

Ban Ki-moon reiterates concern over Nepal blockade

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United Nations: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has reiterated his concern over the obstruction of essential supplies on the Nepal-India border underlining the landlocked country's right to free transit, and called on all sides to lift the obstructions without further delay."

The Secretary-General indeed reiterates his concern over the obstruction of essential supplies on the Nepal-India border.

Acute shortages in fuel supplies continue to impede planned deliveries to earthquake-affected villages in Nepal," Ban's spokesman St phane Dujarric told reporters yesterday.

He said humanitarian organisations urgently require fuel to maintain operations and deliver food, warm clothing and shelter materials to high altitude areas that will soon be cut off by harsh winter weather.

"The Secretary-General underlines Nepal's right of free transit, as a landlocked nation as well as for humanitarian reasons, and calls on all sides to lift the obstructions without further delay," he said.

India yesterday said Nepal's "internal factors" were responsible for the blockade on the border.

The blockade began after Madhesi community who have cultural, linguistic and family ties to Indians living across the border began their protests over Nepal's Constitution.

They believe the new charter is flawed and discriminatory as it does not represent their interests.

The agitators have been picketing the Nepal-India border near Raxaul, from where 70 per cent of goods are transported to Nepal.

- PTI