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**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
President's Secretariat**

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Joint Statement on the occasion of the State Visit to Bhutan by the President of India on 7-8 November, 2014

1. At the invitation of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan, the President of the Republic of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee paid a State Visit to Bhutan on 7-8 November, 2014. The President of India was accompanied by the Union Minister of State for Railways, four Members of Parliament, Secretary to the President, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials of the Government of India.

2. During the visit, the President of India held wide-ranging discussions with His Majesty the King of Bhutan including on bilateral and regional issues. The President also met His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Prime Minister Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay called on the President. His Majesty the King of Bhutan and His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo hosted lunches separately in honour of the President and his delegation. President of India delivered an address on "India-Bhutan Relations" to Bhutanese dignitaries, intelligentsia and the media at the Convention Centre, Thimphu.

3. The meetings were held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, reflecting the spirit of mutual trust, cooperation and understanding that characterise the unique and special relations between the two countries.

4. The main outcomes of the discussions were:

i. Both sides expressed satisfaction over the excellent state of bilateral relations and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen the special friendship between the two countries.

ii. The two sides reaffirmed the trust and confidence between the two countries and their mutual security interests. They agreed to continue their close coordination and cooperation with each other on issues relating to their national interest, and not allow each other's territory to be used for interests inimical to the other.

iii. Government of India reiterated its commitment to Bhutan's socio-economic development and continued support for the successful implementation of 11th Five Year Plan of the Royal Government of Bhutan (2013-18).

iv. President Shri Pranab Mukherjee reiterated the support of the Government of India to education and capacity building of Bhutan. He launched the School Reform Programme of the Royal Government of Bhutan, a Nu/Rs 3487.2 million GOI-assistance project and inaugurated the Yelchen Central School. The President announced the doubling of the Ambassador's Scholarship programme from Rs/Nu.10 million to Rs/Nu.20 million per year.

v. The Royal Government of Bhutan expressed their support to the noble ideas underlying the establishment of Nalanda University and agreed to be part of this international collaboration in the pursuit of re-establishment of linkages of knowledge across the world. By signing the MOU on the establishment of the Nalanda University, Bhutan became only the second country outside the East Asia Summit process to do so.

vi. The following three MOUs on bilateral cooperation in the field of education were also signed during the visit:

□ Between the Royal University of Bhutan and the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, for academic cooperation for English language teaching in Bhutan;

□ Between the Royal University of Bhutan and the National Innovation Foundation of India, to enable mutual cooperation and exchange of expertise and ideas.

□ Between the Royal Civil Services Commission and the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, for joint organization of training programmes and capacity building of officials of the two countries.

vii. President of India launched the up gradation project for double-laning of the East-West Highway, a Nu/Rs. 4636.57 million GOI-assistance project.

viii. The two sides agreed that their cooperation in the field of hydropower was mutually beneficial and a win-win situation for both countries. They expressed satisfaction over the progress of the three ongoing HEPs totalling 2940 MW under the inter-governmental model. They reiterated their existing commitment to the 10,000 MW initiative and in this context for the early implementation of the four JV model projects.

ix. President of India also inaugurated the Jigme Wangchuck Power Training Institute, a Nu/Rs. 337 million GoI-assisted project.

5. The visit of the President of India to Bhutan reinforced the tradition of regular visits at the highest levels, and extensive exchange of views between close friends. It further strengthened the excellent bilateral relations between India and Bhutan.

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