

The Bhutan Monthly REPORTER

Vol II, No. 23, September 2006

(For Private Circulation)

Pages 4, Rs. 4

Exiled Bhutanese to Protest in New Delhi, Kolkata

Kedar Niraula
Birtamod, Aug

Bhutanese in exile recently declared that they would be organizing protest programs in the Indian capital New Delhi and Kolkata so as to draw the attention of India to help in repatriation process.

The Bhutanese Refugees Representatives Committee Coordination Committee, a united front, stated that the bilateral talks between Nepal and Bhutan did not seem to give any solution; hence they had sought for Indian involvement in the talks.

"India's participation is a necessary for a solution to the crisis. So, we are planning to organize demonstrations in the Indian cities," the committee had stated.

A member of the committee and president of Bhutan People's Party, Balram Poudel said that some Indian leaders would also participate in the demonstration. He said they expected assistance from Nepal government as well.

Since a long time Bhutanese leaders have been emphasizing the involvement of India and their representatives in the talks.

US Willing to Accept Exiled Bhutanese

g Rizal criticizes g Women organization hails

Bhutan News Service

Kathmandu, Aug

The US Senator Arlen Specter, who was on two days visit in Nepal, has said on August 14 the US is willing to accept 'many' of the Bhutanese refugees.

According to Specter he would write to Nepalese PM including Deputy PM and Foreign Minister urging them to let refugees for relocation, however the exact number likely to be allowed for resettlement is yet unclear.

Meanwhile, Bhutanese leaders and organizations in



US Senator Arlen Specter

exile have commented upon his statement through Bhutan News Service in differently ways.

Tek Nath Rizal claimed

Bhutan has been deceiving the whole world since 16 years. "The US move to resettle refugees doesn't give entire justice to refugee stalemate and the Bhutanese problem" he said, adding- the country like the US should not coin such controversial package before confirming the repatriation process.

General Secretary of Druk National Congress (DNC) Narad Adhikari talking to BNS said the democratic countries like the US should not violate the fundamental rights of suppressed people. "The concept and

Contd. Page 3

HIGHLIGHTS

TBR Reshuffles Editorial Team

Two years after the start of publication of The Bhutan Reporter (TBR), Bhutan Media Society has recently reshuffled editorial team.

The newly reshuffled team includes Kazi Gautam as Chief Editor and Thakur P Mishra as Editor.

Earlier, Gautam was working as one of the associate editors of TBR, while Mishra is academically enrolled in Media Technology.

Nepali PM Unaware of Resettlement

Bhutan News Service
Biratnagar, Jul-Aug

Nepal's Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala said he was unaware about a government decision to resettle some exiled Bhutanese in third country.

Talking to a delegation of political leaders in exile including Bala Ram Poudel, president of Bhutan People's Party at his residence in Biratnagar in Morang district PM Koirala assured that he would study the development in detail.

The delegation had expressed their dissatisfaction over the UNHCR plan to send some 16 exiled Bhutanese to the US and Canada.

Rizal calls-off dharna participants sharply criticize

Khem Khadka
Kathmandu, Aug

Taking into account the request of human rights activists and members of Citizens Movement for Democracy and Peace (CMDP) exiled leader Tek Nath Rizal on August 27 has formally agreed to end the long standing sit-in protest in front of the UN house in Pulchowk since June 2.

Members of civil society

and human rights activists including Dr. Devendra Raj Pandey, Krishna Pahadi, Bishnu Nisthuri extended their continued solidarity in the days ahead. They also sought Indian attention towards refugees' plight.

Meanwhile, sit-in participants talking to TBR have sharply criticized Rizal for not discussing with them before taking such decision.

Contd. Page 4

Tripartite Talks Sought

TBR Correspondent
Kathmandu, Aug

The issue of exiled Bhutanese can be resolved only through a tripartite agreement among Nepal, India and Bhutan, Indian leaders of Bhutan Solidarity said. They urged the Nepal government, parties and Maoists to initiate the process to 'facilitate' the tripartite talks.

"This issue cannot be re-

solved through bilateral talks between Bhutan and Nepal alone. India must play a prominent role and tripartite talks must convene as soon as possible," said Dr Suni Lam member of Legislative Assembly from Madhya Pradesh. The six-member-team headed by Lam visited Beldangi-II and Khudnabari camps in Jhapa recently and also met five camp secretaries, Bhutanese leaders and human rights groups.

Contd. Page 3

Is this the second phase of eviction?

Thakur P Mishra

There was excitement for all when King Jigme Singye Wangchuk announced that he would abdicate the throne by 2008 for which he said the country would then be a democratic.

The campaign has begun for first historic election as part of his mission for democratization of the country. Some democratic institutions are underway.

For the first election, the government has dispatched several teams for preparation of electoral roll for the polls and referendum. However, frauds and partiality among the citizens have already begun. It has revealed that the government has been trying to bar the southern Bhutanese to use their right to adult franchise.

A team led by the Bhutan People's Party (BPP) found out the facts after an investigation mission in some southern districts recently. For instance, out of 3,200 population of above 16 years in Sibsoo block in Samtse district only 1,700 have been included in the electoral list.

At the initial phase ... government officers had distributed the form to be compulsorily filled in by those crossed 16 years. However, those who were out of house for employment or other businesses at the time when the team made visits to home were not enlisted.

President of BPP,

Balaram Poudel says, "Process of collecting voter's list is being done secretly, in conspiring manner with intention to exclude Lhotshampas from voting." He claimed

at in other 14 northern districts, electoral lists have been prepared on the basis of information given by family head even though all members of family were not present absent. In these 14 districts, the people are told to register their names compulsorily. In the south, the people are told that the collection of the names was a sampling and that a second team would arrive for final assessment of the voter's population. The forms



distributed state 'for secure, independent and fair democratic election and referendum'.

This was meant to create, as the party says, more Lhotshampas stateless and 'illegal immigrants' having no voting rights and citizenry.

Majority of Bhutan's foreign friends have formally welcomed the election process. They, including the largest democratic country, India have claimed Bhutan is stepping towards complete democratization. Now, the questions arises, "Will that be fare and democratic if large number of people are excluded from voting?" It would be translucent if any of the international human rights body or electoral experts make a visit to Bhutan to assess the real current situation inside Bhutan. It should not go deceiving any more.

Divisive Package

At a time when exiled Bhutanese launched series of demonstrations against the UNHCR decision to resettle 16 vulnerable persons in Canada and the US, the US has extended its support to the move. Senator Arlen Specter said the US is willing to accept 'many of the Bhutanese refugees'. However, he did not clarify the exact figure and its procedure.

In fact, the US statement has brought confusions. It has made individuals to think whether the US that opposes 'terrorism' supports dictatorship. If Nepal acknowledges such proposal without understanding the situation prevailing both inside camps and Bhutan, it may add frustration. The US step to resettle refugees rather than exerting pressure on Druk regime to take back its citizens is entirely unfair.

The US clearly knows that Bhutan has been deceiving the world community since the evolution of the problem. The preparation of election in 2008 for the first time reflected that Bhutan is busy at conspirating to evict more Lhotshampas from southern belt. Bhutan has excluded many Lhotshampas from 'voters' list. It would be wiser if countries like the US could at least investigate the current situation in Bhutan. It should not coin divisive package before helping refugees, who are willing, to get repatriated.

But it is also translucent that exiled leaders seem incapable to garner adequate support for repatriation. Thus, there is a need of third party mediator involvement to help the 'willing' people return before resettlement commences to ensure no further eviction of people from Bhutan. Resettlement before articulating repatriation would prove to be an attack to Bhutanese nationality; however those who feel insecure to return will certainly accept the package.

Let us once again join hands to trigger fresh and strong programs through open public discussions to normalize silent state terrorism in Bhutan.

Opinion & Column

By: Ram Bahadur 'Jeevan'

Question of Rejuvenation in leadership

One can boldly say due to failure of leaderships, the Bhutanese refugee cause is getting complicated. Gradually, those who boosted to take hold-off the position at the preliminary chapter are taking-off their hands. Most of them have established their sound living.

Establishment and dissolving of group/organization has become a customary subject in the present context. It is noteworthy to quote that people have ignored the faith towards any of the existing leaders. Youths-students, the prime force in a movement, are on no account in drawing their closeness towards a common political mainstream under the already failed leadership. Escalating rates of frustrating youths' mind has appraised the eligibility of their leaders. In fact, they are enthusiastic to be led by new generation leaders, who could comprehend the present political milieu of twenty-first century.

There are no any substituting ways as the mainstream of erroneous political scenario has been already brought-up into prac-

tical exercises, which would remain irreversible, if again the oath of leadership would be taken by elderly generation who are at zero percent progress. Bhutanese political and other organizations that argue to have initiate many programs in favor of early repatriation has proven just to be a reliant of press release and other paper works. What has they done ignoring a huge public mass in camps till date?

The parties which were at the front-face during 90s peoples' movement in Bhutan are now running behind third country resettlement. This is no more then initiating packages of confusions. Still today, many have been lacking behind for recognizing whether refugee impasse is political, human rights or racial discrimination issue. Up to yet there are no instances where exiled leaders have endeavored to wrap and address youths' emotions. Nonetheless, until this force is not brought to a general platform, the thing ruins where it is.

On the other side the increasing figure of asylum seekers in western countries has defamed the actions of youngsters. Many of those seekers are found stating that

the youths in camps are creating havoc, young ladies are indulge in flesh trade- and many are motivated towards revolutionary acts. Why are those youths, for personal cause, creating orchestrated justification in Court Justice?

Of course, sooner or later there are possibilities- youths may pick-up arms if the unimproved moments gets continued.

Actually, there lies necessity for rejuvenation of already failed leadership to the fresh ones. It doesn't mean leaders should be known figures in international arena. The leaders must be adequate to take right decisions and amass potential support and solidarity from the ground level camped people.

Considering the worsening situation prevailing in camps, it is almost late to form a common platform including representatives from even grass root level.

The so-called forefront leaders are more alert in theoretical lectures rather than being practical to halt the degrading condition of people in camps. This is an evaluating phase for any courageous new faces in leadership to solve the crisis.

READERS' LETTER BOX

TBR: praiseworthy bulletin

I have had a chance of going through 'The Bhutan Reporter', monthly while I was in Beldangi camp for a visit to my relatives. I found the paper a note worthy. I compared it with some of the national papers that exist, now, in Bhutan. It was really nice work that some exiled committed youths have started. I could find a fine balance in every news.

On the other side when I read the information that the paper would be stopped due to regular funding, I was socked. Actually what is the reason behind for such a nice paper to make it a bi-monthly? If financial assistance be the reason, why exiled leaders who have already gained sound wealth not wish to support them?

I think the paper like TBR should be made daily to raise the third voice. I request the publisher to search for alternatives to make TBR

I'm a regular reader of The Bhutan Reporter since from the time it started its publication. Each after the other issue, I find improvement in writing. Comparatively, TBR has been seen unbiased in disseminating news in Bhutanese community. It should really extend its readership outside camps as well, interested towards refugee plight, to advocate our long standing crisis.

Let it be made daily or at least weekly rather than publishing it monthly. Hope it maintains balance in news like in the previous days.

Ganga Ram Dahal, Beldangi-II

reach inside Bhutan as well. No doubt, one day TBR will stand as leader among impartial professional papers in Bhutan. Now where and how will I be able to find TBR?

Som Nath Khadka, Thimphu

Revolt movement

I'm a regular reader of TBR. Usually I download it from <http://www.apfanews.com> It has been time and again proven that Bhutanese refugee mess including the national political impasse couldn't be solved through peaceful means.

So far, the authorities concerned are busy turning deaf ears to the voice raised. Now, I think to pick up arms is the only alternative left then to be slaves of westerners after relocation.

Parshu Ram 'Bhutani', Sikkim.

TBR! Take an initiative

Innocent people in camps are really confused of the situation prevailing here. There are no able and energetic leaders to point out the right path. Day-by-day cases of mental depression are increasing. The educational standard has declined. People are fading-up with the cut-short in their basic facilities. This is the real time for exiled media to bring the situation under control and help them get right and reliable solution.

Nar Bahadur Biswa, Beldangi camp

Dear readers,

You can send letters to this column on any issues at editbr@yahoo.co.uk or GPO Box 8975, EPC 2377 Kathmandu, Nepal

Defrauding

Exiled Bhutanese leaders are defrauding public. Majority of them are running after personal benefits.

The time has really come, now individuals must select their own way to earn a better living, otherwise if we remain hung with hollow and fake words of leaders we will certainly be countless steps back from a normal living.

Most of them have already gained sound living so we think now it's our turn to step towards building our own future a perfect one. It is also learnt that Rizal has collected a big sum for so called *dharna*. He must not run after money.

Mon Bahadur and Sudarson, Dharan

I am extremely shocked to hear the news from FM that Rizal ended up *dharna* despite the will of participants.

He forgot that it was a *dharna* of refugees in the camps. Every individual refugee has contributed. He could have discussed the matter with potential Bhutanese colleagues, camp secretaries and others. He was, I suppose, not given such an authority to do so.

When every Bhutanese in Kathmandu was contributing for HRCB, he dissolved it on his own decision. So on what grounds he decides solely? Who is Rizal? Bishnu Mongar, Via email.

Exile Voices

US Congressmen, Ambassador in Camps

Urge Bhutan to take back exiled Bhutanese

Puspa Adhikari
Beldangi-II Aug

The US Congressmen team led by Jim Kolbe has urged the Bhutan government to take back its people, who have been living a miserable life in eastern Nepal under the protection of UNHCR, on Sunday.

"After 15-years of suffering, you should be hopeful for new life," Kolbe told the exiled Bhutanese in Beldangi at the end of his visit to the camp. He also informed that his team would travel to Thimpu on Monday and hold talks to the Durk regime in detail.

He further said the US government has been looking for an alternative way to resolve the issue since there is no guarantee that all people would be

repatriated. He said all possible alternatives should be kept open to find permanent solution of the crisis. He ensured that the US can provide shelter and civil rights if any exiled Bhutanese was voluntarily interested to go there. However, he did not mention how many would be settle in the US.

US Ambassador to Nepal James F. Moriarty on the occasion said that although most Bhutanese in exile are interested to go back, it was impossible to say, as there was no American presence in Bhutan.

"Since there is no ground to convince the Bhutanese government, the concerned authorities are bound to look for alternative ways," he said

further adding, "We can provide unconditional resettlement in the US to those who are interested."

He said his country is ready to work together with other co-partner countries once the government of Nepal agrees for third country resettlement.

While the US leaders were addressing representatives of the people inside the program hall, thousands of others demonstrated outside with placards demanding immediate repatriation not protesting third country settlement.

The team also visited the Sanischare camp in Morang district on the same day afternoon and talks to people before leaving for Bhutan.

Face-to-Face with Garima

"Women are the most suppressed group in camps. I haven't seen alternatives for exiled women to fulfil needs of their children."

Coordinator of Bhutanese Refugee Women Forum (BRWF), Garima Adhikari began working as social activist when she arrived Maidhar camp in early 1992. With inspirations and suggestions received from *Aama Milan - Nepal* she finally established BRWF in June 1995. Now, BRWF operates in all seven camps. Born in 1956, she also worked as Village Health Worker (VHW) in Bhutan after receiving basic training. She talked to *Bhutan News Service* (BNS) on various issues. Excerpts:

BNS: What for BRWF established?

Adhikari: It is an organization of exiled Bhutanese exile mothers established with objectives of raising awareness in women. It also helps inculcate skills in them. Basically, BRWF timely organizes interaction programs, leadership training, training on gender issues.

BNS: What has it achieved so far?

Adhikari: BRWF collaborating with OXFAM gave non-formal education to Bhutanese in camps. It taught skills to large number of women. On the other side, BRWF is also involved in producing chalks, home made textiles and sell them. They add little to the sustenance of the organization and gives earning to the people in the camps. We also produce

Dhaka sal, however, it sales less. We sell this to visitors.

BNS: What is the political stand of BRWF?

Adhikari: It believes in repatriation rather than any other options. I think there must be equal balance/participation in politics from both sexes. Women should also be accommodated in decision making bodies.

BNS: How is the condition of women in exile?

Adhikari: Women are the most suppressed group in camps. I haven't seen alternatives for exiled women to fulfil needs of their children. We also find mentally depressed women in camps.

BNS: Are your sponsors pressurising you to implement programme they intended?

Adhikari: The UNHCR through the LWF is funding BRWF in its programs. It doesn't mean that when UNHCR sponsors, we have to implement its philosophy. We always respect the sentiments of people in camps. We decide programs based on the demands we receive from the people. Now, the UNHCR has coined the package of relocation and we strongly oppose it; BRWF never favors decisions except repatriation.

BNS: Does BRWF support resettlement?

Adhikari: I don't know who



those Bhutanese are, how will they be settled and why are only these going to be resettled. If the UNHCR says that they are victims of rape cases, I say people with such cases are much more. Until I could be able to study the cases closely, I cannot exactly say whether the UNHCR decision is right or wrong.

BNS: BRWF has shown physical participation in sit-in to extend support and solidarity. How was it motivated?

Adhikari: We had seen less women participation in sit-in. Finally, BRWF decided to come to Kathmandu to extend possible support. As we favor repatriation, it is our moral duty to show active participation. I found that participants are committed towards movement. Peaceful protests are like this. We cannot exactly forecast the time frame for this kind of movement. The program is gradually getting success on drawing attention of international community towards our plight.

BNS: Is repatriation possible?

Adhikari: Yes. Repatriation is possible. For this all exiled Bhutanese leaders must come together and move ahead with common agendas. And I think now, leaders of young generation should lead the mass.

From Regime

Black Mailers Defraud Two

Binod Sanyashi
Thimphu, Aug

The Bhutan Police arrested two Bhutanese with two boxes of fake hard currency in Phuentsholing.

According to Police sources one of the arrested is businessman while the other is an employee of Bhutan Power Corporation. They were arrested on charges of "attempt to counterfeit".

The two Bhutanese had traveled to Malaysia for transaction after receiving e-mails from fraudsters who claim they were Nigerians. The arrested were convinced of transferring US\$ 0.8 million and US \$ 10.00 million to their

account.

The two men had paid US\$14,000 to the fraudsters in a hotel in Malaysia. Later it was known that except for a few genuine notes, the rest were all worthless paper," the police told.

Scam mails that requests to claim for lottery winning notification saying that their agent will help facilitate the release are most common these days.

Informal reports received through reliable sources informed Bhutan News Service that two more Bhutanese victims of the scam were charge sheeted before the court.

US Willing

process of resettlement will just support the absolutism," he added.

Similarly, District- 8 under Region number- 5 committee member 'Aviskar' of Communist Party of Bhutan (CPB-MLM) who telephoned TBR from an unknown place, has claimed that such moves would definitely greet further cleansing of Nepali speaking Bhutanese from southern belt. He also said it depends upon individual refugees to decide but CPB-MLM criticizes such moves.

Meanwhile, Bhutanese Refugee Durable Solution

Coordination Committee (BRDSSC) has welcomed the senator's statement. Its Executive Committee member Hom Nath Baral Said "we have found that those who wish to accept resettlement would preferably select the US, as is unknown what exact number will be accepted, it should be made clearer."

Similarly, Coordinator of the Voice for Change (VFC)-women and family group Ganga Neopane said VFC accepts the statement heartily. "As this is a crucial phase such moves are hospitable, however much needy information are lacking on his statement" she added.

Tripartite....

Bhutan Solidarity was all set to launch a campaign in India for opening of Indian borders so that Bhutanese in exile can return to their homeland with dignity and security. The Indian Social Forum will also organize a conference on Bhutan in New Delhi on November 9-13. Bhutan Solidarity would press the political parties and India government to resolve the issue at the ear-

liest, said Lam at a press meet in the Nepalese capital.

Anand Swarup Verma, president of Bhutan Solidarity and member of the delegation team, blamed India for failing to make efforts to resolve the issue. "Problems will not be resolved unless India wants to address the problems and tripartite talks are held," Verma said alleging India of supporting the Bhutanese king.

SHORT CLIP



Hopeful dream in vain: An exiled mother in *Dharna* taking nap.

Refugees Around Us

Refugees in East Timor camps are afraid

Thousands of East Timorese say they fear for their safety amid an upsurge of violence in refugee camps in the capital and rumours that more serious attacks are being planned. Youths have been staging rock attacks on the temporary homes set up by the refugees, as intermittent violence persists in the capital Dili.

In the latest incident, two Australian policemen were injured on August 21 when gangs attacked them with rocks, closing the road from the city centre to the international airport.

On August 19, another Australian officer was injured when gang members attacked

Compiled By

Vidhyapati Mishra

him. Police later detained 25 people for carrying weapons, rioting and arson attacks that razed six homes.

The United Nations expressed alarm over the trend, with a security adviser saying it appeared attacks were being directed at refugee camps where up to 150,000 people sheltered after widespread, deadly violence crippled the city in May.

The original fighting between factions of East Timor's security forces, triggered by the sacking of 600 deserting

soldiers, degenerated into communal violence on the streets. The unrest claimed 21 lives and sparked the deployment of a 3,000-strong international peacekeeping force, but low level unrest has continued.

"United, we are in peace and building our country!" says a banner in the local Tetum language, stretching above the entry gate to the high-walled Obrigado Barracks in Dili.

Those who remain there fear a permanent calm in the city is still a distant hope.

"We are often pelted with stones", said Domingos Gomes, a 34-year-old father of six.

U.S. Concerned About Safety of Uzbek Refugees

The United States urged Kyrgyzstan on August 23 to investigate the case of two Uzbek refugees deported to neighboring Uzbekistan where they possibly face torture and execution.

The United Nations and other organizations believe refugees handed back to Uzbekistan may face torture and execution, Reuters reported.

"The United States is very concerned by reports that two officially registered Uzbek refugees were forcibly removed from their homes in Osh, Kyrgyzstan," the U.S. embassy said in a statement.

"According to information

provided by UNHCR and Kyrgyz non-governmental organizations, these two refugees are currently being held in a detention center in Andijan, Uzbekistan."

Kyrgyzstan's authorities were not available for comment. No further information on the two Uzbek refugees was available.

Kyrgyzstan drew international criticism this month when it extradited five Uzbeks it was holding in a remand prison to their home country.

Those five were among the hundreds of refugees who fled the Uzbek town of Andijan into Kyrgyzstan in May 2005. Witnesses said they saw troops

kill hundreds of men, women and children in Andijan when they fired on a large crowd of people who had gathered in the center of town. "We urge the Kyrgyz government to take immediate steps to ensure the safety and rights of all refugees and asylum-seekers in Kyrgyzstan," the U.S. embassy said.

Uzbekistan wants the refugees back, saying it has evidence they are criminals. It has pressed its smaller neighbor to return them. Uzbekistan says 187 people died in the Andijan clashes and that most of the victims were armed extremists whose aim was to overthrow the government and establish an Islamic caliphate.

Rizal calls-off.....

Rizal addressing participants meet at BRRRC office cited the financial constraints and weaknesses of participants as the reason to end sit-in. One of the participants on condition of anonymity said, Rizal solely blamed only their weaknesses. Participants claimed such orchestrated statement from Rizal to be fake and emotional.

On a query of TBR, Rizal said if participants are still committed he is willing to lead.

Dharna Coordinators N.B.Rai and K.B.Gurung informed TBR they are in a process to continue the same sit-in until its climax. However, they are yet to decide the leadership of the program.

Congratulations

APFA and BMS Jointly Congratulate

Mr. I. P. Adhikari

(President of INLS-Bhutan Chapter, publisher - The Bhutan Reporter, President-Association of Press Freedom Activists-Bhutan and chief editor-www.apfanews.com

for getting Life Membership

of International Nepali Literary Society, USA.

Opinion hunt

The situation in camps is getting deteriorating. No one seems able to tell exactly what the future of these people would be. TBR is hunting opinion from you individual. Thus, feel free to write how you think the solution to refugee crisis is possible. Send it via e-mail or in our postal address. TBR maintains confidentiality. - Editor

Int'l Coverage On Bhutanese Issues

Refugees Want Resettlement

Bhutanese refugees want third-country resettlement. Bhutanese refugees in Nepal have vowed to continue their demonstration in front of the United Nations (UN) office in the capital, Kathmandu, to draw international attention to their plight.

Tirtha Bahadur Gurung, 70, a member of the Bhutanese Movement Steering Committee (BMSC) formed in May to represent the interests of the estimated 106,000 refugees in Nepal, said they were not going to move. "We will continue with our strike until death and not move from here until our problems are sorted out," Gurung said.

The refugees have been living in Nepal since 1990 when they were evicted from their homes by the Bhutanese government. It introduced a new citizenship law that disenfranchised the group, most of whom have Nepalese ancestry, depriving them of citizenship and civil rights.

Most of the refugees live in one of seven camps in the Morang and Jhapa districts of eastern Nepal, nearly 800 km from Kathmandu.

"We have to now look for other possible options since repatriation seems not possible," refugee Prem Siwakoti, who used to work

as a teacher in Bhutan, said. "We cannot wait any longer. We are happy now to settle in any country," Siwakoti said.

Many refugees want the UN and the international community to facilitate third-country resettlement. "The situation is becoming worrisome every day. There is increasing despair, some of us are becoming suicidal," Mukti Raj Gurung, a refugee who has been in Nepal for 15 years, said.

Ganga Bhandari, 19, said that depression, school absenteeism, crime and forced prostitution were all on the rise among the refugees. "Vulnerability is growing, especially among the youth. There is now social disturbance growing in our own communities," Bhandari said.

BMSC said girls from the camps had been trafficked into sex work in Indian brothels.

"The health situation is also deteriorating due to lack of proper diet and medical facilities," Ghaneswari Rai, a refugee who has been part of the demonstration in the capital since it began more than two months ago, said. Rai sleeps on the street under a thin piece of plastic and has not eaten a proper meal for three weeks.

Source: IRIN:Reuters

Donation Continues

The Government of Japan has contributed US Dollar two million to the UNHCR's 2006 Annual Program Budget for Nepal.

The amount was contributed to help refugee agency's ability to provide continued protection and assistance for the Bhutanese refugees.

The UNHCR's Representative in Nepal, Abraham Abraham has said, "This is tremendous and we wish to thank the Government and people of Japan for this important and generous contribution to UNHCR's activities in Nepal",

adding: "This contribution will be used towards meeting the ongoing protection and material needs of the refugees for the year 2006 under all sectors of assistance."

Similarly, Nepal Investment Bank Limited (NIBL), a Nepalese private bank, has contributed Rs 640,000 towards UNHCR's Annual program for the exiled Bhutanese in eastern Nepal.

According to UNHCR the contribution will be used to fund primary educational needs of the refugee students in the camps.

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