



PM Modi graces 70th Birth Anniversary celebration of the Fourth King

Neten Dorji

Tens and thousands of Bhutanese people marked the 70th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth King with a grand celebration at Changlimithang Stadium, Thimphu yesterday.

The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, graced the special occasion as Guest of Honour.

Prime Minister Modi arrived in the country yesterday morning, and was received in a ceremonial Chipdrel procession at Changlimithang.

His Majesty the King, His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, members of the Royal Family, His Holiness the Je Khenpo, prime minister and cabinet ministers, Buddhist masters, members of international organisations, government officials, and people from across the country attended the ceremony. »Pg2

Bhutan celebrates 70th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo

Bhutan celebrated the 70th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo yesterday, which coincided this year with the holy Lhabab Duechen (Descending Day of Lord Buddha).

His Majesty the King Addressed the Nation from Changlimithang, offering tribute and

expressing the gratitude and love of the people of Bhutan for His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo.

The celebrations were a coming together of all of Bhutan - His Majesty and the Royal Family, the government, and over 27,000 people filling the stands, many of whom came to

the stadium as early as previous evening. Foreign Guests, including Ambassadors and heads of international organisations, as well as Buddhist masters from around the world, who are in Bhutan for the Global Peace Prayer Festival, joined the celebrations.

Translation of His Majesty's Address on the 70th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo

On this auspicious day, I am deeply happy that we are all gathered here at Changlimithang to pay tribute to His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck, to express our everlasting gratitude, and to pray for His Majesty's eternal well-being on His Majesty's 70th Birth Anniversary.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to His Majesty the Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, and Her Majesty Yum Kesang Choeden Wangchuck, for giving Bhutan our King of Destiny, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck. His Majesty is a blessing bestowed upon us, the people of

Bhutan, by our protective deities.

I thank the religious order, led by the Je Khenpo, for their prayers for the Kingdom, and the government and people of Bhutan, for having served His Majesty during his reign with the utmost loyalty and devotion.

»Pg10

PM Modi graces 70th Birth Anniversary celebration of the Fourth King

From Pg 1

Prime Minister Modi's presence highlighted the strategic and emotional ties between the two countries that share close security co-operation, cultural roots, and decades of economic partnership.

His Majesty the King said that the entire country is moved by Prime Minister Modi's presence for an occasion of such importance to the people of Bhutan and conveyed the heartfelt appreciation of all Bhutanese for the gesture. His Majesty also reaffirmed Bhutan's steadfast support and friendship for India and her people.

"Prime Minister Modi's presence here today, on the auspicious occasion of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo's 70th Birth Anniversary, has touched all our hearts. His visit is a powerful testament to the depth of friendship and mutual respect between our two nations," His Majesty said.

His Majesty said the relationship between India and Bhutan is of immense importance. "Both our countries have invested tremendous time, energy, foresight, and vision — but above all, have nurtured this bond with sensitivity, compassion, and resolve. Over the years, it has grown exponentially," His Majesty said. "From father to son, mother to daughter, it has become an intergenerational relationship — one we are deeply proud of, and one we will continue to value, nurture, and protect for the benefit of both nations."

His Majesty reaffirmed that while India has always stood firmly by Bhutan, the sentiment is mutual. "India has always supported Bhutan. Likewise, Bhutan stands firmly with India because we share a common destiny," said His Majesty.

His Majesty the King said that Bhutan has "an enormous amount of admiration" for Prime Minister Modi's leadership and affection for India. "We trust India," said His Majesty. "After this visit, we not only respect India; we love India, we love you, and we look forward to an even brighter shared future."

Addressing the gathering at Changlimithang, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the day holds great significance not only for Bhutan and the Royal Family but also for



First foreign visit after assuming office. Strengthened India-Bhutan ties.

Second visit: Enhanced cooperation in hydropower, trade, education, and connectivity.

Third visit: Reinforced partnership in economic, cultural, and strategic sectors.

Fourth Visit: Attended His Majesty the Fourth King's 70th Birth Anniversary celebrations.

all who cherish peace and harmony around the world.

"India and Bhutan have shared deep spiritual and cultural ties for centuries," Prime Minister Modi said. "It was India's and my personal commitment to be present on this important occasion."

Tribute to the Fourth Druk Gyalpo

Paying tribute to His Majesty the Fourth King, Prime Minister Modi described His Majesty as a perfect blend of wisdom, simplicity, courage, and selfless service.

"He assumed great responsibility at the young age of 16, nurturing his nation like a father and leading it with vision," Prime Minister Modi said. "From establishing democratic institutions to ensuring peace along the borders, His Majesty played a decisive role."

He praised the Fourth King's philosophy of Gross National Happiness as a global model showing that true nation-building goes beyond GDP to focus on human welfare.

"The foundation His Majesty laid continues to sustain and enrich our partnership," the Prime Minister said, extending his warmest wishes for His Majesty's health and long life.

Partnership in development and connectivity

Prime Minister Modi said

Bhutan and Bhutan share a relationship rooted not only in treaties but in "shared values, emotions, and progress."

Recalling his first foreign visit as Prime Minister in 2014 to Bhutan, he said: "That trip remains close to my heart. Today, under the leadership of His Majesty the King, Bhutan continues to reach new heights of progress and development."

Prime Minister Modi commended Bhutan's commitment to sustainable development and environmental stewardship, calling it an extraordinary achievement. "Bhutan is the world's first carbon-negative country. It produces 100 per cent of its electricity from renewable energy, setting an example for the entire world," he said.

The Prime Minister announced that Gelephu and Samtse will soon be connected to India's railway network, a move expected to widen market access for Bhutanese farmers and industries.

"Connectivity creates opportunity, and opportunity creates prosperity," he said.

India will establish an immigration checkpoint near Gelephu to facilitate travel and investment.

The Government of India supported Nu 100 billion for Bhutan's 13th Plan. This support extends across all sectors from agriculture and finance

to healthcare. India is also expanding digital cooperation, including Unified Payments Interface facilities, to ease transactions for citizens of both countries.

Youth, technology, and cultural exchanges

Prime Minister Modi applauded His Majesty the King's efforts to inspire Bhutanese youth through national service, innovation and technology. He noted growing collaboration in education, culture, skills training and space science, including a joint satellite project.

He pointed to recent cultural developments, including the inauguration of a Royal Bhutanese temple in Rajgir, and announced that India will provide land in Varanasi for a Bhutanese monastery and guesthouse.

Prayers for peace

Prime Minister Modi said that while the Global Peace Prayer Festival symbolises the blessings of Guru Padmasambhava and the teachings of Lord Buddha, it also reflects Bhutan's enduring values of compassion and harmony. "Saints and spiritual leaders from across the world have gathered here to pray for peace," he said. "Alongside them, 1.4 billion Indians are also praying for global peace."

Addressing all the Bud-

After this visit, we not only respect India; we love India, we love you, and we look forward to an even brighter shared future.

dhist leaders gathered at the stadium, His Majesty asked to offer special prayers for India - a nation with over 18 percent of the global population, one of the largest democracies of the world, which has set the best examples and made enormous contributions in science, technology, and other fields, and is an important nation in the world.

The prayers were for removing obstacles and paving the path forward for a bright future for India, and for Prime Minister Modi's vision and aspirations for his country and people to be fulfilled.

Prayers were also offered for those who lost their lives in a bomb attack in Delhi on November 10.

Following the event at Changlimithang, His Majesty the King met with Prime Minister Modi at Tashichhodzong, and held discussions on a wide range of areas.

Prime Minister Modi then joined His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Gyalt-suen to offer prayers before the sacred Buddha relics enshrined at the Grand Kuenrey of Tashichhodzong.

The sacred Buddha relics have been brought to Bhutan for exposition as a special gesture from India for the celebrations for His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo's 70th Birth Anniversary and the Global Peace Prayers.

His Majesty and Prime Minister Modi jointly inaugurated the 1,020 MW Punatsangchu-II Hydroelectric Project at Grand Kuenrey, in the presence of the sacred relics.