Confession
Prachanda’s dilemma, how to say sorry

His abhorrence for the United States will perhaps not allow him to admit it publicly. But Prachanda seems to have made a confession, that his propaganda about King Gyanendra plotting to kill some US officials in Kathmandu was a “mistake.”

The Maoist Chief is believed to have made the confession to Prime Minister, G P Koirala, when the latter disapproved of the “irresponsible way” Prachanda went around making accusations. “How will you deal with this?” - Koirala’s question posed in Baluwatar only yielded a smile followed by a confession, “yes, it was a mistake,” sources in the Prime Ministers’ office told newsfront. Prachanda’s quiet confession came after a series of challenges that Ambassador Moriarty threw upon him: share the information about the plot, prove it or apologise. Yet another foot in the mouth syndrome was repeated in the form of a compact disc that was handed over to Speaker, Subhash Nembwang in parliament by the Maoists claiming it as evidence of King Gyanendra and Crown Prince Paras’s “plotting to assassinate political leaders.” This has turned out to be a hoax.

On page 2 ‘Interim government at large’
Intangible

What shall I get attitude delays Government formation

Prime Minister G P Koirala applied all tricks in his book including threatening to quit, and coaxing the eight parties with “a future Nepal which belongs to you, not me”. The eight party meeting on Sunday ended without endorsing his wish list. He had prescribed a cabinet with Deputy Minister of his choice to succeed him, Finance, Home and Defense portfolios to his party nominees, and a commitment from Maoists that they will behave before the formation of interim cabinet. There are speculations that the person uppermost in his mind is Sushil Koirala, the senior most leader of the party will virtually be the Prime Minister in the waiting. Koirala (83), in fragile health repeatedly said in most of the meetings this week that “all I want to see is peace process going smoothly ahead and you all with a long future should not squabble over petty issues.”

Koirala did not attend the meeting on Sunday leaving it to other leaders to sort out contentious issues. Maoists have personally assured the PM that they will return properties confiscated illegally during the past 11 years of conflict.

Koirala during his earlier meeting with Prachanda has made it clear that Maoists would require to notify that they have returned all kinds of property to the rightful owners - individuals, institutions and the Government before they joined the Government.

The submission of the compliance report by the Maoists will determine the date of formation of the interim cabinet which will instantly declare the date of election to the Constituent Assembly. In return the Government will withdraw all pending cases against the Maoist cadres. Both sides have in principle agreed to appoint a high level committee to monitor adherence to code of conduct and human rights situation as peace process continues.

The U N team headed by Ian Martin will be assisting the committee in observing and monitoring the human rights situation in the country. Under the Koirala formula, Maoists need to undertake not to disturb political meetings of any party and to stop their cadres from moving around with arms.

Koirala’s wish to have all parties to agree on him being declared as the interim Prime Minister before other things are settled was thwarted as CPN-ML and others insisted there were far more important issues to be settled beforehand. Prime Minister’s trusted lieutenants, Dr Shekhar Koirala and K P Sitaula had been pressuring other party delegates to first declare the unanimous choice of the alliance so that PM Koirala could take the oath on Tuesday in the House.

There has however been a broader understanding on composition of interim cabinet which will give 25 per cent each to three major parties - Congress, UML and Maoists and 12.5 per cent to Congress (Democratic).

Only two things could lead to the election to the Constituent Assembly (CA) in June as pledged by the eight parties. Firstly, if FPM G P Koirala’s emotional plea, “I will be able to see it in my life time if it takes place in June,” gets heeded. Secondly, if a miracle takes place but all other factors weigh against such a possibility.

Koirala has expressed his emotional wish many times before the members of the Election Commission and top leaders of political parties, but the existing legal and security situation do not give much hope. Besides, the Commission needs to procure election related materials through proper tender procedures which are time consuming. Voter lists are not ready yet and the constitution delimitation commission has not been formed.

“We will need proper electoral laws and mandate besides a security situation where we can hold free and fair elections. Every second counts, but I do not feel convinced enough to say I am satisfied”, Chief Election Commissioner, Bhragup Pahadhael told newfront, adding “this election needs to be very credible given presence and interest of the international community on Nepal’s transition to Democracy”.

“Intangible - What shall I get attitude delays Government formation

“Maoist chief Prachanda at Tundikhel

Correction

In the news “Serving the underprivileged”, carried out on volume 7, page 2, the name of the school was incorrect. It should have read Catalunya School. The error is regretted. -Editor

Emotion Election

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As per the indications, the election to the CA will cost the state exchequer around two and a half billion Rupees excluding expenditure on security arrangements. That may not be a major concern for the Chief Election Commission, but absence of a credible security situation and attack on certain political parties by the Maoists is. “All political parties should be free to carry their political activities freely,” Pahadhael said expressing his unhappiness over the incident in Jhapa and earlier in Lamjung in which the Rashtriyana Prajatantra Party leaders were targeted by the Maoists. But the Commission can act only after the election is notified and model code of conduct formulated. “At this stage I can only appeal to the parties to allow campaigning without intimidation and violence to all”, said he.

Growing ‘Congressisation’ of the security forces, mainly the police and armed police seems to have worried not only the Election Commission, but also many non-congress parties including the Maoists who protested against recent promotions awarded to certain officials just before the formation of the Interim Government.

Some of the police officials with ‘Pro-Congress’ backgrounds were far more important issues to be settled beforehand. Prime Minister’s trusted lieutenants, Dr Shekhar Koirala and K P Sitaula had been pressuring other party delegates to first declare the unanimous choice of the alliance so that PM Koirala could take the oath on Tuesday in the House.

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Army's impatience

Army's indignation and protest comes in the wake of their assessment that a senior civilian official in the Defense Ministry is leaking vital information to the Maoists.

In what could trigger a new crisis, senior army officials have taken offense to "systematic humiliation" of the institution by the Maoists, and Government's indifference to it.

"There is a limit to everything, and to our patience as well," a message conveyed to the Government said. "We know it and the Prime Minister from the Army's top level on behalf of the institution said, after 13 of its vehicles were intercepted by the Maoists in western Nepal last week. G P Koirala's quick intervention worked and the Maoists released the vehicles claiming, "we never did it."

Army's indignation and protest comes in the wake of their assessment that a senior civilian official in the Defense Ministry is leaking vital information to the Maoists. "We know it and the Prime Minister knows it," said a senior official of the Army.

Gauging the tense mood of the army, Prime Minister has decided to attend the "Ghode Jatra" festival in his capacity as the Defense Minister in an attempt to assuage the hurt feeling of the security agency, an agency which the Government is yet to own despite its having declared that Army will be under direct control of the parliament.

"We are loyal to the Nepal Government and have been carrying out every order given to us," Koirala was told by the top officer who presented a list of cases in which Ministers and Maoists had systematically humiliated the army.

It also cited the case when army vehicles en route to Kathmandu for routine servicing and overhauling were intercepted by the Maoists on false propaganda that they were carrying weapons.

Construction halted

The target for completing the Surkhet - Jumla highway by end March is unlikely to be achieved. The construction work has been stopped for the past one week by irate villagers demanding mass compensation for the residents of Khaltalgad market area against "damage caused by explosions."

The mass protest leading to obstruction was triggered after the house of a resident in the market area was partially damaged when Nepal Army used explosives to blast rocks near the site, to build the road. "Nepal army is ready to pay compensation to the person whose house was damaged after proper technical assessment, but the demand for mass compensation is not proper," an army official said. The stretch of road which was completed is now being consolidated by the Army to connect Khaltalgad and Jumla, while the project is expected to give a boost to economic activities and social movement in Nepal's remote Karnali region.

A central level team will be reaching the construction site to open the track while dialogue continues with the villagers," Bhim Prasad Neupane, member of the National Planning Commission (NPC) told newsfront.

Chief of Department of the Nepal Army's construction Unit Uddav Bista clarified that the construction work would resume after the issue is settled. "We hope to get the report of the technical team soon", said he. As many as 800 NA staff is currently working in the construction of the 50 km Khaltalgad – Jumla section of road. "We have already transported materials for building the bridge at Serigadh area. That will mark the opening of the highway," an official said, adding, "if construction begins immediately, it should be ready by early April but inordinate delay will cost more both time and money wise."

No, Thank you

Ram Nagina Singh, the recently retired upright Judge of the Supreme Court, chose to act differently from Krishna Jung Rayamajhi, his predecessor. Singh sternly turned down the cabinet decision unilaterally appointing him as Head of the Constituencies Delimitation Commission, without prior consultation with him.

"This is an affront to me. This is not acceptable at all," he told a cabinet meeting which conveyed the cabinet decision to him last week. The Government however was only following the precedent it created in appointing the Krishna Jung Rayamajhi commission to probe "Misuse of state power and money to suppress Jana-Andolan". Rayamajhi, without any reservation, had not only accepted the post retirement job offered to him, but also accepted Government nominees on party line as member of the commission.

Singh's refusal to accept the post will have a bearing on the conduct of election as the Government was expecting that Justice Singh would put his signature on the dotted line; since the delimitation and a number of additional constituencies had already been finalised, at least in principle.

Singh was chosen since he is from Terai and his reputation as a straightforward judge, would give the process of delimitation the required credibility. Justice Singh was part of the three-member bench which had declared the Royal commission on corruption appointed by the King during his direct regime as "unconstitutional", that led to its dissolution.
**People First**

In a democracy, the people have an obligatory role to play in all spheres of national life. Citizenship is not a mere document or certificate of nationality. Conferring citizenship by the state also amounts to reminding citizens of the roles, duties and responsibilities to their country and society. If citizens are always alert towards their duties, foul play by politicians or power centers would be an exception rather than a rule.

Democracy in Nepal, over a period of time, has become more of a label than a process or conduct. Political parties preaching Democracy do not promote or encourage inner party Democracy. As a result, each party is being ruled by strongest individuals, almost like patriarchs and mini kings of yesteryears. The general public is not only unable to influence the parties but their role is reduced to just voting whenever elections take place—mostly having to choose the one who is a ‘less evil’.

People come to the streets rarely as they did in 1990 or April last year. But once a greater cause is realized, people withdrawing that political parties would act differently. Recent experience indicates that political parties, Maoris included, have changed their colours. A civil society, not affiliated to any political grouping could have been an ideal platform for advocating people’s empowerment and enhanced role in politics. But that is missing. This does not however, minimise the need of a more effective forum.

There has to be a mechanism where every citizen has the right to question, to be heard, free from any fear. It can effectively take up issues like funding of political parties so that they can act free from interest of donors. Similarly, issue of total independence of judiciary, its separation from executive and functional autonomy of security forces, with full accountability, of course, would not let the Government of the day to act with an agenda of vendetta against its rivals, something that is happening today. New Nepal can not be built if there is no reform on these sectors.

**Identity crisis**

The article in volume 8 by columnist Sushma Amatya reflects a biased perception of foreigners’ view on the identity of Nepal. In most of cases, many hard-working Nepali students who want to obtain foreign degrees are many times rejected visas. Some months back Nepali newspapers followed news on a prominent Nepali writer Professor Abhi Subedi who was denied visa for USA.

Many people I know are suffered from such identity crisis. Even I have a bitter experience to be perceived as Bahadur (a guard) in several Indian tours. But for redemption of our pre-conceptual perception in foreigners’ eyes and to create an image of noble identity across the world we ourselves have to clean all spotted identity socially and politically.

**Space to students**

In Newsfront, I find the way photos are presented attractive. It deals with different current issues analytically. It’s coverage of educational issues are appreciable and could be used as good reference points by students and teachers alike. I think Newsfront would have a wider market if it devoted some space to students, the school going age group.

**Be more practical**

This is the era of science and technology. Everybody has the right to know information regarding social, economic, political and different human interests. Newsfront really reflects the pulse of the people but it has yet to cross the boundary of urban areas to gain popularity in rural areas. It should also contribute to establishment of the political changes obtained by Janadolan-2.

Min Bahadur Shahi
Chair Person, KIRDARC

**Voices of people**

Newsfront has succeeded in capturing the voices of the people. The language is simple and easy to understand. There was a vacuum in the media and it has been filled by this weekly that contains a thorough analysis of socio-political issues.

The column “Insight” is really pertinent and touching and more space should be given to it. Design, layout and quality of the paper is good.

Prakash Sayami
Director and film analyst

**Good columns**

Newsfront is a complete weekly paper in Nepal media replete with facts, in-depth analysis, the salient features of the paper. The columns are good and we think Newsfront really captures the voices of real people. However, the front page layout looks slightly odd and we suggest it could be changed and made more catchy and attractive. Sometimes, the pictures and stories don’t match well, so more attention needs to be paid to these details.

Uday Pariyar
Kathmandu

**Ordinary love is selfish**

Sri Yukteswar (1895 – 1936) was a Spiritual Master from India, also the Guru of Paramahansa Yogananda. Sri Yukteswar was a Spiritual Master of great sincerity and sought to direct his disciples through strict discipline. Yogananda said of his Guru that if he did not speak with such sincerity he would have many more disciples. Sri Yukteswar entered Mahasamadhi (A Yogi’s conscious departure from his body) at the age of 81.

Much of what we know about Sri Yukteswar comes from Paramahansa Yogananda’s Autobiography of a Yogi.

**Quotes by Sri Yukteswar**

“Ordinary love is selfish, darkly rooted in desires and satisfactions. Divine love is without condition, without boundary, without change. The flux of the human heart is gone forever at the transcending touch of pure love.”

(From Autobiography of A Yogi Chapter 10)

“Since this love becomes developed in man it makes him able to understand the real position of his own Self as well as of others surrounding him.”

(From: The Holy Science by Sri Yukteswar)

“Should I, Master? I don’t believe in astrology.”

Sri Yukteswar

“..."It is never a question of belief: the only scientific attitude one can take on any subject is whether it is true. The law of gravitation worked as efficiently before Newton as after him. The cosmos would be fairly chaotic if its laws could not operate without the sanction of human belief.”

Sri Yukteswar
When Ramesh Nath Pandey was at the helm of Shital News during the Royal regime, he had some ambassadors ‘summoned’ – an accepted stance and views as such. In the prevailing situation the United Nations and mainly countries like India, United States, United Kingdom and China, and to some extent European Union and Scandinavian countries would constitute that community.

But has Nepal written in what appears like a long overhaul of transition that the country is poised for. But has Nepal written the course and areas of help it would require? Ramesh Nath Pandey received cash in assistance from China to be able to pay the Government servants; and G P Koirala, from India for the same purpose. Does that make us more friends; and G P Koirala, from India for the same purpose. Does that make us more

Traditional wisdom here has been suggesting keeping an equidistance between the two giant neighbours, India and China and encouraging friendship between them. a small country like Nepal with high degree of dependence has to be careful. What happens to our grass if two giants fight? Our grass will not be safe even if the two make love. This suggests that this country needs to adapt itself to changing external scenarios using principles of Panchashheel as the best safeguard that it can have.

Nepal has reasons to feel happy that almost every country and the international organisation has to be welcome to speak on internal affairs. This has to be a matter of principle and adherence for all in the Government and the international community which does not have a coherent stance and views as such. In the prevailing situation the United Nations and mainly countries like India, United States, United Kingdom and China, and to some extent European Union and Scandinavian countries would constitute that community.

When Ramesh Nath Pandey was at the helm of Shital News during the Royal regime, he had some ambassadors ‘summoned’ – an accepted norm of disapproval of their conduct and utterances, for ‘interfering’ in Nepal’s internal affairs. But the reason such a ‘summon’ was not taken seriously was because the government of the day had been totally rejected at home and abroad. Moreover, Pandey was acting without any adherence to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs as he was freely inviting other countries to do so if they supported the Royal regime. This means that only a regime which has the people’s support and has to depend less on the international community can define the grounds and conditions for how much the outsiders should be welcome to speak on internal affairs. This has to be a matter of principle and adherence for all in the Government and the international community which does not have a coherent stance and views as such. In the prevailing situation the United Nations and mainly countries like India, United States, United Kingdom and China, and to some extent European Union and Scandinavian countries would constitute that community.

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Why is Cambridge A level programme so popular all over the world?

CIE A Level is so popular because of its international quality and recognition. It is focused on maintaining high standards. When a new syllabus is designed, there is a lengthy process of consultation, research and trial period before the syllabus is published. The delivery of the syllabus is then supported by a variety of means, including specimen papers; face to face workshops for teachers, e-learning courses, online programmes, discussion groups, suggested and endorsed course books and so on. Secondly, CIE syllabus and question papers are international, which means that they are specifically written with the overseas student in mind. There are no obscure references to UK traditions and no assumptions that students have an understanding of UK current affairs. All students overseas, whether studying in Nepal, Nebraska or New Zealand will find CIE syllabuses and question papers ideally suited to an international context. Finally, CIE’s qualifications are recognised by the world’s leading universities, and act as a passport to the most rigorous of undergraduate courses. CIE has recently developed a user friendly recognition database which can be found on the recognition pages on CIE online (www.cie.org.uk).

How is A level course running in Nepal?

A Level programmes are popular in Nepal and CIE has registered a number of Cambridge International Centres (CICs) and British Council attached centers. Both British Council and the CICs are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the examinations, making all local administrative arrangements to ensure that students take their examinations under the best possible conditions. All centers are registered with or are in the process of registering with the Ministry of Education. It is said that Cambridge has made A level syllabus easier, to expand its market.

Your comment?

A Level is often referred to as a ‘gold standard’, meaning that the standard of the qualification is maintained over time. A Level was first developed over 50 years ago and CIE goes to great lengths to ensure that new syllabuses and question papers reflect the original gold standard. Thanks to the good reputation of CIE International A Level, students with good grades are welcomed at leading world-class universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. Syllabus is regularly revised to ensure that their content is

Institutions authorised to run A level programme:

1. Budhanilkantha School, Kathmandu.
2. Rato Bangla School, Lalitpur.
3. Chelsea International Academy, Naya Baneshwar.
4. Lumbini International College, Lalitpur.
5. Everest Education foundation, Kathmandu.
6. Nagarjuna Academy, Sanepa.
7. Maji Institute, Lazimpat.
8. Saipal Academy, Kathmandu.
10. A J Wild Institute of Advanced Studies, Maharajgunj
11. The British School, Jhamsikhel.
12. Kathmandu Valley school, Maharajgunj
13. Kathmandu Academy, Gairidhara.
15. Orient College, Maharajgunj.

—William Bickerdike
Regional Manager
Cambridge International Examination

A level is popular because...
A-levels education is no longer a monopoly of the privileged few. Till a decade ago, the education system that was accessible to only a few from elite families mostly from urban areas is now available widely, including students from middle class and rural areas.

To quote William Bickerdike, Regional Manager of Cambridge International Examination, “Cambridge A Level is so popular because it has maintained international quality...” The Cambridge University has extended this programme to 170 countries.

According to Ministry of Education, 16 schools run A Levels programmes inside and outside the valley (Pokhara and Biratnagar). A good score would mean an opportunity to study abroad, a dream of every student these days. To fulfill that dream, most of the students make it their first choice after passing SLC.

A teacher of Budhanilkantha School, Keshar Khulal, said, “While developing curriculum, creativity is given priority and evaluation is done comprehensively. Because of its recognition all over the world, it has become the first choice of the students.”

Planning of A level is prepared by general certification (GCE) of Cambridge International Examination, UK. GCE develops curriculum, conducts examination and performs evaluation by applying modern methods. This level has to be completed in two years although there is no time limit for talented students. Sudhir Kumar Jha, Principal of Chelsea International Academy said that a good student can complete A Level in one year.

Cambridge University has recognized Budhanilkantha School, Rato Bangala, The British School and Kathmandu International Study Centre as exam centers. Students from other Schools and independent candidates have to take exams from the British Council.

Students are evaluated through grading system where A is the highest and E denotes failed. Raghu Aditya, A level Student, said, “Exams as well as evaluation is more scientific and different from the traditional ones.”

Compared to the Intermediate and Plus 2 fees, A level is expensive. There is no uniformity in the tuition fees in different institutions. According to Principal Jha, around two and half Lakhs needs to be invested by a student to complete an A level.

The Cambridge provides exam pin code for institutes having minimum students and infrastructure up to date and relevant.

How is CIE applying a monitoring system on Cambridge registered or affiliated institutions?

There are different checks and balances. Registration with the Ministry of Education is one part of the process. In addition, CIE regularly visits and inspects centers to make sure that their facilities and resources are fit for the purpose. CIE attaches great importance to the quality of faculty members, the extent and quality of library, science and IT laboratory facilities, and the general appearance and cleanliness of the premises and classroom facilities. CIE is delighted that centers in Kathmandu and Pokhara have formed two associations called Cambridge Educators’ Association in Nepal (CEAN) and A Level College Association (ALCA) respectively.

These professional associations run self-help teachers training for less experienced teachers and are working with the British Council and CIE to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

What are the further plans to increase quality of the Cambridge A level education system?

CIE is constantly implementing fresh ideas for the improvement of quality. A recent example is a series of professional development events called Ask the Examiner, putting teachers in direct contact with examiners and providing opportunities for question and answer sessions on the syllabus and recent examination sessions. CIE continues to develop a wide range of resources for students, which are available at www.cambridgestudents.org.uk. This year, hundreds of A-Level candidates accessed the A Level student revision checklists to make sure that they were thoroughly and comprehensively prepared for their examinations.
Combating old scourge

The HIV epidemic fuels the TB epidemic. The rapidly growing epidemic of HIV in South East Asia including Nepal poses a major threat to TB control.

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Naxal attack

Chhattisgarh govt caught unprepared

After the massacre of 49 police personnel by Naxals in Chhattisgarh, India there is still a sense of disbelief. Even one of the biggest ever attacks by Naxals and the security forces who were massacred were hopelessly outnumbered and outgunned. The administration is trying to cope with the aftermath in the state’s Bijapur district.

Still dazed

Bereaved relatives have been given Rs 10,000 in cash part of Rs 2 lakh compensation announced by the government. But most are still too dazed by what happened the night before.

An attack of unprecedented magnitude on the base camp of the Chhattisgarh Armed Force and Special Police Officers all of who were part of the anti-Naxal operations in the area. Faced by a well-armed group of 500 Naxals, the security forces soon ran out of ammunition and lost 55 of their men. Some, who tried to hide in the building were dragged out and burnt. Others were hacked to death; said Mahendra Karma, opposition leader.

“The government’s flawed security plan is responsible for the massacre. The government must own up to its failure and resign,” he further said.

Forces outnumbered

The government too admits its forces were outnumbered and outmatched. “More than 500 naxals were involved in the attack. They used bombs, grenades and automatic weapons. Our forces need better training in tactics,” said CP Rathore, DGP, Chhattisgarh.

At least 676 people have been killed in Maoist violence in Chhattisgarh over the last two years. Its Special Police Officers like Santosh who need the special training. A rifle, a bulletproof jacket and a few rounds of ammunition aren’t enough for villagers like Santosh to take on the well-armed and well-trained Naxals.

As expected after the massacre Santosh is having second thoughts about the job. “Let me see if I want to continue,” said Santosh, Special Police Officer. Getting more villagers like Santosh to fight the Naxals is now the biggest challenge the Chhattisgarh government faces.

The outrage in Chhattisgarh

The killing of 55 security personnel by Maoists insurgents in a remote camp in Chhattisgarh’s Bastar region is the most devastating attack by left wing extremists in the State in recent times. The deadly pre-dawn assault—carried out by an estimated 350 to 400 rebels armed with grenades and petrol bombs—is the fourth by Maoists on police and paramilitary personnel in 2007. In January, seven Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) men were killed by an Improvised Explosive Device when on patrol; in February, six security force personnel perished in a powerful landmine explosion in the Bijapur area; and in early March, this month, another landmine took the lives of four members of the Nagaland Armed Forces and two policemen on the Chhattisgarh-Andhra Pradesh border. An analysis of the data compiled by the Institute of Conflict Management reveals that security personnel are much more vulnerable to Maoist attack in Chhattisgarh than elsewhere. In 2005, 49 members of security forces were killed in the State (as against 29 in Bihar and 27 in Jharkhand), the corresponding figure for 2006 was 55 (as against 5 in Bihar and 47 in Jharkhand).

With a forest cover of 44 per cent and the presence of a tribal population of 32.5 per cent that has been denied its share of development, Chhattisgarh has for long provided fertile ground for the naxalite movement to take root in. However, the last three years have seen a marked increase in Maoist activity. It is a result of at least three factors. First, the consolidation of the Maoists after the September 2004 merger between the People’s War and the Maoist Communist Centre of India. Secondly, the “ceasefire” that operated in 2004-2005 in Andhra Pradesh between the State government and the Maoists allowed them to expand their influence in the neighbourhood. Finally, the Chhattisgarh government’s inept policies in dealing with the naxalite challenge, highlighted by the hugely flawed Salwa Judum (“purification hunt”) campaign. This state-led mobilisation of tribals against the Maoists served only to expose innocent tribals to the wrath of the extremists, displacing large numbers from their villages. The campaign, which was suspended in 2005, exposed the folly of instigating people to fight against extremists without effectively protecting them. The point to remember is that Maoist extremism feeds on popular discontent relating to vital livelihood issues. While it is necessary to tackle the menace with a firm hand, any long-term solution must go deep into the socio-economic circumstances that provide extremists space and opportunities to disrupt normal life and commit anti-human atrocities.

Pakistan

Judiciary under attack

The suspension of Pakistan’s Chief Justice, Iftikar Mohammad Chaudhary, by President Pervez Musharraf has triggered country wide protests and has become an issue of concern worldwide. Lawyers boycotted courts and have come under attack in Pakistan as well. Most of the media in Pakistan have led mobilisation of tribals against the Maoists served only to expose innocent tribals to the wrath of the extremists, displacing large numbers from their villages. The campaign, which was suspended in 2005, exposed the folly of instigating people to fight against extremists without effectively protecting them. The point to remember is that Maoist extremism feeds on popular discontent relating to vital livelihood issues. While it is necessary to tackle the menace with a firm hand, any long-term solution must go deep into the socio-economic circumstances that provide extremists space and opportunities to disrupt normal life and commit anti-human atrocities.

From the region

19 Mar-25 Mar, 2007

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Women’s day passed silently without any major event to recognize the women who toil in women’s work. In a patriarchal society like ours, men are not much interested in recognizing the contribution made by women and celebrating the women’s day. But for how long can men undermine women’s contribution towards the overall development of the society and take women for granted?

Until the 1970s, the development policies formulated by international development agencies and adopted by the various governments in developing countries were seriously flawed. They were flawed because they undermined the productivity of women and did not consider them as a force in the development process. Women were mostly viewed as wives and mothers and policies formulated focused on mother and child health and on reducing fertility. It was only in 1970s, researchers on women in third world countries challenged the fundamental assumptions of international development and demanded a new theoretical approach. They advocated for the addition of gender dimension to the study of development process.

A country that does not recognize the contribution of women will have a tough time inching towards prosperity. Thus, acknowledgement of women’s potential and their empowerment is crucial for the overall development of the nation.

Women empowerment means bringing women who are outside the decision making process into it. It emphasizes on access to political decision-making process, in economic sphere, and to market. According to the Nobel Laureate, Muhammad Yunus, empowering women means bringing them into the organization fold will succeed in curbing rapid population growth in developing countries than the current system of educating female farmers planning approaches which he considers to be the intimidation tactics. People tend to choose to have fewer children when they increase their family economic stability. Couples in extreme abject poverty have fewer children when they increase their family economic stability. Couples in extreme poverty give birth to larger number of children in order to ensure that savings are spent for betterment of their livelihood.

Access to credit enhances the self-confidence of women and increases their status in the family. Furthermore, it will lead to social and economic empowerment of women. It will help to reduce the generalized domination and violence against women. Micro-loans provided by micro-credit programs provide women with a much needed entry point that provide them with entitlement to economic resources. When compared to other policies such as sterilization, which is not acceptable especially in Islamic culture, and a one-child policy, which is fraught with female infanticide, better educational opportunities and liberation or empowerment of women, can be very effective in limiting population explosion. This can be achieved through better education and increased occupational opportunities, also the conventional wisdom of having more children for more help and support in old age loses its relevance. So, the women should be considered as an agent for social change and equitable development rather than second class citizens. Soon we realize this, the better off we will be.

Dr. Hari Bansha Dalal

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Siddhartha Thapa

**No Win Situation**

The state organs lack the required leadership to thwart Maoist designs

*The mere absence of war is not peace*, said J. F. Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis. This statement is relevant to Nepal’s context today.

Despite repeated assurances from the Maoists that they have retracted from violent politics, the reality is vastly different. Clearly, the Maoists have made a travesty out of the peace process and arms management. It has become obvious that the elections to the Constituent Assembly must not be held in the stipulated time frame for mid June. This circumstance is mainly due to the failure of the government to confine Maoists to peace time politics.

Our portly political pundits need to understand that the disoriented ethnic groups that have been staging agitations across the country are just now in the initial phase of their revolution. The issues of exclusion and minority rights have the necessary ingredients for the brewing of a greater revolution. Therefore, the continued dillydallying and delay in addressing ethnic issues, has the potential to push country into further quagmire – with the rise of a series of mini and counter revolutions, which could lead to the disintegration of the nation state. The ethnicity dilemma could and should have been solved at the beginning of its insurrection but unfortunately, the demands set forth by the various agitating groups have soared due to continued negligence from the government. On the other hand the Maoist insurgency has served an ideal benchmarking model for agitating groups to attain political limelight and power through the use of arms and violent acts.

The recent turmoil and continued political unrest in the Terai has exposed that in the absence of elections, the major political parties are rapidly losing their base: proving that it is only the Maoists who have the organizational groups that retain some control over rural Nepal. In more recent times the blatant violation of the peace process by the Maoists and the continued intimidation conducted by its cache has been reciprocated with brute force by agitating groups. The Maoist influence in the Terai has been questioned for the very first time. It is interesting to note that the Maoist high command has toured the southern belt as a precautionary damage control measure.

Premi Minister Koirala’s effort to induce the Maoist into government was based on the thesis that once the rebels are inducted in government, the vantage of being in opposition would no longer be a luxury enjoyed by the Maoists and they would be forced to change and act within the norms of multi party politics.

Unfortunately the violence and brutality perpetuated by the Maoists has not subsided. Maoists are unquestionably the primary political party in the alliance. The revolt by the indigenous groups for equality indicates that confrontation is inevitable. The demands put forward by the indigenous group contravenes Maoist school of thought – radical communism. The ramifications of these developments are critical.

Since Maoists are now a part of the interim government, any attack against the Maoists will be viewed as an attack against the government. Prachanda recently declared that the Maoist have been eyeing Home and Defence ministries as a precondition to join government. This means that once the Maoist join the government, the state security organs might be used to crush any voice or ethnic movement that calls for change and opposes Maoist rhetoric. If these ministries are allocated to the Maoists, it will ignite violent unrest and mar Nepal’s transition towards permanent peace and democracy.

The foreboding that even while in government the Maoists have failed to abide by the peace agreement and remain true to their word will only make their next moves fickle. One thing is clear – the Maoists cannot be allowed to hold certain seats in the parliament and allow the Maoist into government.
“You should put everything on plastic,” Dinnie spoke up and added, “You self voice betrayed sympathy at my financial and social norm. I felt overwhelmed during college orientation. Although I was aware of the profound impact of cultural influence. Emerging from a tradition which associates borrowing and long-term debt with social stigma, I made a few insightful observations. Without exaggeration, Dinnie’s proposition struck a blasphemous chord. The revelation was appalling. I later realized that American society is an epitome of borrowing culture. The ‘rags to riches’ story definitely had its support me to claim their rights and indebtednesses and help avoid pitfalls of hazardous borrowing practice. I feel a resonated moment for her as winning a lottery. I found myself gaping at her gusto for the first time they are out of college. Children do tend to act up like that when they are abnormally without it and feel normal while using it. He may also be using drugs to help him confront his abnormalities. Therefore the American maxim of the ‘land of opportunities’. They fall prey to borrowing obsession without even realizing it. Unfortunately education systems fail to provide basic information about the downsides of this munificent offer.

“Lenders are much more willing to take a risk on people under 25 than they were 20 years ago,” says Nina Prakash, a vice president at a student loan corporation. “They will give out credit cards based on a college student’s expected ability to repay the bills.” However, for those who never learned to balance checkbooks, this offer can be lethal. According to a report by USA Today, 18-35-year-olds have grown up with a booming economy and expensive lifestyles. Debt counselors, market researches and consumer advocates have reported that students often live paycheck to paycheck, using credit cards and loans to finance new cars they couldn’t otherwise afford, gas, restaurants, meal and other entertainment. Therefore the American youth are off the hook at eighteen year old. They are an integral part of the society while the society strives for early independence, the trade off is dependences on financial institutions.

Buying on credit is tantalizing. Instead of paying a lump sum it sounds attractive to spread the payments over a period of time. The point of interest payment is completely missed. The tempting offers such as 0% finance on goods purchased, and discounts offered by store cards can be a fix. Studies confirm that clients keep the first credit card they acquire, for life. That is why all card companies vie for first place position. It is proven that students will have an average of five credit cards by the time they are out of college. Movies, TV shows and advertising only reinforce the idea that young people are entitled to have an affluent lifestyle. They are encouraged to overspend and it creates tremendous pressure to keep up. Their elevated expectations make them hostage to this inducement. The Credit Union League posted the national campaign theme, “If a disaster that’s happening in America” and this coincides with the release of the new documentary and book “Maxed Out.” It is an attack on credit card issuers by several national consumer groups. They are using the power of mass media to bring attention to the destructive effects of credit cards. They are using the power of mass media to bring attention to the destructive effect of credit cards. It is while the society strives for early independence, the trade off is dependences on financial institutions. The sooner he quits the better his life is going to be. Help to realize the harmful effects of his addiction. He may also be using drugs to help him confront his abnormalities. Therefore the American maxim of the ‘land of opportunities’. They fall prey to borrowing obsession without even realizing it. Unfortunately education systems fail to provide basic information about the downsides of this munificent offer. It is while the society strives for early independence, the trade off is dependences on financial institutions.

Drug users usually get stuck in past Drug counseling by drug therapist, Ragina Shah

My cousin-brother acts like an insane person from time to time. Is he into drugs?

Ritu Kansakar Bhatkapur
One of the main reasons why he would keep postponing could be the fear of sickness that comes on physically and mentally when he quits the drugs he is addicted. There is bound to be won parental bond. They are an integral part of the society while the society strives for early independence, the trade off is dependences on financial institutions. The sooner he quits the better his life is going to be. Help to realize the harmful effects of his addiction. He may also be using drugs to help him confront his abnormalities. Therefore the American maxim of the ‘land of opportunities’. They fall prey to borrowing obsession without even realizing it. Unfortunately education systems fail to provide basic information about the downsides of this munificent offer. It is while the society strives for early independence, the trade off is dependences on financial institutions. The sooner he quits the better his life is going to be. Help to realize the harmful effects of his addiction. He may also be using drugs to help him confront his abnormalities. Therefore the American maxim of the ‘land of opportunities’. They fall prey to borrowing obsession without even realizing it. Unfortunately education systems fail to provide basic information about the downsides of this munificent offer. It is while the society strives for early independence, the trade off is dependences on financial institutions. The sooner he quits the better his life is going to be. Help to realize the harmful effects of his addiction. My cousin-brother acts like an insane person from time to time. Is he into drugs?

Hari Prapapati Bhatkapur
Children do tend to act up like that when they are unable to communicate to us their problems. This behaviour could be their way of coping with their frustrations and this might also lead to depression. There is also a possibility that he is into drugs. One of the manifestations of a drug user is signs of insanity displayed when a person is taking drugs like tablets or injections. This insanity could be brought on by the craving for the drug. It could also be the effects of the drug. Drug users usually tend not to live in the present and get stuck in the past. Their reality is made of a composite picture of moments of the past, some of the present and also some created by them, that fits into their past. The only reason the present in the present makes them appear as insane.

Do sit down and try to communicate with him. Only after interacting with him would you be able to determine the difference and then you can get help for him accordingly.

Please address any queries you have about drugs addiction to newfront@chinkut.com

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Cate's in Indiana Jones

She was seduced by a school student in her last flick - and it looks like the age gap won't be much different for Cate Blanchett's next potential on-screen affair.

The sultry siren, who played high school teacher Sheba Hart in Notes on a Scandal, has just signed on to star alongside ageing Harrison Ford in an upcoming addition to the Indiana Jones series.

While the specifics of Blanchett's role are being kept under wraps – along with David Koepp's screenplay – it is believed the 36-year-old beauty will feature prominently in the flick. However, it has been revealed Ford will definitely be reprising the title role he made famous in the '80s – though at 64, and more than a quarter of a century after the original hit the big screen, it's unsure whether he will be more convincing in the role of intrepid archaeologist or one of his fossils.

Not that he is likely to be the oldest cast member on set, with Sean Connery also linked to the project – reprising his role as Indiana's father. Steven Spielberg will direct the flick – currently known simply as Fourth Instalment of the Indiana Jones Adventures – when it starts shooting in June, with Star Wars creator George Lucas signing on to produce.

Blanchett received an Oscar nomination for her role in Notes on a Scandal, in which she had to act out love scenes with 18-year-old up-and-comer Andrew Simpson.

Her Hollywood star has been constantly on the rise since picking up the best supporting actress Oscar in 2004 for The Aviator. ä

Arts patron Nasher dies

DALLAS: Raymond D. Nasher, an arts patron who helped establish museums in Texas and North Carolina and made a fortune in banking and real estate, died. He was 85.

Nasher died Friday in a Dallas hospital, said Elliot Cattarulla, the executive director of the Nasher Foundation. Cattarulla declined to release additional details, citing the wishes of the Nasher family.

Nasher and his late wife, Patsy, amassed what one expert described as the "world's greatest private collection of modern and contemporary sculpture." The real estate developer was also considered a pioneer in placing sculptures in commercial retail complexes.

The Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, which opened in 2003, includes pieces by Willem de Kooning, Paul Gauguin and Pablo Picasso.

In 2005, the Nasher Museum of Art opened at Duke University, his alma mater. Nasher donated $10 million to fund construction of the $23 million museum and loaned his private collection for its exhibits. On display there were Andy Warhol portraits of his wife and their three daughters — Andrea, Joanie and Nancy — that had previously hung only in the hallway outside the Nashers' bedroom.

Nasher served on the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities under the last three presidents. During Lyndon Johnson's administration, Nasher was a delegate to the General Assembly of the United Nations. Since 1995 he has served on the Council on Foreign Relations. ä

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