



25 YEARS

HIS MAJESTY KING JIGME SINGYE WANGCHUCK

A KING

1974-1999



Kingdom of Bhutan



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## A KING FOR ALL TIMES

In June 1999 the people of Bhutan gather to rejoice in the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck

On 2 June 1999, the Kingdom of Bhutan celebrates the 25th anniversary of the reign of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan. During this momentous occasion the Bhutanese people will commemorate the outstanding achievements of His Majesty's reign and pay homage to him for his efforts in promoting their prosperity and happiness. His Majesty's enlightened and energetic leadership has won him the affection and respect of the people of Bhutan, as well as the admiration of the world. While Bhutan is perhaps no different from other kingdoms in

*His Majesty and his parents: His Late Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and the Queen Mother Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck.*



celebrating a beloved monarch, the reverence and loyalty that the Bhutanese people have for their King is rare, if not unique, in the world.

His Majesty the King is the only son of five children born to His Late Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and Queen Mother Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck. His birth on 11 November 1955 not only ensured an heir to the throne, but augured well for a bright and secure future for Bhutan. His education in both Buddhist and modern curricula began at the age, of seven. Later, he studied at St. Joseph's College in Darjeeling, India, and in London, where he experienced the life of an ordinary student. The lessons he learnt abroad were brought into harmony with everything he had learnt about Bhutanese tradition and culture during his childhood. The Crown Prince returned home in 1970 and attended the Ugyen Wangchuck Academy in Paro. This was his most formative period in learning the craft of leadership, as it was at this time that the Crown Prince acquired much knowledge from his beloved father. The Crown Prince soon became a highly effective leader by realizing his own potential as he was forced by circumstances to overcome great challenges.

In 1971, at the age of sixteen, the Crown Prince was appointed Chairman of the Planning Commission. The following year, he was invested with the symbolic rank of Tongsa Penlop. When His Late Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck passed away on 23 July 1972, Bhutan was on the threshold of a new era, even though politically it was in a delicate position, sandwiched between two of the world's leading powers. Though Bhutan is not a large kingdom, the throne of Bhutan is a most sensitive and demanding position.



## A King For All Times



His Majesty inherited a country with very little of the infrastructure that we today associate with a modern nation-state. The economy was still a subsistence one and for many, life was difficult. There were few hospitals and schools. Although road construction was underway, many parts- of Bhutan could only be reached via mule-tracks and footpaths. Communication facilities were lacking and telephones were almost non-existent.

Three days after the Crown Prince lost his father, he took the reins of the government and the nation. At the age of seventeen he was then the youngest monarch in the world. The Coronation ceremony, which drew a large gathering of international personalities to Thimphu, took place on 2 June 1974. Since taking the oath before the Golden Buddha in the grand hall of Tashichho Dzong, the King has led a life devoted completely to promoting the well-being of his people and safeguarding the interests of the nation. Just one year before his passing, His Late Majesty was heard to proclaim, "If I were to make a prayer, I would ask that during my son's reign the people of my country would be far more prosperous and happy than they are today." In the last two and a half decades, this wish has most certainly been fulfilled.

When His Majesty became King, he desired, as his father had before him, to open and modernize the country in a cautious manner. This was to be done by' developing industry, agriculture, hydro-electricity and other infrastructure so chat the standard of living of the people could be

improved. His Majesty also desired to foster a balanced society by promoting tradition, culture and the preservation of the environment.

The King's forefathers once fought historic battles that held the country together. Through his own efforts at international diplomacy, the young King was able to further enhance the sovereignty of the nation.

As a policy author and development strategist, he has steered the country firmly towards the national objectives of economic self-reliance, cultural promotion, regionally balanced development, environmental preservation, good governance, and decentralization. His Majesty is a very meticulous and hard-working man, with boundless energy and a seamless ability to transform his vision into reality. During royal audiences, people are invariably moved by his charisma and insight into and understanding of complex international issues.

*Tashichho Dzong, the site of the Coronation of His Majesty the King on 2 June 1974*





## A King For All Times



*Their Majesties on the occasion of the Royal Wedding on 31 October 1988. From left: Her Majesty Ashi Tshering Yangdön Wangchuck, Her Majesty Ashi Tshering Pem Wangchuck, His Majesty the King, Her Majesty Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck and Her Majesty Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck.*

The simplicity of His Majesty's personal life has amazed both Bhutanese and non-Bhutanese alike. His office is modest, like that of any ordinary civil servant. He lives in austere surroundings - a cluster of log cabins in a pine forest, euphemistically known as Samtenling Palace - and has rejected as extravagant a proposal by the National Assembly to construct a new building to serve as the Royal Palace.

In 1979 His Majesty the King married four sisters: Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, Ashi Tshering Pem Wangchuck, Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck and Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck. Their Majesties the Queens are the daughters of Yab Ugyen Dorji, a nobleman and descendant of both the mind and speech incarnations of Shabdrung, the founder of Bhutan. A private royal wedding ceremony was held discreetly in 1979, followed by a public ceremony on 31 October 1988. Their Majesties have five princes and five princesses. During the royal wedding it was

declared that the eldest prince, His Royal Highness Dasho Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck, presently a graduate student, would be heir to the throne.

His Majesty the King is widely travelled and has paid state visits to a number of countries, particularly while attending meetings of the Non-Aligned States and the South Asian Association of Regional Co-operation. His Majesty has often been invited to speak at international gatherings and functions, though unfortunately his busy - schedule and royal duties do not always allow him to accept.

His Majesty the King is a people's monarch in every sense: he is accessible to anyone who wants to petition him and scores of people from all around the country do just that, calling on His Majesty every week when he is in Tashichho Dzong.



## A King For All Times



*His Majesty celebrates DANTAN Day*

and needs. After such meetings, His Majesty and the Royal Family customarily eat with the people.

Over the last quarter of a century Bhutanese society has come to depend greatly on His Majesty's immense abilities of leadership.



Majesty introduced a programme of political change early in his reign in order to reform the system in a measured and cautious way. Programmes of both administrative and political decentralization were initiated as soon as His Majesty acceded to the throne. In 1981, District Development Committees consisting of elected members were established to decide on the development priorities of the individual districts. In 1991 the process was taken a step further with the establishment of Block Development Committees. These bodies work to promote the democratic processes by giving the responsibilities of decision making to officials at the grass-roots level. In 1998, His Majesty introduced a system whereby the National Assembly would elect a Council of Ministers by secret ballot. He delegated full executive powers to the Cabinet, and directed the National Assembly to devise a new system that would introduce a vote of confidence in the King.

His Majesty is one of those conscientious people who believes that service to the people comes before everything else. He regularly travels to each of the Kingdom's 20 districts, meeting with both people and their representatives, in order to discuss development priorities

The people and the National Assembly did not know what to expect of these major political changes. There were strong feelings against what was perceived to be uncharted political reform. The people wished His Majesty would remain as the head of the government as well as the state. But the Royal Edict was irrevocable and the changes were implemented.

His Majesty ceased to be the head of the government, although to the relief of the people, he has retained the challenging responsibilities of dealing with the sovereignty and security of the country.

While the Wangchuck Dynasty has only existed for some 92 years, the lineage of the monarchy can be traced back to Terton Pemalingpa, who lived 478 years ago, and the foundations of our Buddhist monarchy are deeply rooted in

history. Both the monarchy and the system of succession to the throne were legally established in 1907. According to the distinctly Bhutanese custom of the times, the great, great-grand father of the present King was elected the first hereditary King by consensus of a genja (an oath of allegiance) which was then stamped with the seals of all sections of Bhutanese society. In 1998, when His Majesty graciously renounced executive power and began a process towards 'self-constrained' monarchy, there was an overwhelming movement in the opposite direction to draw up another genja reinforcing the one invoked in 1907.



*His Majesty lends an ear to a student during a visit to Sarvang.*





## A King For All Times



*His Majesty serving the people on the occasion of the National Day in Mongar in 1980.*



*His Majesty discussing plans with members of a Block Development Committee.*



## A King For All Times



*His Majesty with Their Majesties the Queens. From left: Her Majesty Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, His Majesty the King, Her Majesty Ashi Tshering Pem Wangchuck, Her Majesty Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck and Her Majesty Ashi Tshering Yangdön Wangchuck*



*His Majesty with four princes and four princesses in 1991.*



*From left: Their Royal Highnesses Ashi Sonam Dechen Wangchuck, Ashi Chimi Yangzom Wangchuck, Ashi Dechen Yangzom Wangchuck, Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck.*



*HRH Dasho Ugyen Jigme Wangchuck and HRH Euphelma Choden Wangchuck in August 1997.*





## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES

Friends of Bhutan from all over the world  
recognize His Majesty's remarkable achievements of the last 25 years

### SENSITIVE MIND AND MODERN OUTLOOK

*HE Mr I.K Gujral, MP*

*Former Prime Minister of India*

*Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee*

In the contemporary world of changing political systems, it is not often that one comes across a personality like His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan whose sensitive mind and modern outlook sustains the unity of the State and obtains the loyalty of his people.

I feel that the people of Bhutan are lucky to have His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck at the helm at a time of rapid change of nations and societies due to continuing strides of science, technology and multimedia. Bhutan is no longer Shangri-La. It is a nation modernizing itself under the direct leadership of a man of vision who is not tempted by the glitter of borrowed modernism but has the wisdom to find a judicious balance between the traditional and the modern. Under His Majesty's guidance, Bhutan has arrived from the edge of time to the mainstream of global change. While its visions of the future are riveted on the great heights of the mighty Himalayas, in whose bosom it nestles, its feet are firmly on the earth that has sustained the Kingdom since it was created as a unified political entity in the 17th century. There may be no country like Bhutan that so well combines change with stability, the new with the ancient. The credit goes to the King as well as the people of Bhutan. The people are gentle, honest and hard-working. Their King laces power with compassion and humility.

My personal acquaintance with the Kingdom of Bhutan goes back to the coronation of His Majesty. The golden occasion was celebrated with Bhutan's typical mingle of austerity and

appropriate extravaganza, the solemnity of the occasion made almost more poetic by the youth of the new King, and the dignity with which he ascended the throne. The year was 1974 and the new monarch was just 19 years of age. Since then I have had the pleasure of visiting Thimphu and other places several times and the honour of an abiding personal friendship with the King. I chose Thimphu as the first foreign capital to visit when I became Prime Minister of India in March, 1997.

*His Majesty with His Excellency I. K. Gujral,  
former Prime Minister of India, in 1997.*





## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES

During his reign, Bhutan has grown from almost a pastoral economy to a steadily modernizing one, while its monarch has grown from a visionary youth to a mature person who is still young and, happily, has many, many years to pilot his Kingdom through the inevitable turmoil of growth and modernization. His matured youth has acquired some of the wisdom that is native to the Himalayas. He has drawn from the eternal storehouse of wisdom of the ever-enduring teachings of Gautama Buddha. Mixing caution with dynamism, at times with radicalism, he has brought his Kingdom to a stage when it has a surplus budget; it finds most of development funds from its own resources; it has built and is still engaged in building institutions of the State as the habitat of a people on the move from one milestone of growth and development to another; steadily widening its horizons in education, health and freedom from want as well as political, economic and social development.

I have watched with admiration how the King of Bhutan has navigated the shoals of development. Bhutan is the stablest country in South Asia and in much of the wider world. He has not allowed Bhutan's lavish wealth of forests to be ravished in the name of development. He has not allowed the fresh air and pure water of the rivers and rivulets flowing down from the Himalayas to be spoiled in the name of tourism. The big power plant at Chukha and the bigger one that is being built at Tala, both with India's co-operation, provide enough electricity for Bhutan's confident strides forward in the new millennium.

King Jigme Singye Wangchuck has crafted a process of democratization on Bhutan's own cultural and civilizational tracks. From the village to the district to the national level, Bhutan is governed by elected representatives of its own people. It is they who determine the priorities of development. Never colonized by the British, Bhutan has not tried to graft a foreign political model on its rocky and at the same time green pastures. Last year, the King delegated all executive power to the cabinet, and much against its will, persuaded the National Assembly to put before the people for a whole year's debate a royal Kasho which makes it obligatory for the



*His Majesty with Rajiv Gandhi, the late Prime Minister of India, in 1985*

Parliament to express, in total freedom, its confidence in the monarch himself.

If the vote of confidence does not pass, the monarch will step down in favour of the Crown Prince. Bhutan, then, is building its own democracy in accordance with its own design, with its own characteristics.

Bhutan is India's closest neighbour, friend and ally. Its foreign policy is anchored on non-alignment. It has been playing an important role in SAARC since the creation of the regional body. Bhutan has long borders with Asia's two largest countries, India and China. Both borders have remained peaceful and tranquil.

I began by saying that the people of Bhutan are fortunate in having as their monarch a man who has attributes of Plato's philosopher-King. Let me end by saying that India is fortunate in having Bhutan and its young, dynamic, wise and progressive King as its closest neighbour and friend.

I wish His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck a very long and active life engaged in one of the most fruitful models of political and social engineering of our time.



## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES



*His Majesty with Crown Prince Naruhito of Japan in 1987*

### A THOROUGHLY PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

*Ms Mieko Nishimizu,  
Vice President, South Asia Region,  
World Bank*

It is rare to find a nation, today or in the history of our globe, whose people share a clear and dynamic vision rooted in their cultural heritage and common values. It is even rarer to encounter a nation which, by the strength of her conviction, initiates a new paradigm for the transformation of its society - sometimes called "development" - that challenges the world to reconsider established methods of measuring change. This unique nation is the Kingdom of Bhutan, and the ultimate source of its uniqueness rests singularly in the leadership of His Majesty.

I shall never forget October 27, 1997. On that day, I received the honour of an audience with His Majesty. It was on that day that I began to think of "development" and the "development process" with an entirely different mindset. I ceased to think of Gross National Product, and other such concepts, as appropriate measures of development. I began to think of development as the transformation of a society, by the society, for the society. I began to think of the development process as a constant process of change, wherein people of a society choose to gain more control over their own destiny, enrich their lives by widening their horizons, reduce the afflictions caused by poverty, and improve the quality of life.

I understood a peaceful equilibrium of this perpetual process, when people of a society embrace the very fact that the only constancy in life is change. I can recall as vividly as if it were only a moment ago when this "thunder" struck me during the audience. Stepping out into the sun-drenched courtyard of Tashichho Dzong afterwards, an ancient Chinese poem came floating across my mind:

*With the best of leaders, When the work is done,  
The project completed,  
The people all say "We did it ourselves."  
(Tao Te Ching)*

The World Bank has been invited to be a partner in Bhutan's own strategic framework of development. This is a privilege my colleagues and I cherish. It is also a challenge that both humbles and energizes us. We honour Bhutan's living and dynamic strategic framework that is based on a long-term vision of her own; that has identified structural barriers for her transformation; that has selected those who can serve as true catalysts for change and that is founded on a participatory process amongst the people to reach down deeply into the society in creating, revising, adopting and realizing their shared dream.

In joining the people of Bhutan to celebrate the Silver jubilee of the reign of His Majesty the King Jigme Singye Wankchuck, I wish to repeat the very words that spoke my heart-felt sentiment on that memorable day that transformed me as a "development" banker.

"The people of Bhutan are most fortunate to have Your Majesty as their Sovereign King."

### A POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT FAVOURABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT

*Mr E. Werner Kulling,  
Secretary General,  
Helvetas, Switzerland*

It has only been four decades since the Kingdom of Bhutan stepped out of its isolation. Since then, with truly remarkable speed, political and social development has taken place. All this would not have been possible, had "Druk Yul" and its



## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES

engaging population nor had the fortune to be led with great dignity, wisdom and prudence, towards a modern future by a succession of four extraordinary monarchs.

The first 25 years of the reign of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck have been characterized by his service to the people and his vision of "Gross National Happiness". His reign has also been characterized by a respect for human dignity, protection of the environment, a programme of carefully opening the country while preserving its neutrality, the prudent promotion of economic growth, adherence to good governance, avoidance of corruption and the gradual and cautious introduction of decentralization. Helvetas is grateful to be able to work in a country which offers such a favourable development and political environment, quite above the norm of many other countries in which we are active. The people of Switzerland pay homage to His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, and express their great respect for his personality. They congratulate him on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his Coronation, accompanied by heartfelt gratitude for his outstanding contributions and co-operation with the Swiss in the Kingdom of Bhutan. Tashi defek!

### **PRESERVING THE SPIRIT VITAL TO THE NATION**

*Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, GCMG,  
House of Lords,  
President, Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom*

On behalf of the many friends of Bhutan in the United Kingdom, and especially the members of the Bhutan Society, it is a great pleasure to record our warmest congratulations on the important occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Coronation of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

These have been 25 significant years in the life of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Throughout, His Majesty the King has provided wise and thoughtful leadership reinforced by his wholehearted commitment to the country, its people, its development and its welfare.



*His Majesty the King welcomes His Majesty King Birenda Bir Bikram Shah Dev and Queen Aishwarya Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah of Nepal to Bhutan in 1988.*

Those of us who look with friendship at Bhutan from more distant countries have watched with admiration what the Kingdom has achieved over those 25 years. Managing relationships with its near neighbours so as to emerge from previous isolation without compromising integrity. Steady development going hand-in-hand with maintaining and nurturing traditional values, so that those very impressive students from Bhutan who come to our country combine a thirst for knowledge with confidence and pride in their own culture. Active development by His Majesty of a new style of political leadership in which participation is steadily broadened and planning development is becoming increasingly rooted in the needs and aspirations of ordinary citizens at the village level. All this we see and admire.

I first had the pleasure of visiting Bhutan more than 25 years ago. Much has changed and developed since then. Much that is vital to the spirit of the nation has been preserved and strengthened.

As we enter the new millennium, it is inevitable that there will be more changes and new challenges. With the past 25 years having shown what has been achieved by the wise and



## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES



*His Majesty with UN Secretary General Perez De Cuellar in 1989.*

enlightened leadership of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, Bhutan can be confident of facing new challenges with vigour and determination.

On this auspicious occasion we, the friends of Bhutan in the United Kingdom, wish His Majesty and the people of Bhutan a bright and prosperous future.

### A STAR ON THE ASIAN STAGE

Gisela Bonn (1996),  
Cologne, Germany

(condensed and translated by Reinhard Wolf,  
Thimphu)

I have followed the fortunes of King Jigme Singye Wangchuck since 1972. There are persons in whose life a whole age is condensed. They appear at the troubled seams of cultures and epochs and make history. One of those persons is Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the young King of the Himalayan country of Bhutan. Quiet and unassuming, without beating the drum of propaganda, he has become a star on the Asian stage.

His successful performance during the summit of the Non-Aligned States in March 1983 in New Delhi was not his political debut, but a breakthrough, which does not happen every day. What is valid for actors may also be valid for politicians, presidents and kings: intelligence and knowledge, ideas and opinion become more credible if they are presented by a personality who is good-looking and endowed with charisma. The young King has both and he additionally has several things not

acquired by learning alone: self-confidence, natural dignity, calmness and persuasive power.

If the people of the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, often called Shangri-La, the last paradise, have a message for us, then it is one of harmony of the material world with the spiritual world, a concept still believe by the people here in the mountains. The young King has made himself a spokesperson for this.

### A MAJESTIC STEP

*Mr Pieter Lammers,  
Director, Foundation Ecooperation,  
the Netherlands*

During my visits to Bhutan, on several occasions, I had the privilege of having audiences with His Majesty the King. In long and very open discussions, His Majesty explained the dilemmas and opportunities that Bhutan faces. He introduced the concept of Gross National Happiness as far back as the early eighties. During these audiences, I really began to understand what his aspirations for his country and people were. His Majesty strongly appreciates the value of history and tradition, but does not cling to the past. He recognizes the merits of development and modernization, but does not idealize their possibilities and has a very keen eye for the dangers. Again, I feel very privileged to have shared his wisdom.

*His Majesty and the Amir of Kuwait in 1990.*





## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES

Bhutan has been going through tremendous changes in the past 25 years, and it looks like the rate of change in the next 25 years will be even greater. I do hope with all my heart that the leaders and the people Of Bhutan will maintain their wisdom to find a middle path between modernization and tradition. As a "face developer" Bhutan can make use of all the lessons learned by other peoples and countries.

Bhutan has been blessed with the leadership of a monarch who has led his country in a historically very short time from feudal isolation into the modern world. Participation and democracy have been his leading principles: not just for the people, but always by the people. A majestic step in this process of democratization was taken in 1998, when His Majesty voluntarily gave up his role in the day to day governing of the country, as a modern head of state should.

I hope that the people of Bhutan and their elected representatives will continue to make use of His Majesty's great wisdom.

### DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

*Peter Nicholas (World Bank Economist)  
and Colleen Nicholas,  
Washington D.C.*

His Majesty's unique and courageous approach to development is a great gift not only to his people, but to the world. Through his leadership and his own example, His Majesty has shown the true

meaning of service to one's country. As a visitor, one is heartened by the -deep sense of commitment to Tsa-Wa-Sum that one encounters at every turn. Officials at all levels are dedicated, thoughtful, and hard-working, but above all they are manifestly working for their King and country rather than for themselves.

In too many cases elsewhere officials have assumed that they know best, or have seen government service as a route to their own personal enrichment. In Bhutan, His Majesty's regular visits to each dzongkhag, and the open meetings he holds there, have inspired a genuinely participatory approach to development. In other countries, roads, irrigation canals, or schools may be built where government officials think they should go; in Bhutan the Royal Government consults the people at every stage, from the preparation of the Five Year Plans through programme design to individual project implementation.

At the same time His Majesty has ensured that development does not destroy more than it creates. He has emphasized the continuation of a living culture, rather than merely trying to preserve it in museums, or as an architecture that must be protected rather than enriched because the skills to do so are lost. The Rigney School and Institute, the Traditional Medicine Hospitals, the National Library, the Painting School, and now the Centre for Bhutan Studies are all contributing to a living and vibrant culture.



*His Majesty with fellow leaders of SAARC member nations. From left: HE President Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, HE President Maumoom Abdul Gayoom of Maldives, HE President Ramasingh Premadasa of Sri Lanka, HE Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh, HE the President of Bangladesh, His Majesty the King, HE Prime Minister Narasimba Rao Of India and HE Prime Minister G.P. Koirala of Nepal*



## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES

His Majesty's commitment to Gross National Happiness is now known and admired around the world, and there is no surer sign that he is on the right track than that of people "voting with their feet". Unlike very many other developing countries, the vast majority of Bhutanese who study abroad choose to return to Bhutan, not because they could not find higher paying jobs in the West, but because they love their country and their King.

### 25 YEARS: A BENCHMARK

*Dr Brian Shaw,  
Honorary Research Fellow,  
Hongkong University*

The duties of any monarch are arduous, especially so in a community moving from an individualistic to a more interdependent form of endeavour. The past 25 years of rule by the Fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, represents a full quarter of the tenure of the monarchical institution that reaches its first centenary in eight and a half years time. Through his personal example of unswerving and public dedication to enhance the interests of the nation, His Majesty has been faithful to the dreams and hopes of his late revered father, and has

enormously enhanced the institution of monarchy as a basis for stability.

Since 1907, and particularly since the time of the Third King, the principal concerns of Bhutan's leaders has been to ensure the sovereignty and security of the country, to improve the quality of life in Bhutan, and to implement a dream for the future of this country which itself is subject to constant reassessment as each piece of the dream is realized.

The key to the future development of the unfolding and strengthening of Bhutan's unique identity is the further enhancement of a sense of personal responsibility by each citizen and of the collective responsibility of each particular community, and of the country as a whole for the future of the society and indeed for the circumstances of daily life.

If we quite rightly speak of the strong moral authority and personal example of the person of the monarch, this moral authority may further evolve to take on the characteristics of the monarchy's reserve power, as both the common people themselves and those responsible for the daily governance of the country increasingly take on the responsibilities for shaping the future.

*His Majesty and the Amir of Bahrain in 1990.*





## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES



*His Majesty the King and HRH the Prince of Wales in 1998.*

How to encourage this down to the household level is a permanent task of the country's most forward-looking and selfless citizens.

It is a privilege and an honour to link with the citizens and friends of Bhutan on this felicitous occasion to offer tashi delek, and long life to His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

### EMBARKING ON A UNIQUE COURSE

*Robert J. van Schaik,  
Honorary Consul of Bhutan in the Netherlands,  
And former Dutch Ambassador to the UN*

Bhutan's development model is interesting in three ways. First, it was less than forty years ago that Bhutan embarked on a process of planned development. The country, therefore, could learn from the errors other countries had made. In particular, it drew the lesson from experiences elsewhere that development should be a gradual process and that development assistance can only be used effectively if natural resources are

*His Majesty the King with King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden in 1994*



preserved and balanced sustainable development is pursued.

Second, Bhutan is aware of its unique identity, the special qualities of its culture, as well as of its religious and other traditions. Indeed, without these special characteristics, the country, small as it is, might even not have continued to exist. It realizes that modernization - the twin brother of development - should never become a substitute for the country's cultural heritage, squeezing out the spiritual wealth that makes the country unique.

Third, these last decades have been characterized by what is called "globalization". Even if the temptation may be great to protect the people and culture from the influences of the modern world, globalization is gaining ground, knocking on people's doors in all corners of the world. In particular for a small country such as Bhutan, it is a great challenge to manoeuvre between the Scylla of a hasty course towards development, risking to destroy its individuality, and the Charybdis of stagnation and retrenchment, risking the shrinkage of Bhutan's culture into a folkloristic phenomenon.

What makes the reign of His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck unique is that, in the footsteps of his father, His Late Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, His Majesty, through wise leadership, clearly led the country to the forefront of the modern age. Whilst moving towards the outside world, Bhutan asks from the world that it be allowed to maintain its identity.

The need for decentralization is a theme to which His Majesty attaches great importance. I remember vividly a substantive discussion with His Majesty on this topic. Last year's important constitutional change, leading to the delegation of decisions and other functions to the level of Ministers and the Assembly, as well to the district and local levels, appears to herald an era of more modern, pluralistic management.

Humility is characteristic of the Bhutanese mind, as moulded by Buddhism throughout the ages. As a foreigner shaped by another cultural background and other traditions, it ill behoves me to pass a judgement on Bhutan's achievements which goes beyond the words I have just written. Let it





## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES



*His Majesty the King and Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn of Thailand in 1991.*

therefore suffice to say that, although not a Bhutanese, I myself feel the inspiration of the leadership of a man who 25 years ago embarked on a unique course that had not been charted before.

### **AN OPTIMUM BALANCE**

*Akiko Naito-Yuge,*

*Former Resident Representative of the UNDP in Bhutan;*

*Presently Professor, Department of Global and Inter-Cultural Studies, Ferris University, Japan*

On the auspicious and special occasion of the Silver jubilee of the Coronation of His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan, I wish to convey my heartfelt congratulations and felicitations.

On this Day, I would like to pay my deepest respects to His Majesty the King for his profound vision and dynamic leadership that have resulted in Bhutan's most remarkable success in national development over the last quarter of a century. His Majesty's statement that Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product reflects the clear precedence placed on the happiness of people over economic prosperity in the national development process. Impressively, Bhutan has maintained an optimum balance between sustained economic growth, Sustainable human development and improvement in the quality of life of its People, preservation of their cultural heritage, and preservation of the environment.

I truly feel privileged to have been given an opportunity to spend four and a half years of my life in Bhutan while associated with development work. As Bhutan builds on past accomplishments and proceeds with further development, many new challenges lay ahead. With its sound policies and judicious approach, I am certain that Bhutan will not only enter the new millennium with a great stride but will steadily progress on its path towards sustainable human development based on a clear vision and self-confidence.

On the Silver jubilee of the Coronation, I sincerely pray for the long reign, good health, peace, happiness, and prosperity of His Majesty the King of Bhutan. May peace and happiness prevail for other members of the Royal Family, all people in Bhutan, and the peoples of the world.

### **A TRIBUTE TO A WISE SOVEREIGN**

*His Eminence Sogyal Rinpoche,*

*Buddhist spiritual master, philosopher and writer;  
Spiritual Director, Rigpa, London*

Nothing could be more striking than the pristine, haunting beauty of the landscape of Bhutan, or the atmosphere of peace and sacredness which pervades the land from end to end. Bhutan is a place blessed with an almost magical power to transform the mind, whenever I am there I feel as if transported into a pure realm. For the Kingdom of Bhutan is truly unique: it is the only independent Mahayana Buddhist country in the world. It has a great Buddhist heritage, stretching back uninterrupted over 1,300 years, and a legacy of more than 2,000 temples, monasteries, dzongs and sacred sites. Many of the greatest Buddhist saints, like Guru Padmasambhava and the omniscient Gyalwa Longchenpa, have blessed this land, and holy places such as Paro Kyichu Lhakhang and Bumthang Jambay Lhakhang still retain their original form, dating back to the 7th century.

In the Kingdom of Bhutan, the great living tradition of Buddhist practice thrives and the blessings still remain, unspoiled and quite undiminished. There exists a truly spiritual environment and foundation to life, so rare now in



## IMPRESSIONS AND TRIBUTES

a world that has largely lost its spiritual bearings. This is, I feel, a testimony to the judgement and wisdom of His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck. His family, the members of the Royal House of Bhutan, have been distinguished by their moving devotion to the teachings of Buddha, and the support they have given to the great Buddhist figures of our age, who have included my own masters. I think, for example, of the Queen Mother and her devoted support of His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. In recent times, Bhutan has played a role of singular significance in safeguarding the future of the teachings and practice of Buddhism.

In his wise rulership, I see His Majesty as treading in the footsteps of the legendary Buddhist monarchs of the past, from Ashoka onwards. With his deep concern for his people and their welfare, both spiritual and secular, he has demonstrated how Buddhist values can really guide the 'governance of a state. Through Bhutan's unique system of government, where monasteries are represented in both the National Assembly and the Upper House, it has become clear how, even today, spiritual and temporal can combine and prove a vitally effective system.

The last 25 years have been marked by remarkable progress in Bhutan, a steady improvement in the standard of living going hand-in-hand with a reconfirmation of the nation's identity, independence, and security. While still a developing country, Bhutan can boast a healthcare and education system which are free to all citizens. Yet development and progress have been pursued with the greatest care in order to avoid the ravages of unchecked material exploitation and the harmful aspects of modern influence. Balance has been the keynote, and His Majesty has shown that modernization is possible, while at the same time preserving intact all of Bhutan's age-old traditions.

One domain in which Bhutan has become a world leader is conservation of the environment. With 72 per cent of the country covered with forests, and with some of the rarest and most beautiful plants in the world, Bhutan stands out as a country where the people share a precise understanding of the crucial importance of their relationship with nature. Another sphere of excellence which must



*His Majesty with the PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.*

be saluted is Bhutan's exquisite tradition of sacred art, without question among the finest Buddhist art in the world. Today, the arcs in Bhutan are maintained with all their original verve and authenticity and are being faithfully passed down to future generations.

The last quarter of a century has seen a great Buddhist country guided with wise and steady hands. His Majesty has blended his own forward looking, innovative genius, and his dedication to his people, with a deep respect for the Buddhadharma and a knowledge of the far-reaching importance of spiritual culture. It is this which gives Bhutan its unique character. In a world made ever smaller by modern communications, Bhutan has a vital place in showing the world just what is possible, and how it can be done.

I congratulate His Majesty on his Silver Jubilee and on his achievements. I pray that he will rule for many, many years and so bring great benefit to the Dharma, the people of Bhutan and to the world.



## GLIMPSES OF CHANGE

Development has come slowly to Bhutan. Every change is measured for the good it will do for the nation before it is implemented.



*The Chukha hydro-electric dam, commissioned in 1987, produces electricity for both export and domestic consumption*



*Within this structure build in the traditional Bhutanese style, research for the Renewable Natural Resources Sector is conducted.*

a rate unequalled by many developing countries. The transformation of the economy has led to a rapid increase in per capita income up to an estimated figure of US\$645 in 1998 - one of the

From the near medieval conditions that existed at the start of the 1970s, Bhutan, under the reign of His Majesty, has successfully transformed itself into modern nation-state. The economy is long past the subsistence stage. In the past decade, it has grown at an annual rate of nearly seven per cent,

highest in South Asia. The key to this growth has been the harnessing of natural resource potential, especially the generating of hydroelectricity, not only for export but also for the domestic market.

Every sector of the Bhutanese economy has developed during the reign of His Majesty but perhaps none more so than the agricultural sector. His Majesty stressed the importance of protecting Bhutan's fragile ecosystem in particular when preparing strategies for agricultural development.

The share of the agriculture sector constituted 56 per cent of GDP in 1980 (the first year national income records were calculated). Even though its share decreased to 37 per cent in 1998; in absolute terms the contribution has increased substantially since 1974. The steady growth in the crop and livestock sectors is due to the introduction of



## GLIMPSES OF CHANGE



*Mechanical rice planting in Paro Valley: Imported agricultural equipment is sold to farmers at highly subsidized prices..*

research centres and farm Stores. Most of these facilities have been set up during the reign of His Majesty the King.

The development of transport and communication networks has transformed the country. Since 1974, a road network of 1,300 km has increased to nearly 3,400 km linking 19 dzongkhags, and making it possible to move freight and people with greater speed, safety and economy. In the same period about 300 suspension bridges were

higher-yield varieties of fruits, vegetables, rice and maize; more reliable irrigation; and more land being brought under cash crop cultivation. Impressive progress has been achieved in the output of export products such as apples, citrus and potatoes that find a market in neighbouring countries.



*Jersey bulls and Halfinger stallions are distributed to farmers to improve the breeding stock.*

To increase labour productivity among the farmers, imported farm machinery has been distributed at highly subsidized prices and local farming tools have been improved. Where the terrain permits, farm mechanization

has also introduced a new dimension to field work. The emphasis on livestock has increased the number of improved breeds. As a result of introducing artificial insemination for cattle, the number of improved and crossbred animals has increased. Crop, forestry and livestock development activities and services are delivered through a countrywide network of facilities which include crop and livestock extension centres, veterinary hospitals, beat and range offices,



*His Majesty the King participates in testing an improved type of plough.*

constructed, significantly reducing the journey time in rural areas. They bring many rural communities out of their isolation and make it possible for them to market their agricultural surpluses, and access essential services like schools and health centres. Bhutan is one of only three countries in Asia to have the digital communication network that was installed in the early 1990s. The number of telephone connections of less than 500 in 1974 have multiplied to over 9,300 today. The continuing expansion of digital communication will bring even herders within reach of a telephone in the near future.



## GLIMPSES OF CHANGE



*Druk Air's Dornier aircraft arrives at Paro Airport in 1983.*



*His Majesty the King confers with a group of women..*

The introduction of aviation services in 1983 immediately changed the reality of the once isolated Kingdom. The Druk Air service was upgraded from Dornier airplanes to BAe jet planes that can reach major international destinations in South and Southeast Asia. New routes have been inaugurated and frequency of flights has increased. Druk Air flew a record 38,968 passengers in 1998. The outside world came closer to our doorstep overnight. Bhutanese increasingly travel to destinations, both outside and inside the country, that could hardly be contemplated a decade ago. The two-week journey from Trashigang to Thimphu along the mule-track has now shrunk to two days.

The aviation services have helped, among other activities, to expand the tourism industry substantially. Tourist arrivals have increased from 287 in 1974 to 6,207 in 1998, generating a revenue of US\$7.9 million. Guided by His Majesty's wisdom that Bhutan should cater only to tourists who come here to experience its unspoilt environment and cultural heritage, it has followed

a successful approach based on low volume and high value. Largely due to this far-sighted policy, Bhutan has acquired a resonant and compelling international image as a culturally and environmentally rich country.

Bhutan's potential in hydropower has been exploited considerably during the reign of His Majesty. From 4 million units of electricity in 1974, it has reached nearly 1,800 million units in 1998. Around 75 per cent of the electricity produced is exported to India while the

remainder is used internally for domestic and industrial purposes. The development of hydropower potential has helped set up a number of natural resource-based industries. During His Majesty's reign, numerous industries involving raw materials such as dolomite, limestone, gypsum, coal and marble have been established. The large-scale industrial concerns that have developed include Bhutan Ferro-Alloys Limited, Bhutan Chemical and Carbide Limited and Penden Cement Authority.



*The Penden Cement Factory, opened in 1980, is fitted with filters to prevent air pollution.*



## GLIMPSES OF CHANGE



*Druk Air's BAE-146 service that was introduced in 1987.*

In 1974, about 70 villages and 17 towns had electricity. By 1998, the number of villages and towns with electricity had reached 375 and 39 respectively. Altogether, nearly 32,000 households have electricity as opposed to an insignificant number in 1974. Mini and micro-hydel projects have been established in many remote parts of the country. The provision of electricity for lighting and the introduction of smoke-less stoves have reduced the incidence of respiratory infections caused by smoke emission. Electrical lighting has also extended the number of working hours, which has led to increases in productivity.

Just as the economy has transformed and diversified within, there had also been transformation and diversification in the economic relations with the outside world. For many years India was Bhutan's only economic partner. Today, countries as far away as Germany and Japan are Bhutan's trading partners.

The progress recorded in the transformation and the diversification of the economy, and the development of physical infrastructure have been more than matched by progress in the social sectors. At the time of His Majesty's accession to the throne, health and educational infrastructure were extremely limited. In 1974, there were 56 poorly equipped health centres; the number has now shot up to 661, including 454 out-reach clinics which are situated in the remotest parts of the country. There are now 28 hospitals, 145 Basic Health Units, and 454 outreach clinics that deliver basic health care to 90 per cent of the nation's highly dispersed population. Doctors, health assistants, nurses, and trained Basic Health



*An indigenous hospital in Bumthang, where health services utilizing both Western and indigenous medicine are provided free of charge.*

Workers staff these facilities. Most villages contain trained Village Health Workers who attend to minor illnesses. Over 58 per cent of the rural population has access to safe water. An ambitious plan to supply cap water to all the rural communities by the end of 2000 is being implemented. These developments have made it possible to achieve remarkable improvements in the health of the population. Life expectancy at birth has increased to 66 years today from 46 years in 1974. The Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Rates have been reduced to 71 per 1,000 live births and 3.8 per 100,000 live births respectively. Immunization has been extended to 90 per cent of the nation's children and diseases such as smallpox, polio, neo-natal tetanus and diphtheria have virtually been eliminated. Health for All by the year 2000 is a realistic goal. To sustain the effective level of health services, an innovative financial mechanism - the Health Trust Fund - has also been launched.



## GLIMPSES OF CHANGE



*A satellite dish for digital telecommunication links remote parts of Bhutan and the outside world.*

Bhutan has witnessed a similarly spectacular progress in the education sector under the reign of His Majesty. In 1974, when His Majesty acceded to the throne, only 14,000 pupils were enrolled in school. There was no degree college. The number of educational institutes now include 243 primary and community schools, 44 junior high schools, 18 high schools and a range of other institutions that provide secondary and tertiary education; technical, managerial and vocational training. There are more than 100,000 children attending school today. The country has attained an enrolment rate of 72 per cent within a short span of 25 years. The country's literacy rate is now estimated to be about 54 per cent. While expanding educational services, the government has ensured that the education provided to the citizens is of international standards and at the same time relevant to the Bhutanese context. The rapid strides in the fields of education and human resource development have enlarged the nation's stock of trained human resources as well as



*His Majesty the King pays a visit to Students in Deothang in 1998.*



*His Majesty with the people of Paro during the Seventh Plan meeting.*

are now saved through the Provident Fund Scheme. Under this scheme, employees receive upon retirement the amount that they have contributed to the scheme during their working years, with a matching contribution from the government on top of the interest earned. Legislation to introduce a pension scheme is being considered.

reduced the need for Bhutan to resort to over-seas training.

As well as these social and economic infrastructures, the Royal Government has also paid considerable attention to the equity and welfare of its citizens. Education and health services are still provided free. Thousands of people from the private sector and official agencies alike have benefited from government funded scholarships to go abroad for further training and higher study. People who cannot be treated within the country are sent for

specialized medical care either in India or even further afield. A large section of the country's farmers have prospered through the provision of subsidised loans and other incentives handed out by the government. Many landless people have been given land by His Majesty the King.

Those who are employed in the civil service and corporations are given liberal allowances and benefits. Employees are entitled to 30 days of annual holiday and 10 days of casual leave. Working mothers are entitled to three months of maternity leave. Employees' retirement benefits



## GLIMPSES OF CHANGE

Modernization tends to undermine both culture and nature. However, under His Majesty's enlightened leadership, special measures have been taken to stem the pressure on culture and environment. He has stressed that our future sovereignty and security as a nation-state will continue to partly depend upon the articulation of our culture. Bhutan's culture continues to live in the minds of our young people, who retain a respect and commitment to the ideals, values and institutions that have given substantive and spiritual content to our path of development. A vibrant culture, which has evolved in response to a developing society, bears testimony to this effort.

A rich climate has been fostered for traditional scholarship, skills and crafts to flourish during the reign of His Majesty. The national language, arts and architecture, and monastic institutions have received vigorous support. A number of new meditation centres and *shedras* have also been established, besides an increasing enrolment in the monastic bodies based in the *dzongs*.

His Majesty has attached great importance to promoting Bhutan's pristine environment and rich bio-diversity. Consequently, Bhutan has acquired an international reputation as an environmentally exemplary nation, and a global hotspot for bio-diversity. Forest covers over 72 per cent of the country's total area, and 26 per cent of the country has been declared as national parks, nature reserves and wildlife sanctuaries; not only for the benefit of Bhutan, but for mankind. A range of micro-climates in Bhutan has enabled it to become home for a number of exotic and endemic species of plants and animals which are being protected. Bhutan's rich bio-diversity will have a significant role to play at the global level in maintaining the generic and pharmaceutical bases in the future. The Bhutan Trust Fund for the Environment, established in 1992, has become a model financial mechanism for environmental conservation.



*Sherubtse College where degree courses were introduced in 1983.*

There has been impressive progress in all fields. Bhutan's achievements would have been far less numerous without the dynamic, wise and enlightened leadership of His Majesty the King. On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of His Majesty's Coronation in 1974, it is not only an appropriate time to look ahead with optimism but also to look back and reflect on the tremendous progress Bhutan has made in raising the level of welfare and well-being of the people.

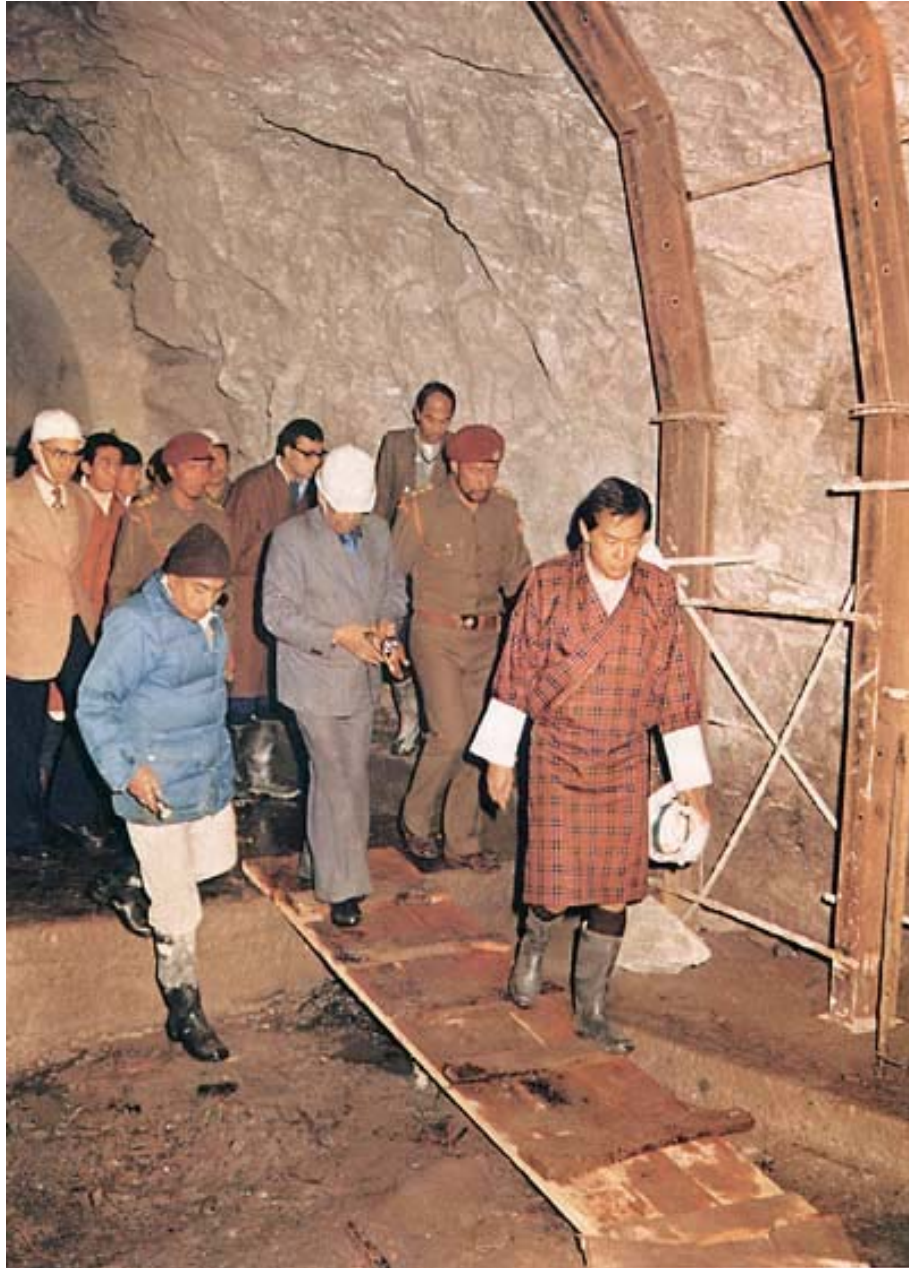
The monarchy will continue to hold its place as the most respected and hallowed of all Bhutanese institutions. The Kingdom and its people will look to His Majesty the King for further inspiration, leadership and wisdom.

**May His Majesty the King live long and continue to lead the people of Bhutan.**



*The National Resources Training Institute in Lobesa, established in 1992.*





*His Majesty inspecting Head Race Tunnel in 1986.*



## MILESTONES OF PROGRESS

	1974	1985	1998
<b>HEALTH</b>			
Life expectancy at birth			
• Male	n/a	45.8(a)	65.9 (b)
• Female	n/a	49.1(a)	66.1 (b)
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live birth)	n/a	142 (a)	70.7 (b)
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	n/a	39.1 (a)	39.9 (b)
Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)	n/a	19.3 (a)	9.0 (b)
Maternal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	n/a	7.7 (a)	3.8 (b)
Health coverage	n/a	50%	90 % (b)
<b>NUMBER OF HEALTH INSTITUTES</b>			
Hospitals	56	157	661
Hospitals	11 (c)	27	28
Indigenous hospitals	0	1	1
Indigenous units	0	4	11
Training institutes	0	1	3
Basic health units	0	65	145
Dispensaries	45	44	**
Malaria centres	0	15	19
Outreach clinics	0	0	454
Universal child immunization	n/a	n/a	90%
Rural water supply scheme	n/a	150	1,768
Rural population with access to piped water	14%	14%	58%
Rural population with access to latrine	n/a	n/a	80%
<b>EDUCATION</b>			
School enrolment	13,410	51,835	100,198 (d)
Enrolment rate	n/a	n/a	72%
Literacy rate	n/a	23%	54%



## MILESTONES OF PROGRESS

	1974	1985	1998
<b>NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES</b>	97	183	322
High schools	8(e)	8	18
Junior high schools	12	22	44
Primary schools (including community schools)	71(f)	145	243
Private schools	0	0	7
Degree colleges	0	1	1
Other institutes (including Sanskrit pathshalas)	6(g)	7	9
<b>TRANSPORT &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>			
Length of road (km)	1,332	1,755	3,376
Number of telephone exchanges	7	13	26
Number of telephone connections	480	1,880	9,314
Number of post offices	51(h)	54	106
Number of WT stations	24(i)	18	37
Number of suspension bridges	20	175	320
<b>RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES (PNR) SERVICES</b>			
RNR centres	0	0	35
Natural resources training institutes	0	0	1
RNR research centres	0	2	4
RNR research sub-stations	0	0	6
Soil and plant analytical laboratories	0	0	1
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>			
Agriculture extension centres	15	121	159
Agriculture seed production farms	9(j)	10	11
Plant protection centres	0	0	3
Farm mechanization centres	0	0	3
Farm mechanization training centres	0	1	1
National mushroom centres	0	1	1
Forestry training institutes	0	1	1
Nature study centres	0	0	1
Forest cover (including 8 per cent shrub)	n/a	n/a	72.50%
Protected area	n/a	n/a	26.23%



## MILESTONES OF PROGRESS

	1974	1983	1998
<b>POWER</b>			
Total electricity generation (million units)	4	40.5	1,791.64 (n)
Electricity generated by Chukha (million units)	n/a	n/a	1,780.64 (n)
Export of electricity from Chukha (million units)	n/a	n/a	1,339.10 (n)
Export of electricity from Chukha to India	n/a	n/a	75.2 % (n)
Number of villages with electricity	62 (1)	95	375 (m)
Number of towns with electricity	17 (1)	23	39 (m)
Number of households with electricity	n/a	9,750	31,639 (m)
<b>INCOME</b>			
GDP in million Nu	n/a	2,392	14,477 (o)
Per capita income in US\$	n/a	n/a	645 (o)
GDP growth	n/a	6.8%	6.7 % (p)
Share of agriculture to GDP	n/a	53%	36.4% (o)
Savings as percentage of GDP	n/a	n/a	35.8 % (o)
Investment as percentage of GDP	n/a	45%	48.1 % (o)
Inflation rate	n/a	4.4%	12.1 % (r)
Exports as percentage to GDP	n/a	11.4%	33 % (o)
Imports as percentage to GDP	n/a	43.5%	42.3 % (o)
Foreign exchange reserves in million US\$	n/a	20.6	252.22 (i+ii)
<b>PUBLIC FINANCE</b>			
Government revenue receipts in million Nu	n/a	233	3,094.1 (q)
Tax revenue in million Nu	n/a	135.9	1,436.9 (q)
Government expenditure in million Nu	n/a	1,217.7	7,296.2 (q)
Current	n/a	441.5	2,849.9 (q)
Capital	n/a	776.2	4,149.4 (q)
Net lending and repayments in million Nu	n/a	n/a	296.9 (q)

### NOTES ON MILESTONES OF PROGRESS

- (i) US\$188.77m; (ii) Rupees 2,694.70m or US\$63.45m (Exchange Base Rate US\$1 =Nu 42-47)
- (a) Demographic sample survey, 1984  
 (b) Health survey, 1994  
 (c) Includes 6 general hospitals, 4 leprosy hospitals and 1 mobile hospital \*\*Dispensaries upgraded to BHUs  
 (d) Figure as of June 1998, includes 1,842 students of the 54 non-formal education centers  
 (e) Includes 3 public schools and 5 central schools  
 (f) Includes 1 nursery school and 70 primary schools  
 (g) Includes 2 technical schools, 1 Rigney school, 1 fine arts centre, 1 school of Buddhist studies and 1 teacher training institute
- (h) Includes 2 general post offices, 37 departmental post offices and 12 branch offices  
 (i) Includes 8 hydrometeorological stations and 1 wireless station in Royal Bhutanese Embassy in Delhi  
 (j) Demonstration-cum-seed multiplication farms  
 (k) Veterinary dispensaries  
 (l) Figures pertain to 1977  
 (m) Figures pertain to June 1998  
 (n) Figures pertain to 1998 calendar year  
 (o) Figures pertain to 1997  
 (p) 8th Plan projection  
 (q) Figures pertain to approved budget for 1998-99  
 (r) Figure pertains to December 1998, (n/a) refers to not available



## EVENTS OVER 25 YEARS

### 1974

- National Assembly Secretariat established
- Chukha Hydro-electric Project Agree signed with India
- PemagaTshel Dzongkhag established
- First Bhutanese currency notes released Financial Manual released
- National Memorial Chorten consecrated Food Corporation of Bhutan established
- Royal Institute of Health Sciences established Thimphu General Hospital upgraded Tourism introduced
- State visits to India and Bangladesh Wildlife Act passed
- Handicrafts Development Corporation established
- Radio National Youth Association of Bhutan started
- Royal Bhutan Polytechnic established
- Teachers' Training Centre opened
- Jigme Dorji National Park declared
- Khaling Wildlife Sanctuary declared
- Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary declared

### 1975

- Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan established
- His Majesty goes on private visit to India
- Work on Chukha Hydro-electric Project begins
- Mechanized forest harvesting introduced

### 1976

- World Food Programme started in schools
- Provident Fund Scheme started
- 4th Five Year Plan launched
- His Majesty attends 5th Non-Aligned Summit in Colombo, Sri Lanka
- Junior College opened in Sherubtse Motor Vehicle Act passed
- Army Welfare Project established

### 1977

- Bhutan declared Smallpox Free Zone
- State visit to New Delhi

### 1978

- State visit to New Delhi
- Royal Bhutan Embassy established in New Delhi
- Partial Test Ban Treaty and Geneva Protocol of 1925 signed
- Land Act and Stamp Act passed
- Joined IFAD
- Cattle artificial insemination programme launched

### 1979

- UNDP Resident Representative Office in Bhutan opened
- The Alma Atta Declaration signed
- His Majesty attends the 6th Non-Aligned Summit in Havana, Cuba
- BBS established and SW transmission introduced
- Joined Asian Reinsurance Corporation (ARC)
- Customs Act passed
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) constructed

### 1980

- Royal Bhutan Embassy established in Dhaka
- Marriage Act, Inheritance Act, Livestock Act, Loan Act and Police Act passed
- Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry established
- Trade Agreement signed with Bangladesh
- Penden Cement Authority Ltd. Commissioned
- Countrywide equine crossbreeding with Halflinger stallions started
- Signed Postal Parcel Agreement & Universal Postal Convention
- Pre-investment survey of forest resources completed



## EVENTS OVER 25 YEARS

### 1981

- State visit to New Delhi
- 5th Five Year Plan launched
- District Development Committees established
- Joined IMF, World Bank, IDA & FAO
- National Women's Association of Bhutan formed
- Ratified Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- International Convention against raking of Hostages signed
- Warm-water fish farming introduced

### 1982

- Bhutan Board of Examination established
- State visit to New Delhi
- Joined WHO, UNESCO and Asian Development Bank
- Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC) established
- National Institute of Family Health established
- Prisoner's Act and Royal Monetary Act of Bhutan passed
- Joined SEARO and SACEP
- Signed the Final Act and the Law of the Sea Conventions

### 1983

- Comprehensive tax policy introduced
- Diplomatic relations established with Nepal and Kuwait
- Druk Air Dornier flights started
- His Majesty attends the 7th Non-Aligned Summit in New Delhi
- Joined UNIDO, Asia-Pacific Postal Union (APPU), South Asian Sports Federation and Olympic Council of Asia
- Teacher's Training Institute at Samtse upgraded to National Institute of Education and B.Ed. introduced
- Degree courses introduced at Sherubtse College
- Royal Monetary Authority established
- Bhutan Board Products Ltd. Commissioned

### 1984

- State visits to India and Bangladesh
- Diplomatic relations established with Maldives

### 1985

- Environmental Studies started in schools

- State visit to New Delhi
- His Majesty attends the 1st SAARC Summit in Dhaka
- State visit by the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi
- State visit by PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat
- Joined SAARC
- The Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva established
- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signed
- Diplomatic relations established with Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and Norway
- Statutes of the Centre for Science and Technology of the NAM countries and International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology signed
- Joined UNCTAD Board and ICIMOD a Citizenship Act passed
- Royal Audit Authority declared autonomous organization
- Bhutan Government Transport Service privatized

### 1986

- Community Schools started
- His Majesty attends 8th Non-Aligned Summit in Harare, Zimbabwe
- His Majesty attends the 2nd SAARC Summit in Bangalore, India
- Royal Bhutan Embassy established in Kuwait  
Diplomatic relations established with Japan and Finland
- Land Acquisition Act passed
- Civil Aviation Division established
- First convocation of Sherubtse College held
- His Holiness Tenzin Dhondrub becomes the 68th Je Khenpo of Bhutan
- New approach to Primary Education launched  
Royal Institute of Management established
- New approach to Primary Education launched  
Royal Institute of Management established
- Bhutan Polythene Company Ltd. Established
- Special Commission for Cultural Affairs established



## EVENTS OVER 25 YEARS

### 1987

- Group Insurance Scheme started
- His Majesty attends the 3rd SAARC Summit in Kathmandu, Nepal
- Visit by Prince Naruhito of Japan
- 6th Five Year Plan launched
- Chukha Dzongkhag established
- National Accounts estimated with GDP projected backwards to 1980
- Diplomatic relations established with South Korea and Sri Lanka
- Pasture Development Act passed
- Joined International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI)
- Druk Air BAe-146 jet services introduced
- Dzongkha Development Commission opened

### 1988

- Royal Wedding held in Punakha
- His Majesty the King and the Indian President R. Venkataraman inaugurate Chukha Power Project
- Bhutan Carbide and Chemicals Ltd. Commissioned
- His Majesty attends the 4th SAARC Summit in Islamabad, Pakistan
- State visit by Princess Galyani Vadhana of Thailand
- State visit by the King and the Queen of Nepal
- State visit by President Muhammad Ershad of Bangladesh
- Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Notification Act passed
- Joined ITU and Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP)
- SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism signed
- Bhutan Development Finance Corporation established
- Financial Manual revised
- Bhutan identified as a global hotspot
- Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry established

### 1989

- State visit to New Delhi
- Visit by UN Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar
- Diplomatic relations established with Austria
- His Majesty attends the funeral of Emperor Hirohito in Japan

- Bhutan Telecommunication Master Plan initiated
- His Majesty attends 9th Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade, Yugoslavia
- Explosives Act, Company Act and the Royal Advisory Council Act passed
- Joined International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
- National Driving Training School established

### 1990

- Goodwill state visits to Bahrain, Kuwait and India
- State visit to New Delhi
- His Holiness Geshey Geduen Rinchen becomes the 69th Je Khenpo of Bhutan
- His Majesty attends the 5th SAARC Summit in Male, Maldives
- His Majesty attends the Coronation Ceremony of Emperor Akihico of Japan at the Akasaka Imperial Palace in Tokyo
- Diplomatic relations established with Pakistan
- New Trade Agreement signed with India
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child signed
- Universal Child Immunization achieved
- Fire Arms and Ammunition Act passed
- Joined Office International des Epizooties (OIE )
- National Environment Commission established
- PGCE introduced in the National Institute of Education
- Wood Craft Centre established
- Bhutan Ferro-Alloys Ltd. Established
- General Auditing Rules and Regulations adopted
- International Direct Dialling services introduced
- Earth Satellite station installed



## EVENTS OVER 25 YEARS

### 1991

- Computerization of land record started
- His Majesty attends the funeral of Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi
- His Majesty attends the 6th SAARC Summit in Colombo, Sri Lanka
- His Majesty relinquishes the Chairmanship of Planning Commission
- Crown Prince of Thailand, Prince Vajiralongkorn visits Bhutan
- Diplomatic relations established with Thailand
- Block Development Committees established
- Visit by SAARC Chairman, President
- Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Maldives
- Enabling Act for Suppression of Terrorism and Extradition Act passed
- Joined Asian Institute of Transport Development
- Honours course introduced in Sherubtse College
- Tourism industry privatized
- Bhutan Broadcasting Service complex opened

### 1992

- Taxation policy revised
- Joined INTELSAT
- Diplomatic relations established with Bahrain 7th Five Year Plan launched
- Gasa and Trashigang Yangtse Dzongkhags established
- Bhutan Trust Fund for Environment established
- Visit by SAARC Chairman President Ranasinghe Premadasa of Sri Lanka
- Unit Trust of Bhutan established
- Financial Institutions Act and National Security Act passed
- Kuensel and Bhutan Broadcasting Service corporatized and declared autonomous
- Natural Resource Training Institute established
- Population education started in the schools

### 1993

- Royal Securities Exchange of Bhutan established
- State visit to New Delhi
- His Majesty attends the 7th SAARC Summit in Dhaka
- State visit by Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao
- Sustainable Development Treaty signed with the Netherlands
- Red scarf awarded to Dasho Gagey Lham, the first woman to receive it

- Rape Act and Plant Quarantine Act passed Rules and regulations of the Royal Advisory Council amended
- Druk Satair Corporation and Eastern Bhutan Coal Company Ltd. Established
- Airmail, DHL and express mail services introduced
- Toorsa Nature Reserve established
- Jow Durshing (Black Mountain) National Park established
- Thrumsemla National Park established
- Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary established
- Bomdeling Wildlife Sanctuary established

### 1994

- State visit by SAARC Chairperson, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh
- King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden visit Bhutan
- His Majesty attends the wedding of the Maharaja of Gwalior's son to the daughter of Maharaja of Baroda
- Joined WIPO
- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) signed
- Kurichu Power Project Agreement signed with India
- Domestic express mail service introduced
- Convention Centre opened
- Khaling Blind School upgraded to the National Institute for the Disabled

### 1995

- Thimphu City Corporation made autonomous
- His Majesty attends the 8th SAARC Summit in New Delhi
- Mines and Minerals Act and Forest and Nature Conservation Acts passed
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Convention on Biological Diversity signed
- Work on Kurichu Power Project started





## EVENTS OVER 25 YEARS

### 1996

- His Holiness Trulku Jigme Choedra becomes the 70th Je Khenpo of Bhutan
- Youth Guidance and Counselling Section established
- State visit to New Delhi
- Official visit by the Indian Foreign Minister, I.K. Gujrat
- Marriage Act and Loan Act amended, and Chathrim for National Wage Rate introduced
- Joined Asia Pacific Seed Association (APSA)
- Distance education started
- Agreement on the establishment of International Vaccine Institute (IVI) signed
- Tala Hydro-electric Project Agreement signed with India
- Dungsom Cement Project Agreement signed with India
- Basochhu Power Project Agreement signed with Austria
- Bhutan Postal Corporation Act Passed, and Post and Telegraph Division corporatized
- Post Graduate Course in Financial Management introduced at the Royal Institute of Management
- Companies Act passed

### 1997

- Royal Institute of Management opened
- Bank of Bhutan management nationalized
- State visit to New Delhi
- Their Imperial Highnesses, Prince and Princess Akishino of Japan visit Bhutan
- Royal Bhutan Embassy established in Bangkok
- Unit Trust of Bhutan becomes Bhutan National Bank
- State visit by Australian Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer
- His Majesty attends 9th SAARC Summit in Mate, Maldives
- 8th Five Year Plan launched
- Road Safety and Transport Act passed
- Joined Asian Broadcasting Union (ABU)
- Convention on Chemical Weapons signed
- State Trading Corporation of Bhutan privatized
- Civil works on Basochhu and Tala Power Projects started
- Trashhi Yangtse Rigney Institute commissioned
- Semtokha Rigney Institute upgraded to Institute of Language and Cultural Studies

### 1998

- State visit to New Delhi
- Visit by HRH Prince Charles of Wales
- Visit by former Prime Minister of Japan, Toshiki Kaifu
- Visit by Chairman of SAARC, President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Maldives
- Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck's book "Of Rainbows and Clouds" published by Serindia
- Joined the Constitution of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)
- New Timber Marketing Policy adopted
- Mail-order post introduced by Bhutan Post
- Health Trust Fund established
- Joined Asia-Pacific Network Information Centre
- His Majesty introduces election of Council of Ministers by the National Assembly by secret ballot
- His Majesty devolves full executive powers to the Council of Ministers.

### 1999

- Foundations of low-cost housing in Chang Bandu laid
- Civil and criminal procedures enacted
- TV introduced
- Internet and Intranet introduced
- New Terminal Complex at Paro International Airport inaugurated
- Municipal Act passed
- Centre for Bhutan Studies opened
- National Technical Training Authority established
- Cultural Trust Fund established
- Mithun artificial insemination launched
- HM the Queen Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck appointed UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador
- Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley becomes the first Chairman of the Council of Ministers.



## 25 YEARS A KING

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