

The Government Must be Formed Under the Leadership of Our Party

[This is an interview with Prachanda, Chairman of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), from *The Red Star*, Vol. 3, #17, July 16-31, 2010.]

The Politburo meeting that was held for the long time has decided that it will lead the national united government. If it's sure that the national united government will be formed, who will be the prime minister?

The politburo meeting has decided that national unity government must be formed under the leadership of UCPN (M). When the time comes to form that government our part will finalise about the leadership. We didn't discuss it this time. The main focus is that the government must be formed under the leadership of our party. It's the party that counts not the person.

Your party has been demanding the formation of national united government. There are talks of majority government too. Are both the options open?

Both of the options are open. But, we also discussed about the possibility of the national unity government in the politburo meeting. We came to the conclusion that the possibility of a national unity government is getting weaker. Taking this situation into account, we have decided to remain prepared for both options.

You were to hold a Congress on the coming February. But instead, you called an Expanded Meeting of the Central Committee. How can it be a party that doesn't hold its Congress for 20 years?

When we had unification 20 years ago, we named it as a Unity Congress. But when the unified CPN (Maoist) was formed, it was done after a national convention. That convention had approved a party document too. So, the context of not having a Congress for a long time is about our former party, the CPN (Maoist), not the present one, the Unified CPN (Maoist). The convention of the unified party has already taken place.

Secondly, the nation is at a very sensitive condition. The transition period is reaching to its end. The major issue now is to conclude the peace and constitution writing process , and the priority should be to give a way out. The party Congress is obviously necessary but it is not the principal

task at this time. We have thought that the resolution of the burning issues of nation and its people is the main question at present. But at the same time, it is necessary to build a unified understanding in all these issues and consolidate the party ideologically and organizationally. So, we have called the Expanded Meeting of the Central Committee.

What decision did your Politburo meeting make on army integration, which is the main point of the debate.?

In the comprehensive peace accord (CPA), we had agreed to provide the same status to Nepal Army (NA) and People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the main spirit of the CPA was to build up a National Army by democratizing the NA and professionalizing the the PLA. Both the Armies are under the monitoring of the UNMIN. Same numbers of weapons are kept in the container. In the interim constitution, the provisions are made in the same article for NA and PLA. But, parties in the government are propagating as if the NA is the only Army of the state and the other is not, this is against the crux and spirit of the CPA. We have decided to oppose this strongly.

Secondly, the integration and rehabilitation is the also crux of CPA. Confusion has been created on the modality and standard norms. The politburo meeting has clarified this confusion. No number of PLA soldiers for integration is mentioned in the CPA. It means that all those PLA verified by UNMIN are eligible for the integration. So, the demand that has been made to specify the number of soldiers to be integrated is against the CPA and peace process. We have come to the conclusion that the trend that doesn't want peace process to succeed is provoking the issue.

Likewise, the modality of the integration also had not been fixed. That is to be decided by the political consensus. Our meeting has seriously and comprehensively discussed this issue and decided that it would be easier to integrate PLA as a separate force and give it a special responsibility. We will try to make consensus with other political parties having this stand.

The ruling parties are talking about the standard norms for integration. This is rather the standard norms for new recruitment not for the integration. The standards of new recruitment are not applied in the integration process in any country. Moreover, the CPA had been done with our own ingenious peace process. Integration of two armies was agreed upon, not the recruitment of PLA soldiers into the Nepal Army. So, the standard norms of the integration should be discussed. We have come to the conclusion that we can take the international practise as reference and make consensus among the ruling parties.

What about the restoration of the local people's government?

People have several problems. Actually, this government is not the one with any sense. This is adding more problems instead of reducing them.

If you see from the security perspective, murder, loot, and kidnapping has been a daily routine. The government doesn't show any concern.

People are tormented by the state. The inflation and corruption had never been like this in the Nepalese history.

So our PB meeting has decided that that our party, for being the largest party in the country, should try and solve this problem. For this, we need to have common fronts of all oppressed class, nationality, region and gender in central, regional and local levels. We have decided to initiate a process of relief. So, it won't be wise to provoke as if Maoists are restoring people's governments. This is an attempt of the Maoists to serve the people of this country.