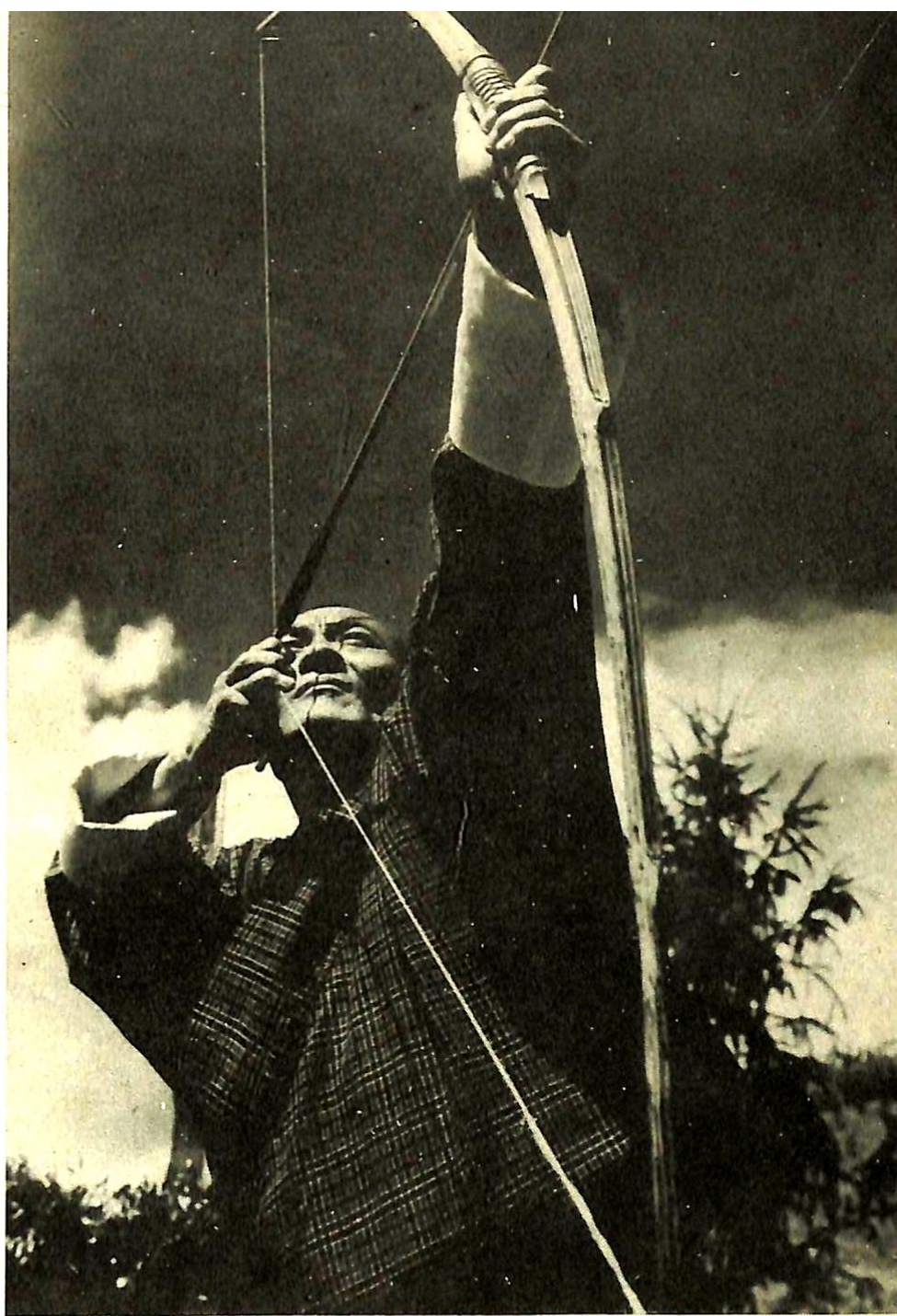
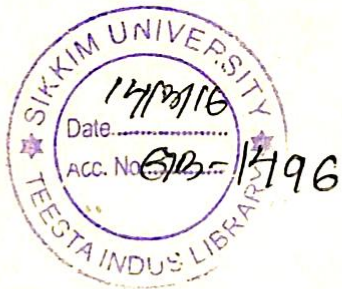


GLIMPSES OF BHUTAN



*HIS MAJESTY the DRUK Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck,
architect of modern Bhutan.*

GLIMPSES OF BHUTAN

BY
P. N. SHARMA



Royal Trumpeters.



Her Majesty Kesang Wangchuck Queen of Bhutan.

BHUTAN

**THE VALLEYS OF THE
THUNDER
DRAGONS**



The panoramic view of Phuntsholing-Thimpu National Highway. The 174 Kms highway, an Indo-Bhutan Cooperation project, connects Phuntsholing, the principal gateway to Bhutan with the capital, Thimpu (approximate altitude 9,600 feet). The highway is an outstanding example of modern road engineering.

BHUTAN

Beauteous Land of the Drukpa

Bhutan has a fascinating past and a bright future. Like many other ancient lands, its origins are shrouded in mystery and majesty. Known from time immemorial as "Druk Yul" or the Land of the Thunder Dragon, Bhutan has a rich spiritual and cultural heritage. Its geographical setting is no less magnificent. Bounded on the north by the towering peaks of the inner Himalayas and on the south by the fertile plains of India, Bhutan is a land of unrivalled scenic splendour. Rugged mountains, with their awe-inspiring precipices, flowing rivers and pretty rivulets, lush green virgin forests, sunny valleys interspersed with myriad waterfalls, the entire landscape of this Land of the Thunder Dragon, is dotted with colourful banners with fervent prayers. Hermitages and monasteries adorn this splendid land endowed by mother Nature with flora and fauna which provide an eye-filling spectacle.

Living in close communion with nature, the simple but energetic people of Bhutan are imbued with fortitude and tenacity of spirit. Guided by their enlightened ruler, the Drukpa (the people) are slowly and gradually embracing the benefits of modern civilization. Their age-old isolation is now ending and they are greeting the dawn of the new era with joy in their heart and prayer on their lips. The new bracing wind of change has produced a healthy impact on people and their age-old institutions. The elegance and enchanting beauty of their past and their refined manners are still there, but the peaceful rhythm of their life is now gaining momentum to meet the challenge of the second half of twentieth century with calm confidence. The younger generation is more eager to modernize their community so that the flow of prosperity may trickle down to the lowest of levels of society.



The Druk Gyalpo addressing his people. He is held in the highest regard by his subjects with whom he maintains close contacts through frequent tours throughout the country. He is the principal architect of Bhutan's march towards political and economic development.



Phuntsholing, the gateway to Bhutan, borders the jalpaiguri district of West Bengal (India). It is the most populous Bhutanese town and the country's principal industrial and commercial centre.



Young Bhutanese Belles in their native costumes.

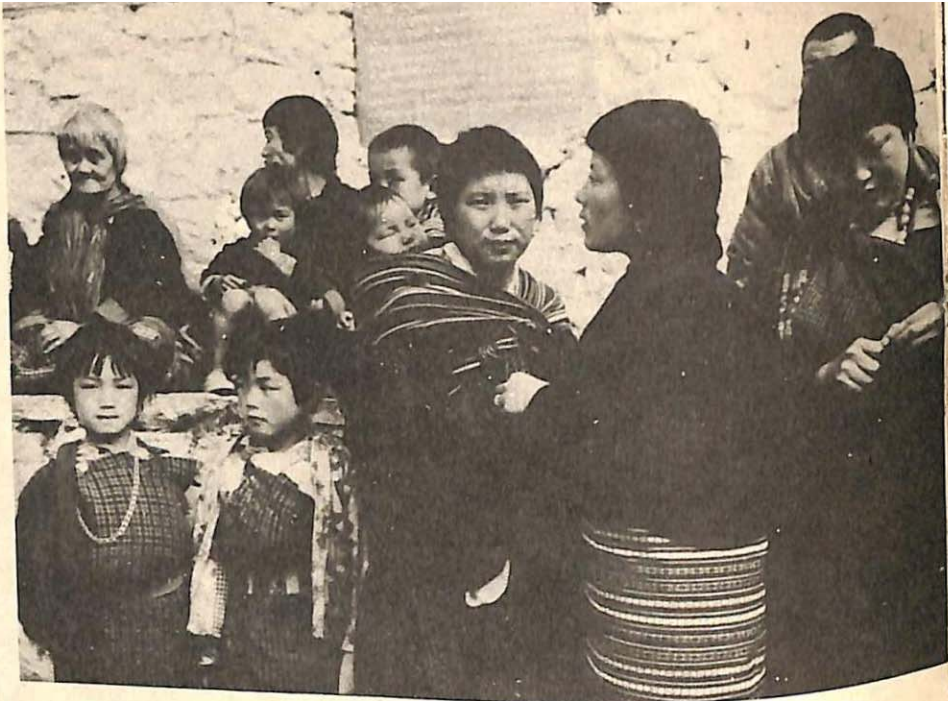


"Tashichhodzong" in Thimpu, one of finest specimens of traditional Bhutanese architectures. It houses the offices of the Royal Government of Bhutan.



A general view of Thimpu valley through which flows the "Lung ten Zampa" — LUCKY RIVER.

PEOPLE OF BHUTAN



A group of Bhutanese women and children. Their dresses are made from indigenously woven cloth.



Bhutanese woodcraftsmen.

Bhutanese men in their national dress.





Students of Thimpu Public School performing a music drill.

EDUCATION

Bhutanese school teachers, Thimpu Public School.



Students of Thimpu Public School singing the Bhutanese National Anthem. In 1961 Bhutan had barely 30 schools. As at the end of 1968 the country had over 50,000 students studying in over 105 schools.





A typical Bhutanese crowd assembled to witness a traditional national festivity.



Bhutanese School Children in their national dress.



The lovely children of Bhutan greet the visitors everywhere. The king takes personal interest in their education and welfare.



DANCES OF BHUTAN

PA-CHHAM

Pa-Chham is a religious dance. The object of the Dance is to lead people to Heaven in their next life.

TOOM GNAM CHHAM

Toom Gnam Chham is a ritual dance, performed with rhythmic recitations. The Lamas wearing masks and clad in rich costumes perform this dance which symbolises the destruction of the Evil.

DAME-TSE-NGA-CHHAM

This is one of the dances performed by the devout Kunga Gyaltzen.

SHANAK (BLACK HAT DANCE BY LAMAS)

The Shanak dance depicts the killing of Du Lang Tarma, an evil spirit, by legendary Lama Lhalung Palrik Dorji.

MASKED DANCERS tell the legend of ancient Bhutan.

Horned beasts with staring eyes and grinning fangs, fierce birds, skeletons, clowns, and grim denizens of the nether world all take part in Bhutan's sacred dances. Masks of cloth and clay represent each character, the dancer looking out through the mask's mouth or nose.

Shrilling flutes, clanging cymbals, and booming trumpets set the tempo. Some dancers whirl at bewildering speed, their long-sleeved robes flying. Others pirouette slowly on one foot.

Most so-called devil dances have religious significance. They drive out demons, portray legends, or describe the terrors of the Lamaist hell.





**COLOURFUL BHUTANESE
DANCES**

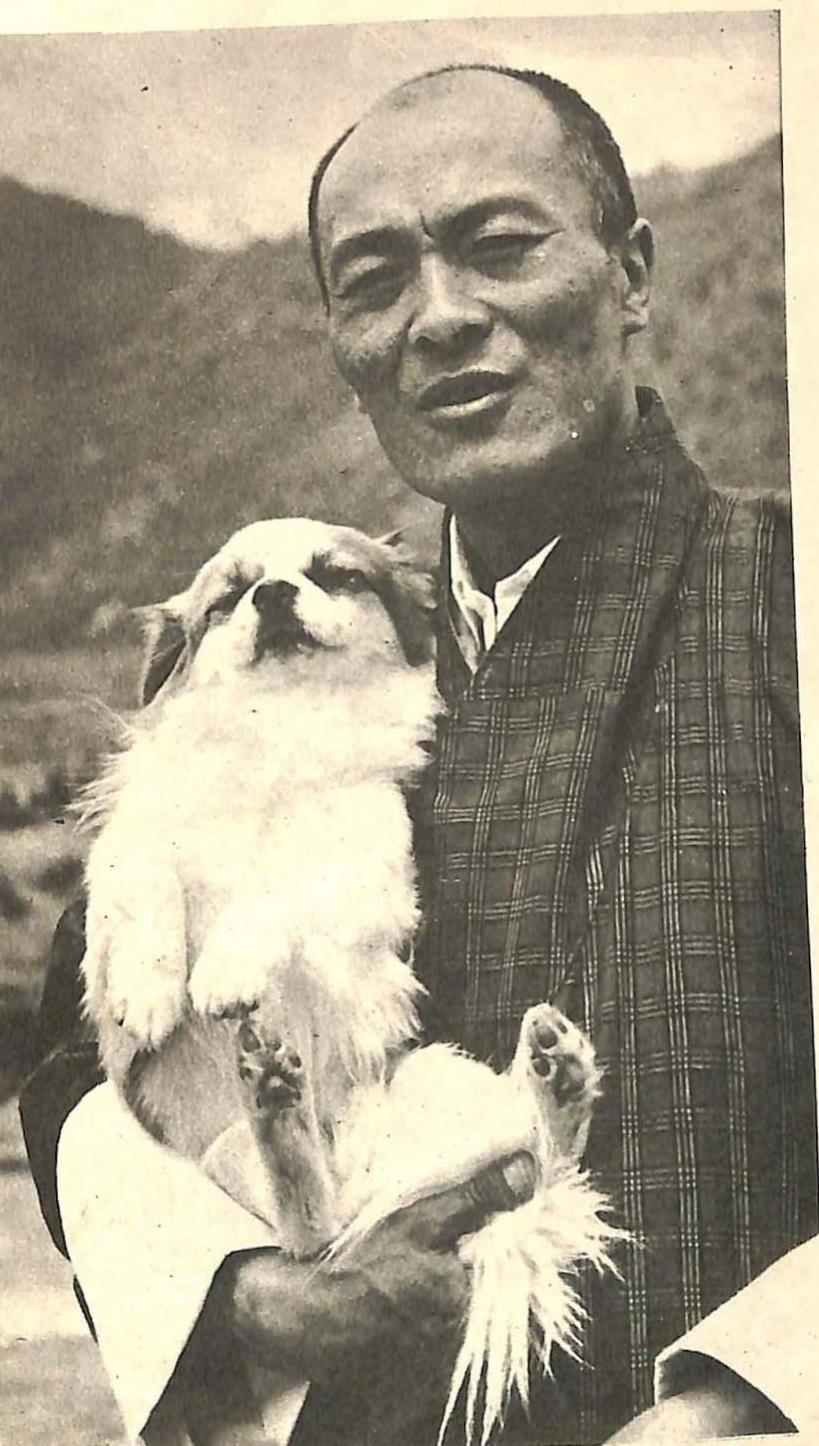




Terraced fields around the Thimpu Royal Palace. In Bhutan's development plans very high priority is given to agricultural development. Bhutan is agriculturally a surplus area. The principal crops are rice, maize, and wheat.

A saw mill in Thimpu. Forests are an important national resource and the country is rich in highgrade timber.





His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo with his pet dog "Khomtu".



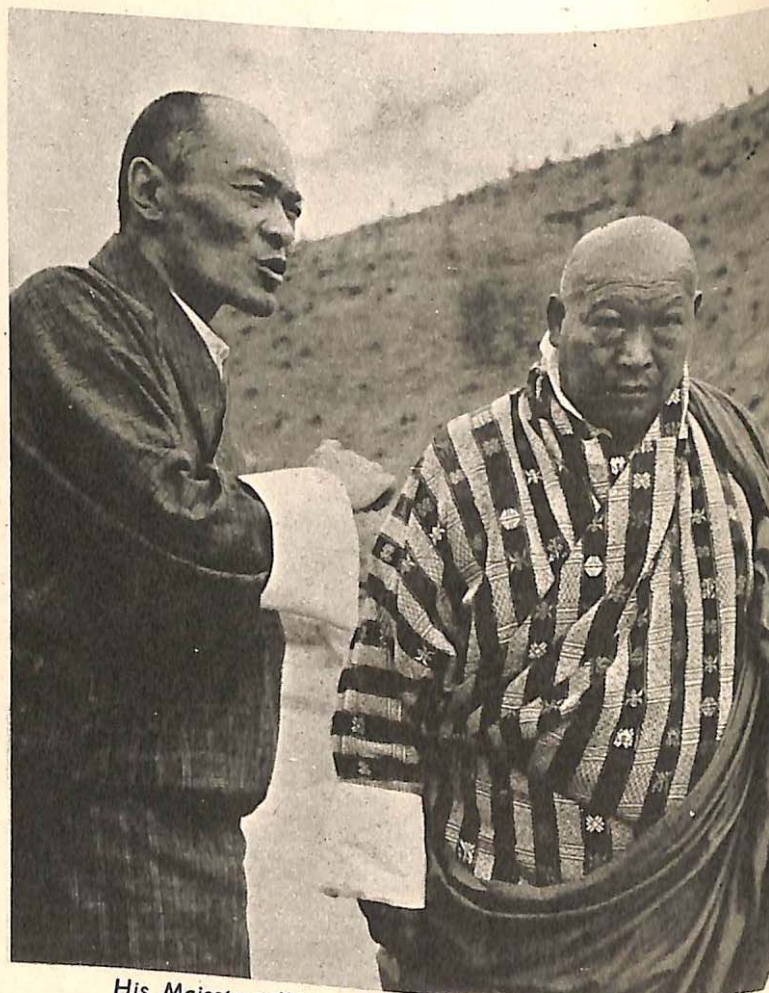
The golden royal throne.



Bhutanese musical instruments.



His Royal Highness Namgyal Wangchuk, Tengye Lonpo, Bhutan's Minister for Commerce, Trade, Industry and Forests.



His Majesty talking to his Home Minister, Tamji Jagar Kidug Lonpo.

Historical Glimpses

Bhutan's early history is interwoven with legend and mythology. An early chronicle of Bhutan was lost through a fire at the printing establishment at Sonagachi in 1828 and another in Punakha in 1832. However, a few manuscripts survived in the monasteries which shed some light on Bhutan's colourful past. The earliest legend goes as far back as the seventh century B. C. when one Sangaldip came to Bhutan from Assam. Some centuries later came another king named Naguchi, the King of Sindhu. The site of his palace, Chagkhar Gome (the iron fort without doors) may still be seen from the old Bhutanese capital, Punakha. Some time in the eighth century A.D. came another dynamic and powerful figure on the Bhutanese scene in the person of Guru Padmasambhava who introduced the Buddhist faith in Bhutan. While Guru Padmasambhava gave to Bhutan her faith, Shabdung Ngawang Namgyal unified the country in the 16th century.

Bhutan's contacts with the East India Company began in 1772. These early contacts were mainly of a trade and commercial nature. In 1865, the British-Indian Government concluded a treaty with Bhutan which is known as the Treaty of Sinchula. The Treaty of Sinchula, to a large extent, set the pattern of the subsequent Treaty of 1910 which in its turn provided the broad framework of the Treaty of 1949 between India and Bhutan. In 1907, Bhutan set up the institution of hereditary monarchy which gave certain unity to the administrative pattern. Kusho Ugen Wangchuck, Penlop of Tongsa became the first monarch of Bhutan, thus ending the old dual system of ruling the country by the Deb Raja (temporal ruler) and the Dharma Raja (spiritual ruler).

In 1910, the King of Bhutan concluded a new Treaty with the then Government of India by which Bhutan agreed to be guided by the advice of India with regard to its foreign affairs. It was also agreed to give an annual subsidy of Rs. 1 lakh to Bhutan as a gesture of friendship.

After the exit of British Power from the sub-continent of India, the Government of India and the Government of Bhutan concluded a new Treaty on August 8, 1949. Under this Treaty, Bhutan agreed to be guided by the advice of India in regard to external relations and the Government of India in turn undertook to abstain from interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. As a symbol of cordial relations between the two countries, the Government of India decided to give Rs. 5 lakhs as annual subsidy and restored to Bhutan about 32 square miles of territory in the area known as Devangiri. The Treaty also established free trade and commerce between the territories of the Government of India and of the Government of Bhutan.

People, Religion and Culture

The present population of Bhutan is estimated to be about eight lakhs. Very little anthropological research has been done regarding the present inhabitants of Bhutan. According to Sir Ashley Eden,* the original inhabitants of Bhutan were "Tephoo Bhutias" who came from Cooch Behar in India. Later, there were migrations from Kham in Eastern Tibet. In the later part of the nineteenth century there also occurred a wave of migration of Nepalese into Southern Bhutan. The mingling of these three elements probably accounts for the ethnic composition of the present inhabitants of Bhutan.

The majority of the Bhutanese are Mahayana Buddhists and belong to the Dukpa Kargyu sect. They embraced Buddhism in the eighth century A.D. under the guidance of the Indian Guru, Padmasambhava. The people of Nepali origin are predominantly Hindus.

There are four main languages spoken in Bhutan viz., (a) Dzongkha in Western and Northern Bhutan (b) Bumthangkha in Central Bhutan (c) Sarchapkkha in Eastern Bhutan (d) Nepali in Southern Bhutan. The variations among these various languages are such that those speaking one language cannot easily understand the other. However, Dzongkha is today the official language all over Bhutan.

*Sir Ashley Eden, who visited Bhutan in 1862-1863 as special envoy of the then British Governor General of India.

EARLIER CONTACTS BETWEEN BHUTAN AND INDIA



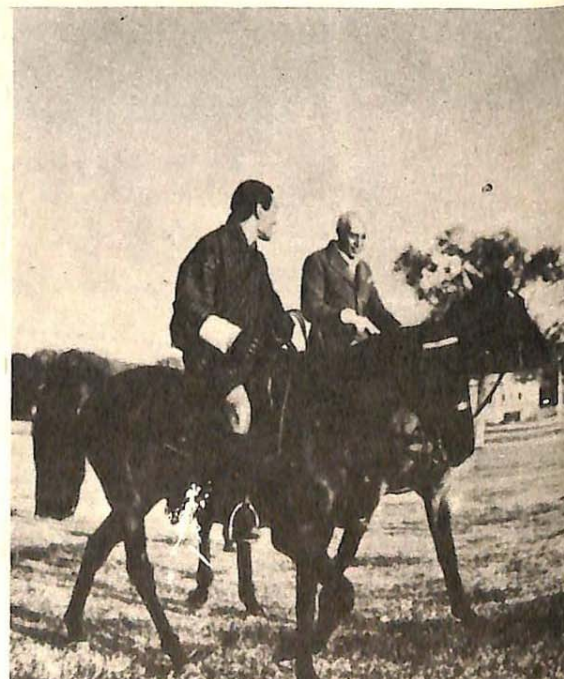
Their Majesties with India's late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.



His Majesty the King of Bhutan with former President of India, Late Shri Rajendra Prasad and India's Late Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru.

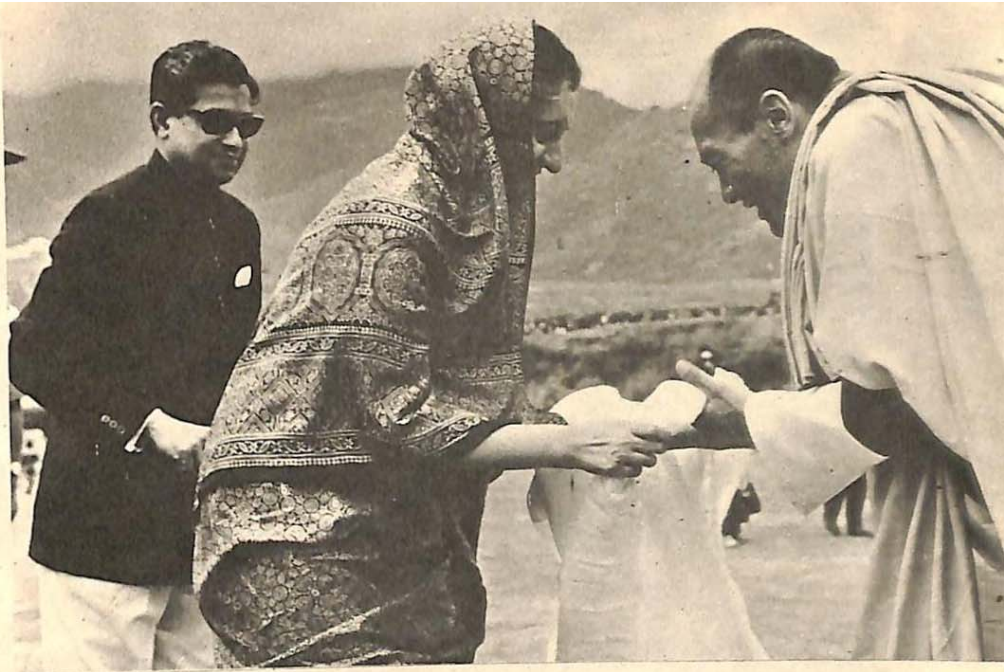


His Majesty with the former President of India, Late Shri Rajendra Prasad.



His Majesty the King of Bhutan is seen riding with late Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru.

**SMT. INDIRA GANDHI
OPENS A
NEW CHAPTER
IN INDO-BHUTAN
RELATIONS**



His Majesty exchanges ceremonial greetings with India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi during her visit to Bhutan in May, 1968.

India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi inspects a guard of Honour given to her by the Royal Bodyguards during her visit to Bhutan in May, 1968.





Left to right
 (1) His Royal Highness
 Namgyal Wangchuck
 Tenzey Lonpo, Bhutan's
 Minister for Trade, Com-
 merce, Industry and forests.
 (2) Shrimati Indira Gandhi,
 Prime Minister of India,
 (3) Tamji Jagar, Kidug
 Lonpo, Bhutan's Home
 Minister.



India's Prime Minister
 Shrimati Indira Gandhi
 with some members of the
 Royal Advisory Council of
 Bhutan and the Tsongdu
 (Bhutanese National
 Assembly).

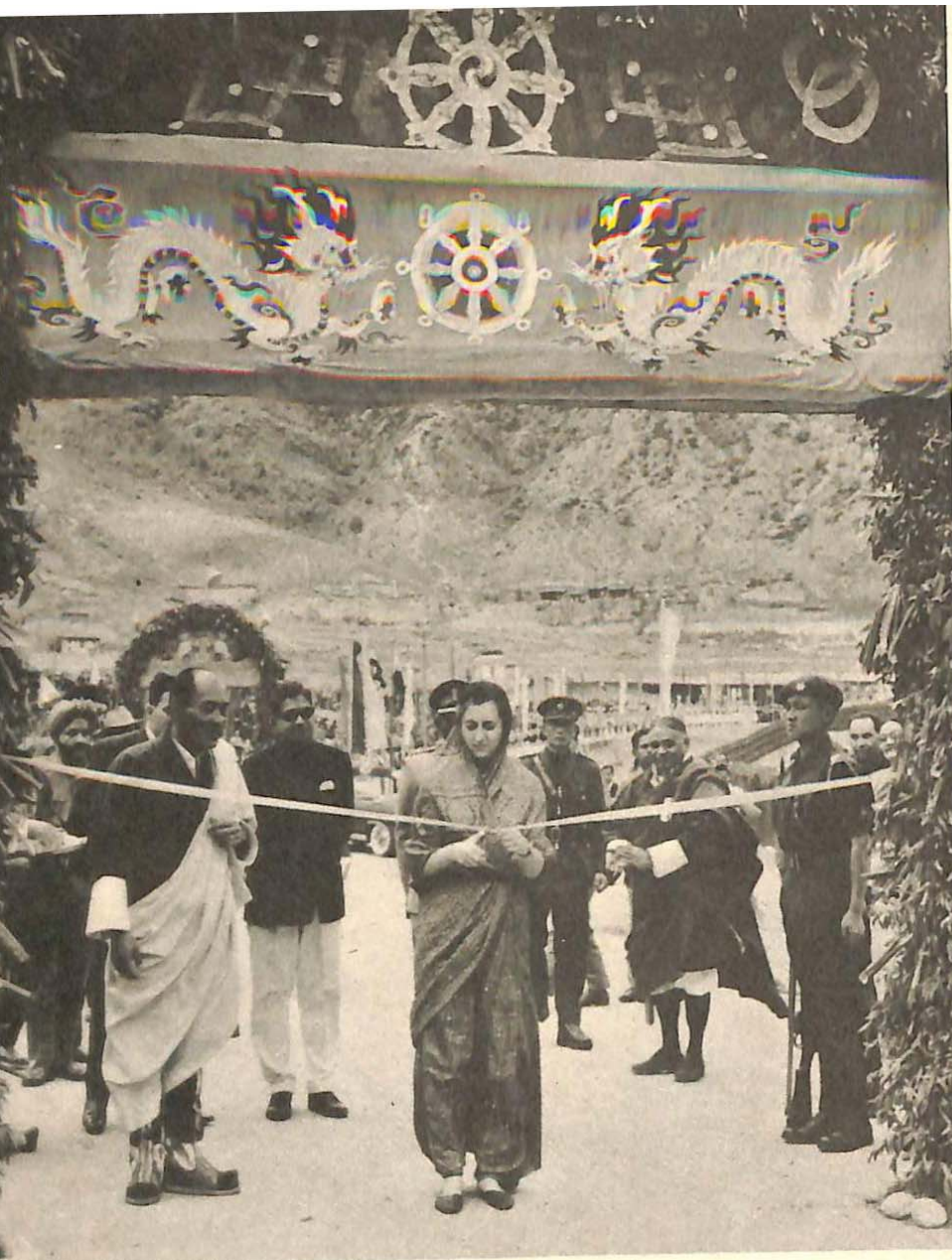




Left to right (1) Her Royal Highness Aji Chhoden, Senior Queen Mother, (2) Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, and (3) His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi with Ministers and other senior officials of the Government of Bhutan. Second from right is Chogyal, Tsilon, Bhutan's Finance Minister.





India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi opening the "Shum Lung I" (Phuntsholing-Thimpu National Highway).

His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo is seen talking to Shri T. N. Kaul, Foreign Secretary Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India and Miss Preeti Kaul.





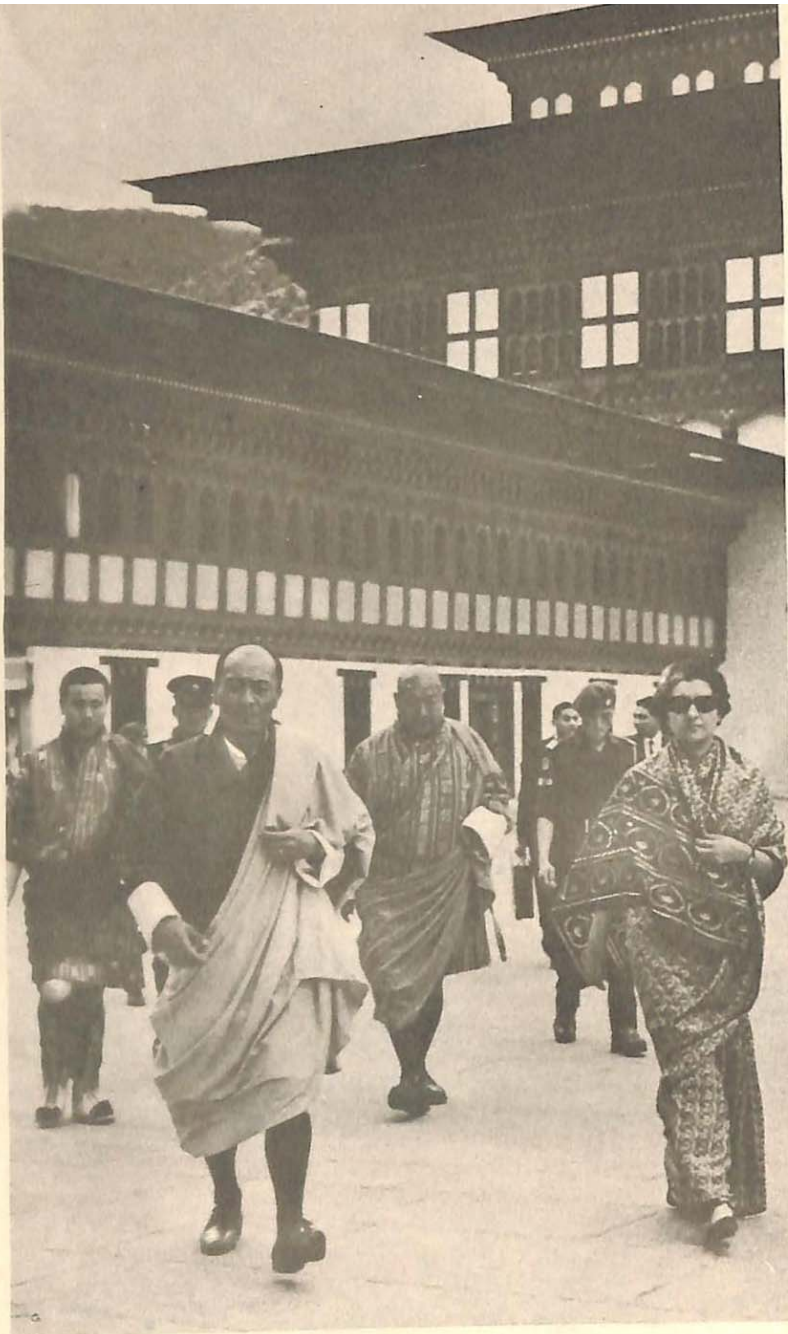
Shrimati Indira Gandhi presenting a helicopter to H.M. the Druk Gyalpo.



H.R.H. Princess Pema Wangchuck and H.R.H. Princess Aji Deki.



*Left to right
 (1) Her Royal Highness Aji Pema Dechen, Junior Queen Mother,
 (2) Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India,
 (3) Her Royal Highness Aji Chhoden, Senior Queen Mother, and His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.*



**Political Institution
Tsongdu—the Bhutanese National
Assembly**

The present Ruler of Bhutan, His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, on accession to the throne in 1952 decided to establish a National Assembly (Tsongdu), representing the people, the monks and the officials, to advise the Government on all matters of national importance. With his wisdom and foresight, the King realised as far back as 1952, that for the rapid progress of the country all sections of the people must participate in discussing national issues and advise on the formulation of policies which affected the country and the people.



India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi laying the foundation stone of "India House, Thimpu" which will house the office and residence of the India's representative in Bhutan.

H.M. the Druk Gyalpo, India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Bhutan's Home Minister Tamji Jagar, Kidug Lompo in the courtyard of "Tashichhodzong", Thimpu.

Consequently, the National Assembly or the Tsongdu, as it is called in Bhutan, was inaugurated at Punakha in the year 1953. It later shifted its sittings to Thimpu, the new capital. When the old Thimpu Dzong was demolished for reconstruction, the place of meeting was shifted to Paro. Tsongdu meets twice a year—once in Spring (April) and the second time in Autumn (October). Dates vary according to the Bhutanese calendar.

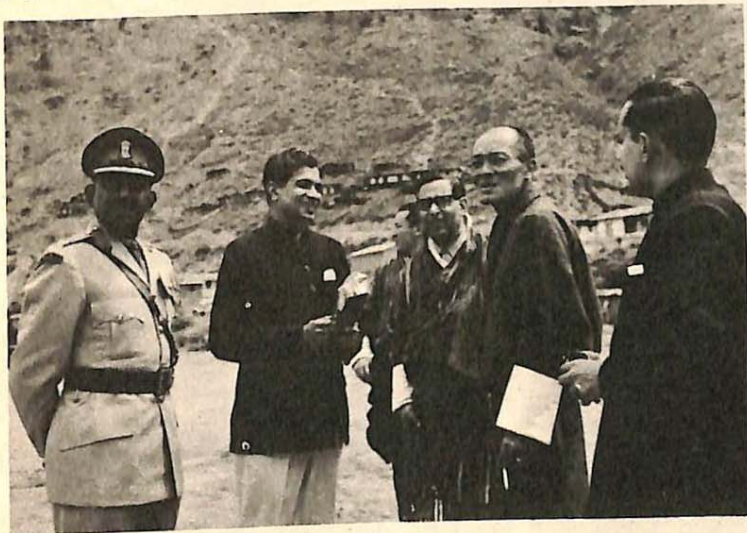
Over the years, Tsongdu has developed into a legislative and parliamentary body also playing a vital role in the political set-up of the country.

The total membership of the Tsongdu has varied from time to time, the variation ranging between 140 to 200. The present strength is 150.

At an informal Party given by H. M. Druk Gyaplo, India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi and party with members of the Royal family.



H. M. Druk Gyalpo is seen talking to India's Political Officer Shri N. B. Menon, Bhutan's Trade Commissioner Shri P. R. Bakshi, Special Officer of India in Bhutan, Shri B. S. Das and Brigadier T.V. Jaganathan IMTRAT.



The Tsongdu has three categories of members viz., (a) People's representatives, who roughly constitute half the total strength of the Tsongdu, and who are elected through a system of indirect elections, (b) Monastic representatives, who are nominated by the various monastic bodies in the country and (c) Official representatives, who are nominated by His Majesty The King mainly on a functional basis. It may be mentioned that there is at present no cadre of civil servants in Bhutan. They are appointed from amongst the public on the basis of merit and loyal service and can reach the highest position in the country viz., Minister. At present there are three ministers in charge of Home, Commerce and Finance respectively and there is also a Deputy Home Minister.

The Tsongdu plays a triple role. It enacts laws, approves senior appointments in the Government and advises on all matters of national importance.

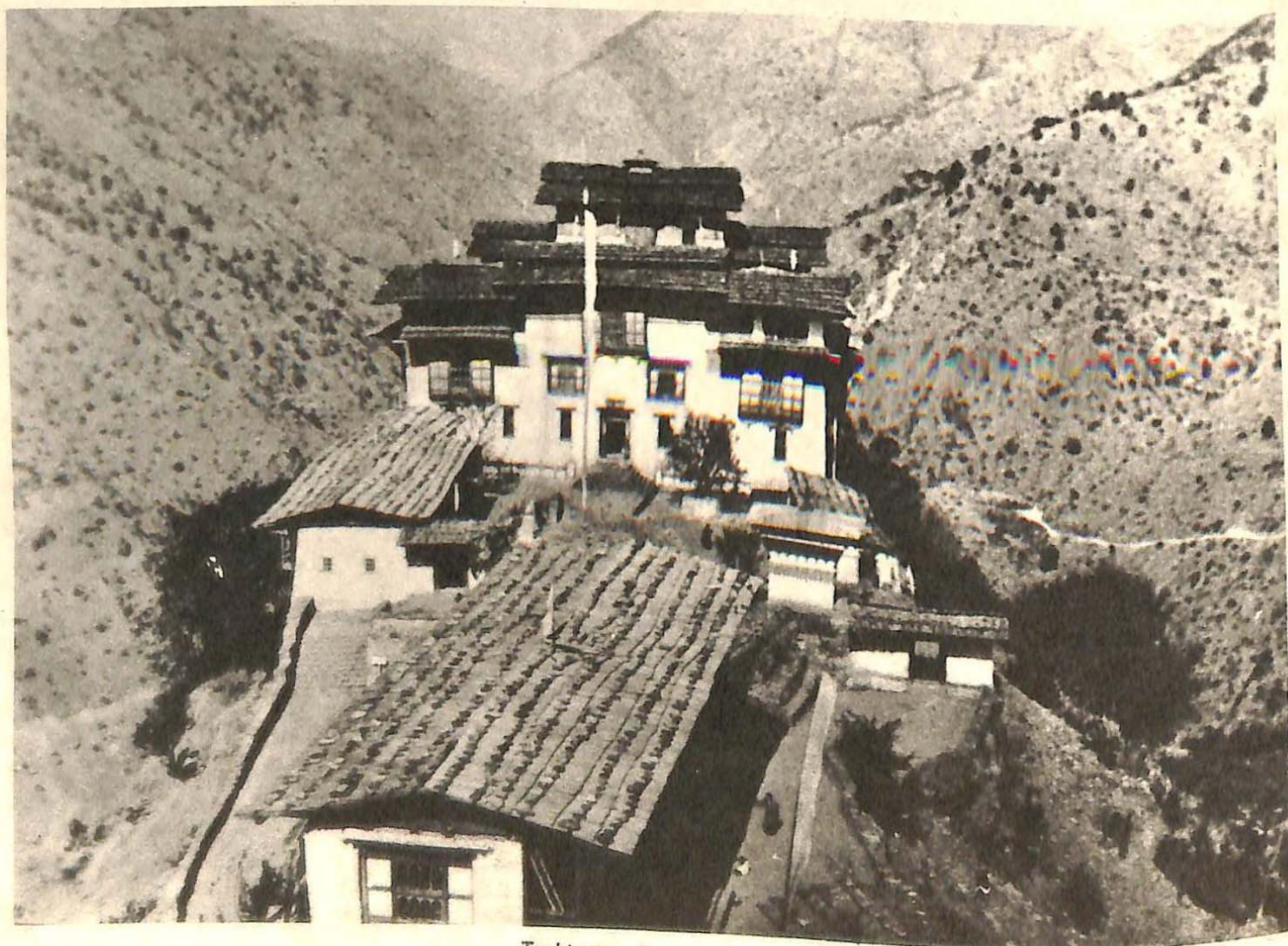
The Assembly has played an important role in enacting various civil, criminal and property laws. For instance, nearly all the civil and criminal laws applicable in the law courts have been passed by the Assembly and duly codified. It has decided issues and passed laws relating to land taxation, compensation, property and land tenure system. Although the King has the right to veto any bill passed by the Tsongdu, it is significant that this right has seldom been exercised.

It could be argued that with a system of absolute powers with the King, the Tsongdu acts merely as a stamping body. Those who had occasion to attend the recent sessions of the Tsongdu will not subscribe to this. No doubt, the King by virtue of his position and traditional loyalty can play a dominant role in acting as a check on freedom of expression and action. Yet, it has been amply proved during recent years that on the contrary, the King anticipating the fast changes taking place in the country and with a deep devotion to the cause of people's participation, has encouraged the Tsongdu to act more and more independently. The very fact that the King has already started the trend towards strengthening the powers of the Tsongdu by reducing his own, speaks of the vital role Tsongdu has recently been playing and will play in the future.

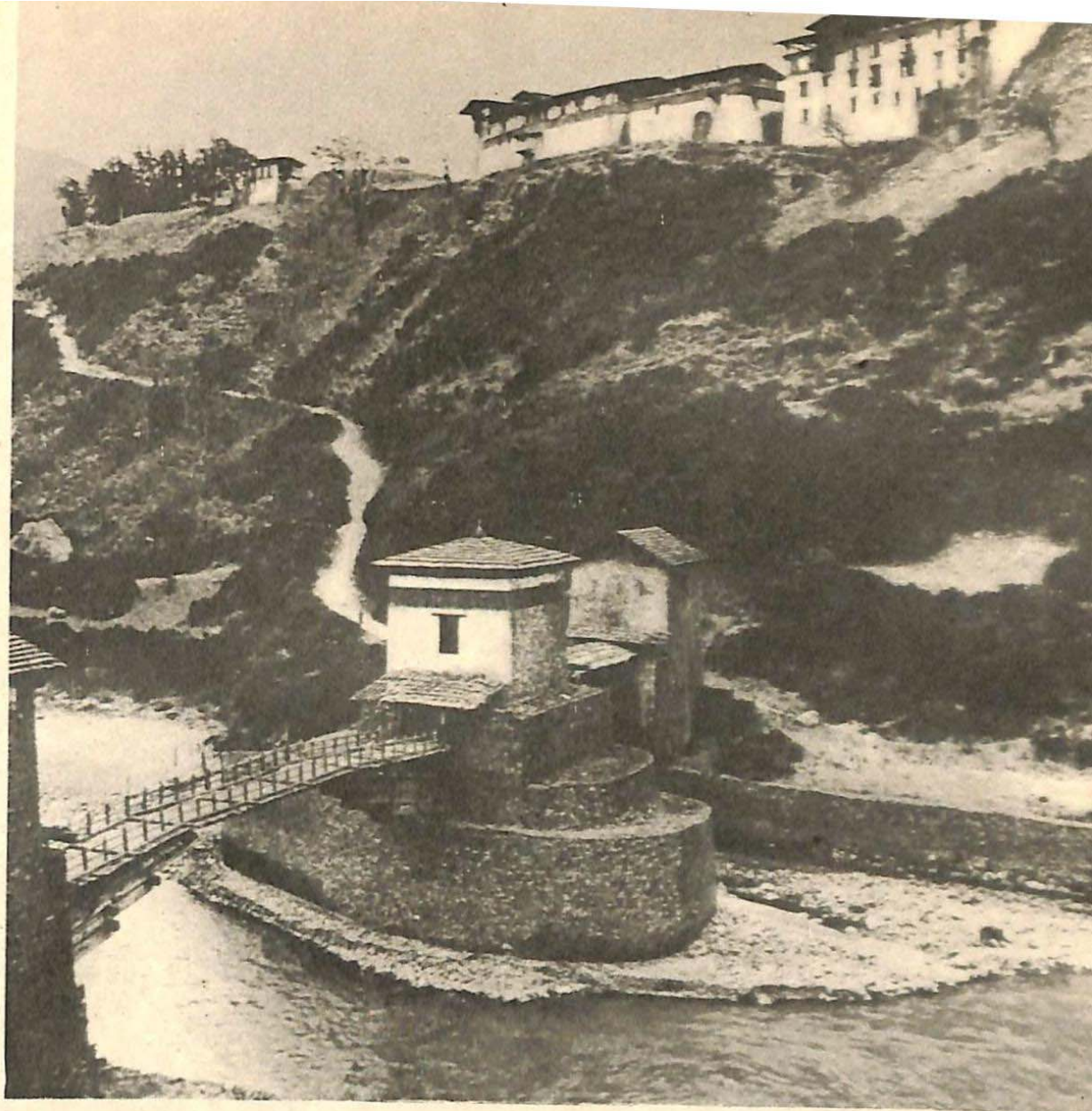
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India's Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi, who inaugurated the THIMPHU MICRO-HYDEL Station in May 1968.



Tashigang Dzong, Bhutan.



Wangdiphodrang Dzong,
with Bridge, Bhutan.

Encouraged by the results achieved by the Tsongdu's performance and with the rapid changes taking place in the country as a result of development activities, His Majesty is keenly aware of the role which a body like Tsongdu must play in future. The greatest achievement of the dynasty of the present Ruler has been the creation of a sense of national unity in the country. But, the main credit goes to King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck who created a sense of participation amongst his countrymen and the Tsongdu, a creation of His Majesty, has contributed the most to this development.

Encouraged by the response from his people, His Majesty wants to strengthen the sense of national awareness by giving more powers to the Tsongdu and ultimately develop Bhutan into a constitutional monarchy with the people having the final voice in the country's affairs.

During the November 1968 session of the Tsongdu the King took a far-reaching step for the liberalisation of the country's political structure by making the Tsongdu a sovereign body with full powers to enact laws without receiving royal assent.

Royal Advisory Council

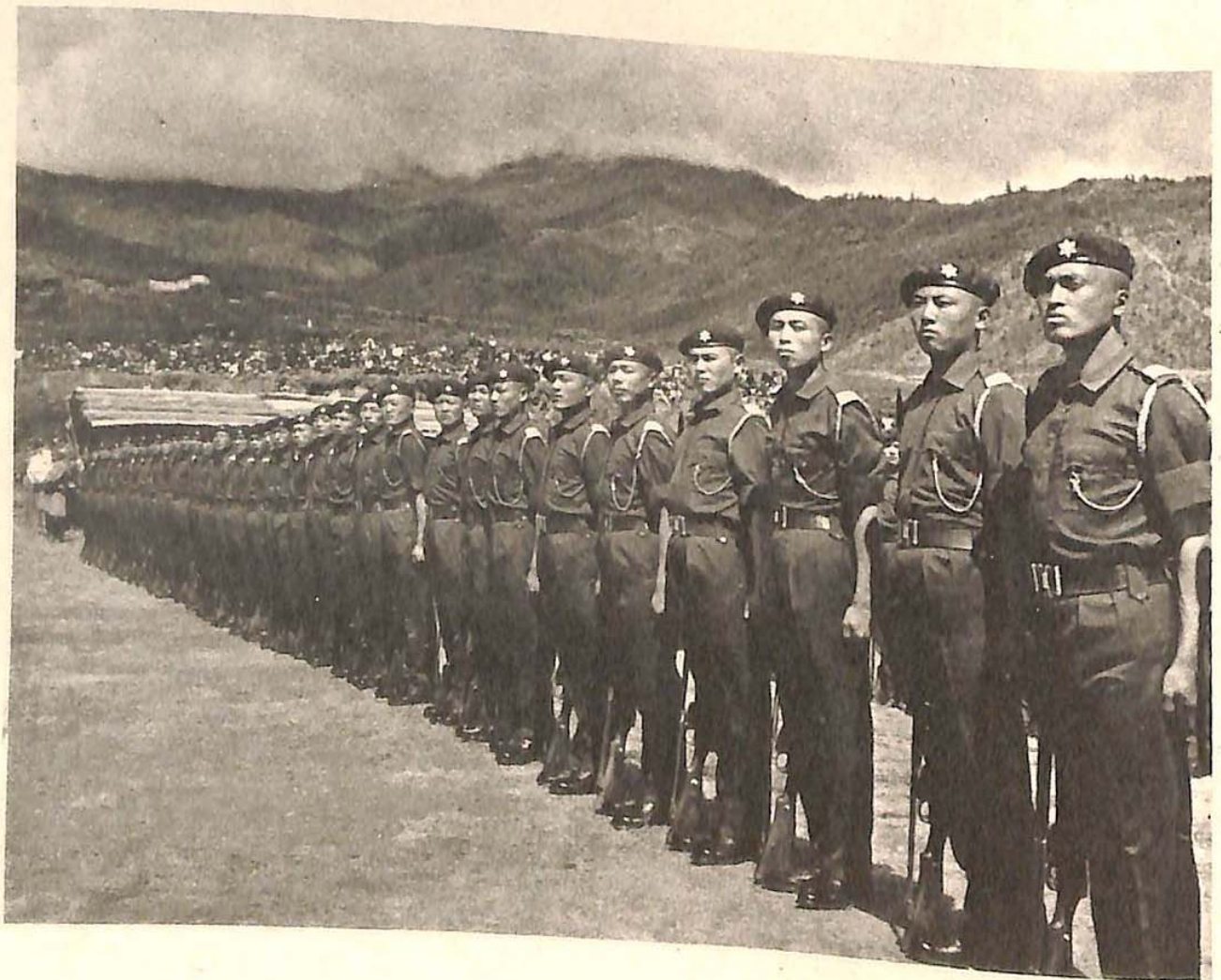
Closely linked with the Tsongdu is the Royal Advisory Council which has developed as a "Council of Elders". All its members are also members of the Tsongdu. The Council consisting of eight members has five representatives of the people representing the different regions, two Lamas representing the monasteries and one representative of the Government. This body was also formed during the reign of the present Ruler.

Its basic function is to advise the King and his Ministers on all matters of national importance. Its scope of functioning has widened during the last two years. It meets regularly every day except when members visit their respective areas to assess the implementation of the Government's policies and directives and people's reactions thereto. All the Ministers are required to attend its meeting once a week and answer questions relating to their Ministries. The Ministers also consult the Council on all important issues and take their advice. Members of the Council have access to His Majesty the King who also consults the Council on all important matters.

Continued



Bhutan has a powerful Army which is on its way to Modernization.





H.M. Druk Gyalpo looks forward to a happy future for Bhutan.

Economy

While promoting measures for political liberalisation His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo has also been responsible for initiating planned economic development of the country. Bhutan is particularly rich in forest and mineral resources and has considerable Hydro-Electric potential. Bhutan's first five year plan was launched in July 1961 with financial and technical assistance from the Government of India. The second five year plan was launched in April 1966. The major goal in both the five year plans has been to build the infra-structure for the country's future development and high priority has been accorded to the development of the transport and communications, hydro-electric power, agriculture, education and public health services. Striking progress has been registered in all these fields. For example, in the sphere of education, when the first five year plan was launched there were hardly 30 primary schools in the country but the number has now risen to 105 schools with over 50,000 students. Public health facilities have also increased considerably. At present there are four hospitals and twenty-eight dispensaries in the country; campaigns have been launched for the eradication of malaria, tuberculosis and venereal diseases.

The progress achieved in the development of postal services deserves special mention. The colourful postage stamps of Bhutan are prized by stamp collectors the world over for their thematic value and technical excellence. It is estimated that in 1968 alone Bhutan earned approximately 47,000 US Dollars in foreign exchange from philatelic sales.

Bhutan is rich in cottage industries. Weaving of cloth, gold and silver work, bamboo and wood-craft are well developed. As cottage industries constitute an important source of supplementary income for the people, most of whom are farmers, the Government is trying to encourage their growth by finding markets abroad.

Bhutan on the World Map

Under the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of 1949 Bhutan has agreed to be guided by India's advice in regard to its external relations. Through India's sponsorship and support Bhutan secured membership of the Colombo Plan in 1962 and was admitted to the Universal Postal Union in 1969. India has always looked forward to assisting Bhutan in developing to a stage where she will play a responsible role in international affairs.

Concluded

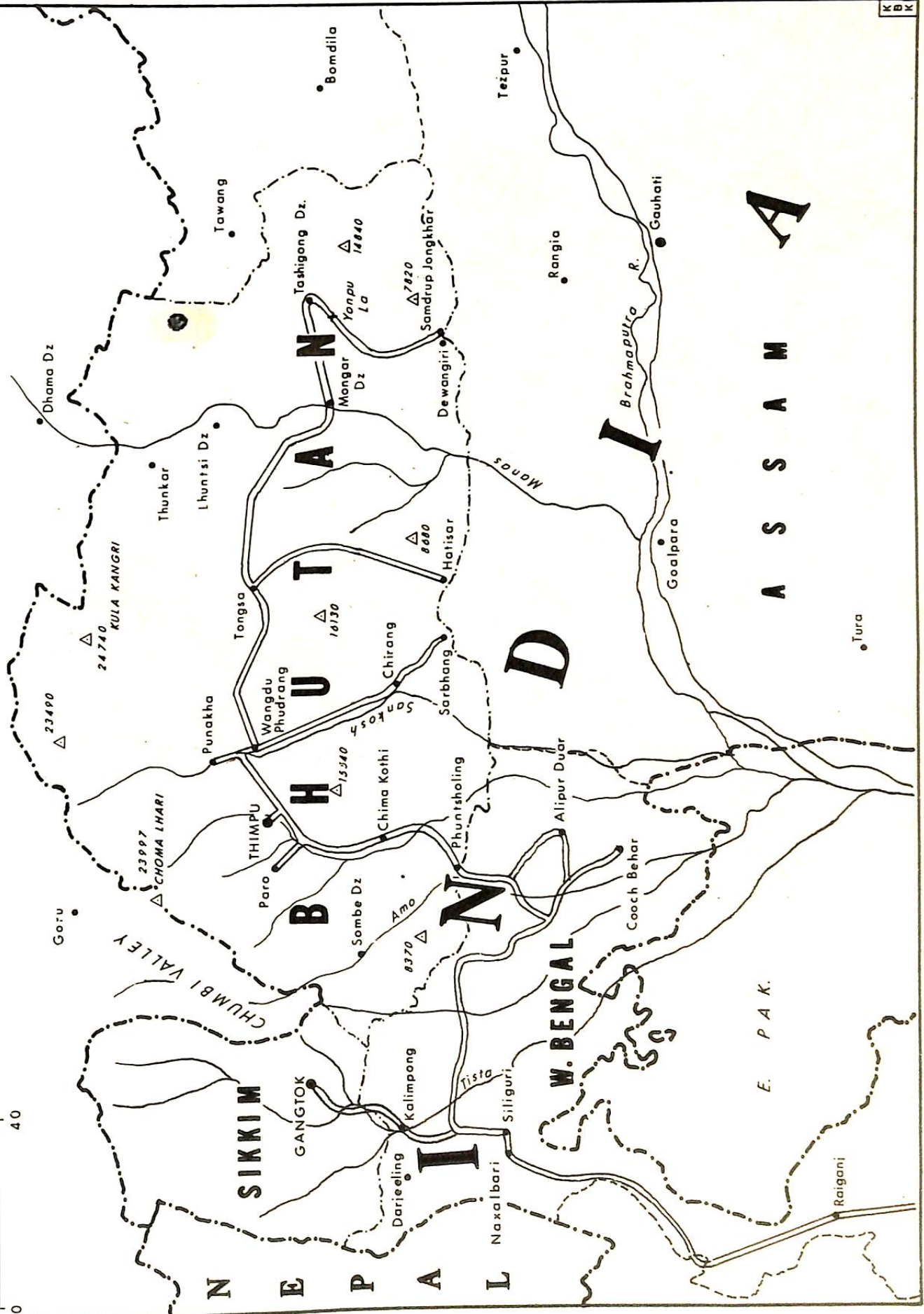
The most important function recently allotted is the power of arbitration between the Ministries or between the Departments in case of disputes or differences of opinion. The Council's decision is final in such cases.

Being constantly in session and representing all the regions of the country, the Council acts as an effective check on the Government, particularly the Ministers. In other words, it not only effectively advises but also acts as "watchful eyes" of the people. A High Court with four judges has also been set up recently to try appeal cases.



Masked Dancers.

T I B E T



A S S A M A

E. P. A. K.



H. M. Druk Gyalpo is very fond of photography.

