

Staff reporter Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay arrived in Dhaka Saturday morning on a three-day official visit at the invitation of his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina. This is Tobgay's first visit to Bangladesh since he assumed office in July 2013, which is exactly the day when Bhutan recognised Bangladesh as an independent state in 1971. An aircraft of Royal Bhutan Airlines 'Drukair' carrying the Bhutanese PM and the members of his entourage landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport here at 9.02 am. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received the Bhutanese premier at the VVIP Tarmac of the airport at 9.12 am when he alighted from the aircraft. A tiny tot presented a bouquet to Tshering Tobgay. On arrival at the airport, the Bhutanese Prime Minister was given a guard of honour by a smartly-turned out contingent drawn from the three services. Accompanied by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Bhutanese PM took salute from a decorated dais. He later inspected the guard. The national anthems of the two countries were played at that time. Sheikh Hasina later took Tshering Tobgay to the presentation line and introduced her cabinet colleagues and other dignitaries to him. The Bhutanese Prime Minister also introduced his entourage to Sheikh Hasina. Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan were present at the airport. Besides, the chiefs of the three services, the PM's Principal Secretary and Press Secretary, the Foreign Secretary, the Inspector General of Police, the dean of the diplomatic corps, the Bhutanese Ambassador in Dhaka and high civil and military officials were present. After the warm reception at the airport, the Bhutanese Prime Minister went to Savar National Memorial where he paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the War of Liberation. The Bhutanese Prime Minister was accompanied by his Foreign Minister Rinzin Dorji, Minister for Economic Affairs Norbu Wangchuk and other senior officials, in addition to a business delegation. He will later meet Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office at 5:10pm and hold bilateral talks on a wide range of issues relating to bilateral relations and other matters of common interest. Cooperation in the areas of electricity, connectivity, trade between the two countries, water resources management and culture are likely to be discussed at the meeting. After the meeting, several deals are expected to be signed which will be witnessed by the two primiers. Before the bilateral talks, they will have a tete-a-tete from 3:15. During the visit, the Bhutanese Prime Minister will pay a courtesy call on President Abdul Hamid. He will also meet several other senior leaders, including Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed and Health Minister Mohammad Nasim. Meanwhile, local business leaders and their Bhutanese counterparts will meet here on Saturday to explore business opportunities between the South Asian countries. The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) will host the event, 'Networking Business Meeting', at its meeting room. A 10-member business delegation will attend the meeting with the leaders of the country's apex trade body - FBCCI.