

## **Nepal's Madhesi agitation turns violent again, several hurt**

25/10/2015 13:35 by admin

**Kathmandu:** Several people were injured today when supporters of Madhesi parties turned violent and attacked buses and other vehicles being escorted by security forces in southern Nepal near the Indian border where they have been agitating for over a month against the new Constitution.

Clashes erupted between the security forces and Joint Democratic Madhesi Front (JDMF) cadres, who pelted stones at the vehicles in Dhalkebar in Dhanusa district before dawn.

The protesters threw petrol bombs in the direction of the vehicles and smashed their window panes. Police fired around 30 rounds into the air to control the protesters, some of whom were said to be hit by rubber bullets during the clash.

At least eight passengers were injured by people throwing stones at the vehicles. The driver of a bus is said to be seriously wounded after being hit on his head by protesters.

In southeast Nepal's Bardaha district, police had to baton charge and fire teargas shells at protesters throwing stones on vehicles ferrying people and goods. At least six agitators and two policemen were injured in the incident.

Southern plains of the landlocked Nepal has been simmering with tension since the new Constitution was formally adopted on September 20.

Madhesi parties - who claim to represent the interests of the Indian-origin inhabitants of Nepal's Terai region - and Tharu ethnic groups have been agitating against the charter.

They see it as flawed and discriminatory to their interests.

Over 40 people have died in the agitations, that has also overwhelmed India-Nepal ties, as transit of goods and fuel to the Himalayan nation via the major trading points of Birgunj and Biratnagar have been squeezed.

Faced with an acute shortage of fuel and essential goods, the new Nepalese government has been cosying up to its northern neighbour China.

Unified CPN-Maoist vice-chairman Narayan Kaji Shrestha yesterday met China's Ambassador to Nepal Wu Chuntai and discussed with him the shortage of fuel, medicines in the country.

Shrestha, who recently had been on China visit, has also met China's Minister for Commerce and Supplies Ganesh Man Pun and Nepali Ambassador to China Mahesh Kumar Maskey over the issues, UCPN-Maoist party sources said.

Senior Maoist leader Dinanath Sharma told PTI that the talks focussed mostly on the supply of essential commodities.

China and Nepal have reopened two of their border trade points, which were damaged in the massive earthquake in April.

Nepal has also made official requests to China to supply fuel and cooking gas ahead of the festival season

- PTI