



TV

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

U.N. IN ACTION

Week of 22 March 2004

Programme No. 897

Duration: 4'17"

FROM THE THRONE TO THE PEOPLE BHUTAN MOVES TOWARDS DECENTRALIZATION

VIDEO

MOUNTAIN/LION DANCE IN
TEMPLE/PEOPLE (22.5")

PEOPLE AT INTERNET
CAFÉ/MONKS WATCHING TV
(15")

THE KING (17")

INTRO (6")

AUDIO

NARRATION

Tucked into the Himalayas between China and India is the little known kingdom of Bhutan. Isolated and prudent about change, Bhutan has barely been touched by modern times. Now the winds of change are blowing over this Kingdom of 700,000 people.

Today Internet cafes are gaining popularity. In 1999, Bhutan became the last country in the world to open its door to satellite television.

The present monarch, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, crowned in 1974 has been advocating modernization for decades. The most significant change has been his efforts towards building a constitutional monarchy.

Renata Dessallien is the UN Resident Coordinator in Bhutan.

DESSALLIEN:

RENATA ON CAMERA (6")

"He always says and maintains that the future of the country is in the hands of the Bhutanese people."

NARRATION

PEOPLE FARMING (13")

Development here started just four decades ago. Before 1960 there were no roads, no national currency, no schools, no health care system and no written constitution.

TRUCK PASSING/MOUNTAIN
PASS (16")

Even today, there is only one highway crossing the entire mountain nation. Many villages are still inaccessible, and tradition remains strong.

QUEEN VISITING VILLAGE
(8.5")

When the Queen visits, the entire village turns out to greet her. The Royal family is still highly revered. The country's absolute monarchy dates back to 1907.

PEOPLE PUTTING VOTES IN
BALLOT BOX (16.5")

In 2002, as a result of the Royal Government's commitment to decentralize, Bhutan held its first-ever nationwide elections. People were asked to vote for leaders in the country's 201 geogs, or local communities.

SONAM WALKING IN VILLAGE
(11")

Thirty-six-year old Sonam Dorji, a farmer with a primary education, is one of the newly elected leaders. The villagers have high expectations of him.

DORJI: (In Bhutanese)

SONAM DORJI ON CAMERA

"We elected him because he has done many

(13.5")

things for us in the past like building roads. And we expect him to continue doing the work for us."

DORJI SIGNING PAPER FOR VILLAGERS (7.5")

NARRATION

Sonam, now an elected village head, is directly responsible to the people. He has plans for the village.

SONAM DORJI ON CAMERA (7.5")

DORJI: (In Bhutanese)

"I've got a five-year plan for them. First I will set up an office, and then we will build a farm road."

DORJI AND VILLAGERS MEASURING (13.5")

NARRATION

Thanks to a new UNDP programme that provides 15,000 US dollars per year directly to local development committees, Sonam is able to upgrade the village water supply system.

INTRO (5")

Deidre Boyd of UNDP.

DEIDRE BOYD ON CAMERA (8")

BOYD:

"Fifteen thousand dollars per year doesn't sound like a lot. But for a small community, it can be quite a lot."

DORJI IN OFFICE (5")

NARRATION

Moving from a centralized royal government to village power is no easy task.

KARMA PENJOR ON CAMERA (4.5")

PENJOR:

"A big challenge is also orienting them to the new responsibilities and functions."

INTRO OVER BITE (3")	<p><u>NARRATION</u> Karma Penjor from the Ministry of Home Affairs.</p>
KARMA PENJOR ON CAMERA (4.5")	<p><u>PENJOR:</u> "It will take some time for people to get used to the new change."</p>
THIMPHU/TRAFFIC COP (17.5")	<p><u>NARRATION</u> In Thimphu, the capital, the government several years ago, installed electric traffic signals. But today, traffic is being directed manually...the electronic traffic lights were removed because people disliked them. The Bhutanese people want change, but at their own pace.</p>
DORJI AND QUEEN (8.5")	<p>As the country moves towards decentralization, Sonam and the villagers are now directly responsible for their own development.</p>
SHOWING PICTURES (18.5")	<p>Recently returned from a UNDP-supported study tour in Thailand and Bangladesh, Sonam has seen how other systems work. His challenge now is to modernize his villages, while making sure that their tradition and heritage will not be swept away by the winds of change.</p>
UN LOGO (10.5")	<p>This report was prepared by Patricia Chan for the United Nations.</p>