



Royal University of Bhutan

The Royal University of Bhutan
Bi-Annual Newsletter December 2023

New Infrastructures

April, 2023

The newly built 156-bed hostel near Gawaling Residence and Food Science and Technology Laboratory was consecrated in a ceremony attended by the Indian Ambassador Sudhakar Dalela and officials from the Dzongkhag. The programme included Lhap-sang and inauguration sessions, traditional offerings, a welcome address, remarks from distinguished guests, and cultural items.



In addition to the dignitaries, all the college's staff members and student leaders were present at the ceremony. The event also saw the participation of individuals involved in cultural activities at the college.

Batch 1 Council for Education, Transformation and Advocacy [CETA] Completes Its Tenure

30th June, 2023

CETA, short for Council for Education, Transformation, and Advocacy, is the top student-led organization at the college, with the college president as its advisor. Under the management's guidance, CETA plans and runs all the major events and activities for the students. CETA has all the students as its registered members. It oversees the operation and coordination of the student centers, clubs, residences, and classes. The first batch of CETA student leaders has finished their term and handed over their roles to the second batch of CETA student leaders.



G-Fest 2023: A Celebration of Business Innovation and Creativity

19th – 21st October, 2023

The Gedu College of Business Studies proudly hosted the fourth edition of the G-Fest, an international business literary festival. The event was a grand success, with over 200 participants from seven colleges across Bhutan and India, competing in various business-related contests and showcasing their talents and skills.

The G-Fest was conceived in 2016 by a group of visionary students who wanted to create a platform for stimulating innovative business ideas, fostering intellectual and cultural exchanges, and equipping students with the knowledge, skills and values to cope with the 21st century challenges. The festival has grown over the years, attracting more participants and sponsors, and becoming a flagship event of the college.

The theme of this year's G-Fest was *"Building a Resilient Future Economy: Fostering Innovation, Sustainability, and Global Prosperity."* The theme reflected the need for finding resilient solutions to the current and future challenges facing the world, such as climate change, pandemics, inequality, and digital transformation. The participants were challenged to think creatively and critically, and to apply their learning to real-world scenarios.

The festival was inaugurated by the Deputy Chief of DGPC, who was the chief guest of the event. He delivered an inspiring speech, highlighting the importance of curiosity, innovation and self-confidence for the future leaders. He also praised the college for organizing such a remarkable event, despite the difficulties posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The inauguration ceremony was followed by a cultural program, where the college cultural troupe performed various dances and songs, showcasing the rich and diverse culture of Bhutan.

The festival featured a range of competitions, such as business quiz, business plan, business case analysis, business debate, business presentation, and business simulation. The participants displayed their knowledge, skills and talents in these contests, and impressed the judges and the audience with their brilliant performances. The winners of each contest were awarded certificates and prizes, sponsored by various organizations and individuals.



The festival concluded with a valedictory function, where the Director of RIGSS was the chief guest. He congratulated the winners and the participants, and commended the college for hosting such a wonderful event. He also encouraged the students to continue their pursuit of excellence, and to contribute to the development of the nation and the world. The function ended with a vote of thanks by the principal of the college, who expressed his gratitude to all the stakeholders, including the participants, the judges, the sponsors, the faculty, the staff, and the volunteers, for making the G-Fest 2023 a memorable and successful event.

Congratulations to the Campus Recruits of 2023!

27th – 30th June, 2023

We are delighted to announce that 10 of our graduating students have secured jobs in two reputed organizations through the campus recruitment drive organized by the Gedu College of Business Studies. The campus recruitment drive was a great opportunity for our students to showcase their skills and talents, and to find rewarding careers in their chosen fields.

The first organization that participated in the campus recruitment drive was the Renew Microfinance Pvt Limited, a leading microfinance institution that provides financial services to the low-income and marginalized sections of the society. Eight students applied for the post of Credit and Loan Officer, and four of them were selected after a rigorous interview process. They are:



Ms. Sumcho (Enrollment No. 3200340) - Account Officer

Mr. Jamyang Loday (Enrollment No. 3200088) - Loan Officer

Mr. Karma Mongar (Enrollment No. 3200018) - Loan Officer

Mr. Namgay Wangchuk (Enrollment No. 3200201) - Loan Officer

We wish them all the best in their new roles, and hope that they will make a positive impact in the lives of the people they serve.

The second organization that participated in the campus recruitment drive was the Ask Me Anything Studio (AMA), a creative agency that specializes in digital marketing, branding, and content creation. AMA is a venture of the Gedu College of Business Studies, and aims to provide innovative and effective solutions to the clients. Ten students applied for the post of Creative Sales Executive, and five of them were selected after a series of tests and interviews. They are:



Ms. Mumta Ghalley (Enrollment No. 319092) -
Creative Sales Executive
Ms. Nima Selden (Enrollment No. 3200215) -
Creative Sales Executive

Ms. Karma Choden (Enrollment No. 3200109) -
Creative Sales Executive

Ms. Pema Lhaden (Enrollment No. 3200234) -
Creative Sales Executive

Ms. Rinchen Dema (Enrollment No. 3200269) -
Creative Sales Executive

We congratulate them on their achievement, and
look forward to seeing their creative work in the
market.

We would like to thank the Renew Microfinance Pvt Limited and the Ask Me Anything Studio for their participation and support in the campus recruitment drive. We also appreciate the efforts of the faculty, staff, and volunteers who facilitated the smooth conduct of the event. We are proud of our students who have proven their excellence and potential, and we hope that they will continue to grow and succeed in their careers.

Royal University of Bhutan Business Idea Competition 2023

16th – 31st August, 2023

Participants from Norbu Rigter College received training from three officials of Gedu College of Business Studies and Ministry of Industry Commerce & Employment for the RUB Business Idea Competition 2023, which will take place in October.

The first phase of training covered:

Innovation and entrepreneurship basics

Business opportunity identification

Business idea presentation



1st RIGTER STUDENT RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM (RSRC)

11th August, 2023

This event was a platform for Norbu Rigter College (NRC) students to share their research findings and celebrate with sixteen NRC Alumni who presented their undergraduate papers. The presenters and the session chairs impressed the audience with their *maturity, poise and confidence*. The event's goal was to promote research culture among students. Two best research papers will be selected for publication in the Rigter Journal. RSRC is a yearly event.



International Society for Teacher Education (ISfTE) conference

11th – 16th June, 2023

International Society for Teacher Education (ISfTE) conference was held at Paro College of Education. It was attended by over 150 people, including about 90 from 13 different countries and the rest from Bhutan. They were all educators and scholars.



International Conference on Inclusive and Special Education 2023

5th – 7th November, 2023

The inaugural International Conference on Special and Inclusive Education (ICSIE) was held at Paro College of Education (PCE). It had over 100 delegates attended from different organizations, including NGOs, school principals and teachers, faculty members, inclusive education coordinators, special education teachers, students, Nepalese delegations, and ATTAIN project members.



Seminar on Practices, Opportunities, and Challenges for the Inclusion of Out-of-School Children with Disabilities in Bhutan

31st May, 2023

Paro College of Education organized a Seminar on *“Practices, Opportunities, and Challenges for the Inclusion of Out-of-School Children with Disabilities in Bhutan.”* It was attended by school principals, SEN educators, PCE lecturers and postgraduate students, including implementing partners (VTOB Foundation, Changangkha Middle Secondary School, Yangchengatsel Higher Secondary School, and Ability Bhutan Society). The seminar discussed and shared practices, opportunities, challenges and sustainability of the intervention programs implemented by the four partners to include out-of-school children and youth with disabilities in Thimphu, Bhutan.



Music seminar at Paro College of Education

23rd August, 2023

A group of music educators and specialists gathered for a seminar to explore relevant issues in music education. Dr. Sunmai Paik, a music expert, led some workshops with our staff and students to deepen their understanding of music education. She will also participate in the evaluation of music curriculum and textbooks, making sure they meet international norms and quality criteria. Staff and students of Paro college of Education are the participants of this seminar.



DET and Self-Advocacy Training Workshop: A Joint Effort for Inclusive Education

18th – 19th September, 2023

Paro College of Education (PCE) with financial support from Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) and International Development Research Center (IDRC) conducted a two-day training workshop event on DET and self-advocacy. It was part of a joint project titled “A Multi-Country Study on Educational Innovations for Out of School Children (OOSC) and Children at Risk of Dropping Out in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal”.



The workshop was led by experts from Disabled People's Organization of Bhutan (DPOB) and PCE at Tushita Eco-Lodge in Paro. It had about 35 participants, including SEN teachers, parents, and children with disability, tutors, and PCE postgraduate students of MEd in Inclusive Education. They came from four project partners: Changangkha Middle School, Yangchen Gatsel High School, Ability Bhutan Society and VTOB Foundation.

Skill Development Trainings for Technicians of the College

18th – 22nd & 23rd - 27th November, 2023

Two intensive training programs for enhancing technical skills of the Technician of the college were successfully completed by Jigme Namgyel Engineering College (JNEC). The first 5-day program on Basic Plumbing Training, from November 18th to 22nd, taught participants the fundamentals and practices of plumbing. The second 5-day program on Basic House Wiring, from November 23rd to 27th, gave attendees the basics of electrical systems.



A field visit to the Pemathang Gyalsung Centre on November 28th 2023 was a highlight, where participants learned from real-world examples. These training initiatives showed JNEC's dedication to developing practical skills and preparing participants for challenges in their fields. The college plays a key role in promoting technical education and enhancing the skills of its participants.

The Druk Journal hosts a vital discussion on mental well-being in Bhutan

24th April, 2023

The Druk Journal, in collaboration with the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD), organized a knowledge-sharing event on “*Ensuring Mental Well-being in Bhutan*” at Samtse College of Education. The event aimed to raise awareness and spark dialogue on the pressing issue of mental health in the country, drawing insights from articles published in The Druk Journal.



The event was attended by a diverse group of stakeholders, including educators, students, health professionals, government officials, and religious leaders. The discussion was moderated by Dasho Kinley Dorji, Chief Editor of The Druk Journal, who highlighted the alarming rise in mental health problems, especially suicide cases, in Samtse Dzongkhag and other regions of Bhutan.

The participants also learned about the establishment of “*The PEMA*,” a nodal agency for mental health under the patronage of Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen. The agency, announced by Mr. Kelzang via virtual communication, will focus on planning, standardizing, consolidating, and professionalizing mental health services in the country.

The event featured presentations by experts and researchers on various aspects of mental well-being, such as the connection between emotional, psychological, and social well-being, the challenges of stigma and acceptance, the need for multifaceted and systemic interventions, the prevalence and impact of mental health issues among students, and the myths and misconceptions surrounding mental health.



The discussion was interactive and engaging, with the audience asking questions and sharing their views and experiences. The event concluded with a call for collective action and responsibility to address mental health issues and ensure a happier and secure Bhutan.

Higher Education in Bhutan: Challenges and Opportunities

14th – 15th May, 2023

The Second National Conference on Higher Education, co-organised by Samtse College of Education, BQPCA (Ministry of Education and Skills Development), Royal Thimphu College, and Paro College of Education, was held at Samtse College of Education. The event brought together participants from various educational backgrounds to share their insights and experiences on higher education teaching, learning, and assessment practices in Bhutan.

The conference was graced by the presence of Lyonpo J B Rai, Minister of Education and Skills Development, who emphasised the need to embrace technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI) and ChatGPT as tools to enhance learning. The conference also featured keynote speakers from UNESCO, National Land Commission, and Leeds Beckett University, who addressed topics such as reinventing higher education, transforming higher education in Bhutan, and emerging trends in teacher education.



The conference covered a wide range of research topics, such as enhancing student engagement, curriculum design, educational technology, digital learning, and quality assurance. The attendees expressed their enthusiasm and appreciation for the event, highlighting the valuable networking opportunities and the inspiring ideas shared. The conference also showcased the feedback and testimonials from some of the participants, who shared how the conference enriched their knowledge and provided them with innovative ideas that they can implement in their own schools and colleges.

The conference not only provided intellectual nourishment but also took care of the attendees' physical well-being. Scrumptious meals and refreshments were provided, catering to diverse dietary preferences and restrictions. These breaks allowed the participants to network and recharge for subsequent sessions, contributing to the overall positive experience.

The conference concluded with a call for collective action and responsibility to improve the quality and relevance of higher education in Bhutan. The event's success highlighted the importance of embracing new ideas and technologies to shape the future of higher education.

ERASMUS+ Mobility Program Sherubtse Welcomes Prominent Slovakian Researchers for Ecology and Environment Sciences Exchange

13th October, 2023

Sherubtse College hosted an ERASMUS+ mobility program that featured esteemed researchers from Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia.

The program had lectures and discussions on various themes. It also gave an overview of the researchers, their topics, and results from the Department of Ecology and Environmental Sciences at the Slovakian university.

Participants learned about Slovakia's nature protection, land use changes, and cultural heritage, and the current state and issues of the Carpathian region's high-mountain and lowland landscapes. It was an insightful exchange of knowledge and expertise in the field of ecology and environmental sciences.



Sherubtse Hosts International Conference on Business Continuity and Professional Practices 25th August, 2023

Sherubtse College hosted an International Conference on *"Business Continuity, Planning, and Professional Practices"*. The conference, co-hosted by Sherubtse College and NEMA, discussed business sustainability and professional approaches.

The Inaugural Session was at the Auditorium with Former Minister of Home Affairs Mr. Minjur Dorji. Mr. Tshering Wangdi, President of Sherubtse College, Dr. Sunildro, the Conference Convenor, Prof. W.C. Singh, Director of NEMA, and Prof. L. Shashikumar Sharma, Chairman of NEMA shared their insights and the importance of the academic discourse. The conference's abstract book was also revealed during the session.

The Technical Sessions covered topics like finance, tourism, marketing, and sustainability, engaging the participants from 11:45 AM to 04:15 PM. Eminent session chairs led these discussions, promoting knowledge exchange and meaningful conversations.

The event ended with a valedictory session, where participants were recognized for their contributions, and closing remarks were given. The conference was a platform for interdisciplinary dialogues, enhancing collaboration and insights into business continuity and professional practices.

The next International Conference will be in Bali, Indonesia.



Thank You!