

## What might “Naya Nepal” mean to the Madhesh region?

### **Sarala, CPN-UML:**

Naya Nepal is a great opportunity for the Madheshi to become first class citizens of this country. In the past, we were highly discriminated and were often referred as Indians even in our own capital Kathmandu. The share of representation in any entity of the government is currently just negligible. Looking at the Madheshi women, the situation is even worse.

Now, in federated Naya Nepal, we have equal rights as our fellow citizens of the hill and mountain regions, but we still need to correct the past treatment and provide the Madheshi with equal opportunities.

Saying so, I don't agree to make another centralized ruling by forming the Madheshi belt as one State. We Madheshi have been ruled and dominated by the Pahadis in the past and should now not repeat the mistake of ruling other ethnic groups such as Tharus or Pahadis in the name of one Madhesh state. Let the people of different geographical locations within Terai decide on the new federated structure of the Terai belt.

I must also add that within the Madhesh society, dalits and women are heavily discriminated by the Madheshi upper class males, a practice that my people need to address with highest priority in order to step towards a true Naya Nepal.

### **Sukdaiya, Maoist:**

Our Tharu community strictly opposes the "One Madhesh - One State" proposal by the eastern settlers of the Terai region. As we are abolishing the centralized ruling system, our community will not agree to be ruled by people from another region again. There is no right to the eastern Madheshi to rule the Tharus in the name of a concept that forms a single State out of the whole Terai plain.

We all agree that the Madheshi were discriminated, very much like us by the past autocratic regimes. In Naya Nepal, the Madheshi should now have equal rights including self-governance but it is also important that the Madheshi recognize the rights of other people living in the plain.

### **Laxmi, NC:**

We all know very well that the people of Madhesh were discriminated to a great extent in the past. Most of them were even denied citizenship. There is no proper representation of Madheshi people in the bureaucracy, the police force or the army.

Now as we are stepping forward, I would like to see the Madheshi joining hand in the process of constitution making and refrain from all kinds of strikes and protests. We as political leaders too, should work on convincing the people of the Madheshi area to have trust in the new setup of the State. Similarly, the Madheshi political party leaders should prove their statesmanship for the wider benefits of the entire nation. Now, it is us Nepali people from all over the nation crafting our destination.

## Role of external players on building the road towards “Naya Nepal”?

### **Sukdaiya, Maoist:**

To tell you frankly, currently some of the external players are clearly overstretching their roles by interfering with our internal matters. This I see as taking advantages of our fragile transitional phase. However, we need to convince our external partners to invest into the socio-economic sector for our economic and social development.

### **Laxmi, NC:**

Nepal was lucky to attract the support of our neighbors and friendly nations, be it for development assistance or for moral support to end the autocratic rule. In Naya Nepal too there is a great role for external players in helping the country to grow economically. We still need development assistance as well as foreign investments in big infrastructure projects such as hydro plants, the improvement of the street network or the establishment of an industrial sector.

In the past, many so-called external "partners" misinterpreted their role trying to have an undue influence in our internal affairs and manipulating our political leaders. Here we desperately need to learn our lesson and try to better protect our own interest.

**An old man's son fits nowhere.**