



A Beginning of an Eco-Adventure: Completion of Eco-Trail from Phurjurlaptsa to Jaiphu Pam



The eco-trail spanning from Phurjurlaptsa to Jaiphu has been completed. This undertaking was financially supported by the United Nations Development Programme-Global Environment Facility (UNDP-GEF) as an integral component of the GEF Eco-tourism project falling under the program outcome entitled 'Wildlife-based Ecotourism Strengthens Biodiversity Conservation, Livelihoods, and Enhances Human-Wildlife Coexistence.'

The trail, measuring 2.88 kilometers in length, offers an approximately two-hour walking experience. This eco-trail presents numerous benefits to both the local people and the tourists. It offers a unique and immersive experience in the heart of nature, showcasing the rich biodiversity and cultural heritage of the area while promoting a deeper connection to the environment. The eco-trail will contribute to sustainable tourism practices, supporting local livelihoods and fostering environmental conservation efforts.

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Contributed by: Planning Office

Highlights

- **General Election Results in Mongar**
- **Mid-term Budget Review**
- **History of Wengkhag Nagtshang**
- **Post-Pandemic Poultry Farming**
- **BCSEA Exam Results for the year 2023**

Optimizing Excellence: Performance Calibration Training/Workshop

The Royal Civil Service Commission, recognizing the significance of bolstering support for the senior civil servants on Performance Management Systems, and keeping them abreast of the latest developments in the fields, a one-day training/workshop was organized in Thimphu from 15th-26th January 2024.

Senior officials (P1 level and above) from the Ministries, Departments, autonomous agencies, Dzongkhags attended the workshop. During the training, participants were sensitized to the significance performance standards, setting performance expectations, conducting job performance & competency analysis and calibrating performance ratings using performance and competency analyses. The workshop hold significance in enhancing skills and distinguishing between performance and non-performance, and fortifying the country's civil service.

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Contributed by: Dzongdag Office

From Ballots to Results: General Election Results in Monggar

The National Assembly Election 2023-2024 called on 3rd November, 2023, ended on 9th January, 2024. Those two political parties advanced from the Primary Round and battled for 47 National Assembly seats. The candidates of the Bhutan Tendrel Party came victorious in all three *Demkhongs* under Monggar Dzongkhag. The details of votes secured by the party candidates are as follows;

Demkhong	Bhutan Tendrel Party	People's Democratic Party
Dramedtse Ngatshang	5,689	4,074
Kengkhar Weringla	4,504	3,298
Monggar	4,477	3,278
TOTAL	14,670	10,650

As illustrated in the table above,

25,320 voters of 38,749 total registered voters of Monggar Dzongkhag turned up to cast a vote either through the postal ballot facility or in person at the Polling Station. The overall voter turnout of the Dzongkhag is 65.34%.

The number of voter turnout has increased in this election as compared to the National Assembly Election 2018. However, the percentage of voter turnout in the Dzongkhag has dropped by more than 5 percent. Correspondingly, the voter turnout percentage has decreased in all three National Assembly *Demkhongs* in the Dzongkhag with a maximum decline recorded in Kengkhar_Weringla Demkhong.

The conduct of the National Assembly Election 2023-2024 incurred a government expenditure of Nu.

12,692,200.01 (Ngultrum Twelve Million Six Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand Two Hundred and Zero-One Cheltrum) only.

Comparison of Voter Turnout for National Assembly Election in 2018 and 2023



Contributed by: Election Office

Economic Pulse Check: Mid-Term Budget Review 2023-24

The Mid-Term Review, a pivotal assessment of the fiscal year 2023-24 activities, convened on 15th January 2024. The meeting was presided over by Dasho Dzongrab, with the active participation of sector heads, relevant accountants, and site engineers. In the financial discourse, it was noted that, aside from the utilization of Nu. 0.219 million from the Beautification budget, no surplus funds were available from other allocated capital activities.



During the comprehensive review, a series of strategic directives were emphasized to ensure the progressive implementation of various initiatives. Procurement-related activities, yet to be initiated, were specifically highlighted.

It was mandated that supply orders for such undertakings should be issued by the end of January, with the procurement process slated for completion by the end of February.

Furthermore, attention was drawn to projects that had reached completion but remained unsettled in terms of accounts. A clear stipulation was made that all such accounts should be resolved and settled by the conclusion of January, streamlining financial matters and fostering fiscal transparency.

A notable exception was acknowledged in the context of the renovation of Wengkhar Lhakhang, as it stood as the sole outstanding capital activity exempted from the overarching completion directive.

Emphasis was placed on the imperative need for expeditious and effective implementation, underscoring the commitment to the timely realization of goals and objectives set forth for the fiscal year.

Contributed by: Planning Office

A Monument's Legacy: The History of Wengkhar Nagtshang



The Wengkhar Nagtshang, about nine kilometers from Mongar Dzong, was built around 1646 during the time of Zhabdrung Ngagwang Namgyal. Umdzed (ritual chant leader) Damchoe Rabgye and Kudrung (monastic discipline master) Pekar Choephel, with help from the Wengkhar community, built a Tadzong on the upper side of the village and a Nagtshang on the lower side of the village, as commanded by Choegyul Migyur Tenpa. They initiated the collection of tsunthral (tax for the benefit of monks) from the people and instituted a monk community to perform rituals and promote the Buddha Dharma. Umdzed Damchoe Rabgye's daughter Kunzang married Dechen Japon Ngatshangpa, or Trashy Sonam, a descendant of the Damed-tse Dzongpon.

The 3rd Zhabdrung Thuktrul (mind reincarnation), Jigme Drakpa, was born to Kunzang Dechen and Trashy Sonam in 1791, in the 13th rabgyung of the 15th day of the first Chothrul month of the Iron Pig Year in Bomdeling, Trashiyangtse. Yum Kunzang Dechen, being a pious religious person, practiced meditation most of her life. She had a hermitage at Takchu Goenpa where Kunzang Namgyal, one of the disciples of the great Buddhist scholar Togdhen

Shakya Shiree, constructed a Gongdzog Lhakhang as a memorial to Yum Kunzang Dechen. As invited by Desi Sonam Tobgay and Je Khenpo Jamgon Yeshey Dorji, at the age of 13, Zhabdrung Trulku travelled to the Central Monastic body. Mainly from the 16th Je Khenpo Jamyang Gyeltshen, he received vows and the complete liberal pith instructions of Sutra and Mantra traditions. He also received the visualization and dedication pith instruction practices from his Yongdzin (tutor) Jigme Gyaltsen. His Kudhung (body) is still preserved at Talo as the main inner relic or nangten.

The Wengkhar Nagtshang was handed over to Nyerpa Norlha, from Bumthang, when Her Royal Queen Mother, Galyum Phuntsho Choden, took over the ownership at a later date. The Nagtshang underwent major renovation in 1952, in the Male Water Dragon Year of the 16th Rabgyung, which was dedicated to the gongdzog (death ritual) of the Second Druk Gyalpo. The renovation was sponsored by Chang-garp (personal attendant) Tshewang Dorje with labour support from the local community. This information tallies with both the content list of wall paintings and the oral traditions.

In 1970 when His Holiness Dudjom Jigdrel Yeshey Dorje came to Phuntsholing Kharpandi for the Maha Parinirvani funeral rites of the late Polo Khen Rinpoche, Kunga Gyaltsen, Her Royal Queen Mother, Galyum Phuntsho Choden, offered the Nagtshang to Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche. Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche handed over the Nagtshang to one of his disciples called Khampa Lama Koenyer. The Khampa Lama passed away while in Nagtshang and Rinpoche commanded the Mongar Kadam Lama, Karma Wangdue, to

manage it.

Thereafter Tshampa Gyurmed, a disciple of Samdrup Trulku, managed the Nagtshang for about 15 years. The ownership of the Nagtshang, along with the Choezhing (offering land), was granted to Tandin Wangchuk, nephew of Lam Sonam Zangpo. He served for more than 20 years starting from 1978. In 1997, Tandin Wangchuk decided to sell the Nagtshang Lhakhang along with the Choezhing to the Renewable Natural Resources office for Nu.0.9 million. Since it was inappropriate to leave behind nangtens and religious items in the Lhakhang, he decided to keep it himself. But several troublesome incidences occurred to him. According to oral sources, it was learnt that he returned the nangtens and the religious items believing that such problems could be due to the ferocious protector deities of the Nagtshang Lhakhang.

When His Holiness the Je Khenpo, Trulku Jigme Choedra visited Wengkhar, Tandin Wangchuk offered the Nagtshang Lhakhang to Kyabje Rinpoche. In 2000, the Nagtshang Lhakhang was handed over to Mongar Rabdey Dratshang as per the command of His Holiness the Je Khenpo. Lam Namgyal was the Mongar Neten then. Since then, the Nagtshang Lhakhang has been maintained and managed by the successive Nagtshang Dzongpons appointed from the Rabdey Dratshang. They are: Gangla Pongpa Karma Thukten, Tsakaling Chimi Dorje, Tsakaling Karma Phuntsho, Yangtse Gangkhapa Ugyen Tshering and Takchu Tshering Drukpa.

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The main sacred relic or the nangten of the Nagtshang Lhakhang is the Chuchig Zhel (eleven-faced Avalokeshvara) of Gyalpoi Lugma. Other clay statues are said to be the nangtens of the very old Lhakhang. The statue of Zhabdrung Jigme Drakpa kept in a zhugkhang near the main altar was procured by Lam Tshering Drukpa in 2019.

Another sacred nangten is the bronze statue of Buddha Dordenma that flies away if offering and paying homage to him stops. According to the oral sources, this happened about three times in the past. The sacred speech relic, or the Sungten, in the Nagtshang Lhakhang is the 12 volume Bum (scripture on One Hundred Thousand Prajnaparamita) that Zhabdrung Rinpoche invited from Lhasa, Tibet. Zhabdrung Rinpoche made a copy from the Lhasa Terma (treasure scripture) from the brass and bronze scripture block consecrated by Guru Rinpoche. A highly valuable volume of Gyad-tongpa (scripture on Eight Thousand Prajnaparamita) written in gold ink is also one of the sacred Sungtens.

The sacred Thuktens (mind relics) are the Jangchub Choeten (Bodhi Stupa) made of elephant tusk and religious costumes of Zhabdrung Jigme Drakpa such as a

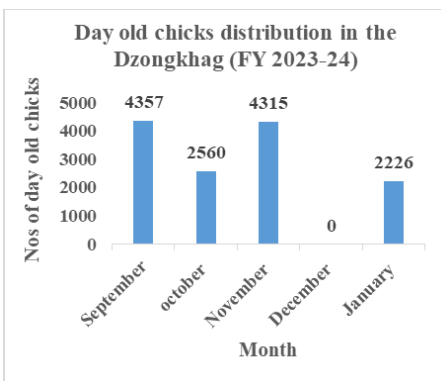


hat, vajra, bell, monk dress, and the letters he wrote to his Yum. The mind relics also include oily stones and few animal images made of copper or brass like material that Zhabdrung Rinpoche played with as a child. There is a small drubchu (holy spring water) below the Nagtshang that remains constant throughout the year.

Source: Gyeltshen, T. (2022), *Moenlam Chenmo, Mongar Dzongkhag, Research and Translation Office of His Holiness the Je Khenpo*: Thimphu Bhutan (page: 107-109)

Compiled by: Culture Office

Post-Pandemic Poultry Farming: Reviving the Business



Mongar Dzongkhag was comfortable with the per capita availability of the egg before the onset of COVID-19 pandemic. However, poultry farming had declined significantly right after pandemic due to issues with the con-

tamination of commercial feed coupled by the change in breed of layer birds. Thus, it had resulted in scarcity of egg in the market and subsequent surge in price of eggs which cost around Nu. 19 per egg although the current cost of production is around Nu. 12.29 per egg. Through the quick intervention of the department, the interim breed (380 BV strain) was replaced by prolific hyline breed to revive the egg production. As per the record, a total of 13,458 hyline day old chicks were distributed to the pullet rearing farms from 12th September, 2023.

It is expected to commence the staggered egg production by 60% (2600 egg per day) at the end of February,



and gradually reach to 90-95% by March, 2024. Further, the sector aims to revive the phased out semi-commercial and commercial farms through collaboration and consultation with the farm owners. The increase in production is expected to curtail the exorbitant prices of the egg in the market.

Contributed by: Livestock Office

The Power of Mediation: Arbitration & Experiences

After failing to comply with the signed Contract, two defaulting contractors initiated arbitration proceedings against Monggar Dzongkhag Administration, marking a significant event in the history of construction contracts over the past two decades. According to GCC 24 and SCC GCC sub-clause 25.3 of the Contract, both parties are entitled to refer disputes to the Bhutan Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre (BADRC), an institutional body empowered by the Alternative Dispute Resolution Act of Bhutan 2013.

Despite fair assessment of work, payments, and liabilities as per the Contract, the discontented contractors, M/s Peldang Construction Pvt. Ltd and M/s Jangchub Builder Pvt. Ltd, registered disputes against the Dzongkhag Administration regarding specific projects. The arbitration process underscores the legal battle surrounding claims, responsibilities, and liabilities within the contractual frame-

work, requiring adherence to Procurement Rules and Regulations, the Contract Act, and other legal provisions. Disputes typically arise from defaulting, non-performing, or non-compliant contractors failing to uphold quality standards or timely project delivery, or from procurement agencies unreasonably disputing valid claims. Effective contract management and administration, timely monitoring and control, strategic intervention, and meticulous documentation are crucial to prevent unfair victimization of contracting parties. Essential documents such as the Site Order Register, Hindrance Register, and Measurement Book serve as evidentiary tools in legal disputes. Quality monitoring and comprehensive site reports play pivotal roles in communication between site operations, project management, and tender committees. The Site Engineer acts as a vital link in contract management, underscoring the importance of their role in ensuring project success. To enhance

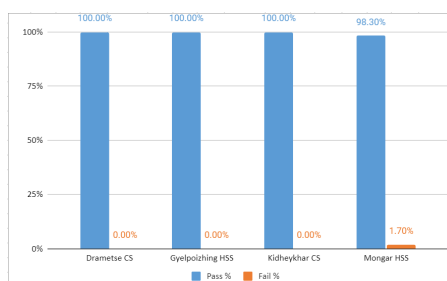
best practices, regular coordination meetings, accurate record-keeping, and timely intervention are recommended. Risks associated with over-intervention and awarding multiple contracts to the same contractor should be mitigated through proper evaluation and staggered project awards.

Challenges encountered during arbitration highlight the need for improved contract administration and documentation. Despite difficulties, arbitration presents a learning opportunity, emphasizing the importance of effective contract management in ensuring project success. Moving forward, increased diligence in contract facilitation and adherence to contractual mandates is essential to avoid potential risks. Limiting the number of contracts awarded to a single contractor and ensuring fair competition through re-evaluation of bids are crucial steps in improving project outcomes.

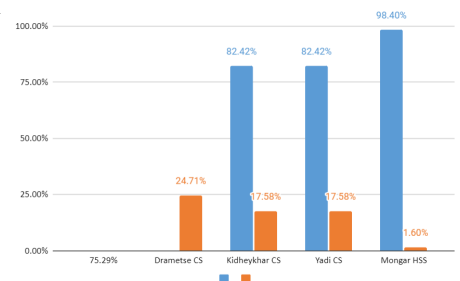
Contributed by: Chief DE

Triumphs and Trials: BCSEA Exam Results for the Classes VII & XII

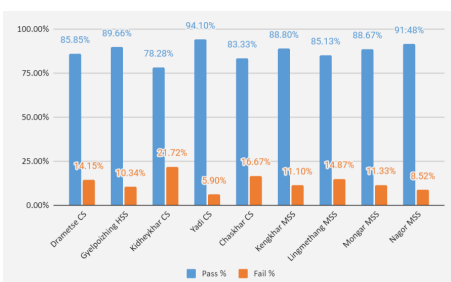
The BCSEA examination for classes VIII & XII commenced on 2nd December and ended on 15th December 2023 and their results were declared on 15th January 2024. A total of 743 students in class VIII and 501 students in Class XII sat for the examinations. The overall pass percentage of class VIII is 86.12 % while for class XII Science, it is 96.91%, for Commerce 82.73% and 99.77% for Arts.



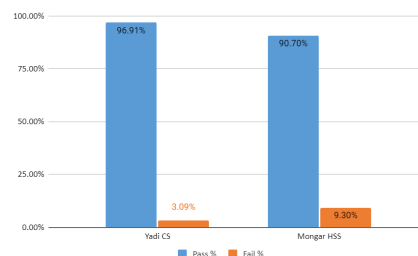
Class XII Science



Class XII Commerce



Class VIII



Class XII Arts

This achievement reflects the collective efforts of both students and educators. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the schools who excelled in their 2023 examinations.

Contributed by: Education Office

Training of Enumerators for the Integrated Agriculture and Livestock Census 2023



bling informed economic development planning. Hon'ble Dasho Dzongdag stressed the importance of data quality during the training, emphasizing its role in reliable, dynamic, and timely decision-making. Enumerators are now poised to conduct field enumeration for households and institutional entities involved in crop cultivation and livestock rearing.

A three-day training for enumerators on the Integrated Agriculture and Livestock Census 2023 concluded on 2nd February, 2024 at Wangchuk Hotel in Mongar. Led by officials from the National Statistics Bureau, the training aimed to prepare 31 local tshokpas and 11 pseudo tshokpas for the census, scheduled to take place throughout February 2024. The census focuses on gathering essential data on crop and livestock production, ena-



Contributed by: Statistical Office

Welcoming New Members

On 18th January 2024, the Dzongkhag Administration extended a warm welcome to three new members joining the Dzongkhag civil service fraternity: Mr. Lozang Dorji, Civil Registration Assistant, and Ms. Kinley Denkar and Mr. Kezang Phuntsho, both serving as Livestock Extension Supervisors. Prior to joining the agency, they successfully completed induction and orientation programs at the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (MoHA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MoAL), respectively. The Dzongkhag expresses its best wishes to them for success in all their professional endeavors.



Contributed by: HR Office

PICTURE STORIES



Land management at Drepong gewog, displaying the view of before and after (26th Jan, 2024)



Eco-trail, 2.88km from Phujurlabtsa to Jaiphu Pam, recently completed.

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