

Plenum fails to bridge differences

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PALUNGTAR: The ideological differences among the top three Maoist leaders appeared so wide that the week-long plenum could not resolve them.

The sixth plenum, held in Gorkha, decided to hold a Central Committee (CC) meeting even to formulate the party's immediate working policy and leave the broad ideological differences to a general convention or a national conclave for settlement.

"Despite serious efforts, we could not pass one single political document. So let's take them up in the CC meeting," a participant quoted Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal as saying at the end of the plenum Saturday.

The ideological differences among party chairman Dahal, Senior Vice-chairman Mohan Baidya and Vice-chairman Dr Baburam Bhattarai were so sharp that the top three leaders had presented separate political documents at the plenum, and the attempt by Dahal to pass his synthesized document failed after the two vice-chairmen disagreed.

Baidya and Dahal not only put forward their differences with Dahal, but also attacked his leadership and accused him of misusing power and authority to keep his hold in the party.

"The chairman has misused power, authority and finances even during the plenum to continue his grip in the party," a participant quoted Baidya as saying during the meeting Saturday. Baidya looked aggressive on Dahal while giving clarifications on the issues raised by the participants during the meeting.

He also accused Dahal of using the Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA) to threaten others not to hold dissenting opinion. "With the misuse of his authority, the chairman has maintained a majority in the PLA," a leader quoted Baidya as saying.

The chairman has cooked curry, but cannot be eaten because it is mixed with dung: Bhattarai. The chairman has misused power, authority and finances even during the plenum to continue his grip in the party: Baidya.

Baidya argued that Dahal says one thing in theory and does quite the opposite in practice. He was angry with Dahal for not implementing the party line passed during the Kharipati national conclave. The Kharipati meeting had adopted the policy to launch a people's revolt to establish a "People's Federal Democratic Republic" in Nepal.

Despite similarity on some issues, Baidya said that he would agree with Dahal's synthesized document only after modifications.

Baidya also challenged Dahal's leadership. "It is said that I cannot lead the party. But it is wrong. If I have ideology and can present a separate document, why can't I lead the party? In fact I am ready to take over any time," a leader quoted Baidya as saying. He said the party is deviating from communist ideology and would soon indulge in the dirty waters of parliamentary politics if the present trend continues.

Similarly, Bhattarai also came down heavily on Dahal. "By mixing the document, the chairman has done his best to prepare curry, but it cannot be eaten as he has mixed dung in it," a participant quoted Dahal as saying Saturday.

Bhattarai demanded that the party hold a general convention to resolve the ideological differences. He also complained for being labeled "revisionist". "If I don't speak then you ask why I don't speak and when I speak, you say I am a revisionist," a central leader quoted Bhattarai as saying. He also objected to Dahal's proposal that the party declare India as the principal enemy. "You cannot fight the foreign powers and their stooges at the same time," Bhattarai stated. Though Dahal and Baidya had agreed that the party should declare India the principal enemy, Bhattarai had objected to it.

The two vice-chairmen termed the synthesized political document prepared by Dahal as an act of "eclecticism" and said it doesn't lead the party anywhere.

Likewise, Baidya objected to Dahal's view that the party should work to safeguard the political achievements made since the Chungwang plenum. Baidya argued that the party deviated from communist ideology since the Chungwang meeting, and it was wrong to declare an end to the "People's War".

Baidya said he doesn't believe that the current peace process would lead to the constitution of a "People's Federal Democratic Republic" and demanded that the party prepare grounds for an immediate revolt to that end.

"We could not agree with the chairman's document. We have so many differences," said Maoist leader Khadga Viswokarma, who is close to Baidya.

Similarly, Bhattarai is of the view that the party should safeguard the achievements made since Chungwang meeting, push for a constitution in favor of the people, work for economic development, and launch a revolt to capture state power after the international situation turns in favor of communism. "The chairman's synthesized document is confusing and doesn't show any clear road," said Maoist leader Ram Karki, who is close to Bhattarai.

Despite differences on broad ideological issues among the top three leaders, the party has, however, decided to formulate a common work-plan on the immediate course the party should take in the current political situation. "We will try to formulate a common work plan at the CC meeting," said Maoist leader Viswakarma.

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