

Common Minimum Program

The ruling Nepali Congress (Democratic), Communist Party of Nepal -UML, Rashtriya Prajatantra Party and Nepal Sadbhawana Party jointly unveiled a Common Minimum Programme (CMP) during a press conference in the capital Kathmandu on June 30, 2004. Presented below is the full text of the CMP:

Prime minister shree bahadur deuba has been reinstated as a result of the peaceful democratic movement launched by various political parties for the past 20 months for democracy, peace, progression and activation of the constitution as well as the voice of civil society. This has brought about new opportunities to move ahead in the direction of finding solution to the political and constitutional crisis which has become more complex and obstructed, as well as in the direction of restoring peace.

We have lots of works to be accomplished before us at this national context. However, there is a need to work with consensus on minimum policies and programmes to be formulated and implemented immediately at this special juncture of national crisis that has become serious and complex day by day.

A historic responsibility has come upon the shoulders of the political parties to consolidate democracy by utilising the achievements made, resolve the Maoist problem that has emerged as a major problem of the country, establish sovereignty of the people firmly, move ahead democratic process by activating the constitution, maintain law and order, provide relief to the people, hand over state governance to elected government by reactivating the people's representative bodies through election by maintaining peace in the country, and build a base for implementation of the progressive programmes of socio-economic transformation.

We have been ready to move ahead unitedly by being committed to the minimum programme of common consensus (mpcc) by upholding nationalism, democracy and people's interests to fulfil this very historic responsibility.

The people's expectations have not been fulfilled despite important achievements made in the direction of democracy and development after the restoration of multiparty democratic system. We have been moving ahead in the direction of total national unity and consensus by learning from past weaknesses to face the serious challenges facing the nation.

We have agreed to participate in the all-party government and run it through mutual consultation and understanding with a sense of responsibility towards the country and the people, though we have our own political values and programmes. We declare that we are fully agreed and committed to the following minimum programme of common consensus (mpcc) as a guideline for the all-party government.

A. Safeguard and promotion of national interest and democracy

1. The reality that independent and sovereign people are the source of state power and that state power to be exercised as per the constitution will be established in practice by leading the country in the path of progression through further democratising the state while at the same time safeguarding the achievements of the people's movement of 1990. If any decisions are to be corrected, it will be done in accordance with the constitution.

2. The principles of full abidance of human rights will be established in practice while making the government commitments more transparent. The victims will be compensated by undertaking probe on the incidents of serious violations of human rights that have taken place in the meantime.

3. The elected representatives of the sovereign people will be handed over responsibility of the state governance by activating the people's representational bodies through election.

4. The works of corruption prevention and control and good governance will be moved ahead. Co-operation from the civil society will be accepted in these works. Reform programmes will be implemented for effective administration that is clean and committed to profession.

5. Legal arrangement will be made as per consensus in the local bodies.

6. Necessary works will be done while being active for the protection of national unity, independence and integrity. Necessary initiative will be taken for building national consensus on national security, foreign policies and water resources, and the national resources and means will be utilised for the best interest of the nation and the people. National interest and self esteem will be protected in the agreements and conventions to which Nepal has been a party.

7. Foreign policy based on the UN charter and the principles of panchasheela will be adopted. Unified efforts based on national consensus will be made to resolve the Bhutanese refugee problem.

B. Resolution of the problems arising from the Maoists and restoration of peace.

1. Peace talks will be prioritised with maximum flexibility for the dignified political solution that is acceptable to all in the national politics on the basis of national consensus for restoration of sustainable peace in the country by resolving the Maoist problem that remains as a major problem of the country.

2. We will move ahead with a proposal of progression by studying alternatives presented by various sectors so far for the outlet and political solution to the Maoist problem and sustainable peace. A programme of progressive political solution of consensus will be implemented after reaching a positive conclusion of the talks.

3. Programmes of rehabilitation of the affected and displaced from the violent conflict and of the reconstruction of the physical infrastructure will be implemented with high priority.

C. Immediate relief

Special arrangement for rescue and relief will be made for the victims and displaced of the violence and conflict. People's participatory programmes will be launched to provide direct benefit to the people in the Maoist affected areas through special programmes of development and construction.

2. High priority will be given to works of guaranteeing law and order to the people.

3. Necessary arrangements will be made with priority to make the goods and services of people's daily needs cheaper and easily available.

4. Government budget and involvement will be essentially increased in important aspects in human development point of view including in literacy, primary and informal education, primary and basic health, drinking water, sanitation and rural infrastructure building programmes.

5. Judicial arrangement and utilisation of self employment and foreign employment will be made for the youths especially the conflict-hit people. For this, loans in low interest rates will be provided from the financial institutions.

6. Necessary measures will be taken to draw support from all concerned to maintain the schools as violence free zones.

D. Commitment for progression and changes.

Political

1. Restructuring of the state machinery will be made as per the constitution to reach the benefits of democracy to the masses and to strengthen the foundation of inclusive politics.

2. The system of internal democracy and management of political parties will be strengthened by improving it. The state will be run as per the principles of rule of law and good governance will be guaranteed, and the people will be given a feel of democracy by extending the access and services of governance to the people through administrative reform. The civil service and security bodies will be kept away from politics and made professionally skilled and committed, unpunishability will be ended and the commission for investigation of abuse of authority (CIAA) and bodies related with dispensation of justice will be strengthened and made effective.

3. The recommendations of the high level committees constituted in the past on election reform to correct the mistakes in the election system will be implemented to ensure free and fair elections.

4. Constitutional methods will be sought to make the national assembly more active. It will be developed as an assembly of women, indigenous nationalities, dalits and well known figures of national life.

5. The local bodies will be made autonomous and equipped with resources and means and established as local government as per the spirit of decentralisation for empowerment, responsibility and transparency in the local level.

6. Candidacy of women in local bodies and in the house of representatives will be increased gradually. Participation of women will be extensively expanded in all areas of national life.

Economic

1) All the efforts for development would be centred on alleviation of poverty. Economic and social policies and programmes would be formulated on the basis of social justice, economic growth and equitable distribution for building an egalitarian society. The liberal economic policy would be utilised for the supreme interest and well-being of the nation and the people by identifying its utility and limitations. Highest priority would be given for the development of agriculture, hydroelectricity, tourism, human resources and physical infrastructures. Reform programmes would be carried out with importance in the modern sectors of the economy like industries, banking and finance, transportation, communications and the management of government corporations. A programme with clear vision for national industrialisation would be implemented. Foreign investment would be attracted for the national interest. Emphasis would be laid on the development of the co-operative! Sector. The private sector would be encouraged.

2) The overall land management, agricultural development and the standard of living of farmers would be raised through the implementation of the land reform programme. The

access of land-less farmers on land would be guaranteed. Special attention would be given for the economic and social uplift of the agricultural labourers, the freed kamaiyas and the land-less squatters. A long-term agriculture plan would be implemented by giving high priority to the development of agricultural sector. The state would make more investment in communities and regions that are lagging behind on the basis of the geographical information system.

3) A special programme would be undertaken for resolving the unemployment problem and foreign employment would be made regular and systematic.

4) Concrete programmes would be implemented for the development of remote areas as per the concept of proportional development and a special mechanism would be put in place for the development of the karnali zone.

5) The state would play special role making prioritised investment in rural areas lacking access to market system in co-operation with the local bodies, community, non-governmental institutions and organisations and the private sector.

6) Concrete steps would be taken towards ensuring systematic urbanisation, environmental conservation, population management and providing clean drinking water and food security to the people.

Social

1) Special programmes, including social security programme, would be implemented for the development of the people of the backward classes, communities and regions.

2) Emphasis would be given to the participation of the dalits, backward indigenous peoples and nationalities and the inhabitants of the terai region in all sectors of national life.

3) Special arrangements would be made for the education, skill development and employment of the dalit and backward communities, indigenous peoples and nationalities and the women, disabled and orphans from economically impoverished families. The dalit commission would be strengthened through appropriate legislation.

4) Equal rights of women to property would be established and provisions would be made for taking stern action in crimes like rape, domestic violence and trafficking in humans by ending all kinds of disparities. Special laws and programmes would be formulated and executed for women development, equality and creating opportunities. The national women's commission would be strengthened through necessary legislation.

5) Social security of labourers would be guaranteed for doing away with the inequality that remains in the labour market and necessary reforms effected in the existing labour laws for raising the productivity of industry and business.

6) All kinds of inequalities existing in religion, language and culture would be fully eliminated. Special arrangements would be made for the protection, promotion and development of the languages and cultures of all the castes and indigenous peoples and nationalities. The nationalities' foundation would be strengthened.

7) Programmes would be implemented for the development of art, literature and culture and for the protection and development of talents in those sectors.

8) Special provision, even of scholarship, would be made in order to encourage children from the dalit and backward communities to go to school. Similarly, arrangements have been

made for providing reservations to the women, dalits and the backward indigenous peoples and nationalities in higher education.

9) Special emphasis would be given to technical and vocational education for making the education system employment-oriented. Arrangements would be made providing quality education by keeping it within the reach of the people and a national campaign would be undertaken in order to eliminate illiteracy. Informal education would be expanded.

10) The policy of handing over the management of schools to the local community and the responsibility of running the programmes and budget related to health posts, post offices and agricultural extension programmes to the local bodies would be further expanded and executed in an effective manner.

11) The problem relating to citizenship existing in the Terai region will be solved on the basis of national consensus.

12) A community health policy would be adopted by increasing the investment in the rural health sector in order to making the health services affordable and accessible to the general public.

13) Provision would be made for making justice fair and accessible and alternative system of conflict management would be developed at the local level.

14) Concrete steps would be taken to eliminating all kinds of superstitions, social evils and improper practice or custom.

15) Arrangements would be made in which the state would protect the rights and interests of the non-resident Nepalis and incentives would be provided for utilising their skills and capital in the country.

Source: Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, His Majesty's Government of Nepal