

South Asia Analysis Group

Published on *South Asia Analysis Group* (<http://www.southasiaanalysis.org>)

[Home](#) > Nepal: Delaying Tactics of Deuba: Unjustified- Update No. 358

Nepal: Delaying Tactics of Deuba: Unjustified- Update No. 358

Submitted by asiaadmin2 on Fri, 01/12/2018 - 05:47

Note No. 794

Dated 12-Jan-2018

By Dr. S.Chandrasekharan

It is more than a month since the elections under the new constitution took place. Still, there appears to be no immediate chance of the new government being formed. It may take another month or even more and as one commentator said that perhaps it may need a third Andolan to get a federal government in place!

The problem is two fold-

First, is the built in procedural difficulties in forming the new government with both the parliament and the national assembly in place to elect a new Prime minister and

Second, is the apparent reluctance on the part of present Prime Minister- Sher Bahadur Deuba to leave office soon after the elections and instead stay as long as possible using the current provisions in the Constitution which unfortunately are too complicated!

What is more- it is noticed that the Nepali Congress is using this time in trying to form an alternative government other than UML which has convincingly won the elections, by approaching Maoist Centre Chief Dahal to head the government. For once, Dahal appears to have respected the popular will and verdict of the electorate. He declined to leave the Leftist Alliance and surprisingly, he said that it will not be appropriate morally as well as politically!

Talking of morals, it cannot be denied that the Nepali Congress had once upon a time set up high standards of morals in Nepali politics. I recall B.P.Koirala much to the consternation of many of his admirers, in taking no time in welcoming the verdict of the referendum held for

the people to choose between multi party democracy and the Panchayat system with appropriate reforms. Koirala knew and everyone else knew that the election in the referendum was rigged to favour the Panchayat system and yet he followed the rules!

It is not without reason that some of the stalwarts in the Nepali Congress like K.P.Bhattarai, Ganesh Man Singh or the then youth leader Marshal Zulum spent years in jail fighting for democracy. Yet Deuba and some of his advisers of the Nepali Congress do not seem to be following the democratic norms in handing over charge peacefully, once the electorate had rejected them!

Built in Delays:

First, is the delay in forming the National Assembly. Since it is the first time that the assembly is being formed under the constitution, 56 members are to be elected for two, four and six years (terms to be decided by a lottery initially). There was delay in the President approving the ordinance that recommended the mode of election by SVT (single vote transfer) and that would favour the Nepali Congress. With the ordinance having been approved, it now appears that the Election Commission would need at least a month to conduct the elections. February 7 th has been tentatively fixed for the elections.

Separately, the Election Commission will have to declare the elected representatives under the PR system. Some of the parties have just sent the list and adjustments will have to be made for proper gender representation etc.

Infrastructure Arrangements for Provincial Assemblies not in Place:

More important, no proper infrastructure arrangements have been made for the seven provincial assemblies. First will be the appointment of Chief Executives fo the provinces and only then can the Election Commission send the list to the respective executives for the elected members to take charge. Then comes a more tricky and controversial issue- selecting temporary headquarters for the new provinces.

Deuba without consulting the other four political parties is said to have decided on the temporary capitals but someone in his office leaked the details. Result- violent protests and serious law and order in some of the places left out in this selection!

The decision of the committee formed by Deuba are said to be -

- Province 1. Gothgaum of Biratnagar. (Not Dhankuta as many wanted)
- Province 2. Janakpur
- Province 3. Thimi
- Province 4. Pokhara

Province 5. Dang
Province 6 Surkhet
Province & Deepayal (not Dhangadi as many would like to have)

Deuba had a meeting with the representatives of other political parties for the first time on 4th January. Since no consensus was reached, it is said that Deuba would go ahead unilaterally in appointing the chief Executives of the provinces and in deciding the temporary capitals for the provinces. This will give rise to further protests affecting seriously the law and order situation. It should be possible to reach a consensus.

Merger Blues:

As expected, the merger process of the two leftist parties is taking time. The rank and file of the UML appear to be in no position to accept Dahal as the chairman of the new party. The two senior party leaders Oli of UML and Dahal of Maoist Centre have been entrusted with the task of merger and decide on the merger road map.

Earlier, the two parties had decided to a “Joint Mechanism” for unification led by Dahal with both parties remaining in tact- The mechanism would decide on the unification process and other joint decisions of the alliance wherever necessary.

It was only on 8th January that the two leaders met (Oli and Dahal) to discuss the modalities of unification. It is not known yet as to what transpired between them but what is said is that the merger process will be decided very soon. This means that there are differences between the two on the unification process! While there may not be any problem in power sharing, it looks that actual merger of the two parties is not going to be easy. It may end up in two distinct units working in unison in running the government!

The Madhesi Parties:

It is not clear as to what both the Madhesi groups FSPN and RJPN are up to. On the one hand, both groups along with the Nepali Congress leader K.P. Situala had approached the Maoist leader Dahal to form a government with their support. Situala was the Home Minister during the turbulent days in post Jana Andolan 2 period and had dealt with the Maoist leaders in that capacity. Upendra Yadav of FSPN is also said to be close to the Maoist leader Dahal. But both the parties have not distinguished themselves well in trying to go against the people’s mandate and take away what is due to the UML to lead the government

With Dahal having declined the offer, both the Madhesi groups have now approached the UML to take a softer stand towards constitutional amendment in return for support to the government led by UML. By such contradictory approaches the groups may fall between the two stools and get nothing finally!

The Nepali Congress:

The Nepali Congress having lost the elections appear to be in a desperate situation. The leaders are disappointed and many of the stalwarts lost the elections from constituencies which have elected them regularly. They were perhaps overconfident.

The Nepali Congress has a long history with democratic credentials in spite of being dominated by the Koirala family. There is an enormous reservoir of goodwill for the party from the people. Their share of voting from the point of view of percentage has not dwindled and the present decision of the electorate to opt for a leftist alliance should be taken more as an aberration and there is scope to survive and emerge stronger in the days to come.

The party lost the election by poor leadership, absence of a workable strategy and above all by poor performance when in power. Internally they were not united. The party needs an introspection and a thorough re haul and senior leaders who have lost their relevance should give way to younger and more active elements in the party. The party will continue to be relevant.

Tags:

[Nepal Elections](#) ^[1]

[Nepali Congress](#) ^[2]

[UML-MC alliance](#) ^[3]

[Madhesi Parties](#) ^[4]

Category:

[Notes](#) ^[5]

Countries:

[Nepal](#) ^[6]

Topics:

[Political](#) ^[7]

Source URL: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/2252>

Links

- [1] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/492>
- [2] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/547>
- [3] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/1831>
- [4] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/891>
- [5] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/notes>
- [6] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/nepal>
- [7] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/political>