

THE PROGRESS

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National Magazine



Debate for Progression !

'The pluralism has no other option than creating an ideological clarity and emotional unity'

POLITICS

Why Debate

• Haribol Gajurel

ECONOMY

Policy Challenge

• Dr. Dilli Raj Khanal

MEMOIR

Unique Experience

• Dhruva Parajuli

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A New Beginning

We have come up with a new venture, a monthly magazine. This will be published in the first week of every month of the Gregorian calendar. Taking a progressive standpoint, we will endeavor to cover ranges of issues pertinent to politics, education, culture, social affairs, art and literature, economics, science and technology, tourism, international affairs, health, environment, sports and so on.

You may have a question, why one more when there are already dozens of newspapers and magazines even in the English language in the country. But, we feel that there was always a lacking of a media outlet that would cover shadowed but important issues and affairs. An English paper that would cover national and international issues in a really change-loving way was necessary.

We hope to publish views and analysis about the political and social movement of Nepal from the viewpoint of the justice-loving people. We will always prioritize the oppressed, backward and marginalized community and segments of the society. We firmly believe that the role of the media is to give voices to the voiceless- the poor, oppressed and dominated people, and we will translate our belief into practice.

The media plays an important role as a source of information, education and entertainment. Moreover, it should play an important role for the overall welfare of the society, and thus the media can perform its constructive role for the progressive transformation of the society.

We do not agree with the current trend of corporate media in our country, which is growing less sensitive to the genuine issues of the people. We fully understand and feel the social responsibility of the media, and we are committed to perform it. We understand the role of the media in shaping public perceptions and opinions about significant political and social issues. Keeping this fact in mind, we will try to give the progressive and socialist perspective to national and international events so that people can make a real understanding.

We are not native speakers of English, and we may lack a lot in terms of language skills. Yet, the urgency to bring suppressed views of millions of people in the public has encouraged us to offer **THE PROGRESS** at your hand. We will gratefully welcome all your suggestions, comments or feedbacks regarding all aspects of this monthly - the materials, language and design. •

Brief Political Proposal on the Crisis Developed in the Party, Solution and Future Program



Photo : Dinesh Shrestha

1. The inner struggle of our great and glorious party has reached to a serious turning point. This circumstance has worried both the Nepalese and international proletariat, and the general masses. On the other hand, it has amused Nepali and foreign reactionaries and opportunists. Failing to take any urgent action to control the damage, it is sure that it will be impossible to check the looming danger. Thus, this central committee has a huge challenge to develop new policy and system to resolve the intra-party contradiction and take forward the revolution in a new way ensuring party unity. Historical necessity at the present is to resolve to move forward exercising right to free-will, being harsh to oneself as well as being honest to the proletariat class, working masses, martyrs of great people's war and people's movement and dreams and aspirations of the disappeared fighters.

2. The inner struggle that are developed in our party is, learning from the experiences of international and Nepali communist movement, the

natural consequence of the ideological struggle for taking forward the revolution in present situation. On the other hand, the intervention of the reactionary forces of the nation and outside is responsible for turning this inner-struggle unhealthy, unusual and explosive. The proletariat has no other option than creating an ideological clarity and emotional unity within ourselves, fighting against our errors through the healthy ideological struggle and checking the multi-dimensional intervention of reactionaries and opportunists against the party and revolution. We can have victory over the reactionary intervention by paying attention to our internal shortcomings in line with the scientific conclusion that the internal part has main role in the development of inner-struggle

3. Particular ideological and political line, strategy, tactics and cultural behavior that represent the interests of the proletariat at a particular country, time and circumstances are the bases of a party and party unity. As the development of such types of political lines and behaviours happens on



The present struggle within our party is objectively and ultimately connected with the obligatory struggle that concretise the working-line, strategy, tactics and behaviours in the present time and circumstances.

the relativity of continuous struggle against the unavoidable reflections within the party in between hybrid capitalism and petty burgoise existing in the society, the ideological struggle keeps on going among the trend that sometimes feels the ideology of enemy class as of fellow class, and somtimes it feels the ideology of fellow class as of ememy class, and sometimes against the trends that wanders between these two. The present struggle within our party is objectively and ultimately connected with the obligatory struggle that concretise the working-line, strategy, tactics and behaviours in the present time and circumstances. This is going on clearly against the above mentioned trends. Therefore, the foundations of the party unity shouldn't be searched in individual or group's proclamation; it should be mainly searched in ideological and political working-line, strategy and tactics. This is the only correct Marxist procedure.

4. There is no formal debate on heading towards the mass revolt giving emphasis on the national sovereignty and People's Republic making the People's Federal Republic as the party's main tactics in the present concrete situation of Nepal, to accept the Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the directive principle of the revolution; defend, apply and enrich their fundamental preamble, hold socialism and communism as the ultimate destination and maximum program, and new democracy as party's strategy, its program as minimum program. But, while we are discussing on tactical steps in attaining above goals, the conradictions sometime happen to affect and attract the whole ideology of the party. So, we should concentrate on the contemporary tangible issues of tactics and behaviour rather than on abstract

and strategic issues of ideology to solve the problems. Obviously, relation of the contemporary tactics and behaviour is connected with certain strategy. And, we should make sure that the relation of tactics is connected with revolutionary strategy.

5. The tactical line taken by the party on the issues of peace, constitution and government is in the centre of intra-party conflict going on in the party at present. Connecting with these subject matters, the theory and strategies of the revolution are dragged in theoretical struggle. Now the question regarding the tactics of Democratic Republic, 12-point understanding, Comprehensive Peace Accord, Interim Constitution, Constituent Assembly, declaration of the federal republic, secularism, institutionalization of theories of proportion and inclusiveness, as the political achievements of the portion of new capitalist democratic revolution and move forward institutionalizing these and stepping on these achievements to complete the remaining task of the new democratic revolution, or the question of moving forward to the process of destruction regarding these as the partial reforms in the reactionary system, is gradually get attracted to the discussion. This question can't be answered on the basis of our wishes but on the objective calculation of the current world order and the balance of power among national and international forces.

Following the resignation of the government led by our party, we tried our best to transform the then deepening political crisis into a crisis conducive for revolution. But that failed despite our conscious and concerted effort. There shall be a critical evaluation of our weaknesses, limitations and the reactionary conspiracy that contributed to our failure. In this connection, we cannot underestimate the people's wishes that Maoist should take the leadership of peace and constitution. These wishes of the people are not baseless; rather these are the result of objective reality we have created through the decade long people's war, 19-day-long people's movement and the commitment we made towards the Constituent Assembly and peace process.

Right at this background, the party started to pay special attention and emphasis in taking the

leadership of peace and constitution making reading people's wish since April (2011). Passing through many ups and downs, the last central committee meeting on August decided to form a government under the leadership of our vice-chairman Baburam Bhattarai with the concrete work-plan on peace process and drafting new constitution. With this directive of the central committee, the standing committee meeting held on 24 August 2011 unanimously endorsed the fundamentals of peace process, constituent assembly and government (in which the decision of handing over the fighters, weapons and containers of the cantonments to the special committee also includes).

On the directives of above decisions to take leadership of peace and constitution making, four-point agreements was forged with the Madhesi front and the fact is well-known that the agreement was passed unanimously by the central office and the parliamentary party.

What should be clear here is that army integration and taking constitution drafting process to the logical conclusion is not the dissolution of the revolution, surrender and class-harmonization rather this is new initiative in taking forward the revolution by grasping the lessons of revolution and counter-revolution of the world communist movement and in Nepali circumstances institutionalizing the achievements, and creating four bases in a new way. Understandably, there is the danger of rightist reformism in this new initiative. But, it is impossible to continuously take forward the revolution to the victory without facing this danger. This lesson has been proved by the experiences of world communist movement and even ours. Refusal to draw lessons from the debacle of the international communist movements, failure to make an objective assessment of the balance of power among the classes in society and propensity to stand against the people and their wishes just for the sake of revolution and on the basis of narrow and dogmatic thinking will eventually assist counter-revolution not the revolution.

6. When the government was formed under the leadership of the party following the above-mentioned policy and decision, in less than a week time the intra-party conflict not only intensified within the

party but spilled over the street taking the preliminary decision of the party regarding the handing over the fighter, weapons and key of the container. While holding meetings of standing committee and central committee to solve these problems, seven-point agreements and six-point agreements were made with other political forces; the contradiction came to this point regarding these and their implementation. This has negatively affected party's position in the political battle with other political parties. Party's status in leading the peace process, constitution making and government is getting weaker. If this type of situation is not terminated immediately, the question will be raised on the significance of the party. So, it is very much necessary to take new initiative in terms of thought and procedure to keep Party's trust, its life and unity.

7. Today party's organizational status is catastrophically fragmenting and dissolving. The party should play the role of vanguard of the proletariat class but this is now failing to do even the minimum formalities. In reality the party is dying—groups are flourishing and within the groups the sub-groups are blossoming, and the personal interests of individuals are playing a catalytic role in the sub-groups. Collective decision, personal responsibility, democratic centralism, criticism, self-criticism, levy, quota, economic transparency, sacrifice have been bulldozed by the individual selfishness. Either in this side or the other, everywhere individual greediness has become dominant.

In this condition, it can easily be understood how challenging task of party operation is. Despite this situation, we have the troop comprised of the best representatives of the proletariat class. They are ready to sacrifice anything for the party's rebuilding and renovation. Our party is still the centre point of hope, assurance and attraction of the entire revolutionaries and patriots of the nation. The masses of Nepali people are searching a bright future within our party.

The following task is needed to be done to find out who and what are responsible for the aforementioned situation by setting up forums with the commitment of holding general convention for



The proletariat has no other option than creating an ideological clarity and emotional unity within ourselves, fighting against our errors through the healthy ideological struggle and checking the multi-dimensional intervention of reactionaries and opportunists against the party and revolution.

the party rebuilding:

- A. Calling meetings of all the committees, holding discussions and implementing the decisions; if anyone has the different opinion they will be taken to the forums of the party
- B. Going to the working area as per their responsibility, taking active participation in the organizational works and mass-mobilization.
- C. Collecting minimum levy quota and keeping the financial transactions transparent.
- D. Following the system of criticism and self-criticism and taking this process to the lower levels as well
- E. Taking initiation by the Party to continue the minimum party schooling and publications on proletariat ideals.
- F. Taking initiatives to implement five-point code of conduct endorsed by the latest central committee meeting through certain points.

8. A. On four-point agreement

According to the understanding made in the central office, serious discussions were done with Madhesi front as the formation of government was possible with its consent. Eventually, four-point agreement was implemented only after approving from central office and parliamentary party after the agreement was signed. Some points of that four-point agreement can be discussed but if we see it relatively with the peace, constitution and government formation, this seems necessary and fair.

b. About the keys of the container

It is clear that the decision of handing over

fighters, weapons and key of the container to the special committee is accordingly to the party decision as the latest central committee made concrete work-plan on peace, constitution and government. It is contradictory to argue that fighters, weapons and container could be handed over to the special committee but not the keys of the containers. Any procedural shortcoming while handing over keys of the containers can be evaluated.

c. On seven point agreement:

We should seriously take the fact that the seven-point agreement was objectively necessary to foil the attempt of retrogressive and rightist forces who were trying to dissolve constituent assembly saying the peace process and constitution making process didn't move forward, to decrease the distress and hatred among the people about the political parties, to re-justify that our party is responsible for the peace, constitution and people, and take initiative in making federal constitution that would guarantee the end of class, national, regional and gender oppression. As this agreement was done according to the decision of central office following the theoretical directive of the central committee, it is clear that this is the formal decision of the party. Several points of the seven-point agreement can be discussed, deliberated and evaluated but, it is wrong to say that this is against the party decision.

D. On returning land

According to the party decision to guarantee the peasant's right and return the seized land with an alternative management, party tried to solve the problem of land from Bardiya district. Party Chairman had said there that the right of landless, bonded labours (*kamaiyas*) and tillers would be guaranteed; the political agreement will be implemented without displacing them. Likewise, we should pay attention to the fact that the party has requested the government to solve the problem of *kamaiyas* and landless, give some alternatives to the peasants, and take forward the program of land reform, and works are being forwarded to that direction. In this circumstance, if the party leadership is blamed for indifference towards the right of landless, *kamaiyas* and peasants; it would be baseless, bias and unfair.

E. On BIPPA

The BIPPA (Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement) signed during the Prime Minister's visit with India gave birth to the debate within and outside the party. This kind of debate is quite usual in the backdrop of Nepal's geo-political sensitivity and the serious trade deficit. Because of this sensitivity, the question has arisen, but no question has been raised when same type of agreement was signed with other countries.

We could not hold extensive discussions within the party and at the national level on the pros and cons of the agreement, it was signed even when the signing of the Double Tax Avoidance Agreement was deferred and the Prime Minister also could not remain in touch with the party chairman during the final hours before signing the agreement. Although, Double Tax Avoidance Agreement has been signed, the shortcomings of BIPPA can be rectified by making the domestic laws more powerful, paying ample attention in the letter of exchange and giving priorities to the national interests in terms of foreign investment.

9. On solving the problems

First: Although the debate has been initiated on certain fundamental questions of ideological and political line, the whole party accepts that these debates have arisen with the concerns of future of revolution connecting with today's need of class struggle, and admit that these contradictions remain within the friendly perimeter.

Secondly: End the process of taking political and ideological differences through separate meetings of ideological group, and take collectively set-up party forums and convert them in specific plan and program. To agree in managing the ideological and political discussion through the procedure of forums up to the general convention has become the compulsion to ensure party unity.

Thirdly: Following the collective decision-making procedure while leadership takes decisions, realising the sensitive situation of today's inner-struggle; implementing the decisions of the past and moving forward discussing, and evaluating in committees if necessary.

Fourth: Moving forward devising new plans on making respectable the remaining task of the army integration, managing the fighters who left the cantonments and giving them due respect, relief and managing the families of martyrs and disappeared, forming commissions on disappeared citizens and Reconciliation, and managing the whole-time cadres.

Fifth: Take bold and collective initiative to the questions of applying party decisions in terms of state restructuring (in which no compromise will be made on right to self-determination and federalism with the autonomous regions), forms of governance and guaranteeing specific representation of workers and peasants, and ending the class, national, regional and gender discrimination and oppression.

Sixth: To make the balanced participation in present government we should be ready either reshuffle the cabinet or take the initiative to form a national consensus government under the leadership of the party.

Seventh: It will be guaranteed that the differing opinion would continuously flow to the party's lower ranks until the general convention, and to take some specific ideological and political issues to the public debate but uniformly implementing the party's decisions as per the committee's decision.

Eighth: Devising programs of broad mobilization of party cadres to re-energize the party bases raising the issues of nationality, public welfare and problems of livelihood of the people. For that we should ensure the mobilization of the organisational structures organising meetings of the party, sister organizations, fronts, departments and forums.

Ninth: Moving forward by making new policy and programs of youth mobilization to serve the people.

Tenth: Implementing the five-point directives set by the latest central committee on transformation and related to code of conduct, and central office will take the necessary initiation.

(Chairman Prachanda presented this paper in the central committee meeting of Unified CPN (Maoist) on 23rd December. This is the unofficial translation from the original Nepali version).

Why Debate for Anarchy or Political Line ?



Haribol Gajurel

If we see at the bottom, there is no difference with respect to the basic policy. The last Central Committee made the unanimous decision to move ahead firmly with peace and constitution writing process and be ready for struggle if obstructions emerge in the way.

Essence of Marxism lies in indivisible relationship between theory and practice. To separate these from each other is to give-up Marxism. Dogmatism and empiricism destroy the essence of Marxism by separating theory from practice and thus transform Marxism into an instrument for the service of the capitalist class. Empiricists mend main proposition of Marxism in order to make it acceptable to the capitalist while the dogmatists make a grand display of revolutionary spirit by clinging to issues that are good but impossible to carry out at any given time, and thus they indirectly serve the interests of the propertied class. Such seemingly different tendencies, which have corresponding fundamental elements, stand in the same position whenever a party faces crisis.

Opportunism is characterised by a condition of sticking to the part at the cost of the whole or raising partially correct issues to achieve wrong goal while revolutionary spirit is qualified by an act of abandoning a part for the overall defense of the whole. The content of the present discussions in our party is related to this. However, in addition to attitudinal issues, the present debate is also related to making the political line further more clear so as to tackle

the new and emerging challenges. This is directed by the necessity for new discovery. Main aspect of contradiction is linked with the sorting out of the causes of problems and the search for solution measures.

Although this is the primary aspect, there are other issues pertaining to addressing the sentiment of the leaders and the cadres, which might in turn be associated with individual will, interests and desires (post, reputation and physical comfort). Additionally, an attitude to split the party for serving extremely individual ambition has also been raising its head. This bourgeoisie tendency, which has partially surfaced within the mechanical and narrow thinking trend, is trying to push the party towards a wrong direction. It is effortful in creating illusion within and outside the party, to serve its opportunist goals, by raising partially good and revolutionary issues. By resorting to individual abuse, this trend is corrupting and vulgarizing the ideological struggle and pushing the situation toward confrontation. The present demands that priority should be given to struggle against this anarchic trend.

What holds the top importance is whether the content of the debate in the UCPN-Maoist are

attitudinal issues or the fundamentally different issues. If we see at the bottom, there is no difference with respect to the basic policy. The last Central Committee made the unanimous decision to move ahead firmly with peace and constitution writing process and be ready for struggle if obstructions emerge in the way. For this, it was felt and decided in agreement that Com. Baburam Bhattarai should be the Prime Minister. When the four-point deal was sealed with the Madheshi parties for the sake of performing this responsibility, there was no disagreement at the outset. A difference in stress and angle in course of the debate is natural allowing the attitudinal differences. Increase in contradiction is also natural when desires, aspiration and sentiments are not addressed. But at the moment when emotional aspects which are linked in different forms with post, reputation and facilities have been raised dramatically to theoretical level simply because they have not been adequately addressed. By tainting the leadership with baseless blames, a situation of self-damage is created. Conclusions have been drawn that the party is deviating from fundamental tenets of Marxism. And this issue needs dissection.

1. Comrade Kiran has put question on political line and tactical steps adopted by the second national assembly held in February 2001 by arguing that revisionist deviation started with the thought and policy propagated by the Chunwang meeting. He has drawn the conclusion that the party leadership has deviated from the fundamental theory and policy from that point to the point of the seven-point agreement with the parliamentary parties. If that is the case, we have to say that the 12-point understanding with the parliamentary parties was wrong, and also the subsequent joint people's movement. And this position ultimately requires us to question the achievement of movement-CA and the republican set up. However, they have been standing for peace and new constitution. It does not fit with dialectic relations of causality when we reject the cause and accept the consequence. How can they justify their position of agreeing with the essence and disagreeing with form?

2. Is not it self-contradictory when Com. Kiran raises questions on issues related to political line and

tactical series concretised as adopted by the second national assembly and concretised by the Chunwang meeting and argues that revolt is still possible at present? The dissenting view has fallen prey to inertness because of metaphysical and monolithic concept that separate relations of cause and consequence.

3. Agreement among the parties to conclude the peace process is not only necessary but also inevitable. Two-thirds of majority is needed to promulgate the new constitution and for this, cooperation among the major parties is inescapable. There cannot be agreement when every one sticks to their stand and says my way is highway. To gain something some other thing must be lost, to fill a hole, some land must be dug out. Of course, the party exercised flexibility while consummating the 12-point Understanding and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The party did as well become flexible while making the recent seven-point agreement, which in turn related with the peace process. This has made a good impression on the people that we are honest for peace and constitution. Is it not good to be able to light the illusion of the enemies and gain people's confidence? Had the Chinese Communist party not adopted flexibility in the peace agreement of 1946, it would have been quite difficult to clear the illusion among the masses. Rather than from logic and theory, people understand from practice. Otherwise, we would not be learning from Com Mao. What justification is there when Com Kiran says that we are not against peace and constitution but hints at the need to break cooperation with the parties and dissociate with CA. Is not it good to focus on including fundamental aspect of scientific land reform in the new constitution by returning the small portion of captured land to the owners with consideration that the basic welfare of the working farmers are not harmed? Is it wrong to be flexible in part for the safeguard of the whole? Is it not success to strike agreement on integrating 6,500 PLA members into the Nepal Army with the parliamentary parties when they have all along been rejecting the idea of integration itself? History is witness that, for the safety of the whole or the revolution, Lenin in USSR had made a sacrifice of the part by making agreement with Germany in 1918 and Mao in China



Central leaders of Unified CPN - Maoist in a central committee meeting at central office Peris Danda, Kathmandu.

had followed the suit while making agreement with Chyan Kai-Sek. It is not that Lenin and Mao were blamed for self-surrender by different tendencies. However, history proved Lenin and Mao as correct.

4. If we come to the conclusion that the party started to deviate from the second national conference and counter-revolution occurred from *Chunwang* meeting, then we have to return to the people's war. Although this is a deviation, it can be a different line. The party had split in 1994 on the question of the necessity for and against going to the people's struggle. As this was guided by the historical necessity, the result of the split became fruitful. But, what is the meaning of talking much of revolutionary purity if it is also to wonder around the perimeter of peace process and constituent assembly? If someone wants to do whatever chairman is doing in practice, then how can anyone claim that their line is basically different? There are bases to say that the phobia against chairman, dissatisfaction and hatred are working for this.

5. Process and working-style are the manifestation of ideology. Process and working style without ideology has no any significance. Some comrades talk about the ideological purity but if two opposing poles stand together as in the so called *Dhobighat* meeting in the name of correcting working procedure and working-style of the leadership; how can it be ideological and moral norms? Marx, Lenin and Mao never did like this. Those comrades have to say that their ideology is different just in appearance; if not so, then there's no meaning of taking aloud about the revolutionary purity. Either they have to say that anything is okay to weaken and oust

Prachanda or stop pretending to be revolutionary. What kind of standard are comrades trying to set, that it's wrong if Com. Baburam agrees with Prachanda and right if he struggles with Prachanda?

6. Isn't it contradictory to argue that discussions between the thought-groups within the party will help to develop ideology and policy and create a base for new synthesis and make a separate party within a party? Isn't it true that the discussion within a single organization gives momentum to the party? So, how can it be Marxist method when we talk about synthesis by making separate organization within the organisation?

7. The Maoist party has now become an 'ocean' with the conglomeration of 'rivers', and 'streams'. Why feel it needful to retract for 'rivers' and 'streams' when we already have 'ocean'. Isn't returning to the group and sub-groups to fall prey to dogmatism, the squeezing of necessity of unity and undercurrent?

However these differences are expressed in one or the other form, to say concretely this is because of not developing the working-line. The problems are piling up and one faction blames the other for it. So, learning from the international communist movement, especially that of China, we should address the inter-relation between new democratic and socialist revolutions in the present national and international significance. The attempt our party Unified CPN (Maoist) is making can be justified only by developing a new ideological norm. In the process of investigation of new ideological norm, so many questions have arisen, and because of that party is going through intense debates. Recent document presented by Chairman Prachanda has formally oriented this debate to that direction. The present necessity is to well-manage this debate and take it to the general convention. For this, everyone should obey the Leninist organizational theory of freedom in expression and unity in action. If we suspect too much on anyone's intention until we do not reach to the conclusion is to suffer from cynicism. If we get enmeshed in cynicism, no one will be benefitted. But, history will curse us.

23 December 2011

(Gajurel is Politbureau member of Unified CPN-Maoist)

High Inequality

A Big Policy Challenge for Nepal



Dr. Dilli Raj Khanal

The urban centered unproductive investment led economic policy routes encouraging speculative activities supported by institutions which facilitate a tiny group of trade and financial power has primarily aggravated such a problem. By implication this has had very adverse impacts on income or wealth distribution, challenging our main thrust of equity based self-reliant sustainable development.

With the historic change in 2006, country's major focus has been how to deal with both formal and informal discriminatory practices perpetuating at political, economic, social and cultural fronts which have been the principle causes of Nepal's underdevelopment and lack of upliftment of productive forces. The major contradiction of the Nepalese society in the form of class, caste, ethnicity, gender and geographic location etc. as identified by the UCPN (Maoist) has been the main basis of evolving solutions at different fronts. Accordingly, despite obstruction by the revivalist, regressive or status quo maintaining forces, some successes have been made at political and other levels. Efforts are underway to make the state or governing structure more inclusive through the introduction of positive discriminatory rules and their practices. The UCPN (Maoist) is making all out efforts at ensuring the formulation of a progressive constitution despite resistance at various political levels. It is fighting to include such a federal governance structure in the constitution that, which by addressing roots of the major contradictions of the society could create a condition, that would en-

able to bring about prosperity of people in general and exploited since centuries in particular within a short timeframe given Nepal's tremendous potentials and comparative advantages in numerous areas.

Despite such positive developments taking place in the threshold of completing the Constitution drafting process, there are equally many challenges in the economic front. Truly, in the constitution, some rights in the areas of food security, health, education, shelter, employment added by a priority rights on local resources of the deprived people at the local will be there. Similarly, a provision of land reform will also be there. These have been in the present Interim Constitution in one form or the other as well. But what has happened at the ground level in the absence of no consensus or proper attention that not only no perceptible moves to bring about policy or structural and institutional changes in conformity with the constitutional provisions have been made but also more dangerously a status quo or regressive route has been followed. This has created a situation that Nepal not only is trapping in a very low growth trajectory

with a temporary boom and more permanent bust type phenomenon similar to the one perpetuating in chronic capitalism but also the external dependency has pushed Nepal in a very difficult situation with extreme vulnerability. The urban centered unproductive investment led economic policy routes encouraging speculative activities supported by institutions which facilitate a tiny group of trade and financial power has primarily aggravated such a problem. By implication this has had very adverse implications on income or wealth distribution, challenging our main thrust of equity based self-reliant sustainable development. This means that there is a need of changes in policy routes added by drastic reforms in structural and institutional arrangements in economic front which have built-in above phenomenon. This is essential for weakening the forces that will resist introducing various provisions laid down in the constitution and facilitating mobilization of resources required for the same purpose. This demands that a rigorous homework has to be started by the political parties like UCPN (Maoist) immediately to develop a long term vision and strategic policy, structural and institutional frameworks within the proposed federal structure. The ongoing preempt by distorting data to show that ongoing policy route is appropriate for growth as well as poverty and inequality reduction has increased such a necessity. Below some discussion on income inequality has been made to exemplify such attempts as well as to show that how the growing income equality unless addressed properly to make compatibility with likely progressive provisions in the constitution will be counterproductive.

The recently published data of Nepal Living Standard Survey (NLSS) indicate that the Gini-coefficient which measures the inequality between the rich and poor has narrowed down considerably. It shows that unlike the ratio increasing substantially from 0.322 in 1996 to 0.414 in 2004, it has declined sharply now at 0.328. Apparently, it propels us to presume that there have been drastic improvements in the existing discriminatory structural and institutional frameworks as well as policy setups and other

arrangements that were preventing deprived and poor from access to, among others, income or employment opportunities. Even recognizing the role of remittances, this simply means that they have equally been broad based or their trickle downing effect has been more positive. But it is interesting to point out that the Gini-coefficient published is not income inequality based but simply consumption based. Truly, measuring of consumption inequality is not disadvantageous itself but the way people are misinformed or it is interpreted to justify that inequality has reduced is a wrong practice and also harmful from the standpoint of developmental or policy routes that we may need to follow in the days to come. It is well known that the Gini coefficient was developed to measure income distribution pattern in a society or nation and hence is used universally for the same purpose.

A comparison of consumption and income pattern as per decile groups reported in three NLSS will explain why consumption approach is fallacious or far from realistic to justify increase or decrease in inequality. In the survey of 1996, it was reported that up to 3rd decile groups from the bottom, the level of per capita consumption was lower than their income. In 2004, however, except 8th and 9th decile groups, all other groups were reported to be consuming more than their income. Even the highest 10th decile group was shown to be having huge negative saving which had generated some controversy and debate. But because of drastic reduction in the consumption share of lowest decile group in 2004 compared to 1996, a phenomenal rise in consumption inequality may have been derived for 2004. The survey finding of 2011 gives completely an opposite picture. As reported, the consumption share of the 1st decile group is shown to be higher by as much as 78.2 percent against its level of per capita income. Not only that the survey additionally shows that up to 6th decile group, consumption per capita level is higher than the per capita income level. Accordingly, 60 percent of the lowest decile group consumes around 33.7 percent share of consumption as against 24.1 percent share of income. This means that such

a higher level of per capita consumption has been possible primarily as a result of excessive debt which has to be paid some time in future. In a situation of no immediate possibilities of huge earnings by that group, deepening of abject poverty is inevitable in the coming days. This also indicates on the need of revisit or serious reconsideration to the consumption basket method applied for estimating poverty for the year 2011. As proven in the context of countries like ours, such a method unless verified properly additionally leads to overestimate consumption and underestimate poverty. The important point to be emphasized is that reduction in inequality claimed based on consumption Gini is misleading. A verification made based on income distribution pattern among decile group additionally corroborates this.

A comparison of per capita income of lowest and other decile groups against the per capita income of highest decile group shows that a very adverse income distribution pattern has persisted in Nepal. In 1996, for instance, per capita income level of 10th highest decile groups was 20.5 times higher than the lowest income group. In 2011, its per capita income level jumped to 26.4 times in comparison to the per capita income level of lowest decile group. Similar phenomenon is observed from 2nd to 5th lowest decile groups as well. The per capita income level of highest decile group against 2nd decile group rose to 15.3 times in 2011 as against 9.8 times higher in 1996. Even in the 5th decile group, the rise has gone up to 7.3 times against 5.4 times during the same period. This means that, unlike the tendency shown by the consumption based inequality, income distribution pattern has worsened. The national accounts estimates also indicate that the factor distribution or returns to labor and capital has also moved in the opposite direction. According to the estimated compensation to employees and operating surplus, the share of former in total value added has gone down steadily from 46.7 percent in 2001 to 38.1 percent in 2011. Contrarily, the share of operating surplus in total value added has risen to 58.6 percent in 2011 against 50.4 percent in 2001.



Porters wait at a crossroad of Kathmandu seeking some works. Photo: The Progress

Above all, a rough calculation made based on cumulative per capita income share by decile groups reported in the NLSS of 2011 reveals that income inequality measured in the form of Gini coefficient is in the neighborhood of 0.51 for Nepal. This ratio is one of the highest from any international comparison. As noted above, this underscores on the need of reviewing principle factors that have contributed to perpetuate higher income inequality in Nepal rather than publicizing reduced inequality simply calculated to measure consumption differences without cross checking the income sources of consumption at diverse decile groups.

(Dr. Khanal, former member of National Planning Commission, is Visiting Professor to the M. Phil. Program, Central Department of Economics, Tribhuvan University.)

A visit to China

Unique Experience, Unfulfilled Desires



Dhruva Parajuli

The largest country in population, second largest in economy and third largest in term of territory could not be studied in a mere 10-day period. But, the warm welcome, the sincere hospitality and friendly behaviour of Chinese officials and party leaders was really pleasant.

On the invitation of the department of international relations of the Communist Party of China (CPC), a 16-member delegate team comprised of different ranks and files of our party, Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), visited various parts of China from 7 to 18 December. During the period, we visited the places like Shanghai, the modern Industrial City, Xian, the historical city and the capital city Beijing. Although we had longed for visiting Yenan, the Birthplace of Mao Tse-tung, and Hunan, the place from where people's resistance initiated, our dream could not materialise.

The first major place we visited was the Shanghai City. We were told that this city pays almost 25 percent of gross tax of China. After the establishment of People's Republic of China, this city was made the base for the development. The development made with the help of foreign investment and technology was quite astonishing for us. The officials informed us about the percentage of investment in any development project here - 30% foreign, 30% Banking, 30% of other provinces and 10% local people. Companies from 110 countries are making

investment in the special industrial area, Pudong. We were quite amazed to climb a 108-storeyed building, built after 1990, with the Japanese design and American money. This skyscraper had rich greenery around and more than 50 thousand foreigners reside in it. We were surprised to hear that the investment done in this area in the last fiscal year was 20 trillion and 4 billion dollars.

We learnt that three types of measures are taken to curb the danger of corruption in China, especially in Shanghai city. No government official is allowed personally to deal with any company; any decision should be taken in a group. No leaders or high government officials are allowed to invest in the companies which they are monitoring. While establishing any company or industrial area, ample attention is paid to make arrangements for school, hospital, greenery places, library, place for sports etc.

The visit to the China Executive Leadership Academy at Pudong in Shanghai City was a unique experience. We took part in about half a dozen seminars and interactions. Professionals of different

expertises presented various papers and gave us lectures. They gave us informations on multi-party system of China, the political system of China, the role of Chinese organization in building the nation, united front, the reform and openness of Chinese characteristics, development of Chinese grassroots, the role of Chinese traditional culture and so on.

During the visit of Shanghai, we were offered the opportunity to visit the museum-turned house where Mao and his 14 other colleagues had hosted the first general convention of the CPC in 1921. Mao was secretariat member of then central committee. The room was decorated with sculptures of all 15 members with their notebooks, pen and nameplates, all sitting on stools and holding discussions. The house owner is seen serving tea to all the delegates. The venue of the convention had, however, to be changed as the information leaked, the convention could not be concluded at that place. Mao and his comrades had to finish it in a ship travelling in the sea. That ship was also kept in the Museum's premise. This was the true preservation of the history.

After Shanghai, our destination was the renowned cultural City Xi'an. This city of Shanxi Province is the city that links the northern and southern part of China. This is one of the main tourist destination for both domestic and foreign visitors. We were informed that every year, 10 thousand tourists visited this city. Our study tour was mainly focused on the capital city Xian and a nearby countryside Pingsey where a poverty alleviation programme was being implemented. On the first day, we were taken to the spot where well-planned programmes were implemented including the building of large apartments. The whole campaign was synchronised in a five-year plan and development of agriculture, industry, tourism were taken forward in parallel. Our team was quite impressed to see hundreds of square kilometers land planted with various types of fruits on the both side of the road.

We saw how the state was helping the people to live in the countryside. The state provides certain



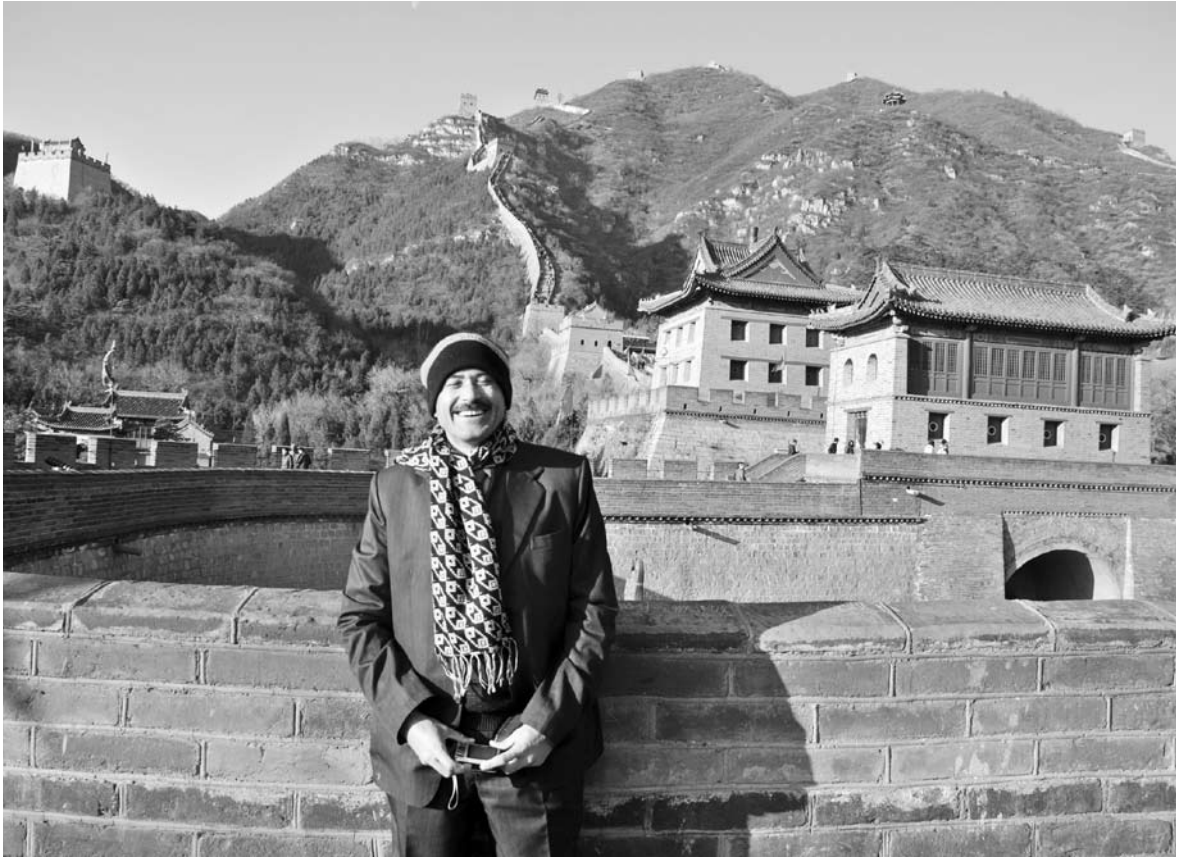
Ai Ping gave emphasis on the need of good relation between two countries and strategic development co-operation between China, Nepal and India

amount of land (the ownership of the land remains to state) according to the family and bears about 20% cost of building house. The state arranges for road, school, hospital water, electricity, entertainment park in every village unit. This kind of arrangements were quite impressive for us as Nepali state is not still able to provide any basic infrastructures.

Our visit to Terakota National Ancient Museum and Eighth Route Army's Museum in the Xian city was really interesting. The Eighth Route Army's Museum was the resemblances of Chinese resistance against the Japanese interference.

On the seventh day, we reached the capital city Beijing. On the same day, the vice minister of the international department of CPC, Ai Ping welcomed us with a dinner party. In course of formal and informal discussions between our team and Chinese officials, we shared our views on the importance of three-dimensional relations between two nations, people of two countries and two communist parties of the neighbours. During the discussions, Ai Ping gave emphasis on the need of good relation between two countries and strategic development co-operation between China, Nepal and India. During the interactions with several other officials and party leaders, we were informed about the Chinese history, the Sinonization of Marxism, the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics etc.

On the morning of December 16, we were at Tianmen Square. Mao's body is kept in a building in the premise of Tianmen square. For a Maoist, visiting Mao's mausoleum is a great chance with immense pleasure. While we were leaving the hotel for Mao's



| Writer Parajuli at The Great Wall.

mosoloum, a strange feeling was arising within me as if one of my wish was getting fulfilled. I was feeling as if I was one of the victorious Army who is going to hear Mao's declaration of PRC. While we were revolving around Mao's mosoloum, we were unknowingly greeting the great leader of world proletariat class. Mao's body was kept as if he was resting, and may exchange our greeting. We were told that thousands of people line-up everyday to see Mao's body.

It was honour that politbureau member of CPC, Wang Kang, gave us lunch party at the Great Hall of the People. Informal interactions were held during the occasion. It was our privilege to get such a warm welcome in one of the grand places of China. The visit to Great Wall, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was a fascinating experience. China visit

without climbing the great wall is incomplete, as Mao had said that every one is brave who climbs the Great Wall. We walked about a km of more than two thousand km long wall made for military strategy.

10 days' visit to study and know about China was indeed insufficient. The largest country in population, second largest in economy and third largest in term of territory could not be studied in a mere 10-day period. But, the warm welcome, the sincere hospitality and friendly behaviour of Chinese officials and party leaders was really pleasant. Had we taken some basics of Chinese language and culture, and had arranged a better communication arrangement, the visit would have been still more pleasant.

(Parajuli is Central Committee Member of Unified CPN - Maoist)

Matrix of the Foreign Policy of Nepal



Dr. Bishnu Hari Nepal

The base for defining a friendly nation depends upon its behavior towards Nepal's national interest. It is directly related to the merits and demerits of a nation tallying Nepal's national interest.

The History

The 'unifier' of modern Nepal, the then King PN Shah, defined Nepal as a yam between two boulders. Many scholars until today follow this definition as their guiding principle in explaining foreign policy of Nepal. But if considered coolly, this centuries old model has been outdated. Shugauli Treaty of 1816 with British India narrowed Nepal's border from Tista to Mechi in the East and Sutlaj to Mahakali in the West -leaving two VDCs of Nepal -Dodhara and Chandani across the Mahakali river.

In 1857, Junga Bahadur led a Nepalese contingent to suppress the Sepoy Mutiny of the then British India. He was victorious, and achieved Nayaa Muluk: Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur as reward. Today, they are the integral and important part of Nepalese map. The suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny helped Junga Bahadur in two grounds: the first to regain Nepali soil occupied by the British during 1814-1816, and the second, it enabled him to sustain his Rana Family autocracy without interference from the British, 1846-1950, for 104 years in Nepal.

Strategy for Survival

After the end of the Rana Rule in 1950, the best instance of strategy for survival was maintained by late King Tribhuvan -taking asylum to India. This was the worst case in Nepal's history. Of course, he was able to oust Rana autocracy from Nepal, but he re-established the Shah dynasty in power again. It was good for his family to establish family rule in Nepal but was counter productive to the sovereignty of Nepal in South Asia. He used Mohan Shumshere to sign the 1950 Treaty with India. Perhaps Mohan Shumshere also might have considered the thin hope for his family legacy but was injurious to the nation even though this Treaty is defunct today.

Another instance of Tribhuvan's strategy for survival was Koshi Agreement of 1954. Similarly, Mahendra started with Gandak Agreement in 1959 and arms deal agreement in 1965 following his 1963 India visit to save his autocratic Panchayat system without outside hindrances.

Mahendra also started equi-distance policy with New Delhi and Beijing following 1962 Sino-Indian war. Famous foreign policy experts Palmer and Perkins of that time defined this

role as a Himalayan Balance of Power system.

Cold War was into the climax and Nepal had to follow the policy of non-aligned being the founder member of Non-aligned Movement (NAM), 1961. But the post-Bandung Conference of 1955, Nepal's strategy of following the principle of panchasheel was perhaps the best strategy undertaken so far being applicable until today.

King Birendra's Zone of Peace Proposal propounded in February 1975 secured the support of 116 countries of the world and was successful in handling independent foreign policy in a sense despite India's non-cooperation and imposition of nearly one-and-a-half decade long economic embargo against friendly neighbor Nepal.

The Ground Reality

Nepal observed basic principle of her Foreign Policy as non-aligned but she could be never be non-aligned because the Gurkhas fought in favor of the colonialism and they are continuing until today in one or another form. Nepal sang the song of historic relations with her neighbors but ultimately it was the tune of India to sustain her unequal Treaties with Nepal. So, this terminology also is useless for today's Nepal. The thinkers also created a fear zone explaining the notion of 'buffer state' forgetting that Nepal is a capable state because of her natural resources instead of being dependant state. Nepal's geo-political location possesses the strategic significance instead of the dependant or buffer state psychology.

Similarly, the 'Big Brother' and 'Small Brother' terminologies also bore fruit for the bigger neighbors to impose domination. Today, all nations in the international community are equal in status. Therefore, this parameter also is not applicable today.

After equi-proximity, pundits of foreign policy started to use geo-proximity. Of course, it is important, but if a bed partner behaves like an enemy, it cannot be taken as an equal friend. Hence this theory also failed in Nepal's context. This cannot be used by the present day Nepal.

We also grounded our foreign policy on the basis

of two Charters –The United Nations Charter and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter. Both the Charters are a failure - the first, because of its Veto System and the second, because of its prohibition in bilateral entries. That is why our foreign policy grounds were never reliable and stable serving Nepal's national interests.

Today's Parameters

Twenty first century Nepal could define Nepal's friends on the basis of the merits and demerits of the nations. Not all countries of the world could be friendly to the Nepalese people. Reading the records of the behaviors of the friendly countries, Nepal could frame her foreign policy towards nations. Nepal cannot forget the geographical importance for her national security while dealing with the nations of the world and the immediate neighbors.

Here lies a basic factor that the foreign policy framers and experts always advocated the dependant posture of Nepal. In fact, in the 21st century, no country, big or small can survive in isolation. They are interdependent culturally, diplomatically, socially, geographically and economically. Therefore Nepal's foreign policy framing today draws the attention of the confidence building measures towards heading for interdependent relations rather than dependant relations. From the point of interdependence Nepal needs to enhance to the path of independent foreign policy.

Pragmatic Approach

Nepal needs to review all its Treaties with her neighbors. She needs to review Treaties with China. The list of the last important Treaties signed with China consists the Treaty of 1856. It was replaced in 100 years -by the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1956. It was immediately replaced in four years in 1960. The Cultural Treaty with China last was signed in 1999. Therefore, Nepal needs to sign a new Peace and Friendship Treaty and also a Cultural Treaty with China immediately. Remarkable point is that all Treaties done so far with China are not controversial.

But some Treaties signed with India have drawn wide range of controversy. Therefore, now the time has come that almost defunct Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 and Mahakali Treaty of 1996 need to be annulled and sign new Treaties at the present day context and reality. Other important Agreements like Koshi Agreement of 1954, Gandak Agreement of 1959 and Arms and Ammunitions Agreement of 1965 need to be reviewed at the present day context.

Similarly, BIPPA needs to be clarified further and needful corrections in the letter of exchange deem necessary. Signing BIPPA in principle is not so worse as it has been explained but certainly it needs specific citation of clear conditions in the letter of exchange to be ratified by the Legislative Parliament of Nepal.

On Treaty of Extradition, besides international obligations, it is a bilateral matter with all countries of the world. Kalapani and Susta posses border disputes while other in 54 places Nepal India have border problems only. They need to be resolved immediately. The permanent solution is a controlled border system



The 'Big Brother' and 'Small Brother' terminologies also bore fruit for the bigger neighbors to impose domination.

with bilateral preparations in the border areas.

Conclusion

The base for defining a friendly nation depends upon its behavior towards Nepal's national interest. It is directly related to the merits and demerits of a nation tallying Nepal's national interest. Therefore merits and demerits of a nation could be the measuring criterion for framing foreign policy towards any nation of the world.

(Dr. Nepal is former expert member of the Foreign Policy Draft Sub-committee, International Relations and Human Rights Committee, Legislative Parliament.)

नेपालको एकमात्र केबुलकार मनकामना जाने सपना साकार

सम्पूर्ण मनोकामना पूरा गर्ने मनकामना देवी

मनकामना केबुलकार

मनकामना देवीले सम्पूर्ण मनोकामना पूरा गर्छिन् भन्ने जनविश्वास शताब्दीयौं देखि र हुँको पाइन्छ । यसै उच्च भावनाको कदर गर्दै सञ्चालन गरिएको नेपालको पहिलो र एकमात्र केबुलकार सेवामा मनकामना क्षेत्रको धार्मिक र पर्यटकीय महत्त्वलाई अझ विस्तारित र व्यापक बनाएको छ । विश्व प्रसिद्ध अष्टिद्वयाली कम्पनी डोपलमायस्टद्वारा जडान गरिएको अत्याधुनिक प्रविधिकृत हाम्रो केबुलकारको यात्रा आफैमा एक अविस्मरणीय अनुभव हुन पुगेको छ ।

तल्लो स्टेशनमा रहेको रेडुरो मा स्वादिष्ट नेपाली, भारतीय, र कन्टिनेन्टल खानाहरुको मजा लिन सकिन्छ । मनकामना माईको दर्शन गरेर फर्कदा नदिको वहाव हेर्दै विश्राम गर्नको लागि यो अत्यन्तै रमाइलो र उपयुक्त छ ।

तल्लो स्टेशनमा रहेका खेलहरुले बालबालिकाहरुको मनोरञ्जन गर्दछन् भने यात्राको सम्पन्नता सधैं ताजा राख्ने सोभिनीयहरुलाई प्रसन्न पनि छ ।

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Importance of Rural Tourism in Nepal



Thakur P. Devkota

Rural Tourism refers to tourists staying in or near a rural, often traditional rural in remote areas, learning about the rural and local cultural way of life customs, and often participating in some rural activities

Introduction

The Rural tourism is the important factor for the tourism development in Nepal. Nepal is rich in biodiversity within the altitudinal variation ranging from 76 meters to 8848 meters above the sea level. The country occupies 0.3% of total land mass of the earth while it shares 10% in the earth in biodiversity. Nepal is full of rural because 90% people live in rural area. There are about 35 thousand rural areas within 3914 VDCs.

The concept of ecotourism in Nepalese prospective is mostly related to the rural tourism package. Rural tourism is a complex multifaceted activity. It includes farm based holidays, eco tourism, walking, climbing and tiding, adventure, sports, health tourism, hunting, fishing, educational tours, are a heritage tourism and ethnic tourism. The rural tourism is multi-faceted, and rarely either static entities or self-contained, and free from urban influence, a working and reasonably universal definition of the subject is difficult to find. However, in almost every case rurality is the central and unique selling point in the rural tourism package. The rural area of Nepal is suitable place for the development of ecotourism, so the rural tourism and ecotourism both are interrelated. If we want to

develop the rural area we must plan to protect and utilize the natural environment and ecology. For the sustainable development of the rural tourism the rural culture, artifact, scenic view, ecologically friendly environment, different type of fauna and flora, geographical situation, organic feeding and hospitality etc. are the importance things.

The Nature and culture are the main component of the development of the tourism. Nepal is rich in both component but it need to develop and promote for the tourism purpose. The nature like the land coverage consists 6000 rivers and rivulets, 6000 species (2.4%) of plants 32 species (6%) of rhododendron and 360 species (2%) of orchid and 36% of world poppies are found in mountain areas of Nepal. 151 species (4.2%) of mammals, 850 species (8.5%) of birds and over 635 (4.2%) species of butterflies. We have 2.2% of fresh water fishes, 1.1% of frogs, and 1.5% of reptiles. Snowcapped mountains, high gorges, beautiful rivers with high current, plain lands with forests, beautiful people with smiling face are some of the tourism products of Nepal even though they are stricken by poverty. Of these tourism products, the local people have something to offer to tourists.

Nepal is multi ethnic, multi cultural, multi religious

and multi lingual with major ethnic groups such as Tamang, Newar, Gurung, Tharu, Magar, Rai, Sherpa, Thakali, Chepang, Sunwar, Limbu, Dhimal, Kumal and many more. They have their unique feature in all sector of life; distinct ceremonies from birth to death and food habit etc are the major cultural resource for tourism. This cultural and biological diversity is the main attraction of the tourism development in Nepal. There are two UNESCO natural heritage sites, seven national parks, three wild life reserves, three conservation areas and one hunting reserve. These are located in the rural areas of Nepal. This entire natural heritage situated in the rural area and it helps to develop the rural tourism in Nepal.

The community based rural tourism practiced in Nepal for varied forms of rural tourism activities. Community based rural tourism products and initiatives are:

Homestays: Ghorepani (Myagdi), Ghalegaon (Lamjung), Sirubari (Syanja), Briddim (Rasuwa), Ilam and other home stay tourism village are established in the tourism year 2011 it need to wait for outcome.

Pilot Programmes: ACAP (Annapurna region), TRPAP (Dolpa, Chitwan, Rupandehi, Rasuwa, Solu, Taplejung), NTB Pilot Areas (Ilam, Basantapur, Dhanushadham, Palpa, Khaptad).

Basic Components/Elements of Rural Tourism

A tourist destination is composed of the following elements:

- Attractions: Natural, Cultural, Historical, Climate
- Accessibility: Transportation: Aquatic, Aerial, Terrestrial
- Accommodation: Sufficient accommodation facilities like homestay facilities, community managed hotels, motels, village/rural resorts, camping sites, caravans etc.
- Amenities: Added facilities and services (playground, view tower, well sanitation, well infrastructure, restaurants, trekking route, administrative facilities, local handicraft, local and organic feeding materials, shopping centers, banks, beauty parlor, fitness center, business center etc.)
- Activities: Events and activities ranges in

terrestrial (trekking, mountaineering, pony trekking, ski diving, rock climbing, bird watching), aerial (Bungi Jumping, hot air ballooning, paragliding, ultra-light aircraft, rural flight, cable car, etc.), and aquatic (rafting/ kayaking, boating, fishing, swimming, ware running, etc.) spheres, all of which are full of adventures.

- Affinity/Attachment: hospitality, host-guest relationship, repeat visitors
- Actors: People
- Acts: Laws, policy, rules and regulations, directives etc.

Value of Rural Tourism

- Economic
- Interaction and exchange of cultures
- Instruments of peace, friendship and understanding
- Educational
- Environmental (smokeless industry, clean industry)

The rising disposable incomes, longer paid holidays, shorter working hours, better education, and rapidly improving transport and communications networks grow the tourism statistics. That increasing flow of the tourists mostly wants to enjoy with nature which our rural situation and its settlement can fulfill their demand. The development of the rural tourism is importance for economic growth of rural peoples and improvement of their living standard. The rise of the free and independent travelers, seeking the non-resort based or rural holidays, has now added the new dimension in tourism.

It has been argued above that rurality as a concept is connected with low population densities and open space, and with small scale settlements. Land use is dominated by farming, forestry and natural areas. Societies tend towards traditionalism: the influence of the past is often strong. Government policies lean towards conservation rather than radical or rapid change. It follows, therefore, that rural tourism should be:

- Located in rural areas;
- Functionally rural, built upon the rural world's special features: small scale enterprise, open

space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, 'traditional' societies and 'traditional' practices;

- Rural in scale -- both in terms of buildings and settlements -- and, therefore, usually small scale;
- Traditional in character, growing slowly and organically, and connected with local families. It will often be very largely controlled locally and developed for the long term good of the area;
- Sustainable -- in the sense that its development should help sustain the special rural character of an area, and in the sense that its development should be sustainable in its use of resources. Rural tourism should be seen as a potential tool for conservation and sustainability, rather than as an urbanizing and development tool;
- Of many different kinds, representing the complex pattern of rural environment, economy, and history.

Rural tourism is a structural form of tourism

- Rural Tourism refers to tourists staying in or near a rural, often traditional rurals in remote areas, learning about the rural and local cultural way of life customs, and often participating in some rural activities
- The people of rural areas build, own, and manage the tourist facilities and services and thereby receive direct benefits from tourism
- Rural tourism aims to expose tourists the traditional rural life, providing spontaneous interaction between the tourists and residents, dispelling tourists often erroneous preconceptions about the local environment and culture, and encouraging a sense of cultural pride on the part of residents.
- The model called for simple lodgings to be built, using traditional materials, methods, and styles, by the locals and to be owned and managed by them.

The rural tourism consists of leisure activities carried out in rural areas and includes different types of tourism activities such as community based tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, guest tourism, backpacking, riding and agro tourism.

There are a lots of tourism resources abundant in the rural area in Nepal. For the development of the rural tourism the following resources are required:

Natural resources: Climate-seasons, water resources-lakes, streams, waterfalls, flora-forests, flowers, shrubs, wild edibles, fauna-fish & wildlife resources, geological-topography, soils, sand dunes, beaches, caves, rocks & minerals, fossils, scenery-combinations of all of the above.

Cultural resources : Historic buildings, sites, monuments, shrines, cuisine, ethnic cultures, religion, anthropological resources, local celebrities etc.

Human resources: Hospitality skills, management skills, seasonal labor force, performing artists-music, drama, art, storytellers, craftsman and artisans, other labor skills from chefs to lawyers to researchers, local populations etc.

Capital resources: Availability of capital, financing, Infrastructure-transportation roads, airports, railroads, harbors & marinas, trails & walkways, infrastructure: utilities water, power, waste treatment, and communications.

All these types of resources are abundantly found in Nepal. The rural areas of Nepal are highly potential for the tourism development. The diversified culture and biodiversity as well as the natural scenic view lure anyone of the world. The policy need to give emphasis to rural tourism, has adopted the strategy of expanding rural tourism to make tourism to the reach of grass-root communities. It incorporates programs related with people's participation in integrated approach; invention & development of new spots especially rural touristic areas and focuses for the promotion of agro tourism, religious tourism, and adventure tourism.

The importance of rural tourism can be implicated from the linkages between rural tourism and its effect in a grassroots level of a community. As tourism needs development of many factors and it creates very wide range of effects, it can very successfully help improve multiple features of socio-economic condition of people. Nepal has accepted rural tourism as an important utensil for poverty

alleviation. Outstanding to rural based composition, The ACAP area, The MCAP area, KCAP area and other conservation area and national parks are major tourism destination of Nepal and also the major rural tourism domain of Nepal. Mainly the ACAP area is the well recommended area internationally for the rural tourism as well as responsible and eco-tourism zone. So the equal distribution of benefit of tourism to the peoples the rural tourism plays the most significant role in Nepal. There are number of potential tourism destination in Nepal which are yet to be explored but have not been explored as yet and have got great potential hence before making a blueprints and discussing the pros and cons we must first of all find out the region which are contributing to a great extent for pathetic development of these areas despite of the fact that these areas have got great potential and scope and development the regions are very strong and are matter of great concern.

Advantages of rural tourism

- Protects and provides a source of income for natural and built heritage,
- Enhances the image of an area, attracting commercial investment outside the tourism industry as well, by demonstrating to potential investors that the place is good to locate to,
- A significant catalyst for economic growth and employment,
- Increases demand for other non-tourism businesses,
- Leads to the creation and maintenance of local amenities,
- Draws attention to the need to protect the natural environment and encourages a more rigorous analysis of the importance of the local eco-system,
- Supports and helps to maintain local services, such as shops and restaurants,
- Provides re-skilling, training and employment opportunities,
- Provides supplementary incomes to those seeking second jobs, part time hours, unsocial hours,
- Encourages residents to stay and spend leisure time,

- Encourages upgrading and re-use of derelict land and buildings,
- Brings expenditure from external sources into the local market,
- Supports a programme of events, arts, sports and other culture,
- Helps to build distinctive communities, thus increasing local pride and self confidence,
- Provides opportunities for social inclusion,
- Encourages cultural diversity.

Challenges of rural tourism:

a. *Social/cultural environment*

Just as the influx of large numbers of visitors can disrupt the natural world, so also can visitors impinge upon the small scale, static, and well ordered socio-cultural world of the rural community. Earnings patterns change, success/failure relationships are altered, and power structures are challenged. More fundamentally, sociologists have long recognized that the impact of 'advanced' cultures on 'traditional' cultures almost always brings change to the traditional culture and not in the other direction. But the process is most marked where special ethnic or linguistic groups are involved.

b. *Socio-economic/environment challenges*

Rural tourism operates within sensitive natural environments. These include sea and lake shorelines, wetlands, high mountain areas, dense forest and conservation areas etc. Many studies have highlighted the threats which tourism has already brought to the environment. Intensive skiing has destroyed vegetation and encouraged land-slips; climbing erodes rock faces, and, with modern equipment, destroys their natural condition; walking and riding wears out paths in heavily used areas; noise and litter drive out and injure wild creatures; existing farming practices are upset by fire, and competition for labor. The peace, quiet and authentic nature of the countryside can be seriously compromised. All these issues can be tackled to some extent by the skilled management of the countryside; management of the order required is as yet rarely available. The environmental pollution threatens the human civilization.

(Devkota is former Member Secretary of Tara Gaun Development Board.)

Solar Energy : An Option for Rural Electrification in Nepal



Ram p. Dhital

The unreliability of grid electricity has been hampering people's everyday life and harming the industry as well as overall development of the country. This reality compels Nepal to look for solar photovoltaic technology as it has been proven to be a viable option not only in rural but also in urban areas.

Nepal, one of the least developed countries, is rich in water resources. There are altogether 6,000 rivers and rivulets possessing the theoretical capacity of 83,000 MW. In spite of having a huge hydropower potential, Nepal has not been able to harness this natural resource due to various reasons including constraints of financial and human resources.

About 45 percent of the total population, mostly from rural areas, is still deprived of electricity in Nepal. Owing to difficult terrain and sporadic distribution of rural households, the extension of grid electricity in a number of villages in the high mountain areas is very costly. Local min-grids from micro-hydro power plants are also not viable because of long transmission and distribution line network. Even in urban areas where households are connected with national grid, there has been an acute power shortage in recent years. Winter becomes worse with almost 18-hour daily load shedding.

The unreliability of grid electricity has been hampering people's everyday life and harming the industry as well as overall development of the country. This reality compels Nepal to look for

solar photovoltaic technology as it has been proven to be a viable option not only in rural but also in urban areas. Fortunately, solar photovoltaic (PV) technology has been gaining popularity in both rural and urban areas to meet the basic energy demand. Nepal receives solar energy ranging from 3.6 to 5.9 kWh/m² per day and the sun shines for about 300 days. These figures indicate that Nepal has high potential of solar PV, which can be tapped to mitigate ever increasing energy crisis.

PV module provides reliable power and it has many uses in various areas, which could help improve the socio-economic conditions of rural people. Electricity produced by PV system can be employed for lighting, powering small business, running computer education etc. It is obvious that the presence of light increases the study hours of students, working output of women and a better social life with entertainment appliances being switched on. This technology has also been very popular in the health sector in providing power for medicine/vaccine storage facility.

Realizing these facts, the government of Nepal has accorded high priority for solar energy

promotion. Promotion of solar energy has been one of the principal focus areas of Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) since its establishment in 1996.

Although the first rural electrification through solar PV system - mini grid type - in Nepal was installed in 1989, the solar energy sector has developed significantly after the initiation of a Danida supported Energy Sector Assistance Program (ESAP) in 1999. Since then, Solar energy component of ESAP has been a key player in disseminating Solar Home Systems (SHS) adopting subsidized vendor sales model for rural electrification in Nepal. Under this model, the qualified company will create demand, install at least 10 systems in a cluster, fill up subsidy application form and submit it along with other supporting documents to AEPC/ESAP. Once the applications are received, the program will process and appraise the information submitted before recommending to the Rural Energy Fund (REF) for approval of the subsidy. REF will further appraise process and approve the subsidy, if everything is found in proper order. Ninety percent of the subsidy is paid to the company while the balance is retained as after-sales service guarantee money, which will be released with evaluation of the promised after-sales service after a year. After one year, users need to take responsibility for operation and maintenance of their system. They also need to pay for maintenance and replacement of the parts when required.

This approach of promoting solar home system requires strong quality assurance and monitoring mechanism and qualification of vendors based on financial, physical and human resource facilities as well as quality service providing capacity. Approximately 300,000 household solar home systems and 500 institutional solar PV systems have been installed through vendor sales subsidized model. Subsidy is provided in two ways; direct cash subsidy to users through vendors and indirect subsidy as tax and VAT exemption to



Solar System installed in a rural area of Sindhupalchowk district

businesspersons for importing solar components. Subsidy for a solar home system varies from NRs 5,000 to NRs 10,000 based on system capacity and remoteness of the place where system is set up. For an institutional solar PV system, subsidy is being provided upto NRs 1,000,000.

The government of Nepal realizes the importance of solar photovoltaic not only in rural areas but also in urban areas; some activities have been initiated in this fiscal year to power a few public places like President's office, Prime Minister's Quarters and Minister's Residences through solar PV system. Similarly, initiation of programs for grid connection and traffic lighting from solar power will explore the wider applications of solar energy in urban areas of Nepal.

As the government, through AEPC, is planning to upscale renewable energy technologies and implementation modality through Rural and Renewable Energy Program (RREP) following a programmatic approach, It is high time to explore various implementation approaches to rural electrification using solar energy for long term sustainability. Some of the issues like inflated pricing, reaching to the poorer segment of the society, administrating subsidy at centre and unhealthy competition among vendors need to be thoroughly assessed and addressed to upscale solar energy in Nepal.

(Dhital is Senior Energy Officer and Monitoring Expert at Alternative Energy Promotion Center. He can be reached at ram.dhital@aepc.gov.np)

Prachanda leads Lumbini Development Drive

The campaign led by Prachanda has now shot the message to the outer world that the birthplace of Buddha lies in Nepal. So, this has in a kind been a battle for nationality, a battle for saving a Nepali heritage.

The Progress Reporter

The leader of the decade long armed struggle, Prachada, is not only leading the peace process of Nepal, he is also steering the international campaign for building the birthplace of Gautam Buddha, Lumbini. As the head of the National Directive Committee for Broader Lumbini Development, Prachada has been very much successful in garnering the international support for this new and equally challenging task.

The ex-rebel head, who designed and carried out armed insurgency based on the theories and strategies of communist ideology, has embarked on international peace campaign. To a great surprise to those who harbour doubt over Prachanda's success, he has already proved his adroitness. Of course, it is not easy to lead twin tough tasks simultaneously-domestic peace process and international peace campaign.

On November 8 when Prachanda arrived at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) after his successful meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, he expressed much confidence on the development of Lumbini. The UN Secretary General accepted Prachanda's invitation to visit Nepal in March this year and attend an international meeting on development of the birthplace of the apostle of world peace.

In the first week of November 2011, Prachanda, also Chairman of UCPN (Maoist), met with the UN head at UN headquarters in New York and

explained the firm and long-term commitment of the Government of Nepal to the preservation and development of all aspects of Buddha's birthplace by adopting a multi stakeholder approach through national and international support. He briefed the Secretary General about the commitment of the government to develop Lumbini as a world peace city.

Prachanda explicated the government's plan to develop Lumbini as a pilgrimage and a heritage city. He expressed his belief that Lumbini could be developed as an enduring source of international peace, harmony and understanding. During the meeting, Prachanda mentioned the long history of the involvement of UN in promoting development of Lumbini from the first Asian Secretary General, U Thant, and appreciated the keen interest and clear support of the incumbent Secretary General in all round development of Greater Lumbini.

Prachanda requested Secretary General Ban for forming an international committee on Lumbini development under the chairmanship of the Secretary General himself.

In response, the UN Secretary General expressed his pleasure to be the second Asian Secretary General to visit Lumbini. He particularly said that he was pleased to see that a distinguished high-level political leader and former Prime Minister, Prachanda, has agreed to head the national committee for development of Lumbini. He expressed firm commitment to extend

full support for Greater Lumbini development and expressed satisfaction to see Nepali leadership and ownership for this purpose. He also reiterated his political and moral support for the conservation and development of the birthplace of Gautam Buddha.

Chairman Prachanda was accompanied by Dr. Minendra Rijal, member of the Directive Committee and former Minister, Manoj Bahadur Shrestha, member from the private sector in the committee.

The Directive Committee was formed by a cabinet decision on October 17. The other members of the Committee are Forest Minister Wakil Musalman, and UML Lawmaker Mangal Siddhi Manandhar. The Committee has been mandated for preparing a master plan for the development of Lumbini along with gathering international support for its development.

International Meeting On Lumbini Development

The High Level Directive Committee is hosting a multi-stakeholder international meeting in Lumbini early this year and subsequent meeting to follow-up in New York next year. Various leaders from political, spiritual, and philanthropic domain, and the private sector are to be invited to the international meeting. The UN Secretary General has already accepted the invitation. UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova, will accompany Ban for the keenly anticipated global meeting.

In a meeting, held in the first week of December, Committee decided to hold an international meeting on Lumbini in March next year. The committee decided to invite heads of state or government from 16 Buddhist countries and other international Buddhist dignitaries to grace the meeting. It is said that the date for the meeting will be fixed after consultations with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Earlier, the committee had held discussions with ambassadors of India, China, South Korea, and the UN and representatives of World Bank and UNESCO on organising the international meeting.

A Hong Kong-based Organisation-Asia Pacific Exchange and Cooperation Foundation (APECF)—



Prachanda shakes hand with UN Secretary General Ban In New York.

has already expressed its commitment to spend \$ 3 billion for the development of Lumbini. Organising a grand media conference in Kathmandu in August 2011, APECF has publicized its detailed plan for the development of Buddha's birth place.

Lumbini, the historic site located in Rupandehi district, some 300 km southwest of the capital city Kathmandu, was enlisted in the World Heritage Site in 1997.

"Visit Lumbini Year 2012"

Along with the lobbying at the international level for developing Lumbini, the government has announced Visit Lumbini Year 2012 (VLY-2012). In a program organized at the birthplace of Buddha on December 1, Prime Minister Dr Baburam Bhattarai formally invited the world community to work towards creating a peaceful society through Buddha's peace message.

He observed that VLY-2012 was declared to make the birthplace of Buddha a centre of global attraction. According to him, the government will design a master plan for the development of Lumbini and then a circuit will be developed to connect all the holy places related to Buddha.

Earlier, On October 17, the Cabinet had

declared 2012 as Visit Lumbini Year (VLY) for the promotion and development of the places linked to the Buddha within the country. The government plans to organize the initiation on January 1, 2012 in a grand manner. The government hopes to attract one million tourists to Lumbini. Government officials related to Lumbini Trust claim that it will be possible to attract such a large number of visitors, as there has been extensive publicity about Lumbini in the international level.

A Grand Success

Only a few had expected that Lumbini would grab this much huge attention of the international community. Even the member of the directive Dr. Minendra Rijal admits that the Lumbini project got this much attention when Prachanda led this campaign. The Grand plan on the Lumbini project was developed about 25 years ago by a Japanese professor. But, it never came to be the priorities of Nepal government. When Prachanda revived it, this became the hot topic not only in

the national but also in the international arena.

Some people with resentment for the Maoists and Chairman Prachada have tried to misinform about the Lumbini Project and success of Prachanda's leadership. They tried to obstruct the grand campaign but to no avail.

There were misinformation and misinterpretation about the birth place of Buddha too. The campaign led by Prachanda has now shot the message to the outer world that the birthplace of Buddha lies in Nepal. So, this has in a kind been a battle for nationality, a battle for saving a Nepali heritage.

Development of Lumbini is not only a part of making New Nepal, it's a great attempt to uplift Nepal's global image. Prachanda's success in convincing UN Secretary General for the development is also the international recognition about the birthplace of Buddha. Thus the campaign has not only erased the illusions about the birthplace of Buddha rather opened the doors of international support for development of Nepal.

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जीवन तथा निर्जीवन बीमा गरी निश्चिन्त हुनुहोस् ।

हाम्रा सेवाहरू

जीवन बीमातर्फ

सावधिक, सावधिक (दोहोरो दुर्घटना लाभसमेत), आजीवन, अग्रिम भुक्तानी, बालबच्चाको शिक्षा तथा विवाह, म्यादी, सामूहिक वात्सल्य, वैदेशिक रोगार, जीवनसाथी वीमा ।

निर्जीवन बीमातर्फ

अग्नि, मोटर, हवाई, सामुन्द्रिक, इन्जिनियरिड, औषधोपचार, व्यक्तिगत दुर्घटना, मार्गस्थ, सेधमारी तथा नकवजनी, श्रमिक मुआब्जा, निष्ठा जमानी, बैंकर्स ब्लैड्केट, जनदायित्व, ग्राहस्थ, विविध, विदेश यात्रा तथा औषधोपचार, चिकित्सकीय दायित्व वीमा



बीमाको क्षेत्रमा विश्वसनीय नाम

राष्ट्रिय वीमा संस्थान

प्रधान कार्यालय, रामशाहपथ, काठमाडौं, फोन. ४२६२५२०

पो.ब.नं. ५२७, फ्याक्स : ०१७७-१-४२६२६१०

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Integration Speeds up

The Progress Reporter

KATHMANDU: The army integration that was stalled for several years have gained significant momentum.

On January 2, the meeting of the Special Committee for Supervision, Integration and Rehabilitation of Maoist fighters decided to begin sending home the fighters opting voluntary retirement.

The meeting further decided to direct the secretariat to maintain all the details of the cantonments including the physical infrastructures and the government will take care of all the properties of the cantonments after the fighters' leave them.

Government will provide Rs 2,000 each for the combatants living in Tarai region, Rs 5,000 for those residing in hilly region and Rs 8,000 for those living in mountain region as transportation fare.

Meanwhile the representatives of parties other than Maoist have opposed the proposal to provide a letter of appreciation to all the combatants for their contribution to the nation and the people. However, the Maoist representatives have been urging for further discussion on the issue.

As many as 17,002 combatants were verified by the SC during the regrouping process and 94 combatants were verified in the second round. According to SC 104 combatants have died in different circumstances till date.

Of the total 9,690 combatants have wished to go for integration 7,286 has opted voluntary retirement and only six of them have chosen rehabilitation package. With only 6,500 combatants will be integrated remaining 3,190 will have to choose either of the two remaining options. Maoist standing committee member and Finance Minister Barsha Man Pun, however, said the remaining number of combatants could also be integrated in the other security forces for which the leaders have been discussing. "We can either increase the agreed number of 6,500 if the number exceeded or integrating them at other security forces."

"We can also ask them to make other choice again if they were willing to change their mind to lower the number to the limit. The secretariat will come up with the options as well," Pun added.

The SC has already decided to provide Rs 600,000 to Rs 900,000 for those choosing rehabilitation package and Rs 500,000 to Rs 800,000 for those wishing to go



PLA members being verified at Seventh division, Kailali. Photo : Rajesh Maharjan

for voluntary retirement as per their ranks.

However, due to the reluctant nature of the major parties especially Nepali Congress and CPN UML on some minor issues of army integration the process was delayed for sometimes lately.

In the meeting of the three parties held on December 26 Maoist chairman Dahal had told the leaders that he would hold discussions on some issues with top two leaders of NC and UML before holding another three-party meeting.

Also the member of SC, Pun said the SC has directed its secretariat to bring detailed plan for integration as well. "The dispute now is that we wanted to take all these three tasks simultaneously but others were for completing rehabilitation and voluntary retirement first while discussions on integration process go on," he said. "We will try to make agreement in integration during the next meeting. If we could forge consensus we will take all three tasks together or else rehabilitation and voluntary retirement process will begin making a schedule and the discussions will continue on integration."

He further said the disqualified combatants have been struggling for their rights. "We don't discriminate our fighters because they have equally contributed to the nation. We will address their woes for which we are on discussion. Even the other political parties have become flexible in this regard."

Leaving Iraq Remembering Vietnam

The Lies of War

Jack Random

The lies of war are forgotten as easily and readily as the wrappings of Christmas or the resolutions of a new year. Like a child still in diapers, the lessons of war must be learned again and again until finally they are taken to heart. The lies of the war in Iraq are so easily buried that six out of seven Republican candidates for president of the United States have publicly pledged to go to war in Iran based on the identical unsubstantiated claims that led us to war in Iraq. The lessons of that ill-fated war, the largest strategic blunder since Vietnam, are so readily put behind us that even before that colossal disaster officially ended, six of seven Republican candidates pledged his and her allegiance to the same neoconservative brain trust that guided us into the snake pit. And the White House is not far behind. Those of us who remember the war in Vietnam and the years we committed to ending it will find the bipartisan rationalizations of the Iraq War all too familiar and profoundly disturbing. The lie that drove the Vietnam War was the Domino Theory: If we lose one nation to the red menace of communism, then we will lose them all. On that basis, three generations of western powers (Britain, France and America) chose a little country on the doorstep of China as their playground of war. It required over three million lives to prove that a child's game was not a legitimate basis for a foreign policy. It only made sense because it fit on a bumper sticker and because our leaders were dominated by military minds in search of power, glory and the spoils of empire. The great postwar lie of Vietnam was that we lost the war because we were never fully committed.

The politicians in Washington held our generals back. Between 1965 and 1968 we dropped over a million tons of missiles, bombs and rockets on North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia but we were never fully committed. We sprayed 12 million gallons of the deadly chemical defoliant Agent Orange over wide swaths of Southeast Asia but we were not fully committed. At the height of the war in 1968 we deployed over half a million soldiers, including the first conscripts since the Korean War, but we were not fully committed. Short of nuclear bombs, we were as committed to that unjustifiable war as any nation could have been yet the lies of war survive. The lies of war take on mythological characteristics and believing them becomes a ritual of patriotism. Little wonder we commit the same strategic mistakes, the same errors in judgment, the same acts of criminal inhumanity, the same ultimately desperate and self-destroying measures over and over again. In the wake of Vietnam, America's leaders were confined to small-scale interventions until George Herbert Walker Bush, former Director of the CIA, conspired to wage war in Iraq. Though the Gulf War was short-lived, its military success inspired President Bush to announce: "The specter of Vietnam has been buried forever in the desert sands of the Arabian Peninsula." Forever was not a long time as his eldest son was to initiate two wars that brought the specter of Vietnam back into focus. One was the ongoing ten-year war in Afghanistan and the other was a return to his father's war in Iraq. Few will recall the lies of the father but the lies of the son are too fresh to be so soon forgotten. They include not only the infamous weapons of mass destruction but also the later claim that virtually all the world



Between 1965 and 1968 we dropped over a million tons of missiles, bombs and rockets on North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia but we were never fully committed. We sprayed 12 million gallons of the deadly chemical defoliant Agent Orange over wide swaths of Southeast Asia but we were not fully committed.

believed the lie. For the record, we lost our appeal before the United Nations Security Council to justify military action on the basis of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The International Atomic Energy Agency thoroughly debunked our claims and the measure was withdrawn when it became clear that the Council would vote overwhelmingly against our cause for war. Members of the Bush administration falsely claimed that Saddam Hussein was a party to the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. They falsely claimed that Iraq harbored and worked with Al Qaeda operatives. These claims were so clearly and demonstrably false that even President Bush was forced ultimately to disavow them. The lies of war had served their purpose. Once the first bombs lit up the Baghdad skyline, supporting the war became a matter of patriotism. The next lie was that our actions had nothing to do with Iraqi oil and everything to do with establishing democracy in the Arab world. That lie was exposed when our first action was to protect the oil fields. Well before an Iraqi government could be established we contracted Iraqi oil to the highest corporate bidders. Mission accomplished. The lies of war are really not that difficult to detect. It only requires an open mind, an appetite for facts, and a willingness to think. The lies of the Iraq War will survive unless those of us who witnessed them, from the soldiers who sacrificed to the citizens who supported and opposed

them, unless each of us vows to accept the truth and pass that horrid account forward to future generations. We can be grateful that a president elected largely on the promise of ending the Iraq War has officially done so, though we remain mindful that thousands of American-hired mercenaries remain behind to guard the largest diplomatic embassy on earth. We understand at our stage of development that a president cannot apologize for the harm done in the name of our nation. We understand the wisdom of separating the war from the warrior. We know the president cannot inform our soldiers that they were fighting the wrong war for the wrong reasons. But when the president announces that we have created an opportunity for the Iraqis to thrive and prosper as a democratic nation, he is not only being disingenuous; he is perpetuating the lies of war. When the president declares that our fight in Iraq was for Iraqi freedom and international justice, he is paving the way for another unjust war in America's future. He is attempting to bury the specter of Vietnam. Leaving Afghanistan for another day, we should all agree that the Iraq War was wrong from its inception. It was never about democracy. It was never about justice. It was always about oil and strategic advantage. Wrong is wrong.

*Jack Random is the author of Jazzman
Chronicles Crow Dog Press and Ghost Dance
Insurrection Dry Bones Press
Source : www.counterpunch.org
America's, political newsletter.*

Academic calendar Will it work in TU ?

Madhav Rosyara

In Nepal, around 600,000 are pursuing education in higher level from Tribhuvan University (TU) and its affiliated colleges throughout the nation.

Forming a commission in 2012 BS the then king Mahendra established TU in 2016 BS commencing formally the higher education in Nepal. And now its 60 constituent campuses cater around 1.5 lakh students and rest on its affiliated colleges. That might be the highest number of students comparing to the world's other universities abroad. As many as 7,841 (Source PAD, TU, 2068) teaching staffs and 7,413 administrative staffs have been looking after such a huge number of students. At least affiliated college is all around the districts except the Himalayan districts--Manang and Mustang.

Almost all the universities in Nepal are autonomous. Thousands of graduates each year have their compulsion to put off their certificates and try for other options to sustain. Some of them may try for abroad studies even deviating from their specialization of study and work on different fields, some looks for the government or private jobs and rest remains unemployed. Some are just out of these things --even deprived from the lower level education either secondary or primary. Though in Nepal a large number of the students wishing to achieve the higher education can join TU, says chief of planning division, TU, Dr. Prahlad Pant, just because the university fee is very low.

University education is not compulsory and should be for those who are interested and want to make career in academics and researches, he further added.

Restructuring TU has been the most important issue as it passed through many phases, political changes and many other experiences.

"Talking about the quality i.e. syllabus we have, this is not bad in comparison to the world's good universities," newly appointed registrar Dr. Chandramani Paudel explained claiming that the syllabuses has been updated in every four years. Slowly its improving, he added.

The main part of the problem in TU is the examination system and administrative activities. In the last one decade the academic calendar has been delayed by around one year. It's due to delayed examinations and publishing their results late and which ultimately pushes the admission the next year. Besides political interferences and the slow-motion centralized administration also contributed to the

problem.

To provide and maintain the quality and fairness of the examination is one important component while publishing the results on time and managing the massive burden of works of the central body is another.

For the betterment of the university we have to follow the academic calendar launched recently at all cost which is the major challenge ahead, Dr. Poudel adds. Calendar itself is not sufficient and it should be executed as before and there are many things for the people to become suspicious on this matter. Firstly, the transition period Nepal is facing and of course the remains of the old concepts in the TU's prosperity.

If there would be the political will power and also the support from the stakeholders to execute it fairly, this is possible, says Dr. Pant. "Students nowadays are being serious on their study, they protests outside but classes go on, he explains with hope. He respects the genuine academic demands of the students too.

TU take exams once a year and students mainly study during the exam times. This may be due to non-semester system. Only the final exams cannot be good evaluating measure of the student. But TU is about to start the four-year program and semester system. For this, not only new curriculum is needed, student's knowledge should be linked with skill. This remains our drawback and we could not make it practical, Dr. Poudel explained.

TU is a big university and runs with limited resources it is imparting mass-based education, fighting with excessive admission, demands of the staffs, students and others at different times, despite these problems TU is competing with the international universities in some technical subjects like medicine, engineering, forestry etc, registrar Dr. Poudel shared. Further, TU is in transition phase and every activity influences its calendar, he added.

Along with these things there are lots of things to restructure. People gets frustrated and fed up with the old system and concepts to restructure it need to be replaced by the new, practical and scientific one. And the education it gives should be behavioural and practical; this should be discussed for further improvement.

And the launching calendar does not seem to be a big deal rather to execute it and that can be possible by the positive support from the stakeholders. If it will be executed fully with determination, the future of the people's university can be bright.