

NEPAL BECOMES A FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

MAY 28, 08. The historic first meeting of the Constituent Assembly (CA) has endorsed a proposal to amend the interim constitution implementing the declaration of Nepal as a federal democratic republic.

The officiating chairman of the CA, Kul Bahadur Gurung said that of the 564 CA members who took part in the voting on the proposal, 560 voted in its favour while four members voted against it.

The motion for implementing the republic declaration was introduced by the government. Home Minister Krishna Sitaula introduced the proposal as per the Article 159 of the Interim Constitution, which was put for voting.

Following the voting result, the CA also approved a proposal stating that the King should vacate the Narayanhity royal palace within 15 days.

The proposal states that the King will lose all perks and privileges except his rights as a common citizen. The Narayanhity royal palace will be turned into a national museum or used in national interest as deemed necessary by the government, the proposal adds.

<http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/may/may28/news18.php#1>

KING GYANENDRA DETHRONED

MAY 30, 08. Nepal is celebrating a new era as a republic after consigning its centuries-old monarchy to the history books and ordering god-king to quit his palace , in two weeks.

In a vote capping a peace accord between Maoists and mainstream parties, a new constitutional assembly early yesterday voted to abolish the 240-year-old monarchy and establish a republic. The flag of the Shah dynasty was taken down from the main palace in the capital, Kathmandu, which will now be turned into a national museum.

Nepalis hope the assembly's decision will end a decade-long civil war that has killed more than 13,000 people and devastated the country's tiny, tourism-dependent economy.

Nepal's army, long seen as a bastion of royal support, said it would respect the verdict of the assembly.

The Maoists, clear winners of last month's elections to the constitutional assembly, started the war to overthrow what they viewed as a backward, caste-ridden structure that had kept most of Nepal's 29 million people in poverty.

"The Nepalese people have been freed from centuries of feudal tradition and the doors have now opened for a radical social and economic transformation," Maoist spokesman Krishna Bahadur Mahara said.

Many remain wary of the Maoists, whose loyalists are regularly accused of using violence and intimidation. - AFP

MAOISTS CLAIM BOTH TOP POSTS



MAOIST CHAIRMAN PRACHANDA

MAY 31 08. Even as Maoist chairman Prachanda has said that his party deserves both the positions of president and prime minister, leaders of Nepali Congress (NC) and Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) have reiterated that the positions should go to separate parties.

"Demanding both president and prime minister is nothing but totalitarian tendency," said Ram Chandra Poudel, NC vice president and Minister for Peace and Reconstruction.

Senior leader of UML Bharat Mohan Adhikary also blasted the Maoists for demanding both positions. "They must not eye everything as we are engaged in politics of cooperation and understanding," he said.

Prachanda had earlier said that his party would opt to stay out of power if positions of president and prime minister are divided among different parties.

The Maoist leaders have been saying that installing individuals from different parties on these positions could create parallel power center during the transitional period.

<http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/may/may31/news01.php>