If Maoist leaders and cadres were, “atrocious and untrustworthy,” Home Minister K P Sitaula was, “incapable and unfit to continue in the post.” This was the conclusion based on the majority of views expressed by District Chiefs of the Congress party from across the country.

The three day meeting that ended on Monday was called by Prime Minister G P Koirala in his capacity as the Congress President. It delved into atrocities committed by the Maoists all over the country in total violation of the code of conduct. It even provoked prominent parliamentarian, Surendra Choudhary to ask, “Are they truthful and peaceful?”

As a result of the growing mistrust towards the Maoists and their declared commitment to the peace process, the meeting clearly asked its leadership not to be swayed by Maoist proposal to declare Nepal a ‘republic state’ before the country goes to the Constituent Assembly election.

Although there was no support expressed in favour of the ceremonial monarchy, the Maoists were projected as much more untrustworthy and less dependable compared to the King.

Their anger was directed at the Home Minister Sitaula who spent most of the proceedings listening to his criticism, helplessly. “He has behaved as if he is from the Maoists side,” many participants said, giving graphic descriptions of how the police chiefs in the districts had been instructed by him not to do anything against the Maoists even if they were found indulging in major crime and violence.

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Pro-King Maoists

Mahara’s call to ‘eliminate monarchists’ from Maoists and other parties.

In a candid admission of crisis within the Communist Party of Nepal, the Maoists, a very senior leader of the party has admitted that there are ‘pro-monarchy’ elements within the party.

The statement comes from Krishna Bahadur Mahara, the party’s senior-most minister and a trusted aide of chief Prachanda. This takes place in the background of a ginger-group questioning the current official line of the CPN-M that ‘Republic’ agenda could be achieved through the parliament.

In a programme organised to release two books in the capital, Mahara predicted fast polarisation of political forces for and against the republic in the country, but warned that the goal of realising full-fledged democracy would be resisted by pro-king elements "present everywhere." "Pro-monarchy elements are present in all the parties including the CPN-M," he said. "I have no qualms in admitting that there are pro-king elements in my party as well and we need to launch a fierce battle to eliminate them."

Refraining from identifying the ‘elements’, he did not elaborate further.

But Mahara’s assertion, political analysts say, will trigger more intense debate within his party than outside it. The Prachanda-Baburam-Bhattarai-Mahara axis had come under sharp criticism in the recently held central committee meeting of the party where Kiren-Rijiju -C P Gajurel alliance openly questioned the current line of politics that the Maoist party was pursuing.

The Maoist leadership is under pressure to adopt a more radical line both on domestic as well as international issues which means taking a firm anti-India line, and discarding the politics of pro-democratic forces and the Maoist alliance brokered by the southern neighbour. The line currently held by Prachanda -Bhattarai and Mahara means that withdrawal from the alliance would mean giving more space to pro-palace forces, which is basically a rejection of hard line being pursued by the other group led by Baidya.

While there are fears within the Maoist party that the current differences at the top level would not subside so easily, it would naturally force the current leadership to force the Government and the eight parties to adopt a resolution in favour of ‘Republic/Nepal’ from the floor of the parliament instead of waiting for the Constituent Assembly to come into existence. The eight parties, which are part of the ruling alliance had earlier agreed that the first meeting of the CA will settle the issue of the monarchy or republicanism.

Mahara suggested that the country must move fast towards ‘federal republic set-up’ for its progressive transformation and stressed that cooperation between the pro-republic and democratic forces was necessary.

He also expressed that the fast polarisation would be resisted by the opposite forces which were, “present every where.” He warned that the top leaders of the eight parties were becoming more and more ineffective encouraging the ‘pro-king’ forces to be more active. He asked, “Was it because there was a treacherous deal between the king and the top leaders of the parties?”

Meanwhile, the message contained in Mahara’s speech that all was not well in the party came out openly in Tulispur area of Dist. YLC cadre roughed up local Congress leader Lokmani Giri in presence of Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai and Congress leader Sekhar Koirala who had gone there to start the process of returning confiscated property. Police helplessly watched as it happened on Sunday.

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Ananta under attack

Gaur massacre controversy has not only died down, it has come as a fresh dose of headache for the Maoist Chief Prachanda. He is under pressure from the influential leaders of the Madheshi Mukti Morcha (MMM), an affiliate body of the party, to take action against Ananta alias Baneshan-Pun having instructed the Youth Communist League (YCL) to confront the Madheshi Janadikar Forum (MJF) in Gaur on March 21 over-ruling the MMM request.

The clash between the two groups had resulted in the death of 27 Maoists, most of them YCL activists.

A delegation of the MMM led by its Deputy Leader Mahendra Paswan met Party Chief Prachanda last week to demand that the responsibility be fixed for the loss of twenty-seven ‘comrades’. Ananta, in his capacity as chief of the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoists (CPN-M) mid-command had instructed YCL cadres to go to Gaur and foil the MJF programme although MMM was much against violent confrontation. MMM delegation is believed to have told Prachanda that it also wants the Narayani regional Bureau Chief of the CPN-M to be held responsible for the massacre.

The central level leadership of the party is likely to order an internal probe into the matter. The MMM is not yet convinced that it would be effective. “It should be thoroughly investigated and responsibility fixed for the lapse," a party source quoted MMM.

Bishwa Mani Pokharel

NA limps back

The aircraft starved Nepal airlines began its partial operation almost after a week’s gap as one of its two aircrafts is back in service. The aircraft was sent back on Saturday by Brunei based Boeing servicing center after replacing the main landing gear.

That partially rescues the top management of the Nepal Airlines which has been criticised, abused and chastised by the harassed passengers for abrupt cancellations of their flights as both the aircrafts got grounded last week.

“We hope to have another aircraft also in operation soon as it is being repaired in Dubai,” a senior Nepal Airlines official told newsfront. The aircraft has “starter problem and needs wiring check-up. Equipment is being sent from here.”

What is worrying the management the most is that the aircrafts would soon be overstressed and not able to continue to be in effective service for long. The management has lifted the service since late passengers not only protested against the flight cancellations but also because unnecessary callers had threatened to blow up the Nepal airlines building if they continued to face such harassment.

Maoists on U N limbus

Ian Martin left for New York a bit dejected after the Maoists successfully thwarted the process of the verification of Maoists arms and combatants.

The U N, at large, does not seem to be taking to the Maoists very kindly. Within a span of less than a week, two powerful U N bodies have said in no uncertain terms that they are going back on their promises both on the issue of rehabilitation of the internally displaced people (IDP) and that of verification of the arms and combatants in designated cantonments.

Ian Martin, Special Representative of the U N Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, left for New York a bit dejected after the Maoists successfully thwarted the process of the verification of Maoists arms and combatants.

Reacting to the Maoists’ demand for salary at the rate of Rs.3,000 per month for the combatants, Martin stated that the process cannot be linked with any other condition. But the far more serious charge against the Maoists was labeled by the UN Secretary General’s Spokesman, Michele Montas on April 30, when Martin was still there briefing the Security Council about Nepal Situation. Montas asked Maoist leadership to let the people who had been displaced as a result of the conflict, to return back to their places.

“Maoists local cadres are not complying with the party’s formal commitments to allow the displaced persons to return to their homes in safety,” Montas said reiterating what the Office of the High Commission of the Human Rights (OHCHR) on Nepal had stated.

The OHCHR had called on the Maoists to support the return of the IDPs and to ensure that they allow unconditional, dignified and safe return of all persons recognised as IDPs. “The mission also urges that local cadres return all land and property that has been abused and confiscated by the MMM,” Montas added. “activities in recent months indicate a failure to implement such central-level commitments.”

 nf correspondent
Ex-embassy on sale

With the new grand building complete, the U S Government has now put up its existing embassy building at Pari Pokhri in Kathmandu on sale. Associated Press (AP) reported from Washington last week that the existing embassy complex in Kathmandu was on sale for six million US dollars. The new embassy in the capital’s Narayan Gopal building at Pani Pokhari in Kathmandu on sale.

Royal Canteen curtailed

Power and privileges used to be the main attractions for anyone serving in the Royal Palace Secretariat. For lesser employees, a canteen which used to function during office hours and offered subsidised food was a welcome place. Cloud of the secretariat now vanished, the palace secretariat seems all set to curtail the canteen hours so that the secretariat will have less burden of the subsidies. Under instructions from Sharada Prasad Pradhan, the canteen in the palace secretariat will now remain open only for two hours - 1.30 P M to 3.30 P M during work days.

Maoist minister’s modesty

In contrast to the perceived image of the Maoist minister, Minister of Agriculture Khagendra Bahadur BK has displayed that he can indeed act like a minister.

His desire to learn and improve when he interacted with senior officials of his ministry on Friday. He admitted he wanted to hear their frank opinion regarding his performance.

The occasion took place on the completion of a month since he began his work in the office. “I have been holding this chair for a month now. Please tell me frankly what my shortcomings are, so that I can work on them.”

All officials of the Joint Secretary rank and above had been invited to the meeting with the minister. At the end of it, everybody was charmed by his honesty, simplicity and modesty. “We never had any minister asking these types of questions before,” an official told newsfront.

SofTech 2007

The first ever software exhibition held on May 2-5 hosted by the Computer Association of Nepal was a big event with 44 companies participating in it. This was also a clear and collective determination of the software developers in Nepal that showed that the local companies without external impetus could do a lot in the industry.

The fact that four booths were occupied by High Level Commission for Information Technology, National Information Technology Center, Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology and Ministry of Finance, three companies from India, one from Sri Lanka and one from Korea was a reassuring sign of their recognition of not only the existence of software developers in Nepal, but the potentials they held.

There were a slew of products ranging from web based to stand alone application software in accounting, resource management, financial and other transaction based products, banking software, SMS based software, geographical information based software, document management, solutions for e-management and so on. Businesses, institutions, governments are probably the biggest users of application software, but almost every field of human activity now uses some form of application software.

The event ended on a happy note and it was clear that the exhibitors were satisfied with the exposure they received for their products. They found the booth charge of Rs. 17,000 reasonable for the return in exposure. In total there were some 25,000 visitors in the event.

Mr. Amrit Bahadur Thapa, the coordinator of the event supported by a group of CAN members was on vigil to ensure that the exhibition went smoothly. Mr. Thapa said that the next event should take place in a larger venue with different levels and sizes of booths to address the level of visibility required for different categories of exhibitors.

The international exhibitors were impressed by the maturity of Nepali products. If the innovation, integrity and professionalism of local software industry are kept on track, a day is sure to come where Nepalis will accept Nepali products as at par with, if not better than the imported ones.

Today much of the developed world is going through customer or consumer revolution. Businesses and organisations are driven by this revolution. They have to change as per customer demand or perish if they ignore it. Government is not an exception to this revolution. Much of the consumer driven revolution has been made possible by unimaginable access to information such as the internet and wireless phones. All of these media need software.

Will Nepal stand like a wide eyed deer caught in the strobe light of this revolution and continue in its usual path of accepting another form of colonisation? Or will it something about it? CAN SofTech 2007 stated emphatically that the Nepali software industry will not accept that. It has definitely sent a serious wake up call to the government.
Wake up or be extinct

Nepal Airlines, the only national flag carrier is sadly in shambles today. Established half a century ago, it started off with a promising future only to dwindle down to nothing. The sorry state of affairs is evident by the fact that two aircrafts, that is all that it has, are grounded today, standing hundreds of passengers. This downfall can be attributed to its lackadaisical performance replete with instances of rampant corruption, inefficiency and politics inside the organisation.

Recent cosmetic resolution of changing its name from Royal Nepal Airlines to Nepal Airlines has not brought about any substantial change in the ailing government sector. The organisation that has been milked dry has always been a victim of political control.

Among its multiple challenges facing it today, a severe shortage of well-maintained aircrafts is the first and foremost. Inability to maintain its only two aircrafts in top condition is the second. It needs to streamline its services and take effective cost-cutting measures if it wants to survive in this competitive business. Changes need to be made deep down to its roots which obviously are in a state of rot.

The passive state of its policy is evident from its decisions when it withdrew from lucrative destinations and handed over to its private competitors. That Airlines, its contemporary is today one of the best operated and profit making airlines in the world. That should be lesson enough for it to draw from.

Privatising it is one option to save the dying airlines but resistance to it is obvious since privatising it would mean that there will no longer be any profit from it for the politicians and other bosses. It would also mean working hard to keep one’s job and not take it for granted, which would need quite a bit of getting used to for all its staff.

The airlines now faces a critical time that calls for crucial decisions. It either should withdraw completely and hand it over to a private company or do everything that an efficient airlines needs to do. Political control and interference need to cease completely in all its decisions; and it needs to give its regions to committed, honest and efficient people and give them a free hand to revamp its image. The time has now come to act or to just lose face and lose out on all residual goodwill of the people for its survival.

Kind attention UNOCHHR

Thanks for repeatedly highlighting the hoax that was Rayamajhi Commission. Your latest column ‘Devilish Judiciary’ with the warning that politics of vendetta would be counter productive was absolutely right. I am citing some examples of how the Rayamajhi Commission acted deliberately and indulged itself in the frame-up agenda.

Barbendra Khanal, Ramesh Kharel and Rajendra Man Shrestha were the three Deputy SPs actively trusted by the previous regime and they were in the forefront in suppressing the movement, and using force against the pro-democracy agitators.

All three were promoted when the Rayamajhi Commission was ‘investigating’ the case.

The Commission however, has named other two dozen district heads of the Police (SPs) on the basis that pro-democracy protestors died in that area. But there are some notable exceptions:

- Ghanshyam Bhatta, SP of Dang has been exonerated from the case of death of Umesh Thapa, a UML worker; because he happens to be related through marriage to a former Chief of Police who de facto runs the organisation.

- Madhav Nepal who was S P in Bara when a pro-democracy protester was killed was not touched for two reasons: one, he is known to be a favourite of the same retired Police Chief.

- S P of Jhapa who was shot and wounded apparently by an army personnel for his having refused to use force against the pro-democracy protesters was charged, ‘guilty’ for excessive use of force.

- Dhiru Basnet, an efficient and honest Dy. Sp of the same batch as Khanal, Kharel and Shrestha was unjustly denied promotion because he had arrested a senior congress leader under instruction from the Government during the movement. The leader who is now one of the powerful ministers had warned Basnet in presence of many, “I will not spare you when we come to the power.”

Rayamajhi exonerated some and he held some very fine and innocent officials guilty. He was definitely not being honest when he did all this deliberately.

Since I am a police official, I request you to withhold my name when you publish this letter. But if at any point of time, the OHCHR, which has been talking so loud about the need for end of impunity and fair trial takes interest in how the Rayamajhi Commission and the Home Minister has actually acted in tandem in the conspiracy. I and many of my friends will come out openly to give statements against them. If the OHCHR keeps mum, that will not only be the mockery of what Bal Martin previously and Lena Sundh now is saying, but will be an endorsement of the politics of vendetta.

A Police official

Girija no different

The last issue's editorial had serious concerns over the commitments made by PM Koirala. People expected many positive changes based on his words. But sadly, he is unable to prove himself any different than other politicians. It is high time the government took a bold step. Otherwise, he should be accountable for everything including the induction of Maoists into the government who are still involved in extortion and other unlawful activities.

Sanjeev Karmacharya
Kathmandu

Readers, your reactions, criticisms, comments, suggestions are most welcome. Please address it to:
newsfront@bhrikuti.com

Letters
Rescue Marx from Marxists

…No reason for them to remain prisoners of ideological dogmatism.

Millennial ideologue Karl Marx was the great philosopher, economist, sociologist and thinker, and a great humanist in the sense that the sole goal of Marxism was human emancipation from all forms of exploitation, oppression, and distortions in the contemporary society. What Marx imagined and what has happened in his socialism is the great contradiction in theory and practice. Today, Marxism is akin to the poem, Blind and the Elephant. A popular saying goes that Marxism is the overly worn hat which has lost its original shape.

Marx believed that socialism would eventually overcome capitalism, making way for a classless society. He applied this idea in the context of contradiction between proletariats and bourgeoisies. This was articulated in the Communist Manifesto. It was a time of revolutionary fervor in Europe. King Louis Philippe of France abdicated the throne, the Belgian Monarch offered to resign, barricades against rioters went up in Berlin, and a series of industrial strikes followed in Europe. This expression of despair among the proletariats, however, was without direction and the uprisings were ruthlessly put down.

Nonetheless, over time Britain, France and Germany did grudgingly concede the need for some great reforms. Child labor was gradually abolished, working hours were restricted, collective bargaining via trade union was accepted, a beginning was made towards progressive taxation and infrastructures such as railways, postal services, health, education and central banking were brought under state control. Only the demands in the Communist Manifesto, the nationalisation of the means of production and the abolition of private property were ignored.

After an improvement in living standards, the proletariat lost the zest for revolution. The class struggle seems to peter out. Marx died in 1883 by which time only one of the four volumes of his magnum opus, Das Kapital, was published. It took 70 years after the prediction for the capitalist system to be destroyed by its antithesis, socialism, and that too not in Western Europe but in Czarist Russia. After the October Revolution of 1917 the Soviet Union took shape under Lenin and over time 40% of the world had adopted some form of socialism. Nepal was no exception.

Marx’s dream of a classless society was never achieved, although Soviet socialism lasted for 70 years before it started to come apart, along with the socialist nations. Today, Cuba is perhaps the last communist bastion. Marx’s thesis of dialectic materialism was proved correct twice in a span of 140 years; first, in the overthrow of capitalism and then of socialism. Marx’s insights into the problem of the capitalist system and why it would eventually destroy itself are remarkable.

Its roots lie in the inexorable march of technology. His prediction that the system would be prone to cyclical depressions has also held true. Changing modes of production, as Marx called them, would alter the existing social structure, redistributing wealth and power. Consequently, the feudal order would fade into the background and the capitalist would become a dominant part of the establishment.

Even so, capitalism based on the concept of private property, he opined, would be ill-suited to plan for the increasing complexity of technologi- cal change, thus subjecting the system to cyclical crises of increasing intensity. The weaker enterprises would succumb to takeover by the stronger whose viability would depend on a race for accumulating ever more labour-saving machinery.

Nevertheless, capitalism has survived, albeit in a different form, from what it was in the 19th century. The synthesis between capitalism and its antithesis, socialism, has emerged as a kind of neo-capitalism rather than communism. Capitalism has achieved unprecedented prosperity through greater global integration and provided improved living standards of peoples though neo-liberalism seems to be the devil. It has enabled countries driven by democratic values to put into effect Marx’s dictum ‘from each according to his ability, to each according to his need’ through measures like healthcare, unemployment insurance, pension schemes and subsidies.

The gap between the rich and the poor may not have narrowed but the poor are certainly better off than ever before. Yet there is a long way to go especially in third world countries. If today Maoists were to accept Marxian dialectics as exemplified by the new synthesis, there is no reason for them to remain prisoners of ideological dogmatism."
Global climatic changes are likely to cause significant changes in the world’s rainfall patterns. The places that are wet are going to get wetter, and the places that are dry are going to get dryer. With increased temperature worldwide, evaporation will increase that puts more moisture into the atmosphere. With more water in the atmosphere, rainfall increases worldwide. Rainfall over land has increased by about two percent globally since 1900 but trends have varied regionally and over time. Global warming is intensifying monsoon in the Asian region. According to the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and WMO (World Meteorological Organization) predict that instability in monsoon activities is bound to occur with the global temperature rising with already some evidences of multi-decade variations. According to the IPCC, the percent-age increase in extreme rainfall is greater than the percentage increase in mean rainfall with the present trend of climate. The return period of extreme precipitation events is shortened almost everywhere. Extreme rainfall is the high amount of rainfall (measured in millimeter) in shorter period of time. Such events are escalating substantially all over the world especially in northern hemi-sphere. Precipitation increases over high latitude regions in both summer and winter and over the northern mid-latitudes, tropical Africa, and Antarctica during the winter and in southern and eastern Asia during the summer. Extreme rainfall occurs for shorter period of time and brings more damages and its duration increases, it can last a series of days. Most of the devastations such as floods, landslides are caused by extreme rainfall. In year 2003, extreme monsoon of monsoon season over Naryangadh-Mugling Highway in Nepal caused hundreds of landslides creating severe problems. Nepal being mountain rich country, many highways run through the mountains connecting some major cities including the capital that can easily be blocked by the landslides caused by extreme rainfall. Monsoon rainfall occupies almost 80% of the total annual rainfall in Nepal. Agricultural activities which is the backbone of county’s economy largely depends on the monsoon. Disurbances in monsoon can disturb the whole economy of the country. Climate change will not only increase the monsoon rainfall but will disturb monsoon periods as well. Monsoon period in Nepal generally starts from June and continues till September. The period is ablated by pre and post monsoon seasons which involve higher rainfall generally in the western regions of the country. Monsoon rainfall on the other hand occupies high percentage in the eastern region of Nepal which is one of the reasons of higher agricultural productivity here. The alteration in climate is estimated to attain higher speed in the developing countries in the coming years. China and India attaining fast economic growth are predicted to be the highest emitters of greenhouse gases in the coming years. All these will certainly not help the monsoon trends in these regions. More than half the world’s population depend on the annual Asian monsoon to bring much-needed water for agriculture and basic human needs. But the rains can be perilous, causing landslides, flash floods and crop damage as well as social, economic and environmental damage. Surging floodwaters in the 2002 monsoon killed more than 1000 people in Bangladesh, India and Nepal, displacing millions of others. Cyclonic storms are also likely to rise in the oceanic regions with the increase in temperature. The socio-economic impacts of intense monsoon can be fatal in south Asian region. Many water borne diseases will increase tremendously resulting to high mortality rates. Extreme rainfall can destroy several infrastructures such as bridges, dams, highways, buildings in no time. Increased intense rainfall will cause countless troubles in the developing world. Nepal in particular can suffer severe floods and massive landslides in many regions adding to chaos in economy and environment. Integrated hazard management will have to be practiced in order to reduce the calamities to come.

(Madhav P. Thakur is an environment science student.)

Undo anarchy

Law enforcement agency leaders made a mockery of the state system

Rajen Wasti

Even after the Prime Minister assured his party legislators of improvement in the law and order situation in the country, no progress has been seen so far. It now appears certain that the blame will rest on the PM if the leaders of the law enforcement bodies are not held accountable for the failing law and order situation in the country. Law enforcement agency leaders made a mockery of the state system when the police and the local administration failed to prevent the Gaur incident, which had it been responsibly dealt with in good time would not have happened at all. The Armed Police Force and Nepal Police simply failed to act to prevent the very unfortunate incident. It is downright failure of the two Inspector Generals of Armed Police Force and Civil Police, who were appointed by Home Minister Sitaula with utter disregard to the established personal administrative values of these organisations. Sitaula for fear of being charged of failing to discharge responsibility has protected these two lead actors shifting the blame to the local commanders. Abrupt removal of Central District Officer (CDO) and District Police Office Superintendent from Gaur helped to keep the key actors on the safe side. Transferring them elsewhere is no punitive measure. The CDO and Police Superintendent have maintained that IGP of both the institutions ignored their repeated requests of reinforcement of additional force. This incident is the height of inefficiency and recklessness of Inspector General of Armed Police Force and Nepal Police. They are the ones to be held accountable for not fulfilling their responsibilities and not adequately responding to the local assessment that violence might erupt there. A series of criminal activities are taking place in the capital, proving the complete failure of the law and order situation. On the night of 30th April, Maoists cadres attacked the Border Police Post Siya of Banke district and looted all weapons and kidnapped the Police Sub Inspector and ten constables. They were returned along with the confiscated weapons the following morning following intense pressure from the local people. The police leadership failed to take any action on the Maoists branded criminals. How can anyone keep police morale from deteriorating when the police officers themselves are brutalised with total impunity? Police leadership has no guts to take action against these elements as per the law of the land but is riding the ways of watching huge series of such incidents taking place frequently. Young Communist League (YCL) cadres are going about their business of kidnapping, extorting and intimidating the capital city. They are using vehicles looted from local business people. Here again, the owners of the vehicles themselves had to go and snatch back their vehicles. The much talked about police raid in the offices of YCL in the three districts of valley is not without fault. The local people revealed YCL looting their good Police Force and Civil Police, who were appointed by Home Minister Sitaula with utter disregard to the established personal administrative values of these organisations. Sitaula for fear of being charged of failing to discharge responsibility has protected these two lead actors shifting the blame to the local commanders. Abrupt removal of Central District Officer (CDO) and District Police Office Superintendent from Gaur helped to keep the key actors on the safe side. Transferring them elsewhere is no punitive measure. The CDO and Police Superintendent have maintained that IGP of both the institutions ignored their repeated requests of reinforcement of additional force. This incident is the height of inefficiency and recklessness of Inspector General of Armed Police Force and Nepal Police. 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Prachanda through long lens

How different from the kings?

Democracy cannot flourish under a monolithic leadership. A step forward towards capitalism is fine, but not following the basic values of democracy, accountability, both moral and political is strange.

He who was a mystery to begin with, surfaced after two decades and became public, so public that he has become an eyesore literally. What else would you call it with thousands of his face staring out from walls in all conceivable corners of the city? Printing so many posters and indulging in this exaggeration is the first sign of self indulgence of this communist leader who was initially perceived by many as an alternative leader of the country. Little did he care about the impact of his faces on the aesthetic value of this quaint valley or the sentiments of its inhabitants. Is he trying to emulate kings of yesteryears? The public who has been waiting and watching now sees him no different from any other political leader. His initial messiah like image has now been eroded by his bourgeois life style replete with his prosperous middle, chest pocked adorned with the gold pen with which he signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA); and the branded watch around his wrist that costs a hefty sum. Those who know from close, confirm he has a taste for Scotch - the drink, and his retinue of cars makes him no different from any rich king in a poor country. Is that not strange for someone who leads the pack that espouses theories of anti-capitalism and anti-feudalism?

Originating from a farmer-class background in Chitwan, he was watched carefully by the public after the Maoist insurgency surfaced in 1996. Today, he appears to have transformed himself into a symbol of state power and poised beyond criticism. His tactics and strength based on the power of gun have disillusioned the hopes of those who thought he might be a harbinger of peace in the country.

Watching him from a distance, he appears to symbolise deception... He pledged to seek people’s endorsement, or politics of ballot when he joined the peace process by giving up politics of bullet which he led for a decade. But bullet continues to be his sole strength.

Has Prachanda’s life style ever become an issue within his party which is supposed to represent proletarians and the have-nots? Perhaps not. Prachanda’s other comrades also seem to be vying to follow the leader rather than challenging him. Culture of consumerism seems all pervasive and the Youth Communist League’s extortions continue. Some of the leaders have admitted having sent their wards abroad for better education when their cadres keep disrupting the schools here.

Prachanda’s declaration on June 2 (the day he ended his years of underground life) from the Prime Minister’s residence that Maoists would be the second biggest revolution in Nepal like the one led by Lord Buddha 2500 years ago, is therefore not being taken seriously. Invoking Lord Buddha’s name after one becomes part of the peace based politics will be perceived differently. And there is a world of difference between the continuing politics of guns and deceit and the one that is founded on the truth, peace, non-violence, sacrifice, austerity and dignity of the human life.

In less than a year, Prachanda has almost given up what he promised, that democracy will be his way of politics in future. In fact, he is emerging as a brazen bully. Frightening exercises by his cadres give credence to the fear that the Maoists are systematically destroying existing institutions so that the resultant vacuum will form an ideal base for the rise of a dictator sans resistance. Is it not recreating the very scenario that the Maoists in principle claimed to detest so – that of an autocracy in which one personality becomes supreme? And thereafter creating a situation in which all dissenting voices are silenced?

Democracy cannot flourish under a monolith leadership. A step forward towards capitalism is fine, but not following the basic values of democracy, accountability, both moral and political is strange.

Buddha always believed in the enormous capacity of any human being to grow and realise the optimum. Prachanda, by announcing that his party had renounced politics of violence is moved one step forward. But he has got a lot to do. Unless Prachanda takes sincere initiatives to consign the blood-tainted movement finally to the inglorious past, he will not be perceived differently, at least by those who have been watching him from a distance. And they constitute the majority.
Marshland Flowers

Only a scientist can test whether a new student has the knowledge he himself has, definitely not a non-scientist.

little later after having dealt with the “Unbroken – enlightened lineage” issue first. So the Buddha historically validated different levels of enlightenment amongst his disciples, and this is recorded in Theravad, Sarnvativ, and Mahayan literature. That means these kinds of generation disciples were enlightened to various degrees according to the Buddha himself.

So, more than anybody else these discipuluses would have been the authentic authorities on what was the Buddha’s Bodhi. Now these disciples authentiﬁed the degrees of enlightenment of their disciples who were the second generation. As these first generations had experienced themselves the Bodhi of the Buddha to various degrees, they would know better than anybody else which of their disciples had reached/attained/experienced various degrees of the Buddha’s Bodhi. I do not think there can be two minds about it.

Only a scientist can test whether a new student has the knowledge he himself has, deﬁnitely not a non-scientist. Likewise only Masters of such an authentic lineage can gauge whether the practitioners of the next generation have attained the Buddha’s Bodhi to some degree or not by other non-Buddhas. For this validation to remain authentic and pure, the lineage should be unbroken generation from the time of the Buddha through the ﬁrst generation, second generation, third generation etc. till the present time.

Even if in one generation, there was someone who was validated as enlightened, the lineage is broken as far as enlightenment is concerned, even if it continues. That then is an unbroken lineage but not an enlightened unbroken lineage. There are other kinds of lineages like the Pandit lineage of scholars, who have transmitted unbroken, the knowledge of the Buddha’s teaching from generation to generation up to date.

But that is not an unbroken enlightened lineage but unbroken Pandit lineage. The Pandit lineage cannot be authentically validated by the experience of someone as valid Buddhist enlightenment or not. It can only infer based on scriptures. In the Buddhism of today as a whole, both the lineages exist unbroken and alive. It is the Masters of these lineages, who are the authentic disseminators of the Buddha’s teachings and not others no matter how brilliant or profound their explanations of the Buddha’s teachings are.

Actually since such lineage Masters of both types of lineage exist in abundance both in the Mahayana and Stravakayana tradition, many of them being holders of both lineages, there is no need for others who do not belong to such authentic lineages to explain or even teach Buddhism based on one’s own personal ideas. The Buddha’s teaching is still alive and dynamic. It is not a thing of the past history that can be explained according to one’s preferences and conditions.

So this is the meaning of unbroken enlightened lineage and unbroken Pandit lineage. Within Buddhism, there is also an unbroken Bhikhu lineage from the time of the Buddha till today. Some Masters hold all the three unbroken lineages. They are enlightened Masters authenticated by their Masters who themselves were authenticated by the Buddha himself who was going backwards to the Buddha himself, but at the same time are also Pandits, taught by Pandits of an unbroken lineage who were themselves taught by such Pandits going back to Sakya Muni himself and not by any other non-masters of such lineages. They are not unrecorded fact but well recorded.

In Mahayana, which is a major tradition, the names like Paramitya and Vajrayana, the names of the unbroken lineage Masters from Masters of present day back to Nalanda, Bikramath etc. are well recorded and available even today. And everybody knows that these great Mahavyaras were like huge universities whose lineage goes back to the Buddha. People from as far away as China, Korea, Central Asia, Greece, Egypt came to study in those learning houses, which were virtually Mahaviharas (great monastic complexes). And those Mahavyaras of those Mahavyaras were unbroken and continue to remain alive and vibrant up till this day.

The meaning of the Sutras and Sastras of Buddhism should be according to the Masters of such lineages and not otherwise. There have been many interpreters of the Buddha’s teachings in the Indian subcontinent who never studied under any of the authentic lineage Masters. So it is free to interpret as they deem fit the teachings of the Buddha but such interpretations should not be mistaken as authentic Buddhism.

(After the incident…)

Watch and learn

Nepalis need to awaken from their slumber caused by fear and inactivity, and decide on the type of economic policies adhered to by their finance minister who is the head of government and development.

Nepalis need to awaken from their slumber caused by fear and inactivity, and decide on the type of economic policies adhered to by their finance minister who is the head of government and development. Today’s current economic growth rate is judged to be highly sustainable by experts and institutions around the world. China on the other hand, following proletarian dictatorship under a communist system, has mesmerised the world with her economic miracle that has continued unabated for over a quarter of a century. Although the Chinese authorities have proven everyone wrong on their critical apprehensions that the Chinese growth will not be sustainable in the absence of a more open and transparent society and increased investment to the greater benefit of the people, China’s sustainability is still an open question for want of credible examples so far. For all that is known, China herself might provide the ﬁrst example.

Pakistan, relatively a smaller country and economy of the region, is rapidly coming on the regional economic radar owing to her outstanding performance over the past seven years under a military regime. Pakistan today boasts of per capita income of US $847 and is receiving foreign direct investment of almost 4 billion US Dollars. The Pakistani Prime minister Shaukat Aziz declared at a recent meeting that Pakistan’s per capita will reach US $1100 and the FDI to 6 billion US $ by 2008. Pakistan seems to have moved on to a new phase of development and under Shaukat Aziz as her ﬁnance minister. There is no dearth of apprehensions pointing to the question of sustainability of Pakistan economy as well as the current system of government. Nepal is fortunate to have the beneﬁt of such illustrious examples of China and Pakistan. Current make up of her parliament and the strength of political parties give a clear picture that post CA elections Nepal will result in a coalition government or a coalition government right to this India. At that moment the third option is clearly out in spite of an attractive model of economic reform and development. Nepal, however, need to wake from their slumber caused by fear and inactivity, and decide on the type of economic policies adhered to by their closest neighbours. One thing seems to be quite clear that most developing economies when economic policies are designed and managed by professional experts who go beyond their personal or partisan interests. Obviously, leadership (taken by professional ﬁnance ministers) plays a crucial role in developing economies where the necessary fundamentals are yet to find its footing.
Hasina returns to Dhaka today

DHAKA: Former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed will return home tomorrow, more than a week after the military-backed government backtracked on plans to exile her, a party official said.

Hasina, leader of the opposition Awami League party, was slated to arrive in the capital Dhaka at 4pm (1100 GMT) tomorrow on an Etihad Airways flight from London, party general secretary Abdul Jalil said.

“The Awami League working committee members will be at the airport to receive her. We hope the government will not arrest her,” he said yesterday.

Hasina, leader of the opposition alliance, served as prime minister between 1996-2001, and is facing charges of murder and extortion.

Police suspended a warrant for her arrest pending further investigation into murder charges against her in connection with the battering to death of four people in political unrest last year.

But they said she could still be arrested on an extortion case filed by the Bangladesh's head of a Chinese company.

Last Wednesday, the government said it was lifting restrictions on her return amid local and international pressure.

The government barred Hasina’s return on April 18, saying she was a national security threat. She was later refused permission to board a British Airways flight to Dhaka.

Hasina’s lawyers served a legal notice against the government regarding the return or reception of the party chief.

“We have come to the residence just to see our ailing general secretary who has returned from Singapore after treatment,” senior presidium member Tofail Ahmed said.

Asked about the party’s preparation to receive Sheikh Hasina at the airport, Abdul Jalil said the party would inform everything about Hasina’s return in due time-

government regarding the return or reception of the party chief.

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Senior leaders, however, refused to say anything about any discussion among themselves or communication with any adviser to the interim government seeking permission to accord the party chief.

Senior leaders, who went to see party general secretary Abdul Jalil at his Gulshan residence, said that the leaders had communicated with an adviser (minister) to the interim government and sought permission for a formal reception to our leader.

The army-backed caretaker government has refused to allow the Awami League (AL) to organize mass reception to party chief Sheikh Hasina as she arrives at Zia International Airport.

After Dow, Reuters & Yahoo in Bid Bazaar

**TARGET:**

**TYPE:** PRIVATE

**VALUE:** $16.3 bn (Market value as on Friday)

**SUITOR:** Thomson

**publishing group of Canada**

Both Reuters and Thomson don't confirm news, but Reuters shares leap 32% to a 5-year high on the London exchange

**TARGET:**

**VALUE:** $50 bn

**SUITOR:** Microsoft

Microsoft and Yahoo reported to be in talks to strike a deal and fend off the common competitor Google. Yahoo shares jump 18% on Nassdaq in Friday trading,

while Microsoft shares fall 1.25% as they don't confirm news, but Reuters shares leap 32% to a 5-year high on the London exchange

**TARGET:**

**VALUE:** $5 bn

**SUITOR:** News Corp

Media baron Rupert Murdoch sets sights on The Wall Street Journal with a 67% premium on Dow Jones's share price. He'll have to win over Dow Jones controlling shareholders, the Bancroft family, who have rejected the deal.
While supposedly brokered a deal to impact democratic changes and bringing about lasting peace, in reality however, the power brokers in Kathmandu and New Delhi have come to a stark realisation that they are now embroiled in a political quagmire.

The lethargy of the transitional period heralds two possible scenarios, both of them equally Machiavellian in nature. The first scenario is concerned with the poll dates. As new reports have emerged concerning the proposal of the merger of People’s Liberation Army (PLA) into the national army, it won’t be long before the Maoist leadership concurs that the announcement of poll dates will depend on the government’s willingness to absorb a chunk of the PLA into the Nepali Army.

This ludicrous idea, floated by leftist think tanks and partisan civil society leaders is the call for the integration of the rebels and the national army. Can an ideologically committed outfit such as the rebel army embrace the belief in the state army or is it just a ploy to trigger a mutiny? In any event the possibility of the polls hinges on Koirala’s readiness to give into the Maoist proposal of merging the two armies.

The second course of is the postponement of elections with no alternative dates in sight. The rebels are ideologically committed, politically astute and strategically wed to their cause. The parties on the other hand need to demonstrate more commitment for their own existence. All major power brokers in the EPA are playing with time in a battle for political dominance. As political parties fail to keep the rebels in check, the rebels’ inscrutable image fast eroding the floor of urban centers. While political parties are busy picking at each other, the rebels busy themselves concentrating on consolidating their reach within urban centers and state institutions. As the political parties are engaged in securing hefty business deals and naively remain silent on Maoist excesses, the policy of playing silent will backfire as the rebels continue to overwhelm the democratic institutions slowly but remarkably efficiently. In their effort to mount pressure on the embattled Prime Minister, the Maoists have now floated the idea of a left alliance. Should the UML and Maoist come together in an alliance, it predictably heralds an explosive scenario. But it will ease the confusion perhaps; as once and for all - a clear line will be drawn separating the democratic and the non democratic forces in the country.

What is also inevitable is the demise of the UML, as the Maoist will emerge as the mother party in the left alliance. But this situation alone can peave Koirala compelling him to indefinitely defer the announcement of poll dates. Should the UML and Maoist come together in an alliance, it predictably heralds an explosive scenario. But it will ease the confusion perhaps; as once and for all - a clear line will be drawn separating the democratic and the non democratic forces in the country.

The visions of New Nepal were indeed very young and did not appear to understand what was happening. They came to parliament without ever contesting an election. The dream they were on un-parliamentary, to say the least. I stepped outside briefly looking for something to eat and I turned on my FM radio. The interview questioned the new MPs about their personal experiences at that moment of history. Was it a nightmare or a dream? How many of us break laws every day? How many of us have learned law and order and give security to its people. The thematic New Nepal has opened the floodgates to discharge stored problems. The revolutionaries are happy and all this maneuvering is with the aim of political dominance and ousting one another. Can Koirala swim past the nets cast by his own colleagues in the cabinet and his party to metaphorically his own Home Minister?

entering parliament has not made Maoists more respectable. Torturing innocent people, conscription of children, violation of the code of conduct and their actions are not leaving the designated cantonments make regular news. MPs walking in parliament with arms! Where on earth do these kinds of things happen? There are doubts raised on the number of armed and combatants registered and Maoists are still obstructing the return of the internally displaced people. This is real Nepal if ever there existed a people die as though human life has no worth. The dead become a medium, petty street fights becomes a medium. The public wanting and reconciliation on the streets.

The government does not seem to exist. It is a constant battle to maintain law and order and give security to its people. The thematic New Nepal has opened the floodgates to discharge stored problems and no sign of solutions are visible. People should understand the meaning and value of terms democracy and freedom. Hooliganism is not freedom or democracy. By disrupting peace and endangering the lives of those who do not want to be a part of violence is neither freedom nor democracy.

We, the people have to decide what we are looking for. In Madhesi, we have an emerging conflict situation. How much of us want to be compensated for the loss of land and resources? How much of us are willing to give up our past generations’ struggle, just to secure a better tomorrow for our children? New Nepal can only rest on the foundation of determination that we will behave differently and act responsibly.

Disrupting peace and endangering the lives of those who do not want to be a part of violence is neither freedom nor democracy.

Young Speak

Garima Bastola

New Nepal is an imaginary concept. However, everything is the same: crowded streets, dumps of garbage, street protests and growing insecurity among the public. Changes we cannot ignore are excessive traffic, pollution, rapid growth of automobiles and gadgets and our new government. I was in the parliament the day history was in the making. Interim Parliament had been born. But the House began after inordinate and unexplained delay. Some of the Members of Parliament (Mps) dazed off: some were yawning in their seats while others talked. Many MPs squeezed themselves in the miniature seats. Some members rose to criticise the new constitution while others expressed optimism that the day symbolised a better and promising future.

Everyone seemed to be curious about the new members. That scenario changed after the new Maoist legislators entered the parliament. Few older looking men led the line of young teenage looking girls. The members of the seven parties especially the seniors looked shocked. However, some smiled and greeted the Maoist legislatas, who sat on the extreme right now.

Many people were disappointed that the Maoist MPs were indeed radicalised but did not appear to understand what was happening. They came to parliament without ever contesting an election. The dream they were on un-parliamentary, to say the least. I stepped outside briefly looking for something to eat and I turned on my FM radio. The interview questioned the new MPs about their personal experiences at that moment of history. Was it a nightmare or a dream? How many of us break laws every day? How many of us have learned law and order and give security to its people. The thematic New Nepal has opened the floodgates to discharge stored problems. The revolutionaries are happy and all this maneuvering is with the aim of political dominance and ousting one another. Can Koirala swim past the nets cast by his own colleagues in the cabinet and his party to metaphorically his own Home Minister?

Four months down the line, law and order is almost invisible in almost the entire length and breadth of the country. Citizen’s security is at the highest risk. The eight parties in the ruling coalition are having problems with each other; there are major differences within the same party.

Youth and students who have been campaigning the concept of New Nepal and/or their role in it are welcome to contribute their articles – restricting it to 600 words – with the writer’s photo to: newsfront@bhrikuti.com

Young Speak

Imaginary NEW NEPAL

The dead become a medium to get demands fulfilled...

The peace process has transcended into a multifaceted quagmire.

While supposedly brokered a deal to impact democratic changes and bringing about lasting peace, in reality however, the power brokers in Kathmandu and New Delhi have come to a stark realisation that they are now embroiled in a political quagmire.

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It's past noon and the temperature hovers around 42 degree Celsius. Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid has just spent his first three hours in Delhi — in India, in fact — registering at a police station. On a white-tinted five-day book tour for his bestseller The Reluctant Fundamentalist, he relates the incident with a chuckle, clearly delighting in the absurdity of it. "Can't believe I come home to India and have to register again!"

However, the perks of being a Pakistani in India haven’t dimmed Hamid’s spirits. Clean shaven and clad in a black T-shirt and penning as a rag like a regular 35-year-old, a far cry from the dark, brooding photograph posted on his website. He is charmingly candid and forthright. “I just glad the book is done and over with,” he sighs with relief.

By his own admission, writing is a constant struggle for Hamid, something that doesn’t come very easily to him. His first book, Moth Smoke, a disturbing portrayal of life in contemporary Pakistan, has now acquired cult status there, but it took him seven years to write it. “I started it when I was 22 and finished it at 29. My entire perspective had changed and I've lost count of how many drafts I'd written by then.”

The same goes for The Reluctant Fundamentalist for which Hamid wrote seven drafts before his publisher was satisfied. “I don’t think the final draft had a single sentence in common with the first ones,” he adds, wryly.

A 9½ novel, its narrative style is uncomon and elegantly constructed. It’s a one-way conversation between a Pakistani and an American at a cafe in Lahore’s Anarkali Bazaar. The only voice the reader hears is the Pakistani’s. Some American critics have dismissed The Reluctant Fundamentalist as Oriental bumbling, but Hamid is quick to point out that the readers in the US have been fascinated by a different point of view. “I went for a reading to Dallas, Texas, and I was nervous,” says Hamid. “That could be because the protagonist attempts to feel some pleasure at the 9½11 catastrophe. ‘Me being in Dallas is sort of like an American soldier in Iraq,’ but the reactions surprised me. Normal Americans are looking for answers,” he explains.

Hamid says the years spent writing The Reluctant Fundamentalist were the toughest of his life. Initially written in first person, by his fourth draft, it shifted to an Americanised first person. “The second time round, you think it’s going to be easier but it isn’t,” he says. He describes the year following 9½11 as one of deep personal turmoil and the repercussions of the illegal war in the Muslim world are carefully woven into the narrative. Yet, Hamid insists, not one of his characters is him. “Of course, like most writers I’m influenced by my environment; my roommate was a heroin addict and I drew on that while writing Moth Smoke,” he says.

Echoes of identity, nationalism and the clash of civilisations resonate through most of Hamid’s writing, whether in his novels, or essays for magazines and newspapers. He describes himself as stubbornly Pakistani, but London-based Hamid has recently opted for dual citizenship; he also holds a British passport. “Let’s face it, it’s a lot more convenient,” he says a trifle sheepishly. He currently works part time with a small consulting firm in London.

Meanwhile, he has sold the movie rights for his first book to Indian actor Rahul Bose. So do we have to wait seven years for Hamid’s next book? He laughs, “I’ve given myself a time limit of two years, but don’t hold your breath.”

(Indic Express)

Insight

Women positive politics

A woman, no matter how strong, capable or qualified would find it difficult to make her voice heard, to fight for her rights, to campaign to make things better for her fellow women. “Do not ask why, just follow blindly, seems to be the popular credo.”

Sushma Amaty

Women journalists in Nepal have been increasingly apparent as some of the greatest astoundingly qualified. A study by the Nepal Women Journalist Forum (NWJF) found that women journalists are a pertinent group of journalists whose primary concern was increased representation of women at decision making levels. Demand for representation needs to be backed up by individual capacity building, commissioning the output of all types of work, and standing one’s ground. Only representation based on gender or any other category sans capability, commitment would be ludicrous and would just result in a new conflict in work-place. Gender bias of age-old bias based on gender, caste etc., would also need extensive and intensive orientation at all work places. Of course, the education first needs to begin at every home and school, through practice.

And at the same time, increasing negative viewing of well educated, urban women - who are making it to the top through sheer dint of hard work and capability- by those who come from rural or unprivileged background should cease. A comment by one of the journalists who said, “The role of urban, privileged women should be minimised,” sparks of a bias, not suited to any journalist worth her salt.

Politics permeate every level of society. It is a common saying that women, more than two Nepalese political party cadres, are almost always in a negative sense. Women journalists in Nepal need to be active in positive politics, steer clear of discriminatory policies and set an example of being able to work together by not giving into petty, shortsighted bickering based on greed and/or jealousy. Only by maintaining their integrity can their mission succeed and will be taken seriously.

Right is not given or taken, it is inherently yours, it is a birthright. This fact is an internalised. All that things you believe in, you first need to practice on yourself first and others - both men and women. If you believe in child rights, send your domestic worker's child to school; if you have an orphan child worker, don’t abuse him/her and provide him with basic education at least. If you espouse women’s rights, don’t beat your wife. If you believe in men’s rights, don’t beat your husbands.

For women to break the glass ceilings in Nepal, every single woman has to empower herself by honing her skills and getting armed with good education. Combine that with sheer determination, confidence building, clear vision and hard work, any man-made barrier can be broken down. Many doors wait out there to welcome upright, intelligent, compasionate women who are brave, can question and value honesty. 

Please address any queries you have about drug addiction to: newsfront@bunlink.com (Your identity will be protected.)
Obe’go, a Spanish, pediatrician by profession is excited that he could come back alive after being stranded in the freezing mountains for eight hours after he was swept away by a powerful avalanche while returning from the summit of Mt. Dhaulagiri.

On his way back from a successful ascent to the 8000-meter summit on April 26, the avalanche not only separated Obe’go from his friend Ihaki Ochoa, a famous climber but carried him some 800 metres away. “It was late in the afternoon. I was clueless about where I was, but imminent death was a stark reality to me;” he told newsfront.

The avalanche struck around 6,700-meter point sweeping Obe’go away. “I was alone for eight hours. I lost my gloves. I did not know where I was. I wrapped my arms around my chest and huddled down in a desperate bid to keep warm,” he recalled. The overnight exposure to the extreme cold estimated around minus 22 degree Celsius affected his vision.

Dawn injected some hope despite his vision that failed him. “But the real problem was not knowing where I was… I started moving cautiously towards the direction of the sun and inched forward making sense of some vague reference points along the way.” He had no idea of how long he walked but finally the effort paid off.

He met an expedition group of Italians and Swiss at Tamwang. “They took me to their tent and administered first aid.” His friend Ochoa could hardly believe his ears when Obe’go called on his satellite phone number to say he was very much alive and back to safety. “He had given me up for dead,” Obe’go said.

Soon after he flew to Kathmandu on a chartered helicopter and decided to cut short his stay in Kathmandu; and fly back home to reassure his panic stricken family. During his treatment in Kathmandu, Dr Chakra Raj Pandey, a famous orthopedic surgeon who examined the climber said he was fine except for his fingers on left hand that had partially been frost-bitten.

Obe’go has been associated with many mountaineering and rescue groups, and he plans to continue with that. After this experience when he was miraculously saved, he said he sees things in a different perspective. He said he looks forward to many more trips Nepal, a country he loves and has frequented many times after 1989; and concluded that Nepal will always remain a part of his life.

Only miracle could save him.