



Deputy speaker of German parliament visits
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7 August 2005 - On an eight-day visit to Bhutan, from August 4 to 11, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Germany, Dr. Antje Vollmer, said that her intention was to personally experience Bhutan, its people, and the well-preserved culture, of which she had heard so much about.

“For a long time I have wanted to come here,” said Dr. Antje Vollmer. “I was often told about the beauty of the country and the wisdom of the King which attracted me to visit your country.”

Dr. Antje Vollmer, who received an audience with His Majesty the King on August 5, said that she had a long and interesting meeting with His Majesty on varying issues.

Talking to the local media, the deputy speaker said that on different levels, both the countries were passing through an important phase of bringing complicated reforms. “We need to bring in major changes to our social systems and need to put in more efforts to do that,” she said. “But with the sound advice and the good leadership of your extraordinary and charismatic King, I don’t see any problems for Bhutan in bringing these changes.”



Dr. Antje Vollmer

“Germany has been through major political upheavals in the past but now we are stable and we would like to share our experiences with Bhutan and support you in whatever way we can,” she added.

Describing herself as a ‘green politician’, Dr. Antje Vollmer said that she was impressed by Bhutan’s efforts to maintain the green environment. “You are doing a lot to save your forests, the landscape and the pureness of the water which is very impressive,” she said.

Dr. Antje Vollmer met the foreign minister, Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, the chief justice, Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye, and the speaker of the National Assembly, Dasho Ugyen Dorji. During her stay, the deputy speaker will visit the German assisted site of the suspension bridge in Punakha, the Punakha hospital and places of religious and historical interests.

A politician and a publicist, Dr. Antje Vollmer joined the German Bundestag as a member of the parliamentary group of The Greens in 1983. She worked in a number of German newspapers and magazines before she was appointed as the vice-president of the German Bundestag in 1994. In 2003, Dr. Antje Vollmer was awarded the Masaryk Order by the Czech Republic for services to German-Czech reconciliation.

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