

Nepal Abroad

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New Nepal Turns Left, Prachanda Turns PM

Courtesy: The Himalayan Times, Nepal

Kathmandu August 15: CPN-Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' became the first Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal after the legislative session of the Constituent Assembly today elected him head of the government with more than two-third majority.

Backed by CPN-UML, Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum (MJF) and 16 other fringe parties, the former rebel leader mustered 464 votes (78 per cent) out of 577 votes cast. His only rival, three-time prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, secured only 113 votes.

Fourteen CA members of the Rastriya Janamorcha Nepal, Rastriya Janashakti Party, Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party and CPN-Unified abstained from voting. UML general secretary Jhala Nath Khanal had proposed to elect Prachanda to the PM's post and senior Maoist leader Dr Baburam



Photo courtesy:nepalnews.com

Maoist chairman Prachanda waving to supporters after being elected Prime Minister at his residence in Nayabazaar on Friday.

Bhattarai and MJF coordinator Upendra Yadav had seconded Khanal's proposal.

Leaders of the fringe parties — Sarita Giri of the NSP (A), Narayan Kaji Shrestha of the Janamorcha Nepal, Chandra Dev Joshi of the CPN-United, MS Thapa of the Janamukti Party, Buddha Ratna Manandhar of the Nepa-

Rastriya Party, Gayatri Saha of Nepal Janata Dal — also supported Khanal's proposal.

Prachanda was also backed by Hridayesh Tripathi of TMDP, Rajendra Mahato of Sadbhavana Party, former PM and RPP leader Lokendra Bahadur Chand, CP Mainali of CPN-ML, Chandra Bahadur Gurung of the RPP-N and leaders of six other

parties. Outgoing PM Girija Prasad Koirala, Deuba and other prominent leaders congratulated Prachanda on being elected PM immediately after Speaker Subas Chandra Nembang announced the result.

In his brief speech, Nembang said he hoped that the country would move forward to find

lasting peace and write new constitution under Prachanda's able leadership.

Emerging from the House, Koirala said, "I am glad that the PM's election has been held in a democratic manner."

Deuba said, "I am glad that the Maoists, who wielded guns just a few years ago, have entered democratic polity. I congratulate Prachanda on being elected to the post. Our party will support the new government on merit basis."

Prachanda, however, could not talk to the media because of poor security arrangement outside the International Convention Centre where the legislative session was held.

Before the election, Khanal said they failed to form a national unity government, as NC did not want to join the Maoist-led government.

"We decided to back the Maoist-led government after they pledged to fully implement the seven-

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US Report: Minorities Will Become Majority by 2042

The U.S. Census Bureau is projecting that, by the year 2042, minorities will become the majority of the U.S. population. Hispanics, now 15 percent of the population, are expected to double their share of the population, to 30 percent. The new numbers suggest a nation more racially and ethnically diverse, and much older. Producer Zulima Palacio has the story. Carol Pearson narrates.

In the Missouri town of St. Joseph, Hispanics could soon become the majority.

Census Bureau data shows that between 2006 and 2007 the Hispanic population in the region jumped by close to 25 percent.

Lucy Timmerman came to St. Joseph three years ago. She ended up opening a business. She says she can see the difference.

"I think Hispanics are here and they are not going to go

anywhere," says Timmerman. "We are going to see more coming."

The trend is national. The U.S. Census Bureau says minorities, now roughly one third of the U.S. population, are expected to be the majority by 2042. By 2050, minorities — including Black Americans, Hispanics and Asians — will make up 54 percent of the population. Hispanic people — because of immigration and high birth rates — will be 30 percent of Americans

Sixty-two percent of the nation's children will be from minority groups.

"I didn't know that," says Lauren Guzik, a white woman in Los Angeles. "I don't mind it. I have been in California my whole life so I am use to it. I love diversity."

The bureau forecasts a population that is rapidly aging. By

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Analysts Warn Of Rising Ethnic Tensions

Kathmandu, August 14: Failure to address the grievances of Nepal's various indigenous and ethnic groups may result in further ethnic tension, warn analysts.

Speaking to IRIN in the capital, Kathmandu, they said the country's top political parties in the Constituent Assembly (CA) must prioritise the formation of the much-anticipated State Restructure Commission, a key national body

that may help to address the federalist demands of diverse ethnic communities.

There has been a growing trend of ethnic and indigenous groups calling for autonomy both in the Terai (fertile southern plains), and in hill areas particularly in the east.

In July several ethnic-based organisations declared autonomy in three of the most important districts

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Editorial:**The Maoists Government**

The victory of rebel leader – Comrade Prachanda, otherwise Pushpa Kamal Dahal and his elevation to Nepal's Prime Minister has made many nepalese hopeful, but with certain caveats. Although outdated in the modern world, his communist ideology and his political party claims to represent hitherto underrepresented, marginalized population in the affairs and the development of the state. Many other parties under different guise also championed the similar cause and also offered tantalizing promises to ensure development of the people and the country. After the fall of the Panchayat regime and during the democratic years, the situation since then has little changed. It divided the country into the privileged few-politicians and their families and friends, and the other large section of population who remained disconnected with mainstream Nepal.

With over 13 thousand lives during the insurgency, and unaccounted bodies and the terror after the resurfacing of the rebels, the Maoists are moving towards the controlling of the affairs of the State. Emergence of Dahal as the head of the government has brought relief to many, hoping that there would be an end to 'real and pseudo' terror and intimidation under various pretext, that a free man can life freely subscribing to any political beliefs, right to property and an end to discrimination. As is natural, people also have expectation from the new entrant in Baluwatar – PM's residence, that he would also defend the issue of

territorial encroachment of Nepal, stop indiscriminate killings of the Nepalese national within our territory by the Indian security forces, that Nepalese people can move across the boarder without the harassment of the same Indian security forces in the boarder areas under different excuses.

People have not forgotten the promises made during the election by the Maoists, primarily freeing Nepal from all unequal treaties imposed since the 1950s, and making this country a self reliant and an example for others to emulate.

But the circumstances that have lead to their victory have made many doubtful. They have tied up with Communists Party of Nepal (UML) and the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) to form the government, and work on the common minimum program. Given their earlier dealings, it may not be wrong to assume that CPN-UML are a group of confused and undecided, while MJF is still not a convinced political group. The recent unpopular swearing-in ceremony of the (unpopular) vice president has raised suspicion among the mass about their political credibility. It wouldn't be a surprise for many if these group announce withdrawal of support to the Maoists lead government in the near future.

Although it would be in the interests of all to have a stable government and deliver goods to the public, the government lead by Dahal will encounter more challenges than the earlier ones who were accommodative of alien interests as well.

IDPs Still Waiting For Help, Despite Peace Accord

Kathmandu, August 06 (IRIN): Thousands of people displaced by Nepal's decade-long Maoist conflict still await help almost 21 months since a comprehensive peace accord was signed.

"The Maoist rebels killed my daughter and announced my death by hanging, and they still continue with their threats," Dig Bahadur Gurung, a political worker who has lived as an internally displaced person (IDP) for eight years after refusing to support the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist, said.

The Maoists are today the largest elected party in the Constituent Assembly but a large number of IDPs live in constant fear of the former rebels, despite their leaders' commitment to allow them to return to their homes safely.

On 21 November 2006, the Maoists and the Seven-Party Alliance-led government signed a historic peace agreement to officially end the armed "People's War" - a bloody conflict that killed 13,000 and displaced an estimated 200,000.

The reintegration and rehabilitation of the IDPs was viewed as a key issue. But aside from providing travel expenses for their return, little has been done to facilitate the overall process, said human rights workers.

The government failed to make any provision to protect the IDPs, nor did it provide a support package to re-establish their livelihoods and income opportunities, IDPs in Kathmandu complain.

"I asked the Chief District Officer [CDO] to arrange security for me to return but he told me that he couldn't promise anything and rather asked me to stay in the capital for my safety," said Gurung, who said that even someone as powerful as the CDO - who as the district's top government official has authority over the security force - sounded helpless.

"Now how can I return?" asked Gurung. He was forced to leave his home in Ramechhap District, nearly 100km east of the capital, in 1999. Many former IDPs

were now being re-displaced due to insecurity in the villages, he said.

Maoist leaders, however, deny their cadres are threatening the IDPs.

"Many IDPs still live in fear of violence and insecurity. Proper restitution of the IDPs has not been taken seriously," Suresh Pandit, an advocacy officer for the Norwegian Refugee Council, told IRIN.

The root causes of displacement have to be identified and addressed instead of merely returning people to their places of origin, he added.

Pandit noted that a large number of the IDPs were unable to acquire civil documents, compensation and other rights, as stated in the government's 2007 IDP policy.

Government ready to help

"Our district offices have been trying their best to provide support to the IDPs but they themselves are overburdened with security tasks," said Durga Nidhi Sharma, the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction's joint secretary, adding that the government planned to introduce programmes to provide IDPs with poverty alleviation programmes, free education, health and employment.

But he explained that the situation was exacerbated by insufficient data for an accurate picture of the IDP situation.

"There is a lack of a mechanism to monitor, evaluate and document cases of forced displacement. We are still struggling for authentic data after all these years," confirmed Padma Prasad Khatiwada, a lecturer at Nepal's Tribhuvan University.

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Strikes And Blockades Hitting Livelihoods

Kathmandu, August 8: Daily wage labourer Krishna Rai is reeling under severe financial hardship as frequent strikes in his area result in market shutdowns and road blockades.

"What are poor people like me supposed to do? How can we survive if this situation goes on?" asked Rai, frustrated over the impact of the ongoing strikes on poor Nepalese like him - most of whom depend on subsistence income to support their families.

Rai travelled for more than 12 hours by bus to Kathmandu from Jhapa District, nearly 400km southeast of the capital, where he hoped for a

regular income as a labourer on a new housing complex.

However, between 1 July and 8 August, the economy and daily lives have been disrupted by more than 20 strikes and road blockades in various parts of the Himalayan nation by 10 different groups - including armed groups, political parties, student unions, the business community, medical workers, transport associations and indigenous ethnic organisations, according to daily media reports.

Since January there have been more than 100 strikes by 20 different groups.

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Nepalese Calendar

Sun August 17 / Bhadra 01 '65
Gaijatra/Pratipada
Mon August 18 / Bhadra 02 '65
Ropain Jatra/duwitiya
Tue August 19 / Bhadra 03 '65
Tritiya
Wed August 20 / Bhadra 04 '65
Chauthi
Thu August 21 / Bhadra 05 '65
Panchami
Fri August 22 / Bhadra 06 '65
Khasthi
Sat August 23 / Bhadra 07 '65
Janmastami/Saptami

Conference On Nepalese Women Organized In Storrs, CT



Photo Courtesy: NWGN

Images from the conference on Nepalese women held on Saturday August 9, 2008 at the University of Connecticut, Storrs CT.

On Saturday August 9, 2008, 117 women and men gathered for the first Nepalese Women's Global Network Conference (NWGN) at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Connecticut. Dr. Cathleen Love, Associate Vice Provost for Multicultural Affairs welcomed conference participants at the University of Connecticut and noted the pertinence of addressing women's rights in Nepal and throughout the world. She supported the participants' purposeful mission of addressing problems that include inadequate health care, poverty, human trafficking, sexual abuse, and educational access.

Dr. Bidya Ranjeet, President of the Nepalese Women's Global Network (NWGN), provided a global framework for the morning panel that focused on the current status of Nepalese women. She highlighted negative media images that objectify women, and the female underrepresentation in government in the United States.

In the morning panel discussion, the panel participants

addressed the issue of cultural traditions that place women in a subordinate societal role in which they neglect their own interests and place the needs of their husbands and their children in highest regard. Domestic violence that takes shape in physical, sexual, emotional, and financial forms often takes place within this social construct. Conference panelists shared knowledge on how to encourage oppressed Nepalese women to seek help to restore their human dignity.

The panel also focused on the current state of Nepalese women living in Nepal and of the positive and negative circumstances of war in women's lives. For example, Maoist militia women felt empowered because of their activist, militarist roles. In this war-ridden backdrop, sexual violence increased and there was a significant rise in metropolitan culture.

Nonetheless, an active civil society emerged as a consequence of war; this activist body now addresses reproductive rights and citizenship rights.

Through awareness of the traditional gender model that places women in submissive roles, activists can educate others to rise up against this oppressive cultural model.

Dr. Suresh Chandra Chalise, Nepalese Ambassador to the United States, addressed the conference participants. Ambassador Chalise talked about his

Calendar of Events

August 16 & August 30: The Association of Nepalese In Minnesota is organizing "Workshop On Orientation" to empower Nepalese women (esp newly migrated) on Saturday August 16 from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Mt. Olivett Church and also "Group Camping and Workshop on Parenting" on Saturday August 30 at St. Croix State Park. For more info visit anmn.org

August 23: The NECC nepalese Educaiton and Cultural Center invites all to celebrate Krishnastami on Saturday August 23 at pashupati Buddha mandir lanham MD. the puja will start at 8.00 pm. For more info contact Pundit Ji ar 301 552 2299 or visit nepalhorizons.com

August 23-24: The NRN Canada is holding it first national convention with the theme "Nepalese Diaspora in Canada: Challenges and Opportunities" on Saturday and Sunday August 23-24 at Nathan Phillip Square of Toronto City Center, Canada.

August 27: The INLS DC Metro Chapter of Washington DC and Aswikrit Bichar Sahitya Puraskar Guthi invites all at the PRize Distribution Ceremony to INLS PAST Central President and Poet Basanta Shrestha on Sunday August 27 from 2 pm to 4.30 pm. For updates visit nepalhorizons.com

August 29-September 01: The 2008 ANMA/NASeA Joint Convention would be held in Omaha, NE from Aug 29 Sep 01 '08 at Doubletree Hotel & Executive Meeting Center Omaha - Downtown 1616 Dodge Street Omaha NE 68102. For more information, visit 2008.jointconvention.org

August 30: The 7th Northwest Nepalese Picnic is to be hosted by Vancouver B.C on saturday August 30 from 12.00pm to 8.00pm at Beer Creek park 8584 132nd Street Surrey Vancouver. For details visit nepalseattle.org

August 30: Peaceland Travels, Temptation Cuisine, Home Seller Texas, Call2Nepal .com and Party Sansar.com jointly presents charity event Summer Night 2008 on Saturday August 30 from 6.00pm to 10.00pm at Dallas Worship Temple, Irving TX. For details call 214 492 1229/ 817 715 3400 or visit nepalhorizons.com

September 01: The Nebraska Nepalese Society (NNS) has scheduled to organize Dar Khaane on Monday Sep 01 from 3.00 pm to 8.00 pm at the Hindu Temple. For details visit nnsociety.org

September 06: The Bay Area Nepalese presents Prashant tamang Grand Concert along with Raju lama nd Mamata Dipabimba on Saturday September 06 at 1547 Lakeside Drive oakland CA 94612 from 6pm to 10 Pm tickets rate \$35, \$50, \$100. For details visit nepalhorizons.com or visit radiodovaan.com

September 14: Radio Dovaan The Nepalese Community Radio is organizing its Eight Annual Picnic 2008 on Sunday September 14 from 12.00 pm to 5.00pm at Cabin John Regional Park Ice Skating Rink, Rockville MD. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

October 18: The Nepalese Association of Oregon has scheduled to organise Dashain 2008 Celebration on Saturday October 18 from 6.30pm to 11.00pm at Multnomah Arts Center 7688 SW Capitol Hwy Portland OR 97219. For details visit nepalseattle.org

To list the scheduled event(s) of your organization on the Community Events above, please email us: enews@nepalabroad.com

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Until there are *Tharus and Tharuhat*, Nepalese sovereignty will remain intact: Advocate Chaudhary

Born in Saptari District, Maheshwor Chaudhary, Tharu (37), has a Master's degree in the Humanities from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Mr. Tharu did his Bachelors of Law (LLB) from Mahendra Bindeshwari Multiple Campus in Rajbiraj.

He has participated in several national and international level discourses on Human Rights, Conflict management and Environmental Protection. Recently Mr. Tharu presented a paper in an international conference held in Bali, Indonesia, organized by International Center for Transitional Justice.

A member of the Nepal Bar Association, Mr. Tharu is currently the General Secretary of Tharu intellectual and Research Centre.

Last week he talked to Niraj Aryal, Editor-Telegraph Weekly in Kathmandu Nepal on the plight of the Tharu community and the contemporary political developments in the country. Below the results:

Q: Can you explain the ongoing Tharu uprising in Nepal?

Chaudhary: It has become by now a universal fact that the Tharu community has been strategically sidelined by the successive ruling classes from time immemorial. However, even after the success of the Maoists' led rebellion and the peoples' uprising that pledged to institutionalize the rights of the Dalits, Madhesi, Women and all other marginalized community including the Tharu Community followed by the end of the 240 years long feudal monarchy, conspiracies are still afoot to further sideline the Tharu Community and undermine our inherent rights of self-identity. To our surprise, the Madhesi leadership has now taken over the Nepal's age-old leadership to ignore the rights of the Tharu community. Now that the process of the constitution making has begun, the objective of the Tharu Uprising this time is to institutionalize firmly the rights of the Tharu community in the new constitution. We are also largely focused on minimizing the blatant attack instigated by the Madhesi community towards us. Our main objective now is to make sure that the Tharu Community has to face no further conspiracies from any quarters.

Our movement is mainly against the notion of "One Madhesh-One Sovereign Province" and liberating the Tharu community from the age-old slavery and above all we want that all the country men no matter which community they belong to, exercise their socio-economic and political rights through the establishment of fully functioning federal states.

We do still remember that the Madhesh centric parties had obstructed the normal proceedings of the Constituent Assembly for over

fourteen days thus obstructing the constitution making process. Gheraoing the CA rostrum—halting the constitution making process and raising secessionist demands are objectionable under any circumstances. The Tharu uprising also aims to keep the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and nationalism intact. We will not compromise on these vital issues.

2. The Tharu Welfare Society is alleged to have been manipulated by some political parties, specifically the UML. As a member of the Society and a Law practitioner, how do you see these allegations?

Chaudhary: First, Niraj Ji, let us go into the facts and figures before dwelling on to such wild, unsubstantiated and baseless allegations made specifically by some Madhesi leaders to malign our spotless credentials. The Tharu Welfare Society was born in the year 1948 and the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist Leninist, UML, has less than two decades of political history of its inception. The UML to be precise was formed after the Peoples' Uprising-I of the 1990. Thus this Communist party is much younger than the Tharu Welfare Society. Thus the claim that our society is affiliated to the UML is just high voltage propaganda to malign the entire Tharu community.

Be that as it may, I think such allegations are made either out of sheer ignorance or complete frustration associated with irritation. Anyway such allegations, as we know it, are meant for discouraging our movement now being waged by the entire Tharu Community and also to undermine our distinct and prestigious identity that we possess in abundance.

As I have already said that our uprising is aimed at liberating the entire marginalized communities of Nepal's Tarai. It is not that we toe the Madhesi communal line. We take into consideration of the grievances of all the marginalized Nepalese people. Thus, if any political party or a group wish to join or extend support to the Tharu uprising they are most welcome. Not just the UML, but leaders of almost all the central political parties, even some intellectuals and academicians stationed in various Madhesh centric parties and non-partisan men do support the Tharu uprising and our genuine agenda. The Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalists have been continuing to support the Tharu uprising which is certainly encouraging.

3. It is alleged that Nepal's Madhesh centric parties are India sponsored and that Vice-President Parmananda Jha taking oath and secrecy of the office is a part of the Grand Indian Design aimed at bifurcating Nepal. What is your take on this?

Chaudhary: Look Mr. Niraj, I can not tell you exactly who is sponsored by whom. But surely if you look into the Party Flag of the Madhesh Centric Parties – the Tri-color and their intense love to the Hindi language, it does tell so many things unspoken. Certainly, the Tri-color and Hindi are linked to Indian nationalism. And I see this is a part of the design to establish the Indian identity in Nepal—the design is thus to linguistically and geographically colonize Nepal.

We have seen of late that the Nepali nationalists have objected to the design by none less than the president of the Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum, Upendra Yadav and well executed by his party candidate for the vice president Parmananda Jha to establish Indian identity in Nepal. Thus I would like



Maheshwor P Chaudhary
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to urge the Nepali Nationalists, the respected CA members and the parliamentarians who have voted in favor of Parmananda Jha to remain highly attentive in the days ahead and know the inner intentions of such people. The need of the hour is to remain vigilant.

4. As per the interim constitution and more so all the parties have agreed for the formation of the Federal States. How do you see this federalism?

Chaudhary: Agreed that Republican System and Federal System is well accepted by our political parties and more importantly, by the Interim Constitution but the needed unanimity over the type of federal structure, system of judiciary, economic structure and most importantly delineation of federal states boundaries geographically are yet to be discussed in details. World experience does tell that ethnicity, language, culture, geographical Contiguity and Natural Resource form the basis for the formation of the federal states. The federal system is the best System of Governance to transform administrative, political and judicial rights to the grass root. It could prove to be a tool to transform conflict and eradicate discrimination from the society. There are agents of local feudal forces and foreign power centers who have been trying to foil the prospects of the Federal System by raising demands of Single Madhesh-One Province, Single Pahad-One Province and Single Himal-One Province. Such demand definitely goes against the present spirit and, by implication, tries to reestablish the supremacy of a

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NPPA & NAO Organizes Joint Summer Picnic



Photo: nepalhorizons.com

Images from the Summer Picnic 2008 organized jointly, for the first time, by NEPA PASA PUCHAAMERIKAYE (NPPA) & NEWAH Organization of America (NOA) on Sunday August 10, 2008 at Wheaton Regional Park, Wheaton MD. These two organizations have decided to form a single and united entity, and work for the betterment of the community in the days ahead, revealed the speakers on the occasion. As a result of the favorable weather, there were over 200 participants from the DC, VA and Baltimore/MD area. Meera Shrestha is the president of NPPA, while Rajesh Shrestha is the current president of NAO.

Hindi Boomerang Hits Nepal

Bhumika Ghimire IN



Nepal's newly elected Vice President Paramananda Jha took his oath of office in Hindi – a language spoken in northern parts of neighboring India. Now the country has erupted in protests against him. The vice president is being accused of humiliating Nepal and of being unpatriotic.

Nepali is Nepal's main language but the country is not linguistically homogenous – far from it. Newari, Maithali, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Tibetan, Tamang, Lama and many more languages as well as their distinctive dialects are spoken in Nepal and are recognized by the Constitution as the “nation's languages.” Hindi, however, is not. Jha could have taken the oath in his mother tongue, Maithali, or in any of the recognized languages. But he chose Hindi, legally a foreign language in Nepal. Before speculating why he decided to ignore the Constitution, let us look at Hindi's position in Nepal.

As a result of Nepal's cultural, religious and geographic proximity to India's Hindi-speaking area, over the years the country has been greatly influenced by the Hindi-language media, music and entertainment industry. Bollywood – India's movie industry – is a big crowd puller in Nepal; in fact in urban areas more people prefer

Hindi movies than Nepali. Hindi soap operas are hugely popular in the country and so is Hindi music.

In Nepal's Terai region, where Jha hails from, Hindi is used as a bridge between those who speak Maithali, Bhojpuri or Awadhi. Knowledge of the language helps Terai residents do business with their Indian neighbors in the nearby states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It is a common language of the region, like English is being used nowadays around the world.

It is understandable that Jha using Hindi to take an oath of office in Nepal hurt feelings in the country. After all he holds the second-highest office in the land and the people expect him to respect Nepali, the country's main language. But is the scale of negative reaction justifiable?

Hindi has its own unique position in Nepal, especially in Terai. Nepalese enjoy Hindi-language movies, music and soap operas, and for those living in Terai it is a common language acting as a bridge – maybe it is time to recognize Hindi's position in Nepal and not take the language as a threat to national sovereignty and integrity. I am not advocating forgetting Nepali or our “nation's languages” in favor of Hindi, but it is time that we at least acknowledge that Hindi is used in Nepal, whether the puritans like it or not.

The other side of this “Hindi gate” is the fact that for decades Nepal was “ruled” by whim, without proper regulations. The country still has laws that seem incompatible with the 21st-century world we live in. For example, a mother who is a Nepali citizen cannot sponsor her child's citizenship petition, only a Nepali citizen father can; laws to curb human trafficking are so lax the perpetrators regularly get away with their crimes; victims of sexual violence, especially children, are treated as the culprits rather than victims. In fact there are about 117 discriminatory provisions in Nepal's legal system, including in the Constitution.

The result of this “anything goes” style is that the country and its social fabric are badly damaged and lack structure. Nepal needs to formulate laws and regulations, and in light of “Hindi gate” maybe it should start with a language regulation that states that the oath of office can be taken only in Nepali or any other “nation's language,” and make the use of foreign language punishable. That way the pundits who are scaring people about their fellow citizens from Terai would finally be out of a job – thankfully – and people could get back to debating real issues.

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IDPs Still Waiting For...

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Based on the number of registered IDPs, the government estimates there are 44,831 IDPs in the country, while NGOs and international agencies put their actual numbers at between 50,000 and 70,000.

“There is no proper data on how many IDPs are children. How many are not going to school? How many are elderly? And most important is how many actually need the support?” asked Bishnu Raj Upreti, an independent conflict analyst.

Any amount of aid Nepal receives for IDPs would have little to no impact without a proper mechanism to identify the beneficiaries, he said.

Meanwhile, the main donors to the Nepal Peace Trust

Fund, established under the Finance Ministry, have approved a government proposal to distribute a relief and rehabilitation package of US\$5.6 million to a total of 50,000 IDPs who were ready to return to their homes.

But so far only a few have received reintegration assistance to rebuild their destroyed homes, educational assistance and livelihood loans, according to a report, IDPs - Current Status, by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, released in July.

The report recommended that while return may be the preferred solution for many, it is not the solution for all, and the authorities and donors should consider support for IDP integration or resettlement to an appropriate location.

US Report: Minorities Will

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2050, people 65 and over will number some 88 million. They will be 20 percent of the overall population.

Experts say that historically, it takes a generation to absorb the changes. So it will take time until immigrants are less in need of city services and are beginning to run those cities.

“In places like Los Angeles, where Hispanics have been for while, they have a big impact on policy,” according to William Frey, a demographer with the Brookings Institution. “They matter. We have

a Latino mayor in Los Angeles as a result of all the power they have.”

Other cities could experience big changes in the next few years, including Scranton, Pennsylvania, Las Vegas and Denver, where minorities are expected to become majorities.

“We are just seeing the tip of the iceberg when we look at today’s younger population,” says Frey. “In 10, 20 years, that is going to be America.”

If the trend continues, the U.S. will become more ethnically and racially diverse, with Hispanics playing a more dominant role. (VOA 8/15)

New Nepal Turns Left,...

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point agreement reached among the seven parties on June 27,” Khanal said.

He also appealed to the NC to reconsider its stance and join the Maoist-led government.

MJF coordinator said the NC should also have joined the Maoist-led government. Senior Maoist leader Bhattarai held NC responsible for not being able to form the unity government even though the CA polls were held four months ago.

“We formed the three-party alliance after the NC leaders

informed us that they would not join the Maoist-led government,” Bhattarai said, adding that they forged the alliance, as they could not lead the country alone. “NC must accept the reality that history has changed and country has seen a sea change,” he said.

Bhattarai also announced dissolution of all remnants of parallel government that existed since his party waged People’s War in 1995. He said all private and public property captured during the conflict would be handed over to the rightful owners over a specific period, all Maoist leaders, including Prachanda, would relinquish

Conference On Nepalese ...

Contd. from page 1...

interest in women’s issues and of the importance of women in society as they fill social, political and economic roles. He acknowledged the persistent marginalization of women in Nepal. The world is addressing the issue of women’s rights as it is evident through the Beijing Declaration and the frequent mention of women in the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals. He highlighted the interim constitution’s plans to guarantee women’s rights and the importance of sustained partnerships.

The afternoon breakout sessions focused on building bridges through advocacy, research and collaboration. These sessions addressed sexual health, education, and solutions for survivors of domestic violence. University professors and social activists contributed to these discussions that enabled the participants to speak of their personal accounts. In one of the sessions that discussed building bridges through advocacy and the educational system, participants noted that the empowerment of women lies in the importance of cultivating our talents and the elimination of the caste structure.

A Women’s poetry festival was also organized in collaboration with International Nepali Literary Society. Over 10 female poets recited their poems.

Conference focused on the future of NWGN in the afternoon. The panelists agreed that NWGN must expand to reach individuals throughout the United States and abroad. In order to expand, NWGN must collaborate with other non-governmental organizations, both the Nepalese and the American, to gain visibility and further funding. To address issues of immigrants, it will be important to partner with women’s organizations as well as with organizations that represent minorities in the United States.

military positions of the People’s Liberation Army and Young Communist League would be demilitarised.

Most of the fringe parties who spoke in the House said they supported Prachanda-led post-election government to respect the people’s mandate, find lasting peace and stability and to write a new constitution on time.

Nepalese women need to be more assertive in demanding their human rights to ensure that western countries respect the Nepalese culture. Through education, activism, and political representation, the voices of Nepali women will be heard. Next year, there will be more of an emphasis on reaching out to women and men as well to encourage their attendance. NWGN will establish more chapters and will reach out to more young activists.

Dr. Bidya Ranjeet noted that women are treated as second-class citizens and that women must consciously stand up against this cultural violence to relinquish tradition and to carry on with new standards. She stated that we need to know our rights and we need to have our rights. Dr. Ranjeet issued the challenge to the conference participants to spread the message of NWGN, to have membership throughout the 50 states in United States and abroad, and to bring forth proposals for grants for future funding and collaboration with NWGN.

Attorney Sapana Pradhan Malla, the keynote speaker, congratulated this historical initiative of the first Nepali Women’s Global Network Conference. Women are looking for space in a patriarchal legal framework and law implicates female participation in politics as women are excluded from the developmental process. Progress has been made as women now have reproductive rights in Nepal. Rape is now seen as a crime; sex without consent is a crime.

Advocate Malla also emphasized on abortion rights, property rights, educational rights, citizenship rights and economic rights. Law and society need to work together in a country that is now restructuring the state. Women’s participation in the legislature does not ensure participation throughout society. More people need to be part of the drafting of the constitution. She encouraged conference participants to send their thoughts and to be a part of the process. Through collaboration, a constitution that addresses the rights of women will become a reality, stated advocate Malla.

Analysts Warn Of Rising...

Contd. from page 1...

of the eastern Terai - Morang, Jhapa and Sunsari.

The Federal Limbuwan State Council (FLSC) of the Limbus ethnic group claimed a region they called the "Limbuwan State", while another ethnic community - the Dhimal - named it "Kochila". An alliance of nine indigenous groups known as the Terai Indigenous Janjati Organisation (TIJO) has claimed a region which they call "Morang Autonomous State".

The Kirants

Other indigenous and ethnic groups like the Tharus and Kirants are also emerging strongly, with the latter involved in armed activities to press for autonomy.

Local human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) reported that a group called the Kirant Janbadi Workers Party (KJWP) had attacked police posts and government offices and destroyed important documents.

According to human rights activists, the KJWP continues to threaten local aid workers, civilians and traders in the Bhojpur and Khotang districts of eastern Nepal, where they need the group's permission to operate in so-called "Kirant Land".

Ethnic tensions

"Ethnic fundamentalism is in danger of growing and naturally giving birth to communalism, which is detrimental to national unity," Kapil Shrestha, an independent political analyst told IRIN, adding that mistrust and hatred between the various ethnic communities was apparent, and having an impact on livelihoods and security.

Over the past few years pro-Madhesi armed groups, which have been calling for a single Madhesi province, have been openly campaigning against the people of hill origin, known as the Pahade. The Limbus, Kirants and most indigenous communities (Janjatis) come under the Pahade label.

The Madhesi and Pahade communities have often been involved in communal tensions fuelled by ethnic-based political groups: In September 2007 in Kapilvastu District, the killing of a local Madhesi leader by unknown

assailants sparked serious violence between the two groups.

"The armed ethnic groups believe that only raising arms will solve problems, and are using their strategy of fear among civilians," independent conflict analyst Shovakar Budhathoki said, noting that a dangerous trend was that armed criminal groups were also taking advantage of a weak security situation and exploiting ethno-political issues to provoke communal hatred.

Government officials fear for their safety

Local government officials in the Village Development Committees (VDCs), the lowest level of government administration, have faced constant threats from the armed groups.

Frustrated about the lack of state protection, local VDC officials are shutting down their offices and holding strikes to pressure the government to pay serious attention to their security. Around 17 Civil Servants Unions in Sunsari and Siraha districts (eastern Nepal) have been regularly holding strikes.

Government employees said they would return to work only if the government provided security guarantees. "The officials are too afraid to work in the VDCs as the government has been unable to do anything, despite our constant requests," said Khadag Poudel, president of Bhojpur Civil Servants Organisation.

The District Administration Office (DAO) of Bhojpur explained that although the government had given them assurances of their security, they had remained unwilling to return to work.

Analysts say the government needs to hold talks with the various ethno-political groups and respond to their demands.

Meanwhile, civilians are bearing the brunt of the strikes, armed activities and violence at a time when food and fuel prices are rising. (IRIN News Service)

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Strikes And Blockades ...

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Humanitarian impact

Most groups stage a strike for a day or two, while others last for up to two weeks in a row - raising serious concerns among local and international aid workers over their impact on health services, food supplies and livelihoods of local communities. Among the worst to affect civilians was a 13-day strike in western Nepal, organised by the Kailali Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) to end the transport syndicate system, imposed by the Seti-Mahakali Truck Operators' Association.

Despite a ban imposed by the Nepalese government in 2001, the practice continues, inhibiting free and competitive transport business, says the KCCI.

From 12-25 July, the strike seriously affected most of the hill regions in the far west and mid-west, preventing food supplies, medicine, materials and other necessary commodities from reaching their destinations, according to a report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Thousands of residents were stranded, patients were deprived of medical services and a severe shortage of medicines was experienced in certain remote districts, which are often at high risk of disease outbreaks due to the advancing monsoon season, the report explained.

In July, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) noted the strikes' impact on the food supply to markets in the far western hills and mountains.

Notice:

Nepal Abroad would not be available on the weekend of Labor Day (August 30, 2008). We'd be back on Saturday September 6, 2008.
Nepal Abroad Team

Apology:

We express our apology for not being able to come-up with Nepal Abroad on Saturday August 9 '08 and regret the inconvenience caused.
Nepal Abroad Team

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Key transit points were unable to deliver supplies to the food-insecure districts such as Accham, Bajura, and Bajhang because of market closure and depleted stocks.

"Although the strike has ended now, the poor communities are still living with the damage done to them during the period," said Ashok Shrestha, a community health worker in Accham District, nearly 600km northwest of the capital.

Another major strike that crippled the lives and livelihoods of the civilians was called during the same period for nearly 13 days by student unions belonging to the largest political parties in protest at higher transport costs in more than eight districts of west Nepal. Hundreds of people were stranded along the highways while essential supplies were curtailed.

Political deadlock

"These strikes will never end as long as the political parties do not work together in consensus to end the ongoing political deadlock," said a government official, who requested anonymity.

The government's presence had been diminishing, especially in the Terai, where most of the strikes have been staged by various armed and non-armed political groups, he added.

Insecurity and political instability have been increasing nationwide, said government officials working at the district level.

Four months since the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections, the elected political parties have failed to reach a political consensus to form a new government, resulting in mass unrest throughout the country, explained political analysts. (IRIN)

Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	68.55	69.15
Canadian \$1	64.19	64.76
Euro 1	101.07	101.95
Pound Sterling 1	127.26	128.37
Australian \$1	59.14	59.66
Swiss Franc 1	62.41	62.96
Singapore Dollar	48.36	48.79
Japanese Yen 10	6.22	6.27
Chinese Yuan 1	9.98	10.07
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	10.80	---
Danish Kroner 1	13.55	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.77	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	18.28	---
Qatari Riyal 1	18.83	---
Thai Bhat 1	2.03	---
UAE Dirham 1	18.66	---
Malaysian Ringgit 1	20.46	---

[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, For August 17 '08]

How To Sue In Small Claim Court ?

Contd. from the previous week...

You should always try to settle a dispute without going to court. Generally, disputes should be settled without a lawsuit. During any given year, many cases are filed in small claims court that could have been resolved without a lawsuit. If you do file a lawsuit, you will find that you must spend time preparing your case. You will also have to pay certain fees to have your case processed. A trial in small claims court, although informal, can be a time-consuming and emotionally draining experience.

In many cases, there are alternatives to going to court. In dispute with your landlord, you may be able to get the matter resolved by your apartment association. In a dispute with a business, the Better Business Bureau may be helpful. The Dry Cleaners Association may be able to resolve a problem with your dry cleaner. In a dispute over wages or involving deceptive trade practices, a call to the attorney general's office may be worthwhile.

(This information is not a substitute for the advice of a lawyer and is intended for general information concerning how to sue in small claims court. This information is published as a handbook which is prepared and distributed as a public service by the Texas Young lawyers Association and the State Bar of Texas. This is the general information for the public about the procedure of small Claim Courts in Texas.)

Sometimes a local television station or newspaper will have a consumer action department. Occasionally, such departments are extremely effective in recovering money for consumers and are sometimes successful in recovering money where a suit in small claims court would fail.

The steps set out below may help you to settle a dispute without going to court:

1. First, carefully analyze the nature and cost of the wrong. For example, if the laundry has ruined a piece of your clothing, estimate the value of the article ruined. Determine how much you have been damaged. How much money would it take to make you "whole", or to put you in the position where you would have been had the other party done what he or she promised to do. If your case involves a consumer transaction, obtain a copy of the Texas Young Lawyers Association handbook entitled A Guide to the Texas Deception Trade Practices Consumer

Protection Act to assist you in analyzing your claim.

2. Once you know what you want, a good way to start an attempted settlement is to call the store or the person whom you feel is responsible. Speak to a person in authority, not a salesperson. Generally, a store manager or an officer with authority to make decision is best.

3. Calmly explain your side of the story and how you feel you were wronged. Do not gripe! You are not registering a complaint but are asking that the store or person compensate you for the wrong you feel they have done you.

4. NEVER become abusive or upset. A calm and logical approach with accomplish far more than abusive outrages, no matter what your feelings are on the subject. Yelling and shouting will not increase the amount that you are entitled to recover and will only create hard feelings.

5. Demand something specific. Ask the store or person to replace the garment, return your money, or some other



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specific compensation. Tell them exactly what you want to resolve the issue.

6. If the store manager or person in charge is unresponsive, or if you are unable to reach him or her by telephone, then write a letter explaining your complaint. Send the letter by certified mail, return receipt requested. Remember or keep a copy of the letter. Be sure you mail the letter to the correct address. Try to be as clear and concise as you can. There is no need for long-winded discussion or fancy legal language. A sample letter is included at the end of this pamphlet. ... to be contd. next week

Until there are *Tharus and Tharuhat*, Nepalese...

Contd. from page 4...

unitary system of governance. The demand for "*Single Madhes- Single Province*" is against granting equal rights to all the ethnic communities, equal opportunities for all languages, against the uniform and the equitable use of natural resources and overall human development. This is noting but a poly to disrupt the age-old communal harmony and then to disintegrate the motherland ultimately.

And I must tell you very frankly that there is no Madhesh in Nepal.

The Madhesh or the Madhya Desh or the Mid Country is situated very well in India. Historical and geographical proofs do amply indicate that the region confined by Bindhyachal Parbat in the South, hills close to India's capital New Delhi in the North, Mathura in East and Saraswati River in the West is in fact the State of Madhesh and the ruler of Madhesh was a Rajput King (*Jawahar Lal Nehru, Bharat Ki Prachin Rup Rekha*). Thus the

historical Madhya Desh that is well placed in India cannot replace Nepal's Tharuhat. Until and unless there are Tharus and Tharuhat in Nepal, the Nepali sovereignty will remain intact. Rest assured. Well within the Tharuhat there can be smaller sovereign states based on ethnicity or language, we are ready to hold serious discussion over the issue.

5: The Constitution Assembly is more centered on playing the role of a legislative body than in the constitution making process? In addition, the political skirmish is delaying this process. What is your observation?

Chaudhary: This is one of the best questions that are perhaps attached to the future of this country and it is indeed being discussed among the academics and the common men alike. People have shown deep concern over the growing political uncertainty that is having its impact on the writing of the constitution itself. National and International observers have been

closely watching the ugly political squabble in Nepal. As a student of Law and Political Science, I believe that the political parties in Nepal must write the Federal Democratic constitution and concurrently ensure that an inclusive set-up is placed in all the State Organs and also provide relief measures, resettlement to the violence affected people and guarantee the end of exploitation and discrimination in the society.

However, it is really difficult to see to date, if the CA members have acted upon their roles properly. The political parties represented in the CA are more concerned on making amendments to the interim constitution which is against the mandate of the CA. The CA could have instead focused on preparing the plan of action and rules and regulations for the Constitution Making. The political parties that were not represented in the Interim Parliament look more concerned on delaying the process. However, it is not too late. The government must

be formed at the earliest, with that the beginning to writing the constitution must be initiated.

The Political parties in Nepal seem to have forgotten a very simple fact and that is to abide by the rules of the game...when defeated they must accept the result. However, they are not doing this. This is the root cause of the current political skirmish.

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