the working class has no interests apart from those of humanity as a whole. Unlike the bourgeois revolutions--like France's revolution of 1789, for example--that replaced the rule of one minority class by the rule of another minority, a working class revolution would ultimately abolish class distinction altogether.

Last and crucially: It is in the process of becoming united and struggling against capitalism that the working class rids itself of what Marx called "the muck of ages"--that is, all the rotten ideas drilled into us by the existing system--and becomes fit to found society anew. For this very reason, the central premise for Marx from the beginning was that the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself. There is no other way for socialism to become a reality--if you agree with Marx's definition.

Not everyone does, even if they claim to be following Marx. The debate between socialism from above vs. socialism from below has continued over the years in various forms. The Stalinists who came to rule over the former USSR said their regime was socialism--and there are socialists who believe that we only need to elect socialists into a majority in the government.

Against such advocates of socialism from above, the U.S. socialist

Eugene Debs warned: "If I can lead you into the promised land, I can just as easily lead you back out again."

Those who follow in Marx's tradition believe that genuine socialism is first and foremost about worker's democratic control of society. That means, like Marx, we don't draw up detailed plans of what a socialist society would look like. After all, it will be up to the people who live in that society to figure out and decide democratically.

But while it would be silly to make detailed plans for how, for instance, the municipal water system would work under socialism, we can and should say some general things about what socialism would look like. Here are a few things that I think would be high on the list:

-- We'd have real universal health care--that is, everyone gets health care for free. Period.

-- We'd bail out homeowners instead of bankers. But why stop there? We could also take all the homeless people and put them in houses that are empty. It's not rocket science: Just put the people in the houses.

-- We'd stop throwing away food and get it to people who are hungry.

-- We'd end all wars and use the money for education and social services.

-- We'd devote massive resources and scientific research to saving the environment.

These are just a few steps a socialist society would take. They're all quite simple to accomplish, using just a fraction of the wealth in the hands of the rich and the resources existing in society. For that matter, they're not all that radical--most people already support them. Only under a sick system do they seem so impossible.

Another kind of society is possible. And the reason we can say this with certainty is a series of historical experiences of struggles and movements that have shown--if only for a brief time--what amazing things are possible when the working class runs the show. Those examples are the subject of the next part of this article.

demands as a bargaining chip with an intention to grab more power and privileges in their fold in the future political set-up, state experts.

The political credential of the Madhes based parties has always been ambivalent and doubtful.

They had blamed the UML as the most conservative party with regard to Madhes demands.

But, ironically, they supported the present caretaker coalition led by UML leader Madhav Nepal to reinforce the southern neighbour to foxily turn the country's political events in its favour.

If the NC gets a promising chance to form the government, the Madhes parties will definitely not support the Maoists as New Delhi does not want the formal rebels to ascend to the power corridor.

The prime reason behind the immature fall of the then Maoist-led coalition government was strictly the displeasure of New Delhi towards the Maoists.

If the two parties come in terms with the SLMM to get their support on the issues that cannot be fulfilled immediately, it will be a disastrous for the country.

From every vintage point, the demands for the right to self-determination and single Madhes one province will not augur well to the territorial integrity of the nation.

facility in foreign exchange allowing the firms to export goods more than worth US\$ 500,000 at a time from existing US\$ 200,000.

Deposit amount that the exporters should guarantee on the basis of bank guarantee or cash against document (CAD) has also been slashed to 1 percent from the existing 5 percent.

The interest rate for refinancing credits from the central bank has also been slashed to 7 percent from existing 7.5 percent on which the BFls can not charge more than 10 percent interest to their customers. The NRB will direct the BFls to double their lending to the productive sectors such as agriculture, energy, tourism and small and cottage industries within the next three years.

In order to expand the financial services to the needy people, the NRB will be flexible regarding the expansion of expanding presence of financial institutions by enabling "D" and "C" class Fls to venture into some 30 districts with low financial access.

## Be aware...

capitalizing upon the breakneck race for premiership to fulfill those controversial demands, which remained unfulfilled earlier.

Of course, the Madhes based parties might also have forwarded these

## ~ News ~

### No option to national consensus govt: Bhattarai

Unified CPN (Maoist) vice chairman Baburam Bhattarai has reiterated there is no option to a national consensus government comprising of UCPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress (NC), UML and the Madhes-based parties for successful completion of the peace process and timely promulgation of the constitution.

At a meeting with British ambassador to Nepal Andrew Hall at his residence in Naya Baneshwar Wednesday morning Bhattarai stressed on the need of a national consensus government saying a majority government like the present one cannot serve the agenda of peace and constitution.

Hall had gone to Bhattarai's residence to pay a courtesy call before returning after completing his tenure in Nepal.

At the meeting British ambassador Hall asked Bhattarai about the future political course as the legislature parliament failed to elect Prime Minister twice.

In response, Bhattarai said the parties should strive for a consensus before the next election on August 2 and find an alternative way to form a consensus government if the elections on August 2 also fail to elect a PM.

Bhattarai returned to Kathmandu after staying for few days in Kakani, Nuwakot. His statement about changing the parliamentary regulations for national consensus government had drawn criticism from leaders close to chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal earlier.

### Madhesi parties won't stay neutral in Aug 2 run-off: Yadav

Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) chairman Upendra Yadav has said the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF), the alliance of four Madhesi parties including MJF, will not stay neutral in the third prime ministerial run-off slated for August 2.

"We have been discussing that we should not stay neutral in the next voting for the prime minister. We will arrive at a decision by then," Yadav said while speaking at the Reporters Club Wednesday.

"We are clear that the nation should get new prime minister on August 2," he said, "The ball in the court of the Maoists and the Nepali Congress." According to him, the UDMF will support a party that agrees on the terms set by it.

The Madhesi parties will launch agitation jointly if the issues raised by them are not addressed, he warned.

"Federalism became possible only after the 22-point and 8-point agreements with Madhesi parties. Now we are demanding implementation of these agreements," he added.

Denying the allegations that the Madhesi parties are engaging in a bargain, the MJF chief said his party is maintaining equal distance with the Nepali Congress and the Unified CPN (Maoist) and that it is being wrongly accused of being closer to the Maoists.

### Government lifts Iraq working ban

The government in Nepal has lifted a ban that prohibited Nepalis from seeking work in Iraq.



The ban had left 30,000 Nepalis already in Iraq at risk of losing their jobs because of a demand by the US for contractors to prove that their staff were in Iraq legitimately.

The ban was introduced in 2004 when 12 Nepalis working in Iraq were killed.

Correspondents say the comparatively high wages made tens of thousands defy the ban.

The government said it took the decision to protect the interests of migrant workers in Iraq after the US Central Command directed all companies working for it to remove workers not in compliance with local, international and US laws.

It is estimated that most of the 30,000 Nepalese working in Iraq got there through illegal channels.



# San Miguel BEER

## International :

# How likely is an American attack on Iran?

Plenty of experts have offered their views over the years on whether the United States is prepared to launch a military attack against Iran's nuclear program, but when a former

David Harris

"It seems inexorable, doesn't it? We engage. They continue to move forward. We vote for sanctions. They continue to move forward. We try to

state that has been the focus of verbal attacks by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"Israel, over the past 5 years, has been incessantly threatening Iran with a preemptive attack, warning that it would not allow Iran to achieve nuclear technology," said Iranian journalist Kourosh Ziabari.

That is a theme picked up by David Ricci, a professor of politics and American studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The last thing Obama wants right now is for the Israelis to be center stage in some form of strike against Tehran, he believes.

"That would be the worst kind of solution if there is to be any solution," Ricci said on Monday.

Hayden's comments could possibly have been aimed at Israel, according to Shmuel Sandler, a senior researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies in Bar-Ilan University near Tel Aviv.

One way of reading the former CIA's remarks is to say that he was telling the Israelis not to have itchy fingers, that the United States is in charge of the situation and that it will act when necessary.

"The American's relationship with the Arab and Muslim countries is already complicated enough, they don't need us to stir up the waters further," Ricci told Xinhua.

## SPIN?

Ricci feels that Hayden's comments need to be analyzed within a broader context. The American's, he argues, need to be seen to be saying something on the Iranian front every couple of days.

"They are scattering all kinds of threats, here and there," he said.

This could well be a case of psychological pressure, Sandler agreed, but he warns that can come with a heavy price.

"You can't bluff on these matters. Deterrence isn't just about applying pressure, you have to be able to back it up," he said.

Ricci though, points out that Hayden is no longer an American official, having retired from national

service. Were his comments to have been made by a current director of the CIA, then it would be time to sit up and listen, he said.

That of course does not mean being totally dismissive of Hayden's comments but rather understanding that they bear no formal weight.

## TIME FACTOR

Whatever the underlying reason for Hayden's views, whether stated out of self motivation or on instructions from the Obama administration, their message is clear. The United States is increasingly of the opinion that time is running out.

Ever since the Americans and more so the Israelis first caught wind of a possible secret Iranian nuclear weapons program, they have been both clock-watching. Every few weeks, a military figure, a think tank or a former defense official in either Washington or Israel offers a comment on just how well prepared the Iranians are or are not.

Whenever an ex-intelligence chief suggests nuclear weapons will be ready for action in 18 months, or less, panic buttons are seemingly hit in the United States and Israel, with journalists often leading the bandwagon.

Sandler's analysis of Hayden's words is that the former CIA chief likely believes some form of action needs to be taken sooner rather than later but that does not mean the Americans are ready for an imminent attack.

The Bar-Ilan professor does think it is worthwhile watching events in Pakistan and in particular in Afghanistan as an American pullout of forces from the region could happen roughly in parallel with any tactical strike against Iran.

For Sandler, the issue of timing is highly significant. World War I broke out because of matters of timing, he emphasizes. He thinks Hayden's message is that the time is almost upon Obama to decide whether he will continue down the seemingly unsuccessful road of sanctions and talks or plump for the probably decisive but clearly destructive option of an early military attack on Iran.

## Joint naval drill only benefits militaries

The massive joint military drill by the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK), which began Sunday in the Sea of Japan, is intended to show off its mighty power.



But that is simply to state the obvious. No one today doubts that the US, whose defense spending accounts for half of the world's total, is superior militarily than any other country on earth.

The US and the ROK have sent about 20 ships, 200 aircraft and 8,000 sailors and airmen to the Sea of Japan. These drills plan to display a fleet of F-22 fighters and the USS George Washington, a 97,000-tonnage nuclear-powered aircraft carrier that is one of the largest in the US navy.

The US, by time and again reminding other countries of how inferior their militaries are and how afraid they must feel, has only encouraged them to increase, not decrease, their military build-up.

The US always says it feels uneasy about China's growing military spending, but it does not seem to realize that such a large and prolonged drill, which US officials say might move to the Yellow Sea in the coming months, could be one of the main reasons why China makes a strong argument for the modernization of its military.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the primary target of the ongoing military exercise, is also unlikely to back down in the face of the American power display, as anyone who understands its rationale can tell.

That will make it far more difficult to find a solution to the DPRK's worrisome nuclear program. The Six-Party Talks, which involve the two Koreas, the US, China, Japan and Russia, is also less likely to resume under such escalated tension.

For anyone who finds it hard to understand why the Chinese should be uneasy, angry or even threatened by the drill, think of this: What will Americans feel if the Chinese or Russian military travel across the ocean to hold their exercises in the high seas not far from the coast of Florida, New York or California?

While some claim that the ongoing war game, with the codename "Invincible Spirit", is intended to preserve peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, it is exactly the opposite. Military drill as a show of hostility instead of hospitality destroys the basis for trust, dialogue and cooperation. It will only make the issues in the Korean Peninsula even more complicated.

Such a drill is bad news for the peoples in every country involved because it wastes money at a time of great financial difficulty. However, it is great news for the military.

Facing huge budget cuts in the coming years due to a federal deficit reduction plan, the US military leaders would still hope to find an excuse to justify its colossal spending. Military expenditure even now makes up about 5 percent of the US gross domestic product (GDP).

To justify its monstrous budget plan, the US military needs to convince the Congress that there are still threats to American interests everywhere in the world. Otherwise, the Congress is unlikely to approve the appropriation of the colossal amount, especially when the US federal deficit exceeds \$1.4 trillion.

I have heard the same kind of military rhetoric, of "threat everywhere", during my visit to Camp Smith, the US Pacific Command based in Honolulu, Hawaii, in the 1990s. A top military officer who described the Chinese military threat in the South China Sea was arguing even then for a stepped-up US naval presence.

It is no wonder that the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton tried to play up China's threat in the South China Sea last week. She just proved herself to be yet another lobbyist for the US military by employing the same old trick.

Sino-US relations have become stronger in the last decades. Please do not let the militaries hijack those ties.

(Source: China Daily)



head of the CIA says that is an increasingly likely possibility, it is arguably time to sit up and take note.

Michael Hayden was sworn in as the 20th director of the Central Intelligence Agency on May 31, 2006, at a time when Iran was very much a key focus for the American overseas intelligence arm.

He offered his assessment of the Iranian nuclear threat on Sunday's edition of "State of the Union", a news chat show on the American television network CNN.

"Iran doesn't seem to be paying much attention to the sanctions. As far as we know, they are still trying to get nuclear capability. If it should, is there any alternative to taking out their facilities?" the show's anchor Candy Crowley asked Hayden.

deter, to dissuade. They continue to move forward," the retired Air Force general replied.

In his opinion, Tehran does have a secret nuclear weapons program, despite its denials. He maintains that Iran "will get itself to that step right below a nuclear weapon, that permanent breakout stage, so the needle isn't quite in the red for the international community."

That, Hayden contends, "will be as destabilizing as their actually having a weapon."

The idea that the United States under President Barack Obama would strike against Iran has largely been sidelined by what has always seemed the more likely option: that any military attack would be carried out by Israel. After all, it is the Jewish

## War Revealed: Releases 75,000 secret US military reports

Wiki Leaks

The Afghan War Diary an extraordinary secret compendium of over

91,000 reports covering the war in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2010. The reports describe the majority of lethal military actions involving the United States military. They include the number of persons internally slated to be killed, wounded, or detained during each action, together with the precise geographical location of each event, and the military units involved and major weapon systems used.

The Afghan War Diary is the most significant archive about the reality of war to have ever been released during the course of a war. The deaths of tens of thousands is normally only a statistic but the archive reveals the locations and the key events behind each most of these deaths. We hope its release will lead to a comprehensive understanding of the war in Afghanistan and provide the raw ingredients necessary to change its course.

Most entries have been written by soldiers and intelligence officers listening to reports radioed in from

front line deployments. However the reports also contain related information from Marines intelligence, US Embassies, and reports about corruption and development activity across Afghanistan.

Each report consists of the time and precise geographic location of an event that the US Army considers significant. It includes several additional standardized fields: The broad type of the event (combat, non-combat, propaganda, etc.); the category of the event as classified by US Forces, how many were detained, wounded, and killed from civilian, allied, host nation, and enemy forces; the name of the reporting unit and a number of other fields, the most significant of which is the summary - an English language description of the events that are covered in the report.

The Diary is available on the web and can be viewed in chronological order and by over 100 categories assigned by the US Forces such as: "escalation of force", "friendly-fire",

"development meeting", etc. The reports can also be viewed by our "severity" measure-the total number of people killed, injured or detained. All incidents have been placed onto a map of Afghanistan and can be viewed on Google Earth limited to a particular window of time or place. In this way the unfolding of the last six years of war may be seen.

The material shows that cover-ups start on the ground. When reporting their own activities US Units are inclined to classify civilian kills as insurgent kills, downplay the number of people killed or otherwise make excuses for themselves. The reports, when made about other US Military units are more likely to be truthful, but still down play criticism. Conversely, when reporting on the actions of non-US ISAF forces the reports tend to be frank or critical and when reporting on the Taliban or other rebel groups, bad behavior is described in comprehensive detail. The behavior of the Afghan Army and Afghan authorities are also

frequently described.

The reports come from US Army with the exception most Special Forces activities. The reports do not generally cover top-secret operations or European and other ISAF Forces operations. However when a combined operation involving regular Army units occurs, details of Army partners are often revealed. For example a number of bloody operations carried out by Task Force 373, a secret US Special Forces assassination unit, are exposed in the Diary - including a raid that led to the death of seven children.

This archive shows the vast range of small tragedies that are almost never reported by the press but which account for the overwhelming majority of deaths and injuries.

We have delayed the release of some 15,000 reports from total archive as part of a harm minimization process demanded by our source. After further review, these reports will be released, with occasional redactions, and eventually, in full, as the security situation in Afghanistan permits.

## At least 37 killed as Henan bridge collapses

At least 37 people are dead - and 19 others are missing - in Henan province after the Tangying Bridge collapsed into the Yihe River in Tangying village, Luanchuan county, on Saturday.

Over 4,000 people, including soldiers from Luanchuan and nearby Songxian county, are searching the area for possible survivors and the bodies of the victims, according to Li Guangming, the deputy head of Luanchuan government office.

Six people were rescued, and are being treated at a local hospital. Li Xianghong, from Dawangmiao village, is one of the survivors, and he says that he was one of the many people who were watching the floods from the bridge. "The southern part of the bridge fell first. We all fell into the river. The next thing I knew - I was holding onto a willow tree 200 meters away from the bridge," he says.

A villager surnamed Li said the bridge was repaired last year after it "partly collapsed".

An official with the Luanchuan transport bureau said trees which were toppled by the rainstorms caused extra pressure on the bridge, causing it to collapse.

The provincial transport bureau of Henan is investigating the cause of the accident.

# Mt. Kailash, Gosainkunda, Panch Pokhari and Dudh Kunda trekking



the small village, passing through the dense forestations and meadows. The top of Panch Pokhari (5 lakes) offers an excellent view of Jugal Himal range, Rolwaling range, Gosainkunda etc. On the last day of the trip we take a bus ride back to Kathmandu from Melamchi where we spend the final night of our trip, Himalayan ranges of Gauri Shankar and Rolwaling, Magnificent mountain views of Jugal Himal, Dorjee Lhakpa (6,966m), Madiya (6,257m) and Phurbi Chhyachu (6,637m). Explore one of the most beautiful valleys in Nepal, off touristy route and authentic Nepalese life style, know the production Method of cheese.

## Dudh Kunda

Dudh Kunda Trek is one of the newly developed route in the Everest Region which has the potential to get developed. There are two main areas for trek in Everest Region. One is Khumbu and another one is known as Solu. Solu is far less traffic than Khumbu, which is making more cherished and real experience of the Trek. In side this Solu, We have newly discovered the trekking area

## Mount Kailash

Mount Kailash lies in the southwestern part of the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. At 6,714 m (22,027 ft), Mount

up with its fauna and flora and mythical setup of ecosystem. The lake is 20 kms from Mt.Kailash and is one of the most beautiful and sacred lake

an altitude of 4,380 meters and cradled amidst craggy peaks. Thousands of people trek to this glacial lake every August. The trek passes through varied landscapes ranging from evergreen forest, cascading waterfalls and turbulent

place.Panch Pokhari Trek is just northeast of Kathmandu toward snow wall. The beautiful Himalayan view and pristine nature with distinct culture is the most attraction of the trek. After we eat breakfast at the restaurant

hours bus ride we arrive at the trek starting point called



Kailas is the highest peak in the Kailas Range of the Himalayas. Mount Kailas is separated from the Great Himalayas chain by a trough that is drained in the northwest by the Sutlej River and in the southeast by the Yarlung Zangbo River (the extreme upper Brahmaputra River). Mapam Lake, lying just south of Mount Kailash at 4,557 m (14,950 ft), is one of the world's highest lakes.

Mount Kailas, which has religious significance for both Hindus and Tibetan Buddhists, is an important pilgrimage site. For Hindus, the peak is the home of the god Shiva, while Tibetan Buddhists equate the mountain with Mount Sumeru, the cosmic center of the universe

The great lake Mansarovar is situated in the south-west corner of Tibet and in the north-west of Nepal. It beyond high Himalayas which borders Nepal and China. Tibetan plateau in itself is unique in its geographic make

in Asia. It can be circumambulated in four or five days. It is often a gem like cobalt blue color but during storm, it can turn into a churning black sometimes.

According to Hindu and Buddhist epics, the four great rivers of the Indian sub-continent, the Indus, Ganga, Sutlej and Brahmaputra actually arise from Mansarovar. In reality, only the Sutlej originates from the lake. Mansarovar has been circumambulated by the Indian pilgrims at least since being extolled in the sacred Sanskrit literature called the Puranas around 1700 years ago. Legends has that the mother of Buddha, Mayadevi was bathed at Mansarovar by Gods before giving birth to her son.

## Gosainkunda

Gosainkunda lake is the holy lakes for Hindus, Gosainkunda (4,380), where pilgrims congregate on specific days of the year wash off their sins. It is situated at



streams to alpine grass and barren mountainsides. Besides the famous Gosainkunda Lake, the other lakes in the neighborhood are Nagkunda, Bhairabkunda, Saraswatikunda and Surajkunda. Gosainkunda lies to the north-west of Helambu beyond a 4,602-meters high pass. However, the best approach to Gosainkunda is through Trishuli valley, 71 kilometers north-west of Kathmandu. Trishuli valley is linked with Kathmandu. by a motorable road.

## Panch Pokhari

Panch Pokhari is named after 5 holy ponds and Hindus religiously respect the



Chautara. We are going to spend the first night of our outdoor adventure right nearby small town in a ground. Our Guide gives a short lesson of trekking on the first night. He also explains about the altitude sickness and all the beautiful spots from where you can see an excellent view of mountains. During the rest of our 12 days trip, we observe the different ways of life, culture and come in contact with the people in

called Dudh Kunda. This is on the bottom of the Number Himal. Kathmandu to Jiri by drive, then follow the way to Pike Peak and via Goli Gompa. On the 9th day, we will reach our destination, called Dudh Kunda and rest of the day discover around you. Afterward trek down toward to Jiri via Bhanjyang.

In this trek, we will have spectacular view of the Mt. Everest and many more from Pike Peak.

