

The Role of Swarup Singh Karki During the Second Half of the 18th Century Nepal

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In the initial phase of the modern history of Nepal we find the meteoric rise and fall of many personalities. One such personality was Kazi Swarup Singh Karki, one of the most controversial figures in the history of Nepal. He was one of the most influential *Kazis* during the reign of Pratap Singh Shah and the initial phase of Rana Bahadur Shah's reign. In this article an attempt is made to deal with the role of *Kazi* Swarup Singh Karki in the then politics of Nepal.

Swarup Singh Karki belonged to the state of Chaudandi, a Sena kingdom of the eastern Nepal. It is apt to deal why and how he came to join the service of the Gorkha King. In those days (prior to the Gorkha conquest) Jagat Sena, a prince, could found an independent state of Chaudandi with the help of Limbu chieftains in 1735 A. D. In the kingdom, there was a conflict between Khasas, Brahmins and the Limbus. Under such circumstance, the Sena king was a helpless

figure before the Limbu chieftains. Meantime the conquest of Makwanpur by the Gorkha King in 1762 A. D. aroused the feeling of fear in the mind of Sena Kings and Limbu *Diwans* of Chaudandi. Moreover, the victory of the Gorkhas over Gurgin Khan and Capt. Kinlock made the Limbu *Diwans* think of helping Jaya Prakash Malla, the king of Kantipur. The Limbu *Diwans* were in favour of Jaya Prakash Malla whereas the Khasas and Brahmins of the area wished the speedy success of Prithvi Narayan Shah over the Kathmandu Valley as well as the Sena kingdoms of the East. But before the Sena king could render any help, Kantipur was conquered by the Gorkha king. That success of the Gorkhas had effect on the subjects of the Chaudandi state. The Khasas and Brahmins wished the speedy march of Gorkha army over their homeland whereas the Limbuans prepared for the defence. Prithvi Narayan Shah, a sagacious statesman, made contact with the

influential persons (Khasas and Brahmins) of the area. Harinandan Upadhyaya and his brother Trilochan Upadhyaya, very rich Brahmins of the area, visited Prithvi Narayan Shah at Nuwakot and assured him financial support. Meantime Swarup Singh Karki also came to join the Gorkhas. At the age of seventeen years Swarup Singh seems to have come and served Pratap Singh Shah, the crown prince, before 1769. A. D. In short time he impressed the Gorkha crown prince so much that the latter strongly recommended his father Prithvi Narayan Shah in favour of the former.

Prithvi Narayan Shah, a far-sighted ruler, appointed Swarup Singh as *Sardar* a very high post in the Gorkha administrative hierarchy. He had to conquer Chaudandi in order to unify Nepal. So his objective at that time was to attract as many influential persons of the state as possible. Harinandan Upadhyaya and his brother Trilochan Upadhyaya were already in close contact with him.¹

They not only lent Rs. 11,000/— Patna coins to Prithvi Narayan Shah, who was in dire need of money, but also assured him to propagate among the Khasas and Brahmins in favour of the Gorkhalis. Prithvi Narayan's sagacity laid on winning over the influential subjects of his adversaries. So he had given such a high post to Swarup Singh Karki at the age of seventeen years and assigned him to serve his son Pratap Singh Shah. Such a high post he had not given to any other persons who had left their homelands and joined the Gorkhas, for example, in 1823 B. S., Paratha Bhandari, an officer of Parbat, had joined the Gorkhalis defected his homelond after the battle of Lakhajung against the *Chaubisi* states. He was not entrusted to the post before

the conquest of the Kathmandu Valley.

Similarly Yognarayan Malla of Parbat was appointed only as Subba. Bhakti Thapa was promoted as a *Subba* after exhibiting valour in many battles. Under such circumstances Swarup Singh Karki must have influenced both Prithvi Narayan Shah and Pratap Singh Shah by his tactful dealings otherwise he would not have been appointed to such a high post at such an early age. Not only that he was assigned to conquer Bhaktapur in 1769 A. D. which meant by 1769 A. D. he was successful to win the confidence of King Prithvi Narayan Shah.

Gradual emergence of Gorkha aroused the feeling of uneasiness in the minds of many rulers of *Chaubisi* states and others. These rulers started girding up their loins and strengthened their army. Under such circumstance competent and brave persons were much in demand. Prithvi Narayan Shah, who had launched the military campaign for the unification of Nepal, naturally was in need of many well-trained and competent warriors. But the employment of the outsiders naturally would arouse the problem in any country. Such situation was felt in the court of Prithvi Narayan Shah also later on.

A group of hereditary courtiers called *Tharghar* had served the crown of Gorkha since long. Naturally these courtiers felt that they alone had the right and privileges to get the high posts and honour. When an outsider was given a high post, these hereditary courtiers grumbled and intrigued against the outsiders. When Swarup-Singh Karki was given such a high post of *Sardar*, there seems to have been grumbling. Even during the life time of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the courtiers seemed to have been split into two groups

e. g. the hereditary officials of Gorkha and the new officers. The first group was at Nuwakot rendering their service sincerely whereas the other group was serving the crown prince at Kathmandu. Second group consisted of Pt. Vrajanath and Swarup Singh Karki. Among them Swarup Singh Karki was quite successful in influencing both the king and the crown prince, as such he was deputed to many jobs expected from the confidential persons. Within the short time of getting asylum at Kathmandu, he was assigned as one of the officers to conquer Bhaktapur. Immediately after the conquest of Kathmandu along with Keher Singh Basnet, he was deputed to make an enquiry about the theft of the ornaments of the god Seto Machchendra Nath. At the time of political crisis, the employee of Jaya Prakash Malla had made an attempt to steal some of the valuable ornaments of the god. When it was reported, the enquiry commission was assigned by Prithvi Narayan Shah to find out the fact. The commission performed the duty quite well, which further strengthened the position of Swarup Singh Karki.

The more Swarup Singh Karki became influential, the more jealousy aroused among the other courtiers. Swarup Singh also realising his situation getting precarious became a staunch devotee to the crown prince, who also favoured him too much. But the old officials did not take him into confidence. Prithvi Narayan Shah, while trying to solve a problem, sowed the seed of other problems. Groupism developed unwittingly among the courtiers, which proved a curse in the history.

As shrewd he was, Swarup understood his position in the court. So he also left no stone unturned to keep the crown prince

pleased with him. Pratap Singh Shah was very much inclined towards dance and music. Being expert in singing, Swarup influenced the crown prince by his singing. His influence in the court of the crown prince continued increasing. As he was busy in warfare, Prithvi Narayan had no time to think of the activities of the crown prince. He was residing at Nuwakot from where he was supervising the military campaign towards the East and West. He appointed Pt. Vrajanath to train the crown prince on the polity, *Shastras* and other subjects relevant to the then princes. But Vrajanath could not bring about the change in the attitude of the crown prince, his pupil. Rather he had to do whatever his pupil desired in order to win over the favour of the would-be king, who was very much inclined towards the Tantric cult in order to achieve a goal. So Vrajanath convinced his pupil that devotion to goddess Guheswari would easily attain his desired goal. While undergoing the Tantric cult the crown prince came into contact with a young girl named Maiju, because a virgin girl was also needed in the cult of Tantrism, which emphasised on five *Makar* i. e. *Mahsya* (fish), *Mamsha* (Meat), *Madira* (alcohol), *Mudra* (position) and *Maithun* (sex). Maiju, said to be a daughter of a Pradhan of the Malla period, was used in the ritual of the cult. Gradually the crown Prince was attracted towards Maiju who ultimately became *Rani*, a concubine.

Swarup Singh, feeling himself unsafe, being jealously watched by the Gorkhali courtiers, became closer with Maiju and Pt. Vrajanath. Thus, these three persons became closer and there were substantial reasons for that also. Firstly, they were almost of the same age. Swarup Singh Karki was born in

1808 B. S., Vrajanath in 1810 B. S. and Maiju Rani was also almost of the same age. Pratap Singh Shah, born in 1806 B. S., naturally became closer with these three persons of almost the same age

Secondly, all the three persons (Maiju Rani, Swarup Singh and Vrajanath) were outsiders in the Gorkha system; so for their existence and strengthening the position they were united. Lastly, from the point of view of the Tantric cult they worked together. Pratap Singh Shah was the *devotee*; Pt. Vrajanath along with some Karmacharyas of Kathmandu became the *Gurus*, Maiju was involved as a virgin girl and Swarup Singh became an influential provocative singer essential for the cult. Thus a group of Tantrists was formed. The more Pratap Singh Shah was devoted to the Tantrism, the stronger the group became.

Formation of such a strong group consisting of non-Gorkhalis influencing the would-be-king naturally aroused the jealousy among the courtiers of Nuwakot. Those courtiers of Nuwakot, who were hereditary and had helped their master in the prolonged military campaign for the unification of Nepal, did not wish any other person influencing the would-be-king of Nepal. But Pratap Singh Shah was so much in the grip of the three persons (Maiju Rani, Swarup and Pt. Vrajanath) that they felt it impossible to correct him. They had seen the displeasure of their master Prithvi Narayan Shah toward the crown prince. Under such circumstance they started thinking of their own future. When they found the crown prince incorrigible their attention was drawn towards the next prince, Bahadur Shah who was with his father and very much impressive, well disciplined and well-mannered. At his thirteenth year Bahadur Shah became quite popular among

the old courtiers of Nuwakot.

In the pages of history we have seen that whenever there was a conflict in the family of the master or succession of a weak or minor ruler, the courtiers emerged as the most powerful persons. Courtiers are like fire, a good servant but a dangerous master. At that time the courtiers at Nuwakot not only saw the conflict between the father and son but also the father's inability to control his son. To safeguard their interest they even persuaded Daljit Shah to propose Bahadur Shah as the successor instead of Pratap Singh Shah. Prithvi Narayan Shah did not seem to have expressed any reaction. Along with the courtiers Bahadur Shah also nurtured bad feelings towards the group of courtiers of Kathmandu. He seemed to be quite popular among the courtiers of Nuwakot.

The militant and do-or-die type of courtiers (Nuwakot) found their leadership as desired on Bahadur Shah, who was dashing, competent and popular. They found the crown prince contrary to their expectation, who was indulged in Tantrism and within the grip of non-Gorkhali courtiers. This sort of situation seemed to have developed the feeling of disappointment to the great king Prithvi Narayan Shah, who must have been disturbed because of his brothers' and elder son's behaviour. Although he took a stern stand against his grumbling brothers like Kirtimahhoddam Shah, Surpratap Shah and Dalmardan Shah, all of whom wanted to share the fruit of more than three decades labour, he died before he could bring his crown prince back to track.

Poor King Prithvi Narayan Shah, weary and fatigued by his long military campaigns and unable to bring his son to the track, gave some instructions to the courtiers who were

hereby him at Nuwakot. He had very aptly said, "When an old man dies, his words survive him, so they say what you who are gathered here will hear from me, pass on to your children and they to ours; and this kingdom will endure."² He had a full confidence of his courtiers (Gorkhalis). Moreover he had warned "The Kshetryis and Brahmins of the East and West should not be permitted to enter the court. Answer is that the outsider cause irregularity in the (traditional) system of the court. Keep the command of the king firmly." His main concern was to endure the kingdom with the joint efforts of the ruler and the courtiers. The courtiers were to give sincere advice to the king and the latter was also to listen to the former, hence a strong government would run. Moreover he had realised the mistake he had committed by employing the outsiders. Although that sort of feeling shows the narrow outlook of the ruler but the then situation justifies what he had suspected. He was the king of the newly acquired area which had to be consolidated. Vanquished rulers and the neighbours were very much opposed to the rise of the house of Gorkha. At such a time a strong government was required without any conflict. Actually Prithvi Narayan Shah's last days were very much disheartening because of the clash with his brothers, defeated by the *Chaubisis*, attempts of the *Chaubisis* to provoke the people of Gorkha against him, failure of the missions to Tibet, formation of the non-Gorkhali group under Pratap Singh Shah, etc. The relation between the father and son had so much shivered that even when Prithvi Narayan Shah was seriously ill, Pratap Singh Shah did not go to see his father at his deathbed.

Death of Prithvi Naryan Shah steered clear the way of the non-Gorkhali group.

Pratap Singh Shah ascended the throne and the three persons became the most powerful figures, who had fully influenced the new king. The old courtiers at Nuwakot had now no alternative but hovered around Bahadur Shah. That more at Nuwakot gave a pretext to Swarup Singh and his group to take action against Bahadur Shah. According to the Gorkha tradition, the first son used to ascend the throne and the second son became the *Chautariya* (like primeminister). The fear of the non-Gorkhali group was that if Bahadur Shah would become the Chautariya they would have no grip and say in the administration. Their main effort was anyhow to set aside the old courtiers and held the sway of administration. In that intrigue they succeeded as Pratap Singh could not make a distinction between right and wrong. With the permission of the new immatured king, Swarup Singh, with a group of army, went to Nuwakot to confine Bahadur Shah who was undergoing the mourning ritual of the dead father. Daljit Shah, fearing the unknown consequence as he had proposed that Bahadur Shah should succeed Prithvi Narayan Shah, fled away.

Bahadur Shah and Dalmardan Shah were confined before the fire of cremation ground of Prithvi Narayan Shah extinguished. There was no justifiable reason to confine the prince except the power politics which consumed the then court life to a large extent. Swarup Singh Karki seemed to be quite active. A new set of courtiers were announced at the time of *Pajani*. Pt. Vrajanath enjoyed the power which a *Chautariya* used to exercise. Swarup Singh was promoted to *Kaziship*, others included were Abhiman Singh Basnet, Parasuram Thapa, Amar Singh Thapa. Maiju Rani seemed more influential than the legitimate Rani

Rajendralaxmi. Thus Maiju Rani, Pt. Vrajanath and Swarup Singh were the most influential persons at that time. Their intrigue bore fruit.

By the end of 1831 B. S. (1775 A. D.) Gajraj Mishra, Nepalese *Vakil* at Banaras had come to pay his respect to the new king. The dissatisfied courtiers, who were just grumbling and could not utter a single word out of fear of the severe punishment, approached Gajraj Mishra to bell the cat. Gajraj Mishra, who had good relation with Bahadur Shah, was also much disappointed to see the whole situation of the court. He persuaded the king to release the prince. Bahadur Shah, instead of getting an entry in the court, had to be satisfied with the post of *Amalidar* of Dolakha.

The non-Gorkhali group did not wish Bahadur Shah as the *Chautariya* at all, so they made the king appoint his brother just an *Amalidar*. It is pity that when a king could not judge anything in a right perspective a big gulf or barrier was created even between the two brothers. Even then no love was lost between the brothers. Bahadur Shah, who had not so far nurtured any evil design against his brothers, swallowed the humble pie and remained as a humble *Amalidar* waiting for an opportunity to wipe out the ill-feeling of his brother. Court system was at such an intriguing labyrinth that even a brother had to seek favour of the royal officers to have an access to the king.³ Bahadur Shah became the victim of the system. Swarup Singh, Pt. Vrajanath and Maiju Rani censored all possible means to anyone who wanted to have direct approach with Pratap Singh Shah. They never wished the cordiality between the two brothers (Pratap Singh Shah the King and Bahadur Shah). Swarup Singh seemed to have watched and

supervised everything most jealously. Had the two royal brothers been into good relation Pratap Singh Shah could have achieved a lot in conquering new areas of *Chaubisis* and *Baisis* and also in consolidating them with the help of his competent brother Bahadur Shah. It was a pity in the history of Nepal. Those who remained close to the king spent their whole energy in conspiring and plotting to arouse suspicion in the mind of Pratap Singh Shah against his own brother Bahadur Shah. Had not Narendralaxmi observed *Sati*, she could have worked for the cordial relation between her sons. The courtiers (the fire) instead of serving as servants became the master, which the king could not understand.

Bahadur Shah, though just and *Amalidar* or Dolakha, a very humble post for a person like him, was trying his best to have a personal contact with his brother so that the misunderstanding of his brother could be wiped out. Meantime on certain unknown reason Bahadur Shah and Dalmardan Shah imprisoned Swarup Singh Karki, who was considered the main culprit by the princes.⁴ But due to intervention of queen Rajendralaxmi, Swarup Singh was spared. This incident proves that Swarup Singh had enough influence on queen Rajendralaxmi also; otherwise she would not have come forward to rescue him. Once released, Swarup Singh's devil mind worked fast to avenge for the humiliation he had to suffer from Bahadur Shah and his group.

In Falgun 1832 B. S. Swarup Singh succeeded in expelling Bahadur Shah, Dalmardan Shah and Gajraj Misra on three heinous charges.⁵ They were attempt to confine the king, to murder Swarup Singh Karki and expulsion of Laxmiraman Upadhyaya, a

Brahman. An order was given to Bahadur Shah to cross Chepe river.

After that Swarup Singh Karki became most powerful person for about two years. None in the court could utter a single word against him. He was so tactful that he could please both the wives of Pratap Singh Shah, which hardly a man of ordinary brain could do. From his point of view it was a tremendous success. A person, who had got asylum, could hold the reins of administration within a few years. He also constructed a palatial building called 'Jayamandir' at Chikanmugal Tole, Kathmandu for himself.⁶ He led most pompous and luxurious life.

In the initial period of modern Nepal Swarup Singh Karki ushered an era of intriguing court politics. The rival courtiers were also not sitting idle. They were seeking an opportunity to do away with Swarup Singh Karki. In 1834 B. S. Swarup Singh Karki was all of a sudden expelled from the country. The reason of his expulsion was the vehement opposition of the old courtiers like Abhiman Singh Basnet and Vamsaraj Pandey. The incident preceding his expulsion was like this. Abhiman Singh with his army had marched to conquer Someswor (Chitwan) by the order of the king.⁷

Out of the jealousy that Abhiman Singh would get the credit of conquering Someswor, Swarup Singh Karki also along with some soldiers went to Chitwan and stationed at Jogimara. When he came to know of Abhiman Singh's success of conquering Someswor, Swarup Singh also marched to the spot. That incident infuriated Abhiman Singh Basnet, a devoted warrior and competent officer. So Abhiman Singh Basnet and Vamsraj Pandey, son of Kalu Pandey, reported the foul trick

of Swarup to the king. They at last succeeded in convincing the king against Swarup Singh Karki. As its result the *Kazi* was expelled from the kingdom. The first phase of his career ends here.

Swarup Singh Karki, after his expulsion, went to Betiah, where his main endeavour was to approach many persons with whose help he wished to go back to the court life of Nepal. A person, who had experienced the taste of power, would hardly like to remain without any job and power. When all his endeavours to come back to Kathmandu failed, his attention was drawn towards the widow-queen of Chaudandi who was trying her best to restore her lost kingdom from the Gorkhas with the help of the Company's Government. He was also given pension by the Company's Government during his stay at Betiah.

Karna Sena, the king of both Chaudandi and Vijayapur, after being defeated by the Gorkha army had entered into the Company's territory and was approaching the Company's Government for the military help for the restoration of his lost state. While doing that Karna Sena died leaving his wife and a son. His son had also died about which Hamilton had written that Prithvi Narayan Shah had assigned a physician to inoculate poison to the baby. In spite of the death of her husband and son, the undaunted widow queen continued her attempt to restore the lost state. She approached the Palpa Sena King Mukunda Sena II for a prince to be adopted as the successor of Karna Sena and also to help her against her enemy, the king of Nepal. Swarup Singh, having entered in the service of the widow queen, went to Palpa to bring the prince. An understanding was made between Mukunda Sena and Swarup Singh Karki

that the latter was to approach the Governor General at Calcutta for the military help to restore the lost kingdom of Chaudandi. Swarup Singh Karki was successful to take Dhojbir Sena a prince of Palpa to the widow queen of Chaudandi. His attempt to approach the Governor General at Calcutta was foiled by Dinanath Upadhyaya, the Nepalese *Vakil* at Calcutta. To get an information of the success of Dinanath Upadhyaya, the Nepalese army made a sudden attack on the army of Chaudandi and Dhojbir Sena was killed. Thus the dream of the widow queen, Swarup Singh and Mukunda Sena II was shattered into pieces forever. With this event the second phase of the career of Swarup Singh Karki came to an end.

Meanwhile King Pratap Singh Shah died on Marga 6, 1834 B. S. (Nov. 1777 A.D.). Death of the king resulted into political turmoil in the court. Pt. Vrajanath and Maiju Rani wished Rajendra Laxmi to be *Sati* and thus do away with her forever, whereas other group of courtier wished to save her and work under her. The second group of the courtiers immediately sent for Bahadur Shah who was at Betiah. Bahadur Shah, having come to Kathmandu, was successful to do away with the rival group and save the life of Rajendra Laxmi.

But the cordiality between Bahadur Shah and Rajendra Laxmi did not last more than six months. Conflict between them aroused because both of them were equally ambitious. Rajendra Laxmi, being the *Rajmata*, felt that she was subordinate to none while Bahadur Shah, nearest male relative of the young king Ran Bahadur Shah, had the feeling of his sole responsibility to shoulder the responsibility of administration. Once more the courtiers were

split into two groups. The followers of the queen mother and those of Bahadur Shah. At such a time sometimes Rajendra Laxmi confined Bahadur Shah and at the other time Bahadur Shah confined Rajendra Laxmi in the Hanumandhoka Palace. Sarbajit Rana Magar led the followers of Rajendra Laxmi whereas Sriharsha Pant those of Bahadur Shah. In the scramble for power, Sarbajit Rana was put to death by Bahadur Shah whereas Sriharsha Pant being a Brahmin was not put to death but branded and expelled by Rajendra Laxmi. At last Rajendra Laxmi succeeded to come to power and Bahadur Shah was once more expelled. But at times of crisis Bahadur Shah was called back and his advice was sought. But neither did he prefer to stay at Kathmandu for a long time nor was it appreciated by Rajendra Laxmi. Later on Rajendra Laxmi suffered from tuberculosis. She was worried about her infant son, the king. At such a time she wanted to have someone strong enough to look after her son. She did not rely on anyone of the old courtiers of Gorkha. Rajendra Laxmi called Swarup Singh Karki back forgetting the role he had played (joining the Rani of Karna Sena) against the government of Nepal. It is quite strange to think as to why the Rani invited him ignoring those old courtiers who had served Prithvi Narayan Shah with all their might and sincerity. Prithvi Narayan Shah's warning to be cautious of the Khasas and Brahmins of the East and West totally ignored.

Return of Swarup Singh Karki to the court of Kathmandu brought changes in the court politics. All the old courtiers who had feeling of relief for some time became very cautious of him. They foresaw certain dangerous conspiracy as retaliation from

Swarup Singh and they were correct also. Before he took any action against his rivals, he worked for strengthening his position. Having made Daljit Shah, a brother of Brithvi Narayan Shah, sign a *Dharmapatra* promising not to do anything against the king and queen mother and to report of he happened to listen, any criticism against them in the court, he was made *Chautariya* in 1841. B. S. Appointment of Daljit Shah strengthened the position of Swarup Singh Karki.

In his initial phase Swarup Singh had taken the help of Maiju Rani and Pt. Vrajnath to consolidate his power. At this phase he took the blessing of Rajendra Laxmi and the support of Kazi Bhim Khawas. With that strong support he plotted to avenge some of his rivals who had advised King Pratap Singh Shah to expel him. Vamsraj Pandey (son of Kazi Kalu Pande) was charged of letting Kirtibam Malla, the King of Parbat, flee away from the battle fought between the Gorkha army and *Chaubisis* in 1839 B. S. He was a supporter of Bahadur Shah and an opponent of Swarup Singh Karki. In 1842 B. S. the case of letting Kirtibam Malla run away was suddenly brought before the court at the instigation of Swarup Singh Karki. To deal the case a *Kachahari* (meeting of the courtiers) was held at Bhandarkhal, Hanumandhoka Durbar at night; in those days holding a *Kachahari* at night meant the case was a grave one in which the culprit was to be given capital punishment. When the discussion on the charge levelled to Vamsraj Pandey took place, there was an exchange of hot words between Swarup Singh and Vamsraj Pande. Vamsraj was declared guilty of the crime and was beheaded on the same night. Swarup Singh Karki thus took revenge on his adversary. Although his objective of treating all his adversaries could

not be materialised, Vamsraj Pande, a valour warrior, fell a victim of Swarup's conspiracy.

Death sentence to Vamsraj Pande had its adverse effect. All the old courtiers became more hostile to Swarup Singh Karki. They became beyond control of Kazi Bhim Khawas. To worsen the situation Rani Rajendra Laxmi's health deteriorated badly. She became serious day by day. Foreseeing his dark future in the court of Kathmandu Swarup Singh went to join Daljit Shah who was engaged in the military campaign against Kaski. After the conquest of Kaski, Swarup Singh did not come back to Kathmandu rather stayed at Kaski as an officer-in-charge. His stay at Kaski gives a hint of his unwillingness to come back to Kathmandu where all the old courtiers were quite hostile to him. He feared the retaliation of the old courtiers.

On 2nd Srawan 1842 B. S.; after a few days of the conquest of Kaski Rani Rajendra Laxmi died.

It proved a fatal blow to Swarup Singh Karki and Bhim Khawas. Immediately after the death of Rajendra Laxmi the old courtiers invited Bahadur Shah to hold the administration of Nepal as a regent. Bahadur Shah also, immediately, after holding the post, sent an order to behead Swarup Singh Karki; accordingly on 24th Srawan, 1842 B.S. Swarup was beheaded in Pokhara. Thus one of the mastermind conspirators of Nepal was put to death. With his death the last and most cunning person of the non-Gorkhali group came to an end.

Swarup Singh Karki can be taken as one of the most crooked courtiers in the history of Nepal. His entry in the court of Nepal proved to be very costly one to the court. Although Nemesis, worked in his career, he

did not allow the two brothers (Pratap Singh Shah and Bahadur Shah) to come closer, and caused the death of Vamsraj Pande when he was in power. We can draw a lesson from the career of Swarup Singh Karki that what consequence one had to face when a wrong person was given preference. Swarup Singh Karki was like a hurricane which devastated a lot and the history of Nepal stands witness of many such incidents.

Notes

1. Harinandan Upadhyaya lent a total of Rs. 11,000 (Patna coins) to Prithvi Narayan Shah.
2. His brothers mentioned above wanted to have a separate kingdom for everyone as a reward. But the far-sighted king took a firm stand not to undo what he had achieved i. e. the unification of Nepal.
3. An incident is marked in the history of Nepal. The account printed in *Ancient Nepal*, Vol. 23 reads:
Having realised Sri Guheswari as the main *pith* (Tantrik spot) this king (Pratap Singh Shah) offered one hundred thousand and twenty-five thousand eggs (duck) into the *kund* (holy pond) according to the Tantric rituals whilst this *puja* in the process Bahadur Shah was not permitted to Pratap Singh Shah; and he at once left for Nuwakot.
4. *Ibid*
5. From the unpublished document in possession of Samsher Bahadur Thapa, Kathmandu
6. Bajracharya, Dhanavajra. 1982/1983. "Sri 5 Prithvi Narayan Shah Ka Patraharu." *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1 and 2, pp. 39-42.

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