



ZHEMGANG MONTHLY

FROM STEPS TO LEAPS

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FROM DZONGDAG'S DESK



Looking at the G-shock wristwatch gifted by His Majesty the King and the velocity of seconds, minutes and hours ticking away, I get restless! Why? Because, Zhemgang has many miles to go before we sleep. His Majesty has rightly pronounced that "the road ahead of us is an uphill and the load that we carry is heavy". I can understand and feel the subtle Royal Message in that noble gesture of bestowing that precious gift to an ordinary being like me.

Every phenomenon of our existence is occasioned due to the interplay of time, space and universal interdependence. Time represents the present being between the past and the future, which in fact is characterized by nature of circularity and infinity. It is a unique resource that we cannot multiply, store, preserve and create. Sadly, time and tide waits for none, but we can make best use of it.

Time does not have expiry dates but we do. Therefore, if Zhemgang is to move forward, we have no time to rest and if the working for success is like cycling on a tightrope, the pedaling must never stop, or else we risk the peril of a disastrous fall.

A Man Who Lives For Others



As twilight days sets in one's life, the best that one can yearn for is decent house to live, recite prayers and rest peacefully. How ever, it remains a dream for many and so is for Aap Wangchuk, 71, who also happens to be a stroke patient. He is from Takabi Village under Trong Gewog in Zhemgang.

Life, for sure, has been bit unfair on him. He is originally from Lhuntse, and somehow, and strange that it may seem, a fairy-tale sort of love brought him to Zhemgang. After his wife died a few years ago, he was left at the mercy of his children. Like any other children, he got best of attention from them, but he favored to stay in a little ramshackle hut with his son, who in turn is the sole bread earner to three children and a wife. The son does not have a stable job or enough land and depended on daily wages, who at one time worked as caretaker in one of the government offices. Ap Wangchuk being stroke patient, with his body paralyzed, added burden to his son and his family, but like any other good son, he managed his family and his father at the best. Life became tough for everyone without proper house to live in, until the humble-hearted Dr. Sonam Wangchuk of Yebilaptsa Hospital and his team (Yebilaptsa hospital & some of the Yebilaptsa CS staff) came to his rescue. He alerted everyone he knew, from Dzongkhag Administration to close relatives, gathered from chetrum to thousands. Friends and relatives gave whatever they could. On 23rd March 2019, the Dasho Dzongdag of Zhemgang inaugurated the little beautiful dream house of Ap Wangchuk. For the first time since unknown, a beautiful and bright smile appeared on the face of Ap Wangchuk. And when the Hope and the god fails, human steps in, for sure if there is a God for him, it has got to be Dr. Sonam Wangchuk and his team of Yebilaptsa hospital.

Dasho Keiji Nishioka

Dasho Keiji Nishioka was born on 14 February 1933 to Tatsuzo Nishioka and Toshie Nishioka in Seoul, (Seoul was called Keijou and was under the rule of Japanese during that time). His father was a medical doctor working as a lecturer of anatomy in Keijou Vocational Institute of Medicine and his mother was a nurse who resigned after marriage to become the homemaker and bring up the children. He was the first born and was named Keiji in memory of his birth place, Keijou. He had three younger sisters. Dasho Keiji's family moved back to Japan after Japan lost and surrendered to the Allied Forces during the World War II. Upon their arrival in Japan, his father opened a private clinic named 'Nishioka Clinic'. Keiji finished his school from Yao Junior High School and Yao High School. He decided to enter Osaka Prefecture University under the department of agriculture in the spring of 1952 after he developed a keen interest in nature and plants. He practically worked in the fields learning how to cultivate crops, fruits and vegetables. He married Satoko Nikai who came to listen to one of his talks in a mountaineering clubs in 1959. Upon the recommendation Dr Sasuke Nakao who was one of Keiji's lecturers at the University, Dasho Nishioka was invited to Bhutan as an agricultural expert due to the country's lack of modern techniques since farming was an integral part of Bhutanese life.

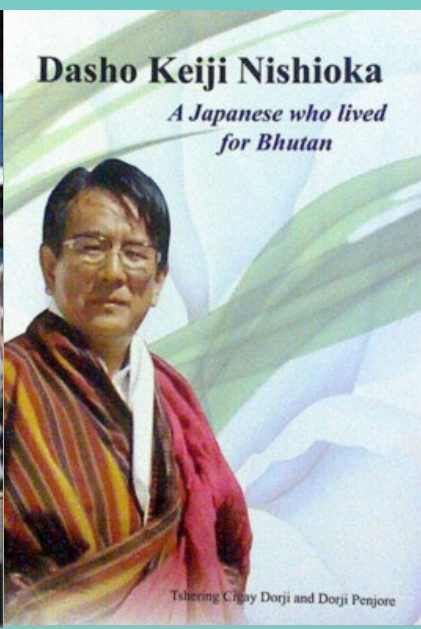
In the land of Khengpas

Before coming to Zhemgang, Dasho Nishioka had already established remarkable works in the agricultural fields at Bondey, Paro. What started from a small experimental plot with the help of three young apprentices grew and left a significant and massive ripple which has foredealed generations of farmers in the country. He changed the face of agriculture especially rice plantation. He also introduced the concept of greenhouse to grow vegetables in winter.

Dasho and his wife were intrigued in visiting Zhemgang when they heard stories of people in lower Kheng survived by eating yams during the food scarcity. Dasho's journey to the land of Khengpas began when he was asked to visit Zhemgang and compile a report during famine in certain areas of the dzongkhag. He assembled a comprehensive and detailed account which included the lack of bridges, shifting cultivation, lack of water and crop damage by the wild animals, all leading to the shortage of food in those areas. The government sought Dasho Keiji's assistance and involvement after an **Integrated Development Project was drawn for Zhemgang**.

Dasho Nishioka, loving called as Japan Sahib and his team of 10 staff from the Bondey farm set out for Zhemgang in March, 1976. The first step was to relocate the households situated in uncultivable lands to more fertile areas. So, people from Bjoka and Ngangla gewog were resettled in the Panbang where agriculture was more possible and productive. Most of the people in lower Kheng practiced the shifting cultivation which resulted in temporary settlements. Dasho oriented people on the advantages of having proper and permanent houses. Sub-tropical vegetation surrounded the lands in Panbang, so malaria and rampage of wild animals especially elephants in some of the areas made the relocation of household a necessity. Sonamthang, Thinleygang, Laling, Marangduth and Tunkudema villages in Ngangla gewog and Pantang in Phangkhar gewog were the results of Dasho's resettlement initiative. He also helped in deploying malaria technicians in those areas. He built 17 suspension bridges during his stay in Bhutan. He realized the importance of having bridges between the villages due to the communication being the main problem for people. The **Nishioka Zam suspension bridge** over Drangmechu and Kurichu connecting the Panbang town and the Drungkhag office was named after him by His Royal Highness Prince Namgyel Wangchuck. Besides the Nishioka zam, he also built the Changazam and Phangkharzam.

He also showcased his magic of rice plantation in lower Kheng as well. He introduced rice and demonstrated how to make paddy fields to the farmers. The rice fields spread to Thinleygang, Tunkudema, Marangduth and Katong villages. Though rice plantation was limited to few villages, it yielded promising results which put an end to shifting cultivation carried out by more than 200 families. Along with paddy fields, he constructed many irrigation channels. He pioneered orange and cardamom plantation as well, of which orange farming gained quick growth since it brought cash income for the people.



My Toilet Dream, everyone's Choice

As I have already involved in managing public toilets in few big occasions, this time when I heard about the BazaGuru Drungdrup for three days (1st - 3rd MAR). I was rather obliged rather than feeling excited. To create toilet of my dream, I went to check the conditions of the public toilets several times (Moelamchenmo ground, zhemgang). To my surprise the recently constructed public toilet surrounding was in a very hostile condition. I tried everything in my control to do some cleaning although the weather was not in our favor. Before I headed back home, I approached the camp coordinator to support my cause with some toiletries –tissue paper, soap, buckets, jugs, and phenol. I elaborated to him in length that these items are mandatory to keep any toilet clean and tidy. But, he seemed least bothered. He hesitantly accepted to fund my aforementioned proposal.



For whatever reasons, I did not give up because I know it is for the good cause. It is a public matter and I felt the need is urgent. Therefore, I remained firm and pushed myself even further. I even have to coax some officers in between thinking for some favors to carry out this public service more blatantly and successfully. But, very few have supported the move.

On the first day, we were very excited. Therefore, we reached there by 5:45 am. In fact, before anyone, we took with us our own buckets, jugs and some hard brooms because we knew these items won't be in their list. I left my team to do a final touch and I went straight to the store. I luckily got phenol and the soap. I thanked them immensely. I told them I would remain obliged for their kindness and the support for the cause. On the very first day, after a few hours we came across acute water shortage, toilet shortage especially for our females (4 units for large gathering is too less), missing tissue paper and maintaining the surrounding clean free of litters.

To keep the mission alive, I immediately rushed to few officers I knew, for some help—the only word that I could utter was “Water Shortage for Toilet Sir”. Luckily we got immediate supply from Fire Fighter Truck that lasted just for few hours because water storage tank was too small for the crowd. Anyway we managed till the last hour. We even fought silently with cooks over water—they feel kitchen is more important (of course we too felt the same) and we had our own share of right (everyone has right to clean toilet). I and my team tried our best to convey that toilet is equally important like kitchen. We did not back an inch from our prospect, and our gesture remained unabatingly firm and our mission remained undying like Ashley Eden. We felt first few hours were less impactful but as time passed by we picked our momentum and slowly everyone felt our presence. Everyone trusted us and everyone seemed impressed with our dedicated service.

On the second day we ran short of water supply more acutely, we had to struggle to maintain the sufficient amount of water for toilet; on the other hand some officers' were reluctant to aid us. But after a several special request, by afternoon Municipal Officer gave us the independent water supply and the two small tar drums which immensely helped us to perform our toiletry works.

Third day was bit easy and comfortable. We only needed to check water supply, phenol, soap and clean the toilet pot time to time. Although, we all were thoroughly exhausted, we never gave up.

After working tirelessly and selflessly, we got some positive feedback –“toilet was very clean, and toilet smells so good”, these remarks gave us a sense of happiness, satisfaction and pride for the work we undertook to serve everyone. We also had some bitter experience from three-day experience— people become bother less, carefree, and too much dependent with free services, which made me to reflect on the quote –“Once you carry your own water, you will learn the value of every drop”.

All these were made possible due to my dedicated and committed team [7 boys and 3 girls] for which I shall remain ever grateful and thankful. I am also so humbled by their team spirit, energy level, sacrifice and positiveness.

Let's make toilet a first priority

Let's stop to defame mother nature

Let's forget the dirty toilet mindset

RAI, TEACHER, ZHEMGANG CS



Prayer Flag

After taking a painful hike, using just homemade blunt tools but perfected the art with precision and enduring the back breaking labor. I look up at the sky and listen to the flapping sound being produced by a prayer flag erected just then. With its majestic view point, showing off its magnificent colors to every passerby and filling the air with its aura of believe, respect and admiration.

Apart of its grandeur, prayer flag is also a secret symbol to adore God and pay homage to his power. The attitude of adoration comes with small package of sacrifice because; to adore God means forgetting the importance of oneself. But there is small gift with every sacrifice, the gift of leading oneself to the purest joy. This joy is purest; as it enables us to cast away all petty problems and concentrate our attention to what is truly important. In other words a prayer flag helps to divert our attention towards God and to free ourselves from the darker side of the world. Thus, prompting us to elude the darkness which resides within us.

Prayer flag also plays a vital role in crafting an intimate relationship with the omniscient present. Although prayer flags, which consist of just wooden pole and some colorful cheap fabrics, we should never undermine its importance, as it serves as an important link between humans and the Almighty. Pertaining to the colors of prayer flag, it consists of 'white, yellow, red and green', representing four key elements: 'land, water, fire and wind'. Regarding the fiber of the prayer flag, it contains some mantras suiting with different purpose of the erector.

In lieu of its importance in religion, it plays a vital role in preservation of our unique and pristine culture. Bhutan being one of the smallest country in the world, protected its sovereignty only by its weapon of culture. Indeed it is true that 'smallest thing can be of great value'. Even the simplest thing like erecting prayer flag (which is more of self-benefiting) can serve a great purpose of protecting country's independency. Furthermore increasing the sacredness of the place and intensifying its beauty.

I should say that prayer flag is the silent prayer chanted by wind and carried to every direction that it travels, cleansing every soul from its aching sins, like a farmer forging forest. Whoever breathes in this air are filled with the purest of joy that, they would have ever experienced and whoever is involved in the action is accumulating merit for next re-birth.

Contributed by Tandin Wangchuk

Dasho Keiji Nishioka ..(Cont)

Agar wood plantation was gaining popularity in the districts of Assam, India. So, Keiji collected and planted around 3000 trees. He persuaded the people of Panbang, Shilingtot, Mamung and Pantang of its value and encouraged them to grow the agar saplings. The wood is known for its fragrance hence it's used in making incense and perfume.

Besides his contributions in agricultural fields, he also aided in building schools and orienting people about the healthy eating habits. He also sent many children to be trained at the Bondey Farm for various skills like mechanics, bulldozer operator and repairmen. He encouraged people to give up their idle living styles and tried to engage them in meaningful and productive efforts.

He also extended his help to Upper and Middle Kheng. He educated farmers of Shingkar and Bardo gewogs on how to make cattle sheds attached with pits for collecting cow dung which simultaneously improved the sanitation and soil fertility. He provided incentives to encourage farmers to switch their dry lands to wet lands. He taught about the modern farming techniques in Wamling village. He also standardised the travel days for different villages which are still used today. He also distributed apple saplings in Wamling. Sang – ja was first cultivated during his time. Since then, it is has been cultivated and selling after processing them into dye. The reminiscence of his works can be seen in Thrisa, Tshanglajong, Zurphey and as far as Dunmang. After 5 years of stay in Zhemgang, Dasho left for Bondey in 1980.

He dedicated 28 years of his life in changing the face of the agriculture in Bhutan and lives of the Bhutanese farmers. He was awarded with 'Red Scarf' and the title of Dasho by His Majesty the fourth king for his selfless works. Dasho was also posthumously awarded with the Druk Thugsay medal. He passed away on 21 March 1992 at the age of 59 in Thimphu Hospital. The whole nation mourned for his untimely death and the loss of a great human being. A state funeral was conducted by the country and the funeral was attended by members of the Royal family, country's highest officials and people whose life had been touched by him. The cremation ceremony took place on 26 March 1992. Japanese by birth but he was no lesser if not more of a Bhutanese who wore gho, spoke dzongkha and had done great deal for the people and the country of Bhutan.

Source: Dasho Keiji Nishioka 'A Japanese Who Lived For Bhutan' Author: Tshering Cigay Dorji Panjore.

COMPLIED BY D. P YANGDEN



RBP Ground, Thimphu, December 17, 2007

".....a nation's future is mirrored in the quality of her youth and that it is the government's sacred duty to provide a good education and a conducive environment for you to become strong, capable leaders for the future."

".....Bhutan's success or failure will ultimately depend on the strength of your commitment- your willingness to embrace challenges and hard work. Unlike other countries, with our small population, it is not enough that a few of you excel- every single one of you must strive to be the best. This is the only way you can secure the future of our nation – through excellence."

".....in a small nation, society – whether it is the general public or the private sector – will always follow the bureaucracy's example. Therefore, you must set higher goals and work harder than others. Your principles and actions must be a model of service to the people and country."

Compiled by Dechen Pema Yangden

King Never Sleeps

In Thailand there is a beautiful tradition whereby a king is supposed to stay awake at night. He does not sleep because he has to protect his people who retire from a hard day's work. The tradition started from the kings of Ayutthaya who were at war with Burmese kingdoms. The people then could sleep peacefully because they knew that their King was awake and would protect them in case some enemies attacked in the middle of the night.

As the capital shifted from Ayutthaya to Thonburi to Krung Thep (aka Bangkok) this tradition, it seems, is still alive. King Bhumibol, it is being said, works a lot at night going through reports, maps and charts at night. In fact some years back I was in a taxi to the airport when our traffic stopped at a crossing. It was 3 in the morning and the royal motorcade was passing by. I asked the taxi driver and in a rudimentary English he said, "King never sleeps". "Why?" I asked him with child-like inquisitiveness. He couldn't explain further because of his limited English. A friend of mine later enlightened me on this tradition.

A facebook picture of our own King looking towards a menacing river at night reminded me of this tradition. Thai people believe that our King embodies the spirit of a king who never sleeps. And who protects his people all the time.

Yes, it's true but we rarely attribute our good sleep to good governance. We have never thought that if we could go to sleep peacefully it is because we know we are safe; we know that our King will protect us and will be there for us. After all it is one of those things that we Bhutanese take for granted. Good king, good leadership, clean air, clear water, what else don't we take for granted?

"You know what? We should be grateful that our King worries for us - and that you guys don't have to worry at all," I used to tell students at Sherubtse College at the morning assemblies during my short stint there.

An Indian media tycoon once told me, "Now I know why you Bhutanese are happy. Because your King does all the work for you." I was walking him to his car from an audience with His Majesty – at Taj Hotel in Delhi. The year was 2012.

I still think what the Thais tell me is the best. "You people should be lucky that you can sleep peacefully thanks to your King." Hopefully our people will say a little prayer before retiring to a peaceful sleep from now on.



From dorjiwangchuk.blogspot.com

Contributed by Karma Wangchuk

Orientation for new teachers: 1st February. 2019

I have often reflected on the value and integrity of conducting orientation to new teachers. Year after year, we priorities and mark the calendar in order to keep tradition as live as it is. It is great to have a program to orient new teachers on different aspects at that.

The Education Officers return to the fundamental basis of a Nation's Vision, MoE's Vision and seamless policies, rules, guidelines to name a few. We return the same year with hope and prayer looking for goals, hoping to discover its soul. A different idea that is welcoming to the eyes and to the minds is worth in order to lift the heart and sharpens the sensitive-ness of new teachers.

On 1st February, 2019, an hour presentation explained briefly below was unfolded to them:

1. [Why 1st February being kept for orientation day?](#)

Uniqueness is our country that relies on auspicious day to begin. New teachers oriented so that the culture of our country being relooked from Buddhist perspectives. 1st February, 2019 speaks of commencing good education, appointment, and hold good discussion amongst others

2. [Fortunate teachers](#)

New graduates of 2019 considered to be fortunate. They are becoming the part of Third Parliamentary Government, 12th FYP participation and Re-iteration of role of Civil Servants (HM King Addresses to the Nation during 111th National Day Celebration at Samtse)

3. [Synergy between Knowledge, Skills and Attitude](#)

Theory learnt at the Training Colleges to be tested in real fields. Attitude counts more than skills and knowledge.

4. [Moment of Liberation Vs World of Island](#)

Graduation means, moment of celebration of hard work and perseverance. Also a moment to forget what has been taught and learnt. A free bird thought pops in.

However, enters the world of policies, guidelines, rules and regulations. Civil servants are being looked after by manifolds red tapes.

5. [Law of jungle](#)

This is a world of social animal. Application of who is might or who is small not applied. All are under one law. Even if one is edge off, the long arm of law reaches.

6. [Same umbrella](#)

Be it new or old, whoever enters the education fraternity falls under MoE. MoE is the employer and we all are employee of her. Under her, whether she or he, high or low serves the King, Country and People.

7. [Brooms Policy](#)

You are sent to different schools with lots of expectations and promises to be fulfilled. You are sent there as there are students waiting for you not vice versa. We expect you all sweep rooms very well.

8. [Self-leadership development](#)

In schools, you are assigned different roles apart from core mandate of teaching. Your completion of tasks before time, your knowledge, skills input, behavior and characters defines yourself. Self-leadership for personal growth and professional growth is the need of hour.

9. [Insurance](#)

You are insured because you to have insure students. Insuring yourself + Insuring children = Secure children. You cannot play with life of children be it in any form. Rather, have to put under your arms for safety and protection. Security insurance brings applause and accolades to those who insures children the best.

10. [Ley Judrey Tha Damtsig](#)

Promotion and enhancing of this unique value rests on teachers. Embracing it, understanding it, practicing it, imbibing it, and believing it and your assessment give rise to flying colors in one's life.

11. [How would you like to be remembered?](#)

One day, you leave that place. How would you like to be remembered? Ball is in your court.

Reflect:

There are 3 kinds of people in the world.

[Those who make things happen](#)

[Those who wonder what had happen](#)

[Those who wonder how it happen](#)

Choice is yours.

Neither gets mesmerized nor enchanted with "teaching degree". Your mind and soul is. As I am, so are you!

Trashi Delek !

Contributed by Education Sector

Our Birds

White wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)



Photograph: Sancha Bdr Rai

Place of Photography: Mangduechhu (Lower Kheng, zhemgang), 2016

Length: 16 - 19cm

Status: Fairly common winter visitor.

Altitude range: 110 - 345m.

Habitat: Rivers, streams, damp fields, vicinity of water and short grassland.

Food: It depends mainly upon varieties of insects, fish, frogs, etc.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)



Photograph: Sancha Bdr Rai

Place of Photography: Mangduechhu, zhemgang, 2017

Length: 18 - 19cm

Status: Fairly common winter visitor.

Altitude range: 110 - 345m.

Habitat: Rivers, streams, damp fields, vicinity of water and short grassland.

Food: It depends mainly upon varieties of insects, fish, frogs, etc.

Description: The white wagtail is a small passerine bird in the wagtail family, motacillidae. It has extremely variable head pattern and mantle color indicating its racial identification of breeding males. This species breeds in much of Europe, Asia and parts of north Africa. In Bhutan, it is found in all the places especially in southern and central areas.

Contributed by Sancha Bdr Rai

Civil Registration and Census Office (CRCO)

The Dzongkhag Civil Registration and Census Office, Zhemgang has issued a total number of 304 Citizenship Identity Cards as of December 2018 till 11th January 2019 for the general public under Zhemgang Dzongkhag.



The Dzongkhag Civil Registration and Census Officer (DCRCO) surveyed villages in Zhemgang. The survey crossed checked and approved around 304 citizenship cards after the downloading the photos and thumb impressions. During the official tour, DCRCO also made follow up of census drop out cases submitted to headquarter earlier. Next step was to travel to Digala and Langdurbi Chiwog to make the services available to those who had not renewed or prepared their CID earlier due to domestic affairs and also to follow up of the public who had not received their CID due to some problems.

By Tenzin Wangdi
DCRCO

Month that was

1 - 3 March - Baza Guru Dung Druk

14 - 16 March - Zhemgang Annual tshechu

24 March - HE Hon'ble Home Minister Visited Zhemgang

25 March - APA Signing With Hon'ble Prime Minister

27 March - Dzongkhag Annual Health Conference



UN-HEARD PARADISE

Of all, the people of Pongchula rejoiced consuming maize wine. With good ethic and strong culture, the drinking is enjoyed by whole family and relatives gathered all around. Few chilies smashed with cheese served as side dish. After the wine, the series of folk songs starts to flow and cascade the evening. They head early to bed when the night is still young because they distaste the dark silent night when every beautiful creature in the nest is at rest.

Summer allows the people of the land to shape their muscles and shed some sweat and blood onto the mother earth. Barren fields collide with hard efforts of many hands to sprinkle to harvest corn. The best part of corn is the production of wine later which hordes the gatherings and merriment.

The project, REAP (Rural Economy Advancement Program) heard about the unknown village locked and swathed in one of the corners of Zhemgang. The project helped the famers in every way possible. During the 1st phase, cattle sheds were constructed for 34 households. During the 2ND phase, 34 jersey cattle were supplied and people were advocated on cattle management, product processing and marketing. They were provided with fodder training and fodder slips, 2 bags of Karma Feeds each initially. The villagers were thankful for the unwavering and dedicated services by the project. They hold so much of gratitude for His Majesty and the government for support being provided to them and the village.

JERSEY COW FROM REAP PROJECT

Pema Goedling Lhakhang

The master copy of the Baza Guru mantra installed in the Dungkhor was originally written by Rinpoche himself and was later mass reproduced in a printing press at Siliguri. After they arrived back to Zhemgang, they began the construction and completed it in 1966 as advised and blessed by the Rinpoche and it is believed that this Dungkhor was the first of its kind in the whole country. The entire materials for the Dungkhor had to be carried on horseback and people because, by then there was no motorable road.



On the wall at the entrance of the Lhakhang, one can see its history and the following lines;

8

"Why am I trying to lick the wound that never seems to heal?" Norbu slammed the bedroom door and leaned against it. "Is there no escape from this burden?" Norbu wondered. Norbu stumbled to his bed and dropped onto it, pressing his pillow around the ears to shut out the noise that kept ringing in his head "I wish you could have brought him bit earlier".

Once Norbu was a happy young man, though he was married and employed, he stayed with his parents in Zhemgang and he loved them immensely, they were the sole reason for him to seek transfer from Trashigang to Zhemgang. But unfortunately, after few months of his arrival to Zhemgang his beloved father passed away.

After that day his life never seemed to move on and every night he cried "Oh God, "let me sleep. Let me sleep!" but the sleep seldom came, thus with his eyes wide open he would think about the incident over and over again and even on that particular night he tried real hard to get some sleep, covering his ears and turning left and right on the bed but he couldn't. Finally after much tussle with his pillow he could get some sleep, however his sleep was short-lived due to creaking sound of the door, as his wife approached the room. "Did I disturb you dear? I am really sorry." said Zangmo as she entered the room, "no" replied Norbu. Zangmo knew very well that Norbu would always go to bed early hoping to get some sleep but he could never sleep.

"We need to do something about the door, it creaks a lot" said Zangmo just to divert her mind as she cuddled into the blanket, Norbu just nodded in agreement. And then Norbu lay awake on his side of the bed just staring at ceiling, after a momentary gaze at the ceiling he turned towards his wife and saw her already asleep and wished he could sleep like her. As he gazed at her, his thoughts again went over the incident that he could recall it with vivid pictures as if it happened yesterday, although the incident had come to pass more than three years.

It was on 13th April 2013, Norbu was playing card in his Neighbour's house, he would gamble every day after his office hours and everyday his wife would call him to come home but every day he would say "it's last game I will come after this" and he would never turn up on time. Even on that faithful night during the middle of his card game he heard his wife shouting "Norbu! Norbu! come home" and he replied in the usual tone, "coming, coming its last game, I am losing, will you stop shouting". After a brief moment, again his wife cried hysterically "Norbu! Please come home your father is very ill", Norbu thought for some time and murmured casually to friends "Ah it's her usual drama just another trick to lure me home, don't pay any heed to it", yet Zangmo called him again for third time and this time even his friends insisted him to go home.

"Wowww wow....." suddenly Nobu was startled by a howling sound of a dog near his window, when he was lost in his past "ani chang-che di tsu" cursed Norbu, as dog's cry is always associated with ill omen (death) in Bhutanese belief. However his thought could not ponder much on the myth as it automatically got diverted on the way he stormed out of the gambling den jabbering "today if she is lying, I will" but again he wandered "what if she was speaking the truth", with that thought he dashed home.

As soon as he reached home, his heart dropped at the sight of his father sitting on a chair with heavy breathing as if something was stuck in his throat and beside him Norbu could see his mother trying desperately to call 112 for emergency, but the formalities and the questions from other side of the phone was very time consuming and agitating which made his mother to break into tears. At that moment Norbu was standing still motionless consumed by mixed feelings, not knowing what to do but kept on repeating "it's all my fault, it's all my fault". Instantly his wife ran towards him and shook him vibrantly saying "pull yourself together and do something before it's too late". Thus, without wasting any time he called one of his friends who could drive.

Again he shook his head purposefully just to divert his thought from that incident and instead he tried to think about his work "tomorrow I have meeting in the morning, I have to meet a client and once the office gets over I will go with my friends to play basketball". Once he thought about his friends, he remembered that particular friend who came immediately after his call during the mishap and recalled the way Norbu supported his father and comforted him "Apa it will be fine don't worry". But with every step that his father took, he sighed so heavily "uff....uff.... a..lala..a..lala", which he could still feel like a whisper in his ears. As soon as they reached the parking lot, his father collapsed right then and there on his lap. He couldn't believe this was happening, he was instantly consumed with a flood of emotions and could just utter "Apa..... Please pull yourself together". He was so devastated to know that his father's legs totally gave up on him, it was only his sheer will-power to live that kept him breathing. But with a glimpse of hope he pulled his father up with all his might and tugged him inside the car and took him to the hospital.

After reaching hospital, Norbu remembered shouting frantically "please someone save my father, please help me", no sooner did hospital personnel hear him crying, a nurse came running towards him and laid his father on a stretcher and took him to the emergency ward, calling "doctor! Doctor! Emergency, please come faster", with blurry cemented floor due to tears rolling down his cheek profusely, Norbu accompanied his father till the doorway of emergency ward. After that he was made to wait outside the ward and tried very hard to console his sobbing mother "don't worry mother he will be fine", mentally he just prayed to almighty "let him be alright as I promised to mother", although part of him wanted to cry his heart out but just for his dearest mother he put up a mask to conceal his emotions and endured the pain silently.

(continued in Page 10)

After an hour or so, doctor came out from the ward and used the most un-forgetful euphemistic phrase, "your father is no more, you were late to bring him to the hospital and he was suffering from a disease called Meningococcal, a respiratory disease.....". Doctor went on explaining medical jargons but Norbu was engulfed with feelings of remorse and regret that he could not keep any track of what doctor said, instead he kept on thinking "it's all my fault, I wish I could have listened to my wife, now he is no more and this is all because of me, I wish I would have never gambled, I wish I wish..".

As he was lost in his thoughts he glanced his wife going to washroom and when she returned she remarked, "Are you still awake dear and don't tell me you have been wondering over the same thoughts", "I can't helped it" replied Norbu, his wife felt really sorry looking at his tired eyes. "Don't be so hard on yourself dear, you did everything that a son could have done for a father", added Zangmo. "I did everything at my capacity to redeem my guilt but it never seems to go, maybe its God will to see me suffer", said Norbu sadly, at that juncture Zangmo hugged him and whispered "God will never torment a tormented soul, it's just your thought and try to get some sleep dear". With her tenderly touch she lured him to sleep.

After that incident, though he became a refined man with a promise of never gambling and atonement from his wife but he could never redeem himself for what he had done. That incident left him with a burden and agonizing sleepless nights and every night with a deep sob he tried to will himself to sleep. This experience left him with a wound that never seemed to heal.

*Contributed by
Tandin Wangchuk*

Key Strategies of Zhemgang Dzongkhag in the 12th Five Year Plan

1. Enhance income and resilient capacities particularly of the poor and vulnerable in eradicating poverty in all its forms;
2. Develop and improve critical infrastructures and ensure standard and quality;
3. Provide effective, efficient and user-friendly public services and amenities;
4. Promote and strengthen entrepreneurship, enterprises and industries of all types;
5. Identify, build and strengthen critical HR capacity and skills and ensure their effective and efficient management and utilization;
6. Initiate Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement and hire experts for planning and implementation to offset lack of HR capacity and skills
7. Increase contracting and outsourcing of works and services while ensuring quality and value for money;
8. Increase dialogue and collaboration with private sector, community and others in every value chain development of economy;
9. Identify issues, opportunities and mitigating interventions related to cross-cutting issues and themes such as gender, climate, environment, disaster, poverty, population and vulnerable and disabled people, etc. during plan and strategy formulation.
10. Tap incentives and sectoral support available through various policies such as EDP, Fiscal Incentives Policy, CSMI Policy, etc. for local development and economic/business growth.
11. Ensure that the mandatory indicators related to corruption reduction namely, work, integrity and leadership culture index, corruption, transparency and accountability index; and administrative sanction against public officials as KPIs in the Annual Performance Agreement, in addition to ensuring that measures to reduce corruption are strengthened and implemented.

Contributed by Thinley Jamtsho

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