

Unofficial Translation

Statement by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa at the Press Conference regarding Future Plan, Strategies and Programmes of His Majesty's Government (HMG)
November 4, 2003

Dear friends of the Media,

1) On my first address to the nation about four months ago after my assumption of the post of Prime Minister, I had emphasized holding elections for local bodies and the House of Representatives by containing existing problems of violence, murder and terror as the principal objective of the government. Everybody is aware of the government's sincere initiative towards this end through peaceful dialogue for resolving Maoist problem. The government displayed maximum flexibility, patience and restraint for bringing the negotiation to a successful conclusion. Likewise, in the course of negotiations, the government presented a forward-looking concept paper aimed at introducing reforms in the State System. But unfortunately, the Maoists used to using negotiations and ceasefire as an opportunity for fulfilling their strategic interest, have again carried out a spree of murder, violence and terror by unilaterally breaking ceasefire and negotiations for the second time. The Maoists are striking at the very roots of Constitutional Monarchy, Multiparty Democracy and the right of the people to live in safety by creating terror through individual murder, extortion and destruction of personal and state property, and violence. In this context, it is the primary responsibility of the government to effectively tackle the cycle of murder, violence and terror unleashed by Maoists through a planned and coordinated mobilization of state authority.

The government's effort to resolve the problem has entered into a second phase after the completion of first phase of efforts towards this end. Learning from our past experience, the government is committed to launching its activities in a more effective manner. The first objective of the government will be to maintain law and order in keeping with the aspirations of the people. Security, reform, development and elections will constitute broad directions of the government in future.

2) In the context of the above background, I wish to briefly acquaint you with the future plans, strategies and programmes of His Majesty's Government.

The future plans of the government will be as follows:

- (a) To maintain law and order in the country by containing violence, murder and terror,
- (b) To hold elections to the local bodies and the House of Representatives by creating a congenial atmosphere of security,
- (c) To strengthen Constitutional Monarchy and Multiparty Democracy, and
- (d) To execute the concept of forward-looking reforms in the State System.

The government will pursue the following strategy with a view to fulfilling the above objectives:

- (i) Implement an effective security plan to disarm the Maoists,
- (ii) Strengthen people's confidence in Constitutional Monarchy and Multiparty Democracy,
- (iii) Provide an efficient, strong and effective governance,
- (iv) Make continuous efforts to maintain consensus and understanding among political parties,
- (v) Endeavour to sustain confidence and cooperation of the common people, and

- (vi) Undertake efforts to ensure continued cooperation and support of international community, civil society and public media.

Taking into consideration the above plans and strategies, the programmes prepared by the government are summarized as follows:

3. Programme relating to security

- 3.1) The government will launch a Civil Military Campaign to disarm the Maoists by containing violence, murder and terror. Under this campaign, security policy and programmes will be executed in a planned manner.
- 3.2) A concept of Unified Command will be adopted in order to mobilize all the security agencies in an integrated and coordinated manner for achieving a common security objective. The Royal Nepalese Army will have a leading role in the security operation of the Unified Command, which will be kept under the political and civilian leadership. Likewise, the responsibilities of all the four security agencies under the Unified Command will be clearly spelt out and defined.
- 3.3) The existing system of security posts and centers will be reviewed afresh in line with the security and strategic necessities.
- 3.4) Necessary steps will be taken to strengthen security system in vital installations and industrial enterprises.
- 3.5) Rural Volunteer Security Groups and Law and Order Committees will be constituted and mobilized with a view to strengthening law and order in villages and motivating local people in maintaining security.

4) Elections to the local bodies and the House of Representatives

It is very essential to hold elections for local bodies and the House of Representatives for giving continuity to democracy and constitutional system in the country by ending existing constitutional stalemate and vacuum. Elections to the House of Representatives and the local bodies as enshrined in the Constitution will be held by creating a congenial security atmosphere. The government will undertake effective security measures and hold consultations with political parties for conducting elections at the earliest possible date.

5) Strengthening Constitutional Monarchy and Multiparty Democracy

As Constitutional Monarchy and Multiparty Democracy are the indispensable pillars of Nepal's state polity, it is the responsibility of the state to preserve and strengthen both these pillars. In course of fulfilling this responsibility, the government will initiate steps for bolstering esteem and respect towards the Monarchy, which is a symbol of Nepal's nationality and national unity in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution. Likewise, the government will give special emphasis on launching programmes for ensuring continuity to the constitutional system, rule of law, protection and promotion of human rights and human values, unhindered respect for civil rights and fundamental rights and development of independent journalism with a view to inculcating the confidence of the common people in the multiparty democracy.

6) Endeavors for promoting understanding with political parties

It will be desirable to create a minimum degree of consensus and understanding among political parties who abide by the Constitution, with a view to resolving the problem faced by the country. The government will continuously endeavour for promoting consensus and understanding with political parties on the basis of principles and policies. The forward-looking concept for initiating necessary reforms in the State System and future policies and programmes of the government will constitute a basis for working out consensus and understanding with the political parties.

7) Implementation of the concepts of forward-looking state system

The concepts of the forward-looking State System as presented by HMG during the third round of talks with the Maoists were not directed only for Maoists. Forward-looking reforms in the present State System had already been extremely necessary both to end all kinds of inequalities, discrimination and exploitation in the society and to translate into action the changed expectations of the people. The forward-looking reforms concept prepared in the context of these realities do not have to be stalled merely because of an obstruction in talks with the Maoists. Therefore, HMG will implement with priority the matters relating to reforms as contained in the concept paper. While matters that are to be implemented through amendment of the Constitution are expected to be implemented by the Parliament to be in place following general elections for the House of Representatives, HMG will go on implementing reforms that can be achieved through amendments in rules and regulations and through executive decisions. In the process:

- 7.1) A Task Force will be constituted to submit a report with recommendations so as to strengthen the dignity, independence and scope of work as well as authority of the Election Commission. HMG will implement recommendations to be received from this Task Force.
- 7.2) A high-level Committee will be constituted to furnish recommendations so as to avail the local authorities of additional resources and authority in accordance with the concept of local governance. HMG will implement recommendations of the Committee.
- 7.3) HMG will remain fully committed to preserving human rights and fundamental rights as well as humanitarian values without any hindrance. With a view to assist HMG in this task, a 'Human Rights Promotion Center' will be established and activated under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister.
- 7.4) Until a national average in relation to the population on the basis of integrated indicator of human development is worked out, HMG will implement for a fixed period beginning Baisakh 1, 2061 (April 13, 2003) a system of special measures, including reservation, for women, indigenous people, nationalities and exploited Dalit communities in the fields of education, health, administration service and other areas of employment.
- 7.5) With a view to making citizenship certificates easily available to all Nepalese people, the policy and problems relating to citizenship will be dealt with and a citizenship distribution campaign will be conducted. Under this campaign, various teams will be dispatched and citizenship certificates will be made available at the people's doorsteps to the extent possible.
- 7.6) To end dual ownership on land and to provide land to landless marginal peasants, HMG will implement a people-oriented land reforms programme.
- 7.7) To set certain policy standards for appointments to the constitutional positions and to make the process of appointment transparent, laws will be made relating to Constitutional Council.

- 7.8) Since the current Tenth Five Year Plan is the Country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, its implementation modalities and process will be improved so as to expedite its implementation and to ensure its expected results to the people.

8) Integrated Peace and Development Programme

It is essential that the people's confidence continues to remain intact during the fight against terrorism. The services and minimum development activities the State would provide to the people should be available and running without interruption even in the difficult circumstances. In recognition of this reality and in order to implement development programmes in planned and coordinated fashion, HMG will prepare and implement an Integrated Development and Peace Programme.

9) Mobile Service Programme

Due to deteriorating security situation, the common people have not been able to benefit from services provided by the government. In view of this reality and to make available services to the people at their doorsteps, HMG will conduct Mobile Service Programme under the concept of mobile government.

10) Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Programme

During the last several years, Maoists have destroyed numerous public infrastructure in various parts of the country. As a result, common people have not been able to receive the services supposed to be available from those structures. Likewise, thousands of people have been displaced and have been suffering from the Maoist violence and terrorism. In view of this reality, HMG will implement a Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Programme as a Movement so as to reconstruct the structures destroyed by the Maoists and to rehabilitate people displaced and affected by the Maoists.

11) Special relief for industry, trade and tourism

HMG will make special arrangement to resolve problems of and to provide immediate relief to the affected industry, trade and tourism business due to insecurity and political instability prevailing in the country for a long time. The High-Level Committee constituted under the chairmanship of the Finance Minister with the representation from the government and as well as the private sector will work out measures to provide necessary cooperation and facilities to find out the means of solution after identifying the problems of the above sectors.

12) Guarantee of effective and good governance

In order to defeat the Maoists effectively and to maintain continuously the confidence of general public, there is a necessity of an effective and good governance. Towards this:

- 1) Administrative mechanism will be made clean and effective.
- 2) Anti-corruption work-plan will be executed firmly. In this connection, the National Vigilance Center will be made effective.
- 3) The Regional Administrators will be mobilized empowering additional authority, means and resources.
- 4) Transparency and accountability will be maintained in the governments' activities.
- 5) People-oriented programmes to win hearts and minds of the people will be prepared and

executed.

13) Acquiring support of international community

Government will take necessary measures to maintain continuous cooperation and support of international community towards the steps undertaken by the Government against the terrorist activities of the Maoists.

14) Maintaining cooperation from mass media

The role of mass media in war against terrorism is very important. Keeping this reality in mind, necessary measures will be taken to obtain continuous cooperation and support of mass media towards the steps undertaken by the Government to maintain law and order, and to protect nationality and democracy in the country.

15) Direction, monitoring and co-ordination arrangements

A high-level mechanism will be established under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister to direct, monitor and co-ordinate in the effective execution of the above works.

Dear Friends,

I have presented before you a brief outline of HMG's future goals, strategy and work-plan. Detailed work-description and work-schedule in this regard have already been prepared. I heartily appeal for the cooperation of all political parties, civil society, intelligentsia, media and general public towards the steps to be undertaken by the Government to maintain law and order freeing the country from crisis, to consolidate Constitutional Monarchy and Multiparty Democracy, and to achieve the objective of national development. The present generation of leadership in the country stands at a critical juncture. There is presently an opportunity to free our motherland from the spiral of crisis by uniting ourselves. I appeal to all to utilize this opportunity. We firmly believe that the general elections could be held by restoring law and order in the country within a short span of time provided there is co-operation from all sides. I wish the co-operation of journalist friends to disseminate this message to all sides.

Tuesday, November 4, 2003