

**Indian Express**

# **Nepal Army, Maoists in face-off over recruitment**

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**Kathmandu:**

The repeated failure of Parliament to elect a new Prime Minister for a month has led to a situation in which the Nepal Army and Maoist combatants are inching towards confrontation.

Within 24 hours of the Nepal Army starting the process of filling up 3,400 vacancies, the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists (UCPN-M) responded by saying that it will be recruit at least 300 per cent more combatants in its 'People's Liberation Army'.

"As the Nepal Army is violating the restriction imposed under the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) against fresh recruitment, we are also going to start fresh recruitment in the PLA," Deputy Commandant of the PLA Baldev said on Tuesday.

The UCPN-M and other parties are polarised on the issue of integrating and rehabilitating around 19,000 Maoist combatants currently under supervision of the United Nations Mission to Nepal (UNMIN). While Maoists want to be integrated into the Nepal Army, other political parties as well as the Army are clear that only those who fulfil physical and academic qualifications and are willing to give up political affiliation can be absorbed.

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