



**ROYAL VISIT.** Villagers welcome Britain's Prince Harry during his visit in Lamjung District in Nepal. The British royal extended his five-day trip last month by an additional six days to help rebuild a school damaged by last year's devastating earthquake. (Pradeep Raj Onta/National News Agency of Nepal via AP)

## Prince Harry smears red powder on Nepal villagers

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Britain's Prince Harry smeared red powder on villagers in Nepal celebrating the *Holi* festival marking the beginning of spring.

Harry visited Okhari village to observe the reconstruction of a secondary school damaged by a devastating earthquake last year.

Local media showed Harry smearing colored powder on villagers, who did the same to the prince, who was wearing a white shirt. His face and cheeks were covered with the red powder.

Nepal recently abolished its centuries-old monarchy. It is hard for Nepalese to imagine celebrating the *Holi* festival with the Himalayan nation's royals when they were in power.

During his trip to the school, Harry spent time talking to students and villagers and played a volleyball match.

He later flew to the resort town of Pokhara where he visited the British Gurkha Camp. Nepalese Gurkha soldiers have served with the British army for 200 years, taking part in nearly all wars the British have fought.

Harry has close relations with the Gurkhas and served with a Gurkha battalion in Afghanistan.

## Htin Kyaw sworn in as Myanmar's president

By Esther Htusan  
The Associated Press

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar — Htin Kyaw, a trusted friend of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, took over as Myanmar's president March 30, taking a momentous step in the country's long-drawn transition toward democracy after more than a half-century of direct and indirect military rule.

But democracy in the impoverished Southeast Asian nation still feels incomplete. The military retains a considerable amount of power in the government and parliament, and the president himself will play second fiddle to Suu Kyi, who has repeatedly said she will run the country from behind the scenes because the military has ensured — through a constitutional manipulation — that she can't be the president.

For now, the country was celebrating the installation of the 70-year-old Htin Kyaw, as he took the oath of office in a joint session of Myanmar's newly elected parliament, as Suu Kyi sat watching in the front row.

"I, Htin Kyaw, do solemnly and sincerely promise and declare that I will be loyal to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and its citizens," he said, reading from a written pledge, while repeating after the house speaker, Mann Win Khaing Than. "I will uphold and abide by the constitution and its laws ... I will dedicate myself to the

Harry was on a five-day trip to Nepal during which he met with the president and prime minister and marked 200 years of friendship between the two countries.

A highlight of the trip was visiting earthquake-damaged areas and spotlighting reconstruction efforts. He visited families living in tents at a camp for people made homeless by the quake and toured damaged palaces and temples.

The earthquake last April killed nearly 9,000 people and destroyed about 1 million homes. There has been little aid for the victims even a year after the earthquake.

The prince extended his trip to Nepal by six days to help rebuild a school damaged by the earthquake.

The earthquake also damaged Nepal's tourism industry, which drew foreign tourists to visit Hindu temples and old palaces, as well as trek mountain trails.

Harry said he had wanted to pay his respects to the many who died, and also show that the country is "open for business and has so much to offer."

"I hope that everyone back home who took an interest in the tour can see that Nepal is a country that you really have to come and visit," he said.

service of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar."

The same pledge was simultaneously read by First Vice President Myint Swe and Second Vice President Henry Van Tio. After a 20-minute tea break, all 18 members of Htin Kyaw's cabinet, including Suu Kyi, took a joint oath of office read out by the speaker.

Rightfully, the job belonged to Suu Kyi, who has been the face of the pro-democracy movement and who endured decades of house arrest and harassment by military rulers without ever giving up on her non-violent campaign to unseat them. But a constitutional provision barred Suu Kyi from becoming president, and she made it clear that whoever sits in that chair will be her proxy.

Still, Htin Kyaw will be remembered by history as the first civilian president for Myanmar and the head of its first government to be elected in free and fair polls. Suu Kyi's party, the National League for Democracy, won a landslide victory in elections last November, in a reflection of Suu Kyi's widespread public support.

The constitutional clause that denied her the presidency excludes anyone from the position who has a foreign spouse or children. Suu Kyi's two sons are British, as was her late husband. The clause is widely seen as having been written by the military with Suu Kyi in mind.

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