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# Bhutan National Day Special

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## Progress and prosperity in a globalized world

**VETSOP NAMGYEL**

AMBASSADOR OF BHUTAN



The National Day of Bhutan is celebrated on Dec. 17. It was on this day in 1907 that the people of Bhutan, represented by district leaders, religious heads and the governors of the provinces, elected

Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck to become the first hereditary monarch of Bhutan.

The establishment of the monarchy heralded unprecedented peace, prosperity and development for Bhutan under the enlightened and farsighted leadership of the successive monarchs. A unique development model emphasizing “Gross National Happiness” brought socioeconomic progress while preserving the country’s pristine natural environment and strengthening its rich cul-

tural tradition and heritage.

As the country made good progress on its socioeconomic development and emerged as a responsible member of the international community, political reforms were introduced from the throne to return power back to the people. In 2008, Bhutan transitioned smoothly to a parliamentary system with a written constitution and became a constitutional democratic monarchy.

Our National Day is a chance to celebrate our unique journey. In 2023, Bhutan will graduate from being a least developed country to a middle income one. This is a major milestone in Bhutan’s development path. It stands as a proud testament to Bhutan’s achievements under the leadership of our visionary monarchs. We also have to thank our friends, well-wishers and long-standing development partners like India and Japan for their generous support for the socioeconomic progress of our country.

Our National Day is also an occasion for the people of Bhutan to look forward

together to the realization of common aspirations. Emerging from the shadows of the COVID-19 pandemic and inspired by the vision of our king, Bhutan has embarked on an ambitious program of national transformation. Bhutan’s civil service, public sector and even specific policies, such as our tourism policy, are being transformed to create a strong foundation for Bhutan to progress and prosper in the globalized world. As Bhutan moves forward, the continued support of our close friends like Japan will remain important.

On the National Day of Bhutan, my colleagues and I at the Royal Bhutanese Embassy would like to convey our warm felicitations to every Bhutanese in Japan and to all our Japanese friends.

*Tashi delek* (best wishes).

*This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.*