

'No reviving people's govt, people's courts, army' –Baidya

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The newly-formed CPN-Maoist party has recently convened its seventh general convention which decided on 'people's revolt' as the party's political line. The convention also elected a 51-member central committee under the chairmanship of Mohan Baidya.

Republica's Kiran Pun spoke with Baidya. Excerpts:

You have been elected party head again after 28 years. How do you feel --is there something new or difference, as you have been elected both times during critical periods?

I was elected a central committee member at four general conventions and I was elected party general secretary at the fifth national congress in 2041. So, I no longer feel any desire for assuming the main leadership post.

I now see very high hills of challenge, challenge for the people and the country. The question is how to move forward facing these negative and positive challenges.

I am now in such a place where both renown as a revolutionary as well ill fame are possible. And I remember a quote from Comrade Mao, that people can fall very far down after reaching very high.



Mohan Baidya (Photo: Chandra Shekar Karki)

I can go on facing the challenges if I get the help of party cadres and the people. The question is how can I accommodate the line of the masses and the interests of the people.

Although you were elected both times in very critical circumstances do you feel any difference between the two occasions?

I have always been for the idealist way of revolution. I thought Prachand was also for this. I had thought that I would not again assume the main leadership of the party after the arrival of Prachand in the party's main leadership. I came into the main leadership unexpectedly. But this was natural, as such things can happen if necessary.

Is it easier to be a leader or to make a leader?

Both are complex.

In the sense that you made Prachand the main leader...

It is a very difficult thing to understand human beings. Prachand was not such a person and how he has changed. We do not know how human beings change. It is a very difficult thing.

You also mentioned that it was a mistake to hand over leadership to Prachand. Why?

I left the leadership over the Sector scandal. Dahal also made a mistake. The incident happened in 2043 Bikram Era but I left in 2046. Comrades raised questions in 2046 asking whose mistake it was. I would just say that it was not my personal mistake and it was a mistake to leave the leadership over this scandal.

UCPN (Maoist) leaders say that there is in the main no difference between the two Maoist parties. After the general convention, would you say there are differences?

There are various differences. We follow the new democratic revolution but they have left that path. We talk about national sovereignty but they have abandoned it. We have been saying the constitution should assure the rights of women, dalits and ethnic groups. But they have abandoned that also. UCPN (Maoist) is converting itself into a party of the elite classes but we are trying to make ours a party of the proletariat.

These are the main differences. You can see it in the political documents.

This is the theoretical aspect, but how would the common people understand these things?

New democratic revolution is our political line. We will decide how to move in practice. The upcoming party central committee meeting will decide on concrete moves. National sovereignty and the issues of the livelihood of the people will be raised forcefully. We will bring protest programs to pressure to the current Bhattarai government to step down. We will again rise the issue of a roundtable assembly to form a constitution and also break the

deadlock. We should wait for the CC meeting for concrete programs.

When can we see your CC take full shape?

We will try to give it full shape at the upcoming CC meeting.

What will be the nature of the struggle?

Immediately, we will take up just the programs of people's struggle.

It is said that there is confusion in the party's political line over people's revolt on the foundations of people's war? Can you make that clear?

We have various experiences of people's war. We formed a parallel government. We formed an army. And awareness developed among the dalits, women and ethnic communities. We have experience of the 'win' and 'loss' of people's war. We will launch revolt on this foundation. The main point is we cannot move ahead ignoring our historical experience. We have 10 years of experience and we will use it. Is there any confusion? No. It is all clear.

We should understand that there are two accusations against us. First, some people are saying they pressuring us to take up arms immediately so that it will be easy to suppress us. Secondly, some ask what would be the point of separating from Prachand and Baburam Bhattarai if our party could not take up arms. Neither are our concerns. We will move ahead taking up the people's agendas with struggle.

Are you going to revive people's government, people's courts and army?

We are not going to revive them. The old style is not suitable. We will move in accordance with new bases and a new way.

So, you will go for something new ?

It will be determined by circumstances.

Whether CA elections will take place is debatable. If they are held, will your party participate?

There is no possibility of CA elections.

But if election are held?

We can participate or boycott. We will think at the time depending on what the elections will be like. Now, we have been talking of a roundtable assembly for forming a government and also finding a solution to the constitutional issue also.

Is there possibility of CA revival?

No.

What are the reasons for the success of people's revolt on the foundation of people's war?

It is clear that if we go taking up the agendas and achievements of people's war things will go in a positive fashion.

At the convention, the cadres raised the question with you --what is the basis for believing that you would not become another Prachand or Bhattarai if you get power. How can you convince people?

Such questions are natural. Comrades have been asking in place after place what is the guarantee that we would not deviate. In the past we develop the tendency of individualism in the party. But now we are giving priority to developing collective leadership.

Secondly, we will develop political heirs in the party.

It is a natural phenomena in political parties to have some ups and downs. Where individualism is high there is danger. If collective leadership develops heirs, sacking those who deviate will be a smooth process. Our attention will be to develop collective leadership.

We have also expressed commitments. But we should prepare the next generation leadership.

How would you develop the heirs?

We mean to prepare a capable new generation. We have both 'red' and 'expert'. We will prepare such a generation to step in if the leadership makes mistakes. This is something complex in a communist movement. But we will try to develop such a generation.

Are such leadership heirs possible?

Why not? If we had taken such comrades into the CC, they would have crossed 200 members. We have a good team.

What if they also turn into Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Babauram Bhattarai?

Talking about myself, I had taken Dahal and Bhattarai as my heirs. But the opposite happened. It is a complex thing understanding people. It is a complex matter evaluating a man. People change quickly.

The cadres also raised questions about handover of property to the party.

We will decide whether to hand over party to the party or go for a cooperative system. We will decide soon.

Some cadres asked why the CC did not bring in new faces, saying the same old faces cannot uphold the new spirit.

Generally, communists go for a three in one concept, or three generations. Our CC has all three generations. But we have not been able to bring in new comrades, that is true. We will solve this as soon as possible. We will accommodate them in various central departments.

You have been projecting yourselves at mass meetings as an alternative force and stating that your party is going to lead the country. How are you going to go about doing that?

Our bases are the issues of the people and national sovereignty. We are also raising the issue of the rights of women, dalits and ethnic peoples.

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