

# **India Resumes Military Ties, Intelligence-Sharing With Nepal**

By Dave McCombs

Dec. 8 [2009] (Bloomberg) -- India said it will resume military cooperation with Nepal and train Nepalese security personnel after cutting security ties when former King Gyanendra took power and dissolved the multi-party government in February 2005.

The countries agreed to share intelligence and cooperate on building an airbase for the Nepalese Army in western Nepal, India's state-run broadcaster Doordarshan reported. The agreements came at a three-day secretary level meeting in the Nepalese capital, Kathmandu, that ended yesterday.

India was one of the main suppliers of military aid, providing helicopters and weapons to help the army fight Maoist rebels. The 10-year insurgency ended in 2006 and the rebel party became a political organization that won most seats in elections last year.

India is Nepal's biggest trading partner, taking 59.2 percent of its exports and providing 55.4 percent of goods imported to the neighboring Himalayan country, according to U.S. government data.

Nepal's government faces widening protests following the resignation in May of Maoist Prime Minister Puspa Kamal Dahal, who quit after the president overturned his decision to fire the army chief for refusing to integrate rebel fighters into the military. A general strike started Dec. 6 by Maoists forced schools in Kathmandu and other areas to shut and stranded travelers in some areas, the British Broadcasting Corp. reported on its Web site.

The Maoists announced the strike after police killed five people and injured dozens while evicting landless squatters in the Dudhejari jungle in the western Kailali District, the BBC reported.

## **Excessive Force**

The United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal said it is looking into excessive use of force during the eviction drive in Dudhejari.

Security forces were attacked by those resisting eviction with weapons, including axes, and a police officer was killed, the office said in a statement on its Web site.

“We have been monitoring the situation and interacting with actors on the ground to minimize the chances of further violence,” said Richard Bennett, representative of OHCHR-Nepal.

He called on the government and the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to “exercise restraint and prevent any incidents, which could further aggravate the fragile situation in the region.”

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