

Maoist victory in Nepal, a great step forward

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Communist Party of Nepal Maoist victory in the election held on 10 April is a great step forward for the forces of the Left in the region and internationally. Not only Maoist but also Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist Leninist (UML) has trailing behind Maoist, but received more votes than the Nepal Congress. Until this writing, Maoist has won 69 seats, UML 21, Nepal Congress 20 and Peasant Workers Party 2 seats.

Maoists were heading to become the single largest group in 240 seats that are being decided on a first-past-the post basis. Nearly 60 percent of the 601 seats in the constitutional assembly will be decided by a complex proportional representative votes, whose results will take a couple of weeks to come. The future of King Gyanendra and the Shah monarchy hangs by a thread straining under the weight of pro Maoists mandate.

The elections were due last year on 12 November. But Maoist walked out of the transitional government a month before the general elections. They demanded that all parties agree before the elections that Nepal will become a republic and Shah had to lose the remaining few powers after the elections.

The elections had to be postponed and after protracted discussions the Nepal Congress and UML agreed to the Maoist demands. This was a stunning victory for the Maoist before the general elections. UML had relied on its election experiences and were of the view that Maoist will not be accepted as the main voice in the cities.

“They have no experience of general elections” I heard from several main leaders and supporters of UML while I was in Nepal in October 2007. The masses did just the opposite. They voted for those with no experience of elections but with full experience of fighting for basic rights.

The Maoist Youth had launched a campaign all over Nepal after the success of the movement in 2006 against the corrupt officials in the bureaucracy. They will Gherao (picket) any government office for this purpose and sometime they will kidnap the corrupt to be paraded in public later. These incidents happened while I was there in Nepal.

This practice brought a very forceful message in a society that is in absolute poverty. There is no comparison of poverty of Nepal people than other part of the South Asian countries. Nepal is well ahead in this category. The infrastructure is in very bad condition.

Earlier in 2006, a mass movement initiated by the different radical social movements joined by hundreds of thousands forced the King to withdraw his dictatorial measures and to restore the parliament. He was deprived of all powers as head of the armed forces after the success of the movement.

The Communist traditions are very strong in Nepal for long time. They have fought the most repressive regimes in the past. At one point, the UML was in power for a period of nine months while the King was still the head of the state. The UML became the largest communist party of the country. It kept close relationship with the Indian CPI, CPIM and CPIML, the three main Communist

parties of India. UML has some contacts with Labour Party Pakistan through its mass organizations in peasantry and trade unions.

There is absolute no basis for a counter-revolution after this stunning victory. The masses are very well aware and they will not accept any attempt. In fact, the military has suffered a crushing defeat in 2006 by the mass movement. It will take long time for them to recover.

The victory of Left forces mainly the Maoist will have tremendous effect on the politics of South Asian countries. It will radicalize a whole new layer and particularly it will have tremendous effect on the youth in Pakistan where a mass movement against the military dictatorship is still going on.

During the attacks by Musharaf dictatorship on media after the imposition of emergency in November 2007, a Nepali trade union leader from media came to visit Pakistan on the invitation of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalist. He was very warmly received all over and he spoke about Nepal experience to counter the dictatorship. In one such meeting, where I was also attending, he said, "do not give up the fight, it takes time but it will win, the dictatorship has to go, be united and fight together".

How far the Maoist will be able to solve the basic problems of the masses that have to be seen. But while I was there, there was a meeting of the World bank official with the Maoist minister in charge of Katmandu water. They were in negotiation for the privatization of Katmandu water. It seemed that the minister was not much worried about privatization but more for the aid that will come through World Bank. There was some criticism on this meeting by the rights activists in the meeting I was attending.

Would they go for nationalization of the big institutions and cancel the privatized one, I do not see that. They will more go along the lines of working with a shadow of capitalism rather breaking capitalism. They will mainly copy their communist brothers and sisters in India. More like a Bengal condition rather than a Venezuela type developments.

The victory of maoist is a massive step forward for the people of Nepal. Once for all they will get rid of King and Shah Family. Nepal will start a new one. However, it can go on a much faster speed to development if it do away with capitalism alongside with Shah family. There is no basis for stages. This stage of capitalist development under a radical government has not much room to maneuver. The Maoist has to go further than the programme they have at present if Nepal have to go further.

We will all celebrate the victory of Maoist and other Left forces of Nepal in Pakistan and will show our maximum solidarity with the new radical government.

Farooq Tariq

spokesperson

Labour Party Pakistan

40-Abbot Road Lahore, Pakistan

Tel: 92 42 6315162 Fax: 92 42 6271149 Mobile: 92 300 8411945

labour_party yahoo.com www.laborpakistan.org www.jeddojuhd.com