

1989, No. 6

Bhutan: Right From The Start

IN THIS ISSUE: Crossing from India into Bhutan by air is like stepping through a doorway into the past. Nearly all the land between Calcutta and the border now shows the signs of human habitation; farms, villages, fields, roads. The forests are gone. Once across the border, however, the scene changes. Unspoiled forests stretch for miles, the hills to the north are covered in rhododendron, and waterfalls cascade from cliffsides into deep, mist-shrouded valleys.

Long isolated from outside influences, Bhutan has retained both a unique culture and a pristine environment. Now the country has begun the difficult and sometimes destructive process of developing its rich natural resources. With the help of WWF, the Royal Government of Bhutan has begun to plan for conservation nationwide. Bhutan can be an example for the world; a place where foresight and innovation combine to protect ecosystems that have not been ravaged by past mistakes.

Bhutan: Right from the Start, was written by Jonathan Adams, editor of the *WWF Letter*.

The Dance of the Four Stags, a centerpiece of Bhutan's Paro Tsechu, or festival, closely resembles a morality play. In this Buddhist celebration dancers in brightly colored robes and fantastic masks enact one man's day of judgment. Before he can be granted a happy reincarnation—and thus move a step closer to nirvana or spiritual enlightenment—the Lord of Death must pass judgment by weighing the man's good and evil deeds on a scale. A white-faced god speaks up for the man's good deeds, while the devil details his sins, first among them the killing of animals. The devil's helpers include four stags who tell the tales of this hunter's disregard for animals. As the dance comes to an end, the Lord of Death finds the man unworthy and he is condemned to be set back on the path to nirvana.

The belief that animals may bear witness against a hunter illustrates the profound respect for nature and wildlife that is fundamental to Buddhist culture. The Dance of the Four Stags also serves as an emblem for conservation in the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan—it is performed only here, as the Paro Tsechu honors Guru Rinpoche, the man who brought Buddhism to Bhutan in the eighth century. Bhutan's rare blend of Buddhist ethics, an enlightened monarchy, and committed citizens, has kept Bhutan's pristine environment and spectacular diversity of life largely in-

tact. Together with WWF, the people of Bhutan have begun to plan conservation on a national scale before environmental problems associated with development become intractable.

Though only about the size of Switzerland, Bhutan contains such a wide range of habitats that much of Asia's distinct flora and fauna can be found here. Situated in the eastern Himalayas, Bhutan is bordered by Tibet—now under Chinese control—to the north and the Indian states of Sikkim, Assam, West Bengal, and Arunchal Pradesh to the west, south, and east.

Zoologists have divided the world into six general areas based on the distribution of vertebrates. Bhutan lies astride two of these so-called zoogeographical realms; the Palearctic, which is essentially Eurasia above the tropics, and the Indo-Malayan, which includes tropical Asia and the related islands such as Sumatra and Borneo. This unique location, as well as a range of climates associated with the altitudinal variations and heavy rainfall, accounts for Bhutan's remarkable diversity. The southern part of the country supports such tropical species as Asiatic elephants, greater one-horned rhinos, tigers, Asiatic buffalo, and the golden langur, a primate found only in Bhutan and one of the rarest primates in the world. Just 100 miles to the north in the high Himalayas live blue sheep,

Commentary

We in Bhutan have been fortunate for the wisdom of our past leaders, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and former Prime Minister Jigme Dorji. Through the foresight of these great leaders our natural and cultural heritage has been protected. Now today, through the wise and able leadership of our beloved King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, nature conservation is growing. The Department of Forests is creating a greater awareness of nature conservation, and programs of nature conservation are stressed to an ever greater degree.

Foresight has made Bhutan an example for the world. More and more countries are realizing what Bhutan has to offer by way of modern nature conservation programs. With the help of WWF, we have built a conservation program that extends to all parts of Bhutan, and to all aspects of everyday life.

But there is still much to do. Bhutan's is an ancient culture, but only recently have we had contact with the outside world. Our most difficult task will be meeting the practical needs of a growing country—improving education and health care and boosting agricultural production—while still attending to Bhutan's spiritual and natural well-being. As we grow economically, we must never forget what wonderful nature God has given us, nature that is often destroyed under the guise of development.

Education will play a most important role in helping Bhutan meet the challenges that lie ahead. We must teach our children the importance of wildlife and wildplaces, and how best to save them. Bhutan already has a strong conservation ethic, as respect for the natural world is a central element of Buddhism. But teaching about the environment and about conservation in our schools will be essential in keeping the Bhutanese people informed about what is happening to the world around them.

The Department of Forestry, the Department of Education, the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, and WWF are making important contributions to conservation education in Bhutan, but building a lasting program will take years. Fortunately, the wheels are in motion, and I am confident that concern for the environment, education, and economic development are now inextricably linked in Bhutan.

The most developed countries of the world have learned with great regret the damage that is done when they tamper with nature. These same countries are now spending billions of dollars to recreate these lands to their original ecology. We are very fortunate that this is not the case with Bhutan, and we must never, never make such mistakes.

Dasho Paljor Dorji, Deputy Minister for Social Services; President, Royal Society for the Protection of Nature

takin, snow leopards, wolves, and lamergiers. In between, the area called the inner Himalaya provides habitat for more adaptable species like the Himalayan black bear and leopard.

Bhutan's location has fostered rich biological diversity but also political and cultural isolation. Before the age of air travel, reaching Bhutan meant either crossing the Himalayas or slogging through the malaria-infested jungles of

the southern plains. Westerners did not reach Bhutan until the 17th century, when Portuguese missionaries Joao Cabral and Estevoa Caccella came north through India. By that time a form of Tibetan Buddhism had been in place in Bhutan for several hundred years.

The history of Bhutanese culture stretches back over one thousand years, but the country had no clearly established borders until relatively recently.

The word Bhutan, in fact, may have evolved from the Sanskrit for "end of Tibet." In the early 17th century, however, a Tibetan lama or high priest named Ngawang Namgyal came to Bhutan and united various Buddhist factions and established a religious state based on the Drukpa sect. By mid-century Namgyal had written laws and established a lasting system of civil and religious administration, and he is considered the founder of modern Bhutan.¹ The Bhutanese refer to their country as Druk-yul, or Land of the Thunder Dragon, a name derived from Namgyal's form of Buddhism.

Bhutan and Tibet have long been closely tied in terms of religion and language—Dzongkha, Bhutan's national language, traces its roots to Tibetan—and for centuries Bhutan looked to her northern neighbor for trade. The first contact with the British Empire in India came in 1722. At that time Bhutan was in the midst of several centuries of civil wars between the penlops, or regional governors. In 1907 the most powerful penlop, Ugyen Wangchuck, became hereditary king—called Druk Gyalpo, the Precious Ruler of the Dragon People. The creation of the Wangchuck dynasty led to effective

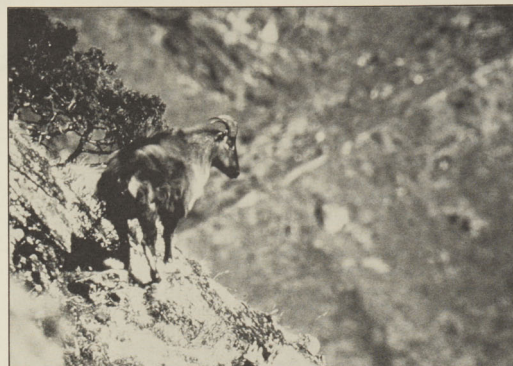
national government for the first time in Bhutan's history.²

Isolation continued to be the rule after the Wangchuck family came to power, however, and not until 1968, two centuries after the first official contact with the British raj, did Bhutan allow a representative of India's government to be stationed at the capital of Thimpu. This came during the rule of the first King's grandson, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, an enlightened ruler who sought the economic, political, and social development of Bhutan, while also preserving its cultural and natural heritage. Jigme Dorji Wangchuck abolished slavery and in 1953 he established the Gyalong Tsogdu or National Assembly. This form of constitutional monarchy remains in place today.

The King died in 1972 and his son, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, then 16 years old, was crowned two years later. The present King, like his father before him, has presided over the gradual opening of Bhutan. The King, however, is acutely sensitive to the risk that development poses for Bhutan's rich cultural and natural heritage, particularly in view of its long isolation. In May, 1980, the King told *Newsweek* magazine, "What we want to achieve is a balance between gross national product and gross national happiness."

Bhutan now looks south to India for trade and development assistance, as the border with Tibet was closed in 1959 following the takeover by the Chinese. The first road to the outside world linked the western Bhutan city of Paro to Jaigoan, India, in 1961. Bhutan now has an ambitious road-building scheme, and three north-south roads to the Indian border—including one from Thimpu to Phuntsholing that is called the "gateway to Bhutan"—have been completed, along with a major road from Ha in the west to Tashigang in the east.

Though more open to outside influences than ever before, life in Bhutan has changed little in hundreds of years. Most activity centers around the dzongs, ancient, castle-like monasteries that often dominate the landscape. The lamas have tremendous influence on daily life—along with their religious



The Himalayan tahr, a relative of the mountain goat, is found all along the southern face of the Himalayas from Kashmir to Bhutan (Galen Rowell)

duties, they also have a representative body in the National Assembly.

WWF has been involved in assisting conservation in Bhutan since 1977, and established a full country program there in 1986. WWF's conservation activities have focused on building Bhutan's protected area system so it will encompass the diverse habitats found in the country, and developing infrastructure and improved management and protection for Royal Manas National Park, Bhutan's first national park.

WWF also seeks to increase the self-sufficiency and effectiveness of the government's Department of Forests. Under the stewardship of Dasho Dorji Tenzing, the department has become a champion of the environment and ecologically sound development planning. Another focus of WWF's efforts in Bhutan is the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, a nongovernmental organization established to increase public awareness of conservation, and to promote environmental education.

Dr. Bruce Bunting, director of WWF's Asia Program, ranks Bhutan among the top conservation priorities on the continent. "In Bhutan, WWF has the unique opportunity to assist a government whose enlightened leadership is committed to conservation and

still has most of its natural resources left intact," Bunting says.

In the past, development and its attendant growth has often led to environmental degradation. Though Bhutan's environment remains intact compared to India or Nepal, a growing population threatens wildlife habitats and deforestation and soil erosion are growing problems. Bhutan is remarkable not because it faces no environmental threats, but because of its foresight in addressing the threats that exist.

Development in Bhutan follows none of the patterns cut elsewhere in the developing world. Bhutan in 1986 rejected a World Bank project to build the Manas-Sankosh Dam on the Manas River because it would have flooded one of the most spectacular wildlife areas in the country, and the King halted construction of a major marble quarry because it was visually polluting. Having come late to the development scene, Bhutan wishes to avoid the mistakes of others.

Royal Manas National Park

The area that would have been flooded by the proposed dam lies squarely in the middle of what is now Royal Manas National Park, the first park in Bhutan to meet international standards. The park, established with WWF's assist-

World Wildlife Fund Letter

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World Wildlife Fund is the leading U.S. organization working to save endangered wildlife and habitats around the world and to protect the biological resources on which human well-being depends. It is part of the international WWF network, which includes national organizations in 23 countries and an international office in Gland, Switzerland. World Wildlife Fund is affiliated with The Conservation Foundation.

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ance, straddles the Manas River on the Indo-Bhutan border and provides habitat for golden langur, the country's last population of wild buffalo, as well as greater one-horned rhino, seasonal elephant populations, tiger, and clouded leopard. Manas also contains exotic orchids and the rare agar wood, which is used as incense and medicine in the Middle East.

Royal Manas National Park is almost a microcosm of Bhutan as a whole. Just as Bhutan encompasses several types of habitats, so within its core area of 427 square kilometers Manas has a fringe of alluvial grassland to the south, a broad belt of dry deciduous forest in the middle of the park, and moist deciduous forests in the hills to the north. Like Bhutan in general, Manas presents an opportunity to protect entire ecosystems from the outset.

Just across the border from Royal Manas National park is India's Manas Tiger Reserve, which has been designated a World Heritage Site for its diverse flora and fauna. Together the two parks cover over 1,000 square kilometers and include the entire Manas ecosystem, making it one of the most important conservation areas on the Indian sub-continent.

Though only recently designated a national park, Manas has been protected for many years, first as a royal hunting reserve and then as a wildlife sanctuary. The natural ecosystems here have not been overexploited, though there has been some encroachment by settlers and some clearing of land for agriculture. Poaching has also become a problem in the southern part of the park, as has the stealing of agar wood.

WWF has helped train rangers and wardens for Manas, and provided funds to mark the park boundaries and to build guard posts and a patrol road. In addition to protecting the park, WWF is helping to open it to visitors by constructing a nature study center and hostel, as well as initiating conservation education and awareness programs.

Manas shares most of India's elephants north of the Brahmaputra river, and hundreds of elephants use the park's dry deciduous forest and



grasslands. Elephants are protected in Bhutan but numbers have declined due to loss of habitat. An estimated 10 to 25 rhinos live in the lower third of Manas, but they are in constant danger from poachers. Tigers are the most adaptable large mammal in Manas, and the estimated 30 to 40 tigers that live here make use of all the park's habitats. India's Manas Tiger Reserve has another 80 to 100 tigers.

Bhutan has a system of 10 protected areas in addition to Manas, and two more have been proposed. All told, approximately 20% of the land area has been set aside as wildlife sanctuaries, reserved forests, nature reserves, and the one national park. Unfortunately, not much has been achieved in most of the areas due to financial and manpower constraints. Some of the currently protected areas are so vast that they could never be managed effectively—

one park covers most of the northern third of the country (see map).

WWF has helped strengthen the ability of Bhutan's Department of Forestry to manage these parks and reserves more effectively. WWF and the government are studying ways to expand the system, including a new reserve in the Black Mountains of central Bhutan—the most heavily populated and thus most ecologically threatened area—as well as improved

management and protection for the large Jigme Dorji Wildlife Sanctuary in the north. WWF provides technical and financial support for training the staff of the Department of Forestry's Wildlife Division, which is responsible for protected area management, and is also helping to expand the curriculum at Bhutan's forestry school to include an inservice training program in wildlife conservation and management.

Dasho Dorji Tenzing, Secretary of the Department of Forestry, believes a well-managed system of protected areas is an essential part of Bhutan's overall conservation strategy. "Preserving Bhutan's great diversity of flora and fauna means we need effective management and trained personnel in order to maintain protected areas in their pristine state. Development can proceed slowly, but protecting our environment demands our full attention now."

Population, Development, and the Environment

In Bhutan as elsewhere in the developing world, population growth poses a threat to natural resources. Though only 5 percent of Bhutan is cultivated or inhabited, the rugged countryside means that few areas suitable for new settlement remain. Bhutan's population of 1.5 million is growing at a rate estimated at 2 percent per year, and the population density remains low, at just 32 people per square km. Nevertheless, even this low rate of population growth is associated with an increase in domestic livestock which is resulting in soil erosion, disruption of water supplies, flood damage as well as depletion of wildlife populations and their habitats.

Bhutan's population growth rate falls below that of India, Nepal, and Burma. In fact, most of Bhutan's national statistics place it at the bottom of the region in terms of growth and standard of living and provide the backdrop for the government's interest in development.

Some 95 percent of Bhutan's population still lives in rural areas. Even Thimphu, Bhutan's largest city has only 20,000 people. Most of Bhutan's people are subsistence farmers, who till the rich soil in the valleys that produces two harvests a year of rice, barley, wheat, and corn.

Bhutan's infant mortality is the highest in the region, and among the highest in the world, and the life expectancy of just 46 years is the shortest in Asia. Widespread disease—especially diarrhea/dysentery, respiratory tract infections, and malaria—and a shortage of medical personnel and facilities ac-

of medical personnel and facilities account in large part for the poor state of public health in Bhutan. The high infant mortality, combined with a low fertility rate, keeps Bhutan's population down. According to the population division of the United Nations, Bhutan is one of just a handful of developing countries that considers its birth rate to be too low.³

Most Bhutanese, however, own land, and many families own two homes, one for winter in the lower valleys, another for summer higher up. Few people in Bhutan go hungry. According to the World Bank, the Bhutanese have a daily per capita intake of 2500 calories, 25 percent higher than for South Asia as a whole.⁴

Bhutan thus feels free to develop slowly, and its conservative development policies, based on a succession of five-year plans beginning in 1960, have led to increased support from international donors, particularly India, and a steady increase in the standard of living. Life expectancy and school enrollment have both increased since 1980.

Bhutan's Forest Policy stands out as an example of Bhutan's priorities. His Majesty the King personally helped draft a policy that would "ensure primarily the preservation of the environment, and only thereafter deriva-

tion of economic benefits that flow from a rationally managed resource."⁵

The forest policy sets a new standard for nature conservation in the developing world. Its goal: maintain forests over not less than 60 percent of the country. This lofty ideal may be attained in Bhutan, in part because Bhutan nationalized all logging in 1979, and thus pre-empted an unplanned acceleration of commercial logging. According to the forest policy, if the forested area falls below 60 percent then reforestation must take place immediately. If, however, more than 60 percent of the country is in forest, the excess should not be put to nonforestry use.

Sangey Thinley, Director of Forests, believes the conservation movement has begun to grow in Bhutan. "Nature conservation efforts have gained support and strength," he says. "More than ever before, people are aware of the importance of nature conservation and preservation of the ecosystem for the well-being of the country. It is up to the forest department to improve upon it and maintain the momentum."

Building on the firm foundation provided by the forest policy, the government of Bhutan has gone on to draft a new Forest and Nature Conservation Act, to replace an old forestry

law enacted in 1969. The new law expands the forestry policy to include forests, wildlife, biological diversity and related natural resources. This legislation, like the forest policy before it, sets goals that are simple yet astounding; it protects, almost without exception, all wildlife throughout Bhutan.

Environmental Education

Many of Bhutan's conservation plans depend on new laws and new technologies that will lead to the more efficient use of natural resources. Both the laws and the technologies depend in turn on well-educated, highly trained individuals. Unfortunately, Bhutan still lacks this skilled labor force. To address the problem the Bhutanese government has made developing the education system a top priority.

Most children in Bhutan must stay at home to work the farm, and thus few can attend school. The school system has only been in existence since 1960, and many areas still have no facilities. Those children able to attend school must walk long distances or else go to a boarding school. Only about one-fifth of children aged six to eleven enroll in primary school, even though attendance is mandatory through grade seven.

Bhutan currently has almost 66,000 students in 195 schools—some of these are vocational training centers—with almost 2,500 teachers. The government hopes to establish 15 more primary schools over the next three years, and to introduce the concept of pre-primary schools. Bhutan has one degree-level institution, Sherubtse College in Kanglung in eastern Bhutan.

As part of its comprehensive plan for Bhutan, WWF originally proposed a conservation education campaign based on a mobile education unit. The Royal Government of Bhutan, however, took the idea further by suggesting a plan to incorporate an environmental education curriculum into every primary and secondary school in the country.

Emilie Mead, the WWF staff officer in charge of the education project, says the commitment of the Ministry of Education has been invaluable in making the project work. "The

Asia harbors some of the earth's most distinctive wildlife, including tigers, pandas, and snow leopards, and some of its richest ecosystems. But Asia is also the world's most heavily populated continent, so conservation of wildlife and natural resources has become an ever more pressing concern. WWF has been working in Asia for over a quarter of a century, and initiated a full-fledged Asia program in 1985. WWF now has projects stretching from Pakistan to the Philippines.

Of the 21 countries in the Asia program region, WWF is active in 13: Australia, Bhutan, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. The WWF program in Asia is an integral part of the overall WWF program, coordinated by WWF-International. Since 1961, the WWF family has provided more than \$20 million in grants alone to support conservation in Asia.

In Asia and throughout the world, WWF seeks to promote conservation through diverse means. In addition to developing systems of parks and protected areas, WWF promotes institutional self-sufficiency among governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in conservation, while also integrating conservation

THE ASIA PROGRAM

with ecologically sound development. In each country, WWF seeks to promote and establish a conservation ethic based in local culture, and to provide the training and information local people will need to make conservation work.

Among WWF's projects in Asia are the following:

■ In *Nepal*, WWF and a local nongovernmental organization, the King Mahendra Trust, are carrying out the Annapurna Conservation Area project. This project combines wildlife and habitat protection with sustainable development for agriculture, forestry, and tourism—activities that provide income to mountain villagers and relieve pressures to clear forests.

■ In *Thailand*, WWF has an invaluable ally in Wildlife Fund Thailand (WFT). Together, WWF and WFT are working to protect such important wildlife areas as Khao Yai National Park and the Huay Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary.

■ Only about 50 Javan rhinos survive in the wild. Their last known habitat is *Indonesia's* Ujung Kulon National Park on the island of Java, though some may remain in Vietnam. WWF is supporting biological surveys of rhino and banteng—a type of wild ox—in the park as part of an Asia-wide

project to preserve large mammals and their habitats.

■ WWF has pioneered the use of the debt-for-nature swap as a conservation tool. In the *Philippines*, WWF has agreed to purchase \$2 million of debt which will be converted into local currency to support a variety of conservation projects.

■ The giant panda may be the most recognizable animal on earth. WWF supports studies on the biology and ecology of the giant panda in *The People's Republic of China*, and has helped build a research and captive breeding center in Wolong Nature Reserve in central China. WWF has also helped train Chinese wildlife managers and developed and supports implementation of a management plan for a system of reserves to protect the giant panda.

■ In *Malaysia*, WWF is conducting a conservation education program designed to promote public awareness of the positive role that conservation of natural resources has to play in the economic and social development of the country. WWF is also working to protect the four species of marine turtles that can be found in Malaysia.

■ Across Asia, WWF provides fellowships to support training for a variety of conservation professionals.



The Manas River in Royal Manas National Park. The park, established with WWF's assistance, is the first park in Bhutan to meet international standards. (Bruce Bunting/WWF)

Bhutanese have been extremely supportive all long," she says. "Although the concept for an education program initially came from WWF, we didn't think the Department of Education would embrace the idea so strongly. The Bhutanese pushed the idea of incorporating environmental education country-wide, and as a result the project improved dramatically from the one we had in mind to begin with." A Bhutanese educator, Chhador Wangdi,

trained in the United States for two months and then returned to Bhutan to conduct a training workshop—which was held in Royal Manas National Park—for primary and secondary school teachers as well as government officials from the Departments of Education and Forestry. He and another officer from the Department of Education will update the science texts used in the school system to incorporate environmental issues such as pollution,

forestry, and wildlife management into existing disciplines. Wangdi also plans to initiate model conservation clubs in three secondary schools and the Institute for Education at Samchi—Sherubtse College already has a club—to promote interest in Bhutan's natural heritage.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Nature

Government sponsored efforts like the education program, while critical, cannot stand alone. WWF has helped establish an effective, non-governmental organization in Bhutan that can provide educational programs on conservation and promote public awareness. WWF provided legal assistance in drafting the by-laws and articles of incorporation of the first private conservation organization in the country, the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, which is headed by Dasho Paljor Dorji, the Deputy Minister for Social Services of Bhutan and the King's first cousin.

The Royal Society has been promoting environmental awareness in Bhutan, and their efforts complement the education program sponsored by the government. Last year the Society sponsored the All Bhutan Art and Essay Competition for the Environment, which was held in conjunction with Bhutan's first "environment day" and involved 150 schools. The contest was so popular that in its second year only five students from each school—nominated by their peers—were allowed to submit entries.

Emilie Mead presented the awards for the contest during her visit to Bhutan in early spring, and she noted tremendous enthusiasm among the students and administrators. "At one junior high

school, the main bulletin board was covered with essays and art work all on wildlife or 'why we need forests.'" Mead says. "Even though not all the students could submit entries to the contest, the theme alone inspired great interest about the environment."

In addition to raising public awareness of conservation issues through programs like the art contest, the Royal Society also helps shape government environmental policies. The Society, for example, participated in a successful lobbying effort for a reforestation program in areas that have been hurt by a serious bark beetle attack.

The Society has also taken a national tiger census and conducts annual surveys of the rare black-necked cranes at their winter nesting grounds in Bhutan. Few such surveys of Bhutan's wildlife have ever been conducted. The Society also persuaded the government to declare two areas—at Phobjikha and Bomdiling—as protected habitat for the cranes. The Phobjikha valley was to be drained for potato farming, but due to the Society's efforts it has now been designated as a sanctuary.

The Future of Conservation in Bhutan

"Conservation in Bhutan is unlike conservation anywhere else in the world," WWF's Bruce Bunting says, with some awe. "The Bhutanese people and their government have a unique regard for their environment, and they are doing things right from the start. The Bhutanese message is one of hope and promise, and it should be an example for other nations."

The message is also one of caution. So far, the Bhutanese have heeded the lessons learned from the mistakes of others. As Dasho Paljor Dorji puts it, "The first step towards saving the beauty of Bhutan is for us to establish good relations with nature, with our environment and our fellow people. If we didn't understand this, we would become slaves of all the goods that we own or want to own."

Notes

1. *Bhutan: The Dragon Kingdom in Crisis*, Nari Rustomji, Oxford University Press, 1978.
2. *Bhutan: A Physical and Cultural Geography*, Pradyumna P. Karan, University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, 1967.
3. U.N. Population Newsletter, No. 46, 12/88—issued by Population Division of the U.N.
4. "Bhutan: Development Planning in a Unique Environment," World Bank, 1989.
5. National Forest Policy of Bhutan—1985, pg. 6.



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DASHO PALJOR J. DORJI

Dasho Paljor Dorji is the Deputy Minister of Social Services for the Kingdom of Bhutan. Appointed to this position in 1988, Dasho Dorji is responsible for the largest Ministry of the Royal Government. In this capacity, he oversees the Departments of Education, Health, Housing and Public Works for the country.

Prior to his current position, Dasho Paljor Dorji was the Chief Justice of Bhutan for thirteen years. He was appointed a judge of the High Court (Bhutan's highest court) in 1972. He has also served as a District Magistrate for Bhutan. Dasho Paljor Dorji was a member of the Royal Bhutanese Army and fought in the Sino-Indian War in 1962. Dasho Dorji is the first cousin to His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck. His father, the Late Jigmie Palden Dorji, was the last Prime Minister of Bhutan.

In 1987 Dasho Dorji founded the first private conservation organization in Bhutan, the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, of which he now serves as President. The Society actively promotes awareness of nature conservation among the people of Bhutan. Dasho Dorji's strong commitment to nature conservation is reflected by his involvement in a wide scope of environmental issues from wetland conservation to pesticide use and air quality. He has been a constant and dynamic force behind many of World Wildlife Fund's activities in Bhutan.

He received his primary and secondary education from St. Joseph's School in India. He was also trained at the Wangchuck Lo Dzong Military Academy in Bhutan and received his commission from the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, England.

Dasho Paljor Dorji has received several prestigious distinctions from the Royal Family of Bhutan. Among them, the awarding of the Red Scarf in 1969. This honor is bestowed by The King of Bhutan and signifies the receipt of the title "Dasho," a term of foremost respect. Dasho Dorji was also awarded the Orange Scarf in 1985, signifying the attainment of the level of Deputy Minister. Paljor Dorji is the recipient of the 1988 United Nations Environment Program's Global 500 Award for achievement in the field of conservation.

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October 2, 1989

Mr. Stuart Gentling and
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Dear Nancy and Stuart:

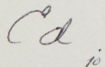
Enclosed is a bit of background on Dasho Paljor Dorji, our Guest of Honor for Wednesday's dinner. Also enclosed is a WWF Newsletter which gives a bit of background on Bhutan and World Wildlife Fund work there.

(A quick comment on the name "Dasho Paljor Dorji": "Dasho" is a title in Bhutan which is roughly equivalent to "Sir" in Britain; "Paljor" is his first name; and "Dorji" is his family name. It would be proper if you began by addressing him as "Dasho Paljor", and then in conversations simply as "Dasho". Dasho Paljor's friends call him "Benji", which is a nickname, and sometimes he is even addressed as "Dasho Benji". You may hear Bruce Bunting or me use this name during the course of the evening, he would probably not be offended if anyone slipped and called him "Dasho Benji" after formal introductions were behind us and Joe-T's concoctions into us.)

Accompanying Dasho Paljor to Fort Worth will be Dr. Bruce Bunting, Director of Asian Programs for W.W.F., and his wife, Jessie Brinkley, Director of Special Contributors for W.W.F. Bruce will be accompanying all of our activities in Nepal, and was instrumental in putting together a program, funded in part by F.W.Z.S. through W.W.F., for the conservation of the Greater One Horned Rhinoceros in Nepal.

Dasho Paljor, Bruce and Jessie are all close friends of mine, are all interesting and fun people, and are certainly looking forward to visiting Fort Worth. I look forward to seeing you at Joe T's, in the Garden, at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, 4-October, casual.

Cheers,



E. P. Bass