

The Vital Link Monpas and Their Forests BHUTAN

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Seeta Giri

The Monpas are an indigenous community living in the buffer zone of the Black Mountain National Park. They are considered to be the first inhabitants of Bhutan. The current Monpa population in the Trongsa and Wangdi districts is 370. They speak Monkha, a distinct dialect of Tibeto-Burman origin. Preserving the environment, sacred and natural heritage sites are an important and integral part of the Bon value system, which the Monpas practise to this day. However, this small community is witnessing a gradual but steady change in its traditional way of life.

The book “The Vital Link: Monpas and Their Forests” provides a chastening insight into the origin, history, and culture of the Monpas and how this community and their forests have co-existed and sustained each other for ages.

The proceeds from the sale of this book will go to support the welfare of the Monpas of Jangbi, Wangling and Phumzur.

Cover photo: Ap Pem Choto, Jangbi Village

Dr. Seeta Giri was born and brought up in Daifam, a small village in the south-eastern part of Bhutan. Since 1994, she has been deeply involved in the management of natural resources both at the national and community level. She has traveled extensively within the country and gained much insight into the different lifestyles and cultures of remote communities such as the Brokpas, Layaps, Lhops, and Khengpas, amongst others. “The Vital Link” is the fruit of her passion to work with rural communities and to learn about their traditional values and practices that have a powerful bearing on the environment.

Dr. Seeta Giri is currently working with the UNDP (Bhutan), a multilateral organization that provides assistance in the areas of poverty reduction, good governance, and environmental preservation.

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