

Nepal Rastriya Mandali Parisad

Annual Report for 2009



December 2009

Nepal Rastriya Mandali Parisad

National Council of Churches of Nepal

Activity Report (July 2008-December 2009)

A. Introduction

NCCN has been focusing its activities on areas like Leadership Capacity Building, Peace and Reconciliation, Justice and human rights, Inter-faith Cooperation, and creating awareness about HIV and AIDS in Churches. Other priority areas of NCCN include contribution to the constitution writing process, policy advocacy, role of intellectuals in nation building and networking of the Churches at National, regional and global level.

B. Achievements

The following are the overall achievements of NCCN over the past several years:

- Institutional Development of NCCN, networking among Churches.
- The capacity of more than 8500 Church leaders throughout the country has been developed through their participation in Capacity Building Programmes organized by NCCN.
- NCCN has played and continues to play an important role in the conflict resolution, peace building, democratization and constitution writing process.
- NCCN has successfully mobilized the various religious communities in Nepal and played key role in the formation of Inter-Religious Council Nepal which is playing a vital role in peace building.

- NCCN has been acting as the link between the Nepali Christian community and the wider society.
- Inspired by the activities of NCCN, local churches are forming inter-religious committees at local level to promote inter-religious dialogue and contribute to peace building.
- Churches are becoming more involved in peace building work at local and national level.
- NCCN's active participation in the regional and global ecumenical activities and programs level brought the Churches in Nepal in contact with the Churches in South Asia as well as whole of Asia and the world.
- Made the Christian Community in Nepal much more visible in society through networking with the media and wide media coverage of its activities.
- NCCN's existence and activities have brought recognition and acceptance for Christians in Nepal from political parties, government, civil society organizations, religious groups, media and the general public.
- NCCN played key role in lobbying for making Christmas a national holiday as a result of which the government of Nepal declared Christmas as a public holiday in 2007 and Christians have been able to celebrate Christmas on Christmas day from 2008.
- NCCN continues to make significant contribution to important national issues through policy advocacy.
- On behalf of Christians in Nepal, NCCN has submitted recommendations to the Constituent Assembly about the new constitution with specific focus on guarantee of religious freedom.

C. PROGRAMS

After decade long armed conflict due to the Maoist People's War and the people's movement-2, Nepalese people got an opportunity to elect the constituent Assembly members to draft the new constitution of Nepal. It is the first time in the history of Nepal that people are Participating in the constitution making process. NCCN, as the representative body of Christians in Nepal, made significant contribution in the conflict resolution and peace process of Nepal. NCCN continues to make meaningful contribution to the ongoing peace process and the constitution writing process, lobbying at the national and international level for guarantee of religious freedom in the new constitution.

To ensure equality, inclusiveness, guarantee of justice and full religious freedom in the New constitution of Nepal, NCCN launched a special programme under the theme "Role of Religious Communities in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution" with a view to provide recommendations to the Constituent Assembly which is in the process of drafting the new constitution. Activities under this program were supported by the Finish Lutheran Evangelical Mission(FELM).

NCCN organized Consultations in different parts of the country under this theme. Outside Kathmandu valley, such consultations were organized in Gorkha, Pokhara, Chitwan, Bhairahawa, Tanahu/Lamjung, and Dhangadi. Finally a national level consultation was organized in Kathmandu with representation from all the above places to give final shape to the recommendations from the regional consultations before submitting to the Constituent Assembly.

The main focus of NCCN in 2009 was:

- Continuing to contribute to the constitution writing process and lobbying for full religious freedom in the new constitution.
- Follow up on activities for building the capacity of Church and religious leaders.
- Supporting the activities of Nepal Intellectuals Forum to mobilized, challenge and encourage the intellectuals to play active role in addressing the burning social and national issues.
- Representing the voice of Christians in Nepal in all national policy making issues.
- Advocating for the rights and problems of Christians in Nepal; and
- Networking among Churches, religious groups, government, Political parties, development agencies, civil society organizations and the media at national, regional and international level.

The primary focus was however on contributing to ongoing peace process, constitution writing process and mobilizing intellectuals to play more active and meaningful role in the task of nation building.

Some of the main activities during the year are highlighted below.

1. Consultation of Church Leaders on "Constitution making process and guarantee of religious freedom in new constitution"

29 September 2008, Gorkha

NCCN organized a consultation programme among Church Leaders from Gorkha and nearby districts on "Constitution making process and guarantee of religious freedom in new constitution" in 29th of September 2008. About 150 Church leaders participated in the programme. The programme was coordinated by Gorkha



Christian Council at local level.

It is essential to campaign for ensuring religious freedom and other fundamental rights of people in the new constitution of Nepal. As the

Participants in the programme

Representative body of Christians in Nepal, NCCN is organizing awareness program and consultations at different parts of the country to make people aware to fight for their rights so that the new constitution will be people oriented and it will guarantee social justice and religious freedom.

This programme, organized in Gorkha, was a part of this campaign where participants discussed on topics like the problems being faced by Christian community, the new constitution and religious freedom, unity among the churches

to fight for full religious freedom, inter-religious cooperation for communal harmony and minority rights.

Addressing the programme, NCCN president Ps. Simon Gurung urged the participants to raise their voice for religious freedom and social justice at local level working together with people of other faiths and broader civil society. He said that this is the time to awake and fight for our rights since the country is in the process of making new constitution.

2. Interreligious consultation on role of religious community in constitution making process

As Nepal is a multicultural and multi religious country, there is a need of religious cooperation to maintain communal harmony in the society. At present context of state restructuring and making new constitution, religious communities have to raise voice for social justice, human rights and guarantee of religious freedom in new constitution. NCCN is playing catalytic role to mobilize religious community in the peace process of Nepal and now in the process making new constitution.

As a part of this process NCCN organized a consultation among religious leaders, representatives of civil society and human rights activists in Kathmandu on 5 October 2009, where about 60 people participated. The consultation decided to raise voice for making Nepal a religiously free country in new constitution.

3. Greetings Exchange program on the occasion of Christmas 2008

NCCN organized a get-together and greetings exchange programme to celebrate Christmas 2008. This Christmas day celebration was a historic one in the sense that Christians in Nepal celebrated this Christmas for the first time as a national holiday. NCCN had played a very significant role in influencing the Government of Nepal to declare Christmas as a National Holiday.

While celebrating this Christmas as a National Holiday, we would like to express our gratitude to Nepal Government, Political parties and the wider civil



society for hearing our voice to declare Christmas as national holiday. On this occasion we would like express sincere thanks to our partners, supporters and co-workers for their support and prayer to the work of NCCN.

This Christmas get-together programme was

Honorable Minister for Information and Communication Ministry

Krishna Bahadur Mahara, addressing the programme

graced by Honorable Minister for Information and Communication Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara as Chief guest of the program. Honorable Minister Pampha Bhusal, Members of Constitution Assembly, Religious leaders, Central Committee members of Inter Religious Council Nepal (IRCN), Honorable members of National Human Rights Commission, representatives of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), national level media, high level government officials, political party representatives and Civil society members.

Addressing the programme as Chief guest, Honorable Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara appreciated the

works of NCCN in the peace process of Nepal and its role to bring different religious communities together to raise voice for peace, justice and social transformation. He said that the activities and objectives of NCCN are more progressive in comparison to other religious groups and it can be a good lesson to all religious organizations and communities to work for social transformation. He extended Christmas greetings to the Christian Community and all Nepali brothers and sisters.

Speaking in the programme honorable member of NHRC and General Secretary of NCCN Dr. K.B. Rokaya briefed about the role played by NCCN in the peace process of Nepal taking a great risk while the nation was in very difficult situation.

The programme was also addressed by Honorable Minister, Pampha Bhusal,



Participants in the programme

Constitution Assembly member Mr. Rajkaji Maharjan, Mr. Richard Bennet from OHCHR, honorable member of NHRC Dr. Lila Pathak, Human rights activist Mr. Bishnu Pukar Shrestha, religious leaders from Hindu, Buddhist and Islam community. They wished Merry Christmas and expressed thanks to NCCN for organizing this programme.

Addressing the programme, Mr. Enosh Rokaya, the programme coordinator of NCCN expressed thanks to all the guests and participants for their valuable

presence in this programme and their support and cooperation to the work of NCCN.

The programme was started by NCCN president Ps. Simon Gurung with prayer.

4. Role of Christians in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution.

5. Gorkha, 1-2 November, 2008



More than 200 Pastors and Church Leaders from Gorkha and some representatives from neighboring districts participated in the programme.

Participants discussed on the topics like biblical perspectives on peace and justice,

Group Photo of the programme participants

religious and communal harmony at local level, new constitution and full religious freedom etc.

After long discussion, the participants came up with recommendations for the religious freedom in Nepal. They



recommended that the new constitution that is going to be made in near future should make guaranty of full religious freedom and constitution should make some provision that the state will treat all the religious communities equally.

There was significant participation of women and youth in the conference. The women leaders expressed their heartfelt thanks to NCCN for making involvement of women in its all programmes and activities.

5. Role of Christians in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution.

Pokhara, 8-9 November, 2008

The program in Pokhara was organized from 8 to 9 November 2008 and was participated by about 200 church leaders from western region of Nepal. This programme was coordinated by Western Region Christian Council (WRCC) at local level.



Group Photo of the programme participants

Mr. Ram Chandra Acharya, the Public Relations and Programme Expansion officer of NCCN and Mr. Phanindra Bhusal, Administrative officer facilitated in the programme.

The participants discussed on the topics related to freedom of religion in the new constitution. Important recommendations were made by the participants.

6. Role of Christians in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution

, Chitwan, 14-15 November, 2008



NCCN and Central Region Christian Council jointly organized the Pastors and Church leaders consultations in Chitwan from 14 to 15 November 2008. More than 200 Church Leaders and representatives of different religious communities, civil

Group Photo of the programme participants

society and local government bodies were present in the programme.

Ps. Simon Gurung, the president of NCCN inaugurated the programme as Chief Guest. He highlighted on the role being played by the NCCN in the peace process of Nepal and its campaign for full religious freedom in Nepal.



Ram Chandra Acharya the Public relations and program expansion officer also spoke about the issues of new constitution and the role of Christians and religious communities. Participants in the program discussed on the importance of religious freedom in the new constitution.

7. Role of Christians in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution

Bhairahawa, 15-16 November, 2008

As planned, NCCN organized this , programme in Bhairahawa with the support and cooperation of local churches. It was coordinated by Ps. Rudra Bahadur Kuwar at the local level. About 220 Pastors, Church Leaders from lumbini zone participated in the programme.



Participants in Group Discussion

There was also the presence of Local leaders of political parties, civil society members and representatives of different religious communities.

Mr. Enosh Rokaya, the programme coordinator of NCCN shared about the

objectives and importance of this programme. He also briefed on the activities being carried out by NCCN and achievements made so far. He said that, as the country is heading towards the formulation of new constitution, we should actively participate in this process to make the new constitution more inclusive and to ensure the full religious freedom in the new constitution of Nepal. He said that we may not get such opportunity again.

The participants actively participated in the discussion. They said that this programme is more relevant in the present context of Nepal. They were very much thankful to the NCCN for carrying out such programme at the right time. It is very important that the voice



Mr. Enosh Rokaya, the programme coordinator of NCCN addressing the programme

of Christians be heard in the constitution Assembly. It will play great role to ensure the full religious freedom in the new constitution of Nepal.

8.

8. Role of Christians in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution

17-18 December 2008, Dadhikot, Tanahu.

NCCN organized this programme in Shree Akala Secondary High School, Dhuwankot, a meeting point of three districts Lamjung, Tanahu and Gorkha with support of local Churches in this region. More than 200 Pastors and Church leaders from three districts and representatives from surrounding area participated in the programme. There was also the participation from civil society, political party leaders, teachers and students from this region.

Addressing the programme, NCCN General Secretary, Dr. K.B. Rokaya briefed on the objectives and importance of this programme and asked



*Dr. K.B. Rokaya the General Secretary of NCCN
addressing the programme*

the participants to be actively participate in the NCCN's campaign to ensure full religious freedom in the new constitution of Nepal. He also briefed on the NCCN's role in the peace process of Nepal and present political situation of Nepal and our role as the citizen of this country.

In the inauguration session, local leaders of the political parties, Civil society members and the headmaster of the School, where the programme was organized, also spoke and expressed thanks to NCCN and Christian Community of Nepal for organizing such consultations and raising the crucial issues of people and minority groups. All of them made evaluation of NCCN activities for the social transformation in the present context of Nepal.

During the Consultation, participants were divided into five groups and issues of discussion was provided to them. They discussed on the problems being faced by the Christian Community of Nepal and role of the Christian community in the process of making new constitution of Nepal. After extensive discussions, all groups



Participants in the programme

came up with important recommendations which will be forwarded for further discussion at the national level consultation to be held in Kathmandu from 13-15 January 2009.

9. Role of Christians in the constitution making process and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution

Dhangadi, 3-4 January, 2009

NCCN Organized a Far-Western regional level Conference of Pastors and Church leaders on "Religious freedom in new constitution of Nepal" in Dhangadi from 3-4 January 2009. The program was coordinated by Far-Western regional Christian Council (FWRCC) at local level. Around 180 pastors and Church Leaders and



about 30 representatives from other religious communities participated. Local political party representatives were also present in the conference. Some of the Participants Came from very remote

Areas of Nepal and there was participation from six Districts of far western region.

The Conference discussed on the issues like religions provision in present Constitution, which still considers religious conversion an illegal practice, and the need to ensure full religious freedom in the new constitution..



Participants discussing in Group

Participants and local people were very much thankful to NCCN for organizing such a very important program at the right time.

**10. National level consultation in the capital on
“Role of Christians in the constitution making process
and Guarantee of Full Religious Freedom in New Constitution”**

13-14 January, 2009



After organizing consultations at the regional level in various parts of the country, a national level consultation was organized in the capital on 14th January 2009 to discuss and finalize

***Minister for Culture and State Restructuring
Mr. Gopal Kiranti addressing the program***

the recommendations received from the regional level consultations before submitting them to the Constituent Assembly and other concerned authorities. Participants from outside Kathmandu had arrived on the 13th of January and had preliminary discussion on the issue of religious freedom in the new constitution and recommendations to be submitted by NCCN.

More than 220 Representatives from all the places where regional level consultations were held including pastors and leaders from the valley participated in the consultation.

Minister for Culture and State Restructuring Mr. Gopal Kiranti was the Chief Guest during the inaugural session. Representatives from various religious groups, civil society organizations and the media were also present during the inaugural session.



A concept paper on “**Guarantee of Religious Freedom in the New Constitution**” was presented during the inaugural session on behalf of NCCN. The following recommendations regarding full religious freedom in the new

*General Secretary of NCCN Dr.K.B.Rokaya
addressing the Programme*

constitution were presented in the concept paper.

- In the current context of writing the constitution by elected representatives of the people for the first time in the history of Nepal through the struggle and sacrifice of the Nepali people, the new constitution must guarantee full religious freedom to every citizen including the freedom to change one's religion.
- The state must respect and treat all religions equally.
- There should be no representation in any state mechanism and machinery on the basis of religion. Religion should be treated as purely individual and personal matter of a citizen. The state should not be involved directly or indirectly in the promotion and preservation of a particular religion or faith.

- State treasury and public property should not be allowed to be used for the promotion and preservation of a particular religion or faith.
- Religious institutions should be maintained and run by the concerned religious community and the state should not interfere in the religious and cultural affairs of the people.
- A powerful Religious Commission should be constituted to coordinate among the various religious groups for religious harmony and understanding, to protect the rights of all religious groups and to discourage and control legal, anti-social and unethical activities that may be carried out in the name of religion.

Representatives from various religious groups who spoke on the occasion expressed their full solidarity towards the recommendations put forth by NCCN. Chief Guest of the inaugural session Minister for Culture and State Restructuring Mr. Gopal Kiranti (who is also the Central Committee



Participants and guests in the programme

member of the Maoist Party) said that the recommendations put forth by NCCN for religious freedom were genuine and should be incorporated in the new constitution. He assured that he would convey the message to the constituent assembly and other concerned authorities to ensure the inclusion of the recommendations regarding

religious freedom put forth by the Christians and other Religious community in the new Constitution.

During the group discussion in the afternoon session, participants made very important and significant recommendations that will be incorporated while finalizing the recommendations to be submitted by NCCN to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of Christian community in Nepal.

11. Follow up Program on "Role of Church Leaders in Making New constitution " Dhuankot , Gorkha 26 – 27 June 2009

NCCN had a special Gorkha, Lamjung and Tanahun (GLT) Christian Leaders program on the theme of the " **Role of Christians for Making New Constitution and Religious freedom** " in Dhuankot, Gorkha on 18 – 19 December 2008. This programme mainly included the pastors and leaders of various Churches.



Participants in the programme

NCCN organized a special follow up program on 26- 27 June 2009 in Alpha Church Dhuankot , Gorkha. More than 65 pastors Church leaders, the leaders

of Civil Society and the political leaders of the area participated in this program. The staff of NCCN described the important achievements of NCCN and it's

challenging role to influence the making of the new Constitution in Nepal. NCCN staff distributed the concept Paper which were concerned with the national issues of drafting new constitution urging the government to insure full religious freedom. The concept paper of NCCN had already been submitted distributed to the President, Prime Minister, and some government organization including members of constituent assembly and house speaker of parliament (Constituent assembly). NCCN collected the suggestion's of participants for the responsibilities and important role of NCCN for the drafting of new constitution, the leaders of civil society also appreciated the valuable and unique work of NCCN.

12. Intellectuals Forum meeting

20 June, 2009

Nepal Intellectuals Forum organized its central committee meeting on 20 June 2009 in Kathmandu. The meeting was sponsored and supported by NCCN. The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Dr. Rokaya the Co-coordinator of Nepal Intellectuals Forum. The meeting was mainly focused in the issues of National Concerns specially the Border encroachment by Indian side in Nepal/India border area in various parts of Nepal which was causing difficulties to the people living in the border area and fueling political tensions. Also the implementation of previous treaties between India and Nepal was discussed.

Dr. K.B. Rokaya in his address told that the intellectual forum should be active in the awareness program in the issues of border encroachment and it's solution. The meeting decided to extend the forum's committee and hold discussion and interaction program in various issues in the upcoming days. All the members of Nepal Intellectual Forum appreciated the role of NIF and said that they would be committed in it's campaign for the promotion of it's objectives.

13. Press Conference and interaction program

6 March 2009

World Trade Centre, Kathmandu , Nepal

NCCN organized the press Conference and interaction program in the United World Trade Center, Kathmandu on 6 March 2009.

The main purpose of the program was to publicize the campaign of NCCN to guarantee full religious freedom in the new constitution.

NCCN had distributed the concept paper of the issues of Christians rights and duties. The participants of the program were from the Regional council of NCCN, Civil society, Political parties, pastors and



Participants in the Programme

leaders from the different churches, and the members of Inter - Religious Council of Nepal.

**14. Consultation program on "The challenges of making new Constitution, Federal system and Karnali region"
25 February 2009, New Plaja, Kathmandu.**

NCCN and Centre for Karnali Research and Development Nepal jointly organized the program on the discussion and interaction of "The challenges of making new Constitution, Federal system and Karnali region" on 25 February 2009



Dr. K.B. Rokaya addressing the programme

in Kathmandu.

Dr. K.B. Rokaya, member of National Human Rights Commission of Nepal, was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

. The discussion was focused on the drafting of the new constitution and that all the civil society, political leaders, intellectuals, social organizations and marginalized people should discuss on how to save the Nation from going into political turmoil and to ensure that a new constitution ensuring the rights of all is made. Also the proposed Federal System of Government was discussed.

According to Dr. Rokaya we should find out both the strength and weaknesses of the federal system in the context of Nepal. The participants of the program were the members of constituent assembly, leaders of civil society, representatives of different religion groups, journalists from different media, intellectual people and representatives of different political parties.

15. Follow up Program on "Role of Church Leaders in Making New constitution "

Peace Church, Bhairahawa

04 – 05 July 2009

NCCN organized a follow up Program in Peace church Bhairahawa on 4- 5 July 2009. More than eighty pastors and church leaders participated in this program including the representative of civil society, social organization and the major political leaders of the area. On the occasion the staff of NCCN stressed that the objectives of the follow up program was how the Christian community could play the role in the constitution making. In the program the participants also



Participants in the programme

discuss the issues of Christians responsibilities in the various different groups and they concluded that Christians should be aware of issues of National concerns and must play the vital role for the social and political transformation. Some of the political leaders and representative of social organizations spoke in regards to issues of religious freedom and the need for its guarantee in the coming new constitution. They also appreciated the important work of NCCN and demanded its campaign not only among the Christians but also in other community and local areas.

16. Interaction program on "The political uncertainty and its impact on the drafting of new constitution"

30 June 2009

Intellectuals have called for political consensus if the new constitution has to be drafted. they made this remark at an interaction program on “ **Political uncertainty**



and its impact on constitution

making process”

organized by Nepal Intellectual

Forum. Convener of the forum Dr.

K.B.Rokaya said law and order

couldn't be maintained in the

Participants in the Interaction program

country because of impunity offered to those involved in crime including murder and violence by political parties. He said law and order can only be maintained if all political parties acted selflessly.

Historian Dr. Suurendra K.C. said that intellectuals have not been able to work independently because of their political affiliation which has caused them to be biased in voicing out their concerns and contributing to the welfare of the nation. He also added that the work for the new constitution will be completed only if all parties followed politics of cooperation and consensus. Leftist leader Mohan Chandra Adhikari said the new constitution should be in the interest of the

proletariat class. Mr. Khildhoj Thapa another intellectual said as long as there is no respect of honest people in the country, the country will continue to face such a misfortune.

**17. Interaction program on "Budget in Post-Conflict State building :
Issues and Challenges"
22 July 2009**

The NCCN and Nepal Intellectual Forum Jointly organized an interaction programmed on '**Budget in Post-Conflict State building : Issues and Challenges**' in Kathmandu on Wednesday. Describing the impact of the budget Dr. K.B.



Rokaya the Member of National Human Rights Commission said the fact that every Year the prices of the daily need have been rising whereas the people's earning capacity is decreasing . "The Budget is more oversized and it seems that the government

Intellectual leaders addressing the programme

wants to distribute the dreams to the Peoples but unfortunately it lacks focus on the real issues ” said Dr. Rokaya . He also said that the present UML led government that does not have mandate of the people lacks Constitutional, Moral and Ideological ground. It has only continued the programs that the previous Maoist led government had started, and scrapped many popular program like the “self employment” program. The present budget with high allocation of resources is not

aimed at the betterment of poor people but favors the rich and was passed without consultation with the wider general public.

The government is led by the CPN UML and it is natural for party to try to seek to accommodate some of the favorite policies and programs. Yet the burden of 22 party coalitions also reflects heavily in the budget. He said that the populist ideals indicate the political parties' tendency to put party politics above national interest. They also imply their inability to address issues of prime concern to the people.. He said, "since the government has an unconstitutional foundation, there is no point in discussing its positive aspects”.

On the program Prof. Dr. Surendra K.C. the member of NIF said, "the local development of tax and Kawadi tax have been scrapped which is very unfortunate for the people". He also added “how can we believe



Participant in the Programme

the government meets the revenue target and its ability to implement it’s budget is very doubtful in the absence of local bodies and continued political instability.

Prof. Keshav Khadka Vice Co-coordinator of NIF also addressed on the issue of the budget. He said, "the revenue target has been increased but the utilization of what is possible will be a major hitch because of the lack of efficient channels to do so.

Mr. Chetendra Jung Himali the member of civil society said that the budget should focus on poverty reduction and that the budget is too infrastructure driven.

The Interaction program was jointly organized by NIF and NCCN. In Kathmandu July 22, 2009. All the members of NIF including the civil society, professors, reporters and many scholars participated in this unique discussion program on the issues of the budget for the fiscal year 2009/10 and its implementation in future. The program was held on the chairmanship of Dr. K.B. Rokaya the coordinator of Intellectual forum of Nepal. The speakers and participating audience all applauded the NIF for organizing the programme in a timely issue.

18. Intellectuals interaction program on "The Complexities in Constitution Drafting Process and Role of Intellectuals"
12 September 2009

The nation is heading towards crisis, the whole constitution making process is about to be threatened by the irresponsible act of political parties and their desire to be or remain in power only. The need of the hour is to leave their differences aside and come into national consensus with one voice, siding with people and make the new constitution in stipulated time and reach to



Vice- Chairman of the constituent Assembly Ms. Pruna Subedi, other CA members and Intellectuals leaders are jointly addressing the programme.

sustainable peace in the country. NCCN and Intellectual Forum Nepal jointly organized the interaction programme on the theme called the "complexities in constitution Drafting process and role of Intellectuals". The

programme concluded that instead of forging cooperation and consensus between all political parties and forming national government the ruling parties are trying to make Nepal a failed state by working according to the vested interest of foreign powers. Vice- Chairman of the constituent Assembly Ms. Purna Subedi, other CA members, religious leaders and the media personnel were present in the event.

Dr. K.B. Rokaya voiced out that not a single political party is serious in drafting of new constitution instead the nations resources and budget is being invested in vested party political programs. The constitution making process is highly at risk and not even a first draft of it has been made by this time. The major topics and issues like federalism, integration of Maoist U.N. verified combatants into Nepal , Army, guarantee of religious freedom etc. are not yet finalized. Majority of the political parties, national as well as international forces are against the constitution making process. The safe landing of peace process has been

jeopardized by the ill-wishes of International and National forces and they are acting to bring chaos and un - stability in the country. Nothing is done according to the hopes and desire of the people. He continued that political parties and their leaders should ponder when the country is facing crisis and they should be engaged in visionary planning for the betterment of nation and its people.

Former ambassador and foreign relations expert Mr. Hiranyalal Shrestha emphasised that the national rulers are not concerned to complete the constitution in given time but are pleased to be ruled by foreigners. When hundreds of people sacrificed their life for the freedom and democracy the new constitution should be inclusive and insuring that marginalized, exploited and segregated communities are



Participants Discussing about the burning issues in the drafting of new constitution of Nepal

treated equally. The intellectual community should act more responsibly to bring the stakeholders into right track.

Similarly senior advocate Mr. Karna Bdr. Karki said now that we have demolished an old house and we are living in huts and nothing has been worked out to build new house . He said the parties have different sort of position and stances that are contradictory with each other so how can they come into conclusion and make new constitution when two third majority is required to approve the constitution.

The chief guest of the programme Honorable Deputy Speaker Mrs. Purna Kumari Subedi insisted that they are gearing up for implementing socialism according to the wishes of the people. One should not be pessimistic for the people are for a positive change.

Constitutional specialist Dr. Bhimarjun Acharya revealed the bitter reality of being sidelined by political parties when one speaks the truth when one is impartial and especially the neutral intellectual's sayings are not taken into consideration. Nepal has got world's highest assistance and investment for Constitution Assembly and some foreign powers are in favor of continued conflict in Nepal.

Media personnel and students present at the programme applauded NCCN and NIF for organizing the unbiased intellectual and inclusive interaction programme and encouraged the organizers to continue holding such events in the future.

19. **Intellectuals interaction program on "The role of Intellectuals in Nepal's Present Uncertain Political Situation"**

Bhairawa, Rupendehi, 11 December, 2009

National Council of Churches of Nepal (NCCN) and Intellectuals of Bhairawa jointly organized an interaction programme named **"The Role of Intellectuals in Nepal's Present Political Situation"** on 11 December 2009 at

Lumbini Construction Entrepreneur Union hall in Bhairawa. The participants were from various spheres of life like lecturers, Bar association members, media representatives, student representatives as well as political leaders. Altogether there were sixty nine participants



Program participants welcome to the chief guest

The chief guest of the interaction programme Dr. K.B. Rokaya challenged the participants that one should not remain silent when the country is facing lots of serious problems and uncertainties and added that we have to

Act to deliver and bring the country into stability, and work for lasting peace and freedom in reality and not just in paper. All should contribute to bring out the positive change that is needed. The true intellectuals should be responsible towards their nation and fulfill their duty otherwise they won't have any space in the making of history and history will never forgive them for what they have failed to do.

20. Press meet and interaction Program on "The Role of Intellectuals in the Present Political Scenario of Nepal", Kathmandu, 17 December 2009

NCCN in collaboration with Nepal Intellectuals Forum organised a press meet on 17th December 2009 titled "The Role of Intellectuals in the Present Political Scenario of Nepal".

The main speaker of the program was Dr. K.B. Rokaya who also heads the Nepal Intellectuals Forum and is also the Honorable Commissioner of the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal. He highlighted the investment of family and nation upon Nepal's Intellectual community and emphasized their immediate role and response to the



Intellectual leaders addressing the Press Meet programme

country's current crisis. He said that the intellectuals and civil society members have failed to act responsibly and have left the political parties to do whatever they wish, they would lead the country nowhere so the intellectuals should be cautious and at the same time without prejudices of any political party, ethnic group, caste and creed should act freely according to their intuition. He opined that billions of foreign aid in the name of so called development is leaking and nothing is done to investigate where the money flows, which is a pity to the nation and is the result of insensitivity of intellectuals. He put forth the view that the major

problems of the country are **feudalistic thinking, capitalistic economic system and fatalism.**



Inter-religious leaders participating in the programme

In the same function historian Prof. Dr. Surendra K.C. added that when it is time for institutionalizing the achievements of peoples war and civic revolution (Jana Andolan - 2) it is unfortunate situation to

announce another revolution and going for agitation. He said that spending 60% of total budget in Kathmandu Valley only and the central bureaucratic

administrative system are the major obstacles for the underdevelopment of the whole Nepal. He emphasized the role of intellectuals to raise voice for nation and people or else be ready to face the curse of history. The other speakers including Mr. Khildhoj Thapa and Dr. Lagan Chaudhary insisted that the intellectuals should act rationally rather than be the puppet at the hands of political parties.

21. Special Greetings Exchange Program and Tea Party on the Occasion of Christmas 2009

23 December 2009

On the eve of Christmas, NCCN organized a special Christmas programme and tea party on 23 December, 2009 to celebrate Christmas. This Christmas day celebration is a historic one in the sense that Christians in Nepal are celebrating this



Dr. Rokaya wishing Merry Christmas to the Christian Community and all Nepali brothers and sisters.



Christmas as a national holiday for the second year and NCCN had played a very significant role in influencing the

Government of Nepal to declare Christmas as a National Holiday. On the occasion Dr.K. B. Rokaya highlighted on the role played by NCCN in the peace

process of Nepal and in bringing different religious communities together to raise voice for peace, justice and social transformation.

The programme was participated by Intellectuals, religious leaders from Hindu,

Buddhist, Muslim and Bahai community. Media persons in large number were present on the occasion. Key representatives of the various religious groups, intellectuals and the media wished Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and expressed thanks to NCCN for organizing such an important programme. President of NCCN Ps. Simon Gurung thanked all the guests and participants for their valuable presence in this programme and their support and cooperation to the work of NCCN.

c. CONCLUSION

We are thankful to the Finish Evangelical Lutheran Mission(FELM), EMW(Association of Protestant Churches and Missions) Germany, the Trustees of the Dr A H F Barbour Trust, Christian Solidarity Worldwide(CSW), Baptist Missionary Society(BMS) UK, South Asia Ecumenical Program(SAEPP) and other supporters, prayer partners and well wishers for their financial support and prayer in 2009 which enabled NCCN to carry out important activities and make meaningful contribution to the ongoing peace process, constitution writing, mobilizing of intellectuals, training Church leaders, building good rapports with the media and contributing to other important national policy issues.

We believe that as far as possible we have tried to stick to the originally planned activities and have achieved what had hoped to achieve. But the chaotic and uncertain political situation and the irresponsible behavior of the political actors with frequent strikes, shut downs and continuing conflicts, did have some effect on our activities.

We do hope that the international community which has so far remained a mere spectator (from the people's perception) will play more active and constructive role in the days to come to bring the major political actors together and help them to mutually resolve the many outstanding issues so that the ongoing peace process comes to a logical conclusion and that the new constitution is drafted on time with guarantee of full religious freedom.

We also hope that our supporters and partners will continue their support for 2010 which will enable NCCN to continue its activities and make significant contribution to the society and nation. On top of continuing its current activities, one new challenge which NCCN aims to take up in 2010 is to work for more meaningful unity among Christians and to actively lobby to put pressure on the government to make land available to the Christian community for burial of the dead which is the number one problem being faced currently by Christians in Nepal.

THANK YOU!

.....Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.....



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