



Teachers to be assessed for proficient standard next year

...those failing to meet standards might have to leave the profession

Yangchen C Rinzin

The government approved an additional allowance of 10 percent for teachers categorised as proficient, 15 percent for accomplished, and 20 percent for those assessed as distinguished teachers.

This is apart from teaching allowances ranging from 35-55 percent approved for teachers in 2019.

However, to be eligible for the additional allowance, teachers need to go through an assessment to meet certain standards based on Bhutan Professional Standards for Teachers (BPST) which categorises a teacher's career into four distinct stages.

These stages will determine the basis to distinguish their professional growth. The standards are: Beginning, Proficient, Accomplished, and Distinguished teachers.

The Ministry of Education has implemented the BPST in all schools from this year.

Deputy chief programme officer Rinchen Dorji said that with the implementation, the ministry will assess teachers for the Proficient standard first, where if a teacher meets the standard, they will get the Proficient allowance of 10 percent from 2023.

All teachers will be assessed for the Proficient standard over the entire next academic year.

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Astrology college marks 25 years of promoting astrology

Staff Reporter

In 1996, His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo and His Holiness the 60th Je Khenpo formally established the country's first school of astrology in Dechen Phodrang, Thimphu. Last week, the college marked the 25th anniversary of its establishment with a grand celebration.

Her Majesty the Gyalum Sangay Choden Wangchuck, the chief guest at the celebrations, launched the silver jubilee logo along with Gyalsey Trulku Jigme Tenzin Wangpo and Lyonchhen Dr Lotay Tshering.

Principal of the college, Sithar Gyeltshen said: "We were fortunate to have Her Majesty as the chief guest to mark the occasion. Her Majesty has helped develop and uplift this sacred place to the present state. It was a fitting occasion, which also coincided with Mother's Day,

to celebrate Her Majesty's contributions."

The silver jubilee celebrations were marked on the Descending Day of Lord Buddha, which in Bhutan also marks Mother's Day and the 25th anniversary of the enthronement of His Holiness the Je Khenpo.

Principal Sithar Gyeltshen said that the occasion was marked to dispel misconceptions about *Druk Tsi* (astrology).

"What we propagate is the teachings of Buddha and not something Bhutanese astrologers have invented. If followed diligently, *Druk Tsi* can help practitioners accomplish good fortune and attain enlightenment eventually," Sithar Gyatshen said.

The principal said that the silver jubilee also marks the importance of developing and propagating *Druk Tsi* in the country. The college makes

yearly predictions about health, wealth, career and many more.

The college also awarded merit certificates to eight former teachers and principals of the school for their contributions.

"It was a modest gesture from our side to encourage them to help flourish the sacred teachings," the principal said.

From a few students learning traditional *Druk Tsi* in its early years, the institute today has close to 200 students. According to the principal, around a thousand students have graduated from the college. There are 102 students and teachers in the college, and around 90 in its two branch schools in Serzhing, Sarpang and Trashiyantse.

The college has been conducting *jana chidoe kurim*, a nine-day ritual, for the wellbeing of the sentient beings and for the peace and prosperity in the country.

Covid-19 Cases

Bhutan:

Confirmed Cases: 2,621
Recovered: 2,610
Active: 8 | Death: 3

Global:

Confirmed Cases: 245,042,031
Death: 4,972,686

India: 34,231,809

West Bengal: 1,591,994

Delhi: 1,439,825

Assam: 610,433

Arunachal Pradesh: 55,154

Sikkim: 31,958

Thailand: 1,875,315

Bangladesh: 1,568,563

Nepal: 810,880

Singapore: 187,851

Inside

PERSPECTIVE

Love, hate and tragedy:
A three-part history of
Bhutan-Cooch relations

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Weather



THIMPHU

21
MAX

2
MIN



TRASHIGANG

22
MAX

8
MIN

No Kuensel issue

There will be no Kuensel issue on **November 2**. The next issue will be published on **November 3**.



Failed Interbank fund transfer shall never get reversed to the payer.
The amount will always be credited to the receiver's account.

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RENEW celebrates World Savings Day

Phurpa Lhamo

A team of students from Gyalpozhing College of Information Technology won the short video competition held by Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW) micro financing private limited (RMFPL).

The competition was among the many activities initiated by RMFPL to celebrate World Savings Day.

Speaking at the celebration in Thimphu yesterday, RMFPL chief executive officer, Bernd Baehr, stated that the average savings amount per individual has increased from Nu 5000 about five years ago to Nu 10,000 under RENEW microfinance.

Serving the rural community, the RMFPL annual 2020 report stated that the savings volume had increased from Nu 2.947 million (M) to Nu

212.622M in 2020.

Bernd Baehr said that to celebrate World Savings Day, painting competitions in Paro and Thimphu and saving game simulations in eight dzongkhags were also held.

“Similarly, piggy bank designing competitions were also held.”

At the celebration yesterday in Thimphu, winners of the piggy bank competition from Jigme Losel School also

were awarded prizes.

Under the RENEW microfinance, power tiller loans in collaboration with Karma One-Stop-Shop was also started last year and has served to 332 clients with loans.

Bernd Baehr said that financial literacy for schools and monasteries were also conducted.

He said that a movie called Gangnam Girls was also sponsored by RENEW

microfinance.

RENEW microfinance was started in 2012 and was undertaken by Deutsche Sparkassenstiftung für international Kooperation (DISK) funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany.

RENEW microfinance project was founded by Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck.

Teachers to be assessed for proficient standard next year

From Pg 1

Proficient teachers independently apply effective teaching strategies, classroom management skills, and the use of learner assessment data, according to the BPST.

The BPST was supposed to have been implemented in 2020 but could not be because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rinchen Dorji said that teachers will be assessed after the third year of their career (teachers who have served for three years), and as for now the assessment will only be for the Proficient standard.

“When a teacher meets the Proficient standard, it will indicate that the teacher is independent, confident in using pedagogy without the support of seniors, or not dependent on others to teach students,” he said. “It will show that a person is competent and proficient as a teacher.”

Accomplished teachers consistently display a high

level of performance in their professional practices, while Distinguished teachers are role models who exhibit the highest standard of professional practices.

However, these two categories are aspirational, while the Proficient standard assessment is compulsory.

Deputy chief programme officer, Tshering Phuntsho, said that a team of assessors will assess teachers, and assessors would be formed from schools where almost 900 assessors have already been trained.

Teacher competency and career stage determination or the assessment will be based on seven standards.

“We have tools and rubrics developed to ensure the assessment is specific and objective, where it will be a joint observation to minimise subjectivity/biases,” Tshering Phuntsho said. “In one category, there will be three rounds of observations inside the classroom;

validations of a teacher’s practice and performance.”

As for assessors, he said, there will be a crisscross between schools, where assessors will also be assessed.

“Assessors should also meet the standard, because even if they have served for a decade, they have to meet the Proficient standard to get the allowance,” he said. He added that in the BPST, there is no distinction according to the number of service years the teachers have served and there could be a chance a P5 level teacher would be less competent than a P1.

The BPST would measure the competencies and practices of teachers to improve the quality of education while earlier the teachers were only categorised based on the number of years they served.

Rinchen Dorji said that in case if a teacher does not meet the Proficient standard during the assessment a teacher would be given two years’ grace pe-

riod to improve themselves, get support, or seek intervention to improve.

“If, despite the grace period, a teacher still can’t achieve the Proficient standard, then they might have to leave the profession,” Rinchen Dorji said. “It’s only to ensure we screen teachers to gain professional credibility and public trust in this profession.”

Tshering Phuntsho said that the teacher professional support division is collecting feedback on how to improve in the implementation of BPST until December. “We’ll review all the feedback and improve the process. The success of BPST will also depend on how successfully assessors will implement the assessment.”

Meanwhile, some teachers Kuensel talked to said that although it is a good move to standardise teachers, they are hoping that it does not turn out like an individual work plan (IWP). A few said it was

unnecessary, when the IWP is already there and it will only be an additional burden to the workload.

Some shared that it could create controversies because the ministry will be categorising an individual on different standards and some may not be happy with the decision.

“We hope that teachers are not disgruntled when placed in one of the standards,” a teacher said. Some shared that assessors should be honest with the assessment.

Rinchen Dorji said that BPST is different from the IWP, since the IWP is aimed at an individual teacher’s work done in a year while BPST is a standard to define teachers’ competency for career stages.

“In BPST there will be at least three assessors who will assess teachers, unlike the IWP which is an annual appraisal assessed by one individual. BPST is not a blanket allowance like the IWP,” he added.

NOTICE OF TIME EXTENSION

PUNATSANGCHHU-II HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AUTHORITY (PHPA-II) BJIMTHANGKHA, WANGDUE, BHUTAN

PHPA-II/SE(P&C)/Vehicle-219/2021/153

This is to notify all the eligible bidders that Tender No. **PHPA-II/SE(P & C)/Vehicle-219/2021/01** dated **11.10.2021** for “Hiring of Private Vehicles (Model 2011 and later) for a period of one (1) year” which is due for submission on **02.11.2021** is hereby extended. For further details, bidders are requested to visit our website: <https://www.phpa2.gov.bt>.

(Sd/-)

Superintending Engineer,
Procurement & Contracts Wing, PHPA-II

ANNOUNCEMENT



DRUK GREEN POWER CORPORATION LIMITED (a dhi company)

10/DGPC/HRA/2021/4599

Druk Green Power Corporation Limited (DGPC) is pleased to announce the selected candidates in reference to the job vacancy announced in the KUENSEL dated **April 1, 2021** for the post of Assistant Finance Officer.

The details are provided in the DGPC website (www.drukgreen.bt) under CAREER under Notification.

Management, DGPC

Climate change: a local perspective

Many say climate change is visible in agriculture

Choki Wangmo | Tsirang

Thirty-eight-year-old Dema grew up surrounded by mandarin trees in her parents' three-acre orchard in Tsirang. She is witnessing how the surroundings changed in a decade. Her parents have replaced the mandarin trees with cardamon. Recently, their cardamom started yellowing and the yield has reduced.

They think the climate and soil no longer favours farming. "Erratic weather such as heavy and short rainfall and windstorms damage the crops," said Dema.

She said that her parents had to cut down the mandarin trees since the yield was poor after a reported disease outbreak. The family's cardamom this year was destroyed by the recent rain that also damaged paddy crops in many gewogs in Tsirang. One chiwog in Dagana reported 11 acres of crop damage.

Farmers are quick to blame the change in weather and climate. "Due to climatic change, untimely rainfall affected paddy crops this year," a farmer in Doonglagang said.

Tsirang residents stopped planting big green chillies a few years ago. They blame the extreme heat and moisture. They were hit hard this year as their small green chilli (jitsi ema) production has decreased because of the chilli blight. "I am losing interest. It is a waste of resources and time," a farmer in Gosarling gewog said.

Although farmers used preventive measures such as mulching plastic, chillies rot in the field, which many farmers suspect could be

affected by high humidity caused by erratic monsoon.

The issue has affected large-scale chili producers across the dzongkhag.

A farmer, Rupa Maya Subedi said that the places have become warmer and the weather is becoming more unpredictable. "It is not like in the olden days. Mandarin trees bear fruits in alternate years when the weather favours. Flowering starts early and there is a shorter fruiting time." She said that the amount of spring water is decreasing yearly.

Farmers in Dagana also say that while they are not aware about the technicalities of climate change, the impact on their daily lives are grave.

Residents of Gozhi gewog in Dagana with the help of the dzongkhag administration are reviving three of the four lakes which have completely dried. With the rapid drying up of lakes, they are left grappling for drinking water.

Due to water shortage, about 50 households in the gewog could not cultivate paddy for years. A resident Sherub said that villagers looked for drinking water sources in different areas for many years but without success.

Farmers in Tshendagang gewog in Dagana also reported decreased size in the onions yearly. They said that the place has become warmer and the soil might not be favouring the growth. The onions are not accepted by consumers.

Thimphu getting warmer?

"See. Climate change has made this possible," remarks a retired civil servant show-

ing his flower garden to guests. In his collection is a healthy pani shing (betel leaf) that he got from Phuentsholing. The climber that usually grows in hot places is thriving in his giant plastic pot.

Near the climber are fruit trees and flower plants that once would never survive in Thimphu. The pomegranate tree is flowering and the passion fruit, a climber, is spreading its climbers.

There are new species of plants, including weeds, that are found in colder places. A farmer in Thimphu said, a thorny weed that was once found in Punakha is now a nuisance in Thimphu. "It grows everywhere and even in the creeks of a concrete parking lot," she said.

The other plants that many people are adapting to change are banana and Tamarillo, locally called tree tomato or sour tomato. The small tree that bears the egg-shaped fruit, a Thimphu resident said, grows in hot places like Punakha and Wangdue. "Now it can bear fruit here in Thimphu," she exclaimed.

Dorji, 84, has banana plants outside his house in Babesa, South Thimphu. "It has become warmer in Thimphu. The banana plant survives in winter here."

A Thimphu-based plant expert said that while there are possibilities of increase in temperature there is no hard data or scientific study to validate them. "We might be able to grow fruit trees that were not seen in Thimphu, but the fruit trees would not have the desirable characteristics," said the expert. This, she explained, is evident from



► Betel leaves that grow in hot places can now thrive in Thimphu

the taste of, for instance, mandarins grown in Thimphu and Phuentsholing.

Plants can acclimatise and if we force, plants can harden up against temperature and can grow, she said. "Some plants can respond to the surroundings and if we give them protection against frost, they will harden up and grow," she said. "We cannot, without scientific evidence, blame it on climate change."

An agriculture expert in Thimphu said that with climate change, new pests such as giant African snails and army worms are emerging while crops such as chillies which were not grown in places like Haa and Bumthang in the past are now thriving. "Cli-

mate change is happening and its impacts are visible in the agriculture sector," she said.

College of Natural Resources' research dean, who is also a climate change expert, Om Katel (PhD), said that the aforementioned phenomena are the result of changing climate.

He said that in the last decade, the frequency of extreme weather events has increased. For instance, he said that the monsoon which was expected to end in early August has recently wreaked havoc, not only in the country but across the world. "Intensity of rainfall has changed significantly. In the last 20 years, the temperature has increased by 1°C."

Land development brings hope to Tsakaling farmers

Choki Wangmo | Tsirang

Most farmers in Tsakaling in Padtshaling Maed had left their land fallow for many years.

Villagers now hope to cultivate crops and vegetables.

Due to the rocky nature of the soil, residents, mostly from Tsakaling in Mongar, have not been able to use the land economically.

There are about 20 households in the village.

"Since nothing grew in this kind of soil, my husband works as a cook in the nearby school. We even tried adding fertilisers," said a resident, Chimi Dema. She said that once the land development is completed, her husband plans to join her on the farm.

With the support of the

dzongkhag agriculture sector, her one-acre plot of land was developed two weeks ago.

"Now I have to clear the rocks, which will take many days to complete," she said.

She tried growing cabbage and paddy last year.

The villagers mostly depend on maize and beaten maize for their livelihood.

A resident, Changala, said:

"We are hopeful."

He said that farming was difficult on steep slopes, as the soil did not retain water and was prone to nutrient erosion. Yesterday, his 3.3 acres of land was altered into a gentle slope with the help of machines.

Padtshaling gewog's agriculture extension officer, Sangay Dorji, said that about 10 acres of land would be developed in

Tsakaling, and 45 acres in Padtshaling Maed chiwog.

"With such soil quality, farmers are demotivated. But many literate youths are now back at home. The development might encourage them to take up farming," Sangay Dorji said.

The dzongkhag agriculture sector has allocated more than Nu 3 million for land development activities.

Work hour or culture: which is more important?

The Royal Civil Service Commission's recent announcement that in view of economic loss to the country due to the Covid-19 pandemic there would be no change in winter office timing has generated debate among civil servants and people out of the system.

Voices from inside the civil service indicate that the change will not make any difference. From outside, it is just the opposite. Put together, the views and opinions speak so much about something that is fast becoming a disease in the bureaucracy or officialdom.

Such discussions are good in that by identifying our strengths and flaws we can bring some vital changes to the system and the public perception of the system itself. The civil service is a machine that takes government plans and national vision closer to reality. The contributions of the civil servants are vitally important so. But this fact, unfortunately, does not speak for all the civil servants.

At the same time, the public at large is disappointed with the way civil servants work. Delays and unnecessary hang-ups are how a majority of people view the civil service and servants. The truth is that those who work, work honestly for the hours they are paid for. Some even give more. But this public opinion about the civil servants is also valid.

It is important, therefore, to understand the real problem, beyond arguing about whether the change in work hours is good or bad.

When civil servants say that an extra one hour of work will not make any difference to the productivity of civil servants, what comes off immediately is that civil servants will resist change and will work the way they have all along. When the people outside of civil service say that the extra one-hour work is good for civil servants, they are talking in terms of services that they are entitled to but don't often get from the system.

What is more important is that we do not lose the right perspective in this debate.

Different age and generation demand different levels of service. At one point in time, long ago, Bhutan's civil servants worked from 8am to 2pm. With greater call for service delivery, we now work from 9am to 5pm. However, people feel that the "Royal" civil servants could offer a lot more than just the presence of physical institutions.

What we really need today is real institution building, which in other words could be called "work culture change". His Majesty The King's national day address about the need for change in the civil service outlines the vision for the country's development which the civil servants and the Commission must respond to.

Work-hour change alone will have little effect on productivity. For the real change, it will take immense courage to shake up the system but shake up we must. It is about time.

MY COUNTRY, MY TOWN



The view from within:

A striking photograph framed by a window taken from inside Dechenphug lhakhang
Photo: Phuntsho, Thimphu

Send in your pictures to: formcmt@gmail.com

MY SAY

Free and fair election necessary

With the local government elections nearing, there are talks going around that some of the candidates are already calling voters residing outside the villages and soliciting their votes. There are also talks that candidates are arranging free vehicles for voters to come to the villages to vote for the bye-elections in the chiwog level.

As an oral society, many of these things cannot be verified, but with social media, especially

Wechat facilitating all the discussions related to elections, people should report such unethical practices to relevant agencies.

In a small country that depends on donor funding to have basic infrastructure in place, we cannot afford to have local government leaders who are power-hungry and are resorting to such practices.

Elections must not only be free and fair but

perceived to be free and fair. It is, therefore, important that agencies mandated to look into all the issues do a good job and put in place a proper mechanism to stop candidates and supporters from providing free rides to voters.

Voters in the country should also be mindful of supporting such candidates and vote for a capable leader.

**Namgay,
Gelephu**

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newseditor@kuensel.bt

Letters are edited for space and clarity

FOR NEWS, VIEWS, AND FEEDBACK

Call 324684 or email

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER (ABRIDGED)

PUNATSANGCHHU-II HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AUTHORITY (PHPA-II)

Bjimthangka, Wangdue, Bhutan

PHPA-II/SE(P&C) Infra Roads/2021/01/152

Sealed bids are hereby invited from Bhutanese contractors for "Re-alignment and Black Topping of PNH from ch.29.41km to 30.86km (Flood affected PNH Stretch) and other allied works."

For details, eligible firms may visit PHPA-II website: <https://www.phpa2.gov.bt/tenders/> and may contact this office on working days at +975-2-471709 or +975-2-471610 E-mail Id: secontracts@phpa2.gov.bt

(Sd/-)

*Superintending Engineer,
Procurement & Contracts Wing, PHPA-II*

KEEP THIMPHU CLEAN & GREEN

NOTIFICATION



THIMPHU THROMDE

PO Box No. - 215

Building No. 8, Gongdzin Lam

TT/Thrompon/2021-22/775

Thimphu Thromde would like to inform the public within Thimthrom to refrain from carrying out any unauthorised constructions or deviations from the approved drawings. A flat penalty of Nu. 20,000 will be imposed for constructions not having prior approval from the Thromde.

The structure will then be dealt with as per the Development Control Regulation 2016. Further, Thromde would like to request all plot owners to remove such unauthorised structures that have been constructed, if any. Thimphu Thromde will carry out strict compliance at the site without further individual notification from **November 7, 2021**.

Thrompon

KEEP THIMPHU CLEAN & GREEN



BID EXTENSION NOTICE

DRUK GREEN POWER CORPORATION LIMITED (adhi company)

DGPC/KHP/TSU/PHOUSE-02/2021/106

The date for submission of bids against tender no. **KHP0007/2021** dated **September 27, 2021** for "Construction of Dining Hall cum kitchen of KHP Lhakang" scheduled for opening on **October 28, 2021** is hereby extended up to **14:30 hours of November 12, 2021** and shall be opened on the same day at **15:00 hours**.

All other terms and conditions of the bidding document shall remain unaltered, unless otherwise notified through amendment. For detail, please visit DGPC's website www.drukgreen.bt/tender.

*Chief Engineer
KHP, DGPC*

NOTIFICATION

THROMDE ADMINISTRATION SAMDRUP JONGKHAR

SJT/Accts-02/2021-2022/688

Samdrup Jongkhar Thromde would like to notify that the Annual taxes for year 2021 are to be paid before **November 30, 2021** in Thromde main office Samdrup Jongkhar during office hours.

Dewathang area will be collected from **December 1, 2021 to December 20, 2021** at Thromde extended office, Dewathang. Therefore, all are requested to pay taxes before due to avoid unnecessary accumulation of penal interest.

Defaulters will be imposed a fine of 24% per annum of due thereof in accordance with the provision of taxation policy 1992.

Executive Secretary

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Distribution and Customer Services Department
Distribution Services
Electricity Services Division, Thimphu: Bhutan



Dear Valued Clients and Stakeholders,

We are pleased to inform you that our office will be moving to a new location at Royal Textile Academy (RTA) building (ground floor). We have decided to move our office from Chubachu, Samten Lam to RTA, Thagrig Lam. The work at our new office will be effective from **November 01, 2021**.

We look forward to working with you from our new location.

New Address : Royal Textile Academy of Bhutan
 Chubachu, Thagrig Lam
Contact Number : 17 39 27 85 (Chief Manager)
Email Address : thimpuesd@bpc.bt

ADDENDUM

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF BHUTAN
Sherubtse College

11(2)-SC/Kuensel/2021/306

Addendum for supply and installation of Acoustic sound-proof materials for Radio and TV studio, Media Lab.

Sherubtse College management would like to notify prospective bidders to note the change made in the unit for Sl. No. (12) & (13) in BoQ for the supply and installation of acoustic sound proof materials for Radio and TV studio, Media Lab. The due date for the bid submission is also extended till **November 9, 2021**.

For further information, please visit Sherubtse College website (www.sherubtse.edu.bt)

President

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

GYALSUNG INFRA
Head Office, Thimphu



GA-HO/HR/Recruit-04/2021/ 3864

Gyalsung Infra invites applications from eligible Bhutanese candidates for the following positions;

| Sl # | Position | Slots | Minimum requirement | Employment type | Grade |
|------|------------------------|-------|--|-----------------|-------|
| 1 | Driver (Light Vehicle) | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum qualification of class VIII with Light Vehicle Driving Licence. Minimum 5 years of driving experience. Age: 18-40 years | Contract | 07 |
| 2 | Driver (Heavy Vehicle) | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum qualification of class VIII with PD & Heavy Driving Licence. Minimum 5 years of driving experience. Age: 18-40 years | Contract | 07 |

The candidates fulfilling the required eligibility criteria may apply **online** latest by **November 8, 2021**. Please visit www.gyalsunginfra.bt for further information.

Project Affairs Department

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|-----------|--------|--------|
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| EURO | 85.90 | 88.30 |
| YEN (100) | 64.85 | 66.65 |
| HK \$ | 9.50 | 9.75 |
| AUS \$ | 55.55 | 57.10 |
| SING \$ | 54.80 | 56.30 |

Courtesy BNB



Impacts of climate change: observations from the highlands

Chhimi Dema

In the highlands along the Jomolhari trek route, there is loss of alpine meadow and growth of algae in the lakes, weather patterns are changing and cordyceps yields are dwindling.

All of these changes are attributed to global warming.

Presented during the fifth series 'Witness to Warming' of a climate series talk on October 28, these were observations recorded by a team of officials who trekked to Jomolhari from October 15 to October 21.

The team comprised of officials from the Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators, the Bhutan Ecological Society, the Guide Association of Bhutan, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Park, and the Tourism Council of Bhutan (TCB) trekked to make observations and assessments of possible climate signals along the Jomolhari trek route and nearby areas.

TCB's deputy chief research officer, Phuntsho Gyeltshen, said: "Natural gorges and erosions are expected to form when the snow melts at a faster rate, and when, instead

of ice water, snow blocks are released."

The loss of alpine regions due to encroachment by shrubs and trees from the warmer areas is another observation, he said. This leads to loss of pasture lands, causing a shortage of grassland and fodder for the animals.

A key observation is the late arrival of spring and rapid transition into summer, followed by a long fall and late onset of winter months, the official said.

The team also saw the growth of algae or aquatic plants in the lake that was not seen a decade ago.

Phuntsho Gyeltshen said, "This again could be due to the rising temperature creating favourable conditions for the algae to grow."

The team noted that the cordyceps yield is decreasing every year.

Phuntsho Gyeltshen said that drier conditions do not provide a hospitable environment for the fungus growth.

The team noted dead trees on the mountains, movement of low-elevation bird species to higher areas, bugs and in-



► The fifth series 'Witness to Warming' is part of the climate series called Raising Climate Ambition: Voices from Bhutan

sects similar to armyworm in Thangthangka, and chillies growing in Shana areas.

The team also noted that poor waste management is a major concern in the area.

During the talk, Pema Choden of Yee Getaway, said that Thorthormi was melting at an accelerated rate.

She said that, as explained by glaciologist Toeb Karma with NHCM when he was travelling from Luggye Tsho

to Lunana in 2002, it was easy to walk on Thorthromi.

"Due to the hydrostatic pressure of Thorthromi, it can push into Raphtsteng and cause a glacial lake outburst flood," she said.

Although there are early warning systems, communities like Thanza and Toenchey would get barely 20 minutes of evacuation time, she added.

Arun Bhattarai, an independent filmmaker, who trekked to Lunana, spoke about his documentary "Snow Lion and the Glaciologist".


He said that the documen-

tary highlighted people who are risking their lives every year to measure the glaciers.

Rikesh Gurung, the founder of Green Roads, also presented on reusing plastic in roads to address waste management.

He said that his company blacktopped 109km of roads using 600 tonnes of plastic.


The climate series is organised by the National Environment Commission, UNDP, the Bhutan Foundation, the Royal University of Bhutan, WWF, and the Bhutan Ecological Society.



འབྲུག་གི་ལྷན་ཁྲིམས་ཚན་པའི་དྲུག་

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Requesting to turn the Wheel of Dharma

Karma Phuntscho is spiritual thought leader, Buddhist teacher, and the Writer-in-Digital-Residence for the Buddha Nature project at Tsadra Foundation.

The fifth limb of the seven-part practice (ཚོགས་གསལ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱུ་པ་) is entreating the Buddhas and teachers to turn the wheel of dharma (ཚོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐྱོར་བར་བསྐུལ་བ་). Turning the wheel of dharma is an idiomatic expression for teaching and the prayer to turn the wheel of dharma is simply a request to the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and masters to teach dharma to the beings in the world. This practice is important because the best and most lasting benefit the enlightened beings can bring to the world is by showing the true path to happiness and enlightenment. By teaching dharma and spreading the light of wisdom and compassion, they dispel the darkness of ignorance, which is the main cause of existential problems.

The metaphor of turning the wheel is used to describe the act of teaching because when the enlightened masters teach, the inner wheel of understanding, realization, and awakening is turned in the minds of the disciples. Wisdom, compassion, and other noble qualities, like the axle and spokes of the wheel, are set into motion and new distance is covered on the spiritual path. Thus, by turning the external wheel of dharma through teaching, the inner wheel of spiritual awakening is turned. This leads a person to the state of enlightenment, which is the ultimate state of happiness according to Buddhism.

It is important to entreat the masters to teach because the Buddhas and the masters sometimes become reluctant to teach. The historical Buddha is said to have reached his profound and bliss-

ful state of awakening under the Bodhi tree and remained for seven weeks in solitude without teaching because he felt no one would understand his profound and mystical experience of awakening. The dharma is very subtle, vast, profound and hard to fathom but most people are distracted by vanity and occupied with worldly pursuits. Thus, the Buddha was reluctant to teach and the celestial gods Brahma and Indra are said to have requested the Buddha three times to turn the wheel of dharma for the sake of the world.

When the teachers remain in solitude or enter states of meditation, they need to be persuaded to come out and share the dharma with the world. Following such requests, the Buddhas and enlightened masters adopt very expedient methods and teach the world to impart their understanding and experience. Having to request for teachings also enhances the regard for dharma and creates a stronger connection between the teacher and the disciples so that the teachings can have greater impact. Buddhism is not a missionary religion and good Buddhist teachers do not go out promoting their teachings. To make the teachings have strong impact on the disciple, the disciple must be really interested in it and seek it with earnestness and longing. The historical Buddha was often asked three times to teach before he consented to teaching. A student must be seriously interested and willing to receive the teachings. A disciple is often put through a long and arduous preparation, just as Marpa did for Milarepa, in order to help the student build an intense longing, earnestness and respect for the dharma. This makes the student appreciate the value of dharma and helps the

teacher and dharma have stronger impact on the student.

Teaching dharma and showing the path is the only genuine and lasting benefit the Buddhas and masters can bring to the world. The Buddhas and lamas cannot wipe off the suffering of sentient beings with their hands, no matter how times they may touch the devotees with the hands by giving hand-blessings (ཕྱག་དབང་) as is the wont in Himalayan communities. The Buddhas and lamas cannot wash off the problems with water or transfer their spiritual powers. It is only by teaching dharma that Buddhas and masters can help liberate the sentient beings. Thus, it is important to request the masters to teach and show the path and there are many verses for making such a request. One of the most common procedure is to offer the maṇḍala and then request the teachers to teach by chanting this common verse;

སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱི་བསམ་པ་དང་། །
ལྷོ་ཡི་བྱེ་བྲག་ཇི་ལྟ་བུར། །
ཆེ་ལྷོང་སྤུན་མོང་གཞུག་པ་ཡི། །
ཚོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐྱོར་དུ་གསོལ། །

*In accordance with the interests
And the types of calibre of sentient
beings,
I beseech you to turn the wheel of
dharma
Of the great, lesser and common
vehicles.*

In this verse, one is basically asking the Buddhas and masters to deliver an appropriate and expedient teaching as there are many types of dharma. One can request a master to teach a particular set of dharma without using a specific verse. However, it is crucial to make the request with the intention of dispelling the darkness of ignorance in the world and spreading the light of dharma for the sake of all sentient beings.

www.whatzit.com

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

chifchat

SOLUTION: www.kuensel.com/diversion/whatzit

Talk it over

www.whatzit.com

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

ELYSIUM PARADISE VALHALLA

SOLUTION: www.kuensel.com/diversion/whatzit

Heavens above!

Sudoku

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

How to play

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3 X 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

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| 7 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 3 |
| 4 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| 1 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 2 |
| 6 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 |

Answer

Love, hate and tragedy: A three-part history of Bhutan-Cooch relations

Part 1: The early period of camaraderie

The founding of Bhutan as a nation-state in the seventeenth century was completed based, among other conditions, on the affirmation of its new sovereign status by existing polities in its neighbourhood. However, the creation of the new state was aggressively contested by the then inimical Tibetan government.

The friendly Maharajah of Cooch Behar, Padma Narayan (who may have been a conflation by Bhutanese historians of Lakshmi Narayan, r. 1587-1621 and Bir Narayan, r. 1621-26), became Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel's devoted spiritual patron on the persuasion of a wealthy merchant from Chapcha. He also emerged as a key political ally and played a central role in securing Bhutan's sovereign status. Cooch Behar also mediated Bhutan's contact with the larger world, including with the Mughal and British rulers of India, both before and after the formalization of diplomatic relations between the two polities.

Based on Cooch Behar and British sources, this three-part series will explore the Bhutan-Cooch relation, which over centuries of its evolution was marked by both great friendship and inescapable neighbourly contestations. The amazing history of these two neighbours shows how one emerged as a thriving modern country, while the other was structurally set up for failure as it tragically disintegrated through nefarious British colonial interventions.

The historical interaction between Bhutan and her southern neighbour has been substantial in terms of trade, both human and materials, but was not limited to it. Both Bhutan and Cooch Behar exerted considerable influence on each other's respective domestic and foreign policies. There are interesting stories of the Bhutanese capturing Maharajahs and interceding in political conflicts while deposed and exiled Maharajahs sought protection in Bhutan.

The Bhutanese traded

musk, furs, high altitude plants, silver and horses in exchange for silks, cotton, and slaves. The trading area that is modern-day Cooch Behar attracted Chinese, Persian, Tartar and Indian traders. Ancient sources provide information about trade with India from the third century BC to the first century AD. The earliest mention of Bhutan in the records from Cooch Behar is a 12th-century account of the Bhutanese having firearms and gunpowder presumably sourced from China.

The Bhutanese were recorded to have had an impressive army. Although the 1773 situation involving the capture of the Cooch Behar Maharajah and the intervention of the East India company resulting in the Anglo-Cooch treaty is widely known, there are a host of incidents before and after this time that illustrates the close and often fractious relationship between Bhutan and Cooch Behar. For example, there is a record that in 1505, the founder of the Cooch royal dynasty, Maharajah Vishwa Singha, attacked Bhutan defeating its then ruler.

Later, when Vishwa Singha died in 1533, his son, Nara Singha, ascended the throne. This was disputed by his brothers, Naranarayan and Sukladhwaja (alias Chilarai), who were then at Benares.

The other brothers joined them, and Nara Singha escaped to the Morang Kingdom. Subsequently, he was pursued by Maharaja Nara Narayan (now the king) and was forced to take shelter in Nepal before fleeing further to Kashmir. Finally, he and his son took refuge in 'Gelung Bhot', which is arguably in present-day Bhutan.

One of the earliest European reports of the Bhutanese comes from the trader Ralph Fitch, a merchant from London who visited Bengal in 1583. Below is a record of the information he gleaned from fellow traders about Bhutan.

"There is a country four days' journey from Cuch [Cooch]... which is called Bootaner [Bhutan] and the



city Bhoteah, the King is called Durmain, the people whereof are very tall and strong and there are merchants who come out of China and they say out of Moscovia or Tartary and they come to buy and sell musk, cymbals, agates, silk, pepper and saffron of Persia".

Cooch Behar, it may be inferred, was in those days a place where the traders chiefly assembled.

In 1627, Stephen Cacella, a Christian missionary journeyed to Bhutan through the kingdom of Kamata. He has written that several years before, the uncle of King Lakshmi Narayan travelled to the hilly country of Bhutan. He was arrested there and made to plough the land. King Lakshmi Narayan was so angry on learning this news that he ordered all the Bhutiyas subjects of his kingdom to be imprisoned.

These reprisals continued until the Bhutiyas released his uncle. In a letter written by Cacella dated 4 October 1627, it has been stated that they met Maharajah Lakshmi Narayan in September 1626. The object of their visit was to obtain information regarding the route to Bhutan.

The letter of Cacella reads that on April 10, they met with the Dharma Raja of Bhutan, which they referred to as Cambirasi supposedly following the idiom of Cooch Behar. This Dharma Raja was 33 years old and was a King

and a Lama.

It can be seen from Cacella's reports that during the last part of Lakshmi Narayan's reign, he had no authority in Bhutan. Cacella remarked on the export of female and male slaves to Bhutan. Lakshmi Narayan became Maharajah in 1606 and in 1618, he met the Mughal Emperor Jahangir on the banks of the Mahi River about 17 miles from Ahmedabad.

Jahangir's son, Shah Jahan, rebelled against his father and tried to seize the throne. He was defeated in battle but escaped at the end of 1623 and attacked Bengal and the country came under his rule with Ibrahim Khan, the Subahdar of Bengal, being killed in battle with him in 1624.

From Maldaha, Shah Jahan conveyed to Maharaja Lakshmi Narayan the news of his victory by a firman and requested him to act under the advice and guidance of Shetab Khan. The firman was delivered to Lakshmi Narayan at Hajo.

In another account by Sihabuddin Mohammad Tali, the companion of Mir Jumla, there is a mention of the Bhutiyas. In the account, it is written that the Dharmaraja of Bhutan was 120 years old at the time. He lived on milk and fruits and was always engaged in prayers. There is mention that the three persons sent in 1659 by the Duke of Moscovy went to China through Bhutan.

This information is also contained in the account of

the famous 17th century French gem merchant and traveller, Jean Baptise Tavernier, who was travelling to India and visited Dacca, the then capital of Bengal. He recorded impressions of Assam and Bhutan in his work. Tavernier is most famous for the discovery or purchase in 1666 of the 116 carat Tavernier Blue Diamond. It is uncertain, but it seems that he confused and conflated Tibet (Bhot) with Bhutan.

In December 1661, the Mughals launched an invasion of the recalcitrant Pran Narayan (who was their vassal ruler of Cooch Behar) and the neighbouring Ahom Kingdom. When the Mughal army was within three days' journey, Pran Narayan escaped to the Bhutan hills and on 19 December, Muazzam Khan (Mir Jumla) occupied the capital of Cooch Behar without resistance. He then sent a letter to the Dharma Raja of Bhutan (Desi Tenzin Drukdra, r. 1655-1667) to send the Maharajah to him but received a polite refusal saying that a guest cannot be turned away.

Those were the heydays of the Bhutan-Cooch Behar friendship. For a brief period, there was even regular goodwill royal visitors from Cooch Behar to the Bhutanese capital. In 1681, Pran Narayan's daughter attended the coronation of the fourth Desi Tenzin Rabgay. In 1690, Rup Narayan, who would become the Maharajah in 1693, paid a visit to Punakha with lavish gifts. He received a befitting royal reception.

The following decades saw relations sour as long-standing tensions between the neighbours simmered before Bhutan eventually sought complete domination over Cooch Behar. The resulting events and the involvement of British India, which set the relationship on an irreversible course of decline, will be dealt with in the next article in this series.

Contributed by Julia Booth (University of Sydney) and Dendup Chopel (The Australian National University).

Lack of facilities impedes grassroots football

Thinley Namgay

As more clubs venture into taking football to the grassroots and engaging more youth in the sport, the lack of facilities or quality playing grounds has hampered the progress of the programme.

Of the 13 Bhutan Football Federation (BFF) registered football clubs, grassroots football has become popular in four Asian Football Confederation (AFC) licensed clubs: Thimphu City FC, Paro FC, Transport United FC, and Tensung FC.

Thimphu City FC alone engages 70 children between the ages of 6 and 14 during the weekend, either in Changlimithang or the Changjiiji grounds. The club charges a minimal fee of Nu 1,300 per month, per child, for about 50 children.

Thimphu City FC's President Hishey Tshering said: "We would like to have regular training, but that is not possible, as the BFF has to share the grounds with many users. We get the ground only twice a week (Saturday and Sunday)."

He said many school grounds are unusable or not maintained. "If the government allows private parties like football clubs to develop and maintain the grounds on a Public-Private Model, everyone will benefit."

Hishey Tshering said the use of grounds would depend on the memorandum of understanding signed between the school and the private party.

Dilip Subba, 14, gets coaching through Druk Lhayul FC for two hours on Saturdays and Sundays. He said the coach usually conducts training in a group



► Some football clubs are recruiting young boys in their academies to hone skills at a young age

where they learn basic skills.

"When the coach is busy, we do individual training. Through football, we can learn about teamwork, and it is important for sound health," a class IX student of Lungtenzampa Middle Secondary School said, adding that he would depend on football if he doesn't get a job in the future.

Paro FC started its grassroots programme three years back.

Paro FC's head coach Puspupal Sharma said the club is grooming 138 children by training them for two hours on weekends and government holidays.

During the summer and winter breaks, participants undergo rigorous training four days a week.

He said the club has created a unique model, blending international best practices

suited to the progressive pattern of growth and development of children. "We have different tiers to our coaching, which now has specialised coaches for different levels."

"Ball mastery, a key component in our training plan has progressive links to technique, skill, and a tactical framework to our coaching model. We have branched our academy out to Thimphu," Puspupal Sharma said.

Paro FC engages children between the ages of 4 and 14 years. The club has 12 coaches looking after the grassroots activities, and the majority of coaches possess a Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching and BFF C Certificate.

Puspupal Sharma said the club is working to increase the number of women participants beyond the current 15 partici-

pants.

"We have 63 children on scholarship. Out of these, 25 are on Paro FC scholarship for which they don't pay the fees. We collect a nominal amount to pay our coaches and buy equipment," Puspupal Sharma said.

Tensung FC has 98 stu-

dents aged between 6-12 years in grassroots training, mostly children of army personnel.

Namgay Tshering, a coach with Tensung FC, said that the long-term goal of their grassroots activities was to groom future club players and curb the purchase of foreign players.

Namgay Tshering said that the increasing turn-out on the pitch reflects the support of parents, but it is a challenge to provide sufficient equipment and coaches.

BFF Grassroot development official said grassroots football is basically for children from 5 to 12 years old. He said the BFF focuses on schools and provide coaching to sports instructor.

The advanced grassroots programme stresses quality, according to an official. "In this category, we provide training to 13-14 years students, where we have sent a coach to 10 central schools."

He said players from the grassroots will be selected and training will be given at BFF academy in Thimphu for boys, and the Women's academy in Gelephu.

TOMORROW

Good Day

- to perform annual offerings

Bad Day

- to appoint to new post
- to learn astrology
- to preach and listen
- to marry and celebrate
- to hand and take over office
- to enter into new house
- to start new business
- to shift house

- to hold good discussions
- to roof house

A good day for rituals (laza):
those born in the rat and pig years.

Generally a good day (sogza):
those born in the ox, dragon and dog years.

A bad day (shedza):
those born in the snake and horse years.



► NBA: Chicago Bulls record fifth win in six games to end Utah Jazz's unbeaten start to season. DeMar DeRozan top-scored with 32 points as the Chicago Bulls ended the Utah Jazz's unbeaten start to the season. The Bulls, who are now 5-1 for the season, led by 17 at one stage before holding out for a 107-99 win. The Jazz, defending the last remaining unbeaten NBA record, had made their best start to a season since 2006-07.

WEATHER Time of issue: 4:00 PM, October 31, 2021

SUNRISE : 6:12am | SUNSET : 5:19pm

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| Gasa | Trongsa | Bumthang | Sarpang | Phuentsholing |
| 15°C | 21°C | 17°C | 30°C | 30°C |
| 1 | 5 | 4 | 21 | 17 |

Source: National Center for Hydrology and Meteorology.
For any weather information: Call hotline 335578

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- Interest calculated on month end balance
- Deposit Tenure: Min. 1 year / Max. 20 years
- Loan available against Deposit

Simple Recurring Deposit

- Min. Monthly Installment: Nu.100
- Max. Monthly Installment: No Limit
- Interest calculated on month end balance
- Deposit Tenure: Min. 1 year / Max. 20 years
- Loan available against Deposit

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