

Bhutan gets it right with 'Gross National Happiness' Index

by Dean Nelson via sadh - The Telegraph UK *Friday, May 11 2012, 9:53am*

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Happiness existed long before Jewish Bankers and the 'Economy!'

Just when the world thought all hope was lost -- with the US perpetual war, murder and plunder, doctrine -- a tiny Himalayan nation returns to the core human values of Peace, Joy and Harmony; the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan has officially adopted a Gross National Index of 'HAPPINESS' to measure the well being and REAL wealth of the nation!



Economy obsessed, Banker raped, Western nations may also learn that there is more to life than a corruption prone, artificial, inequitable, ECONOMY; rampant corruption and failure was recently demonstrated by Wall Street's complicity in the 2008 Global economic collapse.

Report from the Telegraph follows:

Bhutan's 'Gross National Happiness' index

It was first proposed in 1972 by Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the country's former King.

King Wangchuk said that instead of relying on Gross Domestic Product as the best indicator of Bhutan's progress, it should instead consider its "Gross National Happiness."

That was to be measured by its peoples' sense of being well-governed, their relationship with the environment, satisfaction with the pace of economic development, a sense of cultural and national belonging.

Pavan K Verma, India's ambassador to Bhutan and a leading social commentator, said the spread of the idea from remote Bhutan reflects the inadequacy of economic activity as a measurement of success.

"There are limits to the satisfaction economic growth by itself provides," he said.

"There's a search to look beyond material fulfilment. There are many aspects of social

life in countries as diverse as China and the United Kingdom which are falling apart, like family relations and community life. It is becoming an atomised, individualistic world. The Gross National Happiness looks at the quality of life, how much leisure time you have, what's happening in your community, and how integrated you feel with your culture."

It would be a mistake however, he added, if the idea of the Gross National Happiness was regarded as an alternative rather than a supplementary measurement. "You can't shut out material aspiration, economic development must be a part of it."

The high return rates of Bhutanese graduates studying abroad suggests there is something to "Gross National Happiness": most return home, even though salaries are significantly lower than overseas, Mr Verma pointed out.

But, despite the influence of King Jigme Singye Wangchuk's idea, Bhutan is not everyone's idea of Shangri La.

Earlier this year, the country's National Statistics Bureau revealed high acceptance levels of domestic violence. Around 70 per cent of women felt they deserved to be beaten if they refused to have sex with their husbands, argued with them or burned the dinner.

The country has also faced criticism for expelling residents it claims are illegal Nepali immigrants, but who some human rights groups assert were citizens opposed to the monarchy.

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