

ones." (Said, 1995: 350) There are certain benefits of globalization as it provides access to the ideas, information, technology, capital and a number of critical resources that are needed to sustain economic dynamism of a nation. Yet, it is not without uncomfortable burdens either. The often "weak and debt-ridden economies of many third world countries leave them vulnerable and dependent on economic forces and relations over which they have very little, if any, control (Held, 1993:32). The greater mobility of factors of production and the harmonization of global norms and rules means less scope for policy autonomy and limited room for the government to maneuver. Globalization has widened inequality, exacerbated poverty and increasingly led to social crises. These costs would further mount as globalization succeeds in eroding the capacity of the state to mediate between the contending classes of society.

What does it mean for internal cohesion of social, ethnic, linguistic, regional and racial identities? Does globalization help or hurt the government to meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of citizens? This article does not overestimate the possibility of Nepal's freedom of maneuvers in the globalizing world but only suggests a number of arguments for protecting its identity.

Foreign Policy Need

At the outset, it is important to treat why foreign policy is a crucial element for Nepal. First, foreign policy epitomizes a nation's sovereignty and independence in the community of nations. The classic independence of Nepal has provided it a considerable leeway to pursue an independent foreign policy. The relative autonomy of the state from the social classes and its tendency to overcome order particularist ties associated with different cultures, language, regions, etc. formed one of the characteristics of national identity. Absence of ideological constraints, existence of micro-states in the neighborhoods fighting for freedom from colonial bondage and self-reliant economy provided a firmer basis for policy freedom for Nepal. Similarly, after the 1950s onwards, the ideological and military confrontation of India and China helped to overshadow the internal political contradictions existing in the nation. Economic optimality also expressed a symbolic value in terms of the content of nationhood. "National consciousness-which crystallized around the fiction of common descent, the construction of a shared history and the grammatical unification of a written language had been propagated here at first by intellectuals and scholars." (Habermas, 1996:10)

Second, foreign policy is a tool to promote national interest, an interest borne out of the imperatives of national image, identity,

economic development, political stability, national cultures, values and civilization. Foreign policy is also used to project these elements in international spheres so as to earn psychic income as patriotic satisfaction. National culture is the composite of whole body of people's thinking to justify, praise and describe their praxis and action abroad.

Third, foreign policy helps to adjust the nation to international changes and developments and formulates policies to cope with them. In this sense, foreign policy holds greater sense than internal policy in the crystallization of national vision and expression of political will. The failure of domestic politics might inspire a change in the government, yet foreign policy failures endanger the identity of a nation. History bears bitter lessons about this fact. Additionally, history reveals that every nation to become relevant in international politics has to play certain roles. Such roles help expand the base of national existence, its *raison d'être* of common destiny and the spread of national culture. The condition of national culture springs from historical roots. If the root of a nation is cut and history is condemned on ideological and technological grounds, it fritters away the pace of national development and ceases the nation's current and prospective role in the international system.

Statesman of the nation serves as a catalyst to ignite both national culture and consciousness. Had the Nepalese statesmen not taken historical responsibility arising out of the need for national development, Nepal would have lapsed into the same colonial experience of the Indian and the Chinese sorts, emptying the native's brains of all form and content of national memories and, consequently, Nepalese people would not have supported the nation-building project. This is the repositories of its historical experiences and, therefore, often reflected in the execution of its foreign policy goals.

National Identity Imperative

First, Nepal has maintained its existence and identity by formulating and defending concrete and correct policies, not by abstract principles. Love of the nation reflected an expression about faith in the societies and people, their viability and resiliency. This has been often vibrated into its foreign policy guidelines. "Other things being equal, the longer the leaders of small states are able to preserve the insulation of issues in which they have historically acted autonomously, the more will they be able to maintain desired self-environment relationships with respect to such issues." (Rosenau, 1981: 121)

Second, Nepal has often sustained policy flexibilization in tandem with the regional and international geopolitical developments. A number

of rich conceptual innovations arrayed in its past policy parameters explain this. For example, Prithvi Narayan Shah pursued a foreign policy of introvert-type, Rana regime adopted special relationship with British India and seclusion from the rest of the world, post-1950 regimes innovated positive neutralism, special relationship with India and policy harmony with both India and China. Panchayat regime adopted extrovert-type of foreign policy relying on regional equidistance and international diversification and the post-1990 regimes revisited special relationship with India, though their styles differed. Some of these concepts were contextual while the others were mere ideological. Yet, all these concepts have been deciphered by the Nepalese social scientists being influenced by the ideals of their time.

Third, internal and foreign policies of Nepal are shaped more by regional context especially the nature of discord and collaboration between India and China, than by the global configuration of powers, though the latter influences the regional context in a number of ways. Nepal shares common borders with two strong states; and the absence of strategic equilibrium has been facilitated by disadvantageous geography which has made Nepal to tilt towards India. This means Nepal's role in international affairs is determined by the nature of its ties with the immediate neighbours. Lack of a saner and more balanced policy in the neighborhood negatively affects the evolution of its internal policy whether it is security, resources, population, tourism, ecology, agriculture, industry, trade or even constitutional provisions.

Nepal's ecological, economic, social, political and technological policies have increasingly drawn it into a number of international regime-human right regimes, trade regimes, nuclear regimes, ecological regimes, etc. and universalizing its societal elements, such as ethnic, cultural, religious and political groups. This universalization process on the one hand is socializing the Nepalese decision-makers, intellectuals and politicians towards global knowledge, values, processes and institutions on the other these elements have increasingly alienated them from the old civic values of "loving one's own country and people" and turning them into mobile and opportunist ones who can easily abandon the nation for personal profits.

In this sense, it is important to reflect on the history of Nepal because it provides a foundation for future progress and transmits experiences of past generations. It is also relevant to mirror history because a culture in Nepal has been set of to bend, distort, disfigure and condemn the achievements of history on political and ideological grounds and the defenders of this culture detach themselves from "historical responsibilities" of how to build this nation. The third

generation of human rights-first being civil and political and the second being social, cultural and economic rights-endows each state the "right to development and self-determination" like an individual. By implication obstacles to development of the nation are anti-human rights whether it bilateral treaties, conditionalized assistance, or deprivation of the nation from an unrestricted access to the sea. All these conditions undermine the nation's independent identity.

Had the Nepalese decision-makers known these universal rights of the state they would have turned back to the causes for the explanation of underdevelopment in Nepal. Yet, the evidence, perhaps surprisingly, point to the opposite direction. Except the regional development plan, the Nepalese planners' approaches to development have been wasted, for the facts and chronology, ensure that they have not done their job properly to capture the national vision and reality. And consequently, Nepal's development continues to be lowered comparable to Ethiopia and the policy-making prerogative of the parliament has been subjected to trans-national financial institutions thus undermining the social base of democracy. "Without direct involvement by the state there can be no escape from massive poverty and disempowerment." (Friedmann, 1996: 168)

To limit the Nepalese people's right to development and participation to elections, political parties and economic liberalism amounts to the violation of their human rights. The reference of economy here denotes how economic instruments-foreign aid, trade, communication, agriculture and industry-connect domestic politics to foreign policy. Perhaps, this is one of the rationales for constituting a task force by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to elaborate the need for economic diplomacy, the de-contextualization of the term notwithstanding.

The efficacy of economic diplomacy is certainly not a recent innovation. Its role can be seen in the rise and fall of empires and nation-states. The insight and wisdom of economic diplomacy are well distilled in the *Dibya Upadesh* (Wise Council) of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the master builder of modern Nepal. He placed greater premium on the geopolitical necessities of the nation and prescribed that Nepalese themselves should be involved in trade and commerce. For, only the nationally-sensitive businessmen commit for national industrialization and make the nation self-reliant. Moreover, they form the backbone of national economy and promote social peace and welfare. In this context, economic diplomacy with its genesis in mercantilism and free-trade doctrine, should be utilized to bolster-national image and identity.

Nepal's normative role in the United Nations, nonaligned

movement, Inter-Parliamentary Union, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and in developed part of the world is expected to expand the basis of its relevancy and utility. So far, this role was empirically articulated in the policy of diversification in trade, commerce, aid, technology, foreign private investments, tourism, technology transfer and international relations. The imperative today is to seek participation in important decisions affecting its viability, such as security matters, vital resources, developmental policies, stability, etc. In the field of transit, Nepal has to seek justice on the one hand and appreciate many regional coordinating mechanisms of economic integration under the rubric of South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement and in the World Trade Organization on the other. Objectively, the right to development articulated by the third generation of human rights should be evoked to secure the nation's access to the sea. Nepal should not lose sight of the fact that this is a struggle to contrive a kind of global justice, not a model of zero-sum game. In fact, the experience of the application of linguistic pawns of globalization-privatization, liberalization, denationalization and deregulation-in Nepal has pushed majority of the Nepalese into misery, wretchedness leading to the destruction of their culture, the root of national identity. The assertions that globalization would spawn benefits to Nepal were meaningless in the light of the verification of principles.

The lesson of history and the prevailing world system of interdependence suggest how Nepal continues to maintain its identity and persistently seeking freedom of action defined by emerging liberal democratic rights. A situation of fluidity has set in the international system following the downfall of the Soviet Union and the liberation of people from the incubus of political regimentation. Concerns have been increasingly raised for the reforms and democratization of the UN and Breton Woods institutions. Yet, this trend has unfolded a paradox: internationally nation-states are struggling to create an order based on social justice, equality and international cooperation while domestically ethnic groups, minorities and sub-nations are placing almost similar kinds of demands to the government with the help of national and global civil society. In such a situation how national consensus among the politically and socially relevant actors is attained to concert foreign policy question is a crucial challenge for the Nepalese government and citizens alike. One might further ask: whether economic diplomacy help Nepal reap benefits from globalization and prevent the increasing marginalization of the nation from the global political economy? And whether the benefits emerging out of globalization is efficiently allocated among the people to overcome their chronic poverty?

The end of cold war has entailed Nepal to shift the paradigm of geopolitical model of survival to geoeconomics. The classic option of exploiting the politics of bufferism has been undermined by growing cooperation between India and China, regionalization of economy and the transformation of the world into a single market. The connection of geography with economics has become a guiding constant of foreign policy. The European Union has set an example while the other regions including SAARC are following suit. Owing to a utilitarian pleasure of ruling elite, the South Asian countries have failed to achieve the desired level of development which their potentials are capable of. There policies and distributional aspects have often become a subject of criticism and controversy.

In the context of Nepal, too, many issues of strategic significance-treaty on security, vital resources, refugees, democratic values and economic policies-have failed to muster needed national consensus. In some cases, partisan interest held primacy over national interests. This sort of trend does not offer the nation an *elan vital* to play an active role, rather it saps the will power of national leadership. This brings us back to the familiar questions: How can Nepal preserve its identity? Under what conditions this identity becomes an instrument for mobilizing people and attaining other values, such as survival, well being and dignified status?

Conclusion :

No country has so tormented itself over the gap between its classic independence, whose values so far remained absolute, and the current reality of heavy dependence it counters as Nepal. In the changed context what Nepal's experiencing is a grave threat to its national independence, sovereignty and cultural identity. The benefits of globalization do not seem to have filtered down so as to enhance its viability. In the changed context, therefore, it has to redefine its identity. How to escape from its current status of heavy penetration of international system what we call globalization to a desirable level of relationship which does not undermine its identity and independence?

First, an accurate self-image of Nepal should serve as a policy parameter for international conduct. Second, the existential imperative evolved over the years should serve as an anchor point for constant experience and reflection on the more pragmatic day-today approach. Third, Nepalese of all hues should find refuge, if not comfort, in the reality of nation's glorious past and deal realistically with the new situation. This reality, however, should not prevent the Nepalese decision-makers from the possibility of learning from the emerging

civilization and shaping one's own perception and judgement. And finally, it is essential to convert the "inferiority complex" into national confidence. The growing interdependence of country with cities and of the nation with other nations, amply illustrate the development of coherence amid differentiation. In this context, one can conclude national identity exists by the will of the people. But, it progresses with the use of their potential, courage and statecraft.

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