

Background

Madhav Kumar Nepal, former general secretary of the Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) was elected Prime Minister (PM) of Nepal on 25 May 2009. After his thirteen months-long coalition government formed with the support of various political parties (Nepali Congress, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum, Terai-Madhes Loktantrik Party and the Sadbhawana Party) excluding Unified Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN) Maoist, which remained as the main opposition party, Mr. Nepal resigned from the post on the evening of 30 June 2010 stating that his resignation would lift the country from the on-going political havoc; escalate the constitution writing process; and create a favourable environment for the accomplishment of the new constitution before deadline 28 May 2011. Mr. Nepal was preceded by Pushpa Kamal Dahal, UCPN Maoist Chairman, who had resigned on 4 May 2009 on the issue of a conflict with the President over the dismissal of Rukmangat Katwal, the then chief of the Nepalese army.

The country remained without a full-fledged government for the next seven months (from July 2010 to January 2011) which *Repulica*, a popular English private daily of Nepal, claims as "the longest period without government in the world's history". The Constituent Assembly declared 21 June 2010 as the (first) date of election for the "vacant" PM post. Ironically, the country failed to get a new PM for the next seventeenth round of PM election (till January 2011) which prolonged for more than seven months because none of the candidates secured the required majority (301 out of 601) to claim the leadership.

Within this period, budget announcement for the fiscal year 2067/2068 B.S was obstructed and later through all party agreement, Article 96 (5) of the Interim Constitution was amended to allow a caretaker government to introduce a full-fledged budget. After the

sixteenth round of election, the Supreme Court issued a verdict that no party and lawmakers could stay neutral in the on-going PM election. Through constituent amendment, the fresh round of PM election resumed from 3 February 2011 A.D.

During this more than seven months long futile period in the history of Nepal, three major political parties namely UCPN Maoist, CPN- UML and Nepali Congress (NC) contesting for PM post, were represented by their PM candidates Pushpa Kamal Dahal (PKD), Jhala Nath Khanal (JNK) and Ram Chandra Poudel (RCP), respectively. JNK withdrew from the election even before the first series of PM election as per earlier party agreement that he would step down if he failed to garner two-third majority in the legislature to qualify for the next PM post. Pushpa Kamal Dahal pulled out of the election before eight round (26 September 2010) after striking deal with CPN-UML agreeing not to support NC leader RCP in the subsequent rounds of the election.

NC candidate for PM election RCP, due to the mounting pressure from almost all quarters, pulled out from PM race only before the seventeenth round for remaining the sole indecisive contestant from eighth round of the election (26 September 2010) to sixteenth round (3 November 2010)¹. None of the leaders, representing UCPN, CPN-UML and NC were able to secure the majority votes in the election, which made them incapable of leading the next government as per Interim Constitution 2063 leaving the caretaker government of MKN to continue.

¹ (See Appendix II for date and results of 1st to 17th round of PM election)

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this research is to study how the state-owned English daily, *The Rising Nepal*, had presented the PM election, the seven month-long nightmare in the political history of Nepal, from rhetorical perspectives. Assuming that the PM election-2010 was one of the most decisive hours, which was meant to give new and fresh leadership for the Federal Democratic Republic Nepal, this research is aimed at digging out the role of government media in addressing the major issues during PM election.

Significance of the study

The Rising Nepal national daily, the first ever English daily in Nepal that began its publication since 1965 A.D (1 Paush 2022 B.S) under the editorship of Barun S. JBR, holds its serious accountability towards Nepali readers regarding the dissemination of proper information, especially during the nation's critical hours. So, it would be relevant to know how *TRN*, which represents the official voice of the government, had presented the PM election. This would dig out the rhetorical position of a government media as well as various lapses where *TRN* failed to address the important issues of PM election in proper manner, which is itself a matter of public concern.

There have been several news-reports, editorials, opinion articles, letters to the editor, photographs, sketches and many other media contents centered on PM election but the present research is first of its kind where PM election has been studied in an academic location. This research will be a significant initiation for a critical and in-depth analysis of the election discourse. Besides, the study itself is a documentation of this important moment in the history of Nepal.

What can be the most important event in the political scenario of a country which has remained "government-less" for more than seven months? Undoubtedly, PM election-2010, which was aimed at giving a new leadership to a country stands at first. According to Foss (2009), there is virtually nothing that is part of the human experience that cannot be looked at from rhetorical perspectives. Considering Foss's claim, the consideration of PM election as "rhetorical situation" in this study becomes relevant and for that, editorials can be assumed to be *TRN's* main means both for persuasion and influence as the state-owned newspaper. Beside the fact that country was dwindling in the political transition, the significance of the study of PM election becomes wider if one is to consider the role of parties in resolving the conflict and accomplishing the "pending" peace process with the task of completing new constitution in time. There is no doubt that PM election 2010, which was meant to give a country a new leadership, occupies a meaningful space in the political history of Nepal.

Media contents, editorials in particular, are highly rhetorical and their influence on readers is often unnoticed due to their higher implication level. (Hamlet, 2009) quotes, "if newspaper has a political agenda, it, more than likely, would be visible on its editorial page". On this background, it is pertinent to study the editorials of state-owned English daily, to make a judgmental conclusion on the political agenda adopted by *TRN* and the rhetoric behind the particular orientation of the issues included in the editorials.

Methodology

Corax's student, Tisias, brought the teaching of rhetoric to Athens and mainland Greece (Foss, 2009). Rhetorical study basically involves the observation of what Aristotle calls "the art of discovering all the available means of persuasion" (Foss, 2009). Renegar (2009) finds Aristotle's definition of rhetoric "illuminating" because according to

him it is focused on the critical skill of seeing the ways to persuade as opposed to actually making the most persuasive argument. In a broader sense it takes more than the persuasive strategies. Jack Selzer (2004) calls it an “effort to understand how people within specific rhetorical situations attempt to influence other through language” (p.281).

Editorials are themselves the rhetorical texts in that they carry the newspapers official voice. Terry Locke (2005, p.69) claims, " a newspaper editorial is characterized by its privileged in terms of location, its typical anonymity (the writer's identity is usually suppressed) and its rhetorical purpose- to convey the newspaper's carefully weighed viewpoint on a topical issue". His particular claim "newspaper's carefully weighed viewpoint on a topical issue" hints that editorial are written in some particular rhetorical situation to influence its audience with intentional impact. Locke's explanation gives enough space for anyone to take editorial as a "strong" rhetorical artifact.

The main research question of this study is: How did *TRN* portray the PM election? The research has focused on other two basic questions:

- 1) What are the major thematic emphases?
- 2) What rhetorical strategies support these themes?

For the purpose of this study, all the editorials of *The Rising Nepal*, published within the period of first election (21 July 2010) to twelfth election (10 October 2010) are assembled and closely studied while collecting data. Through the hand elimination method, 15 editorials (See Appendix I), primarily and directly focusing on PM election, are selected as the core text. In addition, various news stories, editorials and opinion articles from the leading private dailies namely *Kantipur daily*, *The Kathmandu Post*,

Nagarik and *Republika* are taken for the purpose of cross-reference while dealing with core text.

To study editorials, in this research, in line with the ideas of Foss & Waters (2007), research question are used to identify different themes of the subject matter as the units of analysis and later explained by identifying the rhetorical strategies applied in the text. In other words, this research is the blend of textual and contextual rhetorical analysis. To add more, various rhetorical devices are stated and explained in terms of their rhetoric of use in particular context of PM election.

The following sections of this study include the discussion of the major thematic emphases of TRN, its basic rhetorical strategies for the emphasis and my analysis of the themes and strategies in relation with the political motives of CPN-UML during the elections.

The rhetoric of PM Election

Major Emphases

Ever since the process of electing a new Prime Minister began, setting conditions and pre-conditions to carry out inconclusive and partisan dialogues has become common in Nepalese political scenario. Public utterances of warnings about the country heading towards "failed state" don't seem to bother Nepalese politicians anymore. Mistrust among leaders and the unending game of blaming one another is so evident that every citizen seems to have had enough of the leaders' claims and counter-claims about bringing changes in the country.

TRN has emphasized "consensus Urgency" from every dimension it could while the opinion varies over the pages of various privately owned broadsheet dailies. In a nutshell, above are some of the ways one might sketch the PM election. Sadly a period of crisis and conflict won't be improper to address that historical period of Nepal. The following are different themes that *TRN* has emphatically put forth as its general viewpoint for the major events during the elections.

Nepalese Politics: a dirty game?

Whether be it "street centric politics" and "military flab" of UCPN Maoist, be it the "lust for power" tendency of CPN-UML or the ironical state of NC leader RCP contesting alone throughout the nine round of PM election without securing majority, all issues relevant to the Nepalese politics are commonly elaborated in the concept of being a dirty game.

What kind of image would Nepalese Political parties have if their political acts like "dirty tricks of vote buying", "abduction of CA voters", and "floor crossing inside CA hall" are continuously portrayed in the mainstream media? Whether it is about the manhandling of the ministers during the "controversial" budget announcement, or be it on-the-floor strikes of Maoist inside CA hall, these incidents during PM elections tempt anyone to make a judgemental comment that Nepalese leaders need to work a lot in building their political manners and skills.

The image-portrayals of Nepalese political parties differ from state-owned to private dailies. Is CA hall some kind of military squad? Then why *TRN* is highly emphasizing "muster" ("Into Darkness," 2010, p.4) to refer the collection of votes from law makers while addressing the PM election process. "Muster" is often used in military

sector while assembling soldiers or crew members. Here *TRN* has been implicitly treating contesting leaders, as "soldiers". *TRN*'s position of supporting UML and undermining other parties' role is vivid in this particular case. ("Interesting Game," 2010, p. 4)

Power-mongering of Nepalese political parties was portrayed in one news report of a private daily which stated that one major political party has shown its readiness to go for the "rotational prime ministerial" or "presidential" system to end the existing political crisis. Media reports of the secret meetings of 3 major political parties also give some kind of indication over their "lust for power" tendency and their political manner of ignoring "transparency" towards the event of public concern like meeting among political parties. Such activities portray Nepalese political parties' "power mongering" trait ("UML options," 2010, p.3).

TRN has deliberately associated political parties with negative themes like "lust" and "grabbing power tendency", indicating their never ending hunger for power. Their "public utterances" has been presented as the verification of no matching between their action and words. Their behavior during series of "fruitless" PM election has been described as animal behavior "locking horns" ("Concern for," 2010, p.4). Political Parties who have got people's mandate to write the new constitution and steer the peace process towards logical end were treating public as "hostage" and boasting themselves as "terrorist" as *TRN* has implied in one of its editorials ("Stop Farcial," 2010, p.4).

The conditions for accepting Maoist-led government by other parties, as stated by *TRN* were "dissociation the party totally from its combatants and war time mentality" and "turning the party into a civilian outfit" while there were reports from private dailies where Maoist had justified their party as "civilian" after they had handed the PLA integration issue to the Special Committee led by the government ("Stop Farcial," 2010, p.4). In

addition, the Maoist issues were further elaborated by stating the fact that incorporating "19000 ex-Maoist combatants" into the national army would raise "national question". It can be argued that it is a deliberate attempt of *TRN* to present Maoist as solely responsible party for any kind of national security problem the country would face when such a huge number of combatants would be integrated.

Pranav Bhattarai, a columnist in *TRN*, accuses the Maoists of breaching the parliamentary ethics and values. The Maoist assault during the controversial budget announcement by Finance Minister Surendra Pandey has been termed "Vandalism and raucous activities" ("Gross Indecency," 2010, p.5). Such cynical expressions of *TRN* regarding Maoist issues have given ample space to suspect over the adoption of political agenda of CPN-UML. *Republica* daily reflects on the other side of this event "controversial budget announcement". It states that Maoist had agreed with the parties in introducing a budget only to resolve the financial crisis by amending article 96. In other words, the government would present only a Finance Bill that conferred powers to spend only two-thirds of the previous budget. The columnist of *TRN* has failed to include this side.

The Maoist party has the largest political share in the Constitutional Assembly (237 seats) and they have been given the people's mandate to interfere in any important decision making process like the budget session. Political parties would have forged consensus to table the budget instead of forcefully going for budget announcement without considering the conscience of the largest party in CA. Even the speaker of CA, Subash Nembang, has been incited to use his special authority to take disciplinary action against Maoist lawmakers but speaker Nembang has clearly stated that he doesn't enjoy any such power if he is to stick to parliamentary regulation. Side by side, he has

continuously stated his dissatisfaction over the parties' inability to forge consensus ("Leaders' apathy,"2010, p.1).

TRN repeatedly accuses Nepalese political parties of having either "position based approach" ("Shun Mogerling,"2010, p.4) or "mistrust for each other" ("Agree on Peace,"2010, p.4). The Maoists' explicit distrust towards the Indian Embassy, the American Embassy and the Nepal Army has been criticized by *The Kathmandu Post*. Side by side, the Maoist's credibility is in serious crisis as they are accused of being "politically motivated" and "indoctrinated" referring to their "street centric politics" and "military flab-YCL" ("Shun Mongering,"2010, p.4).

It is evident what kind of political culture has prolonged since the multiparty democracy got space in Nepal. That may be the reason why an opinion leader in one article, has strongly doubted over the competencies of Nepalese political leaders addressing them as "bunch of incompetent leaders". Sadbhavana Party leader Rajendra Mahato, minister of trade and commerce, has commented in one report that there has been trend in Nepali politics where leaders like Surya Bahadur Thapa and Lokendra Bahadur Chand, who belonged to small party Rastriya Prajatantra Party, got opportunity to become prime ministers during 1995/96 A.D. Jhala Nath Khanal, UML chairman, is accused of following the same trend to be the next PM after Madhabh Kumar Nepal resigned ("Poudel ko Umedwari,"2010. p.1). Such instances verify that leaders also use historical references to harm credibility of other parties.

Party conflicts

Politics during the PM elections is marked by conflicts among and within the political parties. *TRN* uses phrases like "raged against each other", "major bone of

contention", "inveterate mistrust", "root of the problem", "military flab", "fringe parties" to signify the state of party politics in Nepal. Such words and phrases are common in *TRN* used to address the conflict, of whatever kind, among political parties of Nepal during the PM elections. . A photo page at the front page of one Private daily which shows CA chairman Subash Chandra Nemang holding talk with seven political parties, includes "For cutting the Gordian knot" in its caption. CK Lal, a famous political analyst has accused NC and UCPN- Maoist for prolonging the on-going crisis (Lal, 2010, p.6) the political criticisms differ from oped to front page photo In the aforesaid photo ("For cutting the Gordian knot," 2010, p.1) one can easily infer the level of disagreement, tussle and mistrust among the political parties. It's so vivid that almost all talks and dialogues seem to yield no fruitful results, except the optimistic quotes of leaders regarding the end of the crisis during the PM election.

Hassles among major parties

Inter-party conflict is not a new topic to discuss about in the "well known" political scenario of Nepal. Leaders fight as if "locking their horns together" on their way to grab power. People's mandate of constitution writing and concluding the peace process doesn't seem to bother them anymore ("Interesting," 2010, p. 4).

Maoist's rage against CPN-UML was apparent during their indefinite strike in the first week of May 2010. Resignation of Madhav Kumar Nepal, as the pre-condition set by Maoist to call off the indefinite strike, verifies such inter-party conflict between UCPN and CPN -UML.

TRN has dug out the failure records of majority government in the past as the justification for UML decision of remaining neutral in PM election in one of its editorials ("Concern over," 2010, p.4). It states that UML will not be repeating the same mistake by

supporting the Maoists for the next leadership as it did after the victory of UCPN-Maoist in CA election-2008. CPN-UML has been tenacious to its particular ideological stance i.e. go for "consensus based government" rather than majority government, after it declared of abstaining from the PM election ("Concern," 2010, p.4)

Ram Chandra Paudel, who remained the sole candidate for PM post from eight round to sixteenth round, used his candidacy as the bargaining tool to make the UCPN-Maoist implement its four point commitments (Bhusal, 2010, p.1), which included return of the seized property; integration and adjustment of the PLA; writing of the new constitution and power sharing. UCPN Maoist which has been continually pressuring NC to withdraw from the PM race had earlier struck a deal with CPN -UML to prevent NC from getting majority in PM election ("NC to drop,"2010, p.1). These examples evoke some level of tussle between NC and UCPN-Maoist, mostly related to the issue of "Who will be the next PM?"

There are opinions that NC and UML's joint efforts to marginalize the UCPN-Maoist might create the situation when the Maoists might dissociate from the peace process and return to the jungle. Lamsal, an oped writer in *The Rising Nepal*, emphasizes the possibility of next government being leaded by Maoists. Formation of the Maoist-led government has been justified as "respect of people's verdict" (Lamsal, 2010, p. 4).

The never ending ideologically directed accusations also elicit some level of conflict among political parties of Nepal. UCPN, the largest party in CA, is accused of trying to establish the "dictatorship" or "single party rule" by capturing the nation legally or illegally and preparing a constitution and integrate PLA in their "own" way ("Poudelko," 2010, p.1). This kind of accusation directly hints at leaders' oral attempt to harm the reputation of their counterparts in the eye of general public. UCPN-Maoist Vice

chairman Babu Ram Bhattarai's charge against other parties (NC, UML and Terai-based parties) of trying to dissolve the CA and start President or Army Rule in Nepal is also suggestive of the ongoing conflict among political parties during PM election.

Intra-party hassles

UCPN-Maoist chairman Pushpa kamal Dahal has formally spoken in front of media that despite his party's main agenda being "national Independence" and "struggle for the Janasambidhan [people's constitution]," his associates were not committed to it. About Vice-chairman Bhattarai, whose possibility of being next PM was much hyped by different tabloids and dailies, Dahal comments: "he always brings new ideas and that makes my line revisionist" ("Pull out from," 2010, p.1). This diversity in the ideologies among Maoist leaders regarding party's future course of action can be considered one of the major crevices within UCPN-Maoist during the PM election ("Pull out from," 2010, p.3).

Within the Maoist party, there were reports that revealed the tension between Dahal and Bhattarai regarding the issue of leading the next government after Madhav Kumar Nepal had resigned. But Bhattarai has clearly dismissed the rumors about his claim for the post ("*Ma pradhanmantriko*," 2010, p.2).

There were rumors about hazy possibility of taking disciplinary action against Bhattarai regarding his controversial interview where he had allegedly revealed confidential information, according to Chairman Dahal and Vice-chairman Mohan Baidya. Such instances are the hints that display the internal tussle among Maoist leaders.

After UML left the leadership in July 2010, there were reports about the possibility of Maoist leading the next government but there was no way Dahal who had once resigned

from the post, was going to be accepted as the next PM again for the other parties. So, internal tussle among top Maoist leaders including Dahal, Bhattarai and Baidya, on the issue of selecting a PM candidate, became visible in different interviews and meetings they attended.

In the case of CPN- UML, the tension between KP Oli and Jhala Nath Khanal was obvious in Nepalese political scenario. *Nagarik Daily* reported that Oli was not happy with the possibility of Khanal being the next PM after MKN. Oli blamed his own Party Chairman Khanal for the latter's "lust" for grabbing the PM post ("Jhala Nathko pradhanmantri," 2010, p.2). *TRN* has rarely raised the issues of conflict with in the CPN-UML unlike other private dailies where reports of internal tussle with in CPN-UML is vivid.

NC, the oldest Democratic Party in Nepal, is also not free of internal conflict. After Sushil Koirala was elected the party chairman, there has been tussle between Sher Bahadur Deuba and Ram Chandra Paudel regarding who will represent NC in PM election. While some level of dissatisfaction with the party ideals and stand was detected, in the form of "number of votes" given by their own party lawmakers, during the elections. One can easily figure out why party lawmakers would show no energy to vote their own candidate. In the twelfth round of elections, NC candidate for PM, Paudel just secured 89 votes. It is important to know that NC lawmaker count 114 out of 601. This doesn't reflect the true sense of unity and trust within NC.

The election debates

Even in the sixteenth round of PM election, Nepal couldn't get a new PM which has, undoubtedly, put the serious question over the formation of full-fledged government and eventually the accomplishment of the Peace Process. It would be very interesting to

know how the media had portrayed the Prime-ministerial period that had prolonged from 21 July, 2010 to January 2011. The theme election debates highlights the major terms which were intentionally used in the opinion articles, news story and quotation by the political leaders as reported by various broadsheet dailies of Nepal, to represent the PM election. Tedious, frustrating, fruitless, purposeless, resultless, longest period, series of horse trading scandals, continuous and meaningless, farcical practice, theatrics or drama, four time flop show, political stalemate, crisis, failed state, mockery of the republican set up and what not. These are the catchphrases used by media to comment on the PM election. The instance of twelfth round of election held on 10 October 2010 helps us to know the level of faith and trust in the Lawmakers, who were entrusted with the responsibility of writing the new constitution, have regarding the PM election. In twelfth round, just 119 lawmakers were present out of 601. A parliamentary regulation regarding PM election states that one-third of the lawmakers must attend the meeting for formal proceeding. If such was the level of ignorance of Lawmakers, who have major stake in deciding the candidate for the most powerful position of the country, the level of optimism in general citizen towards the lawmakers is expected to dwindle. This is where *TRN* seems to represent people's sentiments correctly. What would be the level of hope in a general citizen that those lawmakers would finish the job of writing new constitution before deadline?

The PM election has been frequently termed as "race" or "run". The act of three party leaders Pushpa Kamal Dahal from Maoist, Jhala Nath Khanal (JNK) from CPN-UML and Ram Chandra Paudel (RCP) from NC contesting for the PM post were portrayed as some kind of "games", leaders as "players" and the Constituent Assembly (CA) hall the "playground". The implication could be the level of ignorance of our leaders

and their approach towards the election. Or their lack of seriousness towards the election was another implication ("Interesting Game,"2010, p.4).

PM election, in which NC leader contested as the sole candidate from eighth to sixteenth round of Election, even became a tool for CPN- UML to prolong the tenure of the caretaker government. UML leaders, who have struck the deal before eight round of the election, not to support NC, later were found uttering in media in support of NC's stand of continuing as the solo candidate for PM. UML supported NC's stand by terming it "protection of parliamentary values"("SC tells Speaker," 2010, p.1") but the rhetoric behind supporting NC's instance might be argued as their "dirty" political skill to prolong the tenure of PM election. This gives a strong indication that Nepalese leaders can even change their party ideals if they ever get chance to translate their power mongering trait into reality in any way.

Candidacy - A tool for bargaining

During the prime ministerial period, political leaders have been accused of using their candidacy as the bargaining tool for making other parties implement the past deals or promises.

An op-ed article has stated that the support of Terai-based Parties might give a chance for other parties to lead the next PM but for that their demand of the "endorsement of the Nepali Terai as one province" had to be fulfilled. This clarifies how Terai-based Lawmakers were using their votes to get their demands fulfilled by presenting PM post as "bait" ahead of other parties ("Into darkness,"2010, p.4).

The morality of the lawmakers can be questioned while there were reports of lawmakers selling their votes to Maoist amid the election rounds. This can be argued as the total insanity of lawmakers using their votes for financial advantage or getting their politically motivated demands.

TRN as a propaganda tool

The book *Propaganda and Persuasion* defines propaganda as "the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist. In simple sentences, Propaganda is a specific type of message presentation, aimed at serving an agenda. After MKN resigned from PM post on the evening of 30 June 2010, since then his party CPN - UML has used the state-owned media as a propaganda tool to promote the party stance of "National unity government based on national consensus". This theme will include various instances where *TRN* has been seen taking sides of the ruling party CPN-UML to promote its stance.

In once stance, the role of UML was claimed to be indispensable to form the next government. *TRN* had also portrayed CPN -UML as the most credible party by justifying its leaders' moves of staying out of PM poll as "sacrifice for the country" and fighting for the "broad national consensus". UML decision of staying out of PM election, which has been criticized by private dailies as the hurdle to the peace process and ignorance to parliamentary regulation, has been forced as the only way to peace and prosperity. In addition, historical references and metaphorical expressions were used as the rhetorical devices to strengthen UML argument of consensus based government instead of majority government ("Concern over Political,"2010, p.4).

TRN argues that during the period of the election Maoist and NC lacked sufficient base to lead the next government. Here, *TRN* is using "silence" as a rhetorical device to hide its weakness and simultaneously strengthen the possibility of UML to lead the next government by forming favorable public opinion.

The official voice of *TRN* sounds like the voice of UML when one flips over the *TRN* editorials where most of paragraphs were dedicated, tirelessly, for appreciating every moves of chairman Khanal and PM Nepal. Exaggerating Nepal's choice as the "compulsion" of staying "out of power" rather than "keep the country in crisis" as his virtue, *TRN's* choice of "antithesis" as the rhetorical device is vivid. On the contrary, *TRN's* editorial policy of depicting UCPN with offensive themes like "Maoist Bandwagon", "street centric policy", "military flab" and "hooligans" is the place where once can raise question over *TRN* being motivated ideologically rather than by journalistic norm and values ("PM's Call , " 2010, p.4). There are instances where *TRN* has warned the public about the grave consequences the Nepalese citizen might face if the Maoists got the chance to lead the next government through PM election. One editorial titled "Speaker for Unity" had appealed all to abandon Maoists if country is to avoid the old days of conflict famous as "Maoist Guerilla War" where 13,325 citizens were killed. *TRN's* use of historical reference "Guerilla War" and fact with figures "13,325" as the rhetorical number is quite strategic. It's rhetoric to give the real picture of grave consequences if Maoist led the next government leadership, is apparent in this case ("Speaker for," 2010, p. 4). But there are views from private dailies where Maoists are highly credited for rupturing the feudalistic social structures, awakening the disadvantaged, and instill political awareness into the public at the grassroots level ("Maoist legitimacy,"2010, p.7). *TRN* failed to include this side.

UML's faith on "universal democratic norms and values" and Maoist attempt to establish "one party communist dictatorship" as endorsed in *TRN* had presented the contrast in two extreme ideals between CPN -UML and UCPN. Through such deliberate expressions, *TRN* had tried to heighten UML's positive image while Maoist ideals were associated with non-democratic ideals that would deter their favorable political environment. Attack on Maoist reputation was followed by the irony that the Maoists, despite being the "the largest party" had failed to garner enough majority or "sort of majority". Through such "irony" and deliberate association *TRN* has tried to conclude that CPN-UML's support was decisive to find the new leadership. There *TRN* has remained silent on the fact that the Maoists could have formed the government even with the support of NC and not necessarily of CPN- UML ("And the Political," 2010, p. 4). But there are reports from the private dailies, where other party leaders have doubted over the formation of government under the Maoists Leadership without the end of peace process. *TRN* has stated that Maoists Combatants are still outside the camp and that is the threat to the ongoing peace process. *TRN* has also highlighted the conversion of Maoists Party "armed" to a civilian party (by dissolving its Young Communist League to qualify for the next leadership. At the same time, the editorial's deliberate attempts of associating the particular word "consensus" with the every other words of national values and moral importance like "consensus in the country", "consensus-building", "common cause", "political consensus" or "broader national consensus" is rhetorical too. This exemplifies the *TRN*'s motive of establishing its stance during PM election i.e. consensus urgency at any cost ("Maoists Asked to," 2010, p.4).

TRN has published opinion articles where enough justifications is put forward regarding the UML's stance of "consensus urgency" during the PM election. Emphases

were given over the extreme need of transformation of Maoists party into the "civilian party" for UCPN to qualify for next leadership (Subedi, 2010, p.4). Similarly, *TRN* constantly flatters UML leader's move. The particular case of UML Chairman JNK who had withdrawn his candidacy because of the inability to garner two-third majority of total CA lawmakers as per earlier party agreement, is interesting to know about. His withdrawal from PM election, rather than being portrayed as some kind of agreement or compulsion, is exaggerated as his "sacrifice" for the welfare of the nation. Maoists image is ruined further by citing the historical reference of Maoists failure to run the government which was led by them after their landslide victory in CA election 2008 A.D ("Interesting game," 2010, p.4).

TRN appeals for "amicable outlets" which would pave the way to ensure peace, stability and prosperity was implied to consensus based government rather than majority government. This was the appeal for all parties to abandon the PM election and support UML by going for consensus based government.

The conditions for accepting a Maoists- led government as stated by *TRN* were "dissociating the party totally from its combatants and war time mentality" and "turning the party into a civilian outfit" while there were reports from Private dailies where Maoists have justified their party being civilian party as they had principally put their People Liberation Army (PLA or combatants) under Special Committee led by government ("Stop farcical," 2010, p.4). *TRN*'s rhetorical strategy of just showing "half side" of the issue in the favor of UML is vivid in this case too.

Above stances underscore the *TRN* rhetorical strategy of remaining "silence" in the issues where UML image was likely to be criticized while *TRN* had emphasized other party's failure records and their ideals as "position based approach".

TRN has remained silent on the other party's view about UML's stand of remaining neutral during PM election. Leaders had commented the UML's decision of staying neutral in the PM election as "against" the ideals of Loktantra ("Poudel ko umedwari,"2010, p.1).

They were the instances which demonstrated the critical scenario of government owned media being used as the propaganda tool by the party in power, UML in this particular instance during PM election.

Rhetorical strategies

TRN has applied layers of rhetorical strategies to enforce particular arguments or issues which also include the need of national unity government based on national consensus, as the only alternative to the "fruitless" round of PM election. The inherent rhetorical strategies applied by *TRN* can be found in the tactical use of metaphorical expressions, similes, statistical references and overstatements to weaken the position of other parties while counterpoints and antithesis are used to differentiate UML's "sacrificial" and "moral" public image from the "power mongering" trait of other political parties. Numerous Historical references or flash backs are stated by *TRN* editorials to exaggerate the violent nature and negative role of UCPN Maoists while understatement or silence is used as a strong tool to portray the modesty and ideal image of CPN-UML. One can also detect the use of several Expletives and Repetitions at various places to focus the readers on the urgency of consensus as the last resort to the crisis. Those rhetorical tools were also used to undermine the role of other parties (NC and UCPN) for their act of clinging to "futile" round of PM Election.

The thematic description of the editorials of *TRN* must have given sufficient indications that most of the editorials were firmly in favor of the argument; the contesting parties (UCPN Maoists and NC) instead of participating in the futile round of PM election should leave the election process and support CPN- UML for consensus.

Statistical references can be found in the form of rhetorical numbers "13,000" ("Interesting game," 2010, p.4; "Speaker for Unity," 2010, p.4), "19000" ("Complete the peace," 2010, p.4), and "301" ("And the political," 2010, p.4). They are used to enforce particular issues, whose impact is likely to favor CPN-UML. For example, the rhetorical number "13000" has been used to address the number of people killed during decade-long Maoists insurgency; the rhetoric behind its use is to present the measurable figure of UCPN. Another rhetorical number "19000" refers to the "huge" number of Maoists combatants to be integrated into National Army. Its rhetorical use might be to weaken the political position of the Maoists by emphasizing the level of "complexity" of that particular problem. "301" indicates the number of votes required to win the PM election and its rhetorical use might be restate the ironical political position of Maoists who have failed to secure the majority in the government despite being the largest party in CA.

To present UCPN Maoists as the main hurdle to the peace process, various intricate and complex issues related to Maoists were put forward and repeated whose main rhetoric is to characterize the unacceptable Maoists image. Integration of "19,000" Maoists combatants into to Nepal Army is apparently considered to be impossible if one was to stick to UML's and NC's argument that all PLA's did not fulfill the criteria for the recruitment in Nepal Army ("Shun Mongering," 2010, p.4). To add more, use of figures "19,000" has elaborated the complexity of PLA integration issue that eventually create the Maoists image as an obstacle to the peace process.

In one stance, *TRN* has used "at least three months" as a rhetorical figure to present the tenure of UML leadership of care taker government. This simultaneously intends to imply the incompetence and failure of NC and UCPN to form the next government despite owning the people's mandate to lead the country as the first and second largest party in CA respectively ("Khanal's," 2010, p.4). It might be intended to highlight the decisive role of CPN-UML in leading the government in such a transition period of the country. Presenting the fact that Maoists candidate Pushpa Kama Dahal had failed to garner even 51 percent of total 601 CA votes, *TRN* has argued that Maoists should pull out of "race" and support UML to form national consensus government based on National Unity ("PM's initiative," 2010, p.4).

Aristotelian appeals namely *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos* are also used in *TRN*'s editorial by *TRN* so as to create favorable public opinion for UML and derail the public image of other parties.

TRN has strategically applied Aristotelian modes of appeal 'ethos' to enhance the credible image of CPN-UML and the role of government under their leadership in steering the peace process towards logical end. *TRN* has also, at different level, implied CPN -UML as the most credible party by justifying its party decision of staying out of PM poll as "sacrifice for the country"; struggle for the "people and country" and "broad national consensus". Pointing out the particular case of MKN's resignation on 30 June 2010, *TRN* has tried to establish Mr Nepal as "a man of high moral" ("PM's call," 2010, p.4). In addition, his act of staying out of power has been manipulated as his "sacrifice" of the PM post so that the country would get a new political outlet. In order to maintain the dignity of CPN-UML- led government, *TRN* has appealed all to form a permanent government with the participation of all people "irrespective of ideology, cast and creed".

These types of expressions are intended to elicit a favorable response from the public as well as other parties in favor of CPN-UML. To address the government accountability towards the public, TRN has appealed all parties to "iron out their differences" ("parties must,"2010, p.4) or "bury their partisan interest" to resolve the crisis ("Khanal's optimism,"2010, p.4).

In almost all core editorials, the major thesis statements were centered on appealing all to support the particular political stand i.e. national unity government based on national consensus, ("PM's Initiative," "2010, p.4; "PM's call," "2010, p.4; "Interesting game," "2010, p.4; "Speaker for," "2010, p.4;) being uttered by CPN-UML as its political stand throughout the period of PM election. Some thesis statements were focused on major unresolved issues (integration and adjustment of Maoists combatant, writing of new constitution and power sharing) related to Maoists as the causes of persisting political deadlock. The "claim" of *TRN* throughout the editorials is that only the national unity government can solve the national problems ("Need to revise,"2010, p.4) and accomplish the peace process. These claims were supported by the past failure of two majority governments ("Concern over political,"2010, p.4) and the incapability of the on-going futile round of PM election to elect a new PM, in the form of evidences. Providing such argument, *TRN* has appealed to all parties to quite the election and go for consensus government. The consequences of the on-going PM election has been associated with the national problems such as development activities, budget announcement for the fiscal year 2067/68 B.S and annual policies of the government to state the seriousness of the crisis ("Parties," 2010, p.4).

The use of particular terminologies throughout the editorials of *TRN* like 'tedious', 'frustrating', 'fruitless', 'purposeless', 'resultless', 'longest period', 'series of horse-trading

scandals', 'continuous and meaningless', 'Farcical practice', 'theatrics or drama', 'four time flop show', 'political stalemate', 'crisis, failed state', 'mockery of the republican set up' etc evoke the level of pessimism and frustration towards the outcome of series of PM election. Such human qualities can be associated to one of the modes of Aristotelian appeals namely "pathos". The use of words like 'lust' ("Concern over,"2010, p.4) Tedious, frustrating, fruitless, purposeless, result less, longest period, series of horse trading scandals, continuous and meaningless, Farcical practice, theatrics or drama, Four time flop show, political stalemate, crisis, failed state, mockery of the republican set up etc to address the "power mongering" of political leaders reflects their lack of accountability, if not their misuse of power. In once editorial, to highlight the need of budget announcement by caretaker government, the issue of budget has been associated with 'salaries' of general people with which daily life of the public would be influenced badly ("PM's initiative,"2010, p.4). Its rhetorical implication lies in the idea that the practical complexities to be seen in the daily life of general people have been put forward as the consequence of any kind of delay in budget announcement.

To strengthen the consensus urgency, *TRN* has used *ethos* as one of the major rhetorical tools to influence the PM candidates to go for consensus- based government rather than majority government. Citing the Historical references of failure of past two governments (first led by UCPN Maoists and second led by CPN-UML), *TRN* has appealed all parties to pull out of race, as CPN-UML did, and demonstrate their morality and public accountability of a good "mannered" politicians. There are several instances where *TRN* had tried to justify the UML's position as the most credible and appropriate choice in the on-going deadlock. JNK, who withdrew his PM Candidacy before the first round of PM election as per earlier all-party-agreements, his voice has been given ample

space in the editorial "Khanal's optimism" where *ethos*, one of the Aristotlean modes of appeal, was used to enhance Khanal's credibility.

Antithesis is used to "compare and contrast" UML and other parties such that other parties were portrayed as fighting for power while just opposite to them, UML is presented as the only party fighting for "country and people". Antithesis has been used by *TRN* to portray two different images i.e. positive image of CPM UML and Negative image of other parties. There are instances where CPM UML's decision of remaining neutral or not supporting other party's PM candidate has been justified as "sacrifice for the country" while decision of NC and UCPN Maoists to contest for "futile" round of election has been criticized as the "power grabbing tendency", "partisan interest", "position based approach" ("Mutual Trust," 2010, p.4), "politically motivated and indoctrinated" ("Complete the," 2010, p.4), "major bone of contention" towards the peace process and "regional parties extracting unnecessary advantage to their favor" ("Agree on Peace," 2010, p.4) and fighting for "power and position rather than country and people" ("PM's call," 2010, p.4). Among these two contrasting images, *TRN* has attributed positive inducing words like "consensus" and "sacrifice" to UML's leader activities while all those negative connotations and denotations were deliberately associated with the moves of other parties. This was simply the characterization of two contrasting political images of CPN UML, and of the remaining parties lying at the other extreme.

To enhance the political image of UML leaders, particularly Khanal and Nepal *ethos* has been used. Overstating Khanal's withdrawal before PM election has been defended as his "sacrifice". This is the particular case of characterization being used as the rhetorical tool to characterize leaders, especially in endorsing the *ethos* aspect of the leaders of the ruling parties. Rhetorical questions were inserted in the editorial so as to

answer the queries of public regarding the grave consequences the country might face when Maoists would be given the responsibility of next leadership.

TRN has recalled the incident popular by title "Gaur Massacre" to intensify the conflict among Maoists and Terai-based parties. Such historical references are drawn sparingly to reiterate the impact or liveliness of past event and in this particular case *TRN's* intention might be to intensify the conflict between the Maoists and Terai-based parties such that it would create a favourable atmosphere for for UML during the elections. . Furthermore, the editorial "Agree on Peace for Government" has highlighted the Maoists related issues like "PLA integration" and "disarming YCL" as the "root of the problem" indicating that the Maoists were the main hurdles in the peace process. This might be intended to minimize the possibility of the Maoists leading the next government. While the rhetorical strategy of *TRN* to associate "consensus", which CPN- UML has adopted as its key mantra since they pulled out of PM election before first round of election, with universally acceptable themes like "broad national consensus", "new era of peace and stability", "common agenda" ("PM's call," 2010, p.4), "rightly" ("Complete," 2010, p.4), and "national unity" ("Mutual Trust," 2010, p.4) were noticeable. This was indeed aimed at emphasizing UML's strength and undermining the role and existence of other parties.

TRN's deliberate use of definitive word "pro-consensus" forces has left two major choices for other parties. Either they have to support the procedure of formation of majority government i.e. PM election and deter the crisis further. Or they can support and join UML to forge consensus and form national unity government based on national consensus, which will eventually identify them as "pro-consensus" forces was what the CPN -UML wished. The purpose of using such rhetorical devices is to strengthen the leadership claim of CPN- UML.

TRN uses various other narratives in order to safeguard the position of UML in the on-going political deadlock. In one instance *TRN* mentions a "one point war" to defend UML's position and present the testimony of Maoists' violent nature. In this context, "One point war" referred to the "resignation of PM Madhav Kumar Nepal" as the only pre-condition set by Maoist to sit for dialogue during their indefinite May 2010 strike. *TRN* intends to verify that even after PM Nepal resigned on June 30, 2010, UCPN Maoists did not succeed in their motive. Thus raising serious questions over the Political motive of Maoists, their possibility of government leadership through the on-going PM election has become weak ("Interesting Game," 2010, p.4). This feeble and suspicious image of Maoists is further asserted by phrase like "nothing new" emphasizing the all-time never-changing political trait of UCPN Maoists.

Metaphors and similes are used in the editorials of *TRN* to help readers visualize the conflict between political parties, in this particular case NC and the Maoists. To present the act of NC and the Maoists candidate contesting in the series of PM election, a conceptual metaphor of "locking their horns over" has been used to imply their animal or inhuman behavior in such a crucial event ("Interesting game,"2010, p.4). Similarly the physical assault by Maoists lawmakers during controversial budget announcement has been explicated as rowdy and violent as the street gangs and goons. The remarkable use of metaphors as a rhetorical strategy can be found in one editorial where the futility of the on-going series of PM election has been addressed by "Sisyphean absurdity" , "horse trading" and "theatrics" ("Stop Farcical,"2010, p.4). Such expressions help reader to visualize the low level of significance carried by PM election such that CPN UML's stance of consensus based government would be left as the most convincing alternative.

Expletives have been used to highlight certain idea or words. "Needless to say" ("Interesting game," 2010, p.4) has been used to emphasize the situation of uncertainty being repeated in the series of PM election. The rhetoric behind the use of "Needless to" can be found in appealing the contesting leader to pull out the PM election and support UML for national consensus-based government. The expletive "once again" was used to underscore the argument that UCPN-Maoists, which has failed to lead the country in the past, was again trying to grab the power. The expletive "even" ("Speaker for," 2010, p.4; "PM's call," 2010, p.4) and "at least" ("And the political," 2010, p.4) were used to highlight the time length "six period after the PM resigned" implying the ironical state that despite MKN's resignation, which used to be the only condition to call-off the indefinite strike by the Maoists, there has been no any sign of new government being formed. To draw the attention of all readers towards the consensus based government as the only alternative to the persisting deadlock, "the only" has been used as the expletive ("Khanal's optimism," 2010, p.4). Also, "rightly" ("Complete the peace," 2010, p.4) was used to present the UML leader's justification on their decision of neutral stance in the PM elections.

All above rhetorical tools are generally used for varied purposes such as keeping the reader focused, emphasizing a point or incident, explaining something clearly, organizing the arguments in effective manner, answering the possible queries of reader and balancing those queries, holding the reader's attention, make reader agree on certain arguments and make them remember (Harris, 1997, p.2). *TRN's* major intentions behind applying such rhetorical strategies to present the PM election was to remain silent in the matter that was likely to harm the UML's image; to endorse the credibility of UML leader by associating their character with political ethics and manner; to argue the necessity of

Consensus based government rather than majority government; to dig out the past negative records of Maoists and other parties so as to form favorable public opinion for CPN UML; and finally to prolong the tenure of the care taker government which will give CPN- UML more time to institutionalize it's political ideals amidst UCPN and NC, the largest and the second largest party in CA respectively.

Conclusion

Nepalese leaders get their say in media easily, and projecting on others' weaknesses rather than boosting one's own strength in the name of national welfare has become a kind of political tool for them to sustain their political career, leaving the general welfare in peril.

Was the national unity government based on the national consensus, the only alternative of the ongoing political deadlock the country faced? If not, then why *TRN* promoted that particular stand throughout the elections through its editorial voice? This has raised the serious and debatable question over the UML (the ruling party during PM election) using government owned English daily *TRN* as its propaganda tool to promote its cause. Simultaneously, it has undermined the "watch dog" role of media.

After going through this report, one can easily be convinced that *TRN*, the only state-owned English daily of Nepal, has been used intensively to reinforce the voice of CPN-UML instead of representing the "voice of voiceless". Be it either UML's "consensus urgency" or "leadership claim" by Jhala Nath Khanal *TRN* has constantly attempted to create favorable public opinion for the ruling party CPN- UML. In addition, *TRN* has justified not only UML's decision of staying out of PM election but also put full-stop over

the possibility of formation of full-fledged government under the leadership of other parties. UML's deal with the Maoists not to support NC, new regiment as the alternative to PLA integration issues and rotational leadership system where UCPN, NC and UML will lead the government on periodic basis are emphasized too. In order to justify every move of UML and reinforce "consensus urgency" as the core argument of UML, *TRN* has used various rhetorical strategies to persuade its readers.

Now, it would be natural to state that *TRN* has been serving UML's particular stance of national unity government based on national consensus. Thus, there is no doubt that *TRN* has been used as a propaganda tool by ruling CPN-UML to promote its political stance during particular political context.

Such biased stance of the state-owned media surely raises earnest questions over accuracy, balance and credibility of news being disseminated. The public cannot be expected to get the information of actual happenings in the country if the state media serves the interest of the ruling forces.

This research can be further extended with a comparative study of editorials of state-owned *TRN* and corporate dailies. The extension of this work would give a bigger picture of reality of Nepalese politics during the PM elections. It would equally serve as a comprehensive documentation of one of Nepal's most volatile periods in the absence of a powerful government this research has added little, if not ample, to the vast field of knowledge of rhetoric. Moreover, through conducting such rhetorical research in communication field, it is expected to broaden the horizon of application of rhetoric in academic sector.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Definitions

source: *A handbook of rhetorical devices.* <http://www.sccu.edu/faculty/r_harris/rhetoric.htm>

Antithesis: Antithesis establishes a clear, contrasting relationship between two ideas by joining them together or juxtaposing them, often parallel structure. Human beings are inveterate systematizers and categories, so the mind has a natural love for antithesis, which creates a definite and systematic relationship between ideas.

Expletive: Expletive is a single word or short phrase, usually interrupting normal syntax, used to lend emphasis to the words immediately proximate to the expletive. It emphasizes the words on each side of a pause or interruption in order to maintain continuity of the thoughts.

Hyperbole: Hyperbole, the counterpart of understatement, deliberately exaggerates conditions for emphasis or effect. In formal writing the hyperbole must be clearly intended as an exaggeration, and should be carefully restricted.

Metaphor: Metaphor is a comparison which imaginatively identifies one thing with another, dissimilar thing, and transfers or ascribes to the first thing (the tenor or idea) some of the qualities of the second (the vehicle, or image). Unlike a simile or analogy, metaphor asserts that one thing is another thing not just that one is like another.

Pathos: Pathos are the means of persuading an audience by an appeal to *emotions* such as pity, guilt, anger, or love. Imagery, imagination, and anecdotes (mini-stories) can be used to great effect.

Simile: Simile is a direct, expressed comparison between two things essentially unlike, but resembling each other in at least one aspect. In formal prose the simile is a device both of art and explanation, comparing the unfamiliar thing to be explained to some familiar thing (an object, event, process, etc.) known to the reader. There is no simile in the comparison, "My car is like your car," because the two objects are not "essentially unlike" each other.

Understatement: Understatement intentionally represents something as less than it is, either for ironic emphasis or for politeness and tact. When the writer's audience can be expected to know the true nature of a fact which might be rather difficult to describe adequately in a brief space, the writer may choose to understate the fact as a means of employing the reader's own powers of description.

Appendix II

Core Editorials on PM Election [from *TRN*]

Source: <http://www.gorkhapatra.org/archive>

Interesting Game of Politics- 24 July 2010

The second round voting held Friday for electing the nation's prime minister too has failed to choose one to replace the incumbent caretaker prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal. None of the candidates - Puspa Kamal Dahal Prachanda and Ram Chandra Poudel - have been able to muster the needed support of the lawmakers to stake claim to the post of the prime minister. Even the contest for the second round failed to convince the lawmakers to lend their support to one of them to ease their run for prime minister is a pointer that shows against the manner and purpose for which the two politicians are locking their horns over.

Needless to say, Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal had stepped down from his position on condition that the one he is leading currently will be replaced by a national unity government. UCPN (Maoist) had waged the one-point war against the current government led by Madhav Kumar Nepal and sought its ouster for reclaiming the lost seat of power. Maoist leader Prachanda was more desperate and impatient to restore the position he had lost out to Nepal. He had claimed that the government of national unity would be formed soon after the removal of Nepal as prime minister. But this has not become possible even after the passage of two weeks since Madhav Nepal stepped out of the PM's post.

The CPN(UML), the Madheshbadi parties and some fringe parties seem to be in favour of the government of national unity since this alone will provide the way out for breaking the current political logjam facing the country. CPN (UML) leader Jhal Nath Khanal withdrew from the race for prime minister in the first round because he was not able to muster the needed support for forming the government that has the backing of two-thirds majority of the legislators. The remaining two contestants - Dahal and Poudel - who fought for the second time should also read the writing on the wall carefully and sincerely and realize that the government of bare majority cannot address the problems faced by the country. They should join hands with pro-consensus forces to facilitate the process for formation of the government of national unity.

Agree On Peace For Govt. –26 July 2010

The Nepali Congress and UCPN (Maoist) are ranged against each other, and their headlong collision has posed problems for the formation of a national unity government. It seems that the third round of the elections may also not help create a new government. What lies at the root of the problem is their inveterate mistrust and misperceptions that are plaguing the peace process in the country. Moreover, the major bone of contention is the issue relating to the integration of the ex-Maoist combatants. Even the Madhes-based parties that are key to the formation of a national unity government at present have set preconditions to the adjustment of the ex-PLA combatants. They have sought concurrence of the Maoists for the bloc entry of Madhesis into the national army to secure their support for the formation of the government.

In this case, the stance of the Nepali Congress, UML and Madhes-based parties does concur except the bloc entry of Madhesis into the army. Moreover, some fringe parties have refused to extend cooperation to the Maoists for the formation of a national unity government until and unless it sheds its military flab that is creating political imbalance and apprehensions in the country.

The Maoists seem willing to resolve the issue, but they seem to be waiting to take the rein of the government to carry out the integration on their own terms. It should be commended that the Maoists have become flexible and responded to the call of the Madhes-based parties, but this might not satisfy the UML and Congress. The Maoists have re-emphasised the need to consult with individual combatants to ascertain their willingness, interests and demand before presetting and fixing the number for integration. They have

put forth a proposal for setting up a new regiment for adjustment and incorporation of the Maoist combatants in case there is objection to integrating them in the Nepal Army. Though nothing new is contained in the Maoist proposal, it can provide a basis for further negotiation to resolve the issues and take the peace process forward to a logical conclusion.

Against this backdrop, the major parties, including the Nepali Congress and UML, should loosen their stance in crafting a new government through engagement with the Maoists as their persistent deadlock has allowed room for the regional parties to exploit the situation and extract unnecessary advantage to their favour.

UML's Stance –29 July 2010

Despite the rhetoric for the need of a national unity government based on national consensus, the major political parties have not been able to agree on the formation of such a government. As a result, the country is clearly heading for a majority government, the process of which is underway in the legislature-parliament. The election for the new prime minister in Parliament started after the parties failed to choose a candidate to lead a national unity government. Two rounds of the elections were held in Parliament to choose a new prime minister, but these efforts were squandered as none of the two candidates in the race were able to muster majority support. Chairman of the UCPN-Maoist Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Poudel are in the race to form a majority government, although they, too, are not convinced that a government based on majority support can resolve the country's problems and complete the task of writing the constitution and concluding the peace process.

The Maoists were the ones who repeatedly sought a national unity government, and consistently pressed for the resignation of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal. Their demand for a national unity government may have been guided by the motive of grabbing power once again. But the call for a national unity government is genuine as the Maoists must have realised the need for it because of the failure of the two majority governments. But the Maoists could not stick to its stance for a national consensus government and have joined the race for a majority government.

But the CPN-UML has been consistent in its demand for a national unity government. The party, in general, and its chairman Jhala Nath Khanal, in particular, have been seeking a consensus government for a long time, and its stance has been further re-enforced by the decision not to accept the premiership even when Khanal had already been assured of support by two-third members of the House. But Chairman Khanal withdrew from the race to form a majority government and kept stressing on a consensus government. Had Khanal so desired, he could have refused to withdraw from the race and would have already been Nepal's new prime minister. Other leaders, thus, need to learn from Khanal's sacrifice and work for broader national consensus, which alone can resolve the country's pending problems. Time is running short, but we can still do a lot for which serious attempts need to be made by all the parties.

Speaker for Unity – 10 August 2010

The Chairman of the Constituent Assembly Subash Chandra Nemwang has underlined the need for forging unity among all the people in Nepal irrespective of their ideology, caste and creed to transform Nepal into a peaceful, stable and prosperous democracy. Speaking at a programme organised by the Association of Indigenous Nationalities Journalists of Nepal in Kathmandu the other day, Nemwang said that the constitution-writing process has been delayed because of mistrust among the political forces. The crisis of trust among the political parties has also been reflected in the election of the prime minister. As a result, the country has, thus, become hostage to the indecision and wrangling among the parties. Questions are, thus, being raised about the intention and ability of the parties to write the constitution. It is natural for the people to doubt the parties' intention because they have already proved their incompetence by failing to write the constitution within the mandated two years.

The intention of the parties has come under strong public scrutiny especially after failing to pick a new prime minister even after four rounds of election in Parliament. When they cannot elect a prime minister in time, what ground is there to believe that these parties will be able to give the country a new constitution and conclude the peace process in time? Writing the constitution should be the common concern

and cause of all the political parties. Different political parties have different views on different issues, which is common in a democratic political system. But this must not hurt the common cause of the people. So the political parties need to bury their partisan differences and put all their strength on writing the new constitution. It is hoped that the entire process will be completed within the extended timeframe, and the country will get a new constitution, formally declaring Nepal a federal democratic republic. So this process should not be hampered at any cost because the fate of the country and our democracy is clearly linked with constitution writing.

If we fail to have the constitution in the next ten months, the entire efforts put on the peace and political process since the last four years will go to waste. Should we again fail in this process, there are chances that the country might return to the bad old days of the conflict. So, as said by the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, all the political parties, leaders and other conscious citizens must remain united and make constructive contributions in institutionalizing the achievements of the people's movement. It is a crucial test of the political parties in the eyes of the people.

PM's Call for Consensus Govt. – 13 August 2010

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has once again called for broad consensus in the country so that the ongoing peace process can be complete at the earliest. Talking to media persons in Lalitpur, Prime Minister Nepal called upon all the parties to act more responsibly so that the political deadlock in the country could come to an end. The prime minister's call comes at a time when the country is mired in political wrangling among the parties that has made the political problems more complicated. The country has not been able to pick a new prime minister even six weeks after Prime Minister Nepal resigned. Prime Minister Nepal, who is known as a man of high morals, quit not because he had lost a majority in Parliament but to pave the way for national consensus and formation of a national unity government.

He chose to be out of power rather than keep the country in a crisis. The Maoists had been demanding the resignation of the prime minister as a condition for forging national consensus. Some of the leaders of his CPN-UML party had also joined this Maoist bandwagon. The prime minister had time and again said that he would never be an obstacle in forging national consensus and that he would make any kind of sacrifice for the country, which he proved in action by quitting even when he commanded a comfortable majority in Parliament. His resignation aimed at facilitating the formation of a national unity government. But the party that claimed it could forge consensus as soon as the prime minister resigned has been proved wrong. It is clear that the demand of the Maoists for the prime minister's resignation was guided by their motive of grabbing power. The Maoists have once again cut a sorry picture in the eyes of the people. It is a testimony that the other parties have no faith in the Maoist party and it is not possible to form a government under the Maoist leadership.

The Maoists have just one option, that is, to quit the race for prime minister and support the candidate of another party so that a national unity government can be formed. Similarly, the Nepali Congress also needs to take lessons from the series of failures in the prime ministerial election, which is proof that the Congress also does not have the support of the House. A national unity government is the need of the hour, for which the Maoists and the Congress need to make sacrifices so that the country can get a new prime minister.

And the Political Impasse Continues – 25 August 2010

The legislature-parliament failed to elect a new prime minister even in the fifth round of the election held Monday. Both the candidates - Pushpa Kamal Dahal of the UCPN-Maoist and Ram Chandra Poudel of the Nepali Congress - failed to secure the support of the majority members of Parliament to be elected the country's prime minister. As a result, the sixth round of elections has been fixed. The constitutional provision requires a candidate to get at least 51 per cent of the votes out of the total number of seats in Parliament. The legislature-parliament has 601 members, and 301 votes are required for any candidate to be elected prime minister.

None of the parties in Parliament enjoys a majority. Thus, an alliance between two or more parties is necessary to get a majority in Parliament. The UCPN-Maoist is the largest party but is short of a majority. If it gets the support of either the CPN-UML or Madhesi parties, it can form a majority government. For the Nepali Congress, support of one party is not sufficient to achieve a majority. The Congress needs the support

of both the CPN-UML and Madhesi parties. The deadlock has continued because of this political equation in Parliament. The CPN-UML and the Madhesi parties have maintained their neutrality in the election and have abstained from the vote. Their neutrality is aimed at compelling the two big parties to agree for a consensus-based government to be represented by all the major political forces of the country. Their demand seems to be valid in principle, to a large extent.

Given the constitutional provision and political equation, consensus is a must to accomplish the political tasks of achieving peace, stability and democracy in the country. The constitutional provision requires a two-third majority for the passage of the constitution. If a government is formed on majority basis, it would only create misunderstanding among the parties that would try to hamper the constitution and peace process. The two previous majority governments failed to deliver anything to the people. The new government, if formed on majority basis, is also likely to meet the same fate.

The attempt to form a majority government is tantamount to pushing the country into further uncertainty and instability. The parties are well aware that the task of writing the constitution and concluding the peace process cannot be accomplished without national consensus. But their attempt to form a majority government is a testimony that these two parties are desperate to grab power. As the country is in the midst of most difficult times, the parties need to rise above partisan interests and seek an amicable solution to the problems.

Parties Must Cooperate –14 September 2010

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has called for a conducive atmosphere for national consensus so that everyone can work collectively to face the challenges facing the country. During an interaction in Janakpur the other day, Prime Minister Nepal, who is also a senior leader of the CPN-UML, called upon all the parties, in general, and the Maoists, in particular, to create such an atmosphere for confidence building so that the present political deadlock could be overcome soon. The call of the prime minister has come at a time when the country is in its worst political crisis as the political parties have not been able to iron out their differences. This has been reflected in the election for the prime minister in Parliament where the parties have not been able to give the country a new prime minister even in seven rounds of the election.

In the absence of a permanent government, the development activities have been hit hard, and the country is faced with several other problems. If this situation continues for long, the country would fall into a deeper crisis which will have long-term negative impact on the political, social, economic and development sectors. The main tasks ahead of the country and the political parties at present are to complete writing the constitution and concluding the peace process as early as possible. But these tasks have not been accomplished due to wrangling among the major political parties. The new constitution should have been written in two years, but it could not be done within the stipulated timeframe, which compelled the parties to extend the life of the Constituent Assembly by one more year. But no significant progress regarding constitution writing has been made even four months after the term of the Constituent Assembly was extended. This is an indication that the constitution may not be written even within the extended time. If the constitution is not written within the next eight months, the country would fall into another constitutional crisis. But the political parties do not appear to be serious about the consequences and instead are preoccupied with their partisan interests. This attitude of the political parties has created apathy and frustration among the people.

Already stung by poverty, unemployment and inflation, the state of uncertainty has further afflicted the people. It is high time the parties concentrated on the problems of the people rather than being heavily engaged in their own partisan gains and losses. The parties have to bury their partisan differences and arrive at a common ground so that the political stalemate is resolved and a conducive environment created for writing the constitution and concluding the peace process.

Need to Revise Decision – 15 September 2010

Chairman of the ruling CPN-UML has reiterated his party's stance not to support any of the candidates even in the eighth round of the prime ministerial election in Parliament unless there is guarantee

of a national unity government. At a time when the CPN-UML was expected to change its earlier decision of neutrality, the recent remarks of the CPN-UML chief shows that the country may not get a new prime minister even in the eighth round of the election. The decision of the CPN-UML is aimed at creating national consensus to form a national unity government with the representation and support of all the parties in the Constituent Assembly. In the present political situation, the decision of the CPN-UML may appear to be correct because a majority government cannot solve the country's problems and conclude the peace process. The utter failure of the two previous majority governments testifies to the validity and relevance of the UML's stance. But can we always keep the nation a hostage to indecision forever in the name of a national unity government? This is the question the political parties now must answer to the people. The exercises for consensus and a national unity government have failed. The parties now must give an outlet to the country's political deadlock, which can be done only when the parties elect a new prime minister as early as possible.

Although the main responsibility of the parties at present is to write the constitution in the next eight months and conclude the peace process, for which national consensus is a must, they also have the responsibility of giving the country a responsible government. In the absence of a permanent government, development activities have come to a standstill. If the situation lingers any longer, a situation might come when the civil servants may not even get their salaries as the budget has not been presented in Parliament. Thus, the political parties must draw a clear demarcation between constitution writing and running the government. The parties must forge consensus to write the constitution, but the same may not be applicable in running the government. If the government is formed on the basis of national consensus, that would be good for the country. However, even if national consensus cannot be forged, a government must be formed and a new prime minister must be elected on the basis of majority votes. Although the stance of the CPN-UML for a national government is appreciable, its decision should not be the cause of a protracted crisis in the country. The CPN-UML needs to review its decision and come forward to support any of the two candidates in the eighth round of the election.

PM's Initiative – 29 September 2010

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has taken a new initiative to find an amicable solution to the problems facing the country. Prime Minister Nepal convened a meeting of all the political parties in the capital the other day in which representatives of 10 parties participated. In the meeting, Prime Minister Nepal sought suggestions and advice from the leaders of the different political parties to find an outlet to the present deadlock that has created one problem after another for the country. The parties have not been able to give the country a new prime minister even after the incumbent prime minister stepped down almost three months ago. As a result, the annual policies and programmes and annual budget of the government could not be presented in Parliament. A caretaker government normally does not announce the annual programmes and budget. But Nepal's situation is different and a big crisis could surface if this situation continues for long.

The House had approved a budget sufficient only for four months. This period is going to expire next month. If the present stalemate is not solved and a new government is not formed soon, a situation will arise when the government may not be able to pay the salaries of its employees let alone finance the development projects. Visualising this possible scenario, the prime minister has started consultations in order to avoid such a situation. At the meeting, representatives of the different political parties expressed their views for an early resolution of the present political deadlock to avert possible economic and other crises in the country. According to them, although consensus is the only way out to solve the country's problems in the present context, the country cannot always be held hostage in the name of consensus. An early decision must be taken either to forge national consensus or seek an alternative approach.

The CPN-UML is doing its best to create national consensus, and it has been partly successful. The CPN-UML has so far convinced the Maoists, as a result of which Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal has already withdrawn his candidacy to pave the way for consensus. Now the focus is on the Nepali Congress to withdraw its candidacy from the prime ministerial race. The Congress candidate, Ramchandra Poudel, was unable to muster adequate support from the lawmakers in the eighth round of the prime ministerial election even when he was the sole candidate. This shows that the present process will not give a tangible solution to the country's crisis. Thus, it is high time the parties, including the Nepali Congress, acted more wisely and judiciously to create national consensus.

Lessons To Be learnt – 1 October 2010

It is a matter of concern for all that Nepal is spiralling downhill in all sectors due to the political instability. As politics is a determinant factor, other sectors get affected when the political scenario changes. However, the parties and leaders appear to be least bothered about the country and the people's woes. The present situation is the reflection of the politics prevailing in the country. Every sector seems worried due to the ongoing imbroglio among the key political forces of the country and their insensitivity towards the nation. In this, the people have been the ultimate sufferers.

Having remained under dictatorial regimes for long, the Nepali people rose against the dictatorship and established democracy in 1951. However, multi-party democracy was short lived, for which the parties were partly responsible as bitter fighting, fragmentation and rivalry among themselves encouraged the then king to take over. Had the parties been united and cooperated with each other on fundamental issues like democracy, economy, foreign policy, defence and security, the king would not have dared take such an undemocratic decision. But the parties failed to learn lessons even after that. As the parties and people remained fragmented on the issue of what political course to take, the partyless Panchayat ruled the country for 30 years with an iron fist.

The parties, however, realised the strength of unity in 1990 and fought together, which restored democracy in 1990. Soon after the restoration of democracy, the parties again started repeating the same old mistakes of their ugly rivalry and fight for power. The power struggle was so bitter and ugly that it gave birth to many problems in the country. While the country continued to be mired in many problems, the main parties remained busy in their own interest of grabbing power and retaining it. This situation gave rise to the Maoist insurgency, which cost the country more than 13,000 people and destroyed national property worth billions of rupees. As the country again fell into political chaos, the king took over and unleashed suppressive activities. This compelled the parties to come together in the fight against the king's dictatorship and Jana Andolan II was launched, which abolished the monarchy and established republican democracy in the country.

But history has been repeated as the parties are now fighting for their own interest rather than for the interest of the country. The country is now paying the price of the parties' folly. The parties have not been able to write a new constitution for Nepal and their activities and behaviours indicate that they may not be able to complete the task of institutionalising the achievements of Jana Andolan II. Given the present situation of the country, the parties must learn lessons from history and forge unity to address the problems facing the country before it is too late.

PM's Call For Consensus – 5 October 2010

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has once again called for broad national consensus to take the country out of the present political gridlock and help conclude the ongoing peace process at the earliest. Speaking to media persons in Biratnagar on Monday, Prime Minister Nepal, who is also a senior leader of the ruling CPN-UML party, made it clear that the issue concerning the formation of the new government and its leadership can be determined only when the parties agree on a power sharing formula. The prime minister's remarks have revealed a new fact that the present political stalemate is not because of any political ideology or value-based politics, but one motivated by the desire to have a bigger say in the government. This is self-evident as the parties seem to be interested more in power and position rather than the country and the people. This indicates that the country is not likely to get a new government in the near future.

In the absence of a full-fledged government, the country and people have become the real sufferers. The caretaker government has been in office for more than three months, which is quite unusual. As the parties have not been able to elect a new prime minister even in nine rounds of election, the annual policies, programmes and budget have not been approved even three months after the new fiscal year began. This situation is likely to have a negative impact on our national growth and economy.

As observed by the prime minister, there is no alternative to national consensus because of the present power equation in the Constituent Assembly and the constitutional provision. The main responsibility of the parties is to write a new constitution, whereas the interim constitution clearly states that a two-third majority is a must to approve the constitution. But such a majority is not possible unless the three major parties can come together. Despite understanding this, the parties are pursuing their own agenda and blaming the other parties for the crisis.

This is no time to trade blames and accusations but to cooperate with one another to complete the historic job of writing the constitution and concluding the peace process. The arrogance and partisan politics that the parties are pursuing only indicate that they are not serious about the mandate of the people. If not, the parties must stop the present ugly fight for power and work to forge national consensus so that constitution writing and the peace process can be completed in time.

Khanal's Optimism – 7 October 2010

Chairman of the ruling CPN-UML Jhalanath Khanal has expressed his optimism that a resolution would be found to the present political crisis through mutual understanding among the major political forces in the country. Speaking at a reception organised by the Manmohan Memorial Foundation in Kathmandu on Wednesday, the CPN-UML chief made it clear that the new constitution would not be written and promulgated even within the extended time frame if the parties failed to manage the political problems at the earliest. Given the present political deadlock due to which the country has not gotten a new government even three months after the prime minister stepped down, Khanal's remarks indeed make big sense.

The political deadlock has already created several problems in the country and has also raised questions about the ability of our political parties to manage their problems and steer the country towards peace and prosperity. If this situation continues, the peace process is likely to stay in a limbo which may push the country towards becoming a failed state. The inability of the political parties to form a government has already tarnished the image of Nepal and Nepali political parties in the international arena. The parties know that consensus is the only way out in the present situation and political equation. Despite understanding this reality, the political parties are not prepared to agree on a common agenda by compromising on their partisan interests. This is the root of the problem. As the country is passing through the most difficult time in modern history, the parties must work towards achieving national consensus. As a result of the parties' gross negligence of their main task of writing the constitution, this process has been already delayed. Unless the parties give up their partisan agenda and work together, the country is unlikely to get a new constitution in the next eight months.

By not completing the constitution-writing process in two years, the political parties have already proved their incompetence. If the constitution is not written within the extended time, their inability would further be exposed both at home and abroad, which is not good for our young republic. There are elements that have always been willing to sabotage the ongoing political process so that they can reap benefit out of the confusion and uncertainty. The inability of the parties to work together would only encourage and embolden such elements, which would not be in the interest of the country. Thus, the parties, as observed by UML chief Khanal, must bury their partisan interests and work honestly to create national consensus so that the present political deadlock is resolved and the country sees a new era of peace and stability.

Complete the Peace Process – 10 October 2010

UML chairman Jhala Nath Khanal has emphasised on the need for cooperation and consensus among the political parties. He has snubbed the allegation leveled against him time and again on his selfishly-disguised motive to grab the post of the prime minister and contended that he was not interested in seeking power at all. According to the UML boss, three major issues need to be resolved to overcome the current situation of stalemate and address the national questions, which include integration and adjustment of the Maoist combatants, writing of the new constitution and power haring. These issues can be tackled only when the parties agree to form a government of national unity.

As rightly maintained and upheld by the UML leader, the country had governments enjoying the support of the majority members in the past, but they could not secure consensus, and there was no

convergence of shared perspectives. As a result, neither the peace process could be taken forward to a logical conclusion nor the historic task of writing the constitution could be accomplished. Today around 19,000 ex-Maoist combatants are encamped in cantonments spread across the country waiting for a decision on adjustment and integration. The United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) has already decided to quit in three months' time, presenting thus a big challenge to the major political parties to settle issues pertaining to the peace process.

It is indeed an obligation of the parties to agree on the modality of the adjustment and integration of the ex-Maoist combatants to ensure that the peace process is accomplished before UNMIN completes its mission in Nepal. The major impediment to the peace process has been the position-based bargaining of the political parties. The Maoists are in favour of integration of the ex- PLA combatants lock, stock and barrel whereas the other parties, especially the Nepali Congress, has emphasised on seeking different options and choices for the adjustment and integration of the combatants.

The Nepal Army also seems opposed to the integration of the combatants in its rank and file as the ex-PLA fighters are politically motivated and indoctrinated, and they are not professionally trained to follow the disciplinary norms prescribed for the national military. At this juncture, as time is running out for the accomplishment of the peace process, the political parties should arrive at a consensus so that problems associated with ex-PLA adjustment, peace and constitution writing are tackled.

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Budget A Must – 21 October 2010

In view of the delay in presenting the annual budget for the current fiscal year, due to the inability of the political parties to give the country a new government, the caretaker government is preparing to announce the budget within this month to avert a financial crisis in the country. If the budget is not announced within this month, the government will not be able to spend a single rupee as the budget that was earlier approved comes to an end on November 16. The new budget is a must before November 16, for which the government and the ruling parties are making preparations. But the Maoists have threatened to obstruct the budget to be presented by the caretaker government.

It is true that the tradition of presenting the annual budget by a caretaker government is definitely not correct politically. But there is no alternative to this at the moment. Since the parties have not been able to form a new government, the country cannot be kept hostage to their indecision and inability forever. The threat by the Maoists not to allow the budget to be presented is guided by the ill-intention of pushing the country into a fiscal disaster. Against this background, the Maoists need to be pragmatic and give up the politics of confrontation. If the budget is not presented and passed in a few days, there will not be adequate funds even to provide the salaries to the civil servants, security personnel and others. If the Maoists obstruct the budget presentation, the government would be compelled to seek an alternative way to prevent a financial crisis. Thus, the Maoists must be serious about the country, people and democracy.

When the Maoists were waging a jungle war, they were dubbed the enemy of democracy. But the attitude of the people both at home and abroad has changed towards them after they joined peaceful politics. The Maoists were expected to transform themselves into a genuine democratic and responsible political force. But recent activities have shown that the Maoists were using peaceful politics to achieve their goal of capturing state power by force. If the Maoists want to prove their democratic credentials, they must abandon the politics of protests and cooperate with the democratic forces for the institutionalisation of democracy. They should begin by showing responsible behaviour in Parliament and allowing the passage of the budget. They must realise that the country and the people are above the political parties and their partisan interests.

Shun Mongering For Power – 23 October 2010

Prime Minister Madhab Kumar Nepal emphasized, the other day, on the need of cooperation and consensus among the political parties to resolve the major issues in the country. Speaking at the reception organized by the party he advised the leaders not to hanker after grabbing the post of prime minister but sacrifice for the overall interest of the nation. As stressed by the prime minister, some intricate issues need to

be resolved to address the national questions which include integration and adjustment of the PLA, writing of the new constitution and power sharing. These issues can be tackled only when the parties agree to form the consensus government.

Needless to repeat, the country had the governments enjoying the support of the majority members in the past but they could not forge consensus and convergence of shared perspectives. As a result, neither the peace process has been taken forward to logical conclusion nor the historic task of writing the constitution has been accomplished yet. Today around nineteen thousand ex-Maoist combatants have been encamped in cantonments spread across the country waiting for the decision on their adjustment and integration. The United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) has already decided to quit by next January presenting a big challenge to the major political parties to settle issues pertaining to the peace process. It is indeed an obligation of the parties to agree on the modality of the adjustment and integration of ex-Maoist combatants to ensure that the peace process is accomplished before UNMIN completes its mission in Nepal.

The major impediment to the peace process has been the position based approach of the political parties. Though the Maoists have become flexible as indicated in the ongoing discussions they are still in favour of integration of the ex-PLA combatants en masse whereas other parties especially Nepali Congress has emphasized on looking out for different options and choices for the adjustment and integration of the combatants. The Nepal Army also seems opposed to the integration of the combatants in its rank and file as the ex-PLA fighters are politically motivated and indoctrinated and they are not professionally trained to follow the disciplinary norms prescribed for the national military. At this juncture as time is running out for the accomplishment of the peace process, political parties should arrive at consensus so that problems associated with ex-PLA adjustment; peace and constitution writing are tackled before the termination of the final tenure of the UN mission in Nepal.

Appendix III: Date of Elections and Results

Election Round	Date of Election (2010 A.D)	Ram Chandra Poudel (NC Candidate) (For/Against/Neutral)	Pushpa Kamal Dahal-Prachanda (UCPN Candidate) (For/Against/Neutral)	Jhala Nath Khanal (CPN-UML Candidate) (For/Against/Neutral)
1	21 July 2010 Wednesday	124/235/228	242/114/236	
2	23 July Friday	123/241/218	241/113/218	
3	2 August 2010 Monday	124/246/186	259/114/208	
4	6 August 2010 Friday	122	212	
5	23 August 2010 Monday	124	246	
6	5 September 2010 Sunday	122	240	
7	7 September 2010 Tuesday	119/245/151	252/110/159	
8	26 September 2010 Sunday	116/2/61	PKD withdrew from PM election before 8 th round of PM election.	
9	30 September 2010 Thursday	105/2/61		
10	6 October 2010 Wednesday	109/1/156		
11	7 October 2010 Thursday	104/1/40		
12	10 October 2010 Sunday	89/1/29		
13	26 October 2010 Tuesday	98		
14	29 October 2010 Friday	96		
15	November 2010 Monday	96/2/31		
16	4 November 2010 Thursday	82/2/17		
17	12 January 2010 Wednesday			

Appendix III: Major Political Events relevant to PM Election

- 26 September 2007:** The Seven-Party Alliance endorses a republican agenda.
- 28 Dec 2007:** Parliament votes in favor of abolishing monarchy.
- 10 April 2008:** Historic Constituent Assembly Elections held.
- 27 May 2008:** Nepal swore in 575 lawmakers.
- 28 May 2008:** Lawmakers vote just before midnight to abolish the 240-year-old Hindu monarchy and establish a secular republic.
- 11 June 2008:** Deposed king Gyanendra leaves palace.
- 26 June 2008:** PM Girija Prasad Koirala resigns to clear the way for the formation of a new coalition government.
- 19 July 2008:** Lawmakers vote to elect the country's president; no candidate won the 298 votes necessary.
- 21 July 2008:** Ram Baran Yadav of Nepali Congress (NC) elected the President.
- 23 July 2008:** Subash Nemwang of CPN (UML) unanimously elected the chairman of the Constituent Assembly (CA).
- 15 August 2008:** Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" elected Prime Minister of Nepal.
- 16 November 2008:** Constitution Assembly endorses schedule for Constitutional Commission, the deadline for promulgation of the constitution on May 28, 2010.
- 29 December 2008:** CA makes first amendment to CC calendar.
- 6 January 2009:** CA makes second amendment to CC calendar.
- 13 January 2009:** Madhav Nepal assigned chair of the CA Constitutional Committee.
- 13 April 2009:** CA makes third amendment to CC calendar.

29 April 2009: CA makes fourth amendment to CC calendar.

4 May 2009: Pushpa Kamal Dahal resigns.

23 May 2009: The Parliament elected CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal as the new Prime Minister.

16 July 2009: CA makes Fifth Amendment to CC calendar.

28 August 2009: Nilamber Acharya from Nepali Congress (NC) elected chair of the Constitution Drafting Commission.

9 September 2009: CA makes sixth amendment to CC calendar.

2 May 2010: Indefinite strike called by UCPN Maoist demanding the PM Madhav Kumar Nepal's resignation. PM Nepal didn't resign. Maoist called off strike on May 9, 2010.

30 June 2010: PM Nepal resigned.

21 July 2010: First round of PM election held. No majority votes gained by any party. CPN-UML withdrew from the election. UCPN and NC contested for PM post.

26 September 2010: Eight round of election held. NC candidate Ram Chandra Poudel became the sole candidate for PM post till seventh round of PM.

12 January 2010: This date was slated for 17th round of election but it was called off regarding the all party agreement to start fresh PM election with new procedure. The sole candidate NC leader Ram Chandra Poudel pulled of the PM race.

Appendix IV: Sample of a Code Sheet

Theme (Party Conflict, Intra- party, Party Policy, Procedure, Political history, analytical, crisis and future, consensus urgency, alternatives or solution, frustrations, Dissatisfaction,)	Explanations with thesis statement	Rhetorical Device (argument and counter argument, aristotlean appeals of ethos, pathos and logos,, SAFER, expletives, metaphor, Irony, antithesis, anaphora, exxageration or Hyperbole)	Evidence for Extracts or Remarks
July 29, "Interesting Game of Politics"	In this editorial, Humorous tone is used in editorial to expose the party’s lack of seriousness in the PM election or in giving logical end to the peace process. Leader’s animal act or their in-human approach to such a highly public concerned event. Their typical political trait “Power mongering” is connoted.		
Consensus Urgency	1- UML's stand of avoiding the majority government and going for consensus government.	1- Historical references "Read writing on the wall", see the past records to move ahead in the present.	
Victory	2- Refer to 301 seats out of 601 for qualification of the Post of Prime minister. 3-	2- Silent Clichés "needed supports" – emphasis	
policy or political manner	It talks about morality of politics. Credibility of a good politician.	ethos "against the manner"	
party conflict	1- Three party leaders contesting for the Prime minister post. 2- leaders animal trait, their portrayal as a power monger, highlight the ill intention of the	1- metaphor "race or run" – politics is a race 2- metaphor and repetition or anaphora – "locking their	

	<p>leaders, lacking accountability towards the people</p> <p>3- sheds light on the Maoist Unlimited Hadtaal in recent past that has pushed country into a lot of trouble</p>	<p>horns over" – metaphor for bull-like animal image</p> <p>3- Metaphor or narrative – "One point war" – single agenda or the resignation of contemporary PM Madhav Kumar Nepal as a pre-conditions set by Maoist to call off the unlimited strike.</p>	
Frustration	<p>1. It's obvious that leaders are going to smash the public hope of positive change. Predictable behavior of party leader, people's less expectation from them, evokes sense of pessimism from citizen level</p>	<p>1. phrase "Needless to say"- NO change at all</p>	
solution or alternatives	<p>1. Promoting UML's agenda- Implicitly asking other parties to assist UML because it has been claiming "National Consensus Government" its agenda unlike Maoist and NC which are competing for majority government. - appeal to the other parties to join UML's hand for the formation of "consensus" government as if it is the sole Mantra of UML</p> <p>2. Increasing the credibility of the UML party and its leader Jhal Nath Khanal by pointing the party's sacrifice for the post, evoking the positive party image</p>	<p>1. silent clichés or deliberate use of "pro-consensus forces"</p> <p>2. Ethos "Khanal withdrew from the race for prime minister" – credibility of the khanal and UML Party.</p>	