



Patients will not have to go abroad for pacemaker implantation

Nima Wangdi

With an interventional cardiologist having joined the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital (JDWNRH) after his studies, patients now will no longer have to be referred abroad for pacemaker device implantation.

Dr Mahesh Gurung completed his super-specialisation in interventional cardiology and cardiac device implantation in Thailand. He joined the hospital from February this year.

Dr Mahesh Gurung is the only interventional cardiologist at the JDWNRH.

The surgery involves implanting a small electrical device (pacemaker), about the size of a matchbox or smaller, in the patient's chest, below the collarbone.

The pacemaker sends electrical impulses to the heart through wires to keep it beating regularly or not too slowly. The pacemakers are bought from India for Nu 90,000 apiece.

Recently, a heart patient who had also tested positive to the Covid-19, was saved after implanting a temporary pacemaker at the ICU of the National Covid-19 hospital at Taba in Thimphu.

Dr Mahesh said the patient would not have survived without the pacemaker. "Referral had become difficult due to the pandemic and there were quarantine requirements then."

He implanted the temporary pacemaker on March 19 on the 68-year-old man. **►Pg 2**



► PCAL plant has been shut down since February 4

PCAL remains closed since February

Rajesh Rai, | Phuentsholing

The country's oldest cement manufacturing establishment, Penden Cement Authority Limited (PCAL), in Gomtu is yet to resume production since it closed down on February 4 this year.

The management said it is shut down due to the shortage of quality coal, a major constituent required for manufacturing cement.

According to the chief executive officer (CEO), Tenzin, the plant needs about 150MT of coal per day in order to produce cement.

"It needs to fulfil certain quality parameters as well," he said, adding that PCAL buys coals from both Bhutan and India. "We have some coal stock but the quality is not good."

Tenzin said coal from Bhutan has high ash content and needs to be blended with high quality imported coal to meet quality parameters and for economic reasons.

PCAL management also attributed the issue of coal shortage to the crisis in India and the Ukrainian invasion.

Officials said closure of the international borders has also badly affected PCAL's supply chain, including the sourcing of the coal.

According to Tenzin, the cost of coal has gone up by more than 100 percent in the past few months and it is still not available.

"In addition, PCAL has to follow the procurement norms that has its own cycle time and challenges in a volatile market."

PCAL produced about 1,000

metric tonnes (MT) of cement during the normal pre-covid days and below 500MT during the Covid days. In 2021, PCAL produced an average of 459MT of cement daily.

Meanwhile, PCAL has submitted the coal issues to the economic affairs ministry and other concerned agencies.

Officials said they are discussing with stakeholders, including Indian counterparts. They tried operating the plant on two occasions with the available coal but due to quality issues, production had to be suspended.

Tenzin said that after awarding supply orders to more than a dozen coal suppliers, PCAL is expecting to receive higher quality coal within this week.

►Pg 2

Covid-19 Update

Confirmed Cases: **25,437**
Recovered: **28,092**
Active: **7,333** | Death: **12**
-MoH

Inside

HOME

3 Private sector development for economic recovery: ADO

DZONGKHAG



7 Bhutan Agro ventures into contract farming

Weather



www.kuenselonline.com



3 PLY
Protective Mask
DRA and ISO Certified

Available at **KUENSEL**

Contact :
17867254 / 17871263 / 17797658

Mid-term break shortened to a week

Phurpa Lhamo

To ensure that students and teachers have 90 instructional days for both first and the second term, mid-term breaks have been shortened to one week this academic year.

Last academic year, the students went on a two-week mid-term break.

The education ministry issued a notification with details on the mid-term, home, board examinations, mid-term breaks and the resumption of classes for this academic year on April 5.

Addressed to the dzongkhag and thromde officials, the notification stated that the timing was arranged keeping the provision of approximately 90 instructional days for both the first term

and the second term to meet the requirement of 180 instructional days in one academic year.

It further stated that the information be disseminated to all schools for compliance and inclusion in their school's calendar.

The mid-term examinations this year will begin on August 1 and mid-term break will be from August 17 to August 23.

The notification stated that the second term would resume on August 25.

Earlier, teachers had raised concerns about completing the syllabus this academic year.

School opening was deferred several times with changing Covid situation in the country. Classes for grades VII, VIII, IX, X, and

XII started on April 4 after children attained full immunity after the second dose of vaccination.

Pre-primary to class VI students will go to school from April 18 this year.

However, if students aren't vaccinated, they were notified to report to school on April 28 this year.

In an earlier interview, an education official said that the holidays would be shortened to ensure that the curriculum is covered.

With the national school curriculum, there wasn't a need to cover all topics, he added.

Meanwhile, home examinations will begin from December 5 to December 16 this year. Board examinations for classes X and XII will begin on December 19.

Teacher sentenced to 10 years and six months in prison for child molestation

Staff Reporter

Affirming the ruling of the High Court, the Supreme Court (SC) dismissed the appeal submitted by a 56-year-old school teacher and asked him to serve a remaining sentence of 10 years and four months in prison for molesting 10 children at a primary school in 2019.

The SC passed the judgment on April 4.

Appellant Dil Bahadur Chhetri Neopani from Tsholingkhar gewog, Tsirang was sentenced to 30 years in prison by the Tsirang dzongkhag court in early July 2021. He was found guilty of the fourth-degree felony and sentenced to three years each for 10 counts of molestation. The court also ordered him to pay a compensation of Nu 90,000 to each victim, which amounts to Nu 900,000.

Dissatisfied with the lower court's ruling, the convict's lawyer appealed to the High Court stating that he was not

guilty of molesting and the parents of the students agreed not to accept compensation from the accused.

The high court on November 30 partially overturned the lower court's ruling and sentenced him to a concurrent prison term of 10 years and six months by increasing his offence from fourth degree to second-degree felony. He was found guilty of touching the children inappropriately. However, the court upheld the compensation aspect.

Dil Bahadur Chhetri Neopani was arrested on November 8, 2019, after police and dzongkhag's child protection unit received complaints about molestation and harassment. He was in detention for two months.

He was serving as the officiating vice principal when 10 children studying in classes II and III then complained of bad touch. The incident happened between February and November 2019.

Patients will not have to go abroad ...

From Pg 1

"He was left to recover from the Covid-19 and then was brought to JDWN-RH where permanent pacemaker was implanted."

Dr Mahesh said the normal rate of heartbeat in the person is 60 to 100 per minute. The patient's heartbeat had dropped to 20 beats per minute. "The team went to the ICU and the temporary pacemaker was implanted."

"His swollen heart causing complications has shrunk to the normal size and the patient is doing well," Dr Mahesh said.

He said the permanent pacemaker lasts for five to 10 years depending up on how much the heart uses it. The pacemaker will not be used if the heartbeat becomes normal. The device should be replaced after that. "The patients with pacemaker must be regularly checked on different time intervals."

He said that with more aging population in the country, heart diseases were likely to increase. He said healthy diet, exercising, and maintaining body weight are the key to prevent heart diseases.

Dr Mahesh said, some patients, especially from the rural



► Dr Mahesh explains how the pacemaker is implanted

areas, didn't not even want to go abroad for pacemaker implantation due to language barrier. It also involved risk, as lives were lost in the process of referral. "These are some benefits of it besides the huge cut down in referral expense."

Follow up on the old cases

Dr Mahesh said a total of 56 people have got pacemaker implanted as of yet and three are waiting to get it done soon.

He said that since the old cases have not been followed up, the hospital was collecting all the data on them because most of the patients think it

is done once the device is implanted, which is not the case. "In some, the batteries would have already depleted and we won't know until we check."

He has replaced the device for a 14-year-old girl in whom the battery of the device had depleted.

"The hospital is also working towards establishing a pacemaker clinic at the hospital where all the patients can come and get checked up regularly," he said.

He said that when patients are referred, it incurred package expense of about Nu. 400,000 depending on the complexity of the cases.

PCAL remains closed ...

From Pg 1

"We will resume the production by the end of the week," he said, adding that the PCAL board and management have considered many strategies and action plans to source coal but the market is volatile.

He said they are also considering alternative fuels to supplement coal in the long term.

RAA Preliminary Audit Observation

The shutdown comes at a time when the requirement for cement is at its peak in the country. The Royal Audit Authority (RAA) issued a preliminary observation pointing out that weak management led to a decline in PCAL's performance in 2019 and 2020.

The chief executive officer, however, said as it is still a preliminary audit observation that may be resolved soon.

"The company incurred a financial loss in 2020 for the first time since its inception," he said, citing pandemic, closure of international border, series of restrictions and strict health protocols as the reasons.

He also said a cement manufacturing company cannot do well when the construction sector is badly affected by the pandemic as it's not only the construction sector that influences PCAL's performance or profitability.

PCAL management said global pandemic had a huge impact on performance of the company and the well-being of the employees who had to endure a series of lockdowns, community transmissions and abnormally high risks and extraordinary challenges while trying to keep the business afloat.

"If not for the resilience and the commitment of the board, management and employees, the company would not have survived altogether," Tenzin said.

He said the financial losses would have been much higher if the employees failed to work harder in containment modes and that too constrained by the limited resources. "The company did not lay off any of its employees and continues to pay employees their salary."

Private sector development for economic recovery: ADO

ADB estimates the GDP to grow by 4.5 percent this year

Thukten Zangpo

With the economic recovery, Bhutan has to create a conducive environment for the private sector development, while at the same time reducing dependence on the hydropower sector and state-owned enterprises (SOEs), according to Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2022 released yesterday.

The ADO report estimated Bhutan's gross domestic product (GDP) to moderately grow by 3.5 percent in 2021, as economic activity picked up following the government's stimulus measures and steps to ease supply chain disruptions caused by Covid-19 pandemic.

With progressive relaxation of containment measures, including opening the tourism and other policy measures, the GDP is projected to grow faster to 4.5 percent in 2022 and 7.5 percent by 2023.

Asian Development Bank's (ADB) country director, Shamit Chakravarti, said that Bhutan's economy over the past decades had seen not much change in

the economic structure or employment profile.

"Bhutan's focus on hydropower as the main source of growth, exports, and foreign exchange earnings has come at the cost of a vibrant and competitive private sector," he added.

According to the report, net foreign direct investment inflows to tallied just 0.5 percent of GDP in the fiscal year 2019—low compared to other economies with similar per capita incomes such as Vietnam (6.2 percent of GDP), the Philippines (2.3 percent), and South Asia of 1.6 percent average.

Shamit Chakravarti said that the hydropower sector, which generated 57 percent of the government revenue on average from 2011 to 2020, contributed less than 2 percent to the total employment.

He said that Bhutan's economy should be diversified as hydropower could take a beating from earthquakes and other disasters.

Shamit Chakravarti said that the agriculture (15 percent of

GDP) employment share fell to around 50 percent, but the shift into industry did not translate to a higher industry share of GDP over the past decades.

The industry that contributes about 40 percent to GDP has an employment of less than 15 percent. The services sector contributed to 50 percent of GDP and employs about 30 percent, he said.

Shamit Chakravarti said that the manufacturing sector is supposed to generate a large number of jobs as the economy moves from agriculture to industries to services.

He added that the SOEs with preferential government finance are competing with the private sector.

"I am aware that the government would rationalise the number of SOEs, the role of SOEs, and make sure that they are not crowding out the private sectors," Shamit Chakravarti.

Shamit Chakravarti said that the government must attract the private sector as a partner and investor in economic development, diversify the

economy beyond hydropower, and reduce the oversized role played by the public sector.

Over the years, the government has undertaken policy reforms, simplified licensing requirements, and provided incentives for the private sector. The results, however, have not been encouraging, the report stated.

"Businesses continue to identify tight access to finance, high rents, erratic electricity supply, multiple licensing requirements, delays in getting clearances, and high-interest loans as the main obstacles affecting their operations," the report added.

Simplifying licensing, reducing the number of clearances required, and reducing the cost of business to register are the measures to create conducive environment for the private sector, Shamit Chakravarti said.

He added that the ADB and government are working to update the commercial or insolvency law and make it more transparent to offer timely and cost-effective solutions for

cottage and small industries (CSIs); small firms in financial distress should be considered.

"The CSIs that comprise 95 percent of the total industries need to be protected from bankruptcy since they are different from large companies. Law usually only focuses on the big players," Shamit Chakravarti said.

Reforming technical and vocational education and training or balancing demand and supply in the job market to address very high levels of youth unemployment are also to be looked at, he said.

Shamit Chakravarti said that for a small country like Bhutan, many leaving for employment abroad was a matter of concern.

He also said that Bhutan must promote digitalisation, easier access to finance, and foster entrepreneurship.

Bhutan, he said, should take bold reforms for sustainable economic recovery and a strong growth trajectory. "We can draw comfort from the recovery, and the recovery will be on strong footings."

Former Physics teacher's science model receives patent in Thailand

Chhimi Dema

The Department of Intellectual Property of Thailand awarded Petty Patent to former Physics teacher Dumcho Wangdi's experimental kit for demonstration of the law of energy conservation on March 3 this year.

The petty patent was awarded as the invention was innovative, original, and novel in its contribution to making students understand the law of conservation of energy.

Dumcho Wangdi is pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Australia.

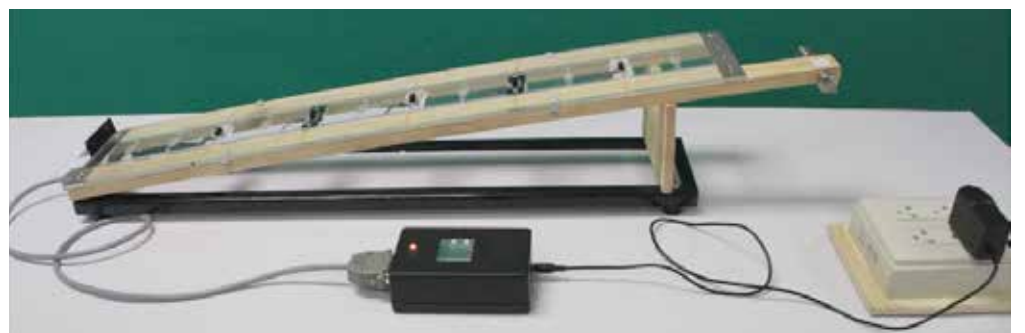
He said he invented the experimental kit to help students understand the concept as an alternative to the conventional methods such as theoretical examples and imaginary illustrations provided in the

textbooks.

"As a science student and as a former middle school physics teacher, I saw students facing difficulties to learn about the law of energy conservation," he said. "Students' challenges motivated me to explore some alternate innovative learning approach."

The model was developed as part of a thesis for his master's degree, and the findings on its precision were presented during two international conferences in Thailand, the 9th Siam Physics Congress, and the 40th Congress of Science and Technology.

Dumcho Wangdi's innovation was also used in Dechentsemo Central School and Bajothang Higher Secondary School in Punakha, and research articles based on its findings were published.



► Experimental kit for demonstration of the law of energy conservation

A research article that was published in the International Journal of Innovation in Science and Mathematics Education 2020, mentioned that students' views and attitudes toward the guided inquiry laboratory were positive and affirmative.

"The results of this study suggest that guided inquiry laboratory as an educational

pedagogy can enhance students understanding of law of mechanical energy conservation," it stated.

The law of energy conservation states that energy can be neither created nor destroyed but it can be transformed from one form to another.

"Our students can write the definition of the law of conservation of energy promi-

nently through the means of rote memorisation. However, they are not able to relate to real-life application or explain it based on their understanding," Dumcho Wangdi said.

The patent was awarded to him after six years of evaluating the model of its originality, genuineness, and authenticity. The patent will protect the invention for 10 years.

Ensuring quality infrastructure

Local leaders in Haa are worried that public infrastructures being built with scarce national resources would not last to serve their purposes if technical monitoring does not improve.

Like other gewogs across the country, they have to rely on engineers based at the dzongkhag headquarters for monitoring and technical expertise on the construction of public infrastructure. They are concerned that without timely monitoring, the quality of infrastructure - an asset in the gewogs - would suffer.

Gups are questioning the effectiveness of decentralisation and significant budget allocation to the local government without experts to make the best use of it through quality monitoring. Dzongkhag engineers are bogged down with too many projects to look after. With more resources being handed down to LGs and more work being executed by community contractors, they certainly need the expertise to ensure quality infrastructure, whether it is roads, schools, or irrigation canals.

The concerns of the local leaders are pertinent given the long history of poor quality construction of public infrastructure. There are plenty of bad examples of how lack of monitoring has wasted scarce resources. The poor irrigation canals, roadside drainage systems, basic health unit structures, and our expensive roads, are good examples.

However, the question of the quality of construction is not only a rural problem. Even with adequate expertise, the quality of our home or building construction in urban areas is equally worrying.

The construction hiccups begin with the plans and drawings, this being a process that has no time frame. Then every house owner becomes an amateur builder, having to go through all the formalities, from the design of the house to recruitment of labour to purchase of materials to site supervision and the finishing touches.

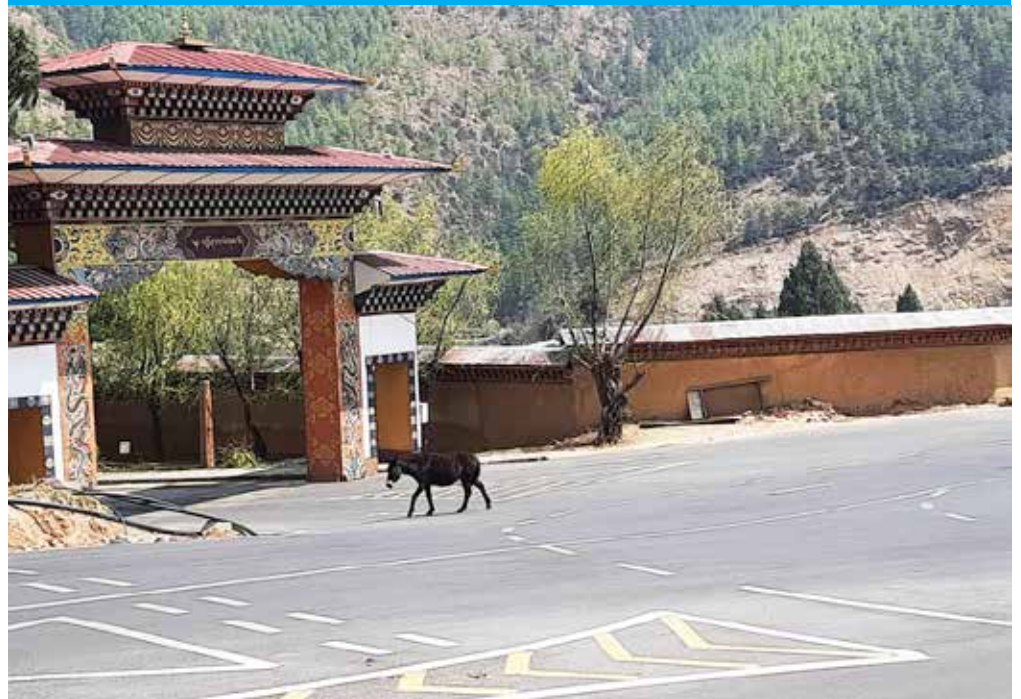
That is why the process has evolved as it has. It is much easier to get an Indian "thrikhadar" to organise your labourers than to run from office to office to complete the formalities. Bhutanese contractors and private builders are resigned to paying extra "fees" to save time and money.

We all know that if you purchase your materials through the proper channels you will end up paying much more than if you leave it to a Jaigaon contact who will get you everything faster and cheaper, with minimal taxes paid. The builder is considered pragmatic if he allows himself to be advised on shortcuts and is alleged to have more money than brains if he decides to follow the rules.

There is some pragmatic wisdom in the view that there is only so much you can do in the third world. The budget is smaller and the equipment poorer, so the risks are greater. There is much less fuss made anyway if one knows the tricks of the business. Although Bhutan's building rules prescribe quality material for Bhutanese constructions, suppliers in Siliguri know how the cheapest materials available are sent to Bhutan because that's what many Bhutanese builders want.

With the end of lockdowns and the easing of labour and material imports, the construction sites in the towns have suddenly come alive. We are going to see a construction boom in the next few years. We can only hope that, in the rush to complete formalities and meet construction deadlines, we do not sacrifice quality.

MY COUNTRY, MY TOWN



The lonely mule: Usually part of a train, this individual seems to have somehow detached itself from the rest Photo: Tandin Wangchuk

Send in your pictures to: formcmt@gmail.com

MY SAY

Creative industry is growing

The film industry in Bhutan has the potential to grow and meet international standards. This was proven by the fact that "Lunana: A Yak in the Classroom" made to the Oscars nomination, and recently "Gangnam Girls" was featured at UK Asian Film Festival.

There were also other films such as Kelzang Dorjee's "Why is the sky dark at night?" and "Snow Lion and The Glaciologist" by Arun Bhattarai that gained international attention.

These are examples of

how Bhutan can use the creative industry to help generate employment and contribute to economic growth. If the creative sector is given the right push there is potential for the best from Bhutan to reach the international stage.

In addition, we see talented video makers picking upstream on YouTube with videos that capture the scene and talents of the young.

But the sector is vulnerable today. There aren't exact figures of how

many are employed in the film industry and the income for those involved all depends on the producers. We also do not know about the working environment and employee welfare.

All the opportunities and potential that we see could crumble to nothing if the creative industry sector isn't guided properly. Only a few would benefit from the growth of the sector.

*Phuntsho Tshering,
Thimphu*

Make your opinions known. Send your letters to

newseditor@kuensel.bt

Letters are edited for space and clarity

FOR NEWS, VIEWS, AND FEEDBACK

Call 324684 or email

newseditor@kuensel.bt

NOTICE CALLING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

KUENSEL CORPORATION LIMITED

Thimphu: Bhutan

This is to notify all the Shareholders that the 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of **Kuensel** Corporation Limited will be held on **April 30, 2022** in the conference hall of City Hotel, Thimphu at **2:30 PM** to transact the following businesses:

1. Consideration and adoption of Audited Financial Statements of KCL for the financial year 2021 along with the Board of Director's Report and Auditor's Report
2. Declaration of dividend, if any
3. To consider the retirement and appointment of Directors for KCL
4. To consider any other matters

All the Shareholders are requested to attend the meeting in person or by proxy. The forms for Nomination, Consent & Proxy can be downloaded from www.kuenselonline.com.

To facilitate proper arrangement for the meeting, it would be appreciated if written confirmation of the shareholders' participation is conveyed to this office on or before **April 20, 2022**, to the Company Secretary, **Kuensel** Corporation Limited at cs@kuensel.bt. Also, kindly note that the above forms should reach the office on the same day.

For further queries, please contact **17557550**.

For and on behalf of Board of Directors of KCL



ལྷོ ། ། འབྲུག་ཉེན་བཅོལ་ཚད་འཛིན།

Bhutan Insurance Limited

Providing Security, Building Confidence

Your Insurer of CHOICE

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Bhutan Insurance Limited is pleased to announce vacancies for **Junior Assistant III** for immediate recruitment.

For further details, please visit our website www.bhutaninsurance.com.bt or contact the Human Resource Department at **02-339893/339894**, extension no. **2042** during office hours.

Management

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

BHUTAN DUTY FREE LIMITED

BDFL/GM/12/2022/80

Sealed quotations are invited from the eligible Bhutanese suppliers with valid trade licence for the supply of following items

Sl.#	Name of the work
1	Supply of Duty-Free shopping bags for the year 2022

Bid documents will be available our website at www.bdfi.bt. The last date for submission is on **April 19, 2022 before 12:00 noon** and will be opened on the same day at **2:30 pm**.

For more details and clarifications, please call **02-322167** during business hours or email us at wangchuk@bdfi.bt

Management

NOTICE INVITING TENDER



STATE TRADING CORPORATION OF BHUTAN LTD.

The State Trading Corporation of Bhutan Ltd. invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified Medium Class W3 category bidders for the construction of fuel retail outlets and associated facilities at following locations. The period for execution of the assignment is 8 (eight) Months.

Sl. #	Locations	Submission date	Opening date
1	Chumme, Bumthang	27/04/2022, 11 AM	27/04/2022, 2:30 PM
2	Jamkhar, Trashy Yangtse	28/04/2022, 11 AM	28/04/2022, 2:30 PM

For details, please visit our website: www.stcb.bt

STCBL

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

KUENSEL CORPORATION LIMITED

KCL/PROC-10/2022/

Sealed quotations are invited from the eligible suppliers with valid trade licence for the supply of **"ORIGINAL TONERS, CARTRIDGES"** for a period of one year.

Cost of tender form	Nu. 500/- (non refundable)
Last date of submission	15th April, 2022 before 12 Noon
Tender opening date	15th April, 2022 at 3 PM

The tender documents with detailed terms and conditions may be purchased from the **Procurement Division** on any working days from **March 28 till April 15, 2022**.

The Management

ABRIDGED NOTICE INVITING TENDER

MANGDECHHU HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AUTHORITY

Dangdung, Trongsa

(DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING)

MHPA/C&P/CD-01/2022/289

NIT No: MHPA0031/2022

Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project Authority (MHPA) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders fulfilling the eligibility criteria for **"Supply & Delivery of Civil, Carpentry, and Plumbing Items."**

The bidding document shall be available from **07.04.2022 to 07.05.2022**. Bid shall be received up to **13:00 hours (BST)** on or before **07.05.2022** and shall be opened on the same day at **14:30 hours (BST)**.

Detailed NIT and bidding documents are available at MHPA website (www.mhpa.gov.bt) and could be downloaded from the website free of cost during the period.


Chief Engineer (Contracts & Procurement)

TO ADVERTISE IN KUENSEL Call 02-326191 or email at kuenseladvertisement@gmail.com
FOR NEWS; Call 02-324684 (English) and 02-333563 (Dzongkha)



ADVERTISEMENT

PAGE 6 Thursday, April 07, 2022 | KUENSEL




PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

ELECTION COMMISSION OF BHUTAN

(Ensuring Free, Fair & Democratic Elections & Referendums)

ECB/NOTIF-01/2022/5746



This is for the information of the general public that election campaign shall be permitted after the issuance of notification calling elections in line with the section 268 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Recently, it has come to the notice of the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) that past campaign materials of the Political Parties are being widely shared via social media. The sharing of such campaign materials can be construed as election campaign and mislead the general public creating social disharmony in the community.

In view of the above, the ECB would like the Political Parties to be mindful that no campaign materials in any forms are shared until the announcement for the next elections is made. Further, general public is requested not to share such materials.

Election Commission of Bhutan

NPPF VENTURE FUND - EQUITY FINANCING PLATFORM SERIES I

NATIONAL PENSION AND PROVIDENT FUND


National Pension and Provident Fund is pleased to announce **Series I: NPPF Venture Fund - Equity Financing Platform**: a great opportunity to access equity capital investment to expand and scale up businesses.

Apply Now! For criteria and details, please visit www.nppf.org.bt or contact **Mr. Tenzin Dorji at 77488907**. Submit your entries on or before **May 6, 2022** to tenzin.dorji@nppf.org.bt

Minimum requirements:

1. Should be in business operation (licenced) for a minimum period of 6 months at the time of application
2. Detailed project plans and expansion strategy
4. Other requirements (please visit our website)

Note: NPPF reserves the right to disqualify or reject any entries submitting incomplete documents and/or does not fulfil the requirements and expectation. All the qualified entries will go through rigorous selection process and validation procedures. NPPF looks forward to genuine business entrepreneurs with a scalable business model already in operation seeking equity financing.





NOTICE INVITING TENDER (ABRIDGED)

PUNATSANGCHHU-II HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AUTHORITY (PHPA-II)

Bjimthangka, Wangdue

PHPA-II/SE(P&C)-102/Stationery/2022/77

Tender No. PHPA-II/SE(P&C)/NIT-01/2022

Sealed bids are invited from eligible Bhutanese supplier/dealers for **“supply of office stationery items through Annual Rate Contracts (ARC)”**.

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, 471744**, E-mail Id: procncontracts@phpa2.gov.bt

(Sd/-)
S.E(Proc. & Contracts)


VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

BHUTAN FOUNDATION

The Bhutan Foundation is pleased to invite applications from the interested individuals for the post of Curator in Wangduechoeling Palace in Bumthang. You can send your resume, cover letter and related transcripts addressed to the Director, Bhutan Foundation at jobs@bhutanfound.org latest by **April 30, 2022**. You can read the full job description on our website at www.bhutanfound.org/wcp-curator

For further inquiries, kindly write to us or call **02 322 751** during office hours (0900-1700 hrs).

Director



- CLASSIFIED ADS - VACANCY

Vacancy: Shingkar Pvt.Ltd., KIA Motors Bhutan would like to announce vacancy for the following posts: one Operation Manager Kia Service Center, one Spare parts Sales Assistant and one Adm. Officer (Head Office). Please submit CV within April 11, 2022. Email. kiabht@gmail.com Mob: 17639799.

Vacancy: Jachung security services Pvt., Ltd., announces vacancy for 30 security guards. Revised salary package and allowances. Food and hostel facilities will be provided during the training. For more details contact 17125734/17172687.



- CLASSIFIED ADS - HOUSING

For rent: Restaurant Space and Space Ideal for Office from May 1, located at Chubachu, below Royal Textile Academy with good parking. Interested may contact. 17643352 / 17423264.

Sale: Land along with 2 storey 4 Units Traditional house at Paro Dotey. Blacktopped accessible road. Interested may contact 17543047

- CLASSIFIED ADS - OTHERS

Lost: Marksheet, certificate of migration and pass certificate of Shilash, Sunar bearing index No.: B/8019/003(ISC December, 06) of Phuentsholing Higher Secondary School. If found please, contact, 17887480/17587005.

NU. PER UNITS OF FOREIGN CURRENCY as of yesterday

	NOTES	
	Buy	Sell
US \$	74.65	76.95
POUND	97.65	100.35
EURO	81.40	83.60
YEN (100)	60.20	61.90
HK \$	9.50	9.80
AUS \$	56.55	58.15
SING \$	54.85	56.40

Courtesy BNB

Bhutan Agro ventures into contract farming

Tshering Namgyal | Mongar

Bhutan Agro has ventured into contract farming in the east to provide market assurance to farmers and get adequate supply

The deputy chief executive officer, Kinzang Dorji, said the integrated agro-processing plant in Lingmethang has signed contracts with seven farmers' groups involving 164 households.

"Two farmers' groups are for passion fruits while five are for pineapples with the total acreage cover of 127 in the eastern six dzongkhags and Zhemgang," he said.

He also said four more farmers groups, who will grow passion fruit and pineapple, have also been identified in Trashigang, Trashiyangtse and Pemagatshel.

According to Kinzang Dorji, agreements have been initially drawn for three years. "We are creating a ready market for farmers by linking with us and offering incremental prices to motivate them and improve their livelihood."

He said Bhutan Agro also

faces shortage of other fruits like mango and oranges, and they are planning to sign contract with farmers.

While oranges are abundantly grown in the east, Agro officials said the main issue is farmers sell across the border whenever they fetch good price.

The company could collect only 53.198 MT from 144 farmers amounting to Nu 1.3 million in the last orange season.

Bhutan Agro makes products like bottled and canned juices from mango, orange, pineapple, passion fruit, jam and pickles.

According to the company's deputy CEO, the plant still has 5,000kg of blended chilli pest ready to be packed.

"The sale is not impressive and we have written to the dzongdags in the region, lam netens, and presidents of the two colleges to include chili pickle as appetiser in the mess menu of schools, colleges and institutes. But we are yet to receive the response," Kinzang Dorji said.

He said they help farmers by buying their farm produce



► Bhutan Agro products

and urges people to consume their products.

Bhutan Agro officials said one of the reasons why people are not keen on buying chilli pickles and selling fruits to the Agro procession plant is due to lack of awareness besides imports.

Kinzang Dorji said Bhutan Agro is also in the process of developing an appropriate app to advertise through social media platforms in future.

Officials said they plan to process high-end products and export to the niche market

in future.

It was learnt machinery are underutilised because of inadequate raw materials.

"Bhutan Agro hopes to receive ample supply with contract signing after fruits like passion fruits and pineapple complete their gestation period and start full production," Kinzang Dorji said.

Established two years ago, the agro processing plant in Lingmethang is run by 36 employees. The plant has so far 11 distributors in the eastern region and few retailers.

Meanwhile, farmers who have signed contracts with Bhutan Agro are happy with the market assurance they get.

Karma Dorji, a pineapple grower in Khangma, Pemagatshel, has signed contract with Bhutan Agro.

He said most of the 32 farmers in the group are happy with the ready market which motivated them to grow on a large scale.

He initially started growing pineapples on two acres of land and is planning to expand it in the future.



Australia Awards

Make a difference with an Australia Awards Scholarship Applications are now open

Do you want to be a leader in your field and make a difference in Bhutan? Apply now for your opportunity to gain a world-class education and become an emerging leader for development with strong links to Australia.

An Australia Awards Scholarship provides you with the opportunity to gain an internationally recognised qualification from an Australian institution. It includes all the necessary support and funding to complete your study.

Your career will benefit from new knowledge, leadership skills and the links you create both in Australia and through the Australia Global Alumni network.

On your return home you can make a vital contribution to the social and economic development of Bhutan.

The application process is open and competitive, providing equal opportunity to all eligible applicants, regardless of gender, ethnicity or disability.

How to apply

Applications for Australia Awards Scholarship for study commencing in 2023 are now open and will close on 29 April 2022.

For information on how to apply, visit:

www.australiaawardsbhutan.org



DIVERSION

PAGE 8 Thursday, April 7, 2022 | KUENSEL

Bhutan's Growing Literary Scene Makes Me Happy

Dolma Choden Roder
Bhutan Echoes

Growing up a book lover in Thimphu used to be a tough and lonely lot in life. There were never enough new books. Never. When I was a child there used to be just one bookstore and it stocked mostly Archie comics and Sidney Sheldon books (both of which I am unembarrassed to admit devouring). The school library was unwelcoming and I don't remember being able to take any of its meager collection homes. In neither place do I remember seeing books by or about Bhutanese people. I read a lot of Enid Blyton. A lot.

So it's amazing to me that today we have such a vibrant emerging Bhutanese writing and reading scene. It makes me happy that we now have several bookstores to choose from, that they don't all stock the same books, and that several of them are run by genuine book lovers. I am so glad that I can buy my four-year-old niece more Peppa Pig books as well as beautifully illustrated books by Bhutanese authors telling Bhutanese stories. I feel so lucky to have befriended so many fellow Bhutanese book lovers in book clubs and bookstores and even on social media (the thriving Bhutanese bookstagram community is so well-read, creative and so very warm and welcoming).

But most of all I love that we had our very own literature festival and that it was free and open to the public as well as telecast on public television. The mix of authors and poets and artists and thinkers was always so eclectic. You got to hear from people you adored and people you didn't know that you adored yet. For me, the festival was really an important indicator of the sea change in our reading culture. Both the accessibility to better, more diverse reading materials and the willingness, even eagerness of people to discuss books and writing and big ideas. Thimphu was no longer the literature desert that I grew up in.

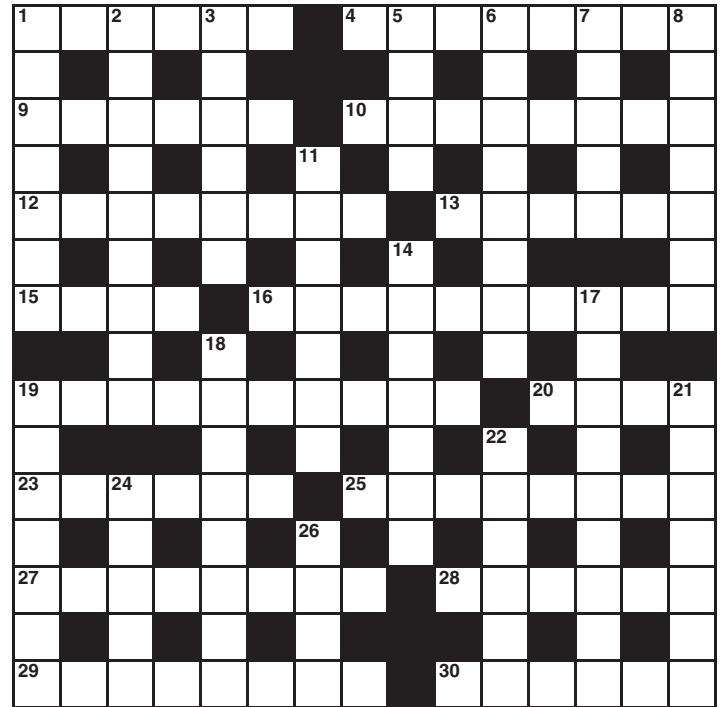
As a long-time book lover, there is no greater thrill than getting to move from enthusiastic literature festival attendee to festival

planning committee. I am so honored to be part of the first all Bhutanese team that was asked to follow the ten wonderful years of Mountain Echoes. The new festival committee had big plans but Covid had even bigger plans so for two years we were forced to wait. In the meantime, we learned how complex it is to organize a literature festival and it was a steep learning curve. (Long time Mountain Echoes festival producer Mita Kapoor made it look effortless!) We rebranded and came up with a new logo to match our new ambitions. What could have represented our dreams and hopes better than a beautiful dragon gripping a pen, ready to tell our stories to the world! We all loved the festival but we wondered aloud was it not important that we encourage reading and writing all year round? Shouldn't we look for ways to engage readers and potential readers beyond the all-too-short whirlwind weekend of the festival? And the answer was a resounding yes! We decided we had to have the energy and fun and engagement of the festival echo the whole year long which was how Bhutan Echoes was born.

And finally, we decided that the festival could not wait any longer, that instead of waiting for the end of the pandemic we had to acknowledge the world had changed and that any festival that we put on would have to live with that. We could take what we learned in the last two years about flexibility, technology, and building community online and plan an innovative, lively hybrid festival. The world had changed in the last two years but we also know that we have an audience ready to hear and tell new kinds of stories, we have an audience ready for this festival and we can't wait for all of you to join us.

The festival will take place virtually from April 22nd to 25th and will be streamed live on our Facebook page, allowing all our friends and followers from all around the world to join. Please check our Facebook and Instagram pages for regular updates on the Festival.

Kwik Xword



April 5, answers

Across: 1 Recoup, 4 Smoulder, 9 Knotty, 10 Hold good, 12 Overleaf, 13 Fringe, 15 Flaw, 16 Join forces, 19 Split hairs, 20 Amid, 23 Fathom, 25 Shrug off, 27 In no time, 28 Mirage, 29 Enormity, 30 Bereft.

Down: 1 Rake-off, 2 Close call, 3 Untold, 5 Moot, 6 Underdog, 7 Drown, 8 Redress, 11 Samovar, 14 Anarchy, 17 Come of age, 18 At bottom, 19 Suffice, 21 Deflect, 22 Futile, 24 Tango, 26 Omit.

Quick CLUES

Across

- 1 To flower (7)
- 5 A mouldable substance (7)
- 9 Outdoor (4-3)
- 10 Prove to be the case (4,3)
- 11 Subside (5)
- 12 King Arthur's sword (9)
- 13 A reprimand (7-2)
- 15 Kind of soft leather (5)
- 16 Tranquillity (5)
- 18 Relaxed in manner (9)
- 21 Ornamental accessories (9)
- 24 Lag behind (5)
- 25 Progress (7)
- 26 Enumerate (7)
- 27 Went to bed (7)
- 28 A counterfeit (7)

Down

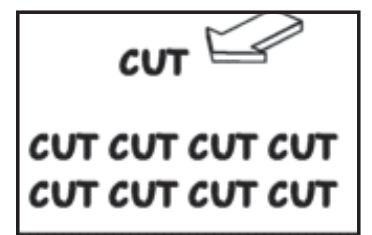
- 1 Cheerful and resilient (7)
- 2 Total (7)
- 3 Leisure (5,4)
- 4 To combine (5)
- 5 Explain effectively (3,6)
- 6 Of the ear (5)
- 7 Inconvenience (7)
- 8 Exclusive group (7)
- 14 Jealous (5-4)
- 15 Tourist (9)
- 16 A baseball player (7)
- 17 Resistant to persuasion (7)
- 19 Picture to oneself (7)
- 20 Spectators at golf match (7)
- 22 Authorisation (5)
- 23 Tough (5)

Solution on Saturday

SCRABBLE

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	Direction Make a 2 to 7 letters word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value.
C ₃	I ₁	X ₈	S ₁	D ₂	E ₁	N ₁	Rack 1	
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	
V ₄	O ₁	S ₁	S ₁	Y ₄	A ₁	A ₁	Rack 2	
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	
V ₄	T ₁	E ₁	I ₁	I ₂	P ₁	R ₁	Rack 3	
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	
C ₃	T ₁	U ₁	E ₁	A ₁	S ₁	L ₁	Rack 4	
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	
T ₁	R ₁	S ₁	I ₁	O ₁	L ₁	E ₁	Rack 5	
Solution								
E ₁	X ₈	S ₁	C ₃	I ₁	N ₁	D ₂	73	
S ₁	A ₁	V ₄	O ₁	Y ₄	S ₁	□	12	
P ₃	R ₁	I ₁	V ₄	E ₁	T ₁	□	33	
S ₁	U ₁	L ₁	C ₃	A ₁	T ₁	E ₁	59	
L ₁	O ₁	I ₁	T ₁	E ₁	R ₁	S ₁	64	
Par score 155-165								
Four rack total							Four rack total 241	

Rebus



Platinum

A cut above the rest

The life and legacy of Tsangpa Gyare

Part 3: Spiritual activities and institutional legacies

The previous two articles of this series have respectively shown the contextual and biographical backgrounds that saw the emergence of Tsangpa Gyare as a leading religious figure of his time. This final article will deal with the fruition of his destined roles, and the institutional and spiritual legacies that he has left behind. Today, they continue to influence not only religious, but also socio-political practices in Bhutan, while at the same time, being periodically reformed and revitalised in response to emerging circumstances and needs.

Completion of learning and embarkation on practice

Tsangpa Gyare's main master was Ling Repa. His various biographies give different years for his becoming a disciple of Ling Repa. The biographies composed by Marton and Gyaltangpa give the year 1181 (age 21). The 'Lhorong Choejung' and one other source state that he met Ling Repa and received oral instructions at the age of 22 (in 1182). The biographies composed by Dremowa Sangyebum, Lorepa, Pema Karpo, an anonymous biographer and the 'Lhodruk Choejung' give the year 1183 (age 23). Thus, he seems to have started to study with Ling Repa from 21 to 23 years old.

Ling Repa recognised Tsangpa Gyare's potentials and earnestly educated him. When he became a disciple of Ling Repa, monks were doing carpentry to build a monastery in Naphu. Tsangpa Gyare requested Ling Repa to exempt him from carpentry in lieu of monetary compensation so that he could devote his time to write a book. Ling Repa did not grant exemption and instead, admonished and urged him to develop patience, or otherwise be able to accomplish both tasks simultaneously.

Later, Tsangpa Gyare often asked Ling Repa for permission to leave for meditation but was rarely ever allowed. Because of his frequent requests, Ling Repa finally gave him permission to leave for meditation and gave him all oral transmissions in advance. However, Tsangpa Gyare came to fervently regret this.

At the age of 28 (in 1188), Tsangpa Gyare was informed



► Ruins of previous monastery and monk dormitories

that Ling Repa had died when he returned from Karchu in the Lhodak region after finishing his meditation. So, he rushed to Ling Repa's location. Tsangpa Gyare strongly regretted that he could not be with his master when he passed away and composed a poem of repentance.

After Ling Repa's death, Tsangpa Gyare concentrated on meditation retreats with a few of his disciples mainly in Kharchu in Lhodrak and Tsari.

He also engaged important masters of the Kagyü school. He met the first Karmapa Duesum Khyenpa (1110-1193) and received oral instructions on the Six Doctrines of Naropa. He also visited Drikung and met Jigten Gonpo (1143-1217) and became acquainted with his three principal disciples.

Full ordination

Most of his biographies and annals give the year 1193 (age 33) for Tsangpa Gyare's full ordination, except for the biography composed by Gyaltangpa, which gives the year 1178 (age 18).

There are different accounts regarding Tsangpa Gyare's preceptor. The biographies composed by Dremowa Sangyebum and Mangala Bhadra state that he received full ordination from the preceptor Zepa. Those composed by Marton, Lorepa and the 'Lhodruk Choejung' regard the master Zhang (1122-1193) as his preceptor. The 'Lhorong Choejung' states that Tsangpa Gyare received full ordination from both masters Zepa and Zhang. The biography composed by Pema Karpo and one other source state that he received novice ordination from the master Zepa and full ordination from the master Zhang.

Founding of Longdol Monastery

As he accomplished his own vast and extensive education and practices, he gained increasing fame and followership, which prompted him to establish a network of influential monastic centres. The biographies and annals state that the Longdol monastery was founded based on the master Zhang's prophecy. On the other hand, there are variable accounts about the year of its foundation. Tsangpa Gyare's biography composed by Gyaltangpa and one other source give the year 1189 (age 29), that composed by Mangala Bhadra gives the year 1193 (age 33), and those composed by Marton and Lorepa give the year 1194 (age 34). At any rate, the Longdol monastery was founded early in his monastic career.

Founding of Ralung Monastery

The head monastery of Ralung, located in upper Nyang, was founded based on the prophecy of a deity according to the biographies and annals. It seems that his master, Ling Repa, owned a small hermitage at Ralung, and thereafter, Tsangpa Gyare expanded the monastery of Ralung which became the head monastery of the Drukpa Kagyü school. Only the biography composed by Gyaltangpa gives the year 1196 (age 36) for its founding.

Founding of Druk Monastery

The Druk Goenpa or Druk Sewa Jangchubling monastery, primary source of the Drukpa Kagyü school's name, was founded to the southwest of

Lhasa based on Ling Repa's prophecy. Most of the biographies and annals give the year 1205 (age 45) for its founding. The monastery was founded in his later years if we accept the year 1205.

Collected Works

There are three known versions of the collected works of Tsangpa Gyare, one each from Bhutan, Nepal, and Ladakh. The three versions respectively include different works, so it is necessary to create a systematically integrated version of his collected works by comparing variants found in different versions of overlapping works and appropriately addressing them.

Tsangpa Gyare wrote in many genres, such as Sutrayana philosophy and instruction as well as treatises on Mahamudra and Vajrayana meditation. We can thus see that he was a person of various talents and interests.

The biographies and chronicles also show how the practice of meditation was an important part of his life. They also refer to the education in philosophy that he has received in his childhood, his educating of his disciples and his creative pursuits, such as poetry.

Death, renown, and legacy

Tsangpa Gyare continued to educate and edify his disciples and left many testaments as oral instructions into his later years. Tens of thousands of disciples are said to have gathered to attend his funeral. The biographies and annals give the same year (1211), date (25th) and time (evening) but different months for his death.

When Tsangpa Gyare died,

his body was cremated, and many miracles were reported: his heart and tongue came out of the fire without being burned, and many crystalline relics called Ringsel were also found. His vertebrae turned into twenty-one images of Avalokiteshvara, and some of these have been preserved even today. The Ranjung Kharsapani is today Bhutan's most treasured national relic and remains enshrined in Punakha Dzong.

Through a lifetime of commitment to the study and practice of ascetic spiritual pursuits, Tsangpa Gyare has won unparalleled admiration and respect throughout the Tibetan Buddhist world. Of his resounding fame, it is said that *Half the people are Drukpa Kagyupas, Half the Drukpa Kagyupas are beggars, And half the beggars are Drubthobs.*

After the founding of Druk Monastery, Tsangpa Gyare gave a series of public empowerments. It was said that half the population of Tibet's central province was present. Still, despite or because of all the increasing public activity, he continued to seek the solitude of remote retreat places. He also sent many of his students into long-term retreats. They say they filled the entire range of the Himalayas and beyond, covering a distance as far as a vulture could fly in eighteen days.

Of particular significance for Bhutan is the 'Tendrel' or auspicious circumstances surrounding the founding of the Druk Monastery. It is said that when Tsangpa Gyare and his entourage built the monastery, they heard the sound of thunder, which was regarded as the voice of dragon (Druk). The dragon's voice foreshadowed the universal fame of Tsangpa Gyare and his lineage. Bhutan, which has inherited its name from this great lineage, today continues to shine and bear this name gloriously on the global stage because of the auspicious circumstances of its origin.

Contributed by Seiji Kumagai

(Uehiro Associate Professor, Kyoto University) and Dendup Chopel (Associated Researcher, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Bhutan Cricket calls 22 players for training camp

Thinley Namgay

Bhutan Cricket has called 22 potential national team players from across the country for a training camp.

With a focus on improving the country's T20I rankings, the team will prepare for upcoming international tournaments.

After the ICC World T20 Asia Qualifiers in Malaysia in 2018, the senior men's team has not participated in international competitions.

The players were short-listed based on their performances in domestic and international competitions among other criteria.

The preliminary squad of the selected cricketers

has been training at Pelkhil School's cricket ground in Thimphu since April 1. Of the 22 players, 14 will be selected for the final squad.

Bhutan Cricket's chief executive officer, Damber S Gurung, said the training would be shifted to Gelephu cricket ground next week to provide a real ground experience for the players.

Damber S Gurung said that the training in Gelephu would be conducted in a semi-bubble format.

He said: "No player will be allowed to meet anyone from outside or go outside. The ground area will be sanitised from time to time."

The selection committee comprises the national team



► Cricket players train at Pelkhil School ground yesterday

head coach, two members of the cricket board, and the captain and the vice-captain. Bhutan Cricket's press of-

ficer, Tandin Wangchuk, said: "It's been long since we had any sort of training for the national team."

The team is training under Trishane Nonis, a professional coach from Sri Lanka.

Paro FC bows out of AFC Cup qualifiers

Thinley Namgay

Paro FC bowed out of the 2022 AFC Cup qualifiers after losing 1-2 against the Maldives' Club Valencia at the Maldives National Football Stadium on April 5.

However, Paro FC staged a strong performance against the host.

AFC preliminary matches used to be played in a double leg format in the past seasons. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, only a game was allowed to decide the winner.

This means that Club Valencia will play against Bangladesh's club Abahani Ltd Dhaka without having to come to Bhutan for an away face off.

The match was played at 11pm (BST) in the cool weather.

Paro FC had hired three international players from Cameroon despite having a number of players from the national team.

Club Valencia's Abdulla Yaameen scored the first goal in the 18th minute. The lead was short-lived, as Paro's Maxwell Ellon found the equaliser nine minutes later.

As both sides failed to



► Paro FC dominated the ball possession

break the deadlock in regulation time, the match entered into the extra time of 30 minutes to decide the winner.

There were only 19 minutes of the added time remaining for the match to go into a penalty shoot-out when the host team's Borja Martin scored the decider.

Paro FC's head coach,

Puspupal Sharma, said: "It was a stellar performance by our boys. Had we been clinical in the box, we could have closed the game in the second half."

"Despite dominating the ball possession and creating chances, we had to bow out of the AFC Cup," Puspupal Sharma said.

Striker Yeshi Dorji said the team's primary strategy was to produce counter-attacks. "We executed as per the plan."

He said that the hosts got

lucky. "We missed a lot of goal-scoring opportunities."

Paro FC landed in New Delhi yesterday. They will return home today.



TOMORROW

Good Day

- to consecrate
- to enter into new house
- to learn astrology
- to set up storage
- to shift house
- to start new business
- to hold good discussions
- to approach higher authority
- to sow seeds

Bad Day

- to appease local deities

- to marry and celebrate
- to roof house
- to hoist Lungdhar
- to till and excavate land
- to sell land

A good day for rituals (laza):
those born in the ox year.

Generally a good day (sogza):
those born in the tiger and rabbit years.

A bad day (shedza):
those born in the rat and pig years.

WEATHER

SUNRISE : 5:45am | SUNSET : 6:21pm

Time of issue: 4:00 PM,
April 06, 2022

Gasa	Trongsa	Bumthang	Sarpang	Phuentsholing
16°C	21°C	20°C	27°C	28°C
7	11	10	20	16

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



WORLD HEALTH DAY

“OUR PLANET, OUR HEALTH”

Message from Hon'ble Sowai Lyonpo

Dasho Dechen Wangmo



Today we are honored to observe the World Health Day here in Lhuentse, that holds a special place in our hearts for its historic connection to our beloved monarchs and a place where His Holiness Je Khenpo's blessing radiates.

The past two years has been a difficult journey and unprecedented time in the history of our small country, we have endured hardships, lockdowns and restriction, but today as we transition into second phase of our National Covid Response having averted a major public health crisis. The protection from the vaccination, public solidarity and our collective efforts will continue to prevail under the constant and compassionate guidance of our benevolent King and blessing from His Holiness.

The theme for World Health Day this year is “*Our Planet, Our Health*” in view of a polluted planet, and an increasing incidence of diseases, and an opportunity to reshape our climate actions in the post pandemic era. As we chart the way forward, the call for “Our Planet, Our Health” is a strong reminder to adopt a green and healthy recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and to put the health of individuals and our planet at the center of actions.

Contaminated water, poor sanitation and hygiene, exposure to hazardous chemicals, air pollution and negative impacts of climate change are the most pressing environmental public health threats that are common in our region. Extreme weather events, land degradation and water scarcity are displacing people and affecting their health. Pollution and non-degradable wastes are found at the floor of our deepest oceans, the highest mountains, and have made their way into our food chain. Consumption of processed unhealthy foods and beverages are the main risk factors for obesity, increasing cancer and cardiovascular diseases while generating a third of global greenhouse gas emissions. These threats to public health are compounded by weak governance systems, inequities in health as well as by limited expertise and resources in the health sector.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has showed us the healing power of science, it also highlighted the inequities in our world and the **need to narrow the gaps** in all aspect of the development. The pandemic has revealed weaknesses in all areas of society and underlined the urgency of creating sustainable well-being societies committed to achieving equitable health now and for future generations without breaching ecological limits.

This year, as we commemorate the World Health Day, let us all commit to fulfill the aspiration of **Her Majesty the Gyalsuen to build a world with clean air, safe water, and sanitation, a world where healthy food is available to all, cities are livable, economies are climate-resilient with a focus on health and well-being.** Let us together create a world where all people, including those living in situations of vulnerability, can live longer and healthier lives by averting the impacts of climate change on human health and wellbeing.

WORLD HEALTH DAY

THEME - OUR PLANET, OUR HEALTH



Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh,
Regional Director,
WHO South-East Asia Region

Why we must act now to keep humans and the planet healthy

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the inequitable and unsustainable systems in which people in the South-East Asia Region and across the world live and work, consume and exist. Globally, over 90% of people breathe unhealthy air, resulting in around 7 million deaths every year, including around 2.4 million in the Region. Food systems that are unsafe, unhealthy and unsustainable cause millions of premature deaths annually, primarily from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), and are a leading contributor to climate change and antimicrobial resistance – two of the greatest health risks facing humanity.

In 2020 around 1 in 4 people globally lacked safely managed drinking water in their homes, and just 50% of health care facilities in least-developed countries provided basic water services. Poor quality drinking water can lead to acute waterborne disease and risks exposure to toxic chemicals such as arsenic. Inadequate access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in health care facilities makes health care less effective and has a disproportionate impact on women and girls. In total, WHO estimates that more than 13 million deaths around the world each year are due to avoidable environmental causes – a figure that we cannot and must not accept.

We have before us a once-in-a-century opportunity to drive transformative, lasting change. While the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the inequitable and unsustainable nature of existing political, social and commercial decisions, it has shown that if decision-making is transparent, evidence-based and inclusive, people will support bold and far-reaching policies that protect their health, their families and livelihoods. It has shown that by prioritizing equitable health now and for future generations – including through long-term investments, well-being budgets, social protection, legal and fiscal strategies – we can build “well-being societies” that facilitate human flourishing, and which fulfil every person’s right to health and development, without breaching ecological limits.

To achieve a Region and world in which clean air, water and food are available to all, where economies promote physical and mental health and well-being, where cities are liveable, and where people have control over their health and the health of the planet, together we must address five priorities.

First, protect and preserve the source of human health: nature. Policies that reduce deforestation, promote afforestation, and end intensive and polluting agricultural practices improve air quality, strengthen food systems, and promote sustainable farming and forest management. They reduce the risk of emerging infectious diseases, over 60% of which originate from animals, mainly from wildlife.

Second, invest in essential services, from water and sanitation to clean energy in health care facilities. Countries of the Region must continue to protect drinking-water supplies by implementing multisectoral water safety plans, and also include WASH in relevant health policies, strategies and programmes, with a focus on increasing access at the primary health care level. In line with the Region’s 2017 Malé Declaration, countries must continue to build climate-resilient health facilities that not only respond to and withstand environmental health threats, but which promote environmentally sustainable practices.

Third, ensure a quick and healthy energy transition. Globally, two-thirds of exposure to outdoor air pollution results from the burning of the same fossil fuels that are driving climate change, which between 2030 and 2050 is expected to cause an additional 250 000 deaths annually. While countries of the Region have made commendable efforts to expand

renewable energy sources, increased action is needed, and must be accompanied by rigorous enforcement of air quality standards, as well increased investments in public transportation infrastructure.

Fourth, promote healthy and sustainable food systems. Diseases caused by lack of access to food, or consumption of unhealthy, high calorie diets, is a major contributor to NCDs, which in our Region kill around 9.2 million people annually. In all countries of the Region, WHO will continue to support countries to identify and implement high-impact and cost-effective “best buys” that transform the food environment, from food reformulation and labelling, to increased taxation of unhealthy foods and beverages, and strengthened restrictions on marketing, especially to children.

Fifth, build healthy, liveable cities. In 2021, five cities in the Region were selected to participate in the WHO Urban Governance for Health and Well-being initiative, which aims to strengthen country capacities to promote health and address health inequities through multisectoral action. To take just two examples, policy makers can expand cycleways and increase the provision of green and healthy spaces to reduce greenhouse emissions and road traffic injuries, increase physical activity, and promote mental health.

We are at a pivotal moment. The decisions we make now can either “lock in” development patterns that do permanent and escalating damage to the ecological systems that sustain human health and livelihoods, or they can promote a healthier, fairer, and greener world. Together, we must raise our voice and act now to protect our planet, our health, and our future.



**World Health
Organization**

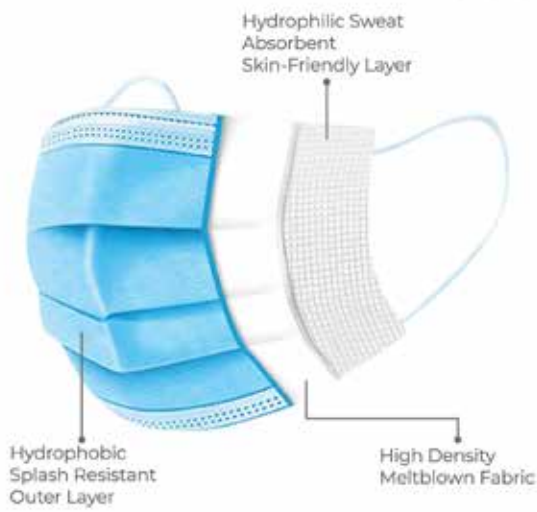
Regional Office for South-East Asia

**Issued in the Public Interest
by WHO, Bhutan**

3 PLY

Protective Mask

DRA and ISO Certified



Available at Kuensel

For further queries contact:

17294773 or 17867254 or 17797658



Medical Mask Listed with DRA

Please click here to view the updated list

Show 10 entries

Search:

S.No.	Generic Name	Manufacturer	Brand Name
1			
2	3-ply mask (CV2992M)	Ava International Pvt Ltd, Haryana India	N/A



**TAX PAYMENTS
 AS EASY AS A TOUCH**



Joenpalekso!



Tax payments made simple and hassle-free

Bhutan's oldest and the most trusted bank brings to you the convenience of paying RRCO taxes right into your palm. Simply, open mBoB app on your smart phone to finish your tax payment with ease.

Tax can also be paid through BoB Connect.
 Pay real time taxes using mBoB

