

Nepal President calls for consensus govt within 7 days

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Kathmandu: Nepal President Ram Baran Yadav has called on the political parties in the country to elect a new Prime Minister and form a national consensus government within a week.

President Yadav made the call following a request from Prime Minister Sushil Koirala who visited him at his official residence this evening.

If parties fail to form a national consensus government within a week, the parliament will initiate majority process for forming the new government.

Koirala earlier said that he would call on the President and ask him to initiate the process of electing the Prime Minister as he had fulfilled the responsibility of facilitating the promulgation of the Constitution through the Constituent Assembly.

Koirala was elected to the post on February 10, 2014 with the backing of CPN-UML, the second largest party in the parliament, and many other fringe political parties.

With Koirala not spelling out the word resignation, leaders have remained divided on whether the government will remain as caretaker or executive.

Coalition partner CPN-UML has said that the President's call for a new prime minister automatically turns the current government into a caretaker one.

"As the current government starts the process of handing over power, the incumbent government has turned into a transitional one," said UML Senior Leader Jhala Nath Khanal.

He further claimed that the new government would be formed within a week under the leadership of CPN-UML's KP Oli.

On the other hand, Nepali Congress leader and Finance Minister Ram Saran Mahat countered Khanal's argument, saying "The Prime Minister should not resign leaving vacuum on government."

With the completion of the election process of a new Prime Minister, the parliament should conclude the process of electing new speaker and deputy speaker within 20 days of the first sitting of the parliament.

The Article 297 of the new constitution requires that president and vice-president be elected within a month after the first sitting of the House session based on understanding among political parties.

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