

Currencies	EXCHANGE RATE		TT	
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
USD	75.10	77.45	76.06	76.59
GBP	99.50	102.25	100.84	101.52
EUR	84.60	86.95	85.75	86.32
JPY (100)	65.95	67.85	66.87	67.35
AUD	53.50	54.95	54.21	54.57
SGD	54.85	56.40	55.59	56.00



03 National Order of Merit – Gold – conferred to Bhutan Red Cross Society

Your Week Begins Here!

NU. 10 | 12 PAGES | SUNDAY

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COVID-19 National

Case Recorded

2,656

Active: 15

Death: 3

RECOVERED: 2,638

Inside Story



BEAR team conferred with Druk Thuksey

>>> 05



Govt. working to trim down internet charges

>>> 08



Specialist Toeb Karma conferred with National Order of Merit – Gold

>>> 10



His Majesty The King Address to the Nation on the 114th National Day (His Majesty's Address on Page 11)

Corruption and incompetency must be snubbed: HM

LHAKPA TSHERING
Thimphu

Increasing accountability and reducing corruption through stronger enforcement of laws and regulations remains a serious concern as His Majesty the King addressed the nation at the 114th National Day celebrations on 17 December from Trashichho Dzong, Thimphu. To realize the national objectives, His Majesty the King commanded to be honest and truthful in holding underperforming officials and bureaucrats accountable and uncover corrupt public servants and embarrass them into not repeating the same offense by others.

Despite several efforts made in the past to reform and improve our governance, His Majesty said, Bhutan is yet to see tangible, meaningful improvements.

“Foreign experts and professionals have commented that our rules, regulations, laws and institutional procedures are among the best in the world. Yet we are not able to reap the benefits.” His Majesty continued, “Where have we gone wrong? Could it be due to our misplaced compassion by not holding people accountable, not removing incompetent people but instead tolerating and even rewarding underperformers?” “We know our country best. We are a compassionate and close-knit society. We hesitate from giving our honest views or taking bold actions, which might risk offending or displeasing others,” warned His Majesty.

“As a result, the strength of our national character, exemplified by courage and determination of our forefathers, has weakened; complacency has set in,

discipline has waned, and corruption is on the rise,” His Majesty said. “This has unfortunately given rise to a popular perception that two laws coexist in the same country. If we allow such practices to proliferate, we will become more vulnerable to even greater risks and dangers.” With the world changing quicker than ever before, His Majesty said, “All of us are aware that we are a tiny, land-locked and developing country with a small population and limited resources. As the world around us changes rapidly and the future becomes more uncertain, we are becoming more vulnerable.” His Majesty added, “What we need now, more than ever, is a corresponding degree of resolve and deter-

PM Modi of India conferred with Bhutan's highest civilian honour

KARMA CHIMI
Thimphu

The Order of The Druk Gyalpo, Ngadag Pelgi Khorlo, Bhutan's highest civilian recognition, was conferred to His Excellency Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India by His Majesty The King during the 114th National Day celebration on 17 December.

Presenting the honour, His Majesty said it is a mark of deep appreciation from the people of Bhutan for his leadership and personal efforts towards strengthening the exceptional relations between Bhutan and India.

His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi further strengthened the great tradition of exemplary friendship and cooperation between Bhutan and India by building upon a legacy founded over 50 years ago.

His Majesty said: “The importance he attaches to the close and special relations between our two counties was evident in his choice to choose Bhutan for his first international visit as Prime Minister in 2014, and the continued gestures of support, including initiating new partnerships in space technology.”

And, as the world faced the difficult challenge of COVID-19 pandemic, His Majesty said PM Modi led his nation in extending support to many countries including Bhutan by providing, amongst others, 500,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines. This provided immense impetus for the successful conduct of nationwide vaccination.

“The people of Bhutan deeply appreciate this extraordinary gesture, which reflects the noble spirit of selfless generosity of the people of India. This award honors Bhutan's special bond with India, who is our closest neighbor and

READ MORE ON PAGE **04**

READ MORE ON PAGE **04**



CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 1

Corruption and incompetency must be snubbed: HM

mination for our national interest. The strength of our national character, courage, grit, and fortitude must define every aspect of our national endeavour.”

“I have witnessed the boldness, rigour, resolve and sternness that had defined the reign of His Majesty the Fourth King. Unfortunately, these qualities have deteriorated over the last fifteen years of my reign,” said His Majesty.

His Majesty said, “From now on, all of us must boldly embrace accountability as a measure of our service, should we falter, deviate, and err in the service of our country.”

His Majesty continued, “As King, I must first and foremost exemplify the ideal of accountability. I do not say these to trigger any alarm or anxiety. We are not too late in getting our priorities right, re-focusing our national

goals, and re-aligning our national priorities and strategies.”

“If the King, government and the people continue to work hand-in-hand with dedication, perseverance and fortitude, we still have every opportunity to further strengthen our country and achieve greater prosperity for our people.”

Laying a clear path on the future, His Majesty said, as underpinned in our age-old saying, “the golden yoke of secular laws,” accountability must henceforth become the cornerstone of governance.

His Majesty said, “We must correct those who deviate, be firm with those who do not deliver, replace those who are incompetent, and terminate those who underperform and have therefore become a liability to our system and nation.”

“We must not hesitate to

expose those who engage in corrupt practices, so that we send a strong signal to deter others from doing so,” His Majesty said.

His Majesty said these are part of a daily conversation among our people while expressing their concerns, hopes and aspirations. “Rather than leave these concerns and sentiments within the confines of their homes, I re-articulate them today as the King’s Command on this National Day.”

His Majesty commended the qualifications, competence, and commitment of the civil servants to serve our people. “As we work with the best of our civil servants and with foreign experts and professionals, we are learning new ideas every day and formulating fresh, clear, and bold strategies for our future.”

Dasho Dorji Gyeltshen coffered Druk Thuksey

The Druk Thuksey has been conferred to Dasho Dorji Gyeltshen in recognition of his exceptional services to the Nation by dedicating a lifetime of service as Zimpon to His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo by His Majesty The King at the National Day celebration at Tashichodzong on 17 December.

Dasho Dorji Gyeltshen was among the first men chosen to serve in the Royal Body Guards when it was established in 1963, he was. In 1964, he was selected to serve HRH Gyalsey Jigme Singye Wangchuck. He received the Red Kabney from His Majesty the Third Druk Gyalpo in 1972. He was appointed Trongsa Zimpon on the investiture of His Majesty as Trongsa Penlop, and was appointed Zimpon, a week prior to the His Majesty’s



Coronation in 1974. He served in that position until 2006.

During his 34 years of loyal and dedicated service, he instituted numerous measures to preserve and promote national culture and tradition, including imparting training, and writing a book on Driglam Namzha.

He coordinated and supervised national events

including National Day Celebrations and inaugural ceremonies of the National Assembly, as well as historic events including the Coronation of His Majesty The Fourth Druk Gyalpo, The Royal Wedding Ceremony in 1988, the Investiture ceremony of the Trongsa Penlop, and the Coronation Silver Jubilee Celebrations in 1999

CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 1

PM Modi of India conferred with Bhutan’s highest civilian honour



PM Modi’s Visit to Bhutan in August 2019.

friend,” His Majesty said, adding the honour will be presented personally to PM Modi in New Delhi.

The Foreign Minister Dr Tandi Dorji received the award and has been entrusted to deliver personally to PM Modi any time soon.

Responding to a tweet from the Prime Minister of Bhutan, PM Modi tweeted: “I am deeply touched by this warm gesture, and express my grateful thanks to His Majesty the King of Bhutan”

“I have been privileged to receive the utmost love and affection from our Bhutanese brother and sisters, and take this occasion to convey my greetings to all of them on the auspicious occasion of the National Day of Bhutan.” he said.

“India will always cherish Bhutan as one of its closest friends and neighbours, and we will continue to support Bhutan’s development journey in every possible way.”

PM Modi further said he admires Bhutan for its unique model of sustainable development and the deeply spiritual way of life. He said the successive Druk Gyalpos - Their Majesties the Kings - have given a unique identity to the Kingdom, and nurtured the special bond of neighbourly friendship that our nations share.

Prime Minister Modi has visited Bhutan twice in 2014 and 2019; both visits have contributed significantly to the growth of Bhutan- India relations into new areas of cooperation.