

PM Modi's Visit To Bhutan

Why In News

- Prime Minister Modi is on a **two day State visit** to further cement India's unique relations with Bhutan as part of **India's 'Neighbourhood First' Policy**.
- The two countries exchanged several **MoUs and signed agreements** in the fields of energy, trade, digital connectivity, space and agriculture, and finalised the MoU on the establishment of rail links between the two nations.



All About The Visit

- India will provide support of **ten thousand crore rupees** to Bhutan over the next five years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday assured **Bhutan's top leadership that India** will stand by the Himalayan kingdom in its quest for development and that their unique bilateral ties would create avenues for greater cooperation in connectivity, infrastructure, trade and energy sectors.
- This was **Modi's second meeting with his Bhutanese counterpart** this month. Tobgay visited New Delhi last week, his first foreign trip after assuming the charge of the top office in January.
- India and Bhutan **exchanged several agreements** of mutual interest to further strengthen their partnership.

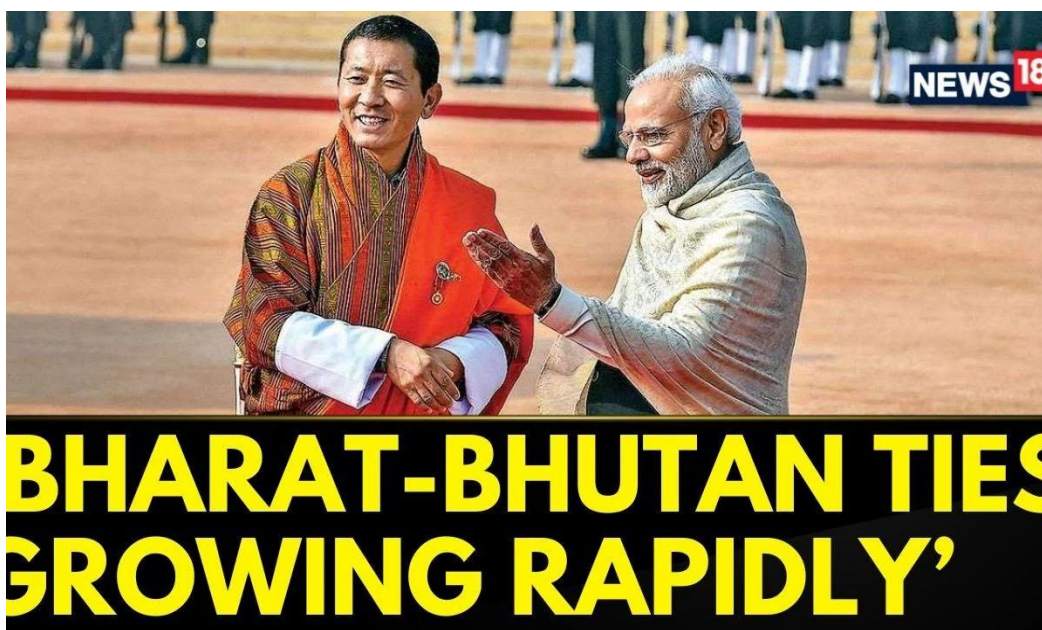


- The documents were **exchanged between India and Bhutan** in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay in Thimphu.
- India is **providing support to various digital programmes** like E-Business National Single Window, Bhutan Integrated Taxation System, Integrated Citizen Services, and Digital School to enable Bhutan becoming a smart, connected and inclusive society.
- Prime Minister reached Paro this morning on a two day State Visit to Bhutan. He was warmly received by his Bhutan counterpart Tshering Tobgay at Paro airport and accorded a ceremonial welcome.

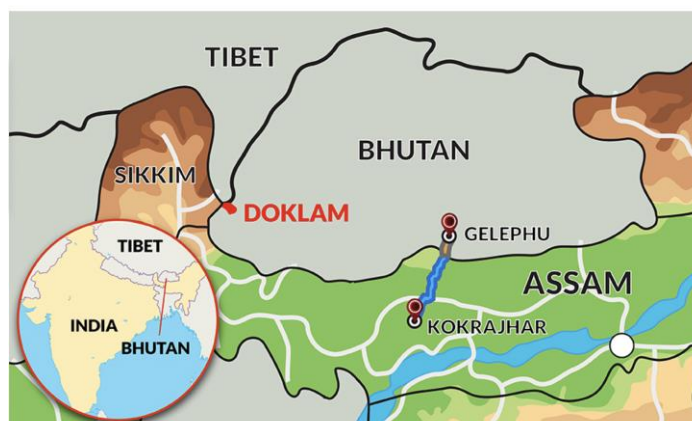


- During the visit, **Prime Minister will have the audience** with King of Bhutan **Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck**, and Fourth King of Bhutan **Jigme Singye Wangchuck**.

- Prime Minister Modi will also inaugurate the Gyaltsuen **Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital** in Thimphu. The state-of-the-art hospital has been built with the assistance of India in Thimphu.



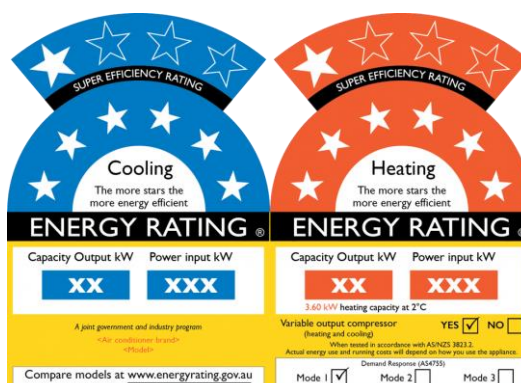
- India and Bhutan enjoy long-standing and exceptional ties characterised by utmost trust, goodwill, and mutual understanding at all levels, the MEA said.
- "Ahead of the meeting, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister of Bhutan witnessed exchange of several MoUs/Agreements on energy, trade, digital **connectivity, space, agriculture, and youth connect among others,**" the statement said.
- In addition, both sides have also "agreed on and initialled the text of the MoU" on the establishment of **rail links between India and Bhutan,** India's Ministry of External Affairs here said.



- The MoU provides for the establishment of two proposed rail links between India and Bhutan, including the **Kokrajhar-Gelephu rail link and Banarhat-Samtse rail link** and their implementation modalities, it said.
- MoU on general supply of **Petroleum, Oil, Lubricants (POL)** and related products from India to Bhutan provides for a list of petroleum, oil, lubricants related items. India would facilitate its supply to Bhutan through agreed entry/exit points, the statement said.
- Agreement for recognition of official control exercised by **Bhutan Food And Drug Authority (BFDA) by the Food Safety and Standards Authority Of India (FSSAI)** will facilitate the trade between India and Bhutan by promoting ease of doing business and reducing compliance costs on both sides.
- The MoU will make the export inspection certificate issued by **BFDA acceptable by FSSAI for compliance** with requirements prescribed by FSSAI while exporting the products to India.



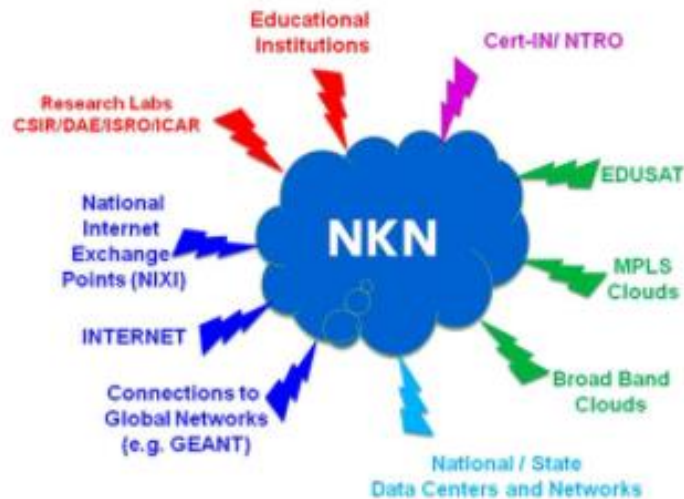
- The MoU on cooperation in the field of **Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation** measures aims to assist Bhutan in enhancing energy efficiency in the household sector by promoting a star labelling programme developed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.



- The MoU covers facilitating the formulation of **building codes based on India's experience**, creation of a pool of energy professionals at Bhutan by institutionalising training of energy auditors etc.
- The **MoU on cooperation in Sports and Youth** would help further the people-to-people linkages between India and Bhutan by advancing linkages between sports agencies of both sides and conducting sports activities/programmes.
- The MoU on cooperation concerning sharing **reference standards, pharmacopoeia**, vigilance and testing of medicinal products.




- This MoU would help further develop our close cooperation and exchange information in the field of the **regulation of medicines** under the respective laws and regulations of each side.
- The MoU would allow for the acceptance of Indian **Pharmacopoeia by Bhutan as a book of standards** for medicines and supply of generic medicines at affordable prices.
- A **Joint Plan of Action (JPOA)** on Space Cooperation provides a concrete roadmap for further developing our space cooperation through exchange programmes, training etc.
- The Renewal of MoU on Peering Arrangement between **National Knowledge Network of India (NKN)** and **Druk Research And Education Network of Bhutan**.
- This MoU is between the National Knowledge Network (NKN) of India and the Druk Research and Education Network (DrukREN) of Bhutan to renew the peering agreement between NKN and DrukREN, The MoU will enhance digital connectivity between India and Bhutan and will benefit the scholars and research institutions of Bhutan.



- Prime Minister Shri **Narendra Modi** was conferred the **Order of the Druk Gyalpo**, **Bhutan's highest civilian decoration**, by His Majesty the King of Bhutan in a public ceremony at the Tendrelthang, Thimphu.
- Prime Minister Modi is the **first foreign leader** to be given this prestigious award. Prime Minister underlined that the award was an honour bestowed on the 1.4 billion people of Bharat and a testament to the special and unique ties between the two countries.



- As per ranking and precedence established, the **Order of the Druk Gyalpo** was instituted as the decoration for lifetime achievement and is the pinnacle of the honor system in Bhutan, taking precedence over all orders, decorations and medals.

 **INDIA-BHUTAN**

MoUs/AGREEMENT/PLAN OF ACTION

State Visit of PM Narendra Modi to Bhutan

- MoU on general supply of Petroleum, Oil, Lubricants (POL) and related products from India to Bhutan
- Agreement for recognition of official control exercised by Bhutan Food And Drug Authority (BFDA) by Food Safety and Standards Authority Of India (FSSAI)
- MoU on cooperation in the field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation measures
- MoU on cooperation in Sports and Youth
- MoU on cooperation concerning sharing reference standard, pharmacopoeia, vigilance and testing of medicinal products
- Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) on Space Cooperation
- Renewal of MoU on Peering Arrangement between National Knowledge Network of India (NKN) and Druk Research And Education Network of Bhutan
- In addition, both sides have also agreed on and initialled the text of the MoU on Establishment of Rail Links between India and Bhutan

