



BHUTAN



A Brief Biography of His Excellency Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley

Lyonchhen Jigmi Yoeser Thinley was born on September 9, 1952 in Bumthang and has been the Prime Minister of Bhutan since April 2008. “Lyonchhen” is a title meaning “Prime Minister”. He received his Bachelor degree with honors from Delhi University (India) and completed his Master’s degree from Pennsylvania State University, USA.

Prime Minister Thinley during one of the Parliamentary session.

He joined the civil service in 1974. In February, 1987, he was awarded the title of Dasho and the Red Scarf, and in 1990, under the zonal system, he became Administrator of the Eastern Zone. He then became Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1992 before being appointed as Deputy Minister of Home Affairs in January, 1994, which was when he was also awarded the Orange Scarf. Later, in 1994, he was appointed as Bhutan’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva.

Prior to the establishment of democracy, he served as Prime Minister twice, from July 20, 1998, to July 9, 1999, and from August 30, 2003, to August 20, 2004. During this period, the one-year Chairmanship of the Council of Ministers was based on rotation, with the order of rotation decided by the number of votes secured during election to the council. Jigmi Yoeser Thinley was also the Foreign Minister from 1998 until 2003 and subsequently served as Home and Cultural Affairs Minister. On June 2, 1999, Jigmi Y. Thinley was awarded the Druk Thuksey and Coronation medals. On December 17, 2008, he was awarded the Druk Wangyal, one of the highest medals of





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Honor, for excellence in carrying out his duties.

In March, 2008, he stood as leader of the political party, Druk Phuensum Tshogpa (DPT), in Bhutan's first democratic election. His party won 45 of the 47 seats in the National Assembly, which enabled Jigmi Y. Thinley to become Bhutan's first ever elected Prime Minister. He took office on April 9, 2008.

Jigmi Y. Thinley blamed the global economic crisis of 2008-2009 on "insatiable human greed" and stressed a need to instead focus on the Bhutanese notion of Gross National Happiness (GNH). His government works to base its policies on GNH rather than purely economic considerations.

In July, 2009, Jigmi Y. Thinley became a member of the SNV Netherlands Development Organization's International Advisory Board and has since contributed his experience to the organization's poverty reduction and sustainable development work.

Gardening, Golf and Trekking come into his activities of special interest. ■



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1. Prime Minister Thinley with former Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Aso Taro.

2. Prime Minister Thinley with Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

3. Prime Minister Thinley with Indian President Pratibha Patil.

4. Prime Minister Thinley taking his best shot in Archery, the very National Game of Bhutan.

5. Prime Minister Thinley with Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

