



The problem of Madhesh and the solution

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I do not feel that the problem can be solved in near future. The fight will continue for a long time. It will continue till a leadership develops and movement under that leadership forces ruling clan to perceive the problem in right way and coming down for solution. Movements always take time. Particularly, when there is gap of leadership in Madhesh.

The fact is that these political parties never allowed strong Madheshi leaders to emerge. The stories of Parshu Narayan Chaudhary, Beda Nanda Jha or Gajendra Narayan Singh are better understood now than we were students and activists of Nepal Students' Union.

They are always in search of Protégé. Even now, I know few people who were trying to undermine involvement of Madheshis in Janaandolan II. They were shouting meager participation of Madheshis in the movement. They were searching Madheshis with lamp in Kathmandu instead of participating in the movement along with them in Madhesh. These cheering have rewarded them and they are the Member of Parliament. They have found easier way to set aside the leaders who tried to champion the cause of Democracy and the ruling class has found protégé.

The situation is not only within Nepali Congress but all the political parties lack credible leadership. Some of the UML Madheshi Leaders have tried to grab the opportunity by fooling people and disrupting the movement. However, they do not have credibility. It is because they have failed in taking their party to address their problems. Therefore, they can not be trusted overnight.

The Leadership of MJF is also not strong. The people aligned with it because they were the first to raise the matter. It is like people taking shelter in a first hut to protect from rain without caring about the owner, capacity, or strength of the house. Therefore, it did not matter for the people that who is the leader. People aligned with them because they raised the point.

It is said that the Constituent Assembly will do the miracle. But can any body say that the underrepresented community will accept the constitution? Previous constitutions were also said to be indispensable. But how many years it could survive? It could not survive because people's participation was denied. It was given by the king not made by people. If new constitution is made by an assembly which has disproportionate pahadi

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representation will not be accepted by Madheshis in the long run. It will prove to be a flop. Madheshis are the people of Land and will not accept a gift of Pahadi ruling kin as was not accepted as gift of king. Madheshis have fought many glorious wars. Only a war lost with Prithvi Narayan Shah can not continue to make Madheshis a Ghulam for ever. Madheshis will fight the war till the community gets its right. I am wondering about the constitution which will be approved by setting aside a chunk of the people. I am saying this considering past. In the past political parties have tried to distribute tickets for only residual seats after allotment to Pahadi community. And it will be done even now.

Present clergy of politicians are not ready to accept the real problem. The problem is not only economic backwardness. It is the problem of Identification. The ruling clan ought to accept that Nepal is not only the country of mountains but also has plains. It should be understood that there is a substantial area of Nepal where people are distinct from the rest of the area, culture is different, social systems varies, economy is dissimilar and so on. A multi racial and multi cultural state needs to recognize all races and cultures in its national matters. But where is Madhesh? In the map? In the National Anthem? Even Sita and Budha who are worshipped in the world could not find place in the National Anthem because they hail from Madhesh. In civil service? In parliament? The list goes on. One can say that every where there is Terai. But at least I do not subscribe with this doctrine. Terai means plain land at the bottom of hill. In other words Terai has no separate identification and there is no existence of Terai without hills. But people of Madhesh are not ready to give up their own identification. They do not to continue to be identified with the mountain. It is this fact which has helped the word Madhesh to regain the glory which had vanished and had become a derogatory word for the Pahadi community.

Constitution has never been a problem. I would like to draw attention to the guiding policy of the state of Nepal in the constitution of 2047. It said “The social objective of the State shall be to establish and develop, on the foundation of justice and morality, a healthy social life, by eliminating all types of economic and social inequalities and by establishing harmony amongst the various castes, tribes, religions, languages, races and communities.”

But what has happened? The real problem is attitude of leadership. If writing in previous constitution could not do any thing what type of miracle will be after writing such things in the new constitution or agreement with the MJF? What new thing can be expected after the election of Constituent Assembly? The situation will never change unless attitude of the leadership changes. Did any constitution say that Madheshis should not be taken in Military and Police? Did any constitution say that tickets for election should be given to Madheshi only after distributing to Pahadi? Did any constitution say that only few Madheshis should be taken into Civil Service? Did any constitution say that in political appointments Madheshis should be appointed only for name sake? All of these matters speak of the attitude and intention of the present leadership clan. This shows that the present clergy of leadership is intentionally downplaying the matter. This has created distrust on the leadership. Therefore, the main problem is distrust. There is no sign of change in the intention or the attitude. Till the intention and attitude changes, one can not expect any solution. The distrust is created by the ruling clan and therefore, it is their duty

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to resolve the matter. They should come with plan of inclusion; they should come with plan of elimination of inequalities. They should come up with plan for improvement of economic and social life of the people. They should recognize identity of Madhesh in separation of mountains. They should show their seriousness by implementing the plan. This will create conducive environment for all political forces to sit and settle the problem.

At present the political clergy has not shown any sign of change in the attitude. Whether it is political appointments, appointments in corporations or autonomous bodies, nothing has changed. Similar state prevails in cultural or social matters. Is the so called parliament ready to include Madhesh in National Anthem? Is the government ready to include Madhesh in the currency notes? Is the Government ready to review appointments made and give Madheshis their due share? No, No body is ready. If not how a reconciliation process can start. Are Madheshis fools that they will digest the promises? They do not want promises instead they want action. They do not want to fill their stomach with water to cheat their hunger. They want food. But where is it?

Presently the leadership is using Janajati, Dalit and Mahila problem along with the Madheshi problem. Madheshi problem is not interchangeable with these problems. There are two reasons for this. Madheshi Andolan seeks Geographical, cultural, social, economic and political balance in Nepal. Therefore it can be termed as macro level problem. Whereas Janajati, Dalit and Mahila problems are micro level problem. Janajati, Dalit and Mahila of both races are sufferers. Therefore a model developed for one community may be implemented in other as well. Another reason is better placement of Janajatis of Pahadi community. They have their own identity. They are not termed as foreigner. They are given jobs in police, military etc. However, Madheshis lack all of these facilities.

Therefore, I feel that the fight will continue till a long time. It will continue till a credible leader takes the command. It will continue till the communal politics kneels down. It will continue till the glorious history of Madhesh is honored. It will continue till the Madhesh gets its share of the bread. You can not say a hungry man that we have eaten the bread and now there is nothing left. Now I have shown a better seed and will produce more tasty food. Wait till the crop is harvested and work for me. He can not work without food. Therefore, he will not work. He will turn into a rebellion.

I am afraid of taking time in the solution. The time may change the slogan from “state” to “Country”. If Madheshis have to fight, to shed blood, to suffer, to be a das then why not a separate country than state. I am afraid of disintegration of Nepal. It is not because of my attitude or attitude of Madheshi leader or people but due to attitude of present communal leadership.

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