



## Indian community celebrates their 72nd Republic Day

**Sonam Penjor**

The 72nd Republic Day of India was celebrated on 26 January in a subdued yet dignified conduct at the Embassy of India, Thimphu, against the backdrop of the National Lockdown imposed in Bhutan due to COVID-19.

Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj hoisted their national flag which was followed by the national anthem at the India House Estate to mark the event.

During the celebration, the Ambassador read out President Ram Nath Kovind's address to the Nation. She spoke to gathered members of the Indian community about the vaccine Maitri initiative of the Government of India (GoI) through which India has gifted consignments of 'Made in India' COVID-19 vaccines to friendly neighbouring countries including Bhutan who was the first foreign country to receive the vaccine gifts.

The Indian President in his address to the nation on the eve of the 72th Republic day stated that this day has come to mean a lot to all Indians living within the country and abroad. "Seventy-one years ago, on this very day we the people of India adopted, enacted and gave to ourselves a unique Constitution. For all of us, then, this is the day to also pause and ponder over the core values that the Constitution pro-pounds."

He also stated that the values – Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity – outlined in the Preamble of their Constitution are sacred to all of them. Its abiding adherence is meant not only for those who are mandated to govern but for the people at large he said.

"It is not without reason that the wise men and women who framed the Constitution chose to place these four terms at the very beginning of the



*Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj hoisted tri colour national flag which was followed by the national anthem at the India House Estate.*

Constitution to build the foundation on which the edifice of our democracy rests. In fact, these were the values that guided our freedom struggle the Indian President said.

"Every Indian salutes our farmers, who have made our vast and populous country self-reliant in food-grains and dairy products."

Despite adversities of nature, numerous other challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic, the President said their farmers sustained the agricultural production and a grateful nation is fully committed to the welfare of their farmers.

Further, the President stated: "Just as our hard-working farmers ensure

food security for the country, the brave soldiers of the armed forces ensure security of our national boundaries amid severest conditions."

Highlighting the sacrifices made by the Indian soldiers the President said that from the freezing cold at Siachen and Galwan valley in Ladakh with temperatures as low

as minus 50 to 60 degree Celsius to the scorching heat in Jaisalmer with temperatures as high as 50 degree Celsius – on land, in the skies and at the vast coastal areas – their warriors are vigilant every moment. Every citizen feels proud about the bravery, patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice among their soldiers.

"By their contribution to food security, national security, protection against disease and disasters and to different areas of development, our scientists have strengthened our national endeavours.

From space to the farms, from educational institutions to hospitals, the community of scientists has enriched their life and work. "Our scientists have been working day and night for decoding the Coronavirus and they have succeeded in developing the vaccine in record time," President Ram Nath Kovind reiterated.

With this accomplishment, the President appreciated and said their scientists have added a glorious chapter of contribution to the well-being of humanity. He said our scientists, along with doctors, administrators and people from other walks of life, have made major contribution in containing the virus and keeping the fatality rate lower in our country, compared to that in developed countries.

Meanwhile, the Ambassador to Bhutan said that providing of 150,000 doses of the 'Made In India' vaccine by GoI to Bhutan was a testimony to the special relationship and uniquely close friendship between India and Bhutan.

"We can all take collective pride in the good work that is being done by India in Bhutan. Each one of you contributes to that, and I am deeply grateful for that invaluable support. Today, let us promise ourselves afresh to work with full soul, love, grace and dignity for our nation," added the Ambassador.