

'ROLES OF SKEPTICS AND RADICALS IN CA DEMISE'

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What does the phrase 'state restructuring', the catch words of the contemporary Nepalese politics, epitomize for general people? Undoubtedly, 'a picture of Nepal fragmented into many tiny Nepal', and this notion is what breeds 'fear, suspicion and inkling' towards the ongoing process of change itself because the unregulated but provocatively intensified debate on 'form of federalism—secular or ethnic— is seemingly capable of causing 'an unredeemable fracture in the system of social cohesion'. Some peoples' aggressive remarks and attitudes that have been spilled out on the streets just before CA demise have sufficiently aroused 'a sense of alertness towards a danger of fresh conflict capable of causing harms to the conventional settings of the national integrity and security. Though these concerns are largely emotional, their origins are not totally baseless.

The very idea of 'federalism', in the science of politics and governance, which emerged as a brilliant tool of democratizing nations through devolution of social security and law enforcement powers to the subsidiary units—the central unit keeping only some vital powers such as national security – is misunderstood as a 'rusty game for profiting 'some ethnic elites and political adventurers' at the cost of national security and social bond by transferring hitherto centrally corrupted state's power at the hands self-proclaimed ethnic *messiahs* in the name of '*yekal jatiya rajya*' (singular ethnic province). The idea of 'federalism' has henceforth ceased to reflect the picture of a 'system of governance in which local people are entitled to participate autonomously in decision making process. The incorrigible stand of NC and CPN (UML) and chauvinist ploy of the UCPN (Maoist) are prime reasons for letting this vile picture of federalism occur in Nepal. The subversive role of a quarter of intellectuals to 'defile the face and characters of federalism' from the very inception is a cause to derail the debate.

In the current utterly negative perspective, the notion of people on federalism is resolutely divided, rather say 'suffering from delusion'. The 'liking and disliking' of people to the idea of federating Nepal' has been rooted in several factors—such as ill-design of some ethnic elites to use 'federalism' as a tool of vengeance to the past exclusion; the skepticism of political leaders suffering from a disease 'megalomania' and the love to *status-quo* accompanied by the agony of fear of losing political berths; the Euro-centric interpretation of the 'structure and nature of federalism' by intellectually incorrigible and 'donor-sponsored projects-based' intelligentsia of Nepal; and the 'disapproving or judgmental attitude of the media'. Moreover, the ill-fated geophysical location of the country, in the perspective of China and India as emerging economic powers and ensued intensifying concerns of the Western powers towards that development, has further complicated the Nepal's scheme of federalism' which in turn has contributed to goad inkling people towards the 'capability of federalism' in order to keep the historically nurtured social cohesion, national integrity and nationalism intact'. Obviously, the scheme of federal restructuring of Nepal has been a scapegoat of the ploys of many actors together.

Instead, the notion of 'restructuring of state' does entail nothing but characters of a 'development or progression of a human society', tenaciously implying a need for a prospective socio-economic and political and governance, with all potentials of fostering a democratic features of life that are indispensable for attaining the highest maximum level of human dignity and security. The human

economic and social development would be, or is bound to have, the ultimate goal of any such plan that intends to restructure the state. Entailing democratic and socio-economic transformative characters is thus a fundamental requirement of any 'plan of state restructuring'. This democratic notion of federalism was, however, stolen by the 'indiscreet game of ploys played by skeptics and radicals' amidst traps of multiple influences from many quarters. Undoubtedly, no scheme of 'state restructuring' could be acceptable against or beyond 'the equity-based opportunity for economic and social development of the most bottom-lined people with priority along with full recognition and appreciation of the individual liberty and security of persons'. The radicals and skeptics, intriguing against democratic characters of 'federalism by falling in traps of external power circle ', are thus responsible to cause the demise of CA.

Federalism, as nothing more than a democratic structure of 'governance', is considered one of the best ways for devolving the state's power relating to welfare (social security) of people and policing (personal physical security) of populations to the 'subordinate units of governance'. In Nepal, unfortunately, this secular paradigm of 'federalism got hijacked by instrumentality of two types of people—skeptics, who are afraid of change and are keen to preserve 'a *regressive status quo* (a structure in which person's position is governed by assigned status), and the 'radicals', who always love to breed utopian ideas but refuses to undertake any accountability for their harmful consequences and are often ready to achieve their goals 'by cutting the nose of the king by striking a sword to punish the recalcitrant fly'.

The keystone of democracy, as the western *messiahs* have unremittingly been teaching us, stands on such 'cardinal principles' as accountability, secularism, devolution of power and individual liberty that indispensably entails a notion of equality'- democracy is thus a melting pot of differences of human beings regardless of their physics, cultures, languages as well as any other forms of variation historically or socially associated with human beings. What is obviously implied here is that 'no democracy can survive and flourish' in absence of those fundamentals, and, thus, no democracy can allow 'fragmentation of society' based on perceived differences of human beings.

This is a reason why the comparatively, rather apparently, marginalized Afro-Asian communities in USA and UK are prevented to put a claim 'for a separate province for them' on the ground they are marginalized, though they are. No claim would be taken justified in Euro-American democratic societies which calls for, if any, 'restructuring of a state in a way that demands for setting up of a provinces or states based on color or creeds of people'. The Belgium tried to do so, but the result was gloomy. People often wrongly argue that Switzerland is a perfect example of federalism based on ethnicity—the modality was, however, adopted as an outcome of compromise to share powers between dominant groups speaking such languages as German, French, Italian, etc. Yet, the compromise was carried out within a framework stipulated by universal democratic principles. The Western liberal democracy thus cannot marry with an idea of 'non-secular' federalism.

The idea of federating India based on ethnic groups was resolutely rejected by Ambedkar foreseeing a danger of conflicts among different groups of people perceivably weakening the national integrity. The carnage following the separation of nation of India—Pakistan for Muslims and India for

Hindus – on communal line in 1948 has not been faded out of history. The gruesome killings, rapes and mutilations that ensued following the declaration of partition can be said beastly. To see the 'unwanted fate of human tragedy created by pitfalls of 'communalizing politics', one should not go very far from the sub-continent. If the wall of social cohesion is scratched, knowingly or unknowingly, it is certain that one day it will fall and that spiteful day will not spare even those who were gloriously engaged in scratching it. The division of 'nation or system of governance' racially has never attained something what human civilizations have defined as the progress. We have decided to believe and pursue the 'faith on democracy' which is untainted by religion and other non-secular values. Therefore, any attempt to 'de-secularize' democracy should be unacceptable for Nepal. Federating Nepal cannot blur the principles of secularity.

HISTORY CANNOT BE A REASON TO PUNISH PRESENT

In my previous article, I made some remarks on 'secularity' as a fundamental aspect of 'federalism', suggesting that 'any adjective to it will taint its underlying notions and functional characters'. In this part, I am making attempt to argue why 'federalism rejects' non-secular characters such as 'racial setting'.

The term 'racial' (*jatiya*) is apparently dubious in meaning as well implications, because the term '*jat*' (caste or ethnicity or race?) is capable of adopting a capricious and anarchist meaning as per the difference in context requires. What does the 'term race or '*jati*' epitomize in true sense? Of course, it is capable of attracting more than one meaning capriciously. Is it a 'color' or 'skin of person'? Or is it a character of an outer biological structure of human body? Or is it a 'social or religious identity of a group', or anything else? And, if there is no singular 'earmarked' meaning what purpose can be used it for? To integrate many into one form or to distinguish one from the 'whole into many parts' is an issue that needs penetrating philosophical debate concerning 'the term race'? Is the term 'ethnicity' a synonymy of the term 'race'? If the answer is no, then what rational does exist behind a 'claim' that calls for 'delineation of provinces with such denominations as 'Limbuwan and Khumbuwan'? Are 'groups of people known as *Rai* and *Limbu*' having different 'genetic stocks'? If they are different, then what is the meaning of '*jati* (race) in real sense? If so, is there anything real which is called 'genetic stock'? If these two groups, for instance, fall in racially same group or stock then what rationality does stand out to justify the claim for the establishment of two 'separate provinces' for people of the same 'racial' stock in the name of '*jati*? Apparently, the demands of '*jatiya*' province are made not based on 'pensive, realistic and pragmatic thoughts or grounds'. Such demands are stricken by whimsical, capricious and disarray grounds'—utopian thoughts of some elite intellectuals and activists seeking to ascend a ladder of power being the hidden agenda.

Obviously, the term '*jatiya pabichan*' (racial or ethnic identity) is not only incomprehensible but also misleading in application. Such a disarray ground of restructuring may be capable of 'maligning the underlying principles of social cohesion'. Some kind of 'identity' such as *Limbuwan*, *Khumban*, and so on, may probably be one of several bases for 'delineating borders of provinces' with a view to

preserve the historical significance of the place, but it can in no way be a ground for 'drawing a line between some people having special rights and others none'. The jurisprudence of rights and duties has no place in it for the 'term like race'. The rights and duties of people are inherently associated with 'personhood and individuality' but not with what are called 'genetic line or social position' he/she was born in. The genetic and social division of human beings become less discernible as far back in the history as one gets into, and the all forms of differences do fully disappear at some point when he/she arrives at the era of pre-historic 'homo-sapiens'.

Nepal is a nation striving to emerge as a 'prosperous society' in the 21st century, hence not the type of society the Romans were nurturing can be the 'destination of modern Nepalese people'. A singular 'nationality consisted in coexistence of diverse socio-cultural and religious groups with assured and fully granted autonomy for governance based on apparatus of federal units is the only plausible way for everybody's development and good governance in Nepal. The need of restructuring of any state occurs or becomes inevitable when a given nation with its prevailing structure is considered incapable of exerting movements and achieving goals of 'progressive transformation'. The progress or development 'epitomizing the wider possible paradigm of human dignity and security' is thus a valid or legitimate driving force for the mission of 'restructuring of any state'. The state of socio-economic disparity and the ensuing regressive *status quo* at what currently people are living in, which is often backed by a deeply rooted 'hierarchical structure practiced by the given society, must come to an end in order to make it possible for striding towards a state of thriving modernity in social behaviors and economic progress of the people.

As the very primary understanding of development science believes, the 'change in the prevailing circumstance of the society is inevitable for progressive transformation of the lives of people' and it is attainable only by 'empowering people through generating in them initially a 'threshold ability' to assert rights to, or over, security of their person, physical integrity, subsistence means, acquiring knowledge and participation in economic enterprises. The 'threshold ability, to make it functional and yielding fruits in a desired way, requires a popularly or democratically established structure of governance and a legal culture. The state structure must be able to address the 'centrality of goal of development as well as distribution of powers among many'. The relevance of 'federalism' in a country like Nepal is thus founded on the 'notion of doubling the pace of development process in a democratic set up'. It is not a platform to 'generate many more ministers and governors'. The 'concept of *jatiyeta* has nothing to do with principles of development. 'To create a political power pockets for some segments of elites' can never be an 'object of state restructuring'.

The 'benign mission of state restructuring' has been stolen by ill-motives of skeptics and radicals from the hands of general people, who, regrettably were not aware of the ways the laws of coincidences work, are fallen in trap of a 'circumstance or grip of pressure generated by a tussle between two big articles'- the competing security interests of two neighbors of ours. However, several other coincidences have contributed to harden this pressure. The deeply rooted culture of political dishonesty and apathy towards critical life standard of majority people, the increasing politico-economic vested interests and concerns of the western powers towards the economically

and politically emerging positions of India and China in the region and thereby the changing balance of world power, the unlimited exposure of the 'fragile Nepalese economy and social settings to the cruel and ruthless pace of globalization', the rapidly and threateningly widening westernization in the name of development, and growing insensitivity among citizens towards the delicate state of national security are major 'coincidences' that have contributed in hardening the situation and make the present stalemate further painful. Obviously, the power-centric attitude of Nepalese political leadership and their rapidly degenerating sensitivity to national interests constitute a 'center' out of which the failure of transition is spilling out.

As the science of logics and dialectics believe, there is always a greater cause behind many subsidiary causes of any event. The fundamental law of coincidence does exert influence over the subsidiary laws of coincidences. Some people are unremittently advocating that 'the grand cause of the present situation is the *bahunbad*'. But nobody explains what the so-called '*bahaunbad*' means exactly? Is it meant to racially point out population of '*bahuns*', one of the cultural groups of Nepal? If so, one need not hesitate to say that 'such kind of thinking would amount nothing but a 'racial hatred' potential of unleashing painful consequences in future. If someone is covertly engaged in 'inciting such a feeling' in Nepal, it would be costly for all in all senses. 'Majority of *bahauns* like other bottom-line brethren is poor and live in a miserable life conditions'. If Hindu Aryan population group has to be condemned for its practice of untouchability and other forms of exclusions in the past, why not British colonial regime deserves similar condemnation 'for atrocities it committed to Nepalese people by engaging thousands of Nepali youths in bloodbath of the World Wars '. Is there any nation in the west that did not practice slavery and did not believe at some point of history the 'significance of a religious crusade and superior blood of whites?' Of course, the history should not be a ground of 'punishing the present'.