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RIO+20
United Nations
Conference on
Sustainable
Development



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Eclipsed agendas



In our second edition of the newsletter, we have focused our coverage on achievements of the RIO Summit and the concept of public security. Addressing the issues of climate change and ensuring public security are major issues which have gone neglected in

the light of continued political bickering and constitutional deadlock in the country.

Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai visited the city of Brazil, RIO Di Janeiro last June to attend the global summit to discuss the climate change. Both the President of US and Chancellor of Germany skipped the forum, almost ensuring that the summit would fail to take tangible decisions. The achievement of Prime Minister Bhattarai's Brazil visit was more focused to his talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Nepal, is trying to use the platform of the least developed countries and mountainous countries to raise agenda for tackling the challenges. However, lack of substantial preparation, focus of leadership on combating political crisis and securing their seat in the government has been a serious set back for taking optimum benefits of those platforms.

With the prolonged transition and failure to deliver new constitution within May 27, deadline which is the of Constituent Assembly, future roadmap of this country is uncertain. The buzz word is political consensus but no one knows when an elusive new agreement will be signed.

Public security is a key aspect on which the government and administrators should accord their top priority at difficult times like this. No political party should provide patronage to the criminals and focus on introducing reforms in the security sector.

The peace process that started in 2006 had committed to transform security agencies as per the aspirations of the political change. The constant wrangling among parties have eclipsed the promises made by political leadership and encouraged the status quo, which should come to an end.

Abhaya R. Joshi

RIO+20 summit, How much it secured the future we want?



KAMAL PARIYAR

Time has come for concrete actions at all levels of government to enforce the appropriate laws and regulations designed to protect the environment. Nepal must join hands with the rest of the world to protect mother earth.

In the RIO +20 Summit, held in Brazil, Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai said, "We emphasize that the outcome of the RIO+20 Conference should provide for additional, and predictable financial resources to support the sustainable development efforts of Least Developed Countries (LDCs). While we appreciate the generous support and cooperation received from our development partners and others, a coherent and enhanced level of support for the LDCs will go a long way towards achieving their sustainable development and graduation from the current LDCs status."

He also stressed on the green economy as new development opportunities. According to him, "The green economy should promote green jobs and enhance our capacity without constraining policy space to pursue a development path in accordance with our own national priorities. The institutional framework for sustainable development necessitates reform in the relevant entities within the United Nations system that strongly support LDCs' sustainable development agenda."

Several commitments were made at the end of the conference aimed at stimulating the global community towards saving the mother planet. These include, planting 100 million trees by 2017, greening 10,000 square kilometers of desert, saving one megawatt-hr of electricity per day, empowering 5,000 women entrepreneurs in green economy businesses in Africa and establishing Masters programme in Sustainable Development. Several billions of dollars were also assured in direct contribution to fighting global warming and other environmental problems. However, the developed countries had escaped from their duties to address the concerns of the LDCs. So environmentalists have conveyed great dissatisfaction with the final document presented at the end. Developed countries had escaped from their duty of offering money to finance green projects.

With the current global economic challenges, and the widening gap between the developing and the developed countries, it has become increasingly difficult for the Least developed countries on their own to support the changes demanded by a green economy. Hence, LDCs are in need of economic support from these developed nations, which coincidentally have contributed largely to the reduction of global environmental resources, through transfer of technology, and predictable financial resources which the

poor countries need to implement sustainable development programs.

Developing countries demanded the vowed commitments from the developed countries to stop playing politics with the issue of the environment. They simply asked for appropriate leadership necessary to lead the world on the path to leave a safer and greener world to the future generations. We can evidently see there is solid scientific support to show that past and current development paths are hurting the planet. Some of the emerging powerful developing countries should also step up to play their roles in saving the earth. No nation should sit back and fold its arm on that matter of global warming and other environmental challenges.

Developing country like Nepal and most countries of the world are already experiencing the consequences of global warming. A number of countries are stumbling under the problems of floods, storms, earthquakes, extreme weather changes and other symptoms directly related with global warming.

The recent incidents of increased floods in many parts of the country, the erosions, the unpredictability of weather, disappearance of rare animals from forests are all parts of the signs that Nepal cannot afford to be indifferent to the environment. Time has come for concrete actions at all levels of government to enforce the appropriate laws and regulations designed to protect the environment. Nepal must join hands with the rest of the world to protect mother earth.

The challenging question before us now is how to pursue an economic growth and development that ensures the progress and well being of all the people of this world in an equitable and sustainable manner. Though our country has created a policy framework, plan of action, institutional set-up, monitoring and evaluation arrangements and high-level coordination mechanism at the central level, there are hurdles on the implementation ground. The programs regarding sustainable Community Development and Community Forestry Programs, rural energy program as well as inclusive governance along with hydropower development projects and sustainable tourism policies must be highly prioritised so as to be a part of green growth strategy.

-Mr. Kamal Pariyar is a freelance journalist based in Kathmandu



RIO+20 was promising on a number of grounds

- Secretary Paudel

Nepali delegation led by Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai participated in RIO+20 summit on June 2012 escaping calls from the opposition parties for not leaving home at the time of political deadlock. Upon the delegation's return, media reports were covered with political rhetoric that the Prime Minister gave at the airport regarding the continuation of his Cabinet.

We caught up one of the members of the visiting delegation --Secretary of the Prime Minister Office Mr. Lilamani Paudel-- to get an insights of the RIO Summit and how it benefits Nepal.

What are the achievements of RIO+20 summit?

At the end of the summit, a common document addressing the issues of underdeveloped and mountainous countries was presented. Some issues were voiced whereas, some were stressed. Since Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai was leading the least developed countries in a separate meeting that helped to focus the issues and problems of these countries in front of the developed nations. Many world leaders and stakeholders are now in the position to concentrate on the issues of these least developed countries, which may be helpful to address and tackle the problems that these countries are facing at present.

What were Nepal's specific concerns on RIO+20 summit?

In this context, we have underscored the importance of Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA) for the Least Developed Countries (LDC) for the decade 2011-2020. We have called for a full, effective and speedy implementation of IPOA and its effective integration into global framework, and remains as the main agenda for post 2015 development. On the other hand, Nepal in last few years, has been raising the problems faced by the

mountainous country, in the same manner countries with oceans are highlighting theirs. With the help of other mountainous countries and LDCs, we are able to incorporate our problems in the final document that is to be implemented in the future.

It is said that developed countries seem to be ignoring the LDCs concerns?

At present, developed countries are fighting global economic crisis and confronting several internal problems. Throughout the summit they stressed to support for implementing the conclusion of the RIO+20 forum but did not assure for economic support towards least developed countries. Our main agenda to participate in the summit

We doubt that these developed nations will support us economically but we cannot stop raising these issues and making people aware.

was to draw attention of the entire world towards our problems. As a result, we were able to highlight the causes and challenges of the problem we are facing. We feel that the main causes of environmental changes and hazards are the developed countries but they are not in the mind set to invest accordingly. We doubt that these developed nations will support us economically but we cannot stop raising these issues and making people aware.

Government delegations participate in several international forums. However, the outcome is insignificant. Can you elaborate what was the gain this time?

Participating and putting forward the national concerns in an international platform are in itself a significant achievement. We participate so that our issues are globalised and sooner or later they will be in the state of being addressed. Had the government delegations not participate in such programs, Nepal would be in a more painful situation. With our common efforts, we are able to accomplish a balanced document from the RIO+20

Summit.

What about the tangible outcome then?

It is very unfortunate that we have the culture of criticizing the participation in the international platforms. Yes, I agree that there have been some unnecessary attraction towards foreign visits. But it is not always the same. Some time, international visits are negatively portrayed by the media which I think is not practical and reasonable. But government should try making every visit reasonable and economical. We should prioritise towards preparation of experts on a particular subject considering what we will be discussing on the debate.

What are the government's upcoming programs regarding environmental change and its effect?

We have several programs that are looked after by the Ministry of Environment (MoE). But since prime minister himself is leading the Environmental Council, The Prime Ministers Office is giving much more priority to this issue. We are coordinating with various national and international organizations for implementing effective programs to address the environmental changes. And we are also in the due process to actively and effectively participate in the international platforms so as to gain perfect result.

How is the government underway to implement the programs declared in RIO+20 Summit?

Yes, we are definitely in the due process to implement different programs from government level. I have prepared a report of different programs after returning back from Brazil, which has been sent to Ministry of Environment (MoE). I have categorised the programs according to interest and priority of international community. Keeping that in mind, we have to organize the programs and propose according to their commitments so as to face the challenges created by environmental changes. RIO+20 summit created bilateral and multilateral negotiations on environmental change, poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Public Security Challenges in Nepal

Nepal is passing through a remarkable and exceptional change in its modern history. Current debate along with discourse about security is going to pose many challenges. One can easily see the changes in traditional mindset of security affairs and their practice is visible in the day to day affairs. After the end of bloody insurgency last few years have seen as transitional relief with uncertainty but with enthusiasm and optimism. When public security is seen as the function of government which ensures the protection of citizens, organizations, group of citizens and institutions against threats to their well-being – and to the prosperity of their communities, citizens expect lot from security forces moreover government. It has been seen in large context as contributing political, economic and social issues.

Any nation's first priority is to protect its citizen from threat to life, property and independent movement. Nepal was facing deep security challenges during conflict. But after signing the Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006 and holding the Constituent Assembly election in 2008, there was a lot of improvement in public security. Though there were armed activities in the Terai and eastern hilly districts-extortion, killing, kidnapping, intimidation and cross border crimes were on rise for some time. But gradually law enforcement agencies tightened their grip on such criminal and unlawful activities. Still security situation in these regions was not improved. However instability in the political sector hampered much on effective mobilization of law enforcement agencies. Criminalization of politics and politicization of crime along with political interference in the security forces became strong nexus to be dismantled in Nepali context in post conflict scenario. Increasing militancy of youth organization has also been big problem for some time. Biratnagar and Chitwan incidents, where youth leaders of major parties were dragged into committing unlawful acts, were examples of political involvement in politicization of criminal activities. These kinds of activities has easily arisen state of impunity in the weak state presence situation.

The morale of the Nepal Police and Armed Police Force went very down during the conflict because of the political bickering as well as wrangling. To some extent police has recovered its brutal image to society, which they have shown during Panchyat System and conflict period, but still corruption is haunting the institution. Prolonging transition, failure to institutionalise political gains even six years of signing Comprehensive Peace Accord and political instability are becoming core causes to less effectiveness for police forces. Neither the peace process is concluded nor new constitution promulgated during this period.

In four years, four governments have been changed. Constituent Assembly, the only peoples elected body, has been dissolved without promulgating constitution. This did not allow framing better or effective policies regarding security forces.

We can recall some episode during the last days and on the eve of Constituent Assembly deadline of May 27, social tensions aggravated to extent of possible inviting communal violence. Some ethnic and region based movement for federal structure created social tensions during the last months of Constituent Assembly deace. These activities have motivated to extent of possibly inviting communal violence for the first time in the history of Nepal. Identity, multi-identity and region based processions have been raised up to the big contests. State response and efficacy of security agencies was very low in terms of performance in the eyes of common people's aspiration.

Security institutions are also lacking in participation and inclusion on the basis of gender, caste, religion and ethnicity. If these are managed, they can perform better in remote and urban areas. Transitional justice issue has been almost forgotten during post-conflict situation. No mechanisms were established like Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Disappearance Commission to deal with human rights violations and ensure justice to the victims, which is an integral part of peace process. The culture of impunity can be seen in spectrum of political, economic and social life. Promotion and protection of human rights violators in every sector by the government has added further threat to public security.

Procurement of logistic, arms and ammunition, ration, clothes, awarding contracts, welfare fund of security agencies recruitment, promotions and postings are core areas of corruption which are pervasive and rampant. So that one can see the financial irregularities are one of the major challenges to public security now days. About three dozen senior officers were charged of corruption at once is biggest example of senior officials involvement in irregularity within the institution.

Even our public security policies and security agencies are still not prepared to deal with large events of terrorist activities, threats resulting from migratory movements- as is seen during Madhesh movement, outbreak of contagious diseases and large events. They are not sufficiently trained to handle with environmental degradation or climate change issues. Nepalese society is suffering with the issue of domestic and gender based violence in many forms like-physical, sexual, mental, psychological and economic. Protection and participation of women in all sectors of day to day life and policy making is must to enhance public security.



DR. DEEPAK PRAKASH BHATT

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Comprehensive public security strategy with short, mid and long term plan is needed to deal with existing problems and control crimes in each front. To implement such policies the law enforcement agencies should be professional, well trained-equipped and impartial to perform their duties. Merit based recruitment, promotion and posting should be made in security agencies. To deal with law and order in generic term, political consensus is needed to deal with criminalization of politics, youth militancy and to introduce a strategic planning.

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Civilian Security in Post-conflict Situation



SHOBHAKAR BUDHATHOKI

Obviously, political agendas must be resolved through dialogue, but the government should make no compromise while enforcing laws and controlling criminal activities. Political negotiation with criminals will be unable to outlaw illegal activities.

Civilian security is fundamental element for the success of peace process and institutionalization of democratic polity. Similarly, security must be prevailed to prepare the foundation for development and nation-building strategies. It is also equally important to initiate post-conflict peace-building and ensure fundamental human rights of people and smooth transformation of transitional period, as well as creating basis for sustainable and just peace, and lawful society. It also creates opportunities for international community to increase direct investment and foreign aid. In political term, security means the regime of good governance, and

accountability and responsiveness towards common people.

Security must be concern of all stakeholders, including civilians. Even though the state is primarily responsible for maintaining security and rule of law, ordinary people should actively support the initiatives of the government and law enforcement agencies. Considering the emergence of complex nature of crime in post-conflict scenario, it is essential to strengthen civilian police, and law enforcement agencies as well as justice mechanism to ensure security, law and order and access to justice for common people. Without proper institutional and individual capacities, post-conflict serious crimes cannot be handled properly, and security cannot be ensured. While formulating policies and directives to address serious and organized forms of crime, issues related to institutional and operational independence must be considered for longer-term effectiveness and sustainability based on principles of fairness, accountability and responsiveness.

Ineffective security mechanisms and increasing threat to ordinary civilians means that the country's security indicators are moved towards "failed state". Therefore, the government and other stakeholders of society must demonstrate their willingness and formulate initiate joint initiatives towards improving security and rule of law, and avoid political disturbances and possible violence. This joint effort will create conducive environment for the success of the constitution-making, peace-building and nation-building processes.

The country's security situation could be under threat, and abductions and killings may occur rampant. Serious complexities are arisen about the post-conflict arrangement of the

government in terms of ensuring civilian security and improving rule of law situation, as well as control transnational crimes and arms smuggling, particularly small arms. The possibility of increased presence of organized criminal groups under the shadow of political nexus and massive availability of small arms and smuggling of explosives certainly creates additional threat to civilian security. Political protection of criminals creates transitional period as more insecure, unstable and vulnerable, and possibly violent. Obviously, political agendas must be resolved through dialogue, but the government should make no compromise while enforcing laws and controlling criminal activities. Political negotiation with criminals will be unable to outlaw illegal activities. It rather demoralizes law enforcement agencies responsible for maintaining law and order, and encourages the criminal or armed groups to regroup through misusing legitimate political space, as well as provides opportunity to legitimize their unlawful activities.

In post-conflict period, new forms of challenges to security and rule of law are usually appeared, which are basically targeted to the efforts of institutionalizing political change and state transformation. State institutions, particularly law enforcement agencies such as the civilian police are usually found confused and fallen into dilemma due to lack of political support, unclear and contradictory directives, absence of institutional and operational independence and inadequate logistic supports. Increasing political interference and disruption on independent investigation regarding criminal activities institutionalizes the increasing "politicization of crime." Escalation of violence and disruption on effectiveness of the law

enforcement agencies can contribute for the expansion of anarchism and lawlessness.

In democratic societies, neither the army nor paramilitary institutions can be involved in maintaining law and order, and public security. In this regard, civilian police is considered only competent authority to handle public security and rule of law issues, and eligible organization to enforce country's laws and regulations. However, post-conflict countries usually face challenges to transfer structures of the security institutions from paramilitary to civilian through institutional and operational reform. Therefore, civilian police must carry out their activities independently and impartially, and all citizens should be treated and respected equally without any forms of discrimination, and the social, political and economic status. Primary responsibility of the civilian police is to maintain social harmony and law and order, ensure public security and protection of laws, protect and respect the individual's fundamental rights and freedoms, and crime prevention and investigation.

Since the civilian police represents government at lowest level of society, it must be efficient and effective while performing its lawful duty and providing services to people. Public trust and confidence in the police are prerequisites for effective policing. Without building trust, the people will not be willing to co-operate police, and report crimes that needed police agencies to work successfully.

Security institutions, particularly civilian police must remain independent from political interference and protect democratic and political rights of people such as freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly, access to justice, etc. This approach will create enough opportunity for policing institutions for effective service, uphold rule of law, ensure civil liberties and human rights, and demonstrate accountability and transparency in their actions. Therefore, the concept of policing must be transferred from regime oriented policing, which is loyal to power-holders to pro-people or community oriented policing as known as democratic or problem-

solving policing that interacts with local community while handling law and order appropriately and effectively.

The concept of democratic policing seems effective in post-conflict countries, which should be implemented according to the aspirations of people. It means that civilian police must be responsive to the community as a whole and committed to deliver their services promptly in an equal and unbiased manner. Such policing activities will enhance to achieve the society's common efforts to promote legal protection and a sense of security.

Improved security and rule of law situation can play an important role for successful transition of conflict-ridden countries. Without adequate civilian security and rule of law, peace process could be easily derailed and peace agreements cannot be implemented. Strengthening civilian security institutions can contribute to create an independent and competent police that operates through democratic policing approach and aims to provide services to the people, effectively and efficiently. Democratic policing also prepares the foundation of sustainable peace and helps to contain the possibility of escalating lawlessness, anarchy and violence.

Post-conflict countries must act upon

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sincerely and proactively to strengthen civilian security institutions and provide them adequate institutional and operational independence, as well as financial and logistic support. Civilian security also plays an important role for post-conflict stability, rule of law and functional government. Adequate security measures must be undertaken for the promotion of human rights, good governance and accountability, as well as eliminate criminal activities and end increasing impunity.

Conflict resolution and security specialist Budhathoki holds MA in Peace and Justice Studies from the University of San Diego, USA





Photo : Abhaya R. Joshi



Display of SCOPE Nepal's 'Update' in 2nd Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum, United Nations Conference Center (UNCC), Bangkok

Photo : Abhaya R. Joshi



SCOPE Nepal's Participation in 2nd Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum, 12 & 13 March, United Nations Conference Center (UNCC), Bangkok

Photo : ekantipur.com



Seti River flood triggered by avalanche in Machhapuchhre mountain on May, 2012

Photo : ekantipur.com



Seti River flood triggered by avalanche in Machhapuchhre mountain on May, 2012

Photo : Prabin Khatiwada



Goodwill rally for peace and harmony at Durbarmarg in Kathmandu, 2012

Photo : ekantipur.com



Victims of Seti river flood, Pokhara

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