

**News Update from Nepal – Extra edition
April 25, 2006****King Gyanendra met all the demands of the Seven-Party-Alliance.**

On April 25 in a proclamation to the nation and the people, King Gyanendra said, “Convinced that the Source of State Authority and Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Nepal is inherent in the people of Nepal and cognizant of the spirit of the ongoing people’s movement as well as to resolve the ongoing violent conflict and other problems facing the country according to the road map of the agitating seven party alliance, we, through this Proclamation, reinstate the House of Representatives which was dissolved on 22 May, 2002 on the advise of the then prime Minister in accordance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990. We call upon the seven party alliance to bear the responsibility of taking the nation on the path to national unity and prosperity, while ensuring permanent peace and safeguarding multiparty democracy. We also summon the session of the reinstated House of Representatives at the Parliamentary House, Singh Durbar at 1 pm on Friday, 28 April 2006 ... We are confident that the nation will forge ahead towards sustainable peace, progress, full-fledged democracy and national unity.”

Most of the leaders of the seven-party alliance welcomed this statement and hoped that this will help the resolution of conflict. Today’s planned protest has been converted into a peace rally. It is said that one element of SPA - United People’s Front and CPN-(Maoist) have opposed this dispensation.

On April 21 in his proclamation to the nation and the people King Gyanendra said,

“You are all aware that, given the situation prevailing in the country then, we were compelled to take the decision of 1 February 2005 to set in motion a meaningful exercise in multiparty democracy by activating all elected bodies, ensuring peace and security and a corruption-free good governance through the collective wisdom, understanding and the united efforts of all Nepalese. By supporting our decision, the Nepalese people made amply clear their desire for peace and democracy and the civil servants demonstrated sincerity towards their duties. We are appreciative of this. We also have high regard for the dutifulness, valor and discipline displayed by the security personnel, upholding their glorious traditions. By visiting different parts of the country, we made honest endeavors to acquaint ourselves with the hopes and aspirations of our people, mitigate their hardships and boost their morale. We also called on the political parties to enter into a dialogue in the interest of the nation and people afflicted by violence and terrorism. However, this did not materialize. The ideals of democracy can be realized only through the active participation of political parties. In keeping with the traditions of the Shah Dynasty to reign in accordance with the popular will in the greater interest of the nation and people and our unflinching commitment towards Constitutional Monarchy and multiparty democracy, we, through this Proclamation, affirm that the Executive Power of the

Kingdom of Nepal, which was in our safekeeping, shall, from this day, be returned to the people and be exercised in accordance with Article 35 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal - 1990. As the source of Sovereign Authority is inherent in the people, harmony and understanding must be preserved in the interest of the nation and people in an environment of peace and security. While safeguarding multiparty democracy, the nation must be taken ahead along the road of peace and prosperity by bringing into the democratic mainstream those who have deviated from the constitutional path. Similarly, a meaningful exercise in democracy must be ensured with the activation of representative bodies through elections as soon as possible. We, therefore, call upon the Seven Party Alliance to recommend a name for the post of Prime Minister, at the earliest for the constitution of the Council of Ministers which will bear the responsibility of governing the country in accordance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal - 1990. The present Council of Ministers will continue to function until the appointment of the Prime Minister.”

Reactions: The leaders of the seven-party alliance (SPA) vowed to continue the movement saying the king’s announcement could not address their road map to peace, democracy and the demand of the people on the streets. On April 22, the SPA meeting declined the king’s invitation to form a government saying that it did not accommodate the main demand of the people’s movement and the 12-point understanding reached between the parties and the Maoist rebels. They said that the peaceful movement will continue along their goals - reinstatement of the house, formation of an all-party government through a house decision, dialogue with the Maoists for the holding of constituent assembly (CA) elections based on a consensus. They claimed that the possibilities of the king using Article 127 again will always be high if they assume power without acquiring the capacity to implement the agenda and address the people’s demands. The CPN (Maoist) dubbed the royal announcement a “conspiracy” and proposed the need for a “third understanding” with the SPA to achieve *loktantra*, peace, and forward-looking reforms. Maoist supreme Prachanda has promised to continue with the agitation and appealed to the SPA and civil society to have only one slogan - institutionalization of a democratic republic through a CA. NC spokesperson Krishna Sitaula said that to prevent “repeated misuse of Article 127 by the king it is important to establish sovereignty, state power and governance into the people.” The president of NC (Democratic) Sher B. Deuba said, “I was made premier with executive powers under Article 35 of the Constitution but was removed by invoking Article 127.” On April 25, the top leaders of the SPA for the first time are addressing the crowd in various places of Kathmandu and bring the valley to a standstill. The SPA has also requested the international community to support their agitation.

International Response: On April 21, the spokesman of the US Department of state, Sean McCormack, welcomed the king’s proclamation and urged “the political parties to respond quickly by choosing a prime minister and a cabinet.” He said, “We urge all sides to refrain from violence to allow the restoration of democracy to take place swiftly and peacefully.” India, the EU, UK, China, Canada and the UN welcomed the royal address and suggested the parties to enter into the formation of a government. Kofi Annan said, “It is up to the parties to work out the modalities for the transfer of power in a timely, orderly and responsible manner.” He also hoped that it will result in the speedy restoration of the democratic order, an end to the conflict and the establishment of lasting peace through an

inclusive process of dialogue.” Indian Prime Minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh said, “India cannot afford to see Nepal becoming a failed state.” He welcomed the king’s proclamation saying that “constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy are the twin pillars of Nepal’s stability. India’s foreign secretary, Shayam Sharan, however, made non-committal remarks, “India would always respect the decision of the Nepali people.” The opposition leader of India, L.K. Advani, in a statement said that the Maoists should be isolated while CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yachuri has emphasized that the regime in Nepal should be ready for constituent assembly elections in Nepal because the rebel Maoists have made a precondition to embracing multi-party democracy.

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