



# ZHEMGANG MONTHLY



FROM STEPS TO LEAPS

Issue 13 | Date 30 September 2019

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## Zhemgang gears towards Bhutan Bird Festival



*Bhutan Bird Festival*  
...giving you the wings to fly

**Tingtibi, Zhemgang Dzongkhag**  
11-13 November, 2019

### Preparations for BBF in Action



# MISSION BLUE

A team of Regional Livestock Development Centre (RLDC) and Dzongkhag Livestock Sector (DLS) of Zhemgang together with Gewog Livestock In-charges got enormous success in neutering 224 dogs and vaccinated 280 dogs against Rabies in just 3 weeks. The mass dog sterilization and rabies control program was started at Zhemgang town from 6th Sep -9th Sep 2019. They perforated 15 dogs and vaccinated 18 dogs against Rabies.

Rabies is a zoonotic and a killer disease that can be easily transmitted with a dog's bite but it's preventable. Canines are the main reservoir of rabies. So, one should get their dogs vaccinated and help the sector reduce the stray dog population in Bhutan.



Zhemgang Regional Livestock Development Centre (RLDC) & Dzongkhag Livestock Sector (DLS) team

On 10th September, the journey gushed downtown to Tingtibi (Trong Gewog). The work was tiresome and challenging but the team tried their best to overcome all the barriers and get the job done. Just 3 days at Tingtibi and the blue team neutered 50 dogs and also vaccinated all the dogs with Anti-Rabies Vaccine.

On 13th of September, the team headed for the RNR, Pantang. In the next three days, the team was efficacious in sterilizing 48 stray dogs. The team consisted of one anesthetist, two in preparation table, one in setup, one in sample collection and one as doctor's assistant.

On 18th September, the team moved to Gomphu, 28 km from Pantang. The setup was done in Gomphu School's MPH. The program came to an end by the evening, where they had neutered 20 dogs.

On 20th September, the Blue team reached to Panbang 25 km from Pantang, the main focus area. It was a real challenge as the area was rabies endemic zone. They also had the fear of getting infected with Dengue. The program was for 3 days in which they neutered 69 dogs which was the highest record for the team.

On 25th September, the team rushed to Bjoka, one of the farthest gewog in Lower Kheng. The people were well informed about the program by the local leaders which was why the team saw increase in the number of dogs brought in for the neutering. The program ended with 18 dogs being sterilized at Bjoka. For the team, it was the greatest triumph of the year with zero mortality.

This year, the 13th World Rabies Day was observed on 28th September 2019 with the objective to focus on vaccination - the foundation of all rabies control efforts. As per the WHO findings, 50,000 + people die from rabies each year. It's the duty of every individual to bring the dogs to nearby livestock center and get it vaccinated against rabies to prevent from deaths. The world aims to eliminate death due to Rabies by 2030. The campaign for Upper Kheng will be conducted in the month of October.



Contributed By : Livestock Sector



# INITIATION OF AEROBIC EXERCISE

Aerobic exercise is a physical activity that makes you sweat, breathe harder, and gets your heart beating faster. It strengthens your heart and lungs and trains your cardiovascular system to manage and deliver oxygen more quickly and efficiently throughout your body. Aerobic exercise that uses your large muscle groups, is rhythmic in nature, and can be maintained continuously for at least 10 minutes.

Cardiovascular system is made up of your heart and blood vessels e.g., arteries, veins, and capillaries that transports blood throughout the body. Aerobic refers to how your body uses oxygen to sufficiently meet energy demands during exercise. In addition to strengthening your heart and cardiovascular system, regular aerobic exercise has many health benefits.

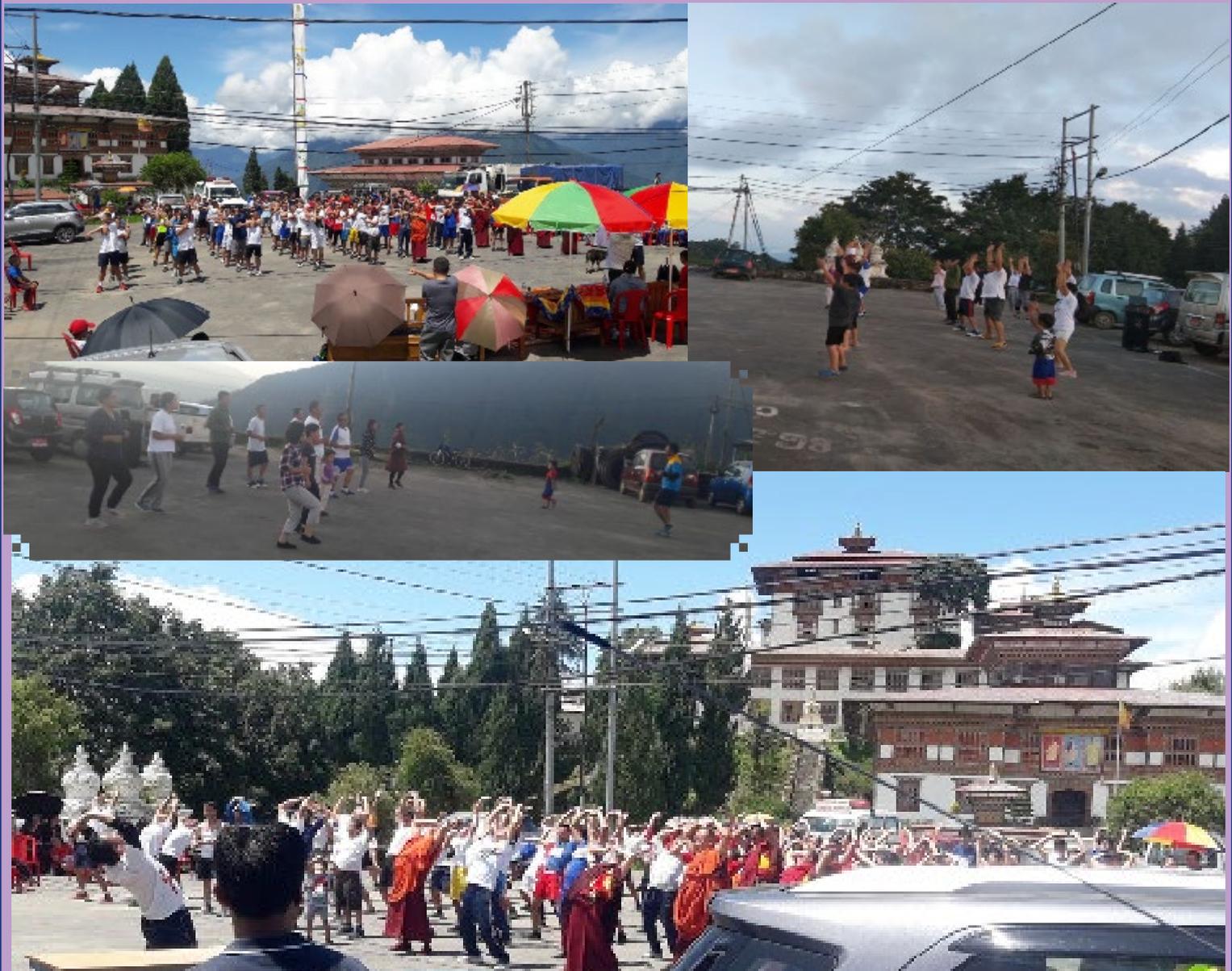
Aerobic exercise:

- Improves your circulation and helps your body use oxygen better
- Increases energy
- Increases endurance, which means you can work out longer without getting tired
- Helps reduce the risk of developing heart disease and diabetes
- Helps reduce body fat
- Helps you reach and maintain a healthy weight
- Helps reduce stress, tension, anxiety, and depression
- Improves sleep

Keeping in mind with the aforementioned health benefits and in accordance with the recommendations of MSTF Review Meeting, aerobic exercise is being initiated for the civil servants working in the Dzongkhag and Regional Offices located in and around Zhemgang Dzongkhag Administration. Henceforth, it will be conducted every Thursday for about an hour after office hours.

This is another strategy in preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and creating awareness to the general public.

Contributed By: Thinley Tobgyal (ADHO), Health Sector



# Passion fruit cultivation takes newer height

As proposed by the two newly formed groups comprising of about 7 members each from Tali village, under Nangkor Gewog, the sector planned for the mass promotion of passion fruit cultivation, which would further be replicated as a promising commodity for sustainable agriculture practice for the income generation in the long run. The idea of promoting such high value horticulture crop is to boost the local economy through strategic marketing facilities and market chain analysis. The produce would easily be absorbed by various agro industries within the country at a very promising price index. This would drastically uplift the rural economy in the most poverty-stricken zones. The sector would be promoting the pulp and juice processing unit at Integrated Fruit Processing Plant (IFPP), Goling. Marketing to other places would be the next big step if the mass production is successful. Introduction of such commodity focused program is mainly to encourage the farmers to cultivate alternative cash crop for their livelihood other than citrus and cardamom, which is declining eventually due to many abiotic & biotic factors. The inputs like seedlings, GI wires, technical backstopping, iron angle post and cements which are the pre-requisite for production, would be supported through collaborative venture among RDTC, Dzongkhag Agriculture Sector & the benefiting group itself. Therefore, in order to sustain the livelihood of the rural populace, the sector has identified and would be promoting the program as one of the most promising and fast growing cash crop, for which market is easily available within the country and abroad as well.

In order to showcase and demonstrate different cultivation and management technologies and strategies, a demonstrative practice was conducted for three days involving various stake holders. Construction of trellis is also one of the important components to manage vines and sustain good yield for marketing huge quantity, which would be executed later. Erection of different types of trellis would enable the growers to manage weeding, watering, manuring, pruning, thinning and harvesting the fruit in particular. Honourable Dasho Dzongdag graced the opening session along with Tali Khenpo and other sector heads. Dasho briefed the participants on the importance of organizing such programs where different strategies/technologies would provide more learnings in other fields as well. He also informed all the participants about the sector's initiatives and efforts for the betterment of the rural populace, so as to earn income and uplift the economy through agricultural activities. For about an hour, the growers were briefed by PD-ARDC-Bhur and DAO on the aims and objectives of promoting passion fruit cultivation with improved modern technologies and strategies. They were also instructed to showcase these technologies as a model vineyard to other visitors and households.



## Practical demonstration at site

We covered approximately 7 acres with the plantation and remaining 5 acres would be continued by the respective group members. The sector planned to establish the plantation site with 12000 seedlings, which would serve as a sample as well as commercial field in the long run. The group members were given a provision of one month to complete the plantation of the seedlings as trained, which would be strictly monitored through field visit. Soon the sector would intervene with the installation of electric fence and the construction and installation of improved trellis for the mass cultivation area. The construction and installation of trellis would be completely based on the manual adopted in other developed countries and is simple as compared to the trellises required for grapes and kiwi.



Three long days of mass passion fruit plantation program at Tali for two potential commercial groups is first of its kind initiated by the sector. If the program succeeds, the commercial passion fruit production would be at full swing and its marketing would be assured for the betterment of the rural income generation and increment of the economy in the community as well. The mass plantation program ended as expected and the beneficiaries were satisfied and optimistic with the support the sector had provided. Once the seedlings are well established, the sector would intervene for the construction of concrete permanent trellis and installation of electric fence at both the sites to assure the production and profit maximization.

The program would be further replicated in other potential and feasible pockets in the Dzongkhag, and the sector would intervene to support for the development of horticulture cash crop in the communities.

Contributed by Dzongkhag Agriculture Sector

# Words of Wisdom from Golden Throne

11th Convocation of the Royal University of Bhutan  
7th June 2017

Royal Institute of Management Hall

“...Our country of Pelden Drukpa, is a blessed and sacred land. The legacy of our ancestors and leaders in the past, achieved through their hard work, is a treasure that we have inherited. In spite of having to embrace a lot of changes over the decades with modernity, our core values, based on our traditions and etiquette, spirituality and integrity, sense of loyalty and patriotism, has not diminished. It remains deeply ingrained in our youth who understand them and continue to preserve them. The security and sovereignty of our nation, our unity and harmony, and sense of peace and happiness are stronger today than ever before. This is the legacy that we have been fortunate to inherit from our leaders who achieved in 30 years what has sometimes taken humanity more than 300 years. “... ensure that we have a just, equal, and harmonious society. When our people are able to live happy and secure lives, we know that we have achieved our objectives. That is what Gross National Happiness means.” The people of Bhutan are central to this endeavor. It is the responsibility of our people to bring all our national goals to fruition, and therefore, it is vital that our policies and strategies are aimed at empowering our people to become strong, capable and responsible citizens. Democracy is a means to achieve this in the 21st century. To achieve great results, it is imperative that we work towards establishing a very successful and strong democratic system. I believe that it is to pursue prosperity and progress. There has to be synergy between prosperity and progress. It is certainly desirable that our people become prosperous, and a prosperous state with adequate funds will give us all a sense of greater security.

But along with prosperity, we must also strive for progress. It is easy to lose material wealth- but not our capability and intelligence. I define progress as cultural, social, political and economic sophistication. As we take our nation forward, we must continue to forge our own path. In the past, our policies were made with a clarity of vision, and the conviction that we have the best solutions, based on our own sense of identity. For example, in the 1970's, tourism as an industry was only introduced after the coronation of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. It was suggested to us then that Bhutan would benefit economically from bringing in as many tourists as possible into the country. At that time, Bhutan was largely unknown to the outside world. And yet, with Drukgyal Zhipa at the helm, we had the confidence to make our own decisions- to decide that our approach to tourism policy would be that of high value low volume. It seemed counter-intuitive at a time when tourists to Bhutan were so few. There were many skeptics. But because of that policy, Brand Bhutan emerged. And you see the results of that policy for yourselves today. People who make it to Bhutan feel privileged to be our guest. In hindsight, we realize the profound wisdom of that decision, but we could have easily gone the other way, had it not been for that conviction we had to forge our own path, our future, and our destiny.

Another example is the national dress. Today, we wear our national dress with a great deal of pride as part of our identity. But in the 70's, as many of the younger generation received foreign education, they were perceived in society as the achievers who would lead the future. It became common for them to wear western suits to office to set themselves apart as the educated generation. With the realization that there was a real risk of losing our unique identity in the demography of large neighbours and a populous region, at a time when it was more important than ever to stand apart, it was made mandatory to continue wearing gho and kira. The stand that we took received a lot of criticism; many people felt that we were moving backwards. But again, that policy has resulted in the chance to build a common national identity that transcends other differences between our people. Our parents took difficult decisions and stood by their beliefs to give us a fighting chance for a bright future.

“.....many people offered different ideas for how the government could become rich. They offered to bring in investments including black money, and gambling businesses like casinos. They offered to mine our mineral resources and exploit timber from our huge forests, promising rich dividends. But we resisted- because it was not our objective to make the government rich. It was imperative that our people prospered. So instead, we came up with the visionary concepts of balanced socio-economic development, the preservation of our culture and pristine environment and biodiversity.” Besides being small, our country's terrain is such that only 7-8 percent of our total land is arable. As families grow, we are faced with fragmentation of land, and I worry about what will happen after a few more generations. Being small is our greatest advantage. We can do things better, more efficiently, and faster, than any other nation in the 21st century. So I am concerned, but I have no doubt that we can overcome all our challenges and that our people and nation will experience phenomenal success within our lifetime.”

*Compiled by Dechen Pema Yangden*

# Bhutan Bird Festival

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## INTRODUCTION

The second Bhutan Bird Festival (BBF) will be held at Tingtbi, Zhemgang from November 11 to 13, 2019. The BBF intends to encourage local community of Zhemgang to protect their rich forest and conserve high diversity of wildlife.

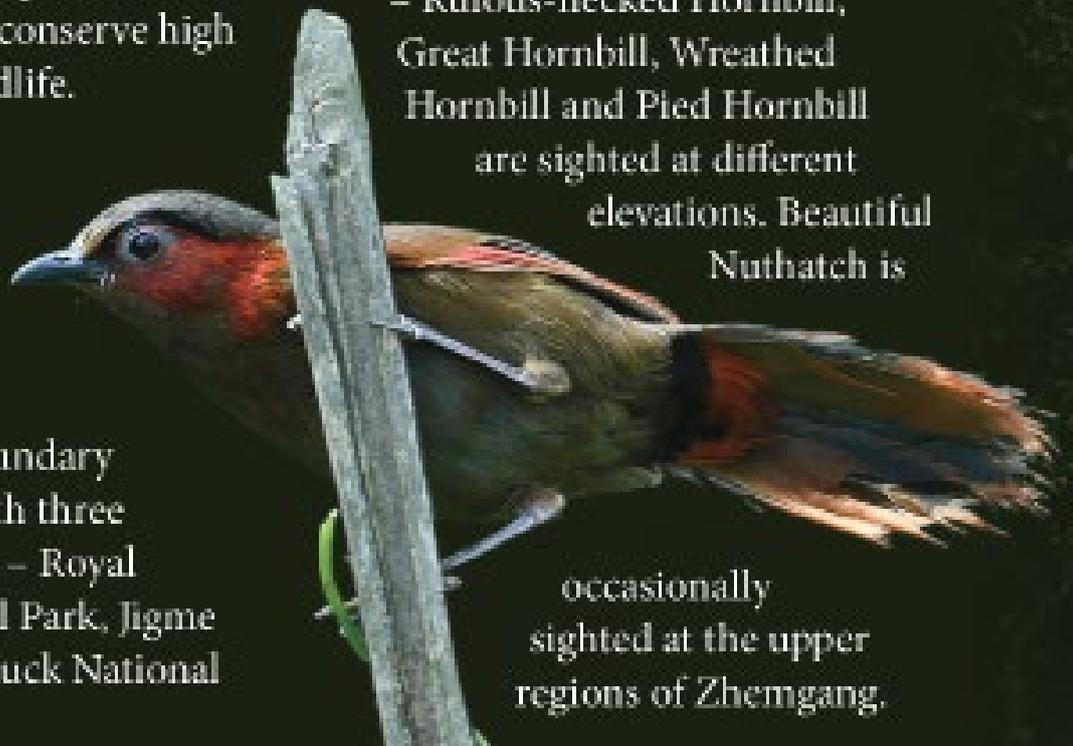
Zhemgang is a popular birding destination.

With the Dzongkhag boundary intersecting with three protected areas – Royal Manas National Park, Jigme Singye Wangchuck National

Park and Phrumsengla National Park, Zhemgang is home to more than 500 species of birds. White-bellied heron are found in Mangdechhu and its tributaries. All the four species of hornbill found in Bhutan

– Rufous-necked Hornbill, Great Hornbill, Wreathed Hornbill and Pied Hornbill are sighted at different elevations. Beautiful Nuthatch is

occasionally sighted at the upper regions of Zhemgang.





Besides high avi-faunal diversity, Zhemgang is home to the highest density (4 tigers/100 sq.km) of Royal Bengal tiger in the country. The Dzongkhag is a safe home to Golden Langur that is endemic to Bhutan and part of Assam. This is place that provides exciting river journey, wish fulfilling bird sighting and healing hot spring bath. Zhemgang's people are humble and offer the best experience of rural life.

Bhutan Bird Festival is an annual event for Zhemgang Dzongkhag and a signature event to promote community-based ecotourism with objectives to:

1. Celebrate birth anniversary of Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck and pay tribute to His Majesty's visionary leadership to conservation in Bhutan.
2. Promote Community-based ecotourism in Zhemgang through signature events like river journey and bird watching.
3. Provide opportunities for local people to participate in festival and enhance their income



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Manas river - Nangla

## EVENTS OF THE FESTIVAL

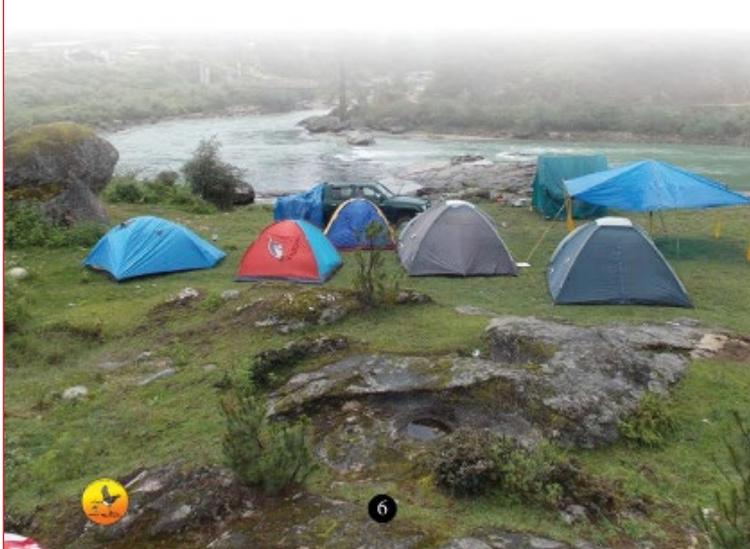
### 1. PRE-FESTIVAL EVENTS

- i. **Bird-athon:** Birders can form a group consisting 1-4 members or individuals can participate. The group or individual can do birding for three days from November 8-10, choosing one of the transects.

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- a) Panbang to Tingtibi (75 kms)
- b) Batasey to Tingtibi (65 kms)
- c) Buli to Tingtibi (57 kms)
- d) Koshala to Tingtibi (55 kms)
- e) Zhemgang to Tingtibi via Dakphel (33 kms)
- f) Zhemgang to Tingtibi via Wangdigang (34 kms)

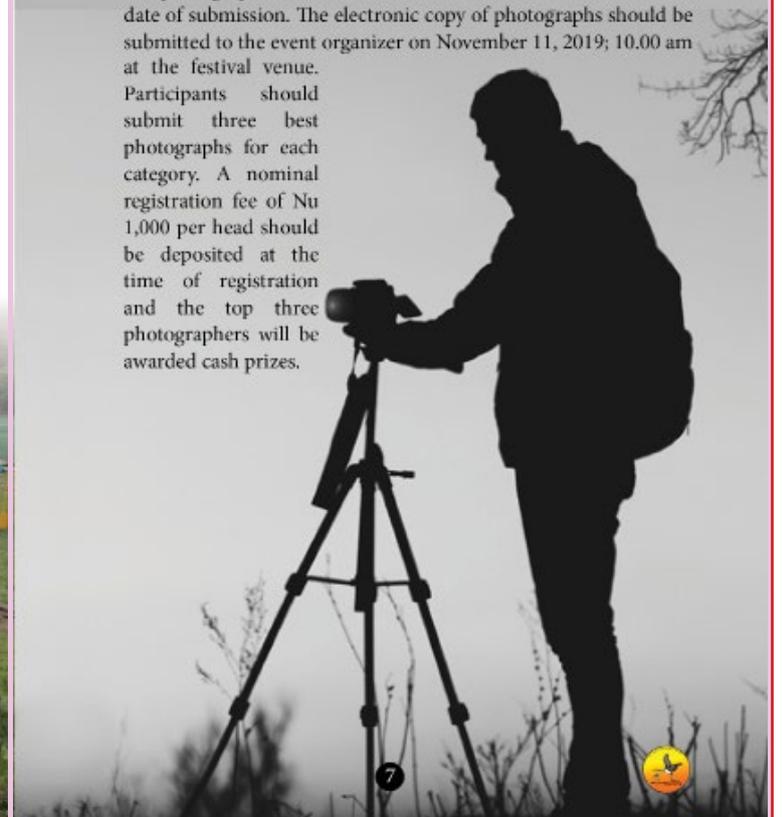
While the group or individuals will be allowed to choose any afore mentioned transects for birding, birders should submit Photographs and acoustics recording to the event organizer on November 11, 2019; 8.00 am at the festival venue. A nominal registration fee of Nu 1,000 per head should be deposited at the time of registration and the top three birding groups will be awarded cash prizes.



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- ii. **Photo Framing (Photographic contest):** Interested groups or individuals can take photographs of wildlife (mammals, birds, butterflies and reptiles) and landscape (natural areas and cultural landscape) within the jurisdiction of Zhemgang.

The photographs should be recent, taken within a month from the date of submission. The electronic copy of photographs should be submitted to the event organizer on November 11, 2019; 10.00 am at the festival venue. Participants should submit three best photographs for each category. A nominal registration fee of Nu 1,000 per head should be deposited at the time of registration and the top three photographers will be awarded cash prizes.



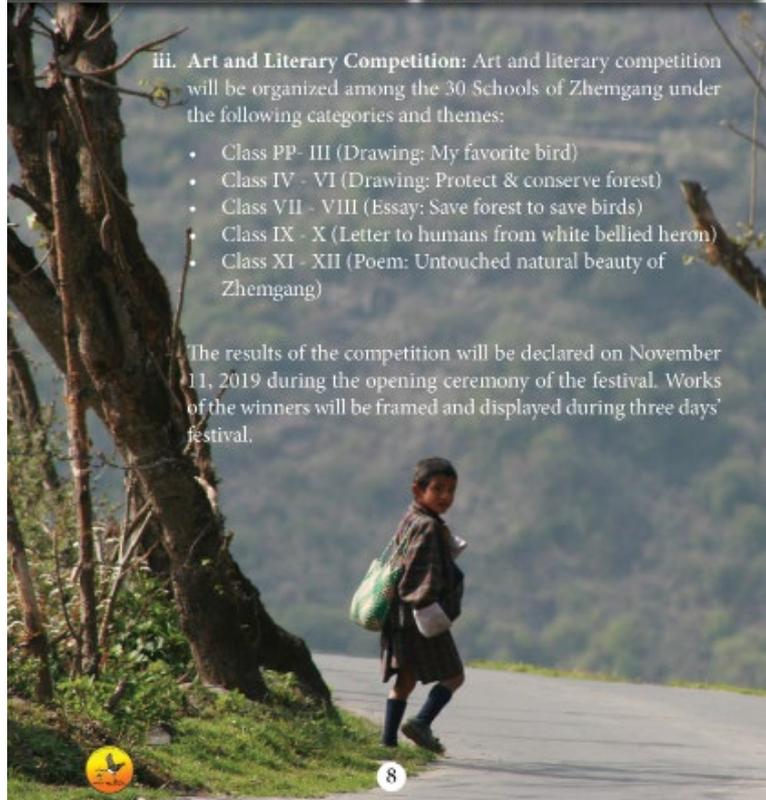
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iii. **Art and Literary Competition:** Art and literary competition will be organized among the 30 Schools of Zhemgang under the following categories and themes:

- Class PP- III (Drawing: My favorite bird)
- Class IV - VI (Drawing: Protect & conserve forest)
- Class VII - VIII (Essay: Save forest to save birds)
- Class IX - X (Letter to humans from white bellied heron)
- Class XI - XII (Poem: Untouched natural beauty of Zhemgang)

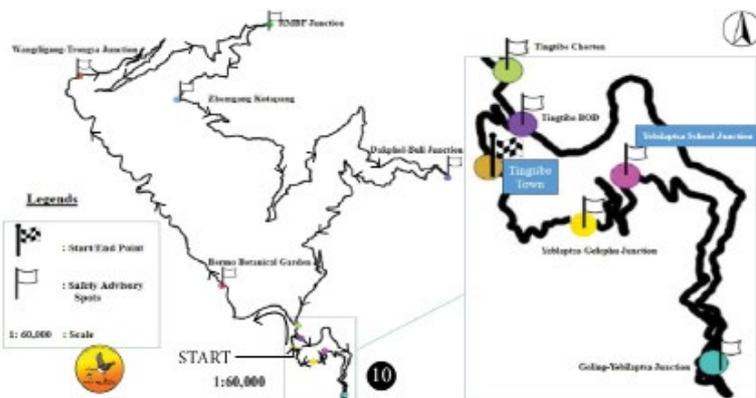
The results of the competition will be declared on November 11, 2019 during the opening ceremony of the festival. Works of the winners will be framed and displayed during three days' festival.



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v. **Cyclothon:** Cycling competition will be organized on the second day of the festival (November 12, 2019) for professionals and novices. The event will start from 7:30 am and end at 3:30 pm with its voted route from Tingtibi-Wangdigang - Zhemgang - Dakphel - Tingtibi - Phophel - Yebilaptsa - Tingtibi which is approximately 85 KMs. A nominal registration fee of Nu. 7,000 per head for local guest & Nu. 10,000 per head for foreigners should be deposited at the time of registration. Participants are requested to bring your own bikes. The top three cyclists will be awarded attractive cash prizes and certificate of participation will be awarded to all participants. All participants are requested to report on 10th November and an opportunity for pre test run along the route can be availed.



## 2. MAIN FESTIVAL EVENTS

iv. **Capture Fishery:** It will be organized by the Berti Capture Fishery Management Group (BCFMG). The community will offer recreational fishing (catch and release) using local trap (Nyee) or fly-fishing equipment.

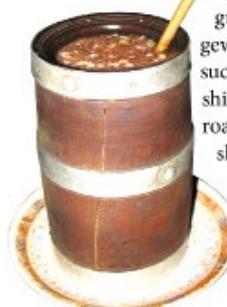
This event is valid only from November 10 to 14, 2019 (excluding November 12, 2019 as it coincides with Bhutanese full moon day) from morning, 9.00 am to 12 Noon and afternoon from 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm with the fishing duration of three hours per permit. The BCFMG will also provide local guides. A nominal fee of Nu. 500 per head for local guest & Nu. 1,000 per head for foreign guests and should be deposited at the time of registration at the event venue.



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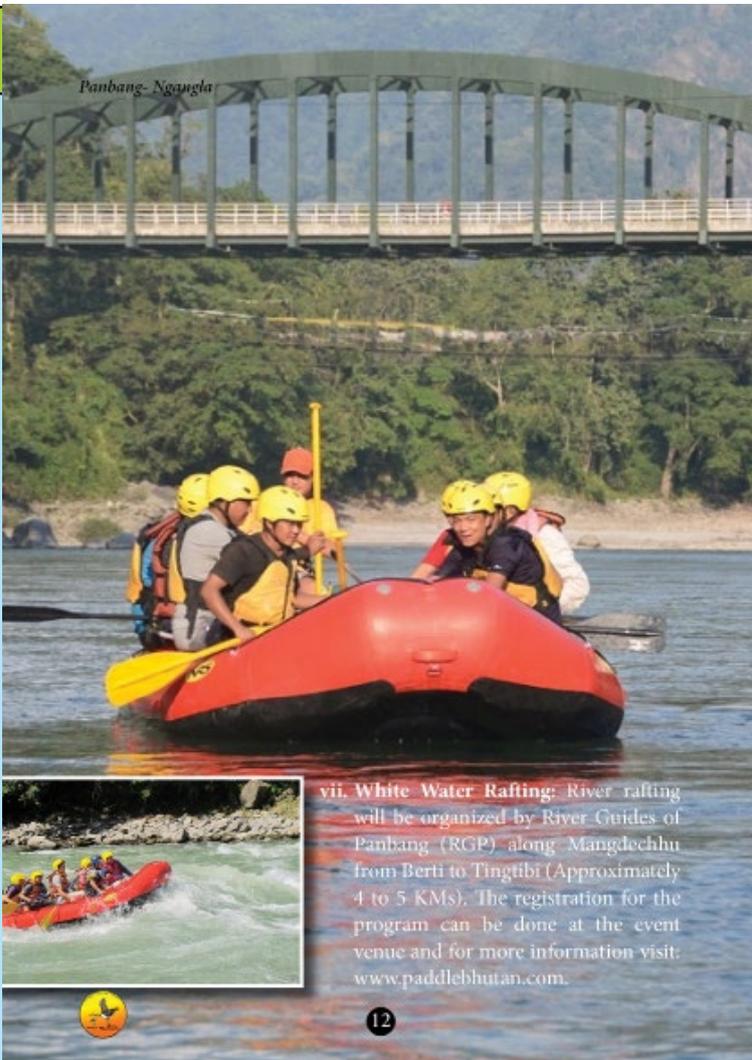


vi. **Food stalls:** Food stalls will be one of the main events of the festival. Food stalls will be installed for displaying local cuisines from eight gewogs. Bjoka Tsharzo Gongphel Tshogpa - a farmers' group from B j o k a gewog will display assortment of cane and bamboo products, Khengrig Namsum Cooperative (KNC) will present processed food products like banana candy, potato chips and pickles. A Dakphel women's group under Nangkor gewog will put on show like turmeric and ginger powder while Buli Farmers' group shall exhibit its gene bank seeds. Other gewogs will come up with non-wood forest products such as patsha, mochali, damroo, mushroom, Kinmar, shingmar, fruits, cereals, tengmaand zaw, cooked and roasted tubers, bamboo shoots and ferns. MPU's will show case their fresh and processed dairy products.



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Panbang- Ngangla



vii. **White Water Rafting:** River rafting will be organized by River Guides of Panbang (RGP) along Mangdechhu from Berti to Tingtibi (Approximately 4 to 5 KMs). The registration for the program can be done at the event venue and for more information visit: [www.paddlebhutan.com](http://www.paddlebhutan.com).

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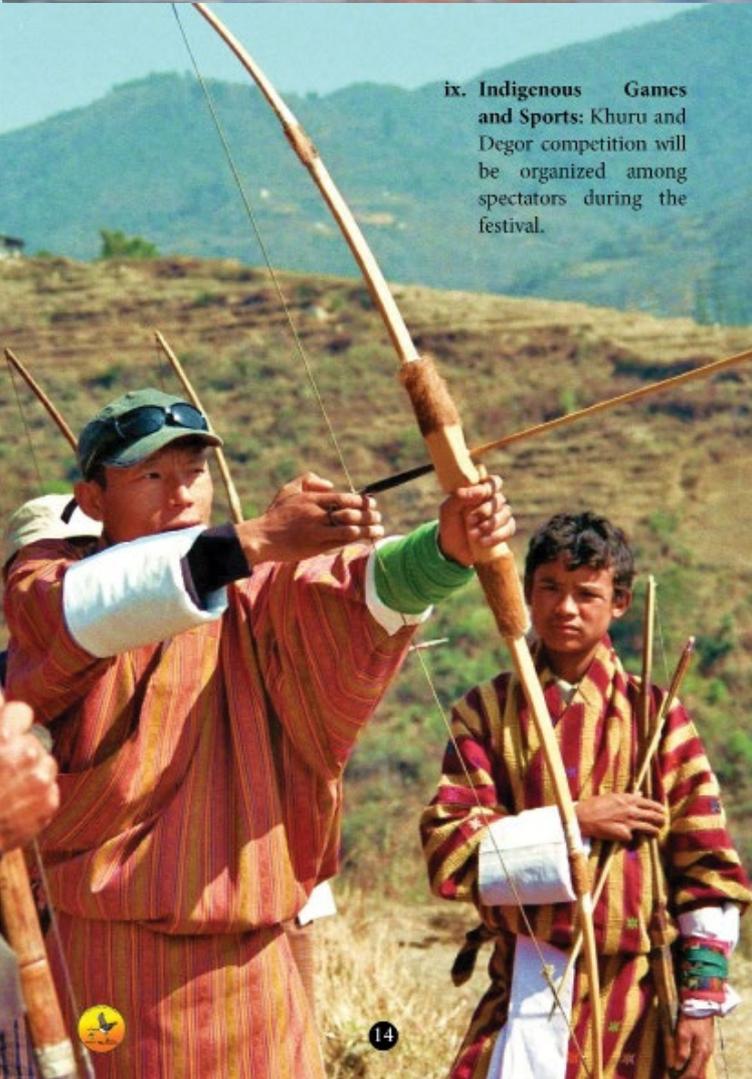
viii. **Cultural Extravaganza:** Cultural programmes will be organized in the following approach towards the evening of the three festival days (7:00 pm-10:00 pm):

- Night 1: Songs and dances by Schools and local artists
- Night 2: Screening movies and documentaries
- Night 3: Songs and dances by Schools and local artists



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ix. **Indigenous Games and Sports:** Khuru and Degor competition will be organized among spectators during the festival.



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3. POST FESTIVAL EVENTS

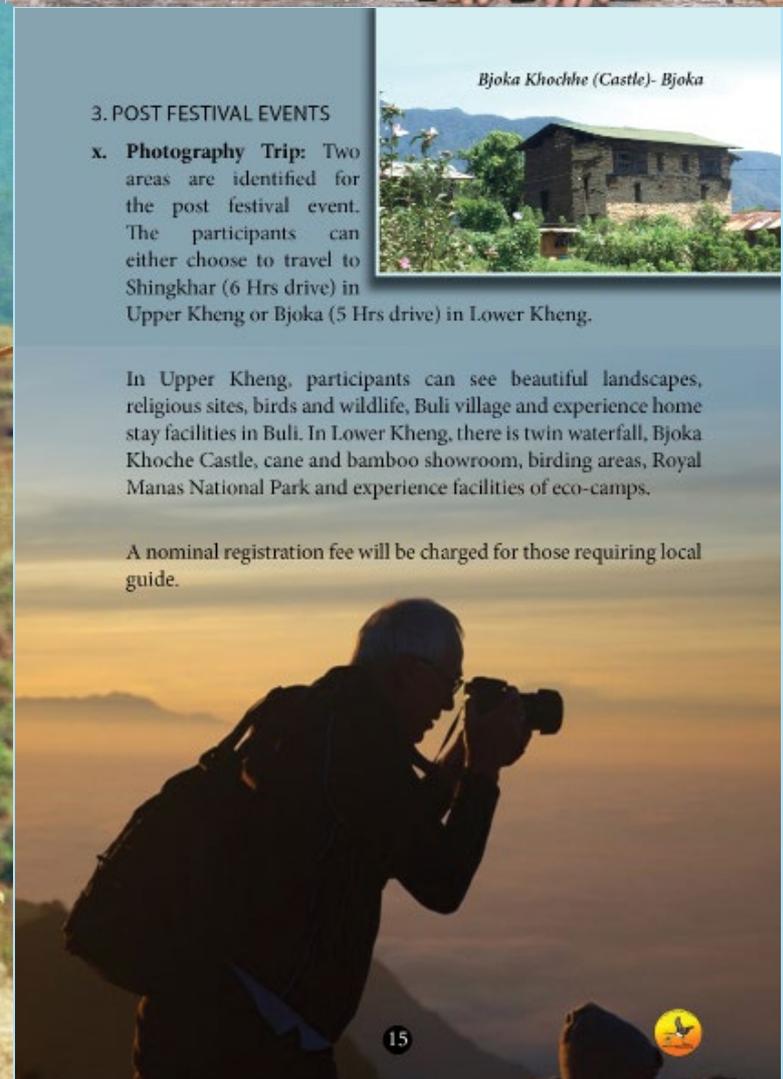
x. **Photography Trip:** Two areas are identified for the post festival event. The participants can either choose to travel to Shingkar (6 Hrs drive) in Upper Kheng or Bjoka (5 Hrs drive) in Lower Kheng.

Bjoka Khoche (Castle)- Bjoka



In Upper Kheng, participants can see beautiful landscapes, religious sites, birds and wildlife, Buli village and experience home stay facilities in Buli. In Lower Kheng, there is twin waterfall, Bjoka Khoche Castle, cane and bamboo showroom, birding areas, Royal Manas National Park and experience facilities of eco-camps.

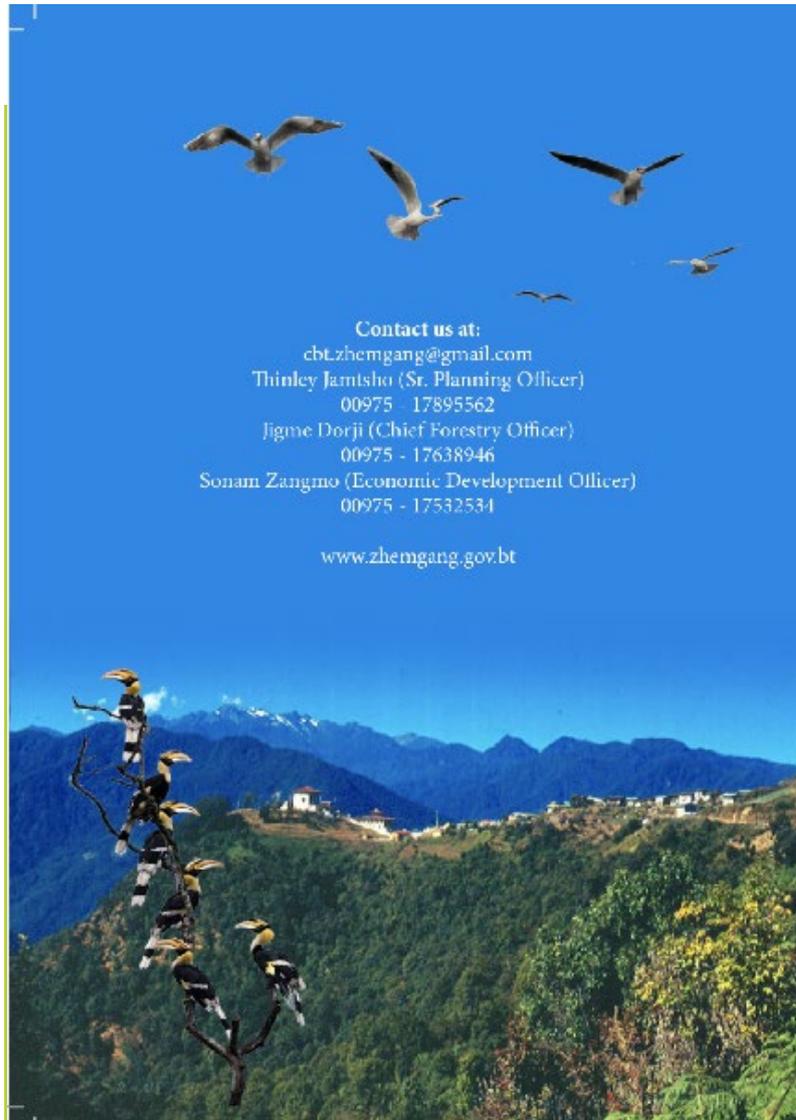
A nominal registration fee will be charged for those requiring local guide.



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**xi. Trip to Duenmang Tshachu (Hot Spring):** A three-day trip to Duenmang Tshachu (Hot Spring) will be organized as part of the post festival event. Since November is the peak season, participants will have to book accommodation in advance and make their own arrangements for meals while pantry facilities shall be provided.



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## Attractive Prizes for Cylothon

(For each category)

Winner : Nu. 100,000/-

First Runners-up : Nu. 75,000/-

Second Runners-up : Nu. 50,000/-

Consolation Prizes for Youngest & Oldest

Completers : Nu. 10,000/- each

All Event Completers : Certificate Awards

All Participants : Event ride T-shirt & Cap with BBF logo will be provided

Photo:10<sup>th</sup> Tour of the Dragon



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