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Home / World / Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' becomes Nepal's new PM

Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' becomes Nepal's new PM

Prachanda led the decade-long armed struggle from 1996 to 2006 that ultimately ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in November 2006.

Written by [Yubaraj Ghimire](#)

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Nepal's newly appointed PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. (File)

HOURS AFTER he walked out of a pre-poll five-party alliance led by Nepali Congress president and outgoing Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' joined hands with rival K P Sharma Oli, chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), and other smaller parties to be appointed as the new Prime Minister of Nepal on Sunday.

Prachanda has claimed the support of 170 parliamentarians – from six parties and four Independents – in the 275-member House.

The general elections last month failed to produce a clear winner. The Nepali Congress is the single largest party with 89 seats, while CPN-UML and CPN-MC have 78 and 32 seats respectively.

In a statement, the President's office said Prachanda has been appointed as the Prime Minister of Nepal as per Article 76(2) of the Constitution – his third time in office. He is set to take oath on Monday.

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A PTI report said Prachanda and Oli have reached an understanding to lead the government on rotation basis, and Oli agreed to make Prachanda Prime Minister in the first round, as per his demand.

Earlier in the day, Prachanda walked out of the Nepali Congress-led pre-poll alliance after Deuba rejected his bid to become the Prime Minister in the first

After talks with Deuba failed, Prachanda reached Oli's private residence to seek his support. He was joined by leaders of other smaller parties, making it clear that Oli had done the groundwork to bring the parties together.

Deuba, who was re-elected as leader of the Nepali Congress parliamentary party, was all set to stake claim and submit the list of his supporters, when the events unfolded.

Interestingly, the parties supporting Prachanda include the pro-monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra Party, the Rastriya Swatantra Party, Janata Samajbadi Party, and regional outfits like the Janamat Party and Nagarik Unmukti Party.

Staking his claim before the deadline given by President Bidhya Devi Bhandari expired at 5 pm on Sunday, Prachanda, 68, was accompanied to the President's office by Oli, RSP president Ravi Lamichhane and RPP chief Rajendra Lingden among other top leaders.

"We are clearly for the monarchy and Hindu Rashtra, and we are supporting this alliance from outside for political stability," said Lingden.

Both Prachanda and Oli are seen as pro-China. In July 2021, Prachanda had withdrawn support to Oli, thus dislodging him from office, after Oli failed to honour the condition on a rotational government.

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