



## Madhesi: A Disadvantaged Social Group

Ram Prakash Yadav\*

### Madhesh and Madhesi

The Tarai is the northern fringe of the Indo-Gangetic plains abutting the foothills of the central Himalayas. It is a long and narrow strip of mostly flatland in the southern region of Nepal adjacent to the foothills of the Siwalik or Churia range. The Tarai region, lying between hills in the north and the Indo-Gangetic plains in the south, is also called Madhyadesh.

Not only geographically but also culturally, the Terai is distinct from the hills. It occupies 23 per cent of the land area and 48.5 per cent of the population of Nepal in 2001. Most Terai inhabitants are plains people, called *Madhesi*, whose religious traditions, languages, caste system, food, clothes, and other social customs and manners are similar to those of the people of the Indo-Gangetic plains.

### Linguistic Dimension

The people of hill origin speak Nepali either as their mother tongue or, if a *Janajati* or *Dalit* or tribal, then as the second language. On the contrary, the people of plains origin speak a language other than Nepali both as the mother tongue and as the second language.

'Until 1958, Tarai residents (plains people) as well as Indians were required to stop at the border town of Birganj to obtain passport before proceeding to Kathmandu. Passports were then checked at Chisapani Garhi on way to Kathmandu. Before 1951, one's nationality appears to have been determined primarily on linguistic basis. Nepalese subjects were the "hill folks" who spoke Nepali or hill languages such as Newari, Magar or Gurung. For this reason passports were not required for people travelling to Kathmandu valley from the eastern or western hills' (Gaige: 88). Thus, until the early 1950s language was the major factor for separating *Madhesi* from *Pahadi* (hill) populations. This mindset more or less continues till now.

\* Dr Yadav is a member of IIDS Board of Director, IIDS.

Editorial.....	2
KAP Surveys in Siraha and Dhading Districts.....	9
Impact of FDI Policies of Rich Countries on Poverty Reduction on Developing Countries .....	10
Sustainable Peace and Conflict Resolution in Nepal.....	11
Assessment of FECOFUN Programmes and Strategies.....	13
SRDPP Programme: Benefitting the Rural Poor .....	14



## Editorial

Education is the right of every citizen, and each and every child has the right to education. Considering this fact, IIDS conducted a survey on the knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) of rural parents and guardians about their children's education in the areas of four VDCs each in Siraha and Dhading districts during December 2004 - June 2005. The survey found that 50 per cent of the schoolchildren in villages had yet to see school. The reasons were, among others, the geographical disparity of the country, policy-level weaknesses and the poverty of parents.

A large number of children in villages are deprived of their educational rights not only because there are no schools in villages or in nearby areas, but also because their parents are not aware of children's educational rights or its importance to children's future. The study, therefore, strongly suggests implementing the Community-based Alternative Schooling Project (CASP) in support of the children of hard core groups in pursuit of their educational rights and also to carry out such KAP surveys in other districts.

X X X

Nepal is currently facing a violent political conflict. This situation is the outcome of an insurgency, launched by the Nepal Communist Party-Maoists in February 1996. As a result of the conflict, more than 13,000 people have already lost their lives, and thousands of others have been displaced from home. Many industries have closed down, resulting in massive joblessness. The development work has come to a halt. The deteriorating socio-economic condition is a matter of great concern to the nation. Deeply distressed by the sufferings and miseries of the people due to the conflict situation in the country, IIDS has undertaken a study on the conflict so as to understand it in its true perspective and explore appropriate solutions to it. The study aims at contributing to conflict resolution, leading to the establishment of permanent peace in the country. It is a matter of satisfaction to us that the study has been completed and its results will soon be brought out for public benefit.

Dr Harka Gurung, in his article entitled 'Trident and Thunderbolt: Culture Dynamics in Nepalese Politics', succinctly and explicitly emphasizes that, basically, there are three main social groups in Nepal that have been marginalized by the state's biased monopolistic policy. They are the *Janjati* ethnic groups on the basis of culture, the *Dalit* (untouchables) on the basis of caste, and the *Madhesi* (Tarai) on the basis of geography.'

### HMG's Road Map for Recruitment

His Majesty's Government sometime ago announced a 'road map' for recruitment in the civil service, proposing 20 per cent reservation for women, 10 per cent for *Dalits*, 10 per cent for *Janjatis* (indigenous peoples) for a period of five years from April 2004.

Dr Krishna Bhattachan, a sociologist, has pointed out several deficiencies of this road map, particularly 'the omission of the *Madhesi* in the progressive agenda of the government, which is all the more alarming since this will further alienate the *Madhesi* and by breeding infighting it could prove suicidal.' Minister Buddhiman Tamang, however, claimed that the *Madhesis* have been accommodated through the reservations allotted to women, *Dalits* and indigenous peoples since they crosscut into these groups (*The Himalayan Times*, December 29, 2003).

First of all, one does not find any explanation of why only three disadvantaged groups, namely women, *Janjatis* and *Dalits*, have been selected for reservation. There is no dispute that these groups have not been represented in the civil service adequately or in proportion to their populations, and, therefore, they deserve reservation. Besides that, there is, however, another group, *Madhesis*, who also have been equally, or even more, discriminated in this representation.

The purpose of this article is to highlight the need for reservation for *Madhesis* in the present road map for civil service reforms. In the Tarai, including Inner Tarai, *Janjatis* (18.2%) and *Dalits* (7.9%) together constitute one-fourth (26%) of the total population. The people of hill origin constitute about one-third (33%) and *Madhesis* constitute 41 per cent of the total population. The *Madhesis*, who are at an extremely low level of socio-economic development, are totally ignored by this road map.



### Literacy Levels of Different Social Groups

It is generally recognized that literacy level is a good proxy for the level of socio-economic development of the community concerned. The literacy level of the *Madhesi* in the Tarai (including Inner Tarai) is only 38.4 per cent as compared to 65.6 per cent for the *Pahadi* (including Himali) group (Table 1). The *Dalits* are the most deprived group of population in Nepal, with only 39.2 per cent literacy. There is, however, a substantial difference between the hill *Dalits* (47.9%) and the Tarai *Dalits* (23.4%) in the literacy level. The Tarai *Dalits* are on the lowest rung of the socio-economic development ladder. Similarly, the literacy rate of the *Janjatis* of the Inner Tarai and Tarai together is only 52 per cent as compared to 58.7 per cent for Himal and 63.2 per cent for Hills. The literacy rate of the Tarai castes (including Muslims and excluding *Janjatis* and *Dalits*) is only 35.2 per cent as compared to 72.0 per cent for the hill caste groups. Thus, the literacy level of the hill castes is more than twice that of the *Madhesi* castes.

**Table 1: Literacy Rate by Geographical Region and Social Groups, in 2001**

Social Group	Himal	Hills	Inner Tarai	Tarai	Nepal
Janjati	58.7	63.2	47.6*	52.6*	60.3
Dalits	-----	47.9	-----	23.4	39.2
Castes	-----	72.0	-----	35.2	57.6
		65.6 (combined with Himal)		38.4 (combined with Inner Tarai)	56.5

\* The literacy rate of *Janjatis* of the tarai, including Inner Tarai, is 50.

Source: Calculated from Harka Gurung's document, *Janajati Nepali-Au 8. doc*.

Table 1 clearly indicates that 41 per cent of the *Madhesi* population (other than *Janjatis* and *Dalits*) is at an even greater disadvantage than the *Janjatis* of the Tarai.

The literacy level is further analysed at a more disaggregated level of population and is presented in Table 2. This table indicates that 100 per cent of the hill caste groups lie above the national average literacy rate of 59.6 per cent while 100 per cent of the Tarai *Dalits* lie below the literacy rate of 40 per cent. About three-fourths of the hill *Janjatis* lie above the national average literacy rate of 59.6 per cent and about one-fourth of the hill *Janjatis* lie between the literacy rates of 50 and 59.6

per cent. When this is compared with the *Janjatis* of the Inner Tarai and Tarai, the picture is very different. About 94 per cent of the Inner Tarai *Janjatis* lie between the literacy rates of 40 and 50, while 95 per cent of the Tarai *Janjatis* lie between the literacy rates of 50 and 59.6 per cent. Thus, the *Janjatis* of the Tarai are definitely at a much greater disadvantaged situation than those of the hills and mountains.

As far as hill *Dalits* are concerned, one-fourth of them lie between the literacy rates of 50 and 59.6 per cent, but the majority, three-fourths, lie between the literacy rates of 40 and 50 per cent. As compared to hill *Dalits*, Tarai *Dalits* are at a further disadvantaged situation, with all of them lying below the literacy rate of 40 per cent.

The picture of the Tarai caste groups is more spread than that of others. About 15.3 per cent of the Tarai caste groups lie above the average literacy rate of 59.6 per cent; about 10 per cent lie between 50 and 59.6 per

cent and 8 per cent lie below 40 per cent. A large proportion, ie about two-thirds, of the total population of the tarai caste groups lie between the literacy rates of 40 and 50 per cent.

If the total population is categorized into two groups-- first, those above 50 per cent of literacy and, second, those below 50 per cent of literacy, one finds clear differences in terms of literacy rate between the Tarai and the hills, including mountains. In the hills, most of the people, except *Dalits*, are in the first category, whereas in the Tarai most of the people, except Tarai *Janjatis*, are in the second category.

### Literacy Levels of *Madhesi* and *Pahadi* Communities in Tarai

A study done by Dr Devendra Chhetry, entitled 'Educationally Disadvantaged Ethnic Groups of Nepal', conducted in December 1996 under the MIMAP Project of APROSC and IDRC points out the existence of a wide disparity in literacy rate between the *Madhesi* and *Pahadi* populations of the Tarai. 'The average literacy rate of the *Pahadi* origin groups living in the Tarai region is 54.5 per cent, while that of Tarai origin populations living in the Tarai region is 26.4 per cent.



**Table 2: Comparative Data on Literacy Levels among Social Groups in Different Geographical Regions of Nepal, in 2001**

Social Groups	Himal	Hill			Terai				Total
	Janjati	Caste	Janjati	Dalit	Caste	Janjati		Dalit	
						Inner Terai	Terai		
Percentage of population above average literacy rate of 59.6	7.9	100.0	73.6	0.0	15.3	6.0	0.0	0.0	54.4
Percentage of population in the literacy rate of 50 to 59.6	91.5	0.0	24.8	24.5	10.3	0.0	95.0	0.0	18.8
Percentage of population in the literacy rate of 40 to 50	0.0	0.0	0.7	75.5	66.4	94.0	0.2	0.0	20.6
Percentage of population in the literacy rate of 40	0.6	0.0	0.9	0.0	8.0	0.0	4.8	100.0	6.2
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Percentage of population above literacy rate of 50%	99.4	100.0	98.4	24.5	25.6	6.0	95.0	0.0	73.2
Percentage of population below literacy rate of 50%	0.6	0.0	1.6	75.5	74.4	94.0	5.0	100.0	26.8

Source: Calculated from Harka Gurung's document, Janajati Nepali-Au 8. doc.

The wide gap between the *Pahadi* and Tarai origin population in the Tarai region is a serious matter which warrants immediate attention of policymakers.'

Another important finding of Dr Chhetry's study is with regard to gender imbalance. He reports that 'the female-male literacy ratio among the *Pahadi* origin population is 52 females per 100 males and that among the Tarai origin population is 28 females per 100 males. This indicates that the gender issue in terms of literacy is more serious among the Tarai origin groups than among the *Pahadi* origin groups.'

#### Exclusion of *Madhesi* from Professional Discussions

Hira Biswakarma's article in *Kantipur*, dated January 7, 2004, entitled 'Dalits in Search for Liberation', groups the population of Nepal into three categories: first, a

group that includes Bahuns, Chhetris and Newars; second, that of *Janjatis*; and, third, that of *Dalits*. He terms both *Janjatis* and *Dalits* as the most exploited groups. However, he also ignores another highly disadvantaged group of people, *Madhesi*. It is unfortunate that *Madhesi* are mostly ignored in many of the discussions on the problems of poverty and exclusion. The literacy data clearly indicate that *Madhesi* are not much different from *Dalits* as far as literacy is concerned.

Thus, it is clear that all *Dalits*, Tarai caste groups and Inner Tarai *Janjati* groups are at much lower level of literacy as compared to other groups. This clearly justifies the inclusion of the Tarai caste group (*Madhesi*) in the government's reservation in



administrative reforms road map.

### Representation of Different Caste/Ethnic Groups in Civil Service

The above analysis is done by segregating *Janjatis* and *Dalits* from other *Madhesi* castes and presenting their literacy figures. But, the analysis now will include *Janjatis* and *Dalits* of the Tarai and Inner Tarai, together with other *Madhesi* castes. After all, they are first *Madhesi* and then *Janjatis* or *Dalits*. Here, the term, *Madhesi*, implies the population of the Tarai except that of hill migrants.

Table 3 shows that two castes, namely Brahmins and

**Table 3: Representation of Different Castes/Ethnic Groups in Civil Service in 1971 and 1991**

Caste/Ethnic Group	Percentage of Population in 1991	Share in Civil Service Employment (in per cent)		Proportional differences index in 1991
		1971*	1991**	
Brahmins	12.9	32.0	41.3	3.20
Chhetri and Thakuri	17.6	21.0	14.7	0.83
Newar	5.6	36.0	33.2	5.93
Brahmin/Chhetri/Newar	36.1	89.0	89.2	2.47
Tarai	32.0	7.0	8.4	0.26
Hill Social Group	22.4	4.0	2.4	0.11
Others	8.3	-	-	-

Source:\* Pashupati Rana's *Nepal's Fourth Plan: A Critique*. (Yeti Pocket Book Ltd. 1971) pp 18-19.

\*\* D N Dhungel's article, 'The Nepalese Administrative System' in *Contemporary Nepal*. Pp 122-123.

Chhetris, and one ethnic group, Newars, dominate the country's civil service. In 1991, these three caste/ethnic groups constituted 36 per cent of Nepal's total population, but they occupied 89.2 per cent of the positions in the civil service, whereas the remaining population of the tarai and hill social groups accounted for 64 per cent of the population but occupied only 10.8 per cent of the positions, and their participation in governance in relation to their proportion in the population is by the mere factor of 0.2. The *Madhesi* population accounted for 32 per cent of the country's population, but they occupied only 8.4 per cent of the posts, with a proportional difference index of 0.26. Newars constituted only 5.6 per cent of the population, but they occupied 33.2 per cent of the posts, and their participation in governance in relation to their

proportion in the population is 'over-represented' by the factor of 5.93. Similarly, the next highest group is that of Brahmins, which constituted only 13 per cent of the population, but which occupied 41.3 per cent of the posts, and their participation in governance in relation to their proportion in the population is represented by the factor of 3.0. This indicates that both *Madhesi* and hill ethnic groups have been highly discriminated in government services.

In 1971, these two castes and one ethnic group occupied 89 per cent of the posts in civil service.

Table 4 presents the caste/ethnicity index of participation in governance in 1999. It is a comprehensive table, encompassing a broad base of participation, collating several sectors and activities. This table also reconfirms the over-representation of Bahuns, Chhetris and Newars by the factor of 4.81. In contrast, hill *Janjatis* and *Dalits* have only around a third (0.35) of representation, with almost the same representation (0.36) of Tarai *Madhesi*. Hill *Dalits* have the lowest participation index of 0.03, which implies that they would have only 3 per cent of participation if they were represented in proportion to the country's overall population. This table shows almost the same level of representation in governance by the hill *Janjatis* and Tarai *Madhesi* and, therefore, *Madhesi* equally justify for inclusion for reservation in the government's 'road map' for recruitment in the civil service.

### Representation in Judiciary

In the judiciary, according to HMG (2001), *Nyaya Parishad Bulletin*, about 8 per cent of all the judges of the country are represented by *Madhesi* communities and the remaining 92 per cent by hill communities. Participation of judges from *Madhesi* communities at the Appellate Court is 12.7 per cent, which could be considered high, compared to 3.7 per cent at district courts.

### Representation of Different Castes and Ethnic Groups in National Legislature

In the two houses of parliament composed after the 1991 election, Brahmins held 38.1 per cent of the total



Table 4: Caste/Ethnicity Index of Participation in Governance, 1999

High Level Officials in	Bahun/Chhetri/Newar			Hill Janajatis and Dalit			Madhesi	Total
	Bahun/Chhetri	Newar	Total	Hill Janjatis	Hill Dalits	Total		
Judiciary	190	33	223	3	0	3	9	235
Constitutional bodies and commissions	181	32	223	4	0	4	18	235
Council of ministries	14	6	20	2	0	2	3	25
Public administration	20	3	23	4	0	4	5	32
Legislature	159	20	179	36	4	40	46	265
Political party leaders	97	18	115	25	0	25	26	166
Local government	106	30	136	23	0	23	31	190
Industry/trade	7	20	27	0	0	0	15	42
Education sector	75	11	86	2	1	3	7	97
Cultural organizations	85	22	107	6	0	6	0	113
Science and technology	36	18	54	2	0	2	6	62
Civil society	41	18	59	1	0	1	4	64
Total	1011	231	1242	108	5	113	170	1526
Percent	66.36	15.18	81.54	7.104	0.261	7.365	11.124	100
Percentage of Nepal's population	31.6	5.6	37.2	22.2	8.7	30.9	30.9	99.1
Proportional difference index	2.1	2.71	4.81	0.32	0.03	0.35	0.36	5.52

Sources: ESP, *A Strategy to Empower Nepal's Disadvantaged Groups*, Document 1, p 10, based on Nepal Institutional Manpower Directory, 1999 in Neupane 2000.

seats and Newars 8.3 per cent, the two highest proportions. They retained their numbers even in the election of 1999 where Brahmins and Newars held 39.6 and 8.3 per cent respectively. Brahmins, Chhetris and Newars dominated the seats in the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, constituting 65.2 per cent of the seats whereas they represented only 36 per cent of the population. On the other hand, *Madhesi* and hill social groups constituted only 17.4 and 14.7 per cent of the seats while representing respectively 32.0 and 22.4 per cent of the population. Thus, it proves a serious imbalance in representation in our law-making body, ie national legislature.

(Table 5)

In the Tarai, in the election of 1999, 46 seats were won by the candidates of hill origin, who constituted about

Table 5: Representation of Different Castes and Ethnic Groups in National Legislature

(In percentage)

Caste/Ethnic Groups	National Legislature				Total Population in 1991
	1959	1981*	1991	1999	
Brahmins	27.5	13.3	38.1	39.6	12.9
Chhetri/Thakuri	31.2	36.3	18.2	17.3	17.6
Newar	3.7	8.1	8.3	8.3	5.6
Brahmin/Chhetri/Newar	62.4	57.7	64.6	65.2	36.1
Tarai	22.0	18.5	19.6	17.4	32.0
Hill Social Groups	15.6	23.0	14.7	14.7	22.4
Others	---	0.7	1.2	1.5	8.3

Source: Pashupati Rana's article 'The Evolution of Nepalese Nationalism' in *Contemporary Nepal*. P 83.

IIDS. The Fourth Parliamentary Election.

\*Gurung, Harka, *The Sociology of Election in Nepal: 1959-81*, Asian Survey, Vol XXII, March 1982



33 per cent of the population, whereas 42 seats were won by the candidates of *Madhesi* origin, who constituted 66 per cent of the Tarai population, indicating an increasing influence of the hill people in Tarai constituencies. Dr Gurung points out that, 'this increase in hill dominance is primarily due to the change in Tarai social demography through immigration. People of hill origin now constitute 30.9 per cent of the Tarai population. Four out of the 18 Tarai districts record majority population of hill origin: Jhapa (70.1%), Kanchanpur (70.3%), Nawalparasi (56.5%) and Morang (50.9%). Hill origin people range from one-third to half of the district's population in Kailali, Sunsari, Rupandehi, Banke and Bardiya. Such a change in social composition of voter population affected the choice of candidates for political representation' (Gurung H, *Nepal Social Demography and Expressions*, p 160). According to the 1952/54 Population Census, only 6 per cent of the Tarai population was of highland group (hill origin) and 94 per cent of the population was of lowland group (*Madhesi*), whereas it changed to 32 and 68 per cent respectively in 1991 (Ibid). This clearly indicates a very high level of migration from hills and mountains to Tarai districts.

### Madhesis' Issues

#### Solidarity

The socio-economic issues of *Madhesis* are not receiving national attention due to internal divisions among *Madhesis* themselves. There is a lack of solidarity among *Madhesis*. Independent commissions of *Janjatis*, *Dalits* and women have been formed by the government, completely ignoring the *Madhesis*. This has further created divisions among *Madhesis* by segregating the *Janjatis* and *Dalits* of the tarai and lumping them with the *Janjatis* and *Dalits* of the hills and mountains, thus weakening the common voice of *Madhesis* for advocating their cause. *Janjatis* and *Dalits* together constitute 26 per cent of the Tarai population. The Tarai and Inner Tarai *Janjatis* constitute about 25 per cent of the total *Janjatis* of the country. Similarly, the Tarai and Inner Tarai *Dalits* constitute 35.5 per cent of the total *Dalits* of the country. It is very likely that they will be overshadowed by the dominant hill *Janjatis* and *Dalits* and their problems may not get fully addressed. For instance, Tharus belong to *Adibasi/Janjati* groups and are fighting for liberation from bonded labour system and land for the landless, while the hill *Janjatis* are taking up a movement on the question of language and

culture as priority areas. Similarly, within *Dalits* there is a hierarchy of upper and lower castes. Hill *Dalits* consider themselves superior to Tarai *Dalits*.

*Madhesis* are also divided along the lines of different political parties, where they are usually in minority and cannot influence national policies in their favour. Even the Nepal Sadbhawana Party, which is more concerned about *Madhesis'* problems, has now been divided into two political parties. The *Madhesi* population is also composed of more than sixty ethnic and caste groups with tremendous variations in language and culture. The only common factor among them is their non-hill origins. They indigenously belong to the Tarai with great similarity in culture and language with the people of Indo-Gangetic plains, adjoining the Nepalese border. So, it is suggested that all *Madhesis*, whether *Adibasi/Janjati*, *Dalit*, *Muslim* or other castes, should unite and find a common ground to solve their common problems together rather than seek separate identities and be inward-looking just within their own narrow caste boundary or group.

#### Pahadization of the Tarai

Second, the 'Pahadization of the Tarai policy of the government is promoting migration from the hills to the Tarai and reducing the overall proportion of *Madhesis* in the Tarai. This phenomenon is correctly expressed as 'Pahadization of the Tarai' rather than 'Nepalization of the Tarai' (in his book, *Regionalism and National Unity in Nepal*, Frederick Gaige uses the term, 'Nepalization of the Tarai'). This, indeed, is the government's strategy of 'weakening the *Madhesis'*. Since hill Brahmins and Chhetris are relatively well educated and tend to be more aggressive in economic, social and political matters, they are able to get hold of local leadership rather quickly. Also, the high caste hill migrants tend to have better access and support of local administration due to their common cultural background with government officials.

Dr Frederick Gaige, in his study, *Regionalism and National Unity in Nepal*, conducted in three districts in early 1970s, found that 'the hill Brahmins and Chhetris represented by far the largest percentage of migrants who acquired land 50 per cent of all migrants acquiring land in Jhapa, 75 per cent in Kapilbastu and 48 per cent in Kailali. Given the large-scale migration into Jhapa and Kailali, this will eventually put much of the land in these two heavily forested districts into the



hands of hill Brahmins and Chhetris. The government is reinforcing this trend by putting most, if not all, of the land confiscated through the land reform program into the hands of settlers from the hills.' (p.81)

Dr Gaige also points out the contradictory policies of the government in respect of the protection of forest in the Tarai and Pahadization of the Tarai through settlers from the hills in the forest. He points out the fact that 'despite the occasional effort to force hill settlers out of the forest, the government is not likely to object as strenuously to this settlement pattern as it would if the forest areas were being settled by plains people, whom government officials suspect of being migrants from India' (p. 82). While a large number of settlers from hills have permanently settled in the Tarai forest area by deforesting and converting forestland into agri-cultural land, plains people have lost their traditional right to use these forests. With the introduction of community forestry in the area, those hill settlers have totally taken over forest areas through their community forest users groups and denied the plains people of their traditional rights of access and use. There has been a continuous process of dis-empowerment of *Madhesi* from the resources which they had used for many generations. Thus, with the introduction of community forestry (which is suitable and applicable mainly for the hills) in the Tarai, *Madhesi* have systematically been dis-empowered of their traditional right to use forest resources.

Dr Gaige predicts that 'most of the four far-western Tarai districts, half or more of Sunsari and Morang districts, and most of Jhapa in the far-eastern Tarai, the northern third of Parsa, Bara, Rautahat, Sarlahi and the three mid-western Tarai districts will be settled predominantly by hill people.' He also says that 'the eradication of malaria has been a far more important stimulus to settlement of hill people in the Tarai than the resettlement projects' (p. 85).

### *Citizenship*

Citizenship provides one with the identity with a nation and grants access to services and power. 'It is a symbol of legitimacy for people living within their national boundaries. Citizenship is a bond between the individuals and the government of a nation and, therefore, important in the process of national integration' (Gaige: p. 87).

A very large section of the *Madhesi* population is without citizenship certificate. This is the central issue of *Madhesi* and has caused the greatest anxiety for *Madhesi*. People of the nationally dominant hill culture and people of the regionally important plain culture have lived often in suspicion of each other over time. 'Citizenship legislation framed by representatives of the nationally dominant hill culture during the 1960s reflects this suspicion, for it makes the acquisition of citizenship more difficult for people of plains origin living in the Tarai' (Gaige: p.87). Citizenship legislation framed after the restoration of democracy in 1990 is not much different.

The citizenship legislation of the early 1950s was non-discriminatory. However, the citizenship legislation of the 1960s was formulated in a very different atmosphere. This was after the royal coup and political leaders of the Nepali Congress party were in exile and they initiated underground activities from the tarai and border areas of India, which posed a threat to the royal government. This resulted in the framing of a discriminatory legislative act for citizenship, particularly for the plains people of the tarai. The requirement of speaking and writing the national language, ie Nepali, was inserted in the Act, which clearly punished the plains people of the tarai due to their lack of knowledge of Nepali language. The *Madhesi* of the tarai, who may have settled for several generations, are denied citizenship certificate due to their lack of knowledge of writing and speaking Nepali language.

Citizenship is required for acquiring land, including agricultural land. Most of the farmers in the Tarai are either tenants or landless, and they must produce their citizenship certificate for buying land or registering the title of the land they work in their names. Even when there is a government policy for addressing the issue of exclusion, the majority of the citizenship-less poor are likely to be excluded from acquiring property and services provided by the government. The landless of the Tarai have failed to qualify for the ownership of land since they don't have citizenship certificate. It is a catch-22 situation for the landless of the Tarai origin. You need land registration document (*lal purja*) to prove that you belong here and then you qualify for



citizenship, but to acquire land or *lal purja* you must have citizenship certificate. Most of the citizenship-less *Madhesis* in the Tarai, which number 3.4 million, according to Dhanapati Upadhyaya Commission formed by HMG in 1995 (2051 b.s.), are living in this paradox.

### Madhesis' Aspirations

*Madhesis'* search for identity and sense of belonging to the nation-state of Nepal is of prime importance. To fulfill this goal, they have four main aspirations, which are as follows:

1. A liberal policy on citizenship so that most of the citizenship-less people can get their identity and fully participate in building this nation as *bona fide* citizens.
2. Official status for Hindi language since as the *lingua franca* it binds all *Madhesis* together.
3. Employment quota for *Madhesis* in the civil service and the army, thereby bringing them

in the mainstream of national development; and

4. A federal system of government to recognize their separate identity.

In order to bring about national integration, balance and harmony are two basic ingredients. No group of citizens should feel to have been deliberately discriminated by the state and deprived of equal opportunities in national affairs. There should be proper balance in the representation of various castes and ethnicity in the administration and other agencies of the government to impart sense of equitable participation. This requires a change in attitude to treat every one on an equal, fair and equitable footing. A more harmonious attitude in rulers to accommodate every citizen of the country in nation-building is the prerequisite. Not only physical (geographical) but also mental (representational) integration is essential. Equitable participation and equitable sharing of benefits are central to this process.

## KAP Surveys in Siraha and Dhading Districts

The participation of the children of marginalized groups in education is low in Nepal. One possible explanation for this is that formal education system alone cannot attract those families that are not aware of child rights issues, live in remote areas, have indifferent or negative attitude towards the value of education and cannot afford to send their children to school. Without targeting these children, the goals of universalising primary education by 2015 cannot be met.

With the support of ICNET/Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), IIDS carried out a knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) survey to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and practices regarding child education among parents in the targeted communities prior to their exposure to the pilot activities, including community mobilization and participation under the Community-based Alternative Schooling Project (CASP); identify the determining factors of parental attitude and practices related to child education in the target communities; and provide recommendations for potential intervention in terms of community mobilization under CASP.

The survey was carried out in the areas of four VDCs each of Siraha and Dhading districts where the project is to be implemented. A total of 333 parents from 17 settlements of the two districts were covered by the survey. Information was collected through the use of semi-structured questionnaires. The study team was guided by a steering committee chaired by the Director of the Non-formal Education Centre.

The study found that the three components--knowledge, attitude and practice--of child education were positively correlated and were shaped by three major factors, namely the literacy status, social status and economic status of parents. The study found that, among the structural factors, the enabling factors were the higher social, economic and literacy status, whereas the constraining factors were the lower social, economic and literacy status. Lack of desire to study, distant location of school, need to work at home for a living and harassment by classmates were the modifying factors influencing the education of chil-

*Contd on P 12*



## Impact of FDI Policies of Rich Countries on Poverty Reduction of Developing Countries

### A case study of manufacturing sector in Nepal

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is increasingly being recognised as crucial for economic growth and poverty reduction in developing countries. FDI is very effective in accelerating the pace of industrialization, improving efficiency and fighting against poverty in the country. Therefore, bilateral and multilateral donors consider the FDI as a tool for poverty reduction in developing countries.

FDI contributes to the economy of developing countries at least in three ways: (a) by serving as a perennial source for new investment capital, by allowing countries to raise imports and accumulate capital faster; (b) by helping encourage technology transfer and increase human capital stock and thereby stimulating the long-term productivity and growth of domestic firms; and (c) by expediting the process of economic integration and competitiveness by helping to link developing economies to global supply and production chains.

FDI is mostly attracted to the manufacturing sector in terms of size of investment. Because it generates more employment opportunities, the manufacturing sector has more spillover effects and is an easier means to identify and quantify the impact of FDI.

Currently, Nepalese economy is passing through a critical phase of poverty and stagnation, aggravated by the political conflict. With a diminutive size of Gross National Income (GNI), poor growth rate and inordinately low GNI per capita, Nepalese economy is a classic case of poverty, which requires a big push, especially through FDIs, to accelerate growth and combat poverty. Therefore, this study has strategic importance in the context of poverty reduction efforts of FDI destination countries.

In light of the above, IIDS, jointly with the Institute for Policy Research and Development (IPRAD), has undertaken a research 'The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment Policy

of Rich Countries on Poverty Reduction of Developing Countries: A case study of manufacturing sector in Nepal', with the support of the Global Development Network (GDN) in April 2005. The main objectives of the study was to analyse the impact of FDI policies pursued by rich countries on the poverty alleviation efforts in Nepal, especially in the context of manufacturing sector.

Specifically, the study aimed to:

- Assess the impact of rich countries' (especially the countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) FDI policies on poverty reduction in Nepal, especially in the context of employment;
- Analyse the structure, pattern, composition and sources of FDI in the light of the foreign investment policy of Nepal;
- Evaluate the impact of FDI on price competitiveness, quality enhancement, human resource development, export promotion and employment generation;
- Assess economic integration and competitiveness as reflected in global supply and production chains; and
- Assess the direct as well as indirect impact of FDI on poverty reduction in manufacturing sector and derive policy implications for FDI from poverty reduction perspectives.

The research team comprises Dr Govind Nepal of IPRAD and Shankar Aryal of IIDS.



## Sustainable Peace and Conflict Resolution in Nepal

The *Janayuddha* (peoples' war), launched by the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists (CPN-Maoists) about a decade ago, has engulfed Nepal in a violent conflict. The war has claimed more than 13,000 lives and has forced thousands of people to flee their homes. Thousands of others have migrated across the border to India. The country has been badly ruined economically and trapped in a political crisis.

Besides the violent conflict between the state and the insurgents, there is yet another non-violent conflict going on between the monarchy and the political parties. To restore the Constitution of Nepal to its full health has posed in itself a big challenge. Moreover, whether the present Constitution is able to address the grievances of the peaceful constitutional forces is a big question. Some of the parties to the conflict are of the opinion that the existing Constitution has to be changed to cope with the emergent situations.

IIDS has undertaken a project with support from the Government of Finland to study the conflict situation in Nepal and to find out ways and means to achieve lasting peace and prosperity in Nepal.

In the context of the twin conflicts—violent and non-violent, the overall objective of the study is to provide a non-governmental, impartial and professional input with plausible options to the possible resolution of the ongoing conflict. The study will provide analytical and impartial views on different burning issues to the parties in conflict to help them find out possible and sensible solutions to contentious questions in socio-cultural, economic, political and legal/constitutional matters.

The study is divided into eleven sub-study groups to cover various areas of importance to the national de-

bate. The topics and the groups formed are as follows:

1. *Monarchy*: Nilambar Acharya and Bishnu Pathak
2. *Political Parties*: Shree Krishna Aniruddh Gautam, Aditya M Shrestha and Dwarika N Dhungel
3. *Electoral Reforms*: Birendra P Mishra
4. *Press and Media*: Janardan R Sharma and Yubaraj Ghimire
5. *Civil Service Reform for Effective Service Delivery*: Achyut B Rajbhandary, Monohar L Malla and Arjun B Adhikari
6. *Decentralization and Regional Development*: Harka Gurung, Chandra B Shrestha, Mahesh Banskota, Premraj Gautam, Vikash R Satyal, Shankar Aryal and Pradyumna P Regmi
7. *Culture, Ethnicity and Gender Issues*: Chaitanya Subba, Jitpal Kirant, Yasodha Nakarmi Shrestha, Purushotam Chaudhory, Khim Kabi Sharma and Muna Nepal
8. *Economic Issues and Development Prospects*: Bishwambher Pyakuryal, Heet S Shrestha and Shankar Paudyal
- 9.1 *Natural Resources: Water Resources*: Santa B Pun
- 9.2 *Natural Resources: Forest Resource*: Suresh R Chalise and Kapil B Chitrakar
10. *National Security*: Indrajit Rai, Dhruba B Pradhan and Karna B Thapa
11. *Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Relations*: Ram Sharan Mahat and Lila P Sharma

IIDS organized a half-day interaction meeting of the members of the different groups involved in the study on 3 June 2005 at Kathmandu. The members of the eleven study teams and representatives of the donor agency attended the meeting. Dr Dwarika N Dhungel, Executive Director of IIDS, who is the coordinator of the study, welcoming the participants, said, 'All of us have big stakes in the future of this country. Every-



body is asking the same question: what is going to happen to this country? A national debate is going on as to what needs to be done, by whom and by which way. All kinds of views are pouring in, but we are still in confusion. Our endeavour should be to churn them out and present a clear vision to help the nation steer to a new destination of peace, prosperity and democracy.'

He further said, 'Sooner or later, the conflict has got to come to an end. Seeking solution to the conflict has become a most desirable task. For this purpose, IIDS has instituted this study with a view to offering independent, impartial and professional input to the potential negotiation for peace and security in Nepal. Our study is not a solution to the conflict; it is nevertheless a positive step towards contributing to the resolution of the conflict.'

Mr Pauli Mustonen, the Finnish Charge' de'Affairs, explaining the Finnish Government's interest in this study, said that it wanted to promote the Nepalese efforts designed at solving the ongoing conflict in Nepal. He said, 'Nepal, being a long-term partner country, we have tried to adapt our cooperation in different situations to the priority areas of utmost concern. From this study, we could make a contribution to the conflict resolution and development of Nepal.'

Aditya Man Shrestha, co-coordinator of the study, presented an overview of the ongoing study and progress made so far. The general objective of the study, he said, was to extend professional, impartial and non-governmental input to the resolution of the ongoing conflict and to restore peace and democracy. The specific objectives are to undertake analysis of positions of different stakeholders on various contentious issues, to work out possible solutions, to help build consensus and to disseminate the findings.

After a short introduction of the study, the study team members of different sub-sections of the study project presented the outlines of their study.

*Contd from P 9*

## KAP Surveys.....

dren. The study found that most of the parents were not used to sending their children to school despite their relatively high level of awareness, positive attitude, practices and concerns. In other words, such positive attributes were unable to produce optimum behavioural changes when it came to sending their children to school.

Based on the key findings, the study team recommended that CASP be implemented to support the children of hardcore groups in their pursuit of educational participation; there be an intensive use of mix of information, education and communication strategies to stimulate positive changes in the behaviour of parents; the existing social values and norms regarding child rights and child education be influenced; and there be another KAP survey to capture the KAP of children.

The research team consists of Dr Khim Kabi Sharma (Team Leader), Shankar Paudel (Community Mobilization Expert), Aswasthama Pokhrel (Senior Data Analyst), Kapil Gautam (Supervisor), Arjun Sapkota (Supervisor) and Jamuna Joshi (Word Processor).



## Assesment of FECOFUN Programmes and Strategies

The Federation of Community Forest User Groups-Nepal (FECOFUN) is the national network of the community forest users groups (CFUGs) of Nepal. It strives to promote self-reliance among the CFUGs through their institutional capacity-building to capitalize on the resources to meet their diverse needs. Out of the total 13,700 CFUGs in the country, 9,604 CFUGs were affiliated to it through its seventy-four district branch offices as of the end of April 2005. Since February 1996, FECOFUN has been receiving financial grant support from the Ford Foundation to carry out various activities such as human resource development; awareness raising; advocacy, lobbying and sensitization; legal advice and support; expansion of FECOFUN; supporting the CFUGs and other relevant activities.

Although FECOFUN has been implementing the above-mentioned Ford-supported activities for a number of years, it has not yet commissioned a formal study to assess their effectiveness, which could have provided a basis for defining the future course of Ford support to FECOFUN. There was, therefore, a research gap which needed to be fulfilled, particularly for identifying the areas and activities that required more concerted efforts of FECOFUN for the overall development of community forests as well as the CFUGs. Hence, in January 2005, IIDS and FECOFUN reached an agreement with the overall objective of assessing the effectiveness of various interventions carried out by FECOFUN, with special reference to the Ford-supported activities.

The study is specifically directed towards:

### 1. Assessing the effectiveness of:

- organizational strengthening and expansion
- advocacy and litigation
- women's empowerment
- CFUG support
- information, communication and coordination
- NTFP development and promotion.

### 2. Exploring the elements of good governance with respect to:

- participation of stakeholders in the working of CFUGs
- openness in its decision-making, and
- accountability in its functioning.

### 3. Examining the effectiveness of its activities in terms of extending benefits to the communities that it represents; and

### 4. Recommending the direction of Ford-supported programmes to FECOFUN.

In the study, both primary and secondary sources of data and information are being used. While secondary information is being collected from published and unpublished reports and records of the institutions concerned, primary information is being collected using qualitative/participatory research methods. The central and district offices of FECOFUN, CFUGs, Department of Forest and district forest offices will be visited to collect information from secondary sources.

As the field study was conducted in only three districts out of the seventy-four districts of the country where FECOFUN implements its activities, efforts will be made to make the study findings as much representative of the district conditions as possible by combining the findings of the desk study review and the perspectives of different persons and institutions that know FECOFUN well.

The research team is led by Mahendra Raj Sapkota and consists of Raj B Shrestha as deputy leader, and Dwarika N Dhungel and Khimkabi Sharma as resource persons.



## SRDPP Programme: Benefitting the Rural Poor Case Studies

**1. Mina Bista** is an energetic and active member of Durga income-generating group (IGG) in Sunwal VDC, ward no. 8, Kalika Tole. Her family consists of husband, three daughters and one son. Her family owns 7 *Katthas* of land and a small house. In the part, they had to engage in daily wage work to earn their livelihood. When IIDS launched the SRDPP programme, she was encouraged to participate in it. Mina was also elected chairperson of the IGG in the programme.

Mina is very enthusiastic towards the programme and activities run by her IGG. The programme offered her opportunities to participate in different training like that of group management, account keeping, goat raising, etc. Now, she is engaged in goat raising and owns four goats. She also encourages other people in the community to engage in trail construction, hygiene and sanitation activities, formal education for adults and cultivation of vegetables in kitchen garden. She saves Rs150 every week, which she hopes to use in her family's rainy days. She has also undergone permanent family planning, and has admitted all her children in school. The first to construct a latrine in her community, Mina has become a good example of a social worker in the village. She has now been elected vice-chairperson of the coordination committee (CC) of her IGG, which is a recognition of her contribution to her IGG.

**2. Balkrishna Lamsal**, 55, a resident of Manari VDC-2, Pipara, is the treasurer of Balpuri IGG. He had migrated from the hills of central Nepal six years ago. His seven-member family includes three sons, two daughters and wife. His family owns one *bigha* of land. Its yield was not enough to feed them even for a year. So, Balkrishna was looking for a better income-generating work.

When IIDS organized a mass orientation programme on the SRDPP programme at Pipara village of the VDC, Balkrishna participated in it. He was highly impressed by the meeting, and the group activities held on the occasion, and joined the group. He was later elected treasurer of the IGG.

He also gained more knowledge and skills and, consequently, social prestige from the programme.

Once, Balkrishna wanted to utilize the kitchen waste available in the house for feeding cattle and use them for other purposes as well. Fortunately around the same time, IIDS organized two-day sustainable soil management training in his village. He also participated in the training and acquired the knowledge of, and skills in, using waste materials to make compost manure. He constructed an improved cattle shed and bio-gas plant by borrowing Rs4,350 from the Revolving Credit Fund (RCF) and Rs650 from the Self Reliant Fund (SRF) of his IGG. His efforts at making compost and vegetable farming were successful, and earned him Rs1,400 in the last season. Now, he shares the idea with other community members so that they may join him in his endeavours and benefit from the programme.

**3.** Following the mass orientation on the objectives and approaches of the SRDPP programme, the people of ward no. 2, Pipara village of Manari VDC, who are extremely poor, showed their interest to participate in the programme and formed an IGG with 24 male members. Somnath Chaudhary was one of them.

Somnath owns only a small house and has no land. He has six members in his family, including a wife and four children. Before joining the IGG, he had to engage in daily wage labour to earn his livelihood. Most of his income was spent on food, constructing a house and alcohol. After he joined the group, he learned to cut down on unnecessary expenses and developed the habit of regularly saving money. He was elected vice-chairperson of the CC, and became more sincere and accountable towards the activities of the CC.

Since he had bicycle repairing skills, the IGG provided him with a loan of Rs2,000 from the RCF to run an enterprise based on this skill.

Somnath now earns Rs100 to 200 a day from his business. He has admitted his children in school. He became able to collect his savings and repay his loans on installment. Now, he encourages his friends in the village to do the same.



## HRD

Dwarika N Dhungel, Executive Director of IIDS, presented a paper, 'Achieving Peace and Order in Nepal in the Context of Maoist Insurgency', at the seminar, Globalization, Security and Development, held at Apia, Samoa, from October 5 to 8, 2004.

The seminar was organized by the Public Service Commission, Government of Samoa, and Eastern Regional Organization of Public Administration (EROPA).

x x

DN Dhungel presented a case study of Nepal, 'Revitalizing Governments in South Asia', at a conference, entitled Regional Forum on Revitalizing Governments in South Asia, held in Hyderabad, India, on December 13-15, 2004.

The conference was organized by UNDP in partnership with the Administration Staff College of India, Hyderabad.

x x

D N Dhungel, participated in the Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, held in Seoul, Korea, from May 24 to 27, 2005.

The Forum, convened with the aim 'towards participatory and transparent government', was organized by UNDESA.

x x

Madan K Dahal presented a proposal, 'A Study of the Impact of FDI Policies of Rich Countries on Poverty Reduction of Developing Countries', at the impact competition held at the Twentieth Annual General Meeting and Conference (AGM/C) of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE) on January 10-12, 2005, in Islamabad.

Dahal also presented the same proposal at the Sixth Annual Global Development Conference, held at Dakar, Senegal, on January 21-22, 2005.

x x

Kamal Dhungel, consultant at IIDS, took part in the South Asia Regional Initiative on Energy (SARI/E) workshop, 'Case Development and Case Based Training', held at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India, on April 13-15, 2005.

The three-day workshop, organized to enhance the capacity of case writing of the members of the institutions and organizations that were associated with the SARI/E Energy programme over the last few years, was organized to enable the associated members of SARI/E to play a larger role in knowledge creation and was envisaged as an attempt to capture, organize and share the case studies in SARI/E focus areas.

x x



## Recent IIDS Publications

**Nepalma Bikendrikaran Sambandhi Sarbajanik Prayasharu: 3 volumes** (Public Initiatives related to Decentralization in Nepal: Volume I, II and III) are the three volumes of the collection of public initiatives introduced



and applied in the form of a charter, constitutional provisions, laws and regulations and policies in the field of decentralization during the period of different governments in Nepal, beginning from the Rana regime.

The book, compiled by Dwarika Nath Dhungel, will make a valuable reading for scholars and researchers of decentralization efforts in Nepal.

*Price Rs1100 (for a set of three volumes)*

**Purba Prashasak-ka Samjhana-ka Goretaharu** (Reminiscences of Ex-administrators) is the result of an untiring effort of the author for collection and compilation of interesting experience of noted ex-public servants of Nepal and publish them as a book.

The compiler, Dwarika Nath Dhungel, has put the experience of ten senior noted public servant of Nepal into the book, which, it is hoped, will enlighten the future generations.

*Price Rs390*



**Available at all leading bookstores in Kathmandu**

### **Published by:**

Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS), P.O. Box 2254, Kathmandu, Nepal.  
Tel: 4378831 & 4371006; Fax: 977-1-4378809; E-mail: iids@wlink.com.np

**BOOKPOST ONLY**

STAMP



If undeliverable please return to:  
**Institute for Integrated Development Studies**  
P.O. Box 2254, Kathmandu, Nepal.