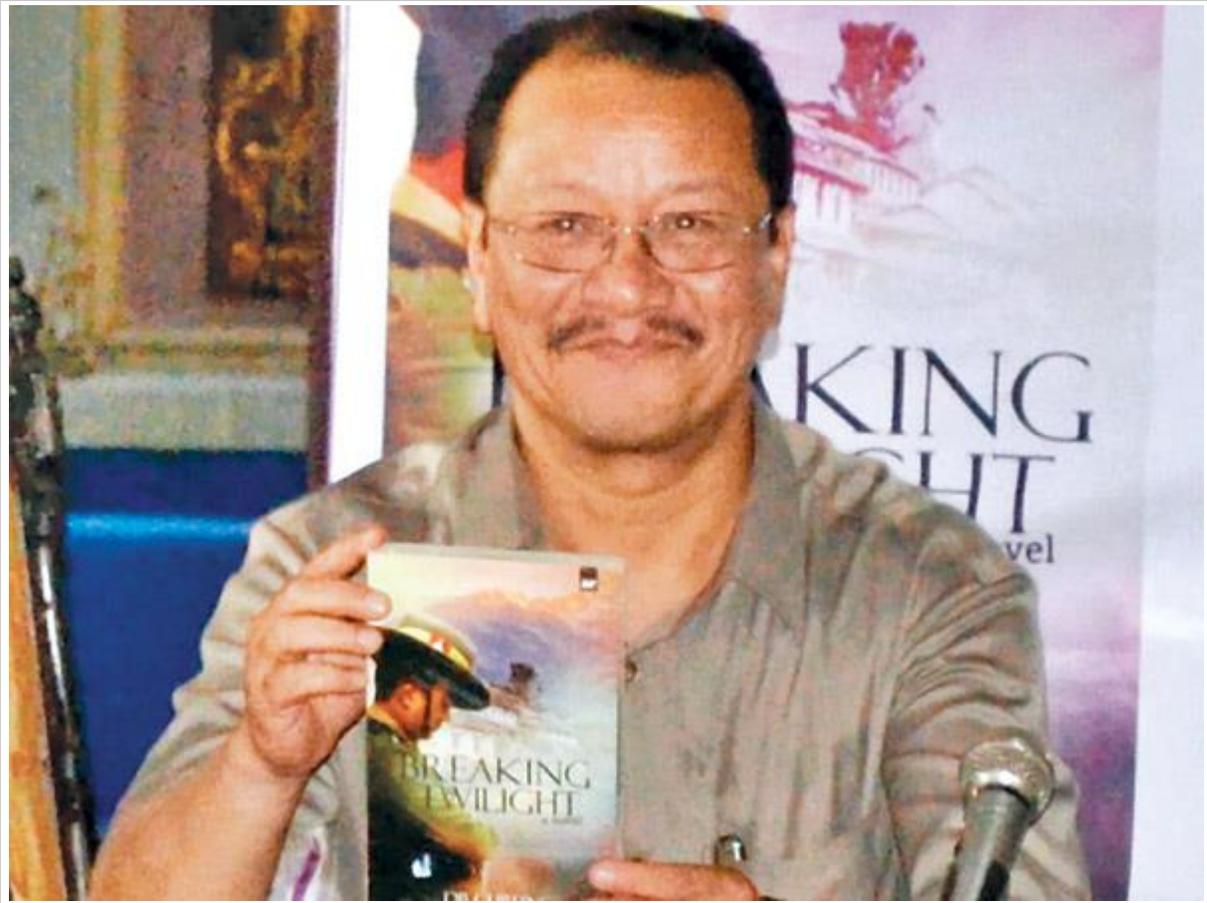


Kathmandu Post Report: DB Gurung



KATHMANDU, MAY 22 - The miseries of war are laid bare in *Breaking Twilight*, the new book by Nepali author DB Gurung. Set within the context of the decade-long Maoist insurgency in the country, the story is told from the perspective of a young girl who finds herself in the thick of it all. *Breaking Twilight* was published by the New Delhi-based Mahaveer Publishers, and is said to be already striking a chord with Indian readers, an effect Gurung hopes to replicate in Nepal, now that the book has been released here too. The Post's Bivek Thapa talked to the writer about his new book and his writing in general. Excerpts:

War-time stories have picked up noticeably in Nepal's literary scene in recent years...Do you consider yourself part of that canon?

The Maoist insurgency marked a crucial segment in the history of our country. I guess it's only natural for writers to zoom in on that as a theme, because those years have had such a major impact on our culture and national consciousness. But I wouldn't say I'm part of that 'canon' as such, because I merely take inspiration from the insurgency-theme.

Tell us how *Breaking Twilight* came about?

Many years ago, I had bumped into this young girl, who happened to be a child bride. Aside from the physical repercussions of being forced into marriage at such a tender age, there was the mental trauma she had undergone, expected of such circumstances. I had her in mind when I was writing *Breaking Twilight*; I was trying to explore her story, her pain, through my fiction.

How does this new book compare to your previous work, 'Echoes of the Himalayas?'

Well, to start with, they have completely different themes. *Echoes* was more like an angry love letter to the rulers berating their disregard for Nepal's diversity, whether in terms of ethnicity, language, culture or religion. *Breaking Twilight*, on the other hand, is more mature in its approach, possibly reflecting my growing confidence as a writer.

What are your expectations from the new book?

This is a big deal for me. I've put my heart and soul into this project, and it's probably my greatest and most precious literary endeavour in the last 30 years.

What does your writing process entail?

I'd say it's a mix of pleasure and pain. Writing is extremely labourious. It takes up a lot of your time, and demands a great deal of patience and tolerance on your part. There's also a lot of self-loathing involved. At the end of the day, it's about giving the world something it doesn't know it needs. My objective is to pace myself; I put a trickle in a bucket each day, so that by the end of 365 days, the bucket is somewhat filled.

Do you consider your writing philosophical?

An artist spills the beans through his work, letting what he creates speak for his beliefs, his understanding of himself and the outside world, all that. And philosophical undercurrents are inevitable in such a process of expression, which is the case with my work. The story is happening on one level, but you also need to read between the lines.

Do you have any advice for those wanting to get published?

I think the trick is to just keep at it, whatever they're doing, over and over, until they acquire the ability to gauge their own work critically. Once you hear that voice inside you that tells you what not to write, you know you've made progress.