



During the 16th SAARC Summit in Thimphu, Bhutan in April 2010, President Mahinda Rajapaksa toured the construction site of Buddha Dordenma Statue at Kuenselphodrang in Thimphu. Pleased with the ongoing progress of the construction of the statue, and as a manifestation of Sri Lanka's support for this project in the context of the spiritual bonds between the two countries, President Rajapaksa offered a token financial contribution towards the successful completion of the project.

The Buddha Dordenma is a 169 ft tall statue of the Shakyamuni Buddha under construction in a mountain top of Bhutan, overlooking the southern approach to Thimphu. It is situated amidst the ruins of Kuensel Phodrang, the palace of Sherab Wangchuk, the 13th *Desi Druk*, a former statesman of Bhutan of the 18

th

century. The statue, which symbolizes indestructibility, when completed is expected to house over one hundred thousand smaller Buddha Statues.

On behalf of the President of Sri Lanka, Prasad Kariyawasam, non-resident envoy of Sri Lanka to Bhutan handed over a cheque of USD 10,000/- to Ambassador of Bhutan in New Delhi.