

# Nepal's Foreign Policy: A Geopolitical Reflection

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**Abstract:** This paper lists the objectives and determinants of Nepal's foreign policy such as geography, history, language, culture, religion, economy, trade, military strength, leadership and emerging international situation. It also presents an analytical description of Nepal's historical experience in foreign relations. Then it presents Nepal's foreign policy priorities topped by the promotion of social and economic development that remains an unfinished task in Nepal's national unification and security. Secondly, Nepal has to maintain a balanced relationship with its immediate neighbors India and China, and, thirdly, play a crucial role in the UN particularly in its peacekeeping operations. Fourthly, it has also to maintain close relationship with global powers especially its donors. Finally, Nepal has to play a responsible role in global and regional forums such as NAM and SAARC. For the execution of such a policy, Nepal needs a clear-headed, upright and determined leadership.

## 1. Nepal's Foreign Policy: The main objectives

*The foreign policy of every country deals first with the preservation of its independence and security, and second, with the pursuit and protection of its economic interests... . Deeply involved with these interests – in the case of major powers at least – are concern with resisting any penetration and manipulation by foreign countries and ideologies and an unblushing effort to accomplish some active penetration and manipulation of their own.*

Karl Deutsch (1912-1992)<sup>1</sup>

What the late Professor of Harvard University Karl Deutsch said in the above quotation is highly relevant in the case of Nepal faced with a challenge to maintain a friendly balance between the two most populous nations of the world, India and China, with different political ideologies which would be inevitably in trouble with each other on serious issues of border as in 1962. So Nepal requires a constant vigilance and a dispassionate assessment of the emerging pattern of power

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<sup>1</sup> Karl W. Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc. 1968, p. 100.

reality on both sides as witnessed in different periods in the past. This article proposes first to describe several determinants of Nepal's foreign relations, and then review the policies adopted by several statesmen, and conclude it with the foreign policy priorities of the country in the days to come.

Foreign policy consists of long-term goals, such as the ones mentioned by Professor Deutsch, set by a nation state in its relations with its immediate neighbors, and other international powers that it has to deal with in promoting its own national interest.

## 2. Determinants of Nepal's Foreign Policy

Foreign relations of a nation are, therefore, determined by geography, history, language, religion and culture, economy, military capability, trade and political leadership. Nepal's relations with other countries are also determined by the same factors.

**Geography.** Geography is an unchangeable factor and is the most constant element in determining a nation's foreign relations. It is said that you can choose your friends or enemies but you cannot choose your neighbors. Looking at the political map of the world, one can imagine the relations of any two countries such as Canada and the US, New Zealand and Australia, or Nepal and India and China. In the case of Nepal, we have to pay attention not only to the political map, but also to the topographic contours. The country lies in the southern slope of the Himalayan watershed, and looks like a giant ladder rising from the Gangetic plains to the heights of the Himalayas. This topography defines the climatic conditions and ecology of South Asia as a whole as it has also defined Nepal's history, linguistic relations, religion and culture, economy and trade.

**History.** History is nothing but the result of an interaction between the land and the man. Nepal's written history of about 2000 years begins with the Licchavi kings and moves forward with the Mallas, the Shahas, and the Ranas and down to the present republic. Historically, all the ruling dynasties had moved up into the mountains from the plains of India and carved their little kingdoms in different parts of Nepal. The last royal dynasty of Nepal, particularly Prithvinarayan Shaha and his descendants who created modern Nepal by unifying the mountain principalities called the *Baisies* and *Chaubisies* and the Kathmandu valley kingdoms during 1744-1815, saw that they could not possibly go beyond the Himalayas to the north and the dense malarial Tarai forest to the south. Thus it was in the east and the west that they launched their unification campaign. As a result, Nepal is what it is today – a rough elongated rectangle in the southern slopes of the Himalayas. It was because of the contiguous Gangetic plains that the succeeding ruling dynasties of Nepal entered into Nepal from the south and had very close social, religious, cultural, political, and economic relations with India. Although there were migrations into Nepal from the east, west and even through the northern Himalayan Mountains as well but they were much less in number and influence in shaping modern Nepal's history.

**Language.** Language is another element that brings countries closer or puts them far apart despite their geographic proximity.<sup>2</sup> Most of the Nepalese feel close

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<sup>2</sup> It is the English language, besides other things, that brings the UK, USA, and Australia close to each other despite the vast geographic distances dividing them. India and other Commonwealth

to India because of the linguistic affinity. For instance, more than forty-eight per cent of Nepal's population is concentrated in the Tarai districts adjacent to Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and Hindi is commonly understood by the people on both sides of the open border. Certain Tarai-based political parties of Nepal such as Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum (MJF) and Tarai Madhesh Loktantrik Party (TMLP) want Hindi to be the *lingua franca* in the Tarai. Vice-President Parmanand Jha belonging to Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum went as far as to take his oath of office in Hindi; albeit not without causing furors among the Hill and Mountain populations. The people in the Himalayan districts constituting some eight per cent of Nepal's population understand Tibetan and feel linguistically close to Tibet. The national language, Nepali, an Indo-European cognate of Hindi, is understood almost everywhere in Nepal.

**Religion and Culture.** Religion and culture are two other elements that bring people close to each other. Just as in India, a majority of Nepalese are Hindus; although there are also Buddhists, Muslims and Christians in both countries. Besides religion, the Nepalese also share a common culture with the Indians, as it is reflected in the dresses they wear, the movies they watch and newspapers and magazines they read. There are also commonalities in art, literature, and music. The people of the two countries feel that they know each other better than they know any other foreigners.

A vast number of Nepalese go on pilgrimages to various shrines in India, as many Indians also come to Nepal particularly to visit Pashupatinath, Janaki temple, Muktinath, and Manakamana. Because of such religious and cultural affinities between the two people, they do not need a visa to visit each other's countries. However, because of the recent incidents of terrorism in Mumbai, some sorts of identification are required to cross the border.

**Economic Strength.** Economic strength is another factor that determines a nation's foreign policy. When Nepal has to define its foreign policy goals, it has to see the size and strength of its economy in comparison to that of its immediate neighbors, India and China. Another side of economic strength is a nation's economic dependence or independence, which is determined by its external trade. More than sixty per cent of Nepal's export is dependent on India from which it imports rice, wheat, maize, lentils, sugar, cooking oil, cooking gas, petroleum products, and construction materials. If the supply of these items is stopped by India, life comes to a screeching halt in Nepal. This situation is indicated by the fact that the joint press communiqué issued on September 17, 2008 at the end of the visit to India by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) reads as the following: "In view of the shortages felt in Nepal for the essential commodities, Government of India will remove bans on the export of rice, wheat, maize, sugar and sucrose for quantities agreed with Nepal. Government of India will also provide a credit of up to Rs. 150 crores to Government of Nepal for the next three months to ensure uninterrupted POL supplies to Nepal."<sup>3</sup> There are no indications of an immediate change in this situation. In 2018 rice and other food items worth 153 billion were imported from India alone.

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countries may feel the same way thanks to English. However, despite geographic proximity, France and Germany may feel distant because of the difference of their languages.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Press Statement Official Visit of Rt. Honorable Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Prime Minister of Nepal to India from 14-18 September, 2008.

Up to the end of the 1970s, Nepal was exporting rice and other food grains but now it has to import them from India. This is not because Nepal has converted its economy from agriculture to industry; it is because of the population growth and reduced agricultural productivity: Almost 70 per cent of Nepalese are still engaged in subsistence agriculture.<sup>4</sup>

**Military Strength.** Whether it is Kautilya or Kissinger, everyone agrees that a nation's strength is indicated by its military strength, which determines its relations with its immediate neighbors and other foreign powers. Kautilya says, "Leaning against the castor oil plant, one should not provoke the elephant."<sup>5</sup> Nepal has to compare itself with its immediate neighbors in this respect: India's standing army is an estimated to be 1,325,000 whereas China has a standing army 2,255,000 strong. Both of these Asian giants that surround Nepal are nuclear powers: China has an estimated 250 nuclear warheads and India is suspected to have fifty to seventy. Given this great imbalance in military strength, Nepal has no military option for national security, or the type of diplomacy that uses military as the last resort.

In this context, we must also consider the fact that Nepal's army was an independent force during the unification campaign up until 1815; however, after the Sugauli treaty with the British East India Company, it became an allied force. After Jang Bahadur Rana took all the power at the wake of the *Kot* Massacre in 1846, it became an even greater ally of British India. In 1857 Jang Bahadur led the Nepal army to suppress the Indian Police Mutiny. Nepal's army also fought on the side of the British in both World Wars. Even today there are Gorkha Brigades, both in the British and Indian armies, bringing a considerable amount of remittance. This is a pertinent reality when we think about Nepal's' foreign relations.

**Trade and Commerce.** Foreign trade is also one of the determinants of foreign policy. East Asian countries, particularly Japan, Korea and China have close links with the US despite their geographic distance and differences in political systems, religion and culture. Nepal's foreign trade is mainly dependent on India and China with whom it suffers huge deficits. Out of its total estimated deficit of 1,000 billion rupees in foreign trade, Nepal's trade deficit with India is estimated to be 750 billion rupees and with China it runs up to 125 billion rupees.<sup>6</sup> These figures do not only indicate the overall trade situation of Nepal, but also Nepal's dependence on India, which affects its foreign policy just like that of Japan, Korea, and China in their relations with the US. In the present situation it seems that Nepal does not have much to export, except its man-power to Arab Gulf countries and East and Southeast Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

**Political Leadership.** Although the political leadership has been placed at the end of the list of the determinants of foreign policy, it is not the least important one in its formulation. It is said that geography and other factors determine the foreign policy of a nation but it is the political leadership that makes an assessment of those factors in formulating a country's foreign policy. If the leadership is

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<sup>4</sup> Importing food and other items does not necessarily mean a crisis in national economy, as is indicated by the case of Japan. Japan imports several food items and all the raw materials for its industry, but it is still the third largest economy in the world. Importing almost everything without exporting anything is, however, a real crisis.

<sup>5</sup> Kautilya's Arthashastra: "*Erandaṃ abalambya na kunjaram kopayet.*"

<sup>6</sup> Website of the Government of Nepal, Trade and Export Promotion Center

incapable of making a realistic assessment of such factors and runs into adventurism, it ends up in disasters for the nation. As a result, the political system collapses and the nation itself may disappear from the map of the earth as Sikkim did. However, if the leadership is capable of making a proper assessment of the nation's strengths and weaknesses and devising a proper foreign policy, even a small nation such as Singapore and Switzerland and even Lichtenstein can survive and take various benefits from its relations with its immediate neighbors and other powers around it.

### 3. Evolution of Nepal's Foreign Policy

In this context, it will be useful for us to study the political leadership of Nepal at various stages of its foreign policy development, because the genesis of our foreign policy lies in our historical experience. Going back to the origin of modern Nepal, we see that it was Gorkha, one of the smaller, weaker, poorer principalities in the mountains, which took the leadership in national unification and laid the foundation of this nation. The first leader that we have to study is Prithvinarayan Shaha, the unifier of modern Nepal. There are five main elements discernible in his foreign policy. First is the unification itself, without which he saw that there was no security or independence of the mountain principalities in the face of the expanding British colonial power that was expanding on the Indian plains. The second element was his military build up, for which he selected competent commanders who were able to make proper assessments of the situation and take the right steps at the right time. The third element of his foreign policy was a cautious friendship with British-India and China. The fourth element of his foreign policy was a balance between offensive and defensive approaches. He was offensive in relation to smaller principalities, which he subjugated with liberal use of force, and took a defensive position against the greater powers in the south and north. Thus, he won decisive victories against the Muslim army of Bengal Nawab Mir Kasim led by Gurgin Khan, in 1763 and against the British army, led by Captain Kilnoch, in 1767. The fifth element of his national security or foreign policy was strengthening the national economy by various policy measures.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> He said in his *Divya Upadesh*:

- I would close the [Himalayan] passes of the east and the west and open those that go through Nepal [for trade between China and India].
- Do not let the foreign merchants come up beyond Gaur and Parsa. If the foreign merchants come to our country, they will leave the country after making our people paupers.
- Forbid the use of foreign clothes [in Nepal]. Show samples to those who know how to make our clothes. Train them and ask them to make clothing so that our money is not drained out into the foreign country.
- Send our herbs abroad and earn money. Bring money into the country. If the citizens are fat [wealthy], the state is strong.
- People are the treasury of the King.
- In a place where there are mines, even if there is a village there, move the village and work the mine.
- In a place where there can be a plot for agriculture, even if there is a house, move the house, dig a canal and make a rice-growing field.

Babu Ram Acharya and Yogi Narahari Nath, *Badamaharajadhiraj Shri Panch Prithvinarayan Shahako Divya Upadesh (Parivaraddhita evam Parishkrita Tritiya Samskarana)*, Kathmandu: Shri Krishna Acharya, (2061), p. 49-57.

Many historians have analyzed the first four elements of Prithvinarayan Shaha's foreign policy, but they do not seem to have paid enough attention to the fifth element for an understandable reason. The probable reason is: dealing with the foreign powers was so important for his unification campaign that it constituted the main policy exercise throughout his reign (1743-1775) so the historians analyze only the first four elements foreign policy of Prithvinarayan Shaha. He did not have time to implement the plan for socio-economic development that he wished, but he did briefly mention them his *Divya Upadesh*, which in itself is a very short document indeed. He meant his instructions to be followed by his successors who, he hoped, would maintain the unity and security of the nation.

The next leadership and the model of foreign policy that we have to study is that of Bhimsen Thapa. Basically, he followed the policy of Prithvinarayan Shaha, but with some change. The time and situation had changed since the death of the founder of the nation. Nepal's resources were stretched too much, and the skill of the national leadership in maintaining balance with restraint had degenerated into adventurism. Thapa made two mistakes. First, he could not make a proper assessment of the nation's economic and military strength, and collided with British-India, which had grown much stronger by then. Secondly, he had not done much to consolidate Nepal's national unity through socio-economic development and an effective administrative structure. Nepal had stretched its territory along the mountains from Sikkim to Garhwal, but the newly unified territories were not really developed into a nation state. According to Dr. Ludwig Stiller, the Kathmandu administration made another mistake by imposing heavy taxation on the newly acquired territories, which made the people hostile toward the central administration.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the policy of Prithvinaryan Shaha, who said that the people must be made wealthy in order for the state to be strong, was forgotten. A huge amount of territory was lost to the British as the treaty of Sugauli was signed in late 1815 after the British-India-Nepal war. The war was predicted by Prithvinarayan Shaha who said also in his *Divya Upadesh* that the war with the British was inevitable.<sup>9</sup> The question was how much loss or gain Nepal would make in the war. It would all depend on the proper assessment of the national strength vis-à-vis the British.

The third leadership and foreign policy model of Nepal was that of Jang Bahadur Rana who was successful in his foreign policy particularly with the British Raj in India and dwindling power of China in Tibet. He had seen the policies of Prithvianayaran Shaha and Bhimsen Thapa, and also the paramount power of the British in India. He realized that the weak presence of China in Tibet would encourage the British to launch an attack on Nepal, as there was no force to counterbalance them. He decided to move cautiously ahead to build a friendship with the British. He visited England in 1850, and also assisted the British in suppressing the Indian Police Mutiny in 1857. As a result, in 1860 he was successful in gaining a part of the territory in western Tarai that was lost to the

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<sup>8</sup> Ludwig F. Stiller, S. J., *Nepal: Growth of a Nation*, Kathmandu: Human Resources Development Center, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> Prithvinarayan Shaha said in his *Divya Upadesh*: "This country is like a yam between two rocks. Maintain a good friendship with the emperor of China. Keep also friendship with the emperor of the southern sea (the East India Company). He is very clever. He has entrenched himself in Hindustan. He is in difficulty. If Hindustan unites and rises up, he will come up looking for places to make forts. Build your own forts in strategic places. Build barriers in passes. That force will come one day. Don't fight offensively; fight defensively." (*Ibid.*), p. 45.

British by the treaty of Sugauli (1815-1816). China did not intervene on behalf of Tibet during the Nepali-Tibetan war of 1856 (as it had done earlier in 1792), probably due to close association of Nepal with the British, and also due to the internal condition in Manchu China in the aftermath of events surrounding the treaty of Nanking in 1842.<sup>10</sup> Those events indicate the diplomatic acumen of Jang Bahadur Rana, who balanced his friendship with and isolationism from the British India of his time. Nepal was thus saved by Jang Bahadur, and his Rana successors from the fate of the Sikhs and the Marathas of India through this policy of mixing close but cautious friendship and isolationism. The country remained stagnated in social and economic terms and became one of the poorest in the world however; and it remains so even today.

As India was to gain independence after the Second World War, the Ranas were becoming aware that the policy of isolationism, coupled with the sole friendship with British-India, was inadequate for proving Nepal's independence and sovereignty, so they established diplomatic relations with the United States and India (even before it got its independence) in 1947 and France in 1949. They also made moves to obtain the membership of the United Nations and to renew Nepal's relations with China, but in vain.<sup>11</sup> They were not able to grasp the fact that foreign policy is but an extension of domestic policy, which should guide the leaders of contemporary Nepal. The Rana regime ended since the rulers failed to appreciate the spirit of independent India as well as the Nepalese people's aspiration from freedom and democracy at home. The mistakes of the last Rana rulers were repeated by King Birendra and King Gyanendra as well – a subject that we will discuss later on.

Now, let us review the foreign policy of the post-Rana leaders in short. As in reaction to the policy of isolationism of the Rana regime the post-Rana leaders such as King Tribhuvan, B. P. Koirala (who led the anti-Rana revolt) and King Mahendra expanded Nepal's relations mainly to establish the country's independent identity in the international community. King Tribhuvan, probably because of his gratitude to India for its role in restoring his legitimate position that he had lost to the Rana Prime Ministers, was very close to India. B. P. Koirala, who became the first elected Prime Minister (1959-1960), expanded Nepal's diplomatic relations from ten to twenty-six in his short tenure of eighteen months.<sup>12</sup> He went as far as to establish diplomatic relations with Israel in 1960, when many other countries of the world had not even recognized it as an independent sovereign state.

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<sup>10</sup> The **Treaty of Nanking** or **Treaty of Nanjing**, signed August 29th, 1842, was the unequal treaty which marked the end of the First Opium War between the British and Qing Empires of 1839-42. In the wake of China's military defeat, with British warships poised to attack the city, representatives from the British and Qing Empires negotiated aboard HMS *Cornwallis* anchored at Nanjing. On August 29th 1842, British representative Sir Henry Pottinger and Qing representatives, Qiying, Ilibu and Niujian, signed the Treaty of Nanjing. The treaty consisted of thirteen articles and was ratified by Queen Victoria and the Daoguang Emperor nine months later. As one historian notes, a "most ironic point was that opium, the immediate cause of the war, was not even mentioned.

<sup>11</sup> Yadunath Khanal, "Nepal between India and China: An Aspect of the Evolving International Balance in Asia", Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1971.

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal website.

King Mahendra needs a little longer space for description as he ruled much longer as an absolute monarch than his father Tribhuvan, and as he used Nepal's situation amidst the Cold War and India-China tension with remarkable skill. He tried to be open in his foreign relations but closed in his domestic politics as he dissolved the elected parliament and assumed full power as an absolute monarch. His actions strained his relations with India, especially when the Nepali Congress workers launched raids from across the border; however, those events were overtaken by serious incidents of Sino-Indian border clashes in 1962. The monarch was then able to cultivate his relations with China in order to offset the pressures from India. In fact, he was able to obtain foreign aid from both India and China. Some industries and highways were built in Nepal by the global rivals, such as the US and USSR, and regional powers, such as China and India but the main issue of internal socio-economic development of Nepal was relegated to the background, as there was virtually no major infrastructure project done by mobilizing internal human and natural resources. The capacity and self-confidence of the people, who had continuously fought the unification war for seven decades in the past, was never revived.<sup>13</sup> Thus, King Mahendra was more like Jang Bahadur Rana and his successors than Prithvinarayan Shaha, especially in view of the issue of social-economic development of Nepal.

King Birendra (1972-2001) and King Gyanendra (2001-2008) also followed King Mahendra's foreign policy towards China and India. Socio-economic development was not taken as the most essential element of strengthening the nation; however, King Birendra divided Nepal into five development regions and gave a slogan for "unleashing the forces of development." In the early years of his reign the word "development" was used very much by the media and political leaders in their speeches but the paradox of a monarch modernizing his nation remained there, and no real progress was made. All the socio-economic indicators of Nepal during the reign of King Birendra were very poor, and the popular discontent with the Panchayat regime, a euphemism for the king's direct rule, was so high in 1990 that he was forced by the first *Jana Andolan* (People's movement) to restore the parliamentary system disbanded by his father. Development was not possible without decentralization nor was decentralization possible under the king's direct rule.

In foreign policy, King Birendra proposed Nepal as a zone of peace and gained support for this proposal from some 116 countries. However, the proposal was construed by India as an indirect way of nullifying the spirit and provisions of the 1950 Nepal-India Treaty of Peace and Friendship. The proposal became an unnecessary irritant in Nepal-India relations. The monarch incorporated it as a guiding principle of Nepal's foreign policy in the Constitution of Nepal as amended second time in 1980 only to aggravate Nepal-India relations. The tension between the two countries reached a breaking point when India imposed a blockade against Nepal as a reprisal for the King's import of arms from China in 1989. The resulting shortage of essential goods instigated the Nepalese people against the King who was

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<sup>13</sup> The defeat in the war against the British in 1815 and the debilitating poverty deliberately maintained by the Rana regime (1846-1951) had made the Nepalese people more fatalists than brave fighters for their own country. King Mahendra was well-aware of the paradox of the modernizing role of a monarch. According to Rishikesh Shaha, "King Mahendra sought to control the pace of modernization with a view to putting off the risk of revolution as long as possible. That also accounts in part for the spectacular lack of development in Nepal. (*Nepali Politics: Retrospect and Prospect* Second edition, 1978), New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 245.

forced to replace the non-party system by allowing parties banned for almost three decades. Thus the king was made a constitutional monarch, and King Birendra was proven to be a failure both in domestic and foreign policies.

King Gyanendra proved to be an even greater failure in domestic and foreign policies. Whereas Birendra was responsible for the end of the political system introduced by his father, Gyanendra was responsible for the abolition of the monarchy established by his eleventh generation ancestor. Just like his father, King Gyanendra conspired to have the parliament dissolved and took the power on February 1, 2005, blaming the parliamentary parties for political instability and for their inability to tackle the problem of the decade-long Maoist insurgency. He pushed all the political parties into a camp against himself at home, and acted against the advice of the traditional foreign governments that had been influential and friendly to Nepal. In this context, it is interesting to reflect upon what the Indian External Affairs Minister, K. Natwar Singh, told Ramesh Nath Pandey, King Gyanendra's Foreign Minister, who was on a working visit to India a month after the King's take-over. Paragraph 5 of the press release issued by the Embassy of India in Kathmandu on March 7, 2005 read:

EAM conveyed to the Nepali Foreign Minister India's *disappointment* at the measures taken by His Majesty, the King of Nepal, which had served to *only deepen the crisis* facing Nepal. He pointed out that it was not only India, but several other friends of Nepal, which had expressed *grave concern* over these measures, which could *endanger the institution of monarchy itself*. The events since February, 2005 had only served to demonstrate that not only had the *security situation in Nepal not improved*, but that the country was now facing a *deteriorating economic situation* as well. This was likely to be further worsened by decisions of some donor countries to suspend aid to Nepal. Against this background, EAM conveyed that it would be in the interests of Nepal and its people, for the King and the political parties to join together on a national platform to unitedly deal with the multiple challenges facing Nepal, including the threat from Maoist insurgency. It was important *for the King to take an early initiative* in this regard. [Italics supplied].

It was a tragic foreign policy failure on the part of King Gyanendra not to listen to these loud and clear words, almost sounding like warnings, from the foreign minister of India. Similarly, the US Ambassador to Nepal James F. Moriarty publicly criticized the King's steps and said on CNN TV that he would not like to see the King face a messy abdication. He was quoted to have said, "Nobody wants to see the King cling on to the wheel of a helicopter and flee." Similarly, the British ambassador, Keith Bloomfield, revealed in an article published in *The Kathmandu Post* that he had warned the king of the dire consequences of his retroactive steps but in vain. He wrote, "Since the London Conference four years ago, the international community has consistently argued that the king and the parties should work together to agree on a strategy for handling the Maoist threat and bring peace to this tragically war-torn country through negotiations and reintegration of the Maoists into the mainstream. Our advice has not been acted upon. We have even been told to mind our own business."<sup>14</sup> No ruler in Nepal, which is so heavily dependent on foreign aid, can afford to ignore the voices of the international powers that influence events in Nepal.

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<sup>14</sup> *The Kathmandu Post*, March 24, 2006

The leaders of post-1990 democratic Nepal also did not have a clear concept of foreign policy (particularly a policy towards India), nor did they have any concrete plan for Nepal's socio-economic development, a proper basis for national security. Commenting on this situation, Rishikesh Shaha, a veteran expert of Nepal's foreign affairs, wrote:

It is really unfortunate that even after all these years Nepal has not been able to set its long-term goal of foreign policy in broad and clear terms. The most important question for Nepal to decide is what kind of long-term relationship it is going to have with its neighbor to the south on whom it leans so easily in every respect. A decision on this vital matter must be made by democratic Nepal as soon as possible.

Now that Nepal has duly elected Nepali Congress government with a clear majority and the main parliamentary opposition represented by the United Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Nepal which was also very much part of the interim coalition caretaker government, there should be no insurmountable difficulty in developing the political and economic relationship between the two countries in the future along the lines advocated in the joint communiqué of 10 June 1991. The Nepali constitution requires the approval of major treaties by a two-thirds majority in the parliament, and the government and the main opposition can easily muster<sup>r</sup> the required majority if they act in concert.

A bipartisan approach to major foreign policy issues is pursued by many countries in the world and it is also desirable for Nepal to evolve as far as possible a tradition of bipartisanship or national consensus on major foreign policy issues.<sup>15</sup>

Shaha wrote this as early as 1991 but this kind of appeal went unheeded by the leaders who ruled the country with utmost mediocrity. Particularly disappointing was the fact that they did not restore or rebuild a productive relationship with India that was spoiled by the kings. In fact, the Mahendra tradition was upheld just with a difference of degree. The vital issues of Nepal-India relations such as border control, immigration and citizenship, trade and transit, water resource management, and possibilities of Indian investment in Nepal were left unattended. The treaties, such as Mahakali, remained unimplemented despite being ratified by two-thirds majority in Nepalese parliament. Nepal could not achieve Indian cooperation in resolving the issues of Bhutanese refugees and Kalapani. The controversy around the 1950 Nepal-India Treaty of Peace and Friendship was raised as an irritant but was never resolved. They have not made any rational assessment of the realities of Nepal-India relations. The question of whether Nepal can forfeit the benefits of the treaty, such as equal treatment of the nationals of both countries in each other's territories, needs to be considered seriously as there are an estimated six to seven million Nepalese working in India. Recently, the CPN (Maoist) and other communist factions have demanded the closure of Gorkha recruitment in the Indian as well as the British army. However, the consequences of such closure do not seem to be well thought out in consultation with the stakeholders inside and outside the country.

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<sup>15</sup> Rishikesh Shaha, "Nepal's Foreign Policy in a Changing World: Focus on Nepal-India Relations", Reprinted in *How to Be a Good Parliamentarian?* Kathmandu: Institute for Human Development, Kathmandu Nepal, 1997, pp. 26-48.

#### 4. Foreign policy Priorities of New Nepal

Today Nepal is undergoing changes of historic proportions. The Kingdom of Nepal is now a republic. The royal dynasties that ruled and reigned in Nepal are history. We talk about building New Nepal, but we have the same traditional thinking both in domestic and foreign policies. Our eyes are focused on foreign powers. There is no doubt that we have to be vigilant about our national security in relation to our immediate neighbors. It is true that international relations are synonymous with the power game, where the powerful do what they will and the weak ones do what they must. The “diplomacy” of the powerful nations is a sort of “continuation of war by other means” as defined by Premier Chou En-Lai of China. We are not a powerful nation compared to our neighbors, so we must define our foreign policy priorities differently. Five main areas fall in Nepal’s priority as we try to strengthen our national security and foreign relations on a realistic basis.

**Socio-economic Development.** The first priority is building our internal strength by socio-economic development, the unfinished task history left to us.<sup>16</sup> A country like Nepal, so poor as it is, cannot survive just by showing skills in balancing foreign relations. The grinding poverty, especially in the rural areas and the utter lack of development may push Nepal towards disintegration. That is a real threat to national security. We cannot always blame the foreign powers for this threat as a Home Minister recently did.<sup>17</sup> We have to acknowledge that today’s demands for regional autonomies, with a right to self-determination by various ethnic and regional groups, are the ultimate results of the utter lack of development or imbalanced development in the past. Today Nepal needs economic security more than military security, which means that the people are in need of greater access to healthcare, education, drinking water, transportation and communication facilities, and gainful employment. Political progress has to be made in such a way that each member or community is rewarded proportionally for its sacrifice and contribution in the process of building New Nepal. We have to make sure that every Nepali feels his or her stake in the physical, moral, and spiritual survival of the nation. If Nepal does not make a rapid and inclusive socio-economic progress, it will be hard for Nepal to endure the pressure of disintegration and ensure national security. Restructuring of Nepal will end up in its disintegration if it does not happen with concurrent economic development. The basic point we must keep in mind is that Nepal’s security threat comes from within the country itself, not from outside.

There are several reasons for emphasizing socio-economic development as the first priority. The first, reasons is: it is our historic need. Nepal was unified by our forefathers who ran the unification campaign for seven decades through war and diplomacy. It was also defended by succeeding generations of rulers through various diplomatic skills in balancing our foreign relations; however, even after its

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<sup>16</sup> Today, even the United States finds itself facing the challenge of socio-economic rebuilding and redefining its national security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. “Obviously the economic crisis has already required Obama’s continuous attention—but that was thrust upon him. No President can set foreign policy aside, but in that area his signaling has mainly been that he will manage a smooth wartime transition; there has been little emphasis yet on transformational rhetoric or policies. His discretionary political capital, instead, is now steadily being piled up on two areas of the table—healthcare reform, and energy, clean, green, climate-change policy.” (*New Yorker*, December 11, 2008). President Donald Trump’s main slogan is economic improvement of USA

<sup>17</sup> Home Minister Bam Bahadur Thapa (Badal) is heard to have been making statement cautioning against the foreign hands attempting to spoil the social fabric of Nepal that has been peaceful so far.

survival for more than two and a half centuries, we feel insecure and threatened. We must realize that poverty and backwardness are the real threats to national security. Even today, we are concerned that our giant neighbors may swallow us or meddle too much in our internal affairs. In this context, we may take a look at the situation of Switzerland in contrast.<sup>18</sup>

The second reason to remind ourselves of the need for socio-economic development is that we have forgotten what the founder of this nation, who knew all its strengths and weaknesses, said: “the state becomes strong only if the people are prosperous.” Nepal’s territorial integration ended in 1815 but its political integration and national consolidation through social and economic development has not yet started. The popular leaders of the 1951 Revolution had realized the fact that after a century of stagnation, Nepal needed to move on the path of development. The first five-year plan started in 1956 and was carried on by the first elected government in 1959-1960, but then it was suddenly hindered by King Mahendra in 1960 dissolving the parliament and ruling as an absolute monarch. The nations stagnated again.

The third reason for reminding the need for socio-economic development is that even the leaders of the *Jana Andolan* (People’s Movement) of 1990, who were successful in restoring the multi-party democracy, were not successful in reviving the speed of national development. The second *Jana Andolan* of 2006 abolished the monarchy that was considered to be an obstacle in the path of national development. That is fine but we have not unleashed the power of the youth yet in building New Nepal. We are talking about economic diplomacy, but it has been limited to asking for foreign aid, and exporting “man power” to Gulf and South East Asian countries through various agencies. Today, the greatest Nepali intellectual and diplomat is the one who can bring the largest amount of foreign aid! Foreign aid particularly the humanitarian aid is given, as a matter of policy, by donor countries even if the developing countries do not ask for it. The question is: Which country has developed with only foreign aid, and without mobilizing internal human and natural resources?

We are suffering a huge trade deficit, but we are not prioritizing the areas of investment of our natural and human resources so that the national economy does not depend on just remittance and foreign aid. What are our priorities? What are our comparative advantages? Given the geographic and climatic conditions of Nepal, the areas of development may be tourism, hydropower, agriculture, health and education all of which can be money-making industries as they will also contribute to our overall socio-economic development.

**Relations with Immediate Neighbors.** Let us now consider the top second priority of Nepal’s foreign policy, as it has a direct bearing upon our national security. Both our neighbors, India and China, stand to gain by respecting our independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Nepal’s neutral position during the 1962 border clash between the two neighbors was welcomed by both of them. It is unnecessary to beat the drum of our nationalism by creating an imaginary threat from them. It is also foolish on the part of Nepal to play one neighbor against the other. They are too big for Nepal to play them.

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<sup>18</sup> Switzerland, landlocked and mountainous like Nepal, does not feel a threat to its existence despite being surrounded by powers (Germany, France and Italy) whose economies are even individually much larger than that of India. Swiss people enjoy the second highest income per capita in the world with US\$ 40,680. And it is one of the aid donors of Nepal.

Nationalism lies more in the common efforts of our people in building New Nepal rather than in shouting slogans against neighbors and singing patriotic songs alone. We must see how we can benefit from the rapid economic growth the two Asian giants have been making in the last two decades. All three of us can be partners in this historic progress. We must acknowledge the fact that, because of the geographic conditions, Nepal has to have more co-operations with India in all fields of our economic activities: tourism, hydropower, agriculture, healthcare and education. Some politicians, diplomats and journalists talk about equidistance between Delhi and Beijing; however, that is not the reality. Relations between the two countries are not determined by physical proximity alone. They are determined by various factors, such as geography, history, language, religion, culture, economy, trade and commerce, as already mentioned above. Nepal's currency is pegged with the Indian Rupee, not with Chinese Yuan. All these factors count when we consider our relations with India and China.

The government, led by CPN (Maoist), has proposed various measures in internal security and external relations, such as the integration of the Maoist combatants in the Nepal Army, restructuring of the state, and revising or scrapping the 1950 Treaty with India. These are issues in which both our neighbors will be interested in their own ways. Our challenge is how can we accomplish these tasks without damaging our relations with our neighbors, particularly India?

**Role in the United Nations.** Our third priority in our foreign policy is our role in the United Nations. Nepal is the fifth largest troop contributor to UN peacekeeping operations. This is an opportunity for Nepal to project its image in the international community, as well as gain experience in carrying out international responsibilities. At this moment, we are also being helped by the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), which means Nepal is willing to accept the UN's role in its internal peace process. Nepal is not a failed state, but acceptance of the role of UNMIN in Nepal does show that we failed in resolving our problems on our own. This situation is a reminder of the fact that in order for us to be successful in foreign policy, we have to be successful in our domestic policy as well.

Our role in the United Nations also has to do with the UN Conventions that we are a party to. Nepal is a party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its Optional Protocols. Such conventions do not only give a positive image to Nepal, but also impose upon us certain obligations. International community, particularly at the UN, will be monitoring our human rights record. Prime Minister Prachanda said on the International Human Rights Day (December 10, 2008) that "Human Rights is [sic] different from what is defined by powerful countries or donor agencies. Human rights is [sic] not an issue that powerful countries define and small countries have to implement. It is not only the issue of the donor community."<sup>19</sup> If we refuse to accept and implement what we are a party to, we must be ready for the consequences as well. One wonders if the international community will accept the argument of the Prime Minister. As far as the questions of human rights, stipulated in the Conventions and Protocols are concerned, we are party to them. We cannot denounce the gross human rights violations in other parts of the world if we do not keep our own record satisfactory to the international community. We have both roles and responsibilities, maintaining international human rights standards first at home and then elsewhere in the world.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Kathmandu Post*, December 11, 2008.

**Relations with Other Nations.** Nepal's fourth priority in its foreign relations is our relationship with regional powers, such as Bangladesh and Pakistan, and global powers particularly the US and the UK. The majority of India's population is Hindu. So is Nepal's. There are also considerable Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian communities in both. Nepal has to be mindful of the fact that Pakistan, which is an Islamic Republic, borders India that has alleged Islamic fundamentalist from Pakistan to have wreaked havoc in the recent terrorist attack in Mumbai. Islamic fundamentalism has been the focus of American foreign policy as well as that of the NATO member countries of Europe. Nepal has two million Nepalese (from Hindu, Muslim, and other communities) working in Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arab and many other Gulf countries. We cannot be oblivious to the concerns of India, the US, the UK and other European powers that have a long-standing relation with Nepal.

The American administration of President Barack Obama is likely to have good relations with both India and China in view of its trade relations and its fight against the Islamic fundamentalists, particularly the Taliban and other radicals. Its relations with Islamic countries in the Gulf region and South Asia, particularly Afghanistan and Pakistan, may be difficult, but is still likely to work in cooperation with them in fighting against the Islamic fundamentalists and terrorist groups. Nepal will have to watch the American policy towards what is called the "green threat." The US is a global power with an influence even on Nepal particularly through its increasing cooperation with India sharing common views on terrorism.

**SAARC and Non-aligned Movement.** Nepal's role and interest in the SAARC, Non-aligned Movement (NAM), BIMSTEC, and other organizations and groups, such as the groups of the Least Developed Countries (LDC), Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and the Group of 77, can be listed as the fifth priority in Nepal's foreign policy. We have the tradition of participating in the summits of SAARC and NAM at the head of the government level, indicating our commitment and support. However, the fact of the matter is that those organizations have not been successful in achieving their goals for various reasons.

SAARC is an Indo-centric organization, geographically and in many other ways. All the smaller members of SAARC are around India and are politically, economically, and militarily weaker. Indo-Pak relations have stood in the way of real progress of SAARC. The fact that India's foreign trade with the SAARC countries amounts to just about 5 per cent of its total foreign trade speaks for the ground reality.

NAM is almost the same. As a movement against the idea of joining power blocks for national security, NAM has lost much of its relevance after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. The idea of NAM promoting the interests of developing countries in global forums, such as the UN or World Trade Organization (WTO) has also been less than effective. Many NAM members, such as Pakistan, India, Iran and Iraq, have fought wars between themselves. NAM members have also not achieved much in terms of economic and security cooperation.

For Nepal, however, NAM has a definite meaning in its relations with its immediate neighbors. Nepal's non-alignment with India and China is beneficial for all the three countries at times of difficulties, as in 1962 when India and China clashed. In India, the spirit of NAM originated from the philosophy of non-violence,

as practiced by Mahatma Gandhi to win India's independence. Although Nepal was, together with India, one of the founding members of NAM in 1961, the genesis of nonalignment in Nepal's foreign policy lies in the experience of our national unification that began in 1744. As stated by Prithvinarayan Shaha, Nepal has to be in friendship with both India and China. Nepal thrives in peace, not in conflict between our neighbors, and has to maintain realistic, balanced and friendly relations that are beneficial to all.

## 5. Conclusion

As we Nepalese work on the project of building New Nepal that is economically and socially developed, we are going to be involved in the historic restructuring of the state as well. It is a challenging task – just as challenging as the national unification campaign was. We have had the elections for the Constituent Assembly and we are going to write the constitution of the Republic of Nepal, which will incorporate our national goals and interests. As far as the foreign policy of the New Nepal is concerned, at least the following ideas must be incorporated in the new Constitution of Nepal:

1. Preserving Nepal's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and consolidating national unity through balanced socio-economic development of the nation,
2. Maintaining friendly relations and peaceful co-existence with our immediate neighbors on the realistic basis of mutual benefits,
3. Working together with all the peace-loving countries of the world for peace, prosperity, and happiness of humanity, and
4. Adhering to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and contributing to the cause of world peace through the efforts of the United Nations.

No nation can be regarded as truly independent if it is not economically independent. No nation can be really sovereign if it is not able to solve its problems on its own. Nepal's independence and sovereignty have been challenged by the economic realities and political conditions as discussed above.

Nepal's foreign policy, aiming to preserve its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, will be effective only if it is based on national strength, which means economic strength. Economic independence is not possible without development, which, in turn, is impossible without mobilizing internal human and natural resources. In this respect one is reminded of what the late Mahesh Chandra Regmi, a noted historian of Nepalese economy, wrote. He wrote, "The all-out mobilization of human and natural resources, irrespective of its purpose, requires a great deal of political and administrative vision, discipline and efficiency. One can only hope that the Nepali people today will be able to develop the same qualities in the reconstruction of their nation as their ancestors developed while laying its

foundation.”<sup>20</sup> Surely, such mobilization of people requires a leader who can inspire them by personal sacrifice, high moral standard and a clear vision.

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# नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीति: एक विमर्श

प्रा. डा. जयराज आचार्य

## १. सिद्धान्त र सिंहावलोकन

जुनसुकै देशको पनि परराष्ट्र नीतिको पहिलो चासो भन्नु देशको स्वाधीनता र सुरक्षाको चासो नै हो । दोस्रो चासो भनेको देशको आर्थिक हितको खोजी एवं संरक्षणको चासो हो । त्यस बाहेक ठूला शक्तिशाली देशहरूमा चाहिँ अन्य देशले आफ्नो देशभित्र घुसपैठ गर्ने, चलखेल गर्ने र आफ्ना सिद्धान्तहरूको प्रचार गर्ने गर्छन् कि भन्ने विषयमा निरन्तर चासो र चिन्ता रहन्छ । तर उनीहरू आफै अर्काको देशमा घुसपैठ गर्ने र चलखेल गर्ने काम लाजै नमान्ने गर्दछन् ।

कार्ल ऊल्फगाङ्ग डोइच<sup>21</sup>

परराष्ट्र नीतिको सिद्धान्तका विषयमा हार्वर्ड विश्वविद्यालयका विश्वप्रसिद्ध दिवङ्गत प्रोफेसर कार्ल डोइचको उपर्युल्लिखित तीनै कुरा (अर्थात् राष्ट्रिय स्वाधीनता र सुरक्षाको चासो, आर्थिक हितको संरक्षण र ठूला देशले घुसपैठ गर्ने कुरा) नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिबारे विचार गर्दा मननयोग्य छन् । एसियाका दुई महाशक्तिहरू र विश्वका दुई सबैभन्दा ठूला जनसंख्या भएका देशहरूका बीचमा रहेको नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीति सफल रूपमा सञ्चालन गर्ने कुरा निकै नै चुनौतीपूर्ण छ । त्यस्तो सफल र प्रभावकारी परराष्ट्र नीति सञ्चालन गर्न हाम्रो परिस्थितिको यथार्थपरक मूल्याङ्कन गर्नु अत्यावश्यक पूर्वशर्त हो । यस सन्दर्भमा हाम्रा केही पूर्वजहरूले नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीति कुशलतापूर्वक सञ्चालन गरेको, केहीले नगरेको र हाल त्यसमा उत्तिको कुशलता नदेखिएको कुराको चर्चा गर्दै आगामी दिनहरूमा नेपालले निर्धारण गर्नुपर्ने परराष्ट्र नीतिका प्राथमिकताहरूको चर्चा यस लेखमा गरिनेछ ।

परराष्ट्र नीति भनेको कुनै एक राष्ट्रले आफ्ना छिमेकीहरू तथा अन्य अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय शक्तिहरूसित कस्तो सम्बन्ध राख्ने भन्ने विषयमा तय गरेको नीति नै हो । जुनसुकै देशको पनि परराष्ट्र नीतिलाई निर्धारण गर्ने प्रमुख कारकहरूमा, भूगोल, इतिहास, भाषा, धर्मसंस्कृति, आर्थिक बल, सैन्यशक्ति, व्यापार-वाणिज्य सम्बन्ध र राजनीतिक नेतृत्व र उसको आदर्श वा सिद्धान्त हुन् । नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिलाई निर्धारण गर्ने तत्वहरू पनि यिनै हुन् र यी तत्वहरूको महत्व पनि सम्भवतः यही क्रममा निर्धारण हुन सक्छ ।

**भूगोल** । भौगोलिक अवस्था भनेको मनुष्यले परिवर्तन गर्न नसकिने अवस्था हो । त्यसकारण भूगोललाई परराष्ट्र नीतिको अपरिवर्तनीय वा सबैभन्दा कम परिवर्तनीय कारकका रूपमा लिइन्छ । भूगोलले नै कुनै पनि देशका छिमेकी को हुन् भन्ने निर्धारण गर्दछ र परराष्ट्र नीतिको अध्ययन विश्लेषणका क्रममा भनिन्छ, 'मित्र या शत्रु छान्न सकिन्छ, छिमेकी छान्न सकिँदैन' । विश्वको नक्सा हेरेर भन्न सकिन्छ को कसको छिमेकी छ र यो पनि सहजै अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ कि कसको कस्तो सम्बन्ध छ । क्यानडा र अमेरिकाको सम्बन्ध कस्तो होला नक्साबाट मात्रै पनि केही मात्रामा भन्न सकिन्छ । त्यसै गरी, अष्ट्रेलिया र न्यू जील्याण्डको कस्तो सम्बन्ध कस्तो होला, सहजै अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ । अनि, हाम्रो आफ्नै छिमेक दक्षिण एसियामा (जसको मध्य भागमा भारत रहेको छ) छिमेकीहरूबीच कस्तो सम्बन्ध छ त्यो त हामीले देखेकै छौं ।

भौगोलिक रूपमा नेपाल दुइटा विशाल राष्ट्रहरू भारत र चीनका बीचमा रहेको छ । अतः दुबै देशको नेपालमा रणनीतिक चासो छ । त्यसकारण नेपालले परराष्ट्र नीति बनाउँदा तत्काल बेहोर्नुपर्ने सम्बन्ध भनको तिनै दुई एसियाली महाशक्ति राष्ट्रहरूसितको सम्बन्ध हो । यो यथार्थ सुरुदेखि आजसम्म अपरिवर्तित रहिआएको छ । नेपालको परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धमा हाम्रो भौगोलिक यथार्थमाथि विचार गर्नुपर्ने अर्को एक मननीय पक्ष हाम्रो देशको भू-बनोट हो । तराइदेखि हिमालको उचाइसम्म हेर्दा यो

<sup>21</sup> हेर्नु: जयराज आचार्य, **यदुनाथ खनाल: जीवनी र विचार**, पुलचोक, ललितपुर: साभा प्रकाशन, २०५९, पृष्ठ १२२ ।

एक विशाल भू-जस्तो छ र हिमालको उचाइ नेपाल र चीनपट्टिको सम्बन्धमा एक प्रकृति-निर्मित महाप्राचीर (पर्खाल) जस्तो भएर रहेको छ । सारांशमा भन्ने हो भने नेपाल हिमालयको पानीढलोको दक्षिणी ओरालोतिर अवस्थित छ । यो भौगोलिक अवस्थाले नेपाल र भारतलाई एउटै जलवायु-प्रदेशभित्र पारिदिएको छ ।

**इतिहास** । इतिहास भन्नु भूगोलकै परिणाम हो । भूगोल र मनुष्यका बीच अन्तरक्रिया भएर इतिहास बन्छ । नेपालको दुई हजार वर्ष लामो लिखित इतिहास लिच्छवि राजवंशबाट सुरु हुन्छ र मल्ल, शाह, र राणाहरू हुँदै आजसम्म आइपुगेको छ । यी सबै शासक वर्गहरू भारततिरबाट नेपालको पहाडी भागभित्र पसेका थिए र तिनले विभिन्न समयमा आफ्ना राज्यहरूलाई विभिन्न आकार-प्रकारमा निर्माण गरेका थिए । आधुनिक नेपालको एकीकरण गर्ने शाहवंशीय ठकुरी राजाहरूले देखे कि हिमालपारि गएर नेपालको विस्तार हुन सक्दैन, न त त्यतिखेर औलो लाग्ने तराइको चार कोसे भाडीतल गएर नै राज्यविस्तार हुन सक्थ्यो । त्यसकारण एकीकरण अभियान पूर्व र पश्चिमका पहाडी प्रदेशमा फैलियो, जसको फलस्वरूप आजको नेपालको नक्सा पूर्वपश्चिम फैलिएर रहेको छ । इतिहास भनेको भूगोलको परिणाम नै हो भनेर यसैलाई भनिन्छ । यही ऐतिहासिक कारणले गर्दा नेपालका राजकीय शासक वर्गहरूको भारत (खास गरी उत्तरी भारत) सित निकटको सम्बन्ध रहन गयो । आज धेरै समयपछि नेपालको इतिहास बदलिएको छ । नेपालमा अब राजतन्त्र छैन र नेपाल गणतन्त्र तथा धर्मनिरपेक्ष राज्य बनेको छ । विगतमा राजतन्त्र र हिन्दू राज्य हुनाले नेपाल भारततिर जति निकट भएको महसुस हुन्थ्यो त्यो अब त्यति नहुन सक्छ ।

अनि इतिहास भनेको राजनीतिक गतिविधिकै अभिलेख हो । आजसम्मको नेपालको राजनीति पनि ऐतिहासिक कारणहरूले गर्दा भारतको राजनीतिसित मिल्दोजुल्दो थियो चाहे त्यो राजतन्त्रको प्रत्यक्ष शासन होस् चाहे संसदीय प्रणाली । तर अब नेपालमा कम्युनिष्ट शासन व्यवस्था स्थापित भएको छ र प्रधानमन्त्री लगायत नेकपा (माओवादी) पार्टीका वरिष्ठ नेताहरूले अब संसदीय व्यवस्थामा फर्किएर जाने कुरा छैन भनी आफ्ना विचारहरू स्पष्ट पारिरहेका छन् । त्यसले नेपालको परम्परागत परराष्ट्र नीतिमा केहीनकेही फरक ल्याउन सक्ने सम्भावना छ ।

**भाषा** । भाषा अर्को त्यस्तो तत्व हो जसले दुई देशलाई एक अर्काबाट निकट या टाढा रहेको अनुभव गराउँछ र पारस्परिक सम्बन्धलाई निर्णायक रूपमा प्रभाव पारिदिन्छ ।<sup>22</sup> भाषा भनेको मानवजातिले बोल्ने कुरा हुनाले भाषाको कुरा जनता वा जनसंख्यासित प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा गाँसिएको छ । त्यसकारण नेपालको परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धको चर्चा गर्दा मननयोग्य कुरा के छ भने भाषिक कारणले गर्दा नेपाल भारतसित निकै निकट छ । नेपालको अत्यधिक जनसंख्या (सम्भवत ९० प्रतिशत) ले उत्तरी भारतमा बोलिने हिन्दी भाषा बुझ्छन् । नेपाल तराईमा देशको ४८ प्रतिशत जनसंख्या बस्छ जसले हिन्दी भाषा पूरै बुझ्छ । यतिसम्म कि त्यो जनसंख्याको आधा हिस्सा त हिन्दीलाई नै तराइको सम्पर्क भाषा मान्न समेत तयार छ । सायद यस्तै महसुस गरेर गणतन्त्र नेपालका उपराष्ट्रपतिले हिन्दीमा आफ्नो पदको सपथ ग्रहण गर्नुभयो । यद्यपि त्यसको चर्को विरोध पनि भयो तर यथार्थ के हो भने भाषिक कारणले नै नेपाल तराईको जनता मात्र होइन, पहाडी क्षेत्रमा बस्ने जनता पनि (जो देशको कूल जनसंख्याको लगभग ४४ प्रतिशत छ) भारतलाई बढी बुझ्छ । हिमाली क्षेत्रमा रहेका नेपालका करीव ८ प्रतिशत जनता चीनको स्वशासित प्रदेश तिब्बतसित निकट महसुस गर्छन् । यस यथार्थले पनि नेपालको परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धलाई निकै मात्रामा प्रभावित पार्छ ।

**धर्म र संस्कृति** । धर्म र संस्कृतिको समानता वा असमानताले पनि कुनै एक देशका जनतालाई अर्को देशका जनतासित निकट या दूर बनाइदिन्छ । नेपालका जनता अधिकांश हिन्दू धर्मावलम्बी छन् अनि बौद्ध धर्म, इस्लाम र क्रिश्चियन धर्म मान्नेहरू पनि यहाँ छन् । त्यस आधारमा नेपालीहरू भारतका जनतासित सामीप्य भएको अनुभव गर्छन् । धर्म बाहेक संस्कृति, लवाइ-खवाइ र

<sup>22</sup> अंग्रेजी भाषाकै कारणले अमेरिका, बेलायत र अष्ट्रेलिया एकअर्कासित निकट छन् यद्यपि ती देश भौगोलिक रूपमा एकअर्काबाट टाढा छन् । तर फ्रान्स र जर्मनी भौगोलिक रूपमा एकअर्कासित जोडिए पनि भाषिक भिन्नताका कारणले एक अर्काबाट टाढा जस्ता महसुस गर्छन् । भाषाले गर्दा नै भारत पनि अंग्रेजी भाषीसित निकट अनुभव गर्छ किनकि अधिकांश शिक्षित भारतीयहरू अंग्रेजी बोल्छन् ।

सामान्यतया सामाजिक मूल्य मान्यताहरूमा पनि दुई देशका जनताको बीचमा समानता पाइन्छ । त्यसले गर्दा दुई देशका जनताको मनोविज्ञान के छ, भने उनीहरू एक-अर्कालाई राम्ररी चिन्दछन् ।

नेपालबाट तीर्थयात्राका लागि भारत जानेहरूको ठूलो संख्या छ र नेपालका पशुपतिनाथ र मुक्तिनाथ लगायत अन्य धेरै तीर्थस्थल, देवस्थलमा आउने भारतीयहरूको संख्या पनि ठूलो छ । शायद यही सामीप्यले गर्दा दुई देशका जनतालाई एक-अर्काको देश भ्रमण गर्न भिसाको आवश्यकता पनि पर्दैन । सामान्य परिचयपत्र देखाएर खुला सीमा पार गर्न पाइने व्यवस्था कायम राखिएको छ । यस्तो खुला सीमाको फाइदा-बेफाइदा दुबै होलान् । अब यहाँ विभिन्न प्रकारका आतङ्ककारी घटना पनि घटिरहेका छन् । त्यस अवस्थामा त यस विषयमा केही विचार गर्नु आवश्यक पनि हुन जान्छ ।

**आर्थिक बल** । राष्ट्रको बल भनेको आर्थिक बल नै हो । त्यसैका आधारमा एक राष्ट्रले अरु छिमेकी राष्ट्रहरूसित कस्तो व्यवहार गर्ने भन्ने कुरा निर्धारण गर्छ । नेपालले आफ्नो परराष्ट्र नीति बनाउँदा विचार गर्नुपर्ने कुरा हाम्रा छिमेकीहरू (भारत र चीन) को तुलनामा हाम्रो अर्थतन्त्र कत्रो छ र कसरी सञ्चालन भइरहेको छ भन्ने हो । स्पष्ट छ, नेपालको तुलनामा भारत र चीनको आर्थिक बल ज्यादै बढी छ । आर्थिक बलको अर्को पक्ष आर्थिक सम्बन्ध हो । आर्थिक सम्बन्ध भन्नाले एक देशको अर्थतन्त्र अर्को देशसित कसरी गाँसिएको छ भन्ने हो जसलाई व्यापार-वाणिज्य सम्बन्ध भनिन्छ । त्यसको चर्चा तल गरिनेछ । नेपालको ६० प्रतिशतजस्तो निर्यात व्यापार भारतसित हुन्छ र नेपाललाई नभइनुहुने दैनिक उपभोग्य सामानहरू ८० प्रतिशत भन्दा पनि बढी भारतबाट आउँछन् । पेट्रोल, डिजेल, खाना पकाउने ग्यास, चामल, दाल, नून, तेल, चिनी र प्रायः सबै निर्माण सामग्री (सिमेण्ट, रड, किला, काँटा) भारतबाटै आउँछन् । यसरी नेपालीहरूको आर्थिक जीवन भारतमाथि निर्भर रहेको स्पष्ट छ र यस परिस्थितिमा एकाएक परिवर्तन आउन सक्ने अवस्था अहिले छैन ।

**सैन्य शक्ति** । चाहे कौटिल्यको कुरा गरौं, चाहे किसिन्जरको, जसले पनि भन्छ कि परराष्ट्र नीतिलाई निर्धारण गर्ने एक प्रमुख तत्व त्यस देशको सैन्य शक्ति पनि हो । कौटिल्य भन्छन्, “अडिरको बुटाको आड लागेर हात्तीसित जोरी खोज्न हुँदैन ।”<sup>23</sup> किसिन्जर पनि भन्छन्- “युद्धको लागि सक्षम सैन्यशक्ति विना प्रतिपक्षीसित जोरी खोज्नु आत्मघाती कुरा हो ।”<sup>24</sup> अतः नेपालले आफ्ना छिमेकीहरूसित भएको सैन्यशक्तिको समेत ज्ञान राख्नु आवश्यक हुन्छ जस्तो कि भारतसित १३,२५,००० सेना र चीन सित २२,५५,००० सेना छन् । नेपालको एक लाख सेनाले हाम्रा छिमेकीहरू भारत र चीनका ठूला सैन्य शक्तिसित लड्ने भन्ने कुरा अकल्पनीय छ । भारत र चीन दुबै हाम्रा छिमेकीहरूसित परमाणु बम समेत छन् जसले एकैसाथ दशौं लाख जनतालाई मार्न सक्छन् र शहरकाशहर क्षण भरमा भस्म पार्न सक्छन् । परमाणु बमकै कुरा गर्ने हो भने चीनसित २१० र भारतसित ५० देखि ७० वटासम्म बम भएको अनुमान छ । यी कारणले पनि कूटनीतिको अन्तिम अस्त्र भनिने सैन्य शक्तिबारे नेपालले सोच्नु आवश्यक छ ।

नेपाली सेना नेपालको राष्ट्रिय एकीकरणको अभियानमा अघि बढ्दा सुगौली सन्धि (१८१५-१६) नभएसम्म स्वतन्त्र रूपमा परिचालित थियो । तर सुगौली सन्धिपछि त्यो ब्रिटिश भारतीय सेनाको मित्र वा सहायक जस्तो भएर परिचालित हुन थाल्यो । सन् १८४६ मा जङ्गबहादुर राणाले शासन हातमा लिएपछि त त्यसको स्वभाव भन् प्रष्ट रूपमा ब्रिटिश भारतीय सेनाको निकटस्थ सहायकका रूपमा नै देखियो । सन् १८५७ मा भएको भारतीय पुलिस विद्रोह दबाउन जङ्गबहादुर राणा आफैले नेतृत्व गरेर ब्रिटिशलाई सघाउन नेपाली सेनालाई लगे । प्रथम र द्वितीय विश्वयुद्धमा नेपाली सेनाले ब्रिटेनकै पक्षमा लड्यो । भारत स्वतन्त्र भएपछि पनि नेपाली जवानहरू भारतीय तथा ब्रिटिश गोर्खा ब्रिगेडमा कार्यरत छन् । नेपालले आफ्नो परराष्ट्र नीति बनाउँदा आज पनि यस तथ्यलाई उपेक्षा गर्न सक्तैन ।

**व्यापार वाणिज्य** । नेपालको करीब १,००० अर्ब जतिको व्यापार घाटामा करीब ७५० अर्बको घाटा त भारतसित मात्र छ र करीब १२५ अर्ब जति व्यापार घाटा चीनसित पनि छ । बाँकी व्यापार

<sup>23</sup> कौटिल्यको अर्थशास्त्र, “एरण्डमवलम्ब्य कुञ्जरं न कोपयेत् ।”

<sup>24</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

घाटा अन्य देशहरू (जापान, कोरिया, मलेशिया, अष्ट्रेलिया, बेलायत, जर्मनी, आदि) सित भएको अनुमान छ।<sup>25</sup> यी तथ्याङ्कले पनि नेपालको भारतसितको व्यापारिक निर्भरतालाई मात्र प्रष्ट पार्ने होइनन् कि हाम्रो आर्थिक दुरवस्थालाई पनि स्पष्ट पार्छन्। मानिसवाहेक अरु धेरै निर्यातयोग्य वस्तुहरू हामीसित हाल छैनन् भन्नुपर्ने स्थिति छ। अरब खाडी मुलुकहरू, दक्षिणपूर्वी एसियाली मुलुकहरू र कोरिया लगायत केही पूर्वी एसियाली मुलुकहरूमा गएर काम गर्ने युवायुवतीहरूले पठाएको रेमिट्यान्स र दातृराष्ट्रहरूले दिएको विकास सहायता नआउने हो भने मुलुकको अर्थतन्त्र ठप्प हुने स्थिति छ। वैदेशिक व्यापारका लागि निर्यातयोग्य गुणस्तरीय वस्तुहरूको उत्पादन नेपालमा दयनीय छ।

एक ताका (सन् १९७० को दशकसम्म पनि) धानचामल निर्यात गर्ने मुलुक नेपाल आज चामल आयात गरेर खाने मुलुकमा परिणत भएको छ। तैपनि नेपालको जनसंख्याको करीब ७० प्रतिशत कृषिमा नै निर्भर छ। यसले के देखाउँछ भने हाम्रो कृषिजन्य उत्पादन घट्न गइरहेको छ र त्यस्ता कुरामा पनि हामी विदेशी मुलुकहरूमा निर्भर हुँदै गइरहेका छौं। यसरी खाद्य पदार्थ लगायत धेरै कुरा आयात गर्नुपर्ने स्थिति नै संकटकालीन स्थिति हो भनेको कदापि होइन। तर हाम्रो अर्थतन्त्रको जग हामीले आफै बलियो नबनाए हाम्रो स्वाधीनताको कुरो नारा मात्र हुन्छ।<sup>26</sup>

**राजनीतिक नेतृत्व**। यद्यपि राजनीतिक नेतृत्वलाई परराष्ट्र नीतिका निर्णायक तत्वहरूमध्ये आठौं स्थानमा राखिएको छ र अधि नै भनिएको छ कि भूगोलजस्ता अपरिवर्तनीय कारकहरूले कुनै पनि देशको परराष्ट्र नीतिलाई बढी निर्णायक रूपमा प्रभावित पार्छन् तथापि नेतृत्वका विषयमा यहाँ अलिकति लामो चर्चा गर्नु आवश्यक छ। किनकि भूगोल लगायत माथि उल्लिखित अन्य कारकहरूको यथार्थ आकलन गरेर आफ्नो परिस्थिति र समयानुकूल एवं प्रभावकारी परराष्ट्र नीति अपनाउने काम राजनीतिक नेतृत्वकै हो। राजनीतिक नेतृत्व नालायक भइदियो र त्यसले परराष्ट्र नीतिका प्रबल निर्णायक कारकहरूको यथार्थ आकलन गर्न नसकेर गल्ती गरिदियो भने देशको राजनीतिक व्यवस्था ढल्ने मात्र होइन कि देशै बिलाएर जाने पनि हुन सक्छ। तर आफ्नो देशको शक्ति र कमजोरीहरूको सही आकलन भयो र देशले सही नीति अपनाउन सक्यो भने अन्य विविध कारणहरूले अपठ्यारोमा परेको सानो, कमजोर र गरीब देश पनि बच्ने मात्र होइन कि त्यसले विविध किसिमका लाभहरू पनि उठाउन सक्छ।

नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिलाई प्रभावकारी बनाउने र त्यस नीतिको कार्यान्वयन गर्ने कामका दृष्टिले नेपालको राजनीतिक नेतृत्वको अध्ययन गर्दा हामीले नेपालको इतिहासका केही प्रमुख नायकहरूको परराष्ट्र नीतिको अध्ययन गर्नुपर्छ। हाम्रो परराष्ट्र नीतिको मूल स्रोत हाम्रो ऐतिहासिक अनुभव नै हो। बाइसी चौबिसीहरू र काठमाडौं उपत्यकाका राज्यहरूको तुलनामा गोर्खा सबैभन्दा कान्छो, सानो र गरीब पनि थियो, तर राजनीतिक र परराष्ट्रनीतिक कुशलताका कारणले नेपालको राष्ट्रिय एकीकरण उसैले गर्‍यो। त्यसकारण आधुनिक नेपालको प्रारम्भ वा राष्ट्रिय एकीकरण अभियानदेखि नेपालले हासिल गरेको परराष्ट्र नीतिको अनुभवलाई अध्ययन गर्दै जाने हो भने पृथ्वीनारायण शाहबाटै सुरु गर्नुपर्छ। उनको परराष्ट्र नीतिमा पाँचवटा तत्व परिलक्षित हुन्छन्। पहिलो, पहाडी राज्यहरू (वाइसी, चौबिसी र गोर्खासमेत) एकीकृत भएनन् भने तिनीहरू पनि भारतको गङ्गा मैदानसम्म घुस्तेआएको अंग्रेजी उपनिवेशवादको शिकार हुनेछन् भनी उनले देखे र अरुलाई पनि त्यो कुरा देखाए। दोस्रो, राष्ट्रिय एकीकरणको र सुरक्षाको भरपर्दो साधन भनेको सक्षम र प्रतिबद्ध सेना नै हो भनी उनले बुझे र एक सशक्त सेना खडा गरे। तेस्रो, नेपाललाई जोगाउने रणनीति भनेको ठूला शक्तिहरू (ब्रिटिश भारत र चीन) सितको होशियारीपूर्ण मित्रता हो भनी बुझे र उनी त्यही अनुरूपको नीति बनाएर चले। चौथो, 'ठूलालाई न जिस्क्याउ र सानालाई आफूलाई मिलाउँदै जाऊ' भन्ने उनको नीति हो जस अन्तर्गत उनले साना-साना पहाडी राज्यहरू प्रति आक्रामक-कूटनीतिक र चीन र ब्रिटिश इण्डिया जस्ता ठूला राज्यहरू प्रति प्रतिरक्षात्मक-कूटनीतिक नीति अपनाए। उनको कूटनीतिको

<sup>25</sup> नेपाल सरकारको व्यापार तथा निर्यात प्रवर्द्धन केन्द्रको वेबसाइट।

<sup>26</sup> जापानले पनि ९० प्रतिशत कच्चा पदार्थ र खाद्य वस्तुहरू आयात गर्छ। तर जापान कच्चापदार्थको १०० गुणा मूल्य पर्ने औद्योगिक उत्पादनहरू (कार, मोटर साइकल, ट्रक, रेडियो ट्रान्जिष्टर, क्यामरा र अन्य मेशीनरी सामानहरू) निर्यात गरेर विश्वको तेस्रो, चौथो ठूलो अर्थतन्त्र बनिरहेको छ।

पाँचौ तत्व हो देशलाई आत्मनिर्भर, स्वाधीन राख्नको लागि आन्तरिक रूपमा आर्थिक र सामाजिक विकास गर्दै जाने ।

पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षानीति या परराष्ट्र नीतिका प्रथम चार तत्वहरूमा धेरैको ध्यान गएको पाइन्छ किनकि उनले आफ्नो राज्यकाल (सन् १७४३- १७७५) भरि तिनको सफल परिपालना गरे र आधुनिक नेपालको जग हाले । तर उनको राष्ट्रिय सरक्षा नीतिको पाँचौ तत्वतर्फ कम ध्यान गएको देखिन्छ । पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको जीवन युद्ध गर्दागर्दै बितेकाले आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास र व्यवस्थापनको लागि काम गर्ने समय रहेन । तर उनले राष्ट्रको आर्थिक सबलीकरणका लागि जुन कुरालाई जोड दिएर भने त्यसबाट के स्पष्ट हुन्छ भने जनताको समृद्धि र आत्मनिर्भरता नै राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको आधार हो भन्ने कुरा उनले बुझेका थिए ।<sup>27</sup>

त्यति खेरको पहिलो आवश्यकता सफल परराष्ट्र नीतिकै थियो । अतः पृथ्वीनारायण शाह आफ्नो परराष्ट्र नीतिद्वारा राष्ट्रिय एकीकरण अभियानलाई अघि बढाएर आधुनिक नेपालको जग हाल्न सफल भए । उनले देशको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास गर्न र त्यसको व्यवस्थापन गर्न भ्याएनन् । आफूले गर्न नभ्याएका तर राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका लागि गर्नुपर्ने भनी ठहर गरेका कुरा आफ्नो दिव्य उपदेशमा भनेर छोडिगएको हुनाले आर्थिक विकासबाट मात्र देश वास्तविक अर्थमा स्वतन्त्र र स्वाधीन हुन्छ भन्ने कुरा उनले गम्भीर रूपमा बुझेको र बुझाउन चाहेको स्पष्ट हुन्छ ।

नेपालको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा र परराष्ट्र नीतिका सम्बन्धमा अध्ययन गर्नुपर्ने अर्को व्यक्ति भीमसेन थापा हुन् । उनले पनि पृथ्वीनारायण शाहकै नीति र परम्परा अनुसरण गरेका हुन् तर उनबाट दुइटा गल्ती भए । पहिलो, उनले आफ्नो देशको आर्थिक र सैन्यबल अंग्रेजको आर्थिक र सैन्यबलको तुलनामा कमजोर रहेको मूल्यांकन गर्न सकेनन् र ब्रिटिश इण्डियासित जुध्न पुगे । जुध्ने परेमा प्रतिरक्षात्मक रूपमा मात्रै जुध्ने पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको नीतिको विपरीत गएर खुला मुठभेडमा गए । दोस्रो, भीमसेन थापाले एकीकृत विशाल नेपाल (त्यतिखेर मेचीदेखि महाकालीसम्म मात्र होइन, गढवालसम्म नै पुगिसकेको थियो) को प्राशासनिक र आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास तथा सुदृढीकरण गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकताको महसुस गरेनन् । गल्ती भयो, अङ्ग्रेजसँगको युद्ध हारियो, कुमाउ र गढवाल गयो, धेरै तराई भाग समेत गयो । शायद यो युद्ध पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले भविष्यवाणी गरे भैं एक दिन अवश्य हुने नै थियो होला (उनले भनेका थिए, “त्यो फौज एक दिन अवश्य आउनुछ, जाई कटक नगर्नु, भिकी कटक गर्नु”)<sup>28</sup> तर कति धेरै या थोरै नोक्सान सहेर सन्धि गर्नुपर्ने हुन्थ्यो भन्ने कुराचाहिँ तत्कालको परिस्थितिको सही मूल्याङ्कन गरेर अघि बढ्ने कुरामा मात्रै निर्भर गर्थ्यो ।

नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिको सफल परिचालन गर्ने अर्को नेतृत्व जङ्गबहादुर राणाको थियो । उनले पृथ्वीनारायण शाह र भीमसेन थापाको परराष्ट्र नीति पनि देखे र नेपालको दक्षिणतर्फ प्रबल रूपमा स्थापित भएर बसेको ब्रिटिश उपनिवेशवादी शासनसत्ताको शक्ति पनि देखे । साथै उत्तरतर्फ चीन अत्यन्त कमजोर भएर गएको र तिब्बतमाथि चीनको प्रभुत्व पनि कमजोर भएको देखे । नेपालको उत्तरी छिमेकी यस्तरी कमजोर हुँदा नेपालमाथि थिचोमिचो गर्न र आवश्यक परे आक्रमण समेत गर्न

<sup>27</sup> उनको दिव्य उपदेशमा भनिएको छ -

- पुरुब पछिमको रस्ता बन्ध गरी नेपालको रस्ता चलाई दिउँला ।
  - देसका महाजनलाई गोडप्रसाहदेपी उभो आउन नदिनु, देसका महाजनहरू हाम्रा मुलुकमा आया भन्या दुनियाँ कंगाल गरि छाड्दछन् ।
  - देसका कपरा लगाउनालाई मन्हाई गरिदिनु, आफ्ना देसका कपरा बन्न जान्यालाई नमना देषाई सधाउनु र बन्न लाउनु र यस्व भया नगत देस जाँदैन ।
  - आफ्ना देसको जिनीस् जरिवुटि देस लैजानु र नगत खैचनु, नगत खैचिराखनु र प्रजा मोटा भया दर्बार बलियो रहन्छ ।
  - राजाका भंडार भन्याका रैतानहरू हुन् ।
  - खानी भयाका ठाउँमा गाउँ भया पनि गाउँ अरु जग्गामा सारिकन पनि खानी चलाउनु ।
  - गहो बन्न्या जग्गामा घर भया पनि गाउँ अरु जग्गामा सारि कुलो काटि खेत बनाई आवाद गर्नु ।
- बाबुराम आचार्य र योगी नरहरिनाथ, **बडामहाराजाधिराज श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको दिव्य उपदेश**, (परिवर्द्धित एवं परिष्कृत तृतीय संस्करण), काठमाडौं: श्रीकृष्ण आचार्य, २०६१, पृ. ४९-५७ ।

<sup>28</sup> उहाँ, पृष्ठ ४५ ।

ब्रिटिश भारतलाई भन् सजिलो हुने कुरा पनि जङ्गबहादुरले बुझे । त्यसकारण उनले अङ्ग्रेजलाई आफ्नो घनिष्ठ मित्र बनाउने नीति लिए - सन् १८५० मा बेलायतको भ्रमण गरे, सन् १८५७ को ब्रिटिशविरोधी भारतीय पुलिस विद्रोह दबाउन सहयोग गरे र अङ्ग्रेजको सद्भावना जिती सन् १८६० मा नयाँ मुलुक (बाँके, बर्दिया, कैलाली कञ्चनपुर) फिर्ता लिन पनि सफल भए, जुन सुगौली सन्धिमा नेपालले गुमाएको थियो । उनले अङ्ग्रेजसित राखेको यो घनिष्ठ सम्बन्धका कारणले हुन सक्छ नेपालले तिब्बतमा सन् १८५६ मा आक्रमण गर्दा चीनले तिब्बतको मदत गर्न आएन, जस्तो कि अघि (१७९२ मा) आएको थियो । यस अर्थमा जङ्गबहादुरको परराष्ट्र नीति सफल देखियो । यो पनि मननीय छ कि अङ्ग्रेजसितको यो घनिष्ठताका साथसाथै जङ्गबहादुरले नेपाललाई उनीहरूबाट जोगाउन पृथक्तावादी नीति पनि कायम राखे । वास्तवमा यो नीति उनका उत्तराधिकारी शासकहरूले पनि कायम राखे । फलस्वरूप नेपालको त्यही हालत त भएन जुन भारतका सिख, मराठा र अन्य राजा रजौटाहरूको हुनगयो । नेपाल अरुहरूभन्दा बढी स्वतन्त्र मुलुकका रूपमा रहिरह्यो । यसरी जङ्गबहादुर राणा र चन्द्र शमशेर लगायत उनका उत्तराधिकारीहरूले नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिमा पृथक्तावाद र अङ्ग्रेज-परस्तताको सतर्कतापूर्ण मिश्रणद्वारा अङ्ग्रेजी घुसपैठ रोक्न सफल त भए तर देशको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास चाहिँ ठप्पै थियो ।

भारत स्वतन्त्रताको नगीच आउँदै जाँदा खासगरी दोस्रो विश्व युद्धको लगत्तै पछि नेपालको पृथक्तावादी परराष्ट्र नीति अपर्याप्त र अप्रभावकारी रहेको कुरा राणा शासकहरूले नै पनि बुझ्दै थिए र संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका र फ्रान्ससित दौत्य सम्बन्ध स्थापित गर्नुका साथै संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघको सदस्यता लिने र चीनसित पनि कूटनीतिक सम्बन्ध बढाउने प्रयास पनि गरेका थिए ।<sup>29</sup> तर परराष्ट्र नीति भनेको आन्तरिक नीतिकै विस्तार हो भन्ने उक्तिमा अभिव्यक्त सिद्धान्तानुरूप आन्तरिक रूपमा उदार नीति अपनाउन उनीहरूले सकेनन् । त्यसो गर्न नसक्दा र खासगरी स्वतन्त्र भारतको नेतृत्ववर्ग एवं नेपाली जनताको भावना बुझ्न नसक्दा राणाशासनको पतन भयो । त्यसलाई परराष्ट्र नीतिको असफलता भन्नु पर्छ जुन पछि गएर राजा वीरेन्द्र र राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रका समयमा पनि दोहोरिन गयो । त्यसको थप चर्चा पछि गरिने छ ।

राणाशासनकाल (१०४ वर्ष) को पृथक्तावादी नीति र खासगरी स्वतन्त्र भारतसित समेत पृथक् रहने परराष्ट्र नीतिको प्रतिक्रिया जस्तो गरी वि. सं. २००७ सालपछि राजा त्रिभुवन, बी. पी. कोइराला र राजा महेन्द्रले नेपालको परराष्ट्र सम्बन्ध विस्तार गर्ने काम गरे । २००७ सालको क्रान्तिमा भारतको विशेष सहयोगी भूमिकालाई हृदयङ्गम गर्दै (शायद व्यक्तिगत कृतज्ञताका कारणले पनि) राजा त्रिभुवनको शासनकालमा नेपालको भारतसित अत्यन्त घनिष्ठ मित्रता रह्यो भने बी.पी. कोइराला र राजा महेन्द्रले भारतसितको घनिष्ठ मित्रतालाई पनि अपर्याप्त सम्झी नेपालको कूटनीतिक सम्बन्ध विस्तारलाई प्रमुख प्राथमिकता दिए । कोइरालाको अठारमहिने सरकारले अस्ट्रिया, इटली, स्वीजरल्याण्ड, पोल्याण्ड, मलेसिया, ग्रीस, फिलिपिन्स, अस्ट्रेलिया, बर्मा, पाकिस्तान, नेदरल्यान्ड्स, लाओस, इजरायल, स्वीडेन, थाइल्याण्ड, इन्डोनेसियासित कूटनीतिक सम्बन्ध स्थापित गरी नेपालको कूटनीतिक सम्बन्ध भएका देशहरूको संख्या १० बाट २६ पुर्याएको थियो ।<sup>30</sup>

बी. पी. कोइराला एक प्रजातन्त्रवादी नेता भएकाले उनको आन्तरिक राजनीति र परराष्ट्र नीति दुबैमा उदारता एवं खुलापना हुनु अर्थपूर्ण थियो तर राजा महेन्द्र आन्तरिक रूपमा अनुदार भएकाले उनी परराष्ट्र नीतिमा मात्र उदार हुनु विरोधाभासपूर्ण थियो । आन्तरिक राजनीतिमा अनुदार हुनेले अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय सम्बन्धमा चाहिँ उदारता, स्वतन्त्रता र खुलापनको वकालत गर्दै हिंड्नु स्वाभाविक देखिदैनथ्यो । राजा महेन्द्रले २०१७ साल पुस १ गते संसदीय प्रजातन्त्र खारेज गरेपछि नेपाल-भारत सम्बन्धमा चिसोपन आउनु स्वाभाविक थियो, आयो । भारतबाट नेपाली कांग्रेसका कार्यकर्ताहरूले सशस्त्र आक्रमणहरू पनि गरे, जसले गर्दा नेपाल-भारत सम्बन्धमा भन् कठिनाइहरू आए । तर सन् १९६२ मा भएको भारत-चीन सीमा युद्धजस्ता बृहत् महत्वका घटनाले गर्दा राजा महेन्द्रलाई

<sup>29</sup> Yadunath Khanal, "Nepal between India and China: An Aspect of the Evolving International Balance in Asia", Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1971.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal website.

भारतसितको सम्बन्ध बढी सन्तुलित र शान्तिपूर्ण बनाउन मदत मिल्यो । विश्वस्तरमा चलिरहेको शीत-युद्ध र भारत-चीन सम्बन्धमा देखिएको असजिलोपनलाई राजा महेन्द्र आफ्नो फाइदाका रूपमा उपयोग गर्न सफल भए । तर उनले आन्तरिक रूपमा मुलुकलाई बलियो पार्ने अभियान (सफल र प्रभावकारी परराष्ट्र नीतिको पूर्वशर्त) चलाउन सकेनन् वा चलाउन चाहेनन् । यस अर्थमा उनको सिद्धान्त वा राजनीतिक आदर्श जङ्गबहादुर राणा र उनका उत्तराधिकारीहरूको जस्तै थियो । आन्तरिक रूपमा मुलुकलाई बलियो पारे मात्र अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरमा पनि मुलुक बलियो हुन्छ भन्ने सिद्धान्तमा उनी पृथ्वीनारायण शाहभन्दा फरक थिए ।

राजा महेन्द्रका उत्तराधिकारीहरू राजा वीरेन्द्र र राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले आफ्ना बाबुको विदेशनीति नै अनुसरण गरे । अलिकति फरकजस्तो, राजा वीरेन्द्रले आन्तरिक रूपमा आर्थिक सामाजिक विकास राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको लागि अत्यावश्यक छ भन्ने महसुस गरी देशलाई पाँच विकास क्षेत्रमा बाँडे, विकासको मूल फुटाउने नारा दिए, विकासका लागि सञ्चार भन्ने नारा दिए । उनको शासनकालका प्रारम्भिक वर्षहरूमा 'विकास' भन्ने शब्द सञ्चारमाध्यम र राजनीतिक नेताहरूका भाषणमा धेरै पल्ट दोहोरियो । तर विकासले गति लिन सकेन, कारण निर्दलीय पञ्चायती व्यवस्थाको संरचना र चरित्रले त्यो सम्भव थिएन । पञ्चायती व्यवस्था भन्नु राजाको प्रत्यक्ष शासन र राज्यको सम्पूर्ण निर्णायक शक्ति राजामा केन्द्रित हुनु नै थियो । विना विकेन्द्रीकरण विकास सम्भव थिएन, र पञ्चायती व्यवस्थामा वास्तविक विकेन्द्रीकरण पनि सम्भव थिएन ।

परराष्ट्र नीतिमा राजा वीरेन्द्रले नेपाललाई शान्ति क्षेत्र भनी प्रस्ताव गरेर करीव ११६ राष्ट्रहरूबाट यस प्रस्तावको समर्थन पनि गराए, तर महत्वपूर्ण छिमेकी राष्ट्र भारतको समर्थनविना त्यस प्रस्तावको सार्थकता थिएन । भारतले त्यस प्रस्तावलाई सन् १९५० को नेपाल-भारतको शान्ति तथा मैत्री सन्धिलाई घुमाउरो पाराले अर्थहीन बनाउने प्रयासका रूपमा लियो र समर्थन गरेन । तैपनि २०३७ सालमा दोस्रो संशोधन गरेको नेपालको संविधानमा राजा वीरेन्द्रले नेपालको शान्ति क्षेत्र प्रस्तावलाई नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिको निर्देशक सिद्धान्तका रूपमा समावेश गरे । त्यसले नेपाल-भारत सम्बन्धमा केवल कटुता मात्र थप्यो, सम्बन्धलाई फलदायी बनाएन । विग्रैदै गएको नेपाल-भारत सम्बन्ध नै टुट्ने बिन्दुसम्म पुगी तनाव त्यतिखेर भयो जब राजा वीरेन्द्रले आफ्ना सल्लाहकारहरूको मतमा लागेर चीनबाट हातहतियार भिकाए । फलस्वरूप भारत सरकारले नेपाल-भारत सीमामा नाकाबन्दी गर्‍यो । नेपालमा अत्यावश्यक वस्तुहरूको अभाव भयो । जनता आक्रोशित भए र पञ्चायती व्यवस्थाविरुद्ध आन्दोलन गरे । पञ्चायती व्यवस्था ढल्यो । राजा वीरेन्द्र संवैधानिक राजा भए । यसरी राजा वीरेन्द्रको आफ्नै दृष्टिकोणबाट हेर्दा उनी आफ्नो गृहनीति तथा परराष्ट्र नीति दुवैमा असफल देखिए ।

राजा ज्ञानेन्द्र पनि गृह तथा परराष्ट्र दुवै नीतिमा भन्नु असफल देखिए । उनकै कारणले राजसंस्थाको अन्त्य भयो । माओवादी जनयुद्धको अन्त्य गर्न नसकेको र पार्टीहरू आपसमा ज्यादै भगडालु भई सरकारमा अति अस्थिरता आएको भन्दै उनले संसद् विघटन गर्ने र आफ्नै हातमा देशको शासनको बागडोर लिने काम गरे जुन राष्ट्रिय तथा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तर दुवैमा अत्यन्त आलोचित भयो । आन्तरिक राजनीतिमा सबै राजनीतिक पार्टीहरूलाई आफ्नो प्रतिपक्षी क्याम्पमा धकेल्ने र परराष्ट्र नीतिमा पनि भारत, अमेरिका र बेलायतजस्ता परम्परागत मित्रहरूको सल्लाहप्रतिकूल जाने काम राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले गरे । यस प्रसङ्गमा राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले आफ्नो हातमा शासनको बागडोर लिएको एक महिनापछि भारतको भ्रमणमा गएका उनका परराष्ट्र मन्त्री रमेशनाथ पाण्डेलाई भारतका परराष्ट्रमन्त्री के. नटवर सिंहले भनेको कुरा मननयोग्य छ । काठमाडौँस्थित भारतीय दूतावासले (७ मार्च, २००५ मा) प्रकाशित गरेको प्रेस विज्ञापितमा भनिएको छ

विदेशमन्त्रीले नेपालका परराष्ट्रमन्त्रीलाई राजाले चालेका कदमहरूमा भारतको निराशा व्यक्त गरे किनकि राजाका कदमले नेपालको संकटलाई भन्नु गम्भीर बनाएका छन् । भारतले मात्र होइन कि नेपालका अन्य मित्रहरूले पनि राजाका यी कदमहरूमाथि गम्भीर चिन्ता व्यक्त गरेका छन् किनकि यी कदमहरूले राजसंस्थाकै भविष्यलाई खतरामा पार्न सक्छन् भन्ने कुरा पनि उनले दर्शाए । माघ १९, २०६२ पछिका घटनाले नेपालको सुरक्षास्थितिमा सुधार नआएको मात्र होइन कि देशले विग्रैदो आर्थिक स्थितिको पनि

सामना गरिरहेको छ भनी उनले भने । केही दातृराष्ट्रहरूले नेपाललाई दिने सहायता रोक्ने निर्णय गरेबाट परिस्थिति भन्नु विग्रने सम्भावना छ । यस पृष्ठभूमिमा राजा, जनता र राजनीतिक पार्टीहरूले एकै राष्ट्रिय मञ्चमा सामेल भई नेपालले सामना गरिरहनु परेको माओवादी विद्रोहलगायत अन्य चुनौतीहरूको समाधान गर्न एक हुनु नै नेपालको हितमा हुनेथियो भन्ने सल्लाह उनले दिए र यस विषयमा राजाबाट चाँडोभन्दा चाँडो पहल गर्नु नै महत्वपूर्ण कुरा हो भनी उनले भने ।

यति स्पष्ट र कठोर शब्दहरूमा (भन्डै चेतवनीको शैलीमा नै भने हुन्छ) भारतजस्तो निकटको मित्र राष्ट्रले (जसले नेपालका हरेक महत्वपूर्ण राजनीतिक परिवर्तनहरूमा प्रभाव पारेको छ र सदा पार्न सक्छ) सल्लाह दिँदा नसुन्नु र त्यसको विपरीत जानु राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रको परराष्ट्रनीतिको असफलता थियो । त्यसै गरी तत्कालीन अमेरिकी राजदूत जेम्स एफ. मोरियार्टीले राजाको कदमको सार्वजनिक रूपमा नै आलोचना गरेका थिए । उनले सीएनएनलाई दिएको अन्तर्वार्तामा राजाले गद्दीत्याग गर्नुपर्ने अवस्था आएको आफूले देख्न नचाहेको कुरा समेत भनेका थिए । ब्रिटिश राजदूतले पनि त्यस्तै सल्लाह दिएका थिए भन्ने सुनिन्थ्यो तर राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले कसैको सल्लाह लिएनन् । नेपाल जस्तो वैदेशिक प्रभावमा पर्न सक्ने र वैदेशिक सहयोगमा निर्भर देशका शासकले त्यसो गर्न हुँदैन ।

जहाँसम्म नेपाल-भारत र नेपाल-चीन सम्बन्ध छ त्यस विषयमा २०४६ सालको जन आन्दोलन पछि बनेका प्रजातान्त्रिक नेपालका सरकार र तिनका नेताहरूले पनि स्पष्ट व्यावहारिक र राष्ट्रिय हितको प्रवर्धन गर्ने नीति अपनाउन नसकेको देखियो । यस विषयमा नेपालको परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धमा धेरै लामो र गहिरो अनुभव भएका स्व. हृषीकेश शाहले लेखेको निम्नलिखित कुरा मननीय छ-

“यतिका वर्ष वितिसकदा पनि नेपालले आफ्नो परराष्ट्र नीतिको दीर्घकालीन लक्ष्य विस्तृत एवं स्पष्ट रूपमा निर्धारित गर्न सकेको छैन । हरेक कुरामा त्यति धेरै मात्रामा भर पर्नु पर्ने आफ्नो दक्षिणतिरको छिमेकीसित कस्तो दीर्घकालीन सम्बन्ध राख्ने भन्ने निर्णय गर्नु नेपालको लागि सबैभन्दा बढी महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न छ । अतः प्रजातान्त्रिक नेपालले यस अति महत्वपूर्ण विषयमा यथाशक्य चाँडो निर्णय गर्नु आवश्यक छ ।”<sup>31</sup>

यो कुरा हृषीकेश शाहले २०४८ सालतिरै लेखेको लेखमा बताएका थिए । त्यस लेखको सन्दर्भ भर्खर पुनःस्थापित बहुदलीय (संसदीय) व्यवस्था थियो । सरकारको नेतृत्व नेपाली कांग्रेसले गरिरहेको थियो र प्रतिपक्षमा नेकपा (एमाले) थियो । तर हृषीकेश शाहले अपील गरेजस्तो परराष्ट्र नीतिमा र खासगरी भारतसितको सम्बन्धमा स्पष्टता ल्याउने प्रयास भएन । नेपाल-भारत सम्बन्धमा राजा महेन्द्रकै परम्परा थामियो – केवल मात्राको मात्र फरक थियो । फलतः नेपाल-भारत सम्बन्धमा र परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धका अन्य पक्षमा पनि खास गुणात्मक परिवर्तन आएन र कुनै ठोस उपलब्धि भएन । नेपाल र भारतका बीचमा सीमा-नियन्त्रण, आवत-जावत, र नागरिकताका समस्या यथावत् रहे । व्यापार र पारवहनमा उल्लेख्य प्रगति भएन, टनकपुर र महाकाली सन्धिजस्ता विषयले दुई देशबीच समझदारी बढाउनुसङ्गै विवाद पैदा गरे । कालापानी र भुटानी शरणार्थी समस्या समाधानमा भारतसित व्यापक र घनिष्ठ सम्बन्ध राखी भारतको समझदारी र सहयोग लिन सकिएन । मननीय छ कि पारस्परिक लाभका लागि प्रशस्त भारतीय लगानी ल्याई नेपालको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास गर्ने परराष्ट्र नीतिभन्दा बढी व्यावहारिक र लाभदायक अर्को विकल्प त्यतिखेर पनि थिएन र अहिले पनि छैन ।

आज सन् १९५० को सन्धिको पुनरवलोकन र खारेजीको समेत कुरा भिकिएको छ तर त्यस प्रक्रियामा आउने चुनौती र परिणामहरूको यथार्थपरक आकलन भएजस्तो देखिँदैन । अनि भारतीय सेनामा रहेको गोर्खा ब्रिगेडमा अब भर्ती रोक्ने कुरा पनि उठेको छ । यी यस्ता गम्भीर विषय छन् जसको लागि राष्ट्रिय सहमति र तयारी पनि हुनु आवश्यक छ । तर त्यस्तो सहमति र तयारी भन्नु

<sup>31</sup> Rishikesh Shaha, “Nepal’s Foreign Policy in a Changing World: Focus on Nepal-India Relations”, Reprinted in *How to Be a Good Parliamentarian?* Kathmandu: Institute for Human Development, Kathmandu Nepal, 1997, pp. 26-48.

देखिँदैँन । विगत दुई दशकमा हाम्रा दुबै छिमेकीहरू चीन र भारतले ठूलो आर्थिक विकास गरे र उनीहरूको ६ देखि १२ प्रतिशतका दरले प्रतिवर्ष आर्थिक वृद्धि भयो । तर नेपालले त्यसबाट फाइदा लिन सकेन । उल्टो, त्यसै अवधिमा देशमा हिंसात्मक द्रन्द चल्यो ।

## २. नयाँ नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिका प्राथमिकताहरू

आज नेपालको इतिहास बदलिएको छ । नेपाल अधिराज्य गणतन्त्र नेपाल भएको छ । देश संसदीय गणतन्त्रबाट अबै जनगणतन्त्र नेपाल बन्ने दिशामा गइरहेछ । यो नेपालको आन्तरिक राजनीतिमा आएको ठूलो परिवर्तन हो । लिच्छवि, मल्ल, शाह र राणा तथा पुनः शाहवंशीय शासनहरू ढलेर इतिहासको पानामा सीमित हुन पुगे । हामी नयाँ नेपाल निर्माण गर्ने कुरा गरिरहेछौं । तर हाम्रो परराष्ट्र नीतिसम्बन्धी सोचाइ भने पुरानै छ । हो, एसियाका दुई महाशक्ति राष्ट्र बनेका चीन र भारतबीच रहेको सानो र आर्थिक दृष्टिले कमजोर नेपालले आफ्नो राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका बारेमा सोच्दा बाहिरी शक्तिहरूको खेलबारे पनि सोच्नै पर्छ । अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय सम्बन्ध भनेको शक्तिको खेल हो र कूटनीति भनेको एक प्रकारको शीतयुद्ध नै हो । भनिन्छ, शक्तिशालीहरूले जे मन लाग्यो त्यो गर्छन् र कमजोरहरूले जे गर्नु पर्छ त्यो बाध्य भएर गर्छन् । अतः आज हामीहरूले नेपालको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको बारेमा सोच्दा हाम्रो परराष्ट्र नीतिका प्राथमिकताहरूबारे नसोची नहुने अवस्था छ ।

**आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास** । यस सन्दर्भमा अब हामीले स्वीकार गर्ने पर्छ कि हाम्रो राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको पहिलो आधार भनेको हाम्रो आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास नै हो ।<sup>32</sup> नेपालजस्तो गरीब राष्ट्र आर्थिक र सामाजिक दृष्टिले सम्पन्न नभइकन केवल परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धमा चातुरी देखाएर मात्र बाँचिरहन सक्तैन । हाम्रा पुर्खाहरूले हामीलाई राजनीतिक रूपमा एकीकृत नेपाल छोडेर गएका छन् । तर आर्थिक दृष्टिले विपन्न रहिआएको नेपाल आज विखण्डनको संघारमा छ ।<sup>33</sup> आज प्रादेशिक स्वायत्तताका नाराहरू घन्किरहेको कारण राजनीतिक असन्तुलन भन्दा पनि आर्थिक असन्तुलन र अविास नै हो भन्ने हामीले बुझ्नुपर्छ । आज नेपाललाई सैनिक सुरक्षा भन्दा पनि बढी आर्थिक सुरक्षाको आवश्यकता भएको छ । यसको मतलब, नेपालमा एक सन्तुलित एवं उत्पादनशील राष्ट्रिय अर्थतन्त्रको विकास आवश्यक छ भन्ने हो । साथै, राजनीतिक प्रगति पनि यसरी हुनुपर्छ कि त्यसमा सबैको समावेश र राष्ट्रिय शक्ति तथा समृद्धिमा समानुपातिक सहभागिता होस्, सबैले समानुपातिक प्रतिफल पाउनु र प्रत्येक नेपालीले राष्ट्रिय जीवनका सबै (भौतिक, नैतिक र आध्यात्मिक) पक्षमा आफ्नो हित गाँसिएको अनुभव गरोस् । त्यस प्रकारको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास विना देश सुरक्षित हुन सक्तैन । राज्य पुनःसंरचनाको कुरा राज्य-विखण्डनमा परिणत हुन सक्छ । आज नेपाललाई राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा खतरा देशबाहिरबाट होइन, देशभित्रैबाट बढी छ ।

आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकासलाई यति जोड दिएर सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकतामा राख्नुका दुई-तीन कारण छन् । पहिलो कारण, यो हाम्रो ऐतिहासिक आवश्यकता हो र राष्ट्रिय एकीकरण गर्ने पुर्खाले आफै गर्नु नभ्याएर हामीलाई छोडेको बाँकी काम हो भन्ने हामीले बुझ्नुपर्छ । हो, परराष्ट्र नीतिको प्रमुख उद्देश्य भनेको राष्ट्रको स्वाधीनता हो, त्यो त बचेकै छ । तैपनि हामीहरू अबै असुरक्षित नै अनुभव गर्छौं र छिमेकीहरूले हाम्रो देश खालान् कि अथवा अनुचित थिचोमिचो गर्लान् कि भन्ने भय हामीलाई भइरहेको छ । मै हुँ भन्ने नेताहरू पनि जनतामा यही भय बेचेर खाइरहेछन् । किनकि हामी कमजोर छौं, गरीब छौं । नेपालभन्दा तीन गुना सानो भूपरिवेष्टित पहाडी देश स्वीजरल्याण्ड भारतभन्दा ठूला अर्थतन्त्र भएका देशहरू (जर्मनी, फ्रान्स र इटली) ले घेरिएर रहेको छ तर ऊ असुरक्षित अनुभव गर्दैन । किन ? किनकि स्वीजरल्याण्ड आफ्ना छिमेकीहरूभन्दा आर्थिक-सामाजिक दृष्टिले बढी विकसित छ । सानो भएपनि ऊ त नेपालजस्ता देशको दातृ राष्ट्र बनेको छ ।

<sup>32</sup> नेपालको त कुरै छोडौं, आज अमेरिका जस्तो देशको पनि पहिलो प्राथमिकता आर्थिक अवस्थामा सुधार ल्याउनु नै रहेको छ ।

<sup>33</sup> आजकल यस्तो महसुस गरेको देखिन्छ । गृहमन्त्रीबाट पनि जातीय सद्भाव विगानेहरूलाई चेतावनीको भाषा बोलेको सुनिन्छ ।

दोस्रो कारण, नेपालको राष्ट्रिय एकीकरण गर्दा नै यस अभियानका नेता पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले देशको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास भएन भने देश सदा असुरक्षित रहनेछ भनेर देशको आर्थिक विकासका उपायहरू भनी बताएका थिए । तर ती उपायहरूको हामीहरू अनुसरण गरिरहेका छैनौं । उल्टो, तिनको उपेक्षा गरेर विदेशीसित सहायता माँगेर देश विकास गर्ने कुरा गरिरहेका छौं । यो विडम्बनातर्फ हाम्रो ध्यान जानुपर्छ । सन् १८१४ मा सुगौली सन्धि भएपछि हाम्रो राष्ट्रिय विस्तार या एकीकरण अभियान सकिएको थियो । त्यसपछि हामीले आन्तरिक विकास गरी राष्ट्रिय एकता सृष्टीकरण अभियानमा लाग्नु पर्‍थ्यो तर त्यो भएन । उल्टो, भाइभारदारहरूबीच तीव्र शक्ति संघर्ष चल्यो सन् १८४६ मा कोतपर्व भयो र राणा शासनको लामो अवधि शुरू भयो जुन अवधिमा नेपालको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास पुरै ठप्प रह्यो । २००७ साल (सन् १९५१) को क्रान्तिपछि नेपालको राष्ट्रिय आवश्यकता भनेको आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकास नै थियो । क्रान्तिपछिका नेताहरूले त्यो कुरा बुझेका पनि थिए । जस्तो कि २०१२ सालमा टंक प्रसाद आचार्य मन्त्रिमण्डलले प्रथम पञ्चवर्षीय योजना बनायो र राष्ट्रिय योचना आयोग पनि खडा गर्‍यो । प्रथम निर्वाचित सरकारका प्रधानमन्त्री वी. पी. कोइरालाको सरकारले प्रथम पञ्चवर्षीय योजनालाई निरन्तरता दिनुका साथै त्यसमा अझ थप योजनाहरू पनि लागू गर्‍यो । त्यस सरकारले राष्ट्रको आन्तरिक आर्थिक सामाजिक विकास विना राष्ट्र कमजोर रहन्छ भन्ने तथ्यलाई आत्मसात् गरी भूमि सुधार, राजा-रजौटा प्रथा उन्मूलन, बिर्ता प्रथा उन्मूलन, गुठी जग्गाहरू रैकर गर्ने, २२०० प्राथमिक विद्यालय खोल्ने, त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय स्थापना गर्ने आदि कदमहरू पनि चाल्यो । तर २०१७ साल पुष १ गते राजा महेन्द्रले संसदीय व्यवस्था भङ्ग गरी त्यस त्यस आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकासको अभियानमा ब्रेक लगाए । राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको अत्यावश्यक पूर्वशर्त आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकासको काम थाती नै रह्यो ।

तेस्रो कारण, २०४६ सालको जन आन्दोलनले पञ्चायती शासन समाप्त गरेर पुनः बहुदलीय व्यवस्थाको प्रतिष्ठापन गरेपछि त ऐतिहासिक रूपमा अवरूद्ध आर्थिक सामाजिक विकासको प्रक्रियालाई पुनः युद्धस्तरमा चालु गर्नुपर्‍थ्यो, त्यो पनि भएन । अहिले नेपालबाट राजतन्त्र हटेर गयो र अब देश गणतन्त्र भएको छ तर आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकासको अभियानको अत्यावश्यकतालाई हामीले अझ आत्मसात् गरेको देखिँदैन किनकि त्यो अभियान अझै थालिएको छैन । हामी आर्थिक कूटनीतिको कुरा त गरिरहेछौं, तर हाम्रो आर्थिक कूटनीति केवल वैदेशिक सहायता माग्न र विदेशमा म्यानपावर निर्यात गर्नमा मात्र सीमित रहेको छ । अहिले नेपालमा जसले बढी वैदेशिक सहायता ल्यायो त्यही सर्वश्रेष्ठ राजनीतिज्ञ, कूटनीतिज्ञ र बुद्धिजीवी ठहरिन्छ । तर हामीले के बुझ्नुपर्छ भने आफ्नो आन्तरिक मानव संसाधन तथा प्राकृतिक सम्पदाको सदुपयोग नगरी, वैदेशिक सहायताले मात्र विकसित भएको देश संसारमा कहीं पनि छैन । आज वैदेशिक व्यापारमा हामीले ठूलो घाटा सहनु परिरहेको छ । त्यस घाटालाई कम गर्न हामीले पर्यटन व्यवसायलाई प्रवर्धन गर्ने, जलविद्युत् पैदा गरी बिक्री गर्ने, कृषिलाई बढी उत्पादनशील एवं गुणस्तरीय बनाउने, र शिक्षा र स्वास्थ्यलाई समेत वैदेशिक मुद्रा आर्जन गर्नसक्ने व्यवसायका रूपमा विकास गर्न सकिन्छ । त्यसका लागि हाम्रो राष्ट्रिय नेतृत्वको सोचमा स्पष्ट प्राथमिकताहरू स्थापित हुनु आवश्यक छ ।

**छिमेकीसितको सम्बन्ध** । अब हाम्रो राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा या परराष्ट्र नीतिको दोस्रो प्राथमिकताको चर्चा गरौं । त्यो भनेको हाम्रा दुई महान् छिमेकी भारत र चीनसितको सम्बन्धमा यथार्थपरक एवं मित्रतापूर्ण सन्तुलन कायम गर्नु हो । राष्ट्रियता न त भावुकतापूर्ण कवितामा हुन्छ, न छिमेकी राष्ट्रहरूका विरुद्ध नारा लगाउनुमा मात्र । राष्ट्रियता राष्ट्रनिर्माण प्रक्रियामा देखिने सामूहिक एकीकृत प्रयासमा हुन्छ । त्यसका लागि हामीले हाम्रा दुई ठूला छिमेकीसित रचनात्मक, उत्पादनशील र पारस्परिक लाभको सम्बन्ध स्थापित गर्न सक्नुपर्छ । दुवै छिमेकीहरू तीव्र आर्थिक विकासको गतिमा हिँड्न थालेको दुई दशक भयो । तर त्यही अवधिमा हामी नेपालीहरू चाहिँ तीव्र राजनीतिक अस्थिरता र सशस्त्र द्वन्द्वमा फस्‍यौं । अब नेपाल शान्ति प्रक्रियामा कार्यरत छ तर गृहनीतिमा माओवादी लडाकुहरूको समायोजन र राज्यको पुनःसंरचनासहित संविधान बनाउने कामका चुनौतीहरू हाम्रा सामु छन् भने माओवादी पार्टीले सन् १९५० को नेपाल-भारत शान्ति तथा मैत्री सन्धि खारेज गर्ने र भारतीय सेनामा रहेको गोर्खा ब्रिगेडमा भर्ती बन्द गर्ने जस्ता विषयहरू अगाडि सारेको छ । यी विषयहरूलाई नेपालको भारतसितको सम्बन्ध नबिगारीकन कसरी टुङ्गायाउने भन्ने चुनौती अहिलेको हाम्रो परराष्ट्र नीतिको एउटा प्रमुख चुनौती हो ।

**संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घ** । नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिको तेस्रो प्राथमिकता भनेको हामीले संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घमा खेल्ने भूमिका हो । हाल संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघको शान्तिसेनामा सिपाहीहरू पठाउने देशहरूमा पाँचौ ठूलो देश नेपाल भएको छ । त्यसले नेपाली सेनाका जवानहरूलाई अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय शान्ति प्रक्रियामा सहभागी भएर विशेष अनुभव हासिल गर्ने अवसर प्रदान गर्नुका साथै राष्ट्रिय आमदानीमा पनि योगदान गरिहेको छ । साथै अनमिन लाई स्वीकार गरेर नेपालले संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघको भूमिकालाई आफ्नो आन्तरिक राजनीतिमा समेत स्वीकार गरेको छ । संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघको शान्ति सेनामा ठूलो मात्रामा भाग लिनुले नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिमा सफलताको पक्ष उजागर गर्दछ भने आफ्नै देशमा अनमिनको सक्रियता स्वीकार गर्नुले नेपाल आफ्नो आन्तरिक राजनीतिको समस्या समाधान गर्न आफै असक्षम रहेको कुरा देखाउँछ । राष्ट्र सफल हुन आन्तरिक र परराष्ट्र नीति दुवैमा सफल हुनुपर्छ किनकि ती दुई कुरा एउटै सिक्काका दुई पाटा हुन् ।

यसरी हेर्दा संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घमा हाम्रो भूमिका दोहोरो रहेको स्पष्ट छ । एकातिर हामी उसको काममा संलग्न छौं, अर्कोतिर ऊ हाम्रो देशमा समेत आएर काम गरिरहेछ । शान्ति प्रक्रियाबाहेक नेपालको संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घसितको सम्बन्ध भनेको नेपालले संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घमा हस्ताक्षर गरेका मानव अधिकार लगायत विभिन्न विषयका सन्धिहरूको पालना गर्नु पनि हो । जस्तो कि द्वन्द्वकालमा र खास गरी राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले सत्ताग्रहण गरेपछि संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घीय मानव अधिकार आयोग आएर नेपालका पाँच विकास क्षेत्रमा अड्डा जमाएर बसेको छ । हामी आफ्नो देशमा मानव अधिकारको उल्लङ्घन गरेर अन्यत्र भएका मानव अधिकारका उल्लङ्घनका घटनाहरूको भर्त्सना गर्दै हिँड्न सक्तौनौ । सारांशमा हाम्रो संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घसितको सम्बन्ध भनेको त्यहाँ हाम्रो सक्रिय भूमिकाका साथै हामीले पालना गर्नुपर्ने दायित्व पनि हो ।

**अन्य राष्ट्रहरू** । नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिको चौथो प्राथमिकता भनेको दक्षिण एसियाका अन्य राष्ट्रहरू खासगरी पाकिस्तान र बंगलादेशसितको सम्बन्धका साथै विश्वका शक्तिशाली राष्ट्रहरू खासगरी संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका तथा बेलायत आदि देशसितको सम्बन्ध पनि हो । हाम्रो छिमेकी राष्ट्र भारतको जनसंख्यामा नेपालमा जस्तै हिन्दूहरूको बाहुल्य छ यद्यपि दुवै देशमा मुस्लिम जनसंख्या पनि प्रशस्त छ । हाम्रा अलि परका छिमेकीहरू पाकिस्तान र बंगलादेश घोषित मुस्लिम राष्ट्रहरू हुन् जसको भारतसित सीमा जोडिएको छ । विगत केही वर्ष यता भारतमा भएका हिंसात्मक, आतङ्ककारी घटनामा पाकिस्तानका अतिवादी, मौलिकतावादी मुस्लिम सङ्गठनहरूको संलग्नता रहेको कुरा भारतले भनिरहेको छ । मुस्लिम मौलिकतावाद अमेरिकी परराष्ट्र नीतिको एउटा प्रमुख चासोका रूपमा पनि रहिआएको सन्दर्भमा र नेपालबाट कतार, युनाइटेड अरब एमिरेट्स, साउदी अरबेरिया लगायत खाडी मुलुकहरूमा काम गर्न जाने श्रमिकहरूको संख्या बीस लाख लगभग रहेको अवस्था छ । यस अवस्थाबाट उत्पन्न हुने विविध किसिमका परिणामहरूको सम्भावना र भारत, अमेरिका लगायत परम्परागत मित्र राष्ट्रहरूसितको सम्बन्धको यथार्थबीच सन्तुलन कायम राखिरहनु नेपालका लागि अत्यावश्यक छ ।

अमेरिकाको नयाँ प्रशासन (राष्ट्रपति बाराक ओबामाको प्रशासन) ले भारत र चीनसित कस्तो सम्बन्ध राख्छ र त्यसले नेपालमा कस्तो प्रभाव पार्छ भन्ने कुरामा हाम्रो ध्यान जानुपर्छ । अर्को शब्दमा आगामी दिनमा अमेरिकाले इस्लामिक मौलिकतावाद र आतङ्ककारी क्रियाकलापसित लड्न कस्तो नीति लिन्छ र कस्तो कार्यक्रम ल्याउँछ भन्ने कुरामा ध्यान दिनु आवश्यक हुनेछ । अफगानिस्तानमा अमेरिका र नेटो फौजले तालिबानविरुद्ध सैनिक कारवाही समेत चलाइरहेको छ र अमेरिकाको पुरानो मित्र पाकिस्तानमाथि पनि अमेरिकाको दबाव परिरहेको छ । आगामी दिनमा आर्थिक र व्यापारिक हितको संरक्षण गर्नुका साथै इस्लामिक मौलिकतावाद र आतङ्कवादी क्रियाकलापसित जुध्न पनि अमेरिकाले भारत र चीन दुवैसित राम्रो सम्बन्ध राख्ने सम्भावना देख्न सकिन्छ । पाकिस्तानलाई पनि उसको पारमाणविक क्षमता र इस्लामिक राष्ट्रहरूसितको विशेष सम्बन्धका कारणले पुरै एकल्याउने सम्भावना देखिँदैन । यसरी नेपालले पाकिस्तान, बंगलादेश र अफगानिस्तान जस्ता देशहरूसितको आफ्नो सम्बन्धमा विचार गर्दा विश्वशक्ति राष्ट्रहरू र अन्य दातृराष्ट्रहरूसितको सम्बन्धमा पनि विचार गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ । जटिलता त यो छ कि तीनै राष्ट्रहरू (पाकिस्तान, बंगलादेश, अफगानिस्तान) सार्कका सदस्य पनि छन् । नेपालले ती देशहरूसितको सम्बन्ध विकासलाई भारतसितको आफ्नो सम्बन्धमा सन्तुलन

ल्याउने प्रयासका रूपमा होइन कि भारतसितको सम्बन्ध समेत सदृढ बनाउने र सार्क प्रक्रियालाई अघि बढाउने नीतिका रूपमा लिनुपर्छ ।

**सार्क र असंलग्न आन्दोलन ।** नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिको पाँचौँ प्राथमिकता भनेको दक्षिण एसियाली सहयोग संगठन (सार्क) र असंलग्न आन्दोलन तथा अन्य अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय समूहहरू (भूपरिवेष्टित राष्ट्रहरूको समूह, अति अविक्सित राष्ट्रहरूको समूह, ग्रुप अफ ७७) मा यसले खेल्नुपर्ने भूमिका हो । यद्यपि सार्क र असंलग्न आन्दोलनका शिखर सम्मेलनमा नेपालको तर्फबाट सरकार प्रमुखकै स्तरमा भाग लिइने परम्परा रहिआएको छ र त्यसले ती संगठनहरू प्रति हाम्रो विश्वास र प्रतिबद्धतालाई प्रतिबिम्बित गरेको पनि छ तथापि यथार्थ के हो भने ती संगठनहरू त्यति प्रभावकारी हुन सकिरहेका छैनन् । त्यसैले पनि ती नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीतिका पाँचौँ प्राथमिकतामा पर्छन् ।

सार्क भौगोलिक तथा राजनीतिक दृष्टिले भारतकेन्द्रित छ । सार्क सदस्य राष्ट्रहरू भारतका वरिपरि छन् र भौगोलिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सैनिक सबै दृष्टिले भारतभन्दा कमजोर छन् । पाकिस्तान मात्र भारतजस्तै आणविक शक्तिसम्पन्न राष्ट्र छ तैपनि अन्य दृष्टिले सानै छ । सार्कको प्रभावकारिता विकसित नहुनमा भारतको आफ्ना छिमेकीहरूसितको सम्बन्ध र खासगरी पाकिस्तानसितको सम्बन्ध नै कारण रहेको छ । व्यापारिक दृष्टिले पनि भारतको वैदेशिक व्यापारको कूल ५ प्रतिशत व्यापार मात्र उसका सार्क छिमेकीहरूसित हुन्छ । यस दृष्टिले सार्क प्रक्रिया त्यति सफल नहुँदा भारतका साना छिमेकीहरूलाई मात्र होइन कि भारतलाई नै पनि पर्याप्त मात्रामा फाइदा हुन नसकिरहेको स्थिति देखिन्छ ।

असंलग्न आन्दोलनको त्यस्तै हालत छ । सामरिक गुटहरूमा सामेल नहुने र विकासोन्मुख राष्ट्रहरूको आर्थिक हितलाई प्रवर्धन गर्ने उद्देश्यले असंलग्न आन्दोलन थालिएको थियो । सोभियत संघको विखण्डन भएपछि र वार्सा सन्धि संगठन ढलेपछि सामरिक गुटमा सामेल नहुने भन्ने कुरा त्यसै गतार्थ भयो । अनि दास्रो उद्देश्य (विकासोन्मुख मुलुकहरूको आर्थिक हितको प्रवर्धन) पनि उति प्रभावकारी भएन । उदाहरणका लागि सार्क सदस्य राष्ट्रहरूलाई नै लिउं । भारत-पाकिस्तान दुवै असंलग्न आन्दोलनका सदस्य हुन् तर दुई बीच तीन पल्ट युद्ध नै भयो र अर्थपूर्ण व्यापारिक आदान-प्रदान समेत हुन सकिरहेको छैन । इराक र इरान पनि दुवै असंलग्न आन्दोलनका सदस्य छन् तर दुई बीच युद्ध नै भयो ।

यी समस्याहरूको बाबजुद नेपाल असंलग्न आन्दोलनबाट हट्न सक्तैन । विगतमा नेपालले असंलग्नताको कुरा गर्दा विश्वस्तरमा देखिएको सामरिक गुटहरूमा संलग्न नहुने कुरा मात्र गरेन कि भारत र चीनसित समेत कसैको पक्षमा नलाग्ने र समदूरी वा समसामीप्य सम्बन्धको कुरा गर्‍यो । सन् १९६२ को भारत-चीनको सीमायुद्धमा नेपाल कसैको पक्षमा नलाग्नाले दुवै छिमेकीहरूलाई लाभ नै भयो होला । तैपनि यथार्थ के थियो र अब्दै पनि छ भने नेपाल सबैजसो कुरामा भारतमा निर्भर छ र हजारौँ नेपाली युवाहरू भारतीय सेनामा समेत कार्यरत छन् । यस कारणले पनि भारत र चीनबीच एवं भारत र पाकिस्तान बीच युद्ध नहोस् भन्ने नेपालको चाहना हुनुपर्छ । यसरी नेपालले आफ्नै राष्ट्रिय र क्षेत्रीय सन्दर्भमा असंलग्नताको व्याख्या गर्दा पनि भारत र चीन दुवै छिमेकीसित यथार्थपरक, सन्तुलित एवं मैत्रीपूर्ण सम्बन्धको कुरा गर्नुपर्छ न कि समसामीप्य र समदूरीको कुरा । समसामीप्य र समदूरी भनेको स्थिरताबोधक र यान्त्रिक अवधारणा हो । नेपालको भारत र चीनसितको सम्बन्ध यान्त्रिक सन्तुलनको होइन, एक जीवन्त, सिर्जनात्मक, गतिशील सन्तुलन हो । यसलाई हाम्रो भौगोलिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सामाजिक, भाषिक, सांस्कृतिक र व्यापारिक यथार्थले प्रभावित पारेको हुन्छ ।

आज हामी नेपालीहरू नयाँ नेपालको निर्माण गर्ने कुरा गरिहेछौं । त्यसका लागि राज्यको पुनः संरचनाको समेत कुरा उठेको छ । देशको नयाँ संविधान लेख्नका लागि संविधानसभाको चुनाव भएको छ । संविधानमा राष्ट्रको हितका लागि अनेकौँ अवधारणाहरू समाविष्ट हुनेछन् । जहाँसम्म परराष्ट्र नीतिको उद्देश्यको पक्ष छ त्यसका बारेमा कमसेकम निम्नलिखित भावना व्यक्त हुने खालका धाराहरू समाविष्ट हुनु आवश्यक देखिन्छ ।

- १) नेपालको स्वाधीनता, सार्वभौमिकता र क्षेत्रीय अखण्डताको संरक्षण गर्दै राष्ट्रको सन्तुलित एवं समावेशी आर्थिक-सामाजिक विकासद्वारा राष्ट्रिय एकता तथा सुरक्षालाई सबलीकरण गर्ने,
- २) छिमेकी राष्ट्रहरू खास गरी भारत र चीनसित यथार्थपरक आधारमा पारस्परिक लाभ र हितका लागि शान्तिपूर्ण सहअस्तित्वको नीतिमा अटल रहने,
- ३) विश्वका सबै शान्तिप्रिय राष्ट्रहरूसित सहकार्य गर्दै मानव जातिको सुख, शान्ति र समृद्धिका लागि अधि बढ्ने,
- ४) संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घको बडापत्रमा निहित सिद्धान्तहरूमा पूर्ण विश्वास राख्दै विश्व शान्तिका लागि संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घमार्फत हुने हर प्रयासहरूमा सकदो योगदान गर्न तत्पर रहने ।

आर्थिक रूपले स्वाधीन नभई कुनै पनि देश साँच्चै स्वाधीन हो भनी मान्न सकिँदैन । आफ्नो समस्या आफै समाधान गर्न नसक्ने कुनै पनि देशको स्वाधीनता र सार्वभौमसत्ताको अर्थ पनि हुँदैन । माथि चर्चा गरिएको नेपालको आर्थिक र राजनीतिक अवस्थाले यसको स्वाधीनता र सार्वभौमसत्तालाई चुनौति दिइरहेको आभास मिल्छ ।

आफ्नो स्वतन्त्रता, सार्वभौमसत्ता र प्रादेशिक अखण्डताको रक्षा गर्ने उद्देश्य राखेको नेपालको परराष्ट्र नीति त्यतिखेर मात्र प्रभावकारी हुनेछ जब त्यो नीति आफ्नै बलमा आधारित हुन्छ । त्यो भनेको सैन्य बल भन्दा पनि बढी आर्थिक बल नै हो । विकास विना आर्थिक बल असम्भव छ । अनि आफ्नै मानवीय र प्राकृतिक स्रोत साधनको परिचालन विना विकास असम्भव छ ।

यस प्रसङ्गमा नेपालको आर्थिक विकासका मूर्धन्य इतिहासकार स्व. महेशचन्द्र रेग्मी (मंसिर १९८६ ( असार २०६०) ले भनेको कुरा स्मरणीय छ । वहाँले भन्नुभएको थियो - “समग्र मानवीय र प्राकृतिक साधनस्रोत परिचालन गर्नका लागि ठूलो राजनीतिक र प्राशासनिक भिजन (दृष्टि), अनुशासन र कार्यकुशलता चाहिन्छ । पुर्खाहरूले यो देशको जग हाल्दा जुन क्षमता र गुण देखाएका थिए, तिनै गुण आजका नेपाली जनताले देश निर्माणको काममा पनि विकसित गर्न सक्नेछन् भन्ने आशा मात्र गर्न सकिन्छ” । हो, त्यस्तो जनपरिचालन गर्नका लागि त्यस्तो नेता चाहिन्छ जसले व्यक्तिगत त्याग, उच्च नैतिक स्तर र स्पष्ट दृष्टिले जनतालाई प्रेरणा दिन सकोस् ।