

Event report: tshechu in bhutan



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Information report (750 words)

Plan, research and write a report on any major event in your country- include at least three appropriate references

Topic: Thimphu Tshechu / Festival (10th day of the Bhutanese calendar)

Introduction:

In my homeland of Bhutan, we celebrate an event known as “ Tshechu”. It is an annual religious Bhutanese festival which is held on the 10th day of a month of the Bhutanese lunar calendar. Tshechu is a very grand colourful festival that is celebrated throughout the different regions of Bhutan in different months. It is celebrated for three or four days continuously and it is declared as government holiday. Tshechu is one of the festivals which defines the unique culture and tradition of Bhutan. There are 20 districts in Bhutan and in each district Tshechu is held on different days and months, but always on the 10th day of the lunar calendar. As every year “ Thimphu Tshechu” is celebrated either at the end of September or first week of October, therefore I have decided to choose “ Thimphu Tshechu as the upcoming festival in my country” as the topic for the English Certificate IV assignment. This Tshechu is witnessed by thousands of people many of which travel from neighbouring Dzongkhags (districts) to attend the festivities. The actual Tshechu is preceded by days and nights of prayer and rituals to invoke the gods (www. tourism. gov. bt, n. d).

Main Topic:

In the 746AD, the ruler of Bumthang Dzongkhag (one of the twenty districts in Bhutan in the Eastern region) popularly known as the Shindha Raja (King), fell seriously ill. Many known doctors and spiritual heads were called from India and Tibet. However, the King's illness could not be cured. On hearing this, the great saint, Guru Padmashambhava, the first born from the lotus came to Bumthang in 746AD to cure the King's illness. It was found that the King was harmed by one of the most powerful local black demon. The local demon was hiding in a deep cave. Guru Rinpoche conducted many powerful and spiritual rituals to subdue the demon but the demon refused to be summoned. Guru Padmahambhava performed one of the scarciest dances known as the Eight Manifestation of Guru Phadmashambhava. The Eight Manifestation of Guru Padmashambhava are the eight principal forms assumed by Guru Rinpoche at different points in his life (rigpawiki. org, 2015) . In the eight manifestations, Guru came in different forms depending on the circumstances. In this case of curing the Shindha Raja's illness, Guru Phadmashambhava performed different dances. The demon which was hiding in the cave got curious after a while and decided to come out to have a look in the form of a snake. At this moment, Guru Phadmashambhava took the form of Jachung or Garuda which is a large legendary bird, bird-like creature or humanoid bird (Wikipedia. org, 2017) and captured the demon. This is how Guru Phadmashambhava subdued the demon and cured Sindha Raja of his long illness.

From that Era onwards, many great saints and Lamas visiting Bhutan from India and Tibet to spread the Buddha dharma started performing the eight manifestations of Guru. Slowly, this came to be known as the Tshechu which

is celebrated on the auspicious 10th day of a month of the Bhutanese lunar calendar.

Thimphu Tshechu is one of the biggest Tshechu celebrated in Bhutan which attracts thousands of local as well as the highest number of tourists.

Tshechus are large social gatherings, which perform the function of social bonding among people of remote and spread-out villages. Large markets also congregate at the fair locations, leading to brisk commerce (wikipedia.org, 2017). During the Tshechus, the towns are decorated with bright lights and in the evening different shows are performed in the town. Many small food stalls are set up as well.

Tshechu is also an occasion for family and friends' gatherings. Every one going to see the Tshechu dresses up in their most expensive and colourful traditional dresses and ornaments. Every family packs a very grand lunch and snacks which later they have with their families, relatives and friends.

On the last day of the Tshechu, a large Thongdrel- a large unique antique hand painted and blessed painting measuring up to 9-12 metres in length and breadth which usually have the painting of Guru Padmasambhava is displayed in the early morning and is taken down before the sun rises. For many, to witness the unfurling of Thangka is to accumulate merits and receiving blessings (Zhao, 2017).

Conclusion:

Thimphu Tshechu which is celebrated in the capital of Bhutan is one of the biggest festivals celebrated in the country. This Tshechu is a much-awaited

occasion for the people of Thimphu as well as for the whole country. Tshechu celebration is a unique tradition and custom in Bhutan which serves as bridge between the ancient times and the modern times, also a platform to bind the old and the young people, share common beliefs and it also signifies the uniqueness of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

References:

1. Eight Manifestation of Guru Padmashambhava (2016). Tibetan Buddhism. Retrieved 30 August, 2016 from www.rigpawiki.org
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4. Things to know about Tshechu in Bhutan (2017). Retrieved February 10, 2017 from www.indiaodysseytours.com
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