

# 40 yrs of Bhutan-Helvetas partnership

Staff Reporter/*Thimphu*

**L**yonchhen Tshering Tobgay attended the 40 Years of Bhutan-Helvetas Partnership celebration in Thimphu yesterday.

On behalf of His Majesty the King and the people of Bhutan, Lyonchhen extended a warm welcome to Mr. Elmar Ledergerber, President of HELVETAS and his delegation, who have traveled all the way from Zurich to celebrate 40 years of HELVETAS engagement in Bhutan.

Speaking to the gathering Lyonchhen said that “the story of the friendship between Bhutan and Switzerland is a unique and fascinating one. It is how



personal friendship brought together two different nations from two different continents, but with many similarities, and shaped into an excellent model of bilateral relations. This relationship began in the early 50s through the personal friendship between His Majesty the Third Druk Gyalpo and Her Majesty The Royal Grand Mother, Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck, with Mr. Fritz Von Schulthess, a Swiss industrialist, and his wife, Monica”.

HELVETAS started operating in Bhutan since 1975. And their support extends in Bhutan’s priority areas that include livestock, agriculture, forestry, health, education, rural infrastructure and governance.