

Hoist the Revolutionary Flag on Mount Everest in the 21st Century

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Preamble

The great Nepalese People's War, having completed its ten years, has entered into the eleventh one. On this historic occasion, how have you been feeling as the main leader of this movement?

When I am called for presenting my feeling on the intensiveness of ten years of People's War, pride and sense of responsibility makes me very much emotional. Certainly, there are quite a number of objective and subjective elements behind the intensiveness of Nepalese People's War, but in our Party opinion, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist outlook that determines its policy, plan and program based on 'concrete analysis of concrete situation' and 'mass line' is the main thing. Twentieth century witnessed great revolutions when revolutionaries had acted in line with concrete analysis of the concrete condition and mass line, the crux of Marxist science; the twentieth century also witnessed grave counter-revolutions, when the revolutionaries, deviating from that, got attached with subjectivism of right or left form. In the course of preparing for People's War, our Party, while struggling even against the dogmato-left deviation which, in the name of struggling against right deviation had been developing gravely from within the communist movement had made concrete analysis of concrete situation and mass line the starting point. It is because of this that the Nepalese People's War has acquired new momentum and intensiveness. My first and deepest feeling is that our ability to make the science of social revolution reachable to the masses by freeing it from subjective idealism is the reason behind the intensiveness and height of the Nepalese People's War.

In each and every revolution, thousands of martyrs sacrifice their lives. In the course of Nepalese People's War too, thousands of brave fighters have already sacrificed their lives. Thousands have been wounded, handicapped and disappeared, while many others are still imprisoned. How would you remember and honor them all?

It is a ruthless, but unavoidable law of any social revolution that in a class society, the masses of oppressed class, nationality, region and sex have to pay a certain amount of quota from themselves to ascertain their liberation, freedom and progress. This law has been applied without exception in the context of every great revolution in world history. The human society has arrived at today's capitalist phase from the slave era only by paying a necessary quota of sacrifice. History has everywhere highly valued the sacrifice of a part for the prolonged safety of the whole. Thousands of

martyrs, who have sacrificed their lives in the movement that has ensued in the form of People's War, will remain alive in the hearts of the living people for ages as an adherence and endless source of inspiration. History highly honours the martyrs, who have sacrificed for justice, equality and freedom. The broad masses will value them highly as their best sons and daughters and preserve their memories in their hearts and the Party will also continue to value the martyrs highly as a source of gaining energy to persistently go ahead. In the same way, the Nepalese people and the Party have been evaluating and will continue to evaluate all the revolutionaries who have been wounded, handicapped, disappeared and tortured in enemy custody, as an essential sacrifice for social transformation. Because of this sacrifice, billions of exploited, oppressed and justice-loving people of the world are acknowledging Nepal and the Nepalese people in the twenty-first century as the source of confidence and inspiration. In this view, it is sure that the sacrifice, which resides in the hearts of the vast majority of people in the globe, will never go futile. Putting forth this scientific and historical fact, I offer red salute and pay emotional homage to all the immortal martyrs of the great People's War. Wishing the wounded combatants a rapid health recovery, I instruct, on behalf of the central headquarters, the whole Party, PLA and People's State to take care of and to respect the handicapped comrades and take active initiative for their overall livelihood and work and I heartily appeal to the entire masses of people for active assistance for the same. Along with revolutionary greetings, I wish for quick release of all the revolutionary fighters who are going through inhuman torture in the enemy dungeon.

What are the major military and political turning points of the People's War in the past ten years?

Like every great revolutionary movement in the world, the Nepalese People's War also is advancing, not in a straight line, but in the midst of a number of rise and fall, twists and turns in the past ten years. Proper balance between political and military intervention has been the specificity of every plan of the Nepalese People's War. Therefore, military with political turn and politics with military turn have been inseparable. But, it does not mean that it is the end of particularity and uniqueness of political and military activities. Bearing this in mind, the third historical Expanded Meeting of the CC that had defined strategies and tactics of People's War from both the political and military point of view should be considered as a milestone. The historic initiation of the People's War on February 13, 1996, represents a great leap and an opening of a new era towards revolutionary transformation of the entire Nepalese society. The fourth Expanded Meeting of the CC (1998) that had added a new dimension to the definition of guerrilla zone and base area should also be taken as a turning point of Nepalese People's War. It is evidently clear that the historic second national conference of our Party has been another milestone as far as ideological synthesis is concerned. The resolution relating to the development of democracy in the twenty-first century and the resolution adopted in the recently concluded CC meeting have remained as important turning points in the development of ideology from political, military and organizational perspectives. Apart from major positive turning points of class struggle, there have also been those of inner struggle, which will be discussed later.

Why was the People's War initiated right on February 13, 1996? Would you please throw some light on the background of its preparation?

Following the historical movement in 1990, the process of polarisation in the overall political movement, in general, and between reformist and revolutionary trends, in particular, got intensified. The major political forces, which had gained access to power with the force of movement, not only failed to address people's aspiration of concrete changes but, on the contrary, exhibited the conduct of sticking only to their chair by collaborating with corrupt panchas and the king. An objective base, upon which the masses could go forward to building up a militant struggle on the basic questions of nationalism, democracy and people's livelihood, went on developing as a consequence of the growing disgust towards parliamentary political leadership among the masses of the people, who

were looking forward to economic, political and social changes. In the same way, the historic movement, in 1990, created a favourable situation by which the process of ideological struggles and splits taking place since long in the Nepalese communist movement could polarize into two big poles, the reformist and the revolutionary. Accordingly, the UML representing reformist and collaborationist trend came forward under the ideological leadership of mainly Madan Bhandari, where as, under the leadership of mainly Comrade Prachanda the Unity Centre came forward representing revolutionary Marxist trend. The UML, advocating multi-party democracy, sank deeply in parliamentarianism, while the Unity Centre, adopting in the Unity Congress the line of Protracted People's War corresponding to Nepalese particularity, carrying forward intensive ideological and political exposition against the right parliamentarianism and intensifying the rural class struggle as well, went forward to prepare for People's War. In this process, uncovering the right liquidationism of Nirmal Lama and Rupa Lal followers, who had joined the Unity Centre with a reformist purpose, and expelling them through the First National Conference, the whole Party advanced unitedly along the preparation for People's War. In the mean time, the Party continued to advance militant struggles legally through United People's Front against the anti-nation and anti-people policies and conducts of the parliamentarian political parties that were in power. The urban people's movement and the rural class struggle taking place in the countryside, mainly Rolpa and Rukum in Western Nepal, had been preparing an objective base for the initiation of People's War. Based on the evaluation of the country's particular political situation, the Party had taken up a policy to make a limited use of the first parliamentary election through a legal and open front. It is worth mentioning that this process of parliamentary struggle, in the then situation of Nepal, had also played an important role to disseminate and establish Party's revolutionary ideology.

In this very backdrop of class and ideological struggle, Party's Third Expanded Meeting was concluded. This Expanded Meeting, which has a far-reaching significance in the history of our Party and Nepalese People's War, drafted an original kind of strategy and tactic of the People's War by carrying forward materialist analysis of the past and present of the Nepalese society. In this way, the historic initiation of the People's War on February 13, 1996, is linked with the distinctive fusion between the development of class struggle and ideological struggle.

Theory/Ideology/Philosophy

Even the enemies seem to be forced to acknowledge that the strongest aspect of this movement is the clear-cut ideological and political commitment. Therefore, those, who termed it 'terrorism' in the beginning, have been keeping mum now. How would it be appropriate to understand its major ideological convictions?

No revolutionary movement in history has been able to advance and attain victory without a clear-cut ideological and political line and deep conviction. Nepalese People's War is not and cannot be an exception to it. In this context, what I want to especially emphasize is that the question of correctly grasping MLM as a science is the most important task. The materialist dialectics, because it is a science, demands continuous cycles of defence, application and development. Our Party has been very seriously grasping the importance of applying materialist dialectics to carry out concrete analysis of concrete condition, the living soul of Marxist science, which seeks truth, and also of following mass line to transform truth into people's strength. Because of our correct understanding, our movement was inseparable from truth and the masses, and hence, enemy could not brush it aside as 'terrorism', however hard it tried. In my opinion, this is the primary thing. Standing upon the foundation of this ideological orientation, the Party has been developing a political line that can defeat enemy one by one and make people victorious in leaps by developing a proper sequence of strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. Our particularity that transforms the ideological and political intervention against the enemy into military intervention and vice versa and maintains balance between these two, obviously disproves enemy's accusations against us.

The Party seems to have given a lot of importance to defence, application and development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. In accordance with this, a particular set of ideas developed from its application in Nepal has also been synthesised as 'Prachanda Path'. Some people have now been curious as to whether it will become a 'Thought' and an 'ism'. Would you throw some light on this?

No revolution in the twenty-first century can be propelled forward without taking proper lesson from the experiences of great revolutions and counterrevolutions of the twentieth century. From this point of view, our Party has been giving plenty of importance to the questions of defence, application and development of the fundamental principles of MLM. While doing so, we are trying to arrive at a correct conclusion by studying and analyzing very seriously the struggle between the empiricist, dogmatist and revolutionary Marxist trends in the international communist movement that emerged mainly after the rise of Khrushchovite revisionism in the second half of twentieth century. Giving priority to the struggle against counterrevolutionary Khrushchovite revisionism in general, Party has laid necessary emphasis on the struggle against Hoxhaite dogmato-revisionism that eulogizes even some of the metaphysical weaknesses of Comrade Stalin and its negative consequences. This fundamental thought had started taking shape in the Third historic Expanded Meeting of the Party Central Committee that was organised to determine the concept related with ideology, strategy and tactic for the initiation of People's War in Nepal. At the Second National Conference, the Party, having arrived at a conclusion that the historic initiation of People's War and its successful and intensive development during five years had developed a series of ideas, synthesised it as Prachanda Path. As one arrives from the Second National Conference to the 'development of democracy in the twenty-first century' and to the decisions of the recently held CC meeting, one finds that new developments have been taking place in the domain of ideology. But, I don't think the time has come to polemicize or debate the terminology 'Thought' or 'ism' right now. The main question is to go ahead to confront the challenges posed by imperialism of the twenty-first century.

Revisionism has been practised in the name of restructuring Marxism. There have also been tendencies to deviate from the fundamental principles of Marxism in the pretext developing Marxism in conformity with the changed era, time and context. Given this situation, could you please clarify the basis, which can aptly justify that the Marxism you are trying to develop in Nepal is the Marxism of Marx himself?

The revolution advancing successfully since ten years is the most authentic and appropriate evidence that the ideology that our Party is attempting to develop is the Marxist ideology itself. I don't think I can present any authentic and eligible evidence other than a living revolution.

Under the adept leadership of Comrade Chairman, the CPN (Maoist) is going ahead by concretely pointing out and correcting the 30 percent weaknesses of Com. Stalin that Com. Mao referred to. In this context one must remember the Marxists of the Frankfurt School who had totally negated Stalin and tended to go back to Hegel and Kant and there were others who went on to glorify even Stalin's weaknesses. Protecting oneself from both these trends, how should one go ahead?

Those Frankfurt School generals, who, based on pure debate and isolated from the revolutionary practice of class struggle, had pounced upon the great revolutionary, Comrade Stalin, ended up in regression. This is as inevitable as the degeneration of the Hoxaites, who, by eulogising even the weak aspects of Comrade Stalin, attempted to vulgarise Marxism as an inert entity. Only a Marxist revolutionary can shoulder the task of taking lessons from the weaknesses of another Marxist revolutionary and go ahead by correcting them; it is not possible for those who deviate to the left or to the right.

Standing on the foundation of revolutionary practice of class struggle, our Party is attempting to go forward by taking lessons from the positive and negative experiences of the revolutions in history. In today's world situation, it must not be forgotten that the reason behind our saying that a big historical responsibility of contributing to raising the science of revolution to a new height has come to our shoulder, is the successful People's War advancing since ten years. This living objective reality of revolution makes it clear that our effort of developing ideology is based on Marxist science, free from right and left deviation.

The question of necessity and freedom arises when talking of state and ideology. This question has surfaced time and again even in the Marxist movement in Nepal. In this context, what we want to learn from Chairman is that, while Che Guevara, Rosa Luxemburg etc., who used to talk more about freedom, have been generally discarded from the mainstream of Marxism, you have sometimes talked of learning from Rosa, too. Would you shed some light on this?

Our Party is definitely opposed to discarding the great revolutionaries like Rosa and Che into a different camp by distancing them from the mainstream Marxism and revolution; rather, we are for respecting them and learning from their contributions. However, while talking about necessity and freedom one must not draw a conclusion that stressing more on freedom is to be automatically more scientific. Comrade Lenin had drawn up a correct conclusion that, even though Rosa sometimes seemed subjective on the question of grasping scientific relation between consciousnesses of necessity and attainment of freedom, she was an eagle of the communist movement. Our Party thinks that Lenin's evaluation of Rosa is correct. Our Party has no illusion about the fact that Lenin had made better scientific synthesis of the relation between necessity and freedom than Rosa had made.

International Situation and Communist Movement

In the resolution recently adopted by the CC and presented by Comrade Chairman, it is said, "It is necessary for proletariat revolutionaries of the twenty-first century to seriously focus their attention on the issue that the analysis of imperialism done by Lenin and Mao and a number of concepts regarding proletarian strategy built on that basis, have lagged behind". Would you please elaborate on this?

The question of developing the science of proletarian revolution is directly linked with the objective analysis of the development and form of imperialism. Marxism developed in the course of studying the particularities of competitive phase of capitalism. The Great Russian Socialist Revolution became possible after developing Marxism-Leninism by analyzing monopoly capitalism, and with the analysis of bureaucratic and state-owned monopoly capitalism along with the process of struggle against it, this development advanced to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Hence, what can be clearly seen is that the development of proletarian revolution together with the development of strategies and tactics can be achieved only on the basis of correct analysis of the development of capitalism and imperialism and their specificities. Following the restoration of capitalism in China, after Comrade Mao's demise, the communist movement fell prey to mainly right revisionism. Naturally, right revisionism surrendered before imperialism, as it is expected to, therefore, there is no question of right revisionists analyzing imperialism from the viewpoint of science of revolution.

On the other hand, the revolutionary Maoist movement, in the name of defending the basic principles of MLM against right revisionism, happened to fall prey to sectarian dogmato-revisionism that repeats old things only and overlooks the analysis of the development of an object. Definitely, our Party since before the historic initiation of People's War has been externally struggling mainly

against right revisionism and internally against sectarian dogmatism. While doing so, the Party has firmly grasped the method of making concrete analysis of concrete condition and applying its conclusion based on the mass line. The Central Committee, speaking about the development of this very process in the document, has emphasized on the study and analysis of the specificities of today's globalized finance monopoly capitalism.

In the aforesaid document, it has been clarified that Marx and Engels had reached the strategic conclusion that revolution will take place simultaneously in the developed countries of Europe, but later, when competitive capitalism developed, into monopoly capitalism, Lenin found that the previous analysis lagged behind, and on the basis of that he drew up new strategic conclusions on war and revolution. Today, a number of particularities of globalized imperialism that have been developing after the second world war, in general, and the cold war in particular, have come up in new forms, and our Party, initiating a process of encouraging deep study and analysis, has emphasized the aforesaid issue in the document.

Earlier Party had talked about South Asian Soviet Federation, while now it has talked about the World Soviet Federation. Does it mean that revolution cannot be accomplished in an individual country now?

The necessity of People's New World Federation raised by our Party does not at all mean that revolution cannot take place in an individual country now. What it means is to admit the reality that, as a result of the unprecedented revolution in information technology and the particular nature of globalized exploitation and oppression of finance monopoly capital, the world has been transforming into a small unit, and it also implies an emphasis on building up a strategy of revolution based on this reality. Today, what we can clearly see is that the worldwide impact of revolution or counterrevolution taking place in Nepal or any other country in the world cannot be compared with that of Lenin's and Mao's time. Therefore, in today's world situation, worldwide movement is especially unavoidable from both the aspects of accomplishing and of defending revolution in a certain country. For this reason, we have been taking the revolution in a certain country as the base area for world revolution. In order to express this concept based on objective reality, the last Central Committee meeting of our Party had put forward the concept of People's New World Federation. It does not mean that the concept of South Asian Federation, which is becoming a stonn center of people's revolution, is unnecessary.

RIM has been in existence since past two decades. But one does not feel that it is developing and expanding at the expected pace. What is the Party's understanding on the challenges and possibilities of constituting a new Communist International?

Following the demise of Comrade Mao, capitalist restoration took place even in China. With this, imperialism and right revisionism intensified worldwide attack on the revolutionary principles of MLM. At that difficult and complex juncture, it was the historical responsibility of genuine proletarian communists to take up special initiative to defend the basic revolutionary principles of MLM. The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) was organized in the background of fulfilling that historical responsibility. To the extent of defending MLM from the attack of imperialism and revisionism, definitely, the establishment and initiative of RIM played an important role. But, in the context of applying and developing MLM, RIM has not been able to take leaps. RIM can develop only by struggling against problems, like the tendency of preferring to analyze and eulogize the experiences of old proletarian revolutions but hesitating to develop boldly the strategies and tactics based on mass line, by carrying out concrete analysis of concrete condition.

Constituting a new Communist International has definitely become essential for the proletariat to fight against globalized imperialism and globalized revisionism, especially in the context of today's

world situation. The challenges in the context of organizing an International are mainly the challenges of maintaining ideological uniformity on the question of defence, application and development of MLM. This challenge can be confronted in the course of ideological struggle and class struggle. As far as the question of possibility is concerned, "globalization" has prepared good grounds for the founding of an International.

The Peruvian movement, which was some time before a center of hope for the revolutionaries in the world, seems to have fallen into a serious crisis now. What is the Party's viewpoint on this? What lessons has the Party drawn from this?

The experience of the Peruvian revolutionary movement, which had to go through intensive development and extensive setback between the last two decades of twentieth century, is very important for those who are leading revolution in the twenty-first century. In the context of preparation and initiation of People's War in Nepal, the Peruvian movement had played a major role in inspiring us, and in this sense, it is of special significance for our Party to take lessons from the positive and negative experiences of this movement. It is our understanding that it will be a big mistake to devalue the contributions made by the Peruvian People's War for world revolution, which, fighting back the ideological attack made by right revisionism after the restoration of capitalism in China, was initiated on the basis of MLM. However, in no case, can it and must it be taken lightly that the People's War, which was developing rapidly for 12 years, is now in a crisis of existence because of the setback following the capture of the leadership. Sufficient indications that Chairman Gonzalo himself is the main spokesperson of the two-line struggle developed within the Party after his arrest, as well as of the right opportunist line that argues for peaceful conciliation with the enemy by abandoning war, reveal the seriousness of the situation.

MLM demands correct application of dialectical materialism to continue relentless struggle against all kinds of mechanical, subjective and one-sided thinking. It is necessary to be cautious of drifting towards another extreme while struggling against one. Following the counterrevolution in China, the communist movement, on the one hand, happened to fall prey to right extremism that mainly sides with class collaboration and, on the other, to left extremism that seeks to go straightforward without looking left or right, forward or backward. Following Mao's death, the Nicaraguan Sandinista movement that waged guerrilla war happened to fall prey to the former, i.e. right extremism, and the great revolutionary movement in Peru ideologically happened to fall prey to the second i.e. left sectarianism. It is our understanding and evaluation that, as a result of the mechanical and one-sided thinking, like for example of negating completely the question of building necessary adjustment compromise or front with the secondary reactionary or middle class against the main enemy, of being unable to maintain proper balance between strategic firmness and tactical flexibility based on the equation of enemy's central power, of understanding the protracted People's War mechanically rather than developing military strategy according to today's world situation, of idealizing Comrade Gonzalo as a supernatural leader who never makes a mistake and of placing him above the whole Party and the Central Committee by asserting his leadership as Jefetura, of being unable or unprepared to learn in the real sense from the metaphysical mistakes of Comrade Stalin etc., the Party has reached a stage of crisis of existence in such a short time despite the sacrifice of more than 60 thousand people. Although one is revolutionary in spirit, the result can nevertheless be fatal if, from the viewpoint of applying the science of dialectical materialism, one gets caught in mechanical and metaphysical weaknesses—this is the lesson taken by our Party from the great Peruvian People's War and the blood of thousands of revolutionaries flown there. All the programs which our Party has been adhering to, such as our concepts regarding the 'development of democracy in the twenty-first century', military line of 'fusion', series of tactics adopted against the enemy, etc., incorporate the lessons from all positive and negative experiences of Peru.

On the one hand, Party has maintained close ideological-political relations with

revolutionaries in India and South Asia through CCOMPOSA, while on the other hand, in the particular geopolitical situation of Nepal, it seems there is also a compulsion to maintain diplomatic relationship with the Indian State. How will the Party be able to maintain proper balance between the two?

In the particular geopolitical situation of Nepal, there are certainly special and essential aspects of relationship with two giant neighbours, India and China. The question of our relation with the Indian State is a question of indispensable diplomatic relation that enriches mutual relation between the people of two countries based on Panchsheel. This relation should be understood and dealt in the form of diplomatic relation of mutual benefit, not in the form of relation based on ideology and belief. Our relation with the revolutionaries in South Asia, established through CCOMPOSA, is mainly ideological relation and it should be taken and handled in the context of the freedom to follow any ideology and belief. It will not be so difficult to handle this relation because ideology and belief remain at their own place and the diplomatic relation with the two countries remains at its own place. Nevertheless, the question of maintaining this balance is very sensitive, given that Indian monopoly capitalist expansionist character has been the main barricade for the revolutionary movement in Nepal and South Asia. However sensitive it may be, they can be propelled forward without crossing the limits of ideological relation and diplomatic relation.

In recent times, particularly in Latin America, the parliamentary left forces that are against American imperialism have been coming to power one after the other. How does the Party look at this course of event? What is the Party's perception on Cuba?

After US imperialism launched naked military aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq in the pretext of September 11 event, the world opinion is agitating rapidly against it. The wave of people in favour of parliamentary leftists in Latin American countries that are related with 'World Social Forum' signifies people's restlessness. This anti-imperialist wave seen right under the nose of US imperialism clearly indicates towards the new wave of world revolution existing in the horizon. From this point of view, the mass wave witnessed in Latin American countries has a strategic significance.

As far as the question of Cuba is concerned, we have taken it in the form of a united front against US imperialism.

Politics: Strategy and Tactics

It is said that the secret of the development of People's War lies in the proper coordination between political and military lines. There have reportedly been some problems in maintaining their balance sometimes. What is the reality? How was the experience of peace talks for two times?

All those who have seriously studied our movement right from the days of our Party formation to preparation, initiation and hitherto development of the People's War, will see that it is different from many of the prevalent and conventional norms of the past communist movements. Our uniqueness, after having fundamentally set the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideological and political working direction, can be seen in the fact that we have taken our ideological and political struggle to a new height and established them among the people by forging Party unity even with rightists. We have prepared for People's War using even the parliament, given emphasis on striking a balance and coordination between political and military interventions, and we have used peace talks and ceasefire against the enemy in a new way. But in this context, one thing is continuous, which is, placing revolutionary political line at the centre, making concrete analysis of concrete condition and adopting massline. In the context of preparation, initiation and development of People's War, it is being developed as a right coordination between political and military lines. That balance and coordination can be clearly seen in our process of taking initiatives for People's War by founding a

political base and presenting the basic problems of the country and the people in the form of 40-point demands from an open front. The first and the second peace talks can be considered as a new development of that coordination. The Party has already analyzed that the two talks have played an important role in establishing the Party's political line among the people in a more extensive way and in clarifying the Party's commitment to establishing peace with a forward-looking political solution reflecting people's need and aspiration as well as justifying the development and significance of the military line.

The Party seems to be successfully handling the question of strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. Don't you think that the Party runs the risk of getting deviated if it goes on stressing on tactical flexibility?

Even our hardcore enemies are compelled to accept our Party's capability of handling strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. We think that while tactical flexibility without strategic firmness leads to a quagmire of reformism and revisionism and while strategic firmness without tactical flexibility leads to a marsh of mechanical tendency and dogmatism, only a proper implementation of dialectical interrelationship between strategic firmness and tactical flexibility can propel revolutionary movement in a proper and dynamic way. This conclusion has already been very well substantiated by our Party and the development of People's War. Had there been only tactical flexibility, our Party would have sunk into the process of uniting with rightist reformists, it would have become pro-parliamentary in the process of making special use of the parliament, and would have never returned to war after the pea [peace?] talks with the enemies. From these and many other examples, it has already been clear that all the tactical plans and visions of the Party are inseparably linked with strategic plans and visions. Likewise, had we shown only strategic firmness, the Party would have turned into a parochial group isolated from the people, which would have only drained the people's unlimited energy and initiatives in the revolution. Today our practical behaviors have already clarified that our strategic firmness comes into effective implementation by means of our tactical flexibility. In fact, the revolutionary movement is being damaged on the one hand by conservatives who only talk of strategy and on the other hand by the reformists who only talk of tactics. The fast development of People's War became possible because our Party, while fighting against the deviation, understood and mobilized the interrelation between strategy and tactic. In order to keep the revolution in motion, it is necessary to give continuity to strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. We have to be clear here that those who see through reformist spectacles consider our strategy as dangerous and always protest against it while those who see it through the spectacles of 'left' parochialism consider our tactical flexibility as dangerous and always protest against it. But having proved them unscientific, our Party, as the correct practitioner of dialectical materialism, has been moving and will continue to move in future in the direction of revolution.

During the initiation of People's War, the Party attacked parliamentary forces more than they did the monarchy, but now it is just the opposite. What is the meaning and relevance of this? Are the questions of nationality and people's democracy linked with it?

It is appropriate to understand new people's democracy, constituent assembly and democratic republic basically in terms of the interrelation between strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. Whenever a proletarian Party becomes weak in terms of ideology, politics, organization and physical power, it stresses, and should do so, on the establishment of its ideology and power accumulation by means of multidimensional political exposure through its strategic slogans. When the Party is strong and is nearing its strategic goal, it takes up, and should rightly do so, the role of responsible leadership to ensure political outlet by taking together as many forces as possible and putting stress on political slogans. One has to be clear about one thing, that our Party is talking about the development of people's democracy in the 21st century after having learnt from the experiences of

the revolutions and counter-revolutions of the 20th century, and accordingly has accepted multiparty competition within an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist constitutional frame. But here, the issues of constituent assembly and democratic republic should be understood in terms of strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. To demand a makeup like that of the initial phase of the struggle when one has come to a stage of running a regime or to demand a character like that of the stage of running a regime when one is in the initial phase of struggle, both don't represent materialist dialectics.

Many are heard saying that the UML's multiParty people's democracy and the Maoist's multiParty democratic republic are similar. What is the reality?

UML's multi-party people's democracy expresses class coordination and a reformist line of bourgeois parliamentarianism while our slogan of democratic republic expresses transitional revolutionary slogan that helps propel class struggle in a special condition of power balance. In this sense, there is a huge difference in essence between the UMLs multiParty people's democracy and our democratic republic. Recently, the UML has also talked about moving towards democratic republic and we have been holding discussions on the essential commonalities between us. We hope that through the slogan of democratic republic, the UML too will move from reformist line of class coordination to revolutionary line of class struggle.

What is the essence and relevance of the 12-point understanding with the parliamentary parties? Is it just an agreement of convenience for both sides or does it have a long-term significance?

Our Party has taken the 12-point understanding with the parliamentary political parties very seriously. We consider it not as a gameplan or an agreement of convenience but as a historically essential and practical understanding required to fulfill people's aspiration for peace and democracy against feudal and tyrannical monarchy. The ensuing protests against tyranny has not only justified its significance but has also approved of it. As a first milestone of the process of achieving complete democracy (i.e. democratic republic in our understanding) through a constituent assembly election, the 12-point understanding has a long-term importance.

After Lenin's time, CPN (Maoist) is perhaps the first Party to have successfully caught the path of revolutionary war even after having represented in the parliament. Can you shed some light on this experience?

One will be in position to make concrete analysis of concrete condition only after one has adopted Marxist science by keeping it away from left or right dogma while being determined to take the revolution ahead. Our Party, during the early phase of its initiation, moved ahead by struggling against rightist revisionism externally and Mohan Bikram's dogmatic revisionism internally. This struggle encouraged us to adopt Marxism as a science by keeping ourselves away from the traditional deviation of Nepali communist movement that understands Marxist science in terms of formulas. This understanding enabled us, by taking decision to use the parliament, to teach the Nepalese society about the futility of the parliament and the necessity of People's War. The 'left' conservatives who perceived Marxism and revolution in terms of fixed models saw us as sinking into the rightist quagmire while the rightists saw us as dogmatist, as we were exposing the parliament. In fact, we were neither rightist nor dogmatists, we were just Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, which history has already shown. In fact, whatever we are trying to do is not new but an attempt to scientifically fix and give momentum to the intensity of the international communist movement which was broken due to Stalin's weakness after the demise of Lenin and which Mao tried to take ahead.

We are not saying that since we went to the People's War after having used the parliament, everyone in the world has to do the same. We know it very well that in today's world the usefulness

of the tactics to use parliament has almost come to an end. But continuous boycotting of a system without considering the situation of a country and its people is not Marxism. Ignoring concrete analysis of concrete condition and also massline would just mean to make Marxism, Leninism and Maoism meaningless by reducing it to the level of a religious sect. Our experience of the use of parliament is less important in terms of the utility of parliament and more in terms of understanding Marxism as a science.

What are the ideological and practical aspects of Prachanda Path?

All the processes of development of nature, society and human thought are mobilized and limited by absolute struggle and relative unity of the opposites. Mao has explained it as sovereignty of internal contradiction, distinctiveness of contradiction, primary contradiction and secondary contradiction. In the course of taking the Party and the revolution forward, there can be numerous contradictions that have to be settled. In other words, the Party always faces mountains of works to be done. In such a situation, if we sort out the aspects of opinions, plans and programs that need to be given immediate emphasis and those that need constant attention even in a secondary form, then we will be able to accomplish our goal in a scientific way.

On the basis of this principle to mobilize internal differences in a scientific way, the third historical extensive meeting of the Central Committee of our Party has presented a series of strategies and tactics that the Party has to emphasize and pay attention to in the entire development process of People's War. Also, the Party always follows this scientific principle while deciding on every new policy, plan and program.

Party/Organisation

Comrade Prachanda, once you wrote very seriously - "New ideology always demands new organization. If the revolutionaries cannot settle the demand on time in a proper way, the old organization will eat up the new ideology." Can you explain the background and the essence in a little more detail?

In the course of developing ideology, strategy and tactic of Nepali revolution, our Party has always tried to form new organization according to new ideologies and strategies. There is a dialectical interrelation between ideology and organizational structure and working method. If the interrelation is not properly mobilized or managed, an internal conflict develops between ideology and organization. One cannot guarantee that the new and scientific ideas will prevail in a situation of internal conflict. In a certain situation, if the internal conflict is not properly settled, the old organization and old working method will blunt the new ideas and impose the old ideas. What one needs to understand here is that a certain organization and certain working method is after all a certain ideology. In this sense, the internal conflict between new ideology and old organization is ultimately the internal conflict between new and old ideas.

Looking back at the history of our Party, what we can clearly see is that whenever new ideas develop in the Party leadership, brave attempts to form new organization come up. From Ekata Kendra to Maoist, the series of development of new unity through the principle of unity-struggle-transformation and on a new basis makes this clear. In accordance with the development of new ideas and necessity of revolution, old organizations should be demolished, new ones constructed and continuous organizational transformation and mobility should be stressed upon. Our Party has chiefly been doing that and the recent dissolution of the Central Committee also sheds some light on this, and this is how revolution receives new life and new pace. But in many situations, when many of the Party leaders fail to adopt the essence of the new ideas developed by the Party, they tend to stick to the old organization and old working method. I think I had written that article on

organizational problem, attacking the tendency that hesitates to enter a new organization and new working methods necessitated by the new decision on the construction of base area and army at the fourth extensive meeting of our Party's Central Committee. The article still has an ideological importance as well as political and organizational relevance even today. The great thought contributing to the international revolution in the 21st century is still fighting organizational diseases like indulgence in parochial and anarchic groupism and adoption of extremely self-centered personal working method.

Stating the process of the formation of the Party, the proposal passed by the Second National Convention said, "The Party unity conducted by Comrade Prachanda a decade back, in fact, reflects the beginning of a giant leap towards revolution and a completely new process, not addition-subtraction, transformation or change of form in any complete group of Nepali communist movement. Comrade Prachanda's ideological and political line passed by the unity convention was the result of a long struggle against pseudo reformists". But even after 15 years, often in course of inner struggle within the Party, the ghosts of old groups and sub-groups have attempted to resurrect and this has made inner struggle unhealthy and obstructing the development of a unified and centralized Party. What is your latest view on this?

As far as science is concerned, the evaluation made in the proposal of the Party's second historical national convention is correct. But the fact that the organization has a weak culture and will power to adopt the height of ideas and transform itself accordingly is clarified by the process of latest unhealthy inner struggle. The strong petty bourgeois material ground existing in Nepali society and the relics of Mohan Bikram school that heartily enjoys anarchic and parochial groups are chiefly responsible for this. In relation to the formation of the Party, the chief characteristics of Mohan Bikram school is 'struggle-split,' 'again struggle and again split.' The Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principle of unity-struggle-transformation and new unity on new grounds is not at all found in the Mohan Bikram school. Since most of the members of our Party were more or less influenced by that period of history, sometimes the influence gets reactivated and we enjoy being divided in groups. The negative dialectics that understands struggle in terms of split rather than transformation leads to such unhealthy condition. Due to the extreme thoughts that do not see unity in struggle and struggle in unity, it has been difficulty to implement the principle of thesis, antithesis and synthesis or the creative dialectics of unity, struggle and transformation. For this, the Party wants to focus on the transformation aspect by raising the ideological struggle against petty bourgeois tendency and metaphysics. It will be difficult to get rid of the Mohan Bikram tendency of groupism and schism until and unless we understand the meaning and importance of struggle-transformation. The Party's attempt is to move ahead by giving priority to the Party rather than a group and to transformation rather than schism. Through this interview, I want to make special appeal to all, ranging from the leadership rank to ordinary Party members, to work specially for the development of new thought and culture by seriously thinking over the question of struggle and transformation.

The Central Committee meeting held some time back (in 2005) is reported to have decided on "revolution within revolution" in order to alleviate the serious deviations which emerged in the Party and the revolution. Could you please clarify on this?

Along with the development of petty bourgeois individualism born on the semi-feudal and semi-expansionist economic, political and cultural grounds, and the development of People's War and the new state, from time to time upgradation of class position, slavish and anarchic tendencies as well as signs of non-proletarian deviation have also surfaced due to the lack of adequate ideological and political training in the Party. Such problems have been seen not only in course of the development of Nepali revolution but in the international revolutions as well. Even after capturing the regime, the

great parties in Russia and China were involved in upgradation of class position and due to the slavish and capitalistic influence, turned into counter-revolutionary parties. The deviations that are appearing within our Party are its leftovers. Realising this bitter truth, in order to give momentum to the historically important global process of preventing future counter-revolution (whose ideological foundation was set up as a continuous revolution through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China under the leadership of Mao), our Party's Central Committee made the decision to launch revolution within revolution. The attempt to move ahead along the principles of the great cultural revolution is the main essence of revolution within revolution. Construction of a new Party by developing new ideas and culture through debates in order to prevent counter-revolution is the essence of the Central Committee's decision.

Can you speak of the characteristics and consequences of the chief inner-struggles over the last ten years?

It is not possible to discuss in detail the inner-struggles within the Party over the past ten years. Yet, to make a mention of the major one in brief, the debate on the concept of leadership during the formation of the first plan of the historical initiation of People's War can be considered the first memorable inner-struggle. Before the completion of one year of the historical initiation of the People's War, the cultural deviation seen in three responsible comrades of the Party centre and a very sensitive inner-struggle that ensued is the second remarkable inner-struggle. The third important inner-struggle is the one over centralization and establishment of leadership during the fourth extensive meeting of the Party centre held amidst the so-called Kilo Sera two operation of the enemy. The popular struggle against Aalok tendency following the fourth extensive meeting is the fourth major inner-struggle. The fifth and the most serious inner-struggle that took the Party on the verge of a split is last year's much publicized conflict over the issue of centralization and rectification of the leadership. In sum, these five inner-struggles can be considered as the major inner-struggles over the past ten years. Though during this course, various weaknesses were seen in various personalities, the Party has achieved success in taking the revolution to a new height, by developing new ideas through struggle and forging new unity with transformation on a new basis. History has proved the fact that this has become a unique and scientific feature of our Party leadership. Being proud of this scientific feature, we revolutionaries have to continuously make attempts to take this process to newer heights.

In the international communist movement, the question of leadership has been the core issue of the Party and the revolution. What is Prachanda Path's latest opinion on this? Recently, it was reported that Comrade Chairman presented a new view on this issue for discussion within the Party. Can you say something about it publicly?

It is a fact proven by experiences of all revolutionary movements of history that the suppressed class cannot achieve success without giving birth to a leadership from within itself. In this sense, the question of leadership [is] central to the success of the Party and the revolution. The development of leadership this way does not happen out of someone's wish but out of class struggle and ideological struggle according to the historical necessity of the class. Therefore, it is only a matter of chance as to who forms the core team of the leadership and who becomes their chief leader. Marxism has clarified such a scientific conclusion since its research period. But relating to its practical use, this question seems to become complicated when the Party captures state power. Since the danger, possibility and necessity to use force in the struggle within the Party increases along with the development of power, the experiences of the 20th century revolutions and counter-revolutions have already clearly exhibited that the issue of moving towards dissolution of states by strengthening the leadership of the proletariat is very complex and challenging. To speak concretely, the excessive use of force in the internal conflict during the leadership of Stalin, the counter-revolution with rise of

Khrushchev's reformism and the counter-revolution in China after the death of Mao despite the great cultural revolution have compelled and inspired today's proletarian revolutionaries to think seriously about it. With this belief, our Party has been seriously studying and thinking over the issue relating to leadership. Against this background, the proposal was presented for discussion on behalf of the central office in the last Central Committee meeting. The main essence of this proposal is that the chief leader and the core team of the leadership should focus on ideological works by keeping themselves away from the day to day administrative works and provide a physical environment for the revolutionaries of the new generation to be trained as successors. What our Party believes is that this process of producing successors ensures continuous revolution by preventing the danger of counter-revolution that is likely to take place following the death of the chief leader. It is not possible to discuss more than this much about the issue here.

The Party's proposal on the development of people's democracy in the 21st century has forwarded the concept of having multiParty competition even in socialist society. What is the essence and significance of this? Is it possible this way to achieve the socialist goal of dissolving all classes, parties and states?

The Party's proposal on the development of people's democracy in the 21st century was forwarded on the basis of the positive and negative experiences of the 20th century. Accordingly, the Party believes that within the anti-feudal and anti-imperialistic constitutional framework, only through multiParty competition even in a socialist society can counter-revolution be prevented and proletariat's rule be strengthened by making effective the people's control, monitoring and intervention in the governance. Only such a rule of the proletariat strengthened on the basis of people's democracy can prepare the necessary infrastructure for the ultimate dissolution of class, Party and the state. This process that increases political awareness among the people through multiParty competition will make socialist competition lively. The foundation of state dissolution will be prepared as extensively and rapidly as we organize socialist competition. The main essence of our proposal is to make proletariat's democracy lively by preventing it from being mechanical and formal.

According to Marxist concept, Party or ideology is inseparable from army and the state. Party is an ideology, according to which the army is formulated and the state is maintained with the power of the army. If multiParty competition is accepted in tomorrow's people's democratic republic or in socialism, it appears to be very complicated as to whether or not to allow every Party to form an army on the basis of their own respective ideologies. What is your view on this?

The main thing that needs to be clear here is the class structure of the state. Going by the experiences of history and conclusions of Marxism, to imagine a classless state is just a bourgeois idealistic hypocrisy. The people's democratic state that we have envisaged is a state under the leadership of the proletariat with collective dictatorship of various classes of anti-feudal and anti-imperialist people. Such a state cannot be established without first dismantling the state that works in the interests of feudalism and imperialism. When an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist state is formed, in such a situation, the political parties that represent various classes and ideological beliefs will not need to set up separate armies because [their] interests will not be antagonistic. Instead, there begins a people's democratic competition under people's dictatorship, which only further strengthens people's state. The issue of forming an army might arise only in two completely different situations. The first situation is, if the Party that leads the people's democratic state turns counter-revolutionary and starts exploiting, suppressing and torturing people, any of the competing political forces using people's right to revolt can and should form an army. The other situation is, if a political Party competing in the name of people stoops to the level of advocating feudalism and imperialism and starts armed activities under their support and instigation, in such a situation the people's state

will certainly impose dictatorship on them and solve the problem. No one should forget the limit of people's democratic and socialist constitutional system.

Army/War

Could you please briefly tell us about the preparation, initiation and development of People's War in Nepal's context? It is heard that there had been an important discussion as to whether the People's War, when it was launched in Nepal in 1996, would develop in a fast or slow pace. What have the events proved now?

Since 1971, when I first participated in the Communist Movement, my attentions were drawn towards the studies of ideological and strategic aspects of armed struggles in the history of the world and particularly of Nepal. After Mohan Bikram's paper presentation on the preparation of armed struggle in the Ayodhya plenum of the then CPN (Fourth Convention) in 1981, I in my capacity as a leader of the then Youth Front in 1982, had got an environment to carry out special studies on ideological and practical aspects of armed struggle. We, in the leadership of the then Mashal group had made an active attempt to prepare and initiate an armed struggle on the eve of the historical people's movement in 1990. It is worth recalling that, in course of our preparation for the same, I along with Comrade Badal went to Manang to meet Comrade Dev Gurung and Comrade Ganesh Bahadur Gurung to purchase rifles. We even conducted the first central level army training after Ganesh Bahadur bought two rifles which Dev Gurung secretly brought to Gorkha. I still feel very excited to recall the incident when I and Comrade Badal were going to Gorkha with army documents, a pistol that Comrade Lekhnath Bhatta had made available to the Party and ten pieces of gelatine, and narrowly escaped a search carried out by Tanabu district's DSP and CDO just across the Muglin bridge.

Considering the context of the preliminary preparation and the 1990 movement, we felt that ideological, political and organizational preparations for a People's War were extremely inadequate. Inspired by the prospects of overcoming the shortcoming in the new political circumstance of post-1990 Nepal, we took initiatives to unify the revolutionaries scattered into various groups and, as a result CPN (Ekata Kendra) came into being. In the unification convention held in 1991, we passed with overwhelming majority an improvised military line of a long-term People's War of Nepali characteristics by fighting against various reformist tendencies within Ekata Kendra. Following the convention, we went forward with preparations at four levels (ideological-political, organizational, technical and struggle) as preparation for the People's War. On the one hand, we emphasized on rural class struggle and on the other hand, through an open People's Front, we carried out various programmes of training people by raising various burning national issues through continuous Nepal Bandh (closure), rallies and mass meetings. Seeing our preparations, the representatives of reformists in the Party chiefly Nirmal Lama, Ruplal Bishwakarma etc. were terrified. Mr. Lama even declared to move along his own way just 15 days before the beginning of the People's War. In such a situation, naturally the two line struggle within Ekata Kendra took an antagonistic form. Finally, after the Party's first national convention expelled Lama and Bishwakarina faction from the Party defining them as rightist liquidationists, the path to solidify concrete and technical preparations for the People's War was cleared.

A few months after that, the third extensive meeting of the Party's Central Committee was held. This meeting occupies a very important place in the history of Nepali People's War, because for the first time it fixed the series of phases, sub-phases, strategies and working policy of the People's War in a systematic way by analyzing the past and present characteristics of Nepali society. The discussions held and the documents approved at the meeting maintained a single understanding about the People's War. It is worth noting that prior to this, some thought that the People's War should be given continuity gradually and slowly without breaking the sequence while on the other hand, there

was still some doubt about Comrade Baburam Bhattarai regarding the question of joining People's War because he was still seen as an intellectual, even though he had been taking up responsibility at important leadership level in the movement. But this meeting unified the views on People's War by changing the thought of waging the war slowly without breaking the sequence and on the other hand, it also erased doubts about Comrade Baburam Bhattarai as he termed the meeting's decision as a milestone and expressed his strong commitment. In this way, the Third Extensive Meeting struck a unique ideological, political, emotional and firm unity in the Party. Because of this encouraging unity, a small remark about Lakhan Thapa by Comrade Bhakta Bahadur Shrestha triggered a memorable peal of laughter, which caused the meeting to halt for some time.

After having clearly drawn the map of the People's War, the Party pushed ahead the final preparation of the war among the people within and outside the Party line in a planned manner. In this context, the enemy's brutal suppression of the rural peasants' struggle in Rolpa-Rukum in the name of 'Romeo operation' played a very important role against the nationwide preparation of the People's War. Finally the Central Committee meeting was held to finalize the planning of the historic initiation of the People's War. At the meeting, the discussion chiefly focused on two important questions. One important question was whether the People's War would move ahead rapidly or in a slow pace. Some comrades thought that it should not be called rapid because it would generate a mentality of achieving quick victory while on the other hand, many of the comrades including those in the chief leadership believed that it would gain momentum, which was finally agreed upon after the discussion. The other important question was the question of leadership. After the reformist elements who were expelled from the Party tried to create confusion in various circles by making publicity on the eve the initiation of the People's War that there was a parallel leadership and headquarters within us, we held discussion on the question of leadership believing that at least the Party has to be clear about it. When Comrade Kiran strongly advocated in favour the then general secretary Comrade Prachanda then the debate grew hot and sarcastic. At last, the debate was settled after a general agreement that chief leadership was in fact chief leadership. Finally, the meeting passed the first plan of the initiation of the People's War. While the preparation for the plan was towards its final phase, we presented a 40-point demand before the then parliamentary government through the open front (People's Front), as a political intervention. A final analysis of all this process was done by the PB meeting held in Kathmandu. After having analysed all national and international situations, the proposal to blow the trumpet of the People's War on 1st Falgun 2052 (February 1996) was approved. The day came and as planned the People's War got underway announcing a new era in Nepali society.

Looking back at the process of preparation and initiatives, after ten years now, that has now become a great history and according to the discussion then, everyone is feeling that the development of events has proved that the People's War took rapid course.

As the supreme commander of the People's Liberation Army, how do you evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the army?

I think the unfailing respect and trust towards the revolutionary ideas and revolutionary leadership as well as high sense of self sacrifice are the greatest strengths of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Inadequacy of technical resources and training can be considered its weakness. Nevertheless, the People's Liberation Army is moving with determination and rapidity towards the great direction of learning war from war and capturing war logistics from war itself. Proud of being the Supreme Commander of the People's Liberation Army with the great spirit of ideas, sentiment and self sacrifice, I highly evaluate and salute the entire People's Liberation Army at this historical moment.

The Party's Second National Convention (of 2000) had put forward the necessity of having a fusion of two different military strategies of long-term People's War and armed struggle

in the present context of Nepal and the world, but now the Party has started talking about developing a new military working direction of the People's War in the 21st century. Can you elaborate on this?

The uniqueness and novelty of ideas lying behind the Nepali People's War were discussed in various contexts above. The second historical national convention adopted the development of those very ideas as 'Prachanda Path.' The second convention took an important decision against the tendency to narrow down the war by erecting a Chinese wall between the two 20th century military strategies (general armed struggle and a Protracted People's War) or being imprisoned in one or the other model. In the present contexts of the world that is getting smaller due to revolution in information technology and a modern, unified and centralized exploitation-oppression of globalized imperialism, the Party on the basis of an analysis of positive and negative experiences of the past century concluded that it is necessary to move ahead by having a fusion of the strategies of long-term People's War in armed struggle and the strategies of armed struggle in People's War. This conclusion provided and is providing a new and wide horizon for the Nepali People's War to move ahead. From a bold offensive to peace talks, ceasefire, again attack and again talks, the second convention laid the foundation of a new military strategy for the 21st century.

The issue of the development of a new military strategy in the 21st century is based on the essence of the Party's proposal relating to the development of People's Democracy in the 21st century as well as on the spirit of historical document passed by the recently held Central Committee meeting. The world today has moved far ahead from the 1920s and 30s. Productive forces are in a new position, imperialism is in a new position, the people fighting against it are in a new position and information, communication and technology are in new positions. Therefore, it is imperative that the military strategies of the proletariat should also be in a new position. The Party's policy of symbolically 'hitting the enemy on the head by riding on the back' is also the part of the new military strategy of the 21st century. This policy is not just purely a military strategy but is also inseparably connected with the question of developing the ideas of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in the 21st century. In addition to continuing the decisive struggle against rightist revisionists, this question also represents the acts of revitalizing the Marxist spirit of doing concrete analysis of concrete condition by fighting against the traditional, orthodox and stereotypical tendencies developing within the communist movement. The military strategy that is being successfully implemented is sure to play an important role in the formulation of new ideas of the 21st century.

Some critics say that People's War in Peru was declared to have reached a stage of strategic equilibrium when it was still in the defensive phase. Can you clarify on some of the solid grounds to justify that in Nepal there hasn't been a mistake in estimating the phase of war by way of getting excited to achieve quick victory?

In our opinion, the main reason for the failure of the People's War in Peru is not the imbalance in the declaration of defense and equilibrium. The main reason is the imbalance in the use of strategic firmness and tactical flexibility (unilateral emphasis on strategy), in the question of developing ideas through concrete analysis of concrete condition in the changed context of today's world as well as idealistic thought of glorifying the leadership. This is the principal thing. So far as the Nepali People's War is concerned, the new ideological, political and military strategic concepts developed since the preparation and initiation periods till the present time are themselves reliable grounds to assert that it will not meet Peru's fate, rather it will emerge victorious.

Amid fierce race of militarization, the Party has said that there is no need of a permanent army. Can you shed light on the dialecticism between the two?

When Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were preparing the theoretical foundation of proletariat

revolution and of future socialist society, they envisaged preparing a sea of armed communities, not a permanent army. Behind the Party's idea of creating a situation that will not require a permanent army lies a concept of preparing armed communities to erect a base for repelling counter-revolution. In Russia and China, the extremely powerful permanent armies could not ultimately prevent counterrevolutions, rather the permanent armies themselves turned into the police of the counterrevolution. The essence lying in this is that, instead of emphasizing on the technical aspect like the bourgeois vocational permanent army that is confined in barracks after capturing the regime, if the people themselves are trained and provided with weapons under certain conditions, we can in the true sense make the people the master of their own fate. We of course need a strong people's liberation army while we are fighting a guerrilla, mobile and systematic war against the Royal Army, the mercenary of tyrannical feudal elements. We believe that when the same people's liberation army, instead of being confined in the barracks, goes to the people and creates an ocean of armed people and dissolves itself in it, it will truly reflect the balance between people's democracy and dictatorship and dissolution of the state. I am fully confident that it will formulate through the discussion in the Party and it will significantly contribute to leading the international revolution in the 21st century.

What is the difference between the idea that the main feature of a Party is the army and Regis Debre's 'Foko' principle, especially in the Latin American context?

There is an incomparable difference between Regis Debre's 'Foko' and the Maoist concept that the army is the main feature of the organization. Debre's 'Foko' reflects the unscientific and cowardly thought of considering the role of some trained youths dedicated to revolution as decisive and relegating the general people's role as subsidiary or that of spectators whereas our concept of considering the army as the main feature reflects the concept of integrating the general people with military organizations of various forms and levels or the scientific concept of considering people as the decisive force of revolution. It is clear that these two ideas have fundamental difference in perspective.

Following the 12-point agreement, there is an issue of keeping both the people's liberation army and the Royal Nepalese Army under a reliable international supervision and of forming a new national army in the new democratic regime. This has triggered general curiosity and debate. What is the Party's actual understanding or proposal on it?

After the 12-point agreement with the seven parliamentary parties, our Party has time and again publicly clarified that we are ready to restructure the military organization according to the decision of a free and fair constituent assembly election.

State/Front

Within a short span of time we have come to see the destruction of the old state in most parts of the country and the initiation of a process of construction of a new state. Please throw some light on the concrete experiences of this process of development.

Within a span of six-seven years of the glorious People's War, the old feudal state had been uprooted from the entire rural areas of the country and in its place the seeds of a new people's power had been sown. Today they are active in the form of different national and regional autonomous republican governments, and in a centralized form, they are advancing in the direction of the creation of a federal system with Nepalese specificities. Undoubtedly, the Party's correct ideology, policy, plan and programs have also been the basis of this process of development. In fact, to be more precise, I think it is the ability of the Party to make the policy of a revolutionary united front active and alive by correctly addressing the problems of class, nationality, region and gender that

has enabled the development of new people's power, although still in its initial stage, in about 80 per cent areas of the country.

The Party had formed a strategic united front mechanism at the central level in the form of United People's Front right from the preparatory and initial days of People's War. In 2001, it formed the United Revolutionary People's Council in the form of a revolutionary people's front oriented towards people's central government. This practice also looks a bit different from what has been carried out elsewhere. Could you tell us something about its relevance and importance?

Here also it becomes necessary to emphasise on the Party's scientific orientation and practice of 'concrete analysis of concrete condition' and of implementing mass line. It is because of this that the Party was able to mobilize and politicize people against feudalism and imperialism in an open and authorized way in the name of United People's Front for a limited period before the initiation of the People's War. The Party took its initiative in forming the United Revolutionary People's Council in the form of a revolutionary people's front oriented towards people's central government after the rudiments of new people's power started making their appearance in the country's entire rural area. The recently held meeting of the Central Committee of the Party dissolved the Central Committee of the United Revolutionary People's Council and built a new Central Organisational Committee which would play the role of an organisational committee for a massive national political meet. The motive behind this is to increase the political intervention against the old state to give our struggle its final shape. In theoretical terms, this step of ours is in tune with the three weapons of revolution as outlined by Com. Mao. But, in implementing this in Nepal's specificities, it has indeed acquired theoretical enrichment in a new way. This practice of a united front as a massline to make the enormous number of people participate in revolutionary movement has its own concrete character. And herein lies the relevance and importance of this process.

It is said that one of the reasons for the rapid development of Nepalese People's War is its ability to address questions of class, nationality, region, gender and caste in a cohesive and united way. What is the reality?

It has been made clear above, in many contexts, that the reason behind the rapid advancement of Nepalese People's War is its ability to correctly address the questions of class, nationality, region and gender. Though small in terms of territorial area, Nepal is nevertheless huge because of its diversity in terms of nationality and geography. But the 237 year old feudal state based on Hindu high-caste chauvinism (Brahmanism) has hindered the progress, the rights as well as language and culture of groups belonging to other class, nationality, region and gender and has been practicing a policy of discrimination, oppression, exploitation and suppression. It was with this glorious aim of creating a new Nepal, out of this unjust feudal state, in a democratic basis for all the oppressed people that our Party took the historic initiative of launching a People's War. And it is because of this initiative, together with the spirit of sacrifice that the People's War has been able to increase its popularity amongst the common people in such a short span of time.

The policy and program of autonomous rule together with the right to self-determination of nationalities and regions put forward by the Party seems to have generated a lot of excitement among the oppressed nationality, region and Madhesi people. But some of the political forces have been expressing their doubts over the fact that such a policy may lead to the disintegration of the nation. How will you convince the common people regarding this apprehension?

Country will not disintegrate because of right to self-determination or autonomy. Rather it will become a united and powerful Nepal in its true sense by forming a new bond of national unity along

democratic lines. In our opinion, the feudal state resting on hill high-caste Hindu chauvinism (Brahmanism) has been unleashing oppression against the majority of people in the country. For the first time, all the oppressed nationalities, sub-nationalities, dalits, women and people under regional oppression are feeling united in a true sense because of our policy of right to self-determination and autonomy. The reactionary forces who spread such rumours that the nation will disintegrate because of right to self-determination and autonomy are people of no less feudal mindset than those who feel that 'all women will start leaving their husbands if they are given the right to divorce'.

The Madhesi question is considered to be a very sensitive and important one in Nepalese struggle. How is the Party looking at this issue?

Our Party has been taking the question of Madhes and Madhesi as one of strategic importance for the Nepalese struggle. It is necessary to ensure the participation of the Madhesi people in all aspects of life of the nation because of geographical accessibility, economic progress and linguistic development and also to rapidly take the country forward in the path of progress together with a strong national unity. But the feudal central power based on hill high-caste chauvinism never looked upon the Madhesi people as citizens. The feudal state kept on giving continuance to the process of oppression, exploitation, psychological assault and sectarianism through various conspiracies and deceptions. The feudal state has not been able to cater to the rights and sentiments of Madhes and Madhesi people and this is responsible for Nepal lagging behind in economic development. It is keeping in mind this historic reality, that our Party has been addressing the issue of Madhes as a central one since even before the initiation of People's War. Amongst the various nationality fronts, our Party held the national conference of Madhesi Front first and this was convened on behalf of the Headquarters itself. Recently the Party has passed a concrete resolution to study the Madhesi question from a greater height and to debate, discuss and develop leaders as well to take the revolutionary movement in Madhes to a new height.

An unprecedented participation of women and dalits is seen in the Nepalese People's War. What is the Party's observation on this?

The unprecedented participation of women and dalits, and the sacrifice and courage that they have displayed, has not only given a big blow to the feudal elements in Nepal but it has also threatened world imperialism. Also the superior role played by women and dalits in the People's War is giving a new and powerful inspiration to the anti-imperialist mass opinion all over the world. Our Party has highly valued the participation of women and dalits in the People's War and it has also determined a strategic objective to develop them as a powerful force to confront the danger of counterrevolution.

The movements of peasants, students, workers, intellectuals and other mass and class organisations have also played an important role in the rapid development of People's War. But it is heard that in comparison to the development of People's War, these mass and class organizations have not developed. What is the Party's view on this?

In a war situation and in the course of ups and downs of revolutionary movement some particular mass and class organizations and some particular mass and class movements are seen to be prevailing in a particular circumstance, whereas, in some other circumstance another mass and class movement is seen to prevail. Nevertheless, as a matter of principle, our Party has been emphasizing on developing all the mass and class movements in a balanced way. At a time when revolution is most feasible in the country and when Party is taking steps towards that direction, it is important to take forward the movements of various mass and class groups in a united, centralized and concentrated manner.

Problems regarding cultural degradation within the Party, as a form of pollution of

feudalist and imperialist culture, have often been heard. How has the Party and movement been battling against these problems?

The question of cultural transformation becomes far more serious, sensitive and of a long-term nature than that of political transformation. The question of culture tends to exert a deep influence as soon as a revolution or counterrevolution takes place. The Marxist-Leninist-Maoists have always emphasized on the fact that cultural revolution has to be carried forward even after a political revolution. Ideological and cultural pollution spread for hundreds of years by the feudalists and imperialists has habituated social degradation. The questions of changing this habit or of emotional transformation of each and every individual and of imparting scientific culture are not simple, straightforward ones. Because of this, our Party has been giving priority to the question of cultural transformation and has been stressing on making the cultural front more dynamic and effective.

Current Issues

The April 2006 mass struggle created a big stir nationally and internationally. Could you please throw some light on its significance?

Building an objective conception on the background and the lessons of the multi-dimensional and popular mass struggle that took place in Nepal in the first decade of the twenty-first century will be of great significance not only to determine the future course of development of Nepalese revolution but also the path of world revolution. Resolute courage, sacrifice and the creative initiative that the Nepalese people exhibited during the three weeks against autocracy not only turned out to be main news in the entire media of the world but also thundered the heart of reactionary rulers and imperialism. Distorting the background of this extraordinary mass struggle and its lessons and thereby confusing the masses, contemptible acts and exercises to fulfil reactionary and opportunist interests have already begun. In this situation, a historic responsibility to expose the reactionary and opportunist moves by bringing out the truth and reality of the mass struggle before the masses and to prepare for a new rebellion has come on the shoulders of genuine revolutionaries.

Definitely, every extraordinary event stands on the foundation of an extraordinary setting. It is not difficult to understand that the extraordinary mass struggle witnessed in Nepal now is in the backdrop of the extraordinary People's War, which has been going on since a decade. The present people's struggle has forcefully revealed that the People's War of one decade had not only made the poor peasants, nationalities, dalits and women politically conscious in an unprecedented way but has also enabled them to demonstrate resolute courage and take initiative for their self-respect and rights.

How far have we come from the mass movement of 1990? There are fears of a compromise just as it had happened in 1990. What is your opinion?

The special features of the present mass struggle are incomparable with the historic mass movement of 1990 from both the angles of quantity and quality, and they are in many sense totally contrary to that of 1990. In 1990, the main arena of mass struggle was Kathmandu valley and urban middle class was at the forefront. But in the present mass struggle, the rural area came forward as the main force and the main arena of people's initiative and, on the class basis, it was evident that the role of poor peasants, nationalities, dalits and women remained principal. If efforts are made to patch up abruptly as it happened in 1990 without trying to resolve the problem by correctly understanding the difference of balance of class forces seen during the mass struggle in 1990 and 2006, it is sure that a bigger uprising will take birth from its embryo in the near future. The present political decision of reinstating the parliament that the international power centres have taken to solve the contradiction between parliamentary political parties and the feudal king does not address even an

iota of the new balance of class forces and the historic initiative that the masses of oppressed class, nationality, region and sex have exhibited in the mass struggle. If someone thinks our country can achieve new vision, promise and tradition from the old leaders of major parliamentary parties, who have already started playing old game and tradition of acquiring victory in the election with the force of baton by bringing the home ministry into their hand, there will be no bigger suicidal mistake other than this.

The present mass struggle has been lauded from all sides but is this at the cost of sidelining the role of the CPN (Maoist)?

One of the main and fundamental particularities of the mass struggle now has been the unity between the forces of armed struggle and urban mass movement, which is said to be peaceful but has never been so. Every individual, who is free from nonsensical feudal tradition and mindset, is clearly noticing that the mass struggle had started acquiring momentum only after the 12-point understanding was reached with the CPN (Maoist), which has been leading successful People's War since the past ten years. The drama of municipal election designed for legitimatizing autocracy got crushed.

The present extraordinary mass struggle stands on the foundation of the extraordinary events like the second understanding reached by revising the program of general political strike which had been declared before by the CPN (Maoist), the general strike called on accordingly from April 6, the military attack on the very morning at the district headquarters of Sarlahi and crushing of the army helicopter for first time by the People's Liberation Army etc. It is also equally clear that the mass struggle started from April 6 did not remain peaceful for a single day. Masses of people resisted prohibition order, curfew, baton charge, teargas and bullets of the so-called security force with stones and blood everyday. Masses, in their own way, continued to step up resistance against the violence that the feudal autocracy had imposed on every next day. The countrywide wrath that the masses showed against offices, signboards, monuments and sculptures which symbolised feudal autocracy is a justified resistance against the reactionary violence.

This mass struggle stands on the foundation of the agreement reached with the Party that has been leading the People's War since 10 years. Against this backdrop and given the fact that people's resistance had been on the increase every single day during this mass struggle, to argue about a peaceful struggle can be nothing other than idealist self-satisfaction of the bourgeoisie.

On the one hand there is widespread celebration that people have become victorious. On the other hand there are arguments that the movement was curtailed in between and that the Maoists want to push further ahead. What is the reality? Also please clarify on the status of the PLA which is considered as being problematic by some.

The reality is that the foreign reactionary power centres, who were scared of the daily qualitative rise of the mass struggle and the resistance that emerged from it, intensified their design to prevent the mass movement from reaching its final goal. When the rural masses in lakhs [hundreds of thousands] started roaring in the cities from Mechi to Mahakali, tens of lakhs of people in the valley started enhancing their effort to encircle the feudal palace. Exactly at this juncture, the foreigners came forward to protect Narayanahiti and the movement was stopped from reaching to its climax by pushing Narayanahiti a step back to the situation of four years ago. Had it been allowed to go ahead for a few days it was almost sure that the situation of the king and his family would not have been different than that of Ceausescu of Rornania. In such a situation, split within the royal army was sure and it was fully possible for Nepal to enter into the era of democratic republic.

But, what an irony! The main leaders of seven political parties, lying on the lap of the almost

overthrown murderer king and the vulnerable murderer royal army, are talking of disarming the Maoists. Today, even Gyanendra and his puppets have started talking about constituent assembly to deceive the people as Tribhuwan did in 1951. A peculiar scene is being seen in the country whereby the royalists are becoming the spokesperson of constituent assembly, which was put forward constantly by the CPN (Maoist) and representatives of the civil to make people sovereign in the real sense and free them from the exploitation and oppression of feudalism and imperialism. A conspiracy to fully isolate the real spokespersons of the constituent assembly from the process and make royalists the organizer of constituent assembly has already been initiated.

Prachanda

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<http://southasiarev.wordpress.com/2008/05/05/prachanda-hoist-the-revolutionary-flag-on-mount-everest-in-the-21st-century/>