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the world...
shouldn't we?*

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***Praying for the World
One Country at Time***



**Bhutan
May 15th, 2011**

Bhutan

Full Name

Kingdom of Bhutan

Capital

Thimphu

Location

Southern Asia, between China and India

Leadership

Head of government is Prime Minister Jigme THINLEY (since 9 April 2008)

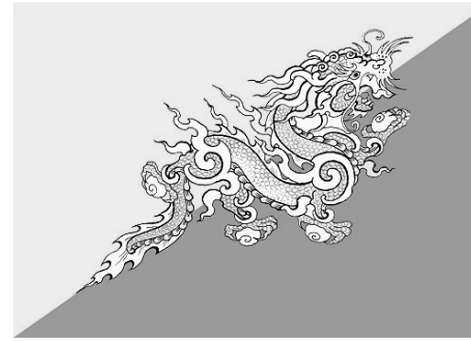
The Chief of State is King Jigme Khesar Namgyel WANGCHUCK (since 14 December 2006)

Overview

In 1865, Britain and Bhutan signed the Treaty of Sinchulu, under which Bhutan would receive an annual subsidy in exchange for ceding some border land to British India. Under British influence, a monarchy was set up in 1907; three years later, a treaty was signed whereby the British agreed not to interfere in Bhutanese internal affairs and Bhutan allowed Britain to direct its foreign affairs. This role was assumed by independent India after 1947. Two years later, a formal Indo-Bhutanese accord returned the areas of Bhutan annexed by the British, formalized the annual subsidies the country received, and defined India's responsibilities in defense and foreign relations. A refugee issue of over 100,000 Bhutanese in Nepal remains unresolved; 90% of the refugees are housed in seven United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) camps. In March 2005, King Jigme Singye WANGCHUCK unveiled the government's draft constitution - which would introduce major democratic reforms - and pledged to hold a national referendum for its approval. In December 2006, the King abdicated the throne to his son, Jigme Khesar Namgyel WANGCHUCK, in order to give him experience as head of state before the democratic transition. In early 2007, India and Bhutan renegotiated their treaty to allow Bhutan greater autonomy in conducting its foreign policy, although Thimphu continues to coordinate policy decisions in this area with New Delhi. In July 2007, seven ministers of Bhutan's ten-member cabinet resigned to join the political process, and the cabinet acted as a caretaker regime until democratic elections for seats to the country's first parliament were completed in March 2008. The king ratified the country's first constitution in July 2008.

Religion

Lamaistic Buddhist 75%, Indian- and Nepalese-influenced Hinduism 25%



Population

708,427

Economy

The economy, one of the world's smallest and least developed, is based on agriculture and forestry, which provide the main livelihood for more than 60% of the population. Agriculture consists largely of subsistence farming and animal husbandry. Rugged mountains dominate the terrain and make the building of roads and other infrastructure difficult and expensive. The economy is closely aligned with India's through strong trade and monetary links and dependence on India's financial assistance. The industrial sector is technologically backward, with most production of the cottage industry type. Most development projects, such as road construction, rely on Indian migrant labor. Model education, social, and environment programs are underway with support from multilateral development organizations. Each economic program takes into account the government's desire to protect the country's environment and cultural traditions. Hydropower exports to India have boosted Bhutan's overall growth. New hydropower projects will be the driving force behind Bhutan's ability to create employment and sustain growth in the coming years.

Prayer Concerns

Bhutan has the dubious distinction of being one of the world's highest per capita generators of refugees as one sixth of its citizens live in exile. This was the result of the government's planned policy for ethnic cleansing, on a pretext that southern Bhutanese raised their voices for equality and justice. Since 1990, over 106,000 Lhotsampas (Ethnic Nepalis from southern Bhutan) are made refugees after being forcibly evicted, forced to flee persecution and repression, or expelled after being coerced into signing 'voluntary emigration forms' (VMF).