

# The week that was



## Samdrup Jongkhar

All 194 swab samples collected from RBP colony in Samdrup Jongkhar town tested negative for COVID-19 on the RT-PCR test.

Drukair will resume commercial passenger flights to India by mid-October as Bhutan and India signed Air Travel Bubble Agreement, last month. The arrangement allows operations of flights between the two countries under restrictive conditions as international flights remain suspended amid the pandemic.



Upon the Royal Command, the first phase of the seasonal influenza vaccination for this year will begin from Wednesday, next week. Six high-risk groups will be receiving the vaccination. The second phase which is for the rest of the population will start in November.

The Indian Embassy in Thimphu organised a special function this morning to mark the Grand Finale of the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Embassy in collaboration with different organisations in Bhutan organised many activities for the past two years to celebrate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. At the event today, prizes were awarded to the winners of various competitions held online.

Meanwhile, to conclude the celebrations, The Indian Council for Cultural Relations will host a Webinar titled Weaving Relations: Textile Traditions, tomorrow.





# Grand Finale of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi celebrated

COVID-19

By Karma Choden  
in Thimphu

A special function was organized by the Embassy of India in Thimphu to mark the Grand Finale of the Gandhi@150 celebrations concluding in his birth anniversary at the India House Auditorium in Thimphu on October 2, 2020.

The chief guest of the function was Lyonpo Sherub Gyeltshen, Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs. The function was also attended by Dasho Paljor J Dorji, Special Advisor to National Environment Commission of Bhutan, Mr. Arun Kapur, Founder-Director of the Royal Academy and Ms. Tshewang Pelden, Principal of National Institutes for Zorig Chusum, winners of the competition and their parents and other guests. The function started by lighting up the lamp by the chief guest followed by other special guests.

To mark the function, on September 2020, an art competition was launched by the Embassy of India along with the National Institute of Zorig Chusum of Bhutan where the participants were asked to showcase the correlation between Gandhiji's thoughts and the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The top 3 winners were awarded attractive prizes from the Embassy. All top 3 prize recipients were the students at the National Institute for Zorig Chusum.

First prize was backed by Rinchen Namgay who has created stunning sculpture of Gandhi and he was awarded a cash price of Rs.30, 000.

Second prize was backed by Tandin Tshering and he was awarded with a cash price of Rs.25, 000. His art was pointillism and water color on traditional arts. In his arts, there are 17 different size squares which comprises of the UN 17SDG goals which is extremely crucial to every country in the world, the Dharma Wheel which represents 8 auspicious signs of Buddhism, the 17 SDG and the four harmonious friends, the elephants trunk on Mahatma Gandhi and the tree. The third prize was backed by Tshering Nidup and he was awarded a cash price of Rs. 20, 000. His art shows Mahatma Gandhi and the UN sustainable development goals. Prizes were also awarded to other winners who won in various events which were organized online.

Ambassador of India to Bhutan, Ms. Ruchira Kamboj shared that they have been privileged to partner with Bhutan to celebrate the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. She said that through these past two years and into the Grand Finale of Gandhi@150, Bhutan has joined hands with them to commemorate the spirit and philosophy of the Mahatma.

According to the press release, the function was another occasion to spotlight and share Gandhiji's thoughts, philosophy and message in Bhutan. Gandhi's favorite and meaningful quotes were also shared by the special guests of the function.

On October 3, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations also hoisted a webinar titled Weaving Relations: Textile Traditions to conclude the Gandhi@150 birth anniversary celebrations and the chief guest was Her Majesty Ashi

Sangay Choden Wangchuck, the Royal Queen Mother of Bhutan.

Over the last two years, the Embassy of India had collaborated with different organizations of Bhutan to organize multifarious activities and events to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. While the most eye-catching of these were the installation and unveiling of the walking life-size statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the front lawns of the Chancery and the Khadi-Thagzo Textile Presentation held at the Royal Textile Academy on October 2019, there were others including the Mountain Bike race arranged by the Bhutan Olympic Committee, the Embassy of India and Project Dantak, a 'Satya Vaarta' by Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye, tree planting at the Kuenselphodrang Park on World Environment Day 2019, release of commemorative postage stamps on Mahatma Gandhi by Bhutan Post and of course, a stellar presentation of Gandhiji's formative bhajan 'Vaishnav Jan To' by the melodious Yangchen Drukpa, a Bhutanese youth.

The Embassy of India had hosted 'Gandhi Katha' by Dr. Shobana Radhakrishna, a well-known Gandhian scholar in July 2020. On September 30, an online audio-visual presentation on Mahatma Gandhi by Mr. Birad Rajaram Yajnik, renowned Gandhian and curator of the Digital Museums of Gandhiji in Hyderabad, Delhi, Johannesburg and Pietermatizburg was live streamed on Facebook LIVE which attracted a huge audience in Bhutan.

