

## **SPA government and the Maoists seal the historic deal**

The marathon summit meeting between the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) government and the Maoists has finally produced a historic deal paving way for formal entry of the Maoists into the peaceful political mainstream.

The deal lists a timetable as per which the Maoists will be joining the interim government on December 1.

The deal includes agreement on all issues such as fate of monarchy, arms management, interim constitution, interim legislature, interim government and electoral system for Constituent Assembly.

### **Fate of Monarchy**

The agreement states that the fate of monarchy will be determined by the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly (CA).

The properties of late King Birendra will be put under a trust. The ancestral property of current King Gyanendra will be nationalized. The king will be powerless till the fate of monarchy is determined by CA.

### **Arms Management**

The agreement states that the government and the Maoists will sign a Comprehensive Peace Agreement on November 16. Following this, the Maoist army would be sent to cantonments on November 21. Seven big cantonments will be set up each in Kailali, Surkhet, Rolpa, Palpa, Ilam, Kavre and Sindhuli districts and there will be 21 smaller camps.

The arms of the Maoist army will be separated and put under single lock system; its key given to Maoists and the cantonments will be monitored by the United Nations through Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and siren alarm, which will be set off if there is any unauthorized tampering of the lock.

The UN will start verifying arms and monitor it from November 16 itself. Similar quantity of arms of Nepali Army (NA) would also be put under single lock system.

### **Interim Constitution, Legislature and Government**

The Interim Constitution will be promulgated on November 26. It will be promulgated by the House of Representatives, which would then be dissolved.

An interim legislature will replace the House of Representatives, which would then adopt the interim constitution. The interim legislature will have 330 members – Nepali Congress (75 seats), Unified Marxist Leninist (73 seats), and Maoists (73 seats). In fact, 209 sitting MPs of the House of Representatives and National Assembly will be nominated by their respective parties to the interim legislature. These will not include pro-regression parliamentarians. Apart from them, the Maoists will nominate 73 members and 48 members will be chosen from civil society, professional organizations and various party organizations.

The interim government will be led by current Prime Minister and president of Nepali Congress (NC) Girija Prasad Koirala. It will be formed on December 1 including the Maoists.

### **CA Elections**

The agreement states that the CA election would be held within mid-June 2007. The CA elections would be held on the basis of mixed proportional procedure.

There will be 425 members of CA – 205 will be elected directly on the basis of existing electoral constituencies. Another 204 members will be nominated by various parties on the basis of their proportional strength seen during direct elections.

The Prime Minister will nominate 16 remaining members of the CA.

Meanwhile, the UML has written its Note of Dissent on two points in the agreement. It has stated that the party believes holding referendum was the best way to decide about the fate of monarchy. Likewise, it also stated that election to CA should have been held on fully proportional representation system.

Other points of agreement include determining 1990 as the cut-off year for providing citizenship.

The agreement was signed by Maoist chairman Prachanda on behalf of his party. Likewise, on behalf of SPA, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal, NC (Democratic) president Sher Bahadur Deuba, People's Front president and deputy Prime Minister Amik Sherchan, general secretary of Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP-Anandidevi) Bharat Bimal Yadav, president of Nepal Workers and Peasants Party (NWPP) Narayan Man Bijukchhe, Leftist Front leader CP Mainali have signed the agreement. The summit meeting ended at 1:15 am on Wednesday.

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