

Xu's Article "Nepal Risks Missing Chance With China" in Global Times of 2016/9/19
Siddhi B Ranjitkar

For your information Mr. Xu Liang, Nepal has not missed anything from China and so, Nepal does not risk at missing anything rather China would miss many things including Tibet if China were not to keep Nepal happy. Nepal's immediate border is with Tibet. China is still a far way country. China came to close with Nepal because of Tibet. Whatever Nepal has business with Tibet up until 1958 it had been with Tibet. Unfortunately, Nepalese businesspersons had to come back to Nepal in 1958 because the then Chairman Mao Zedong wanted to isolate Tibet from the world after the Tibetan uprising against the Chinese rule. So, what Nepal might risk at losing anything from China might be some grants China has been providing Nepal in return for capping the Tibetan exiles even ignoring the fundamental human rights of Tibetans residing in Nepal.

"Prachanda is no more "furious" (ferocious?), as he was once described, but rather has more realistic considerations for political interests." This statement is correct. Prachanda has been rather matured, and he has been following the realistic political approach rather than hitting the unbreakable wall.

Yes, Prime Minister Prachanda had broken the tradition of visiting India first after taking the office eight years ago, and visited China first but during the last eight years Prachanda has learned a lot of political maneuverability and learned the reality of the two giant neighbors. I don't know whether Mr. Xu: author of the article in question has noted or not what Prachanda has said that Chinese have totally forgotten the ideology in reply to the question of whether the current Chinese leaders have followed the ideology. He stated so before the departure to India for a State visit from September 15-18, 2016.

Then, Prachanda must have a question in his mind why he needs to follow the ideology the Chinese have already discarded. He has his party's name as 'Maoist-Center' has been for the namesake only. Probably, currently, he has nothing to do with the Maoism and Maoists except for fighting against the unjustified movement either Maoist Mohan Vaidhya or another Maoist Biplav launched once and again. Prachanda has followed the most practical path of doing something for the country.

Mr. Xu, you have said in the third paragraph that the Pancheshwar Project, reconstruction after the earthquake and the East-West Railway program are among the core subjects of China's Belt and Road initiative that can benefit Nepal. Is it your personal view or the view of the Chinese leaders? If it is your personal view I have nothing to say about it except for thanks for such a beautiful idea. If it is the Chinese leaders' then I have to say that China is not ready to spend billions of dollars on the Nepalese projects without the cooperation of India, as China would not able to benefit or get return on such huge investments. So, Mr. Xu, China will not invest in those projects in the near future. If your wishful thinking is correct then China needs to jump in assisting Nepal in the reconstruction after the quakes but China has been sitting on the fence as any other bilateral and multilateral donors have been.

Concerning your query "whether Prachanda is seeking reconciliation with New Delhi or maintaining Nepal's status of being controlled by India." Certainly, Prachanda is for reestablishing the friendly and brotherly relations with India the former prime minister KP Oli had unfortunately deteriorated it self inflicting the damages to the country and giving an unnecessary lift to China that has been waiting for grabbing any opportunity Nepal provides despite knowing China will not be successful to benefit from Nepal unless India cooperates with it. China has given the highly exaggerated publicity to the agreements KP Oli signed off with China including the passage to the third countries through its land.

The second query you have is "maintaining Nepal's status of being controlled by India." India can control Nepal in many ways such as closing or opening the border entry points, restricting the flow of fossil fuels, and controlling the import from Nepal on various imaginary or real pretexts but it is not only harmful to Nepal but also to India. Indian rulers sometimes do it whimsically as if trying to discipline a child. More often than not such behavior of those leaders backfired them. Mr. Xu has erroneously believed it the Nepal's status as controlled by India.

Mr. Xu has correctly understood that Prachanda has sent an envoy to China to reconfirm that Nepal would perfectly honor the agreements the previous government has reached with. Prachanda has done so for not having the option but for maintaining the regular relationship with China while repairing the damaged relations with India. Nepal will enforce all the agreements, as those agreements are as much in the interest of Nepal as are of China, too.

"It seems that the relationship between Nepal and China stalled abruptly, and a visit by Chinese leaders to Nepal has allegedly been suspended - an unprecedented situation." Mr. Xu can guess that relations of Nepal with China have stalled. However, if Mr. Xu is a bit careful person Nepal-China relations have never stuck. China needs Nepal very much than Nepal needs China. Without the cooperation of Nepal, China would not be able to keep Tibet under its control forever but Nepal could live without the cooperation of China as has been shown when India imposed blockade unilaterally in 2015. If China has the will to help Nepal and has sincerity in its commitment China could have supplied fossil fuel at the time of great need of it for Nepal. Mr. Xu has seen that China did not do so rather went on signing a number of agreements, which China might or not enforce them remains to be seen. Concerning the visit of the Chinese dignitaries to Nepal, Mr. Xu has simply followed the gossip media of Nepal, and strongly believed them.

In the seventh paragraph, Mr. Xu wrote Nepal tricked China when it did not need means when relations between Nepal and India improved. Nepal has never tricked China nor China did so to Nepal. I have already said that China missed the great chance of providing fossil fuel at the time of need. Where is the help China has provided Nepal with at the time of a great need? Mr. Xu needs to study the Nepal-China relations in depth.

Why China did not send much needed fuel? China sent 1.2 million liters of gasoline but not more if China could send so much of fuel gratis why not more for money if China is really a friend? China is a hypocrite, and knows how to take the benefits of the situation. Former Prime Minister KP Oli became the victim indirectly of China and directly of India.

Mr. Xu said that Nepal has placed the ties with China on the back burner once its relations with India improved. Again for the information of Mr. Xu, Nepal has never neglected the good relations with the northern neighbor. If Prachanda has done so he would have never sent his envoy to China which Mr. Xu has said Prachanda did so not having any option.

In the paragraph 10, Mr. Xu has stated the following three things:

First, "if a country's diplomacy is made purely based on its national interests, it will not last long." Which country on earth runs its international policy without its national interest? Diplomacy is mainly for gaining the national interest; each country runs its intelligence network to this end. Mr. Xu needs to think over it and might realize it then. Second, Mr. Xu has raised the question of morality, stating, "Morality, justice and integrity are also needed in mature foreign policies." Mr. Xu is correct in his statement but Mr. Xu needs to give the examples of some countries that have strictly followed such a high-class morality including

China. Third, "China has never disturbed India-Nepal relations, but New Delhi has been interfering Sino-Nepalese ties every once in a while. Hence from whatever perspective, Beijing is more deserving of Nepal's trust." What India can do in Nepal China probably cannot because of the geographical constraints but even then China has been doing whatever it can. For example, China has not opened up the Tatopani border entry point for the trade between China and Nepal so far for whatever reasons after it was closed aftermath of the devastating quakes in April and May 2015. Is it not a blockade if not interference?

"Taking China as a bargaining chip with India, instead of sincerely developing ties with Beijing, will fundamentally hurt Nepal's independence and reputation." Neither Nepal nor China needs to make its diplomacy as a bargaining chip. If former Prime Minister KP Oli had made something like that he had been the victim of it. So, he has fallen from power but nobody has come to his rescue. As already mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the diplomacy is entirely for the national interest. China would keep Nepal happy if China is to benefit from it even then China is bullying Nepal closing the Tatopani border entry point. Concerning the Nepal's independence Mr. Xu needs not worry much about it as Nepalese have maintained its independence when the British has almost ruled China not to mention India.

"Today's Nepal does not need opportunism, but more politicians with perspective and strategies. Only such politicians can seize the opportunities offered by China's "B&R" initiative, figure out a way to become less dependent on New Delhi and turn Nepal into a completely independent country."

Wow, Mr. Xu has worn a nice glass to see Nepal dependent on New Delhi, and China coming to rescue Nepal from dependency. I have already stated what was the status of Nepal when China was a semi-colony while India was a real colony of the British. What more we need as a proof of Nepal being an independent State while unfortunately, both China and India had been under the foreign rule for so many centuries.

"In the Sino-Nepalese relationship, Kathmandu is the one that always gets more. Beijing will lose nothing, but it is Nepal that needs to consider whether it will miss more opportunities."

China is concerned with the Tibetan exiles; what China would do if Nepal did not do China a favor stopping any activities of Tibetans in Nepal? If the then King Mahendra had not cooperated with China on eliminating the Khampa uprisings in early 1970s, China probably has already lost Tibet. Tibetans would have freedom. Nepal and India are brothers. Brothers naturally fight and then they get along again. Is it possible with China?

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Annex

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Nepal risks missing chance with China

By Xu Liang Source:Global Times Published: 2016/9/19 19:53:39

1) Under the spotlight, Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, who is popularly known as Prachanda, shook hands with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi during his tour in India last week. Yet in the picture published by The Himalayan Times, Prachanda was smiling cautiously. This is not an isolated moment. In the most photos taken by Nepalese media, Prachanda tends to knit his eyebrows.

- 2) People from both China and Nepal once pinned their hope on Prachanda, who has indeed surprised us by breaking the tradition of Nepali leaders visiting India first after taking office. He made China his first stop. Eight years later, Prachanda is no more "furious" (ferocious?) as he was once described, but rather has more realistic considerations for political interests.
- 3) During his tour in India this time, the Pancheshwar Project, reconstruction after the earthquake and the East-West Railway program are on the agenda of high-level meetings. However, all those are among the core subjects of China's Belt and Road initiative that can benefit Nepal.
- 4) Against such a backdrop, people cannot help but ask whether Prachanda is seeking reconciliation with New Delhi or maintaining Nepal's status of being controlled by India.
- 5) When Prachanda received Modi's invitation and kick-started a turning point in bilateral ties with India, concerns and warnings made by Nepal's former prime minister Khadga Prasad Oli over the possibility that agreements signed between Kathmandu and Beijing might not be carried out in a timely manner began to widely spread. Prachanda had no other options except sending an envoy to China to explain.
- 6) It seems that the relationship between Nepal and China stalled abruptly, and a visit by Chinese leaders to Nepal has allegedly been suspended - an unprecedented situation.
- 7) It looks like the bilateral relationship between China and Nepal has suddenly turned fragile and sensitive. Obviously, China feels tricked. When Kathmandu needed Beijing to relieve pressure from New Delhi, it got close to China and signed a series of crucial agreements with Beijing, which would help Nepal get rid of its reliance on India.
- 8) But once India's attitude toward Kathmandu relaxed a bit and the former made some promises to the latter, Nepalese politicians immediately put the nation's ties with China on the backburner.
- 9) Perhaps these politicians have not intended to treat Beijing as a tool to counterbalance New Delhi, but apart from pressure on Nepal from India, Nepalese politicians' realistic shortsighted motives are also influencing Beijing-Kathmandu relations.
- 10) However, if a country's diplomacy is made purely based on its national interests, it will not last long, because morality, justice and integrity are also needed in mature foreign policies. China has never disturbed India-Nepal relations, but New Delhi has been interfering Sino-Nepalese ties every once in a while. Hence from whatever perspective, Beijing is more deserving of Nepal's trust.
- 11) Taking China as a bargaining chip with India, instead of sincerely developing ties with Beijing, will fundamentally hurt Nepal's independence and reputation. Compared with relations between India and Nepal, where there is no defense force along the borders and many channels of communication, China's ties with Nepal are not as nearly as good. That means if Beijing and Kathmandu want to seek a balance between the three parties, the two must develop ties very quickly.
- 11) Today's Nepal does not need opportunism, but more politicians with perspective and strategies. Only such politicians can seize the opportunities offered by China's "B&R" initiative, figure out a way to become less dependent on New Delhi and turn Nepal into a completely independent country.

12) Prachanda had once gone very far on this path in 2008 and Oli has inherited this strategic reform. However, under pressure from India, Prachanda is likely to derail the process. Has he forgotten his initial determination? People are waiting for an answer.

13) But whatever the answer will be, China will stay aloof from it. In the Sino-Nepalese relationship, Kathmandu is the one that always gets more. Beijing will lose nothing, but it is Nepal that needs to consider whether it will miss more opportunities.

(SBR's comments: China is concerned with the Tibetan exiles; what china would do if Nepal did not do a favor China stopping any activities of Tibetans in Nepal? Nepal and India are brothers. Brothers natural fight and then they get along again. Is it possible with China? If the then King Mahendra had not cooperated with China on eliminating the Khampa uprisings in early 1970s, China probably have already lost Tibet. Tibetans would have freedom.)

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