

The Bhutan MONTHLY

REPORTER

Vol V, No 46 Nov 2008

(Journalism of Courage for Existence of Free Media)

www.bhutannewsservice.com

Pages 4 Rs 4

HIGHLIGHTS

Rizal Loses Hopes

Exiled human rights leader, who has been advocating for human rights of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese citizens since 1988, has expressed sadness when thousands of his fellow-countrymen are leaving Nepal under Third Country Resettlement Program (TCRP).

In a video footage to Netherlands-based radio journalist from Bhutan, Nanda Lal Gautam, Rizal has regretted for not being able to achieve anything under his leader.

"I am really regretful to those who expected much from me", Rizal said. He has hoped that the folks under TCRP would retain their community bond, working together for dignified repatriation.

Citing security reason and probable attack from within the community, Rizal said he could not visit the camps to see off his relatives, friends and community leaving their camp permanently. "I am not allowed to go beyond ring road", he said. **TBR**

Youth Congress Attended

Youth Organization of Bhutan (YOB) represented Bhutan at the annual congress of the Norwegian youth organization AUF, held from October 16-19 in Oslo.

According to Rajen Giri, YOB president, organization's representative for European region Akaash Budathoki, currently living in Sweden, attended the congress where youth organizations from 15 countries were invited.

Budathoki is politically active and working very closely with some organizations in the region under YOB, Giri said in a statement.

Budathoki briefed the congress about political situation in Bhutan and distributed advocacy materials to participants.

Leader Rai Released After 17-years Jailbird Life

**Thakur P. Mishra
Kathmandu, Nov 06**

Bhutan police authority has released Dhan Kumar Rai, the founder general secretary of Bhutan People's Party (BPP), who was kept in Chemgang jail since 1991 accusing him of involving in political campaigns.

The authority released Rai on November 1 following pressure from International Red Cross Society (ICRC) on the medical ground. Rai, a severe heart patient, is also suffering from psychiatric problem due to cruel tortures inside jails.

Rai, who re-joined his family in Khudunabari camp on November 5, told Bhutan News Service (BNS) that he had

Junior Jigme Crowned, Vows to Remain Guardian of Nation

**Bhutan News Service
Thimphu, Nov 06**

Junior Jigme, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck has formally become the youngest king in the world from November 6. 28-year-old Khesar was crowned as head of state with grand celebrations throughout the kingdom that recently adopted so-called written constitutions.

Oxford-graduated Khesar received felicitations from high ranking officials and religious bodies, later followed by diplomats and invited guests.

Conducted in the Tashichho Dzong, a massive 17th century white-walled fortress that serves both as administrative headquarters and a monastic center, the

coronation was an elaborate display of color, mingled with sacred Buddhist rituals.

A couple of days back, the Royal Monetary Authority released new Nu. 1,000 and Nu. 50 currency notes to mark the coronation of junior Jigme.

"Destiny has put me here. I will protect you as a parent, care for you as a brother and serve you as a son. I shall give you everything and keep nothing. This is how I shall serve you as King." These were some of the most inspiring and animated words of the speech, the newly crowned fifth King of Bhutan, Khesar, gave in his first public address to the nation, on November 7 at the Chaglimithan stadium.

Bhutan Sees First Daily Newspaper

**Bhutan News Service
Thimphu, Nov 02**

Bhutan on the day of Hindu's second largest festival Bhaitika got its first daily newspaper named Bhutan Today. Buddhist monks were invited to pray for its success on the occasion of its lunch on October 30. The first daily, an eight-page morning paper, is priced at Nu 5.

Monks chanted prayers and rang bells and drums were banged as the newspaper's first copies rolled off the presses at an auspicious hour chosen by astrologers.

Until this day, Bhutan had three bi-weekly newspapers – Kuensel, Bhutan Times and Bhutan Observer. The first is controlled by the government while other two are privately owned.

It is feared whether the paper will be able to survive at a time bi-weeklies have

fierce competition for the small advertising revenue. Practically, no private advertisers exist in the country and all revenue for the newspapers must come from government ads.

In its first editorial, the daily complained of unfair competition and said other papers asked the Ministry of Information and Communications to deny a license to operate the daily.

But Tenzin Dorji, the newspaper's 32-year-old managing director, expressed hope that they would be able to overcome all difficulties. He claimed the paper will have a print run of 18,000 copies while readership at national level is as low as 13,000. The daily comes in English but plans to bring its national language edition soon, as law demands so.

The daily will find it hard to deliver copies to all parts of country where few passable roads exist.

not yet made any future plans such as involving in political activities", added Rai.

Responding to a query of the BNS, Suman, his brother, said happiness have at once emerged within their family members following the release of Dhan Kumar. "We are happy to meet with him, who is also a committed and visionary leader of the nation", said Suman.

BPP, one of the political parties in exile and where Rai is said to have been considered as one of the founding members, has not yet reacted to his release.

At least few hundreds of political prisoners are still kept inside Bhutanese jails and their latest condition is never made public.

The government had asked the public transport entrepreneurs to halt all their services in Thimphu and major highways until the coronation celebrations were completed.

The government had been practicing the vehicular movement ban since few weeks under the banner to help decrease the daily consumption of fuels and protect environmental pollution cause by the carbon emission from vehicles.

Meanwhile, political parties in exile have asked junior Jigme to guarantee human rights and freedom in Bhutan. In a statement released yesterday, National Front for Democracy has urged Khesar to repatriate the exiled Bhutanese immediately.

Repatriation Urged

**Bhutan News Service
Thimphu, Nov 01**

A group of exiled Bhutanese led by chairman of Human Rights Organization of Bhutan S. B. Subba submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal on October 29 urging the Nepalese government to take up efforts for repatriation.

In a memorandum submitted to PM Dahal, the group claimed resettlement to third countries was against the international standards which caused confusion on some exile Bhutanese who are 'not farsighted' and Nepalese diplomats.

The memorandum stated that resettlement has brought negative impact in camp life such as weakening security situation, family split, suicide, decreasing interests on student towards education among others. However, there have not been any reports of suicidal cases in the camps since the resettlement process began.

The group demanded suspension of resettlement process unless Bhutan clearly states its position, organize a round table meeting among Nepal, Bhutan, India and representatives of the exiled Bhutanese and formation of a special committee to look after the issue among many.

Addressing a public gathering in Beldangi after their meeting with the Nepalese PM, human rights activist Subba said all options – resettlement, rethink is best for them.

He asked the government of Nepal and the UNHCR to immediately stop the resettlement program.

Publisher/Chief Editor

T. P. Mishra

Editor

Teju Prakash

Associate Editor

Ichha Poudel

Layout/Design

Vidhyapati Mishra

News Coordinator

Arjun Pradhan

EPC 2377, GPO 8975, Ktm Nepal
www.bhutannewsservice.com
editbr@yahoo.co.uk

The publication is supported partially by Rajen
Giri (USA)

Analysis**Coronation And Expectations: A Story From Bhutan****By Govinda Rizal**

Let November 6 come and the world's media will be focused on Bhutan where the crown Prince Jigme Keshar Namgyal Wangchuk will put on the raven crown and replace his father on the golden throne.

The grand coronation and the felicitations to the new monarch will take place in the presence of hundreds of thousands of Bhutanese citizens and hundreds of invited VIP guests from abroad. The coronation of the fifth Druk Gyalpo has other important implications too. The occasion coincides with the completion of a hundred years of rule by the monarchs from the Wangchuck dynasty.

Around the 1900s, Sir Ugyen Wangchuck, a feudal lord of central Bhutan was instrumental in mobilizing British support on his favor, through his skill of interpretation and mediation between the British (then in India) and the Tibetans to rise above his contemporary neighboring feudal lords.

He established an institution of monarchy conglomerating numerous feudal states and principalities through tacit understandings and military power. He was crowned on December 17, 1907 as the first monarch.

The dual festivity of the coronation and the centennial of monarchy will extend for around two months.

On the occasion, the new king is to be conferred with several titles: the Druk Gyalpo, the youngest monarch in the present world, the First monarch for the newest democracy in the world; numerous epaulettes, honors and medals. In return, he will vow to serve the people and possibly bring out a fresh motto for his reign to prove he has his vision un-succumbed to and above his father's populist philosophy of Gross National Happiness.

The new king has innumerable challenges to face, to establish his valor at par to his predecessors. He is warming up the golden throne at a time when the nation itself is traveling an unknown journey with a new system where the king, the government and the national institutions are held together by a constitution for the first time. Earlier kings had the freedom to use their logic and might. Unlike his father and grand fathers, the new king will sit and watch the members in the parliament elected by the people rule the country. The most bitter moment will be when they make rules and restrictions to chain him to a constitutional statuette. The citizens have immense respect and expectation from the monarchy and he

has limitations to give back. The century of monarchial system has made the people believe that the king, country and state sovereignty go together as one.

He is expected to grant amnesty, if not to all, to a significant number of prisoners. Ironically, to magnify the statistics, many prisoners whose terms had expired as early as 2005 are being detained for the release on the auspicious occasion of the coronation. For mysterious reasons their release was not done when the country shifted from autocratic to constitutional monarchy.

The worst enemy to fight is on the economic front. The economic divide between the rich and poor is widening and extremism is growing. The precincts to topographic disadvantages have been a major hindrance to equitable and holistic development. He has, on one hand, to continue several tacit relationships established during his father's era with the mighty northern dragon and whimsical southern elephant; on the other hand, he must ensure that the country passes to his descendants as smoothly as it has reached into his hand.

Looking back to match previous monarchs' position numerically to their contribution to the nation; the monarchs in odd number turn are better remembered by historians and legendaries than the monarchs in even number turn. To keep up with this precedence, the fifth must do many great things. He has to complete and correct several misdeeds of his father's reign and make new success stories for himself.

In 1990, the former king channeled the military to brutally run over a mass protest that made one sixth of the population flee the country and seek refuge elsewhere. He proclaimed to solve the problem within three years (deadline set to 1993) or else abdicate from the throne. He was unable to solve the problem even after 15 years. He failed in his part but kept the promise and abdicated from the golden throne premature to his age, in favor of his son, the new king.

The new king is hardly exposed to the realities outside the palace wall and school fence. He must have been convinced by what he had learned from the immediate people most of whom were the members shielding the former king. Even if he can assume to be ignorant of the refugees from his country, he will face serious questions in international arenas. To repatriate the people and make a harmonious whole by joining the factions divided long before, will be a test of his ability. The

option remains that either he chooses to solve it or follow his father's way to abdication.

The Year 1993 was the worst year for the former king. The country's monetary reserves were almost gone. Most of the money was spent to pay people who left the country, to sponsor the evictors and to maintain a large army and militia. A request to India for supplementary funds met with a bargain, a flush out of United Liberation front of Asom (ULFA) fugitives from their hideouts in Bhutan, in return.

The rout was completed at the cost of the king meeting an accident on the way and one of the princes injured during the operation. Keeping such stories under pleasant smiles, the new king has to maintain cordial relationship with the present government in India as well as with several groups fighting against their governments in the neighborhood. More than the mutual relation with the center government in New Delhi, the new king must institute intimacy with Gangtok, Calcutta, Gauhati and Itanagar and possibly Darjeeling too, if the people win a separate state, for which they are struggling.

The former king who ascended the throne as a teenager could never come out of the cordon of his ministers, most of whom were relatives, family members and others, to exhibit his real potential and exert his influence. Often, he was a puppet of his ministers and an implementer of their sinister designs. For 26 years he was confined to a mere implicit ceremonial throne. For the first time in 1998, he shuffled his earlier cabinet and made his own choice to form a new one. The most fortunate part for the young monarch is the presence of his wise and weathered father. With long and bitter experiences, he is the best aid and a guiding deity to the young monarch.

When the two giant neighbors with growing economies and nuclear strength go competitive; when the people continue to expect more and more, everything that was not achieved in the past hundred or more years; the young monarch will need the wisdom learned from Luntenzampa, Darjeeling, London and Paro, and his in-born potential; to politically save Bhutan, diplomatically prevent incursion; to lead the nation to a self sufficient Shangri-La; to guide the people for a meaningful living; to establish and maintain peace, prosperity and harmonious coexistence of the living and the non living entities of the Earth.

New King...?

"Not to an exception, still senior Jigme holds the remote control in governing the country."

Junior Jigme, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck formally became the youngest king in the world from November 6. 28-year-old Khesar was crowned as head of state with grand celebrations throughout the kingdom that recently adopted so-called written constitutions.

Many analysts and political thinkers have considered Khesar's coronation day as the opening of door towards democratic Bhutan. It would be too immature to say that the country would see ways ahead for fostering people's democracy until few developments from the newly crowned monarch is seen.

Junior Jigme vowed to protect all Bhutanese nationals as a parent, care for them as a brother and serve them as a son. While addressing the first public gathering on November 7 at the Chamlimithan stadium, Khesar said he would give everything to Bhutanese citizens without keeping anything with him. It is noteworthy to mention here that the coronation day coincides with the completion of a hundred years of rule by the monarchs from the Wangchuck dynasty.

The direct rule of Wangchuck dynasty in Bhutan, for almost once century, has always suppressed Nepali and Sarshops-ethnic communities. It should not be forgotten here that Khesar's father, Jigme Singye Wangchuk was behind the curtain—as the leader of grand designer, during the time the then government evicted one hundred plus thousands Bhutanese. Not to an exception, still he holds the remote control in governing the country.

Currently, Bhutanese people have kept high hopes on junior Jigme. However, it is still a matter of debate as to whether he would transform himself to a democratic king. Expediting the repatriation process with dignity and honor would be one of the fire-tests on his part to prove to the international communities that he is committed to public welfare.

Dzongkha: How Well Are You?**By I. P. Adhikari**

In 1969 a new lingua franca was founded in the eastern Himalayas. Instantly, it was recognized as the national language. Some 40 years later, the lingua franca is yet to emerge as full fledged language through which you can express everything seen or felt.

When the constitution was drafted, Dzongkha came short of fundamental words especially those describing political and judicial matters. The Dzongkha Development Commission and its few experts had to coin new words to match

the changing circumstances. The subordinate to Tibetan language, Dzongkha still deserves to be a dialect than a complete language.

Dzongkha has been burden for many within the community it is spoken. For the last few years, government faced tough time finding Dzongkha teachers. Until later 1980s, just literate Dzongkha speakers or the Buddhist gelongs were sent to schools to teach this language. I recall interesting days while writing Dzongkha examination in those years. Most of us who speak Nepali were not fine in getting used to with it and it was harder for us to get good marks. Solution

to this frustration: we found one trick and it came handy for us in such a way that we were well off than Dzongkha speakers in securing marks in that subject. The simple trick was: for all questions our answers used to be the national anthem and for the Dzongkha teachers denying marks to the national anthem was disrespecting it.

Under such tunnel, Dzongkha continues its race for a complete language. Yet, the recent indications have shown, the race would not go well. Several reports by education ministry and Dzongkha development commission have shown the youngsters are not fond of learning Dzongkha.

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Penjore Appeals UN in Nepal, India For Son's Protection

**Bhutan News Service
Germany, Nov 01**

Tshering Penjore, father of Tandin Wangdi has appealed the UN Resident Representatives in Nepal and India seeking assistance for protection of Wangdi who was denied asylum in Germany.

Failing to get asylum in Germany, Wangdi has applied for protection in Switzerland and was interviewed on October 28 at Kreuzlingen for necessary procedures. His lawyer is optimistic about the case.

Penjore in his statement has asked national, regional and international rights bodies to look into the grave situation of his son and help him receive asylum in Switzerland or be included in the resettlement program till his party DNC is able to function in Bhutan.

Ration Supplier Accused of Contamination

**Bhutan News Service
Beldangi, Nov 01**

Exiled Bhutanese and camp management committee of Beldangi-I camp have accused that the oil supplied by World Food Program (WFP) contains contamination.

The accusation appeared when distribution committee found a dead frog in the sealed oil container last week.

Til Chand Bhattarai, A/1 sub-sector head found a rotten frog while distributing ration to his sub-sector on October 27.

"I immediately notified Lok Bahadur Mongar, the incharge of distribution committee as soon as I found the frog", told Bhattarai.

A team from WFP investigated the situation yesterday, derailing the accusation from the public. It has instead questioned how had a frog entered into the sealed container.

BNS Organizes Training

Bhutan News Service (BNS) organized a Motivation Journalism Training in Beldangi-I camp on the eve of Tihar festival.

Over two dozen journalists in exile participated the training, facilitated by Bhakta Ghimire, Ichha Poudyel, T.P Mishra and Devi Charan Pokhrel. *TBR*

'Take Forward The Democratic Transition'

**Bhutan News Service
Beldangi, Nov 01**

Bhutan National Democratic Party (BNDP) has asked the King Jigme Khesar to take forward the democratic process initiated more recently to its logical end, in which all the ethnic groups enjoy the rights of dignified citizens of a democratic Bhutan and deliver justice to over 100,000 Bhutanese people who have been living in exile for political reasons.

In a statement issued on the eve of the coronation of the fifth King Jigme Khesar, BNDP reiterate its position that it continues to believe that multi-party polity and constitutional monarchy are the twin pillars of a democratic Bhutan.

"Earlier, the democratic process, which was introduced by the third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck— with the establishment of National Assembly in 1953, Council of Ministers in 1968, and the induction of the provision in 1969 to impeach the King by two-thirds of the National Assembly members— were reversed by the fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck in the 1970s," the party said, adding, "This had turned back the clock in the democratization process. The then government's

ADB Supports Dagachhu Project

**Bhutan News Service
Thimphu, Oct 31**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has extended support to power project in Bhutan that will produce clean energy for export to India and increase electricity coverage in rural areas where the bulk of the poor live.

The Green Power Development Project—which includes Bhutan's first public-private partnership (PPP) for an infrastructure project—will help tap the country's under-utilized hydropower resources, increase government revenues for development spending and improve the standard of living for nearly 9,000 rural power consumers, a statement by ADB said.

The statement further reads, it will also help promote clean energy development, foster cross-border cooperation and provide a potential model for future private investments in the sector.

With the funding, government will construct a plant at Dagachhu that produces 114 MW of power, mostly for export to India.

It will also support a rural electrification programme that will provide electricity to domestic households and businesses in remote regions of the country using renewable energy sources of hydropower and solar power.

"Expanding generating capacity for the export of clean power and increasing rural access to electricity will enhance energy and social security. It will provide the government a long-term revenue stream to finance its development needs and to cut poverty. It will help

Kalimpong And Duars

Belong to Bhutan

**Bhutan News Service
Beldangi, Nov 01**

A leader of Gorkhaland in Darjeeling said the Kalimpong and Duars in north-east states of India rightfully belongs to Bhutan, for which Bhutan was receiving compensation. According to Indian daily Statesman, GJMM chief Bimal Gurung said Kalimpong and Duars rightfully belonged to Bhutan for which the Indian government was still paying an annual remuneration.

"The government is trying to permanently acquire these lands by paying a lump-sum amount to Bhutan. Such conspiracies won't work. We would vehemently oppose and counter such moves with facts and documents", he said.

Bhutan had been receiving compensation of these lands, which it lost during the war between Bhutan and British India in 1864-65. The war was led by Jigme Namgyal, father of Bhutan's first king.

decision to trample upon the ethnic, religious and citizenship rights of the minority Lhotsampa population in the late 1980s has led to the current political crisis and because of which over one-seventh of the country's population continue to live in exile."

Terming the current democratic transition as cosmetic in nature, BNDP said more political reforms are needed to address the aspiration of all ethnic groups and provide political space to the growing size of educated Bhutanese people.

It said the transition addressed little on the issues of rights of citizenship, freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom to worship.

Mentioning the third country resettlement process as interim, the party said legitimate solution to almost two-decade old Bhutanese refugee problem is their repatriation with honor and dignity to their own place in Bhutan.

The party further asked the Bhutanese government to immediately start dialogue with government of Nepal to open the door immediately for repatriation together with the on-going option for third country resettlement. Any delaying tactics on the resolution of this political problem will be extremely costly for the country and the people of Bhutan, it said.

stimulate regional trade in clean energy and reduce pollution," ADB's South Asia Department Energy Specialist Kaoru Ogino is quoted in the statement.

The Dagachhu power plant will cost US\$ 201.5 million to be split 60:40 between debt and equity. ADB will provide a 30-year, US\$ 51 million loan from its ordinary capital resources and a 32-year, US\$ 29 million loan from the Asian Development Fund (ADF).

Additional financing of US \$55.5 million is expected from the Austrian government export credit agency OeKB along with US \$45 million from the government and its company and fund, and US \$21 million from India's Tata Power Company.

The Austrian Government, which is one of the major proponents of the project, will support engineering implementation of Dagachhu hydropower development.

The state-owned Druk Green Power Corp., Bhutan and Tata Power Company, India have set up a joint venture company for the Dagachhu project which will serve as a showcase for public-private partnerships (PPPs), leading to increased foreign direct investments in energy development and a reduced state debt burden.

The rural electrification initiative will receive an ADB grant of US\$ 25.2 million, US\$ 6.7 million from the government and US\$ 1 million from the Asian Clean Energy Fund, subject to Japanese government's approval.

The project is also expected to install over 100 solar power systems generating energy for off-grid rural users including schools, health clinics and other community facilities in isolated remote areas.

Bhutan Still Industries Begin to Close Down

**Bhutan News Service
Beldangi, Nov 04**

The Association of Bhutanese Industries said heightening global credit crunch and economic slowdown caused some exporting steel industries in Bhutan to temporarily close down. It said other industries are also set to face similar fate soon.

The association said the market crunch has suffered them a loss of about Nu 30 million.

To avoid further damage in the industries, it has approached the government to take rescue measures and help survive the national industries.

They have asked the government to allow them to borrow more from the banks to create liquidity, whose loan debt had reached over Nu 1 billion. Their other demands include the postponement of loan repayment date by about a year and scrap electricity bills for six months. According to law, they are not allowed to borrow more than 30 percent of their company's total liquidity.

The other two submissions include the exemption of excise duty at source on raw material and duty for import of ferrous scrap.

Notice! Notice! Notice!

The upcoming issue of TBR will contain eight pages on the auspicious occasion of International Human Rights Day, December 10. We request you to contribute write-ups/opinion pieces on contemporary issues.

-Editor

“Identity Matters” - D. R. Katel

Bhutan Gorkha National Liberation Front (BGNLF) is one of those political parties especially advocating for rights to Nepali speakers southern Bhutan. The party projects itself an ethnic organization and tries to base the agenda that are important to Nepali speakers. While other parties call ethnic Nepalis for southern Bhutanese, BGNLF argues they are Gurkhas. For many this sounds acceptable since Nepali refers to be the nationality of Nepal, and for others it is not. Since its formation in 1994, BGNLF has been advocating for the ethnic-identity of Gurkhas in Bhutan.

Yadhav Neopane and Ichha Poudel of Bhutan News Service caught acting president of a faction of BGNLF D. R. Katel (another faction in led by D. B. Sampang and is part of the National Front for Democracy coalition) to talks on various issues of the exiled Bhutanese. He worked in survey department before being evicted and hails from Sarpang district. Excerpts:

BNS: Why Bhutan needs your party?

Katel: BGNLF is formed to address our identity which no party did. To be more accurate, it is not a party. We do not agree to be called Nepalis, Bhutanese of Nepali origin or Lhotsampas as these terminologies do not identify us. Nepali is the citizen of Nepal and Lhotsampa is the brand name given by the Druk regime with which it wants to nullify our existence. We are Gurkhas and it ensures our identity.

BNS: What form of system you envision in Bhutan?

Katel: We are for full fledged democracy with equal rights, justice and identity of every ethnical group.

BNS: How have you evaluated the latest political development in Bhutan?

Katel: You may be referring to so-called election in Bhutan. It's a play to fool the international community and institutionalize autocracy. It is nothing more than lip service of the king of Bhutan. People have not felt any change.

BNS: Which model you admire: peaceful or armed rebellion?

Katel: Well, we take the side of peaceful struggle with people's participation. However, if our justifiable demands are not met, or we are suppressed with iron hands time would determine what we would choose the

next.

BNS: Bhutan police have often accused your party of planting bombs at Indo-Bhutan border?

Katel: I think it's the result of their weak mentality. It's a baseless allegation and they want to defame us by labeling as terrorist but we will continue our struggle in peaceful manner.

BNS: Which comes first, ethnic identity or nationality?

Katel: For us to exist, identity has to be there. If you do not have identity what you fight for? Bhutan wants to deliberately nullify our existence by calling us Nepali or Lhotsampa. Nepali is the citizen of Nepal so they cannot be Bhutanese.

BNS: Comment on the third country resettlement offer.

Katel: Resettlement is an unfortunate option for exiled Bhutanese in Nepal. It does not provide any durable solution. Bhutan always wants to reduce the number of citizens it has evicted and TCR process is facilitating it.

BNS: Do you admit that you failed to garner support for repatriation?

Katel: Well, I sincerely admit our weakness to work effectively for repatriation. There was and still exists faction within leaders in regard to movement for repatriation. To be honest most of the Bhutanese leaders worked for themselves rather than for nation, community or common people.

BNS: The reason behind such weakness is break up like you did. Is it?

Katel: Sampang has been terminated from the party since he misused a large sum of donation collected for party's programs. All central committee members are with us.

BNS: What you did after the split?

Katel: I led a delegation that held talks with king's representative in Phuentsholing. We handed over memorandum to the king urging dignified repatriation.

BNS: How do you evaluate India's role?

Katel: India as neighbor wants peace and democracy in Bhutan. It would allow us safe passage if we call ourselves Bhutanese Gurkhas. We are a bit different from Gurkhas of India because we are demanding our identity but not the separate state.

Dzongkha.....

In 1969 a new lingua franca was founded in the eastern Himalayas. Instantly, it was recognized as the national language. Some 40 years later, the lingua franca is yet to emerge as full fledged language through which you can express everything seen or felt.

When the constitution was drafted, Dzongkha came short of fundamental words especially those describing political and judicial matters. The Dzongkha Development Commission and its few experts had to coin new words to match the changing circumstances. The subordinate to Tibetan language, Dzongkha still deserves to be a dialect than a complete language.

Dzongkha has been burden for many within the community it is spoken. For the last few years, government faced tough time finding Dzongkha teachers. Until later 1980s, just literate Dzongkha speakers or the Buddhist gelong were sent to schools to teach this language. I recall interesting days while writing Dzongkha examination in those years. Most of us who speak Nepali were not fine in getting used to with it and it was harder for us to get good marks. Solution to this frustration: we found one trick and it came handy for us in such a way that we were well off than Dzongkha speakers in securing marks in that subject. The simple trick was: for all questions our answers used to be the national anthem and for the Dzongkha teachers denying marks to the national anthem was disrespecting it.

Under such tunnel, Dzongkha continues its race for a complete language. Yet, the recent indications have shown, the race would not go well. Several reports by education ministry and Dzongkha development commission have shown the youngsters are not fond of learn-

ing Dzongkha. The government itself has admitted, students secure good marks in English but not only lack knowledge of Dzongkha rather ignores it. In that sense, English is overtaking the seat of Dzongkha in Bhutanese society.

The expertise of Dzongkha scholars at the commission was vividly reflected in the recently published textbooks for school children. Teachers and parents have cited arrays of mistakes on the books for grade V and VI, subsequently compelling the authorities to make urgent reviews. The DDC had said the textbooks went through massive review and scrutiny before sending to press. Over 19 books are in line, and it won't be surprising to expect errors in upcoming publications as well.

Over the years, the number of students preferring Dzongkha language studies has substantially decreased while this has been reversed case in English.

The Citizenship Act of 1985 makes it compulsory that anyone willing to obtain Bhutanese citizenship must have sound knowledge of Dzongkha and history of the country. However, it was exclusively implemented in southern districts only.

Medium of instruction in Bhutanese schools is English, except Dzongkha as language study. Nepali, taught in southern districts was banned since 1990 whereas Tshagla has not been accepted as language of the country.

Dzongkha and history has enmity relations. For years history in schools and colleges were taught in English and now the fundamentalists have pressed the government to strictly implement the earlier decisions that history must be taught in Dzongkha. Interestingly, those who teach Dzongkha lack knowledge of history and those who teach history are completely out of touch

Media Vs Challenges...

□ **By C N Timsina**

The challenges of the Bhutanese refugee media workers in exile in Nepal are manifold. We face the challenges faced by journalists of any other country in addition to the unique challenges faced in a refugee situation. Some challenges originate from the fact that we are from Bhutan – a country where private media was banned until 2006 and where formation of political parties was considered as an anti-national movement until 2007. Some challenges are faced by virtue of being in asylum and other challenges originate from lack of support provision of UNHCR as well as of Nepal government. However, I wish to discuss the various challenges faced by the Bhutanese refugee media workers in exile in Nepal on legal, economic, political and technological perspectives. The main and the alternative possible solutions to each major challenge are discussed under each perspective.

Legal Challenges

Every newspaper must be registered under certain legal provisions of a definite country and the newspapers must be published conforming to the legal framework under which it is established. The newspapers – whether in print or electronic operated by the Bhutanese refugees in exile are neither registered in Bhutan nor in Nepal. The unions and associations of the media workers too are not registered in the country of origin as well as in the country of asylum.

Private publications were prohibited while we were in Bhutan and presently the Bhutan government does not recognize the publications/organizations established in exile. So there is no way that it could be registered in Bhutan before repatriation.

Nepal government does not have a policy to give registration to the publications/organizations established by the refugees in the country. Unless the Nepal government adopts such a policy in favour of the refugees, it is next to impossible to obtain registration in Nepal as well.

There are many inconveniences, restraints and difficulties faced by the media workers because of non-registration of the papers and organizations.

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from Dzongkha. Bhutan, that hardly has its own history, has nothing to teach in Dzongkha other than the stories of lamas and Tibetan travelers who came down to spread Buddhism.

Literature of Dzongkha is rather non existence. Most Dzongkha speakers choose English to write any stories, even not having Dzongkha version of their write-up. You quest for Dzongkha poets, story writers or book writers will result into nothingness. Criticism, commentary and analysis are beyond expectation. It is most frustrating that a 'national language' has no literature to read. All we get is the volumes of Buddhist sculpture, which in fact are written in Tibetan language.

The newspapers that came into market have bitter experiences on Dzongkha. For instance, Bhutan Observer nearly closed its Dzongkha edition early this year, citing lack of readership and advertisers interests to place ads only in English tabloids. For years, government made tireless efforts to popularize Dzongkha and claimed most Bhutanese have instinct to learn it. However, when the market opened up, facts came transparent what number of populace embrace the language.

The fact that makes Dzongkha so complex and incomplete is the differences in tone and tongs that changes with valleys. Dzongkha in Bumthang, Haa and Wangdue have big differences. Every river you cross, every mountain you pass, you will find a different language and culture. The 'Dzongkha experts' have rarely given attention to this problem and taken initiatives to harmonize the dialect. Many experts who 'standardize' the dialect from headquarters in Thimphu assume what they know and finalize is the correct form of Dzongkha. There are no reports DDC sending its expert teams to districts to linguistic studies.

Bhutan is yet to run a long distant before developing Dzongkha as a language and increasing ignorance towards it in favor of English, might become greatest barrier for the 'Dzongkha experts' to achieve what they aim. Hedge your bets.

Special Correspondent: Jeetan Subba, **Bel-I:** Ganga R. Kalikotey, **Bel-II:** Pabi Maya Rai, **Bel-III:** Yadhav Neopane, **Sanischare:** Hema Dhungana, **K/bari:** Ganga R. Adhikari, **Goldhap:** Tika Ram Lamitare, **Birtamode/Bhadrapur:** Tribikram Adhikari, **Biratnagar/Dharan:** Devi Pokhrel, **Foreign Correspondents:** Dhanapati Acharya/P.P. Siwakoti (India), Sangay Oendray/Nandu Sharma (Bhutan), Kazi Gautam/Yam Kharel/ T. N. Mishra (US), Devika Adhikari (Australia)