



ZHEMGANG MONTHLY

FROM STEPS TO LEAPS

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ཇོང་ཁག་ཚེས་བཅུ་འཁོར་ལུ་

༣ འོ་བསྟར་གནང་སྲོལ་ཡོད་པའི་ གཞུལ་མ་སྤང་ཇོང་ཁག་ཚེས་བཅུ་འཁོར་ ལྷོ་ཆེ་། པའི་སྤྱི་ཚེས་ ༠༡-༠༣/༠༧/༢༠༢༠ ཚུན་འགོ་
 འདྲེན་འཐབ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། འོ་བསྟར་བཞིན་གནང་སྲོལ་ཡོད་པའི་ཚེས་བཅུ་འཁོར་ ཚེས་བཅུ་འཁོར་འབྲེལ་ཐང་ནང་ལུ་ རབ་སྤེའི་སྒྲུལ་གནས་
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འོ་བསྟར་ཇོང་ཁག་ཚེས་བཅུ་འཁོར་འདྲེན་འཐབ་པའི་སྐབས་ དུག་སྤྱིར་ཁྱེད་ལུ་ལྷན་ཁག་གི་དབུ་གཙོས་ ཇོང་རབ་དང་ ཁྱེད་ལུ་
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 ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། མཇུག་འགྲོ་བཞུགས་ཡོད་པའི་འཆམ་གི་རིགས་འདི་ཚུ་ཡང་

Upcoming Events

- 2/5 - Zhabdrung Kuchhoe
- Teachers Day
- 7/5 - Kanjur Lingkor
- Arts and Crafts Day

New Member

The Dzongkhag Administration, Zhemgang welcomes a new family member :



Ms. Sherab Zangmo
Dzongkhag Environment Officer.

ཨང	འཆམ་གི་མིང
༡	གཞིན་རྗེ་ཡབ་ཡུམ།
༢	ལྷན་གཞི་འཆམ།
༣	ལྷན་གཞི་འཆམ།
༤	དུང་དག།
༥	གཏུང་རྩ།
༦	གཏུང་མཚན་བརྒྱ།
༧	རི་ལྷ་བཅུ་དུག།
༨	ཚོགས་འཆམ།
༩	ཞིང་གཞི་གསལ་དཔལ་མོ།
༡༠	ཨ་ཙཱ་དགའ་ལྷན་བརྟེན།



ཚོས་དང་ལམ་སྲོལ་སྤྱོད་ཚོ།

Sershong Integrated Irrigation and Drinking water Supply Survey

After more than decades, the long awaited Sershong Irrigation scheme which will immensely benefit to irrigate more than 250 acres of agricultural land under Trong-Dangkhar chiwog, Trong Gewog has come as a limelight during FY-2019-2020 with approved budget of Nu.50 million under the fund support of SDP-II, GOI.

In line to above, Dzongkhag Administration with Technical support from Department of Agriculture, MoAF has incepted to take up the project as Integrated Irrigation and drinking water through incorporation of the total budget of Nu.20 million under drinking water flagship for Zhemgang Throm.

Based on the preliminary survey report and recommendation of Technical team, the water source has been out-sourced from Wangdigang river source from the pre-determined and identified Sershong stream source. Divergence of the new source is mainly based on the water requirements computation comparisons and feasibility towards the sustainability in terms of population growth and farming intensifications projection at least for 50 years down the line.



Prior to the commencement of detail survey, the consultation meeting among the stakeholders and beneficiaries was held comprehensive planning strategy and to ensure smooth implementation phases. The team and beneficiaries has carried out the detail survey commencing from 1/01/2020 and taken duration of two months due to the tough terrain, covered with dense forest along the alignment.

As per the survey report, the total length as been measured 18.62Km with the estimated cost of Nu.182 million escalating towards the approximate amount of Nu.129 million of the available budget. Thus, Dzongkhag is in the process of exploring the additional budget to meet the cost of differential amount which has escalated due to alteration of water source and increase in the length of construction as specified.

Above all the project is expected to benefit in reassuring both water and irrigation water supply at least for more than 50 years down the line, which has been remained major constraint without adequate and assured water supply.



Compiled & Reported by: Jambay Ugyen, Asst. DAO

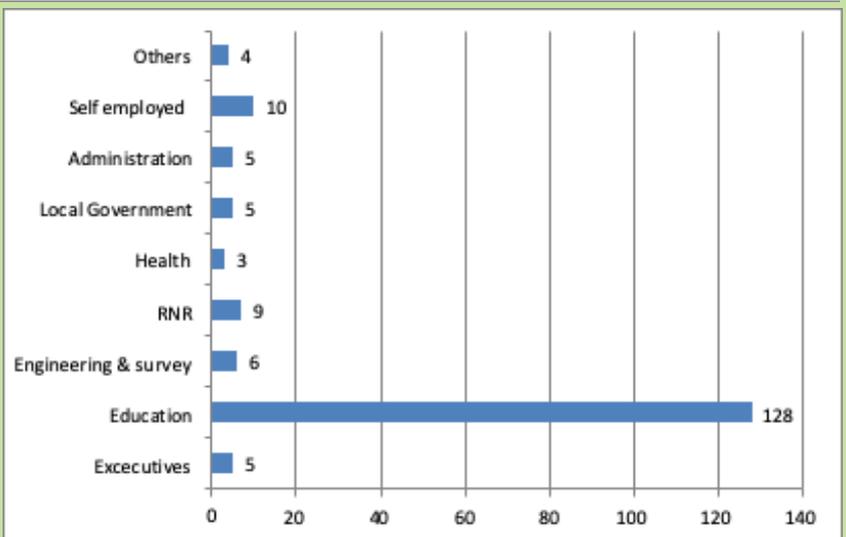
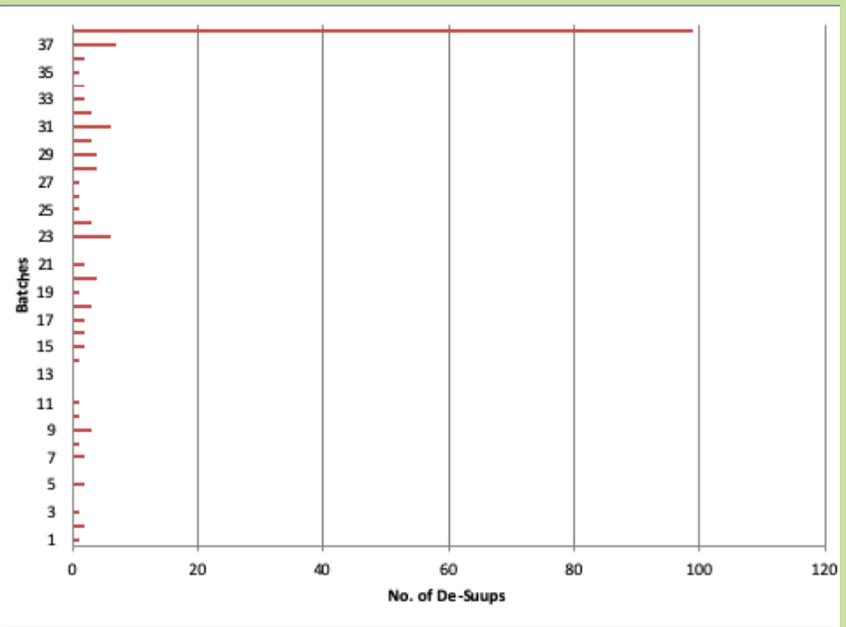
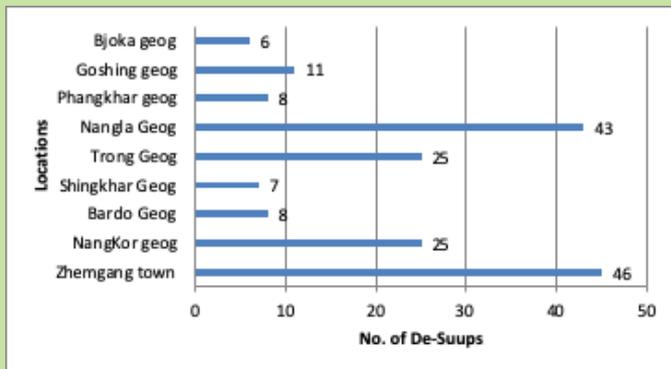
100 De-Suups Join Zhemgang Dzongkhag in April

Zhemgang Dzongkhag received 100 De-Suups after completing 38th batch Accelerated De-Suung Integrated Training Program from Royal Bhutan Police Training Centre, Jigmeling and Military Training Centre, Tencholing. As of April 2020, there are 178 De-Suups spread across eight geogs in the Dzongkhag.

Welcoming the 38th batch De-suups, the chairman of the Zhemgang Dzongkhag De-suung, DASHO DZONGDA offered them appreciation for successful completion of the training and joining back to their respective station in the Dzongkhag. In his welcome note, the chairman urged all the De-Suups to live up to the expectation of His Majesty the King in offering voluntary service to the society and beyond the call of one's duty. With the current situation of COVID-19, the chairman appealed all the De-Suups to respond to the call of the nation with strong commitment and high volunteerism spirit.

During the welcome function held at Tingtibi Lower Secondary School on April 26, 2020, the presentation on Zhemgang Dzongkhag De-Suup Charter and Trust Fund was familiarized to the fresh De-Suup graduates. The chairman informed the gathering that the Charter will remain as the historic document for the Dzongkhag De-Suung as all the members will put their names and signature. The signing will take place on the occasion of 10th De-Suung Raising Day on February 14, 2021.

As of April 2020, Zhemgang De-Suung comprises of members from different agencies and business communities. By region, there are 110 in Upper kheng and 68 De-Suups in Lower Kheng. Of the 178 De-suups, five are Executive De-Suups and 129 are from the Education sectors. The batch wise numbers, current station, professional compositions are given in the graphs below:



Reported by: Desuup Jigme Dorji, (General Secretary)
 Zhemgang De-Desuung Secretariat
 desuupzhemgang@gmail.com

Words of Wisdom from Golden Throne

His Majesty's Address to the Nation, 10th April 2020

The world is faced with an unprecedented challenge due to the spread of the novel coronavirus. The risks unleashed by this pandemic are escalating by the day. Realising that Bhutan will not be an exception to the adverse effects of this global pandemic, we have planned and implemented various strategies to cope with the threat in a timely and effective manner.

Adopting a cautious approach, Bhutan stopped the entry of tourists to prevent the virus from entering the country. We have quarantined every Bhutanese returning home for 3 weeks to eliminate all possible risks of local transmission. Given the vulnerabilities arising from unchecked movement of people along our long and porous borders, we have also sealed the borders and enhanced vigilance.

It is inevitable that such measures will have an adverse impact on the lives of our people. For example, businesses of small shopkeepers have declined, and the tourism and hospitality sector is at a standstill in the absence of tourists. Similarly the future prospects of people working in other sectors such as construction, mining, transport, etc., are uncertain.

During my recent visits to the Dzongkhags, I was deeply moved to see the solidarity and support shown by our people despite the numerous difficulties they face. For example, our farmers in the rural areas came forward to offer their farm produce to the armed forces and Desuups as an expression of appreciation for their selfless services. Contractors have offered their trucks and machineries free of charge. Although many businesses are in debt and likely to suffer, they have made cash contributions. Yet others, like taxi drivers, have offered their vehicles and also volunteered to serve physically if they are needed. Similarly, hotels have offered their properties and services as quarantine facilities. The response of our people in these difficult times has revealed, firstly, that our people are well-informed and understand clearly the devastating impact of an outbreak in our country.

Secondly, I was deeply reassured to see that our people fully appreciate the value of unity, and the spirit of fidelity and harmony. If we – the King, government, and people, work together like members of one family, we can emerge unscathed from any adversity that we may encounter. That our people from all backgrounds are ready to make personal sacrifices, despite facing difficulties themselves, shows that they place the interest of the nation above all else. I will forever appreciate the unwavering support of our people during this ordeal.

The government, led by the Prime Minister, has successfully shouldered its responsibilities. In particular, I commend the Ministry of Health and the numerous health personnel across the 20 Dzongkhags for their tireless service during this time of need.

Our public servants working in various ministries and departments in Thimphu, and in the Dzongkhags, Dungkhangs, Thromdes, Gewogs and villages - are all rendering exceptional service to the nation in these trying times. I would like to extend my deep appreciation to all of you, for working round the clock and shouldering your responsibilities in an exemplary manner. I urge you to remain alert and keep up your efforts.

As long as the virus continues to spread across the world, there is every risk of the transmission of coronavirus in our country. To be totally successful in preventing local transmission, we can neither be complacent, nor can we let our guard down.

The reckless action of a single person who clandestinely crosses the border for trade, or to meet acquaintances, or to bring someone to Bhutan, risks spreading the coronavirus in their community and in the country. It will completely undermine all our national efforts. Therefore, to be 100 percent successful in our fight against the coronavirus, it will require the unstinted cooperation of each and every person.

Ensuring national security is of paramount importance, especially in these uncertain times. With no definite medical solution in sight, we are not sure how long it will be before normalcy can resume. Our health professionals, armed forces and Desuups, along with the public, are serving to the best of their abilities. However, if the situation prolongs, it is certain that fatigue will eventually set in. To supplement their efforts, we have instituted an accelerated Desuung programme to train 2,500 Desuups simultaneously at seven centres, which will be followed by another batch of 2,500 Desuups. We have made preparations to train more Desuups if necessary. One of our biggest concerns is the burden on the economy arising from the measures imposed to control the transmission of the virus. I am also deeply worried about the impact the global economic downturn will have on our country and the lives of our people. Besides health concerns, our people are now worried about the loss of jobs and income, and the wellbeing of their families.

Under ordinary circumstances, we have always exercised extreme prudence and carefully weighed the costs and benefits of every expenditure, to ensure the most judicious use of our limited resources while constantly keeping the long term interest of the nation at heart.

However, the situation we are in today is extraordinary, and unlike any we have experienced thus far. We are confronted with a dangerous global pandemic of an unprecedented scale posing an imminent threat to our people. Therefore, building the resilience, confidence and security of our people must take greater priority over conserving our resources.

With the risks posed by coronavirus confounded by the economic uncertainties, the resilience of our people may also gradually diminish. Moving forward, it is imperative for the King, government, and the people to join hands and work together so that our people are inspired and ready to face this adversity with fearless courage.

The State on its part must immediately provide its resolute support to the people to pursue this paramount national objective.

With this in mind, a team of specialists has been assigned to work with and support the government to establish a National Resilience Fund. The Fund amounting to about Nu. 30 billion will be deployed to finance various economic activities to provide relief and economic stability.

The government has formulated numerous plans, policies, and strategies to fast track the implementation of the 12th Five Year Plan. This includes the plan to front load investments and provide stimulus to boost growth and enhance economic activities for the wellbeing of our people.

One of the biggest concerns of our people and businesses is the difficulty they are facing in meeting their loan repayment obligations. The Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) is working with the financial institutions to defer the loan repayment period and waive interest payments for three months. I commend the RMA and the Financial Institutions for understanding the interests of the nation and people, and proposing the right responses.

Many of our people working in the tourism and hospitality sector, including small restaurants, entertainment centers, truck drivers, taxi drivers, etc., have suffered loss of jobs and income, and are finding it difficult even to pay house rents. It is of utmost importance to extend immediate relief to the vulnerable people before the situation deteriorates. Therefore, the Druk Gyalpo's Relief Kidu will be granted to support the people, provide relief, and enable them to withstand their ordeals through this period.

Our country is a special land blessed by Guru Rinpoche and Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel, and further strengthened by the vision and hard work of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Our country has faced and successfully overcome numerous hurdles in the past.

I am confident that, with the blessings of the Triple Gem, the protection of our Guardian Deities, Kurims conducted by His Holiness the Je Khenpo and the monastic community, and the unwavering bond of fidelity and unity among the King, country and people- we have the fearless courage to overcome all adversities. Let us rise to the occasion in the service of our nation.

Contributed by Rinzin Lhamo

Sustained Growth of Agriculture and Livestock

Low agricultural growth perpetuates food and nutritional insecurities, which also reduces rural incomes. Traditional forms of agriculture are the main occupation of the vast majority of rural people to provide a good income. Instances of localized food insecurity are found mainly among landless farmers and seasonal food shortages remain a concern for many families mainly during the pre-harvest period.

Given, Dzongkhag's small domestic market size, limited infrastructure, high transaction costs and small labour force, the development of rural infrastructure, small and medium enterprises through formation of farmers' groups and cooperatives is important for employment and income-generating opportunities.

In this plan period, Dzongkhag is focusing on product diversification and also encouraging the farmers to move away from the traditional subsistence farming to semi-commercial and commercial farming. This will stimulate the growth of agriculture sector and raise the income levels among the rural population.

Agriculture Sector has a plan to accelerate the homestead vegetable production and gradually upscale for commercial production to cater to the needs of the schools and monastic institutions. The sector has also developed a commercial vegetable production plan for the Dzongkhag in the wake of the noble COVID-19 response. To this end, the sector has identified areas to focus on selected vegetable commodity and assorted vegetables production along with sustainable land management programs.

The sector will continue to strive to increase the amount of agriculture land under organic production by conducting organic farm trainings to its extension staff and the farmers alike. Going organic will reduce their dependence on imported farm inputs, chemical fertilizers and seeds and thereby upholding our traditional farming practices. In this regard, many farmers in the villages were trained on organic farming concept and practice.

Livestock is an important part of rural pockets of the communities

today. For certain communities, it is the main source of livelihood. Traditional practices are subsistence oriented and therefore not organized for tapping commercial opportunities.

With agriculture, livestock development will remain important but efforts will be made to foster commercial orientation to this activity wherever feasible, particularly to exploit the opportunities provided by the development of the growth hubs and centers. Better livestock management and use of improved breeds of cattle will be encouraged. Efforts will be also targeted at social mobilization including setting up of farmers' groups and cooperatives. The success of farmers' groups and cooperatives will be replicated wherever feasible. Currently, the Dzongkhag has four commercial milk processing Units owned by farmers' groups.



Contributed by Thinley Jamtsho

Fodder Contact Grower of Tama Village under Trong Started Generating Income

Fodder refers particularly to the food given to animals (including plants cut and carried to them), rather than which they forage for themselves (called forage). Fodder is also called provender and includes hay, straw, silage, compressed pelleted feeds, oils and mixed rations, and sprouted grains and legumes. Most animal feed is from plants, but some manufacturers add ingredients to processed feeds that are of animal origin.

Growing of improved fodder by the farmers under the Dzongkhag had been a mandatory activity to mitigate the current feed scarcity during the dry season.



There are many proven fodder species released from the research centers, however the species widely adopted and grown by the farmers are Gautemala, Napier and Pachung. These species of fodder can be grown through vegetative propagation and has high bio mass. It also had an advantage of growing very fast with an average tiller of five to six annually.

In the year 2017, Dzongkhag Livestock Sector formed a Contact Fodder Grower Group at Tama village under Trong Gewog. The main aim of the group was to adopt the village as fodder production and seedling cluster within the Dzongkhag. Initially the group started with 15 members covering 15 acres of land with fodder production. As of today we have 11 active members with an increase of total acreage to 22 acres for fodder production. Beside feeding their animals, the group also supplies fodder slips within and neighboring Dzongkhags as a source of seedlings. On average 11 members of fodder contact growers earned Nu. 23,700 in two consecutive years through the sale of fodder slips. The members are optimistic that they will be increasing the area of plantation and make more income in the coming years. The records for the fodder slips supplied and income generated by the group is as indicated in the table below.

Year	Fodder Species	Supplied to	No. of sapling	Rate (Nu)	Income generated (Nu)
2018	Pakchong	Shingkhar (Shingkhar)	8000	2	16000
		Nangkhor (Goling and Buli)	8000	2	24000
		Trong (Gomphu and Paibang)	9000	2	18000
		Phangkhar (Pongchula and Redijong)	25000	2	50000
2019	Pakchong	Shingkhar (Shingkhar, Wamling, Thresa and Radhi)	4000	2	8000
		Goshing (Lamtang and Lingmapong)	5000	2	10000
		Bardho	12000	2	24000
		Ngangla (Sonamthang)	4000	2	8000
2020	Gautamals	Trongsa	50000	2	100000
	Ficus	Trongsa	150	20	3000
				Total	261000

Submitted By: Dzongkhag Livestock Sector

The Secret Behind the Closed Door (Story)

Disclaimer: The story is a work of fiction and is not based on any person, living or dead, or incidents. Any resemblance to any incident or person is purely coincidental and not intentional. Therefore reader's discretion is advised.

The night was dark and quiet. There was an unusual eerie silence. Engrossed in my daily lesson planning, I didn't even realize that it was almost midnight when I checked my phone. With a yawn I prepared to retire for the night into the cozy bed. My heavy eye lashes were about to give way when suddenly I heard a sound of a woman crying from the down floor. I was not sure who it was because all the lights in my neighbor's rooms were put off and there was nobody around. The sound awoke my sleepy eyes. Then I picked my phone and browsed through some newsfeed on Facebook. Again I heard another sound of woman laughing and screaming. It became louder and louder which added to my fear. I was more scared when I knew that the sound was coming from the room (down floor) which I have seen locked most of the time. I tried to ignore the sound but I could not. So I gathered all my courage and opened my window but saw the lights were off. Then I thought maybe my house owner was still talking with his wife and went outside to see whether they were still awake but there was no one outside. Even the lights in their rooms were off.

Then the fear robbed me and I didn't know what to do. I came inside and called my friend who stays next to that locked room. I rang her several times but she didn't pick up the call. Amidst the fear I wrapped myself with the blanket and tried to sleep. As I closed my eyes I heard someone screaming and calling my name. "P...E...L...D...E...N! H...E...L...P... ME". I jumped up and opened my window but it was still dark outside. I couldn't see anything down there but the woman still called my name earnestly. Then I thought she was my friend and I just replied her. "Namgay! What happened? Please don't cry I am coming down". Before I opened my door to get out, there was a hard knock on my door. It was my two neighbours as I opened the door in terror.

"What happened to your friend? She is crying and calling your name repeatedly?" They asked me.

"I don't know. She left just an hour ago after the dinner," I replied.

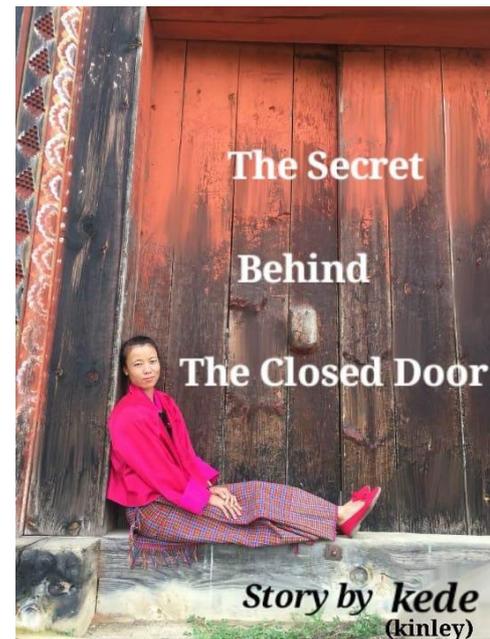
"Let's go down and see." I suggested.

"Okay, let's go then," both of them agreed with me. We ran down. As we approached near, I could feel my heart beating faster than ever, the fear rushing through the vein I was more determined to reach her faster. There, I saw a woman walking towards the closed door and I reached out to touch her and called my friend's name. She turned towards me and I was astonished by a different woman. She was a stranger to me. She was around five feet with round face and yellowish shoulder length curly hair. Her eyes were swollen from hours of crying and tears were running with smeared kohl. She was crying and asking help from me in wobbly voice. "How can I help you? Please don't cry. We are here to help you." I went near to help her but she went towards the room which was closed. Then three of us followed her "Please help me, my husband is going to kill me," she cried out loud. That froze my heart. I wondered why her husband wants to kill her. I wondered why she called me when she doesn't even know me. Lots of thoughts were rushing into my mind when my friend Namgay called me from her house. Then I felt relieved to see that my friend was fine but on the other hand I was scared to go near that woman. She went near the closed door and called her husband, "Pelden! Can you please open the door! Why are you treating me like this when I came all the way from Thimphu?" Then I realized that Pelden too was her husband's name. She was actually calling her husband. It was such a coincidence at such a night that her husband was my namesake.

She knocked the door several times but the man inside didn't open the door. She cried and screamed loud enough to break that midnight silence but it did not break the stone heart of her husband. We couldn't do anything except freezing ourselves outside. I went near her to console and after a long time the man furiously opened the door and pushed forward rolling his sleeves and darted straight towards her. She ran around the house and the man chased her like a child's play during any usual days when I could barely recognize my friend's face. I just leaned against the door helplessly because it was their personal matter and I cannot interfere.

Unable to grab her, the man went inside and closed the door again leaving her outside in the dark. It is sure that he was going to blow her had he caught her. Again the wife started to bang the door. After a while their parents came and the man opened the door. He let the woman inside though the man was still fierce. I could see lots of hatred and anger in his eyes. He was holding a belt in his hand and murmuring a lot of things to her. It appeared like an everyday ritual to the parents of the couples. They closed the door before we could get in and my friends were asking me to go back. I felt so helpless and guilty for not being helpful to her.

I went back to my room and got into my bed which now did not feel cozy. I couldn't sleep because of the incident. I wondered what will happen to the woman once their parents go back to their room. In the morning I woke up early and went down to see whether the woman was fine or not but I found the door locked again. I returned to my room with an uncanny feeling and still I wonder why people love and get married if they are to end up hurting each other. Maybe that will remain as a secret behind the closed door.



Submitted by Kinley Dem

Dangkhar Lhakhang

Description

Dhangkhar lhakhang is 7km south of the Zhemgang Dzong and can be reached by a farm road. The temple is located on the right side of Dhangkhar village. The farm road leads to Dhangkhar temple first and ends at the village.

Dhangkhar lhakhang is a two-storey traditional Bhutanese house built right beside the farm road. The lhakhang is enclosed within an old wall. There is an old cypress tree in front of the temple, a stone next to the temple that contains the footprint of Guru Rinpoche and a big prayer wheel on the left side of the temple at the entrance.

History

The date of the construction and the founder of the temple are unknown, but the local sources say that it was the seat of Pema Lingpa (1450-1521) who visited and blessed many places in Zhemgang. The community still practices the Peling tradition of Buddhism (Peling Choelug). According to oral sources, the village was named Dhangkhar (dhang means clear, khar means clear/immaculate in the Kheng language) because the early morning sun rays from the Rewotala peak fall on the village, hence the name.

Dhangkhar lhakhang is one of the oldest temples under Trong gewog. It is believed that in the mid 8th century, Guru Rinpoche have visited Dhangkhar on his return from Ugyen Drak in Nabji after settling the dispute between the kings, Nawoche and Sindhu Raja. He left his footprint on the stone which is on the right side of the temple.

The oral source said that earlier the temple was below the farm road and it was a one-storey temple. In the 1980s the temple was shifted to the present location upon the advice of Kunzang Thinley, the former Lam Neten of Zhemgang because there was not enough space for religious and other social functions. The whole community was involved in the dismantling and in the reconstruction of the new temple. Ap Sangay says that the temple was rebuilt around 1982.

Architecture and Artwork

Dhangkhar lhakhang is a two-storey temple built in the traditional Bhutanese style and it is surrounded by a wall. The main altar is on the first floor and the ground floor is used as a storeroom during the funeral rites. There is a separate room attached to the right side of the temple and this room is used as a kitchen and also as a torkhang (room for preparation of ritual cakes) during religious festivals. The sacred objects in the temple are a statue of Guru Nangsi Zilngon in the centre, a statue of the Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal (1592-1651) on the right side, and the historical Buddha (Shakyamuni) on the left side. The Guru Nangsi Zilngon's statue was already there in the old temple, but the other two statues were added after the temple was shifted to its present location. Inside the temple there are no wall paintings, and the temple is more like a traditional Bhutanese house.

Social and Cultural Functions

Ap Sangay is the current caretaker of the temple and he has been for over 50 years. He takes care of the daily offerings and the community takes care of other big rituals and offerings. The rituals are conducted by the gomchens (lay-practitioners) of Dangkhar village. The community practices Peling tradition and performs the following activities.

From the 13th – 15th day of the 1st month of the Bhutanese calendar, Nyungney (fasting retreat and prayers) is sponsored by the community.

From the 8th – 10th day of the 4th month of the Bhutanese calendar, Kanjur (Buddhist Canon) recitation is conducted.

From the 8th – 10th day of the 7th month of the Bhutanese calendar, Nyungney (fasting retreat and prayers) is sponsored by the community.

From the 13th – 15th day of the 7th month of the Bhutanese calendar, Baza Guru Dungdrup/ Mani Dungdrup recitation is organized.



Courtesy : Bhutan Cultural Atlas

<https://bhutanculturalatlas.clcs.edu.bt/location/bhutan/zhemgang/?culturecat=13>

JOURNEY OF BEING A DESUUP- THE GUARDIANS OF PEACE

I've always yearned for that orange uniform, but couldn't make it until 38th batch desuung training-maybe it was destined at Jigmeling with beautiful souls of RBPTI (Royal Bhutan Police Training Institute) family and de-suup nyamros. On 4th of April we checked in Jigmeling gate-a gate of transformation, learning, enriching experiences and lot more. We remained in queues and patiently waited for our turn to test for COVID-19 as it was a mandate for the training. It almost took 4 hours for just the de-suups of our dzongkhag alone to enter the gate.

Our first day commenced with a visit to Lhakhang to get the blessing for smooth and enriching training. The proceeding days started with Physical Training (PT) or drill followed by various mesmerizing classes like weapon training, first aid and CPR, crowd control and riot management, search and rescue, military etiquettes, and lot more. First few days were terribly tiring as the systems were different- all talking folks were put into action. We had to jog, what they called double-up or *nyitaap*, for all activities; our classes, meals and games. Walk was when we won immunity in inter-house competitions. In other words, we had to earn the privilege to walk and they called it 'Mid-term mode' and I just wished for that dearly.

In this journey of being a de-suup, we have had tough times, the instructors and officers too had tough times. At times we failed to make up to their mark and expectations due to our late readiness for fall in, the noise as we gathered and getting late for the classes. These made the officers and instructors place in repeated reminders and I must say, the reminders didn't come that easy- it was backed up by *thrim* (punishments). But we enjoyed those punishments as we saw everyone getting the equal share. We would look at each other and giggle at each other's' state. We also had crazy times where we could easily fall asleep irrespective of the place and time, just like pandas. Lecture hall was the best place though due to which the RBPTI family changed its name to 'sleeping bag'. Few de-suups even shared about falling asleep in fall in- just imagine a person could fall asleep while standing - Hilarious! I must say.

This training was also a platform where we could overcome our fear. Firing was what most feared and I was one among them. That terrifying sound that echoed after the bullet was released made me tremble as I hold the rifle and thus landed up giving aimless shots. Nevertheless, that fear was punctured with the needle of encouragement from all sides- from de-suup nyamros, instructors and officers, resulting in better performance in the second round- I'm proud I improved my shooting, thankfully not taking the label 'zero hit'. Rappelling was yet another activity which let our heart sank but this too was a success story for all. At the end of the day every individual was proud to give a try and succeed the down-walk all the way from the top of 3-storey building to the ground.

Of all the activities we disliked the night Fall In where we were made to stand for hours and hours in order to make announcements and discuss about the day's performance. Our tired legs would cross all degree of resilience due to prolonged standing and the exhaustion of day's activities just added the agony. But we noticed our feet getting stronger day by day as the pain felt less and we were actually grateful to all those Fall Ins for we could give our best in Passing Out Parade (POP). There are lot more fun activities that I wish to share, but I think it won't be fair to reveal as it will not interest the future de-suups. So, I'm keeping it a secret for them to experience and enjoy the surprises.

The departure was the most hardest as we had the family of RBPTI – the Commandant, Officers and instructors lined up to wish us safe journey. They had the sweetest wish for each individual which moved our heart and the emotive rhythm played by the

band just added to our emotions as tears rolled down our cheeks. It was then a sad Good Bye.

Irrespective of all ups and downs, we sailed through all thick and thin and it so happened because of the leadership of RBPTI family. We could sense their softer souls behind those yell and shouts. We are successful De-suups, all because of the family there. From the depth of my heart, a gargantuan *Kadrinchhe* to the whole family of RBPTI for gifting us with the title 'De-suup'-The Guardians of peace which is not an easy task at all.

At this point I realize the benefit of all sort of *thrim*- the *yangpubs*, *pumu jangtokha*, whiskey, front roll, back roll, side roll, cream roll, star jumps and so on. These all made us physically strong, morally high, spiritually calm and mentally fit to carry out our duty to the service of Tsa-Wa-Sum. I've always seen pride in this orange uniform but now as a de-suup it's not the pride I would be wearing, I would indeed wear an honour, respect, hope, service, volunteerism and above all the aspiration of our Supreme Commander, His Majesty The King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and adhere to the honour code sincerely to the service of King, country and people. Of course as a De-suup the josh is HIGH and will be HIGH forever.

Submitted by: De-Suup Tshering Pelden

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