



**Royal University of Bhutan**

**Bi-annual Newsletter June 2024**

*This Report is compiled by the External Relation Division with supports from ROs of the respective colleges under the Royal University of Bhutan.*

## National Debate on Climate Change

21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2024



The Jigme Singye Wangchuck Law School (JSW Law) and the College of Natural Resources (CNR) recently organized the **National Debate on Climate Change in Bhutan**. This event aimed to raise awareness about climate change's impact and foster dialogue among universities. *JSW Law School emerged as the winner*, emphasizing the need for collective action to address this critical global issue.

## Warm Welcome Extended to Students and Faculty from Bes-Sfs Center for Himalayan Environment and Development Studies

27<sup>th</sup> February, 2024



In a heartwarming gesture, the college management and CETA recently hosted a reception dinner to warmly welcome 27 students from the U.S. School for Field Studies and 14 esteemed staff members from the Bhutan Ecological Society. The event buzzed with excitement and camaraderie as the CNR community came together to embrace our new guests. The aim of this reception was to create a nurturing environment for our visitors, allowing them to have a fruitful and enjoyable time on our campus.

## Celebrating Cultural Exchange

3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2024



The College of Natural Resources recently hosted a vibrant cultural exchange program, uniting students from the United States with our own college. This event aimed to foster mutual understanding and appreciation among diverse communities, weaving together rich cultural tapestries. Our college students exhibited remarkable sportsmanship, lively music and traditional mask dances showcased our Bhutanese culture, and our guests from the United States reciprocated with a heartfelt performance. *This cultural exchange enriches our campus life and promotes global connections.*

## Jigme Namgyel Engineering College Student Leaders Visit Sherubtse College for Exchange Program

9<sup>th</sup> March, 2024



Jigme Namgyel Engineering College student leaders visited Sherubtse College for an exchange program. They engaged in knowledge sharing, discussed leadership challenges, toured the campus, and played a friendly futsal match. Through this initiative, both colleges strengthened their bonds, exchanged valuable insights, and embraced mutual learning.

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## Guest Lecture by His Excellency Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye

14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> March 2024



The Samtse College of Education had the privilege of hosting a captivating guest lecture series by the Former Chief Justice, His Excellency Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye. Over three insightful days, the lecture series explored Bhutan's rich historical tapestry, delving into monarchy, culture, and constitutional matters.

### *Highlights of the Lecture Series:*

1. *Monarchy in Bhutan:* His Excellency commenced the series by unraveling the intricate history of Bhutanese monarchy. He emphasized that the monarchy provides a unique sense of security, distinct from any elected political party, owing to its steadfast long-term vision.
2. *Bhutanese Culture and Etiquette:* On March 15<sup>th</sup>, His Excellency expounded upon Bhutanese culture and etiquette. His profound insights touched on three essential attributes: appearance, attitude, and actions, demonstrated practically.
3. *Constitution and Democratic Institutions:* The lecture series on March 16<sup>th</sup> centered around the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and the evolution of democratic institutions. An interactive question-and-answer session followed each lecture, fostering dialogue and intellectual exchange.

### *Reflections and Gratitude:*

Pem Dorji, a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work student, expressed heartfelt gratitude for the enriching insights gained during the program. His Excellency's legacy of inspiration will undoubtedly shape the future endeavors of aspiring social workers.

We bid farewell to His Excellency, thankful for the indelible impact he left behind—a legacy that transcends the lecture hall and resonates throughout our college community.

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## WORKSHOP ON SYMMETRIES, DATA SCIENCE AND AI FOR PHYSICIST

25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March



International Center for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), in collaboration with Physics without Frontiers working with the University of Sussex, and DISCnet, organized a dynamic 5-day workshop in Symmetries, Data Science, and Artificial Intelligence at the Sherubtse College. This intensive program catered to over 90 physics students.

The workshop included morning lectures followed by afternoon hands-on sessions. During these sessions, participants analyzed Open Data from the ATLAS experiment at CERN and engaged in problem-solving activities. They learned about particle physics, symmetries, and gained analytical skills. Additionally, an introduction to Machine Learning (ML) allowed them to search for Dark Matter in ATLAS proton collision data. The workshop also featured a careers and opportunities session, and participants concluded by giving presentations and receiving certificates.

The workshop, led by Dr. Kate Shaw (ICTP, University of Sussex), Dr. Mick Taylor (University of Sussex), and Sr. Andrea Banfi (University of Sussex), was a dynamic learning experience for students.

By actively participating, students enhanced their skills in employing advanced data science and computational tools within the field of physics. Additionally, they gained a deeper understanding of the significance of symmetries in scientific analysis, modeling, and global problem-solving.

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## **Panel Discussion with the Hon'ble Members of Good Governance Committee, National Council**

29<sup>th</sup> March, 2024



Faculty, staff, and final-year students recently participated in an hour-long interactive panel discussion on Good Governance and related issues. The esteemed Hon'ble Members of the Good Governance Committee from the National Council led the discussion. During their visit to the college, students and faculty seized the opportunity to seek clarification on pertinent governance matters.

The topics covered included:

- The role of the Good Governance Committee
- Enhancing accountability and service delivery among government officials
- Addressing corruption and bureaucratic inefficiencies
- The civil society's role in fostering good governance
- Strategies for citizen engagement and feedback mechanisms
- Local government efficiency and budget utilization
- Leveraging technology for improved governance

Despite their demanding schedules and long journey, the Hon'ble Members graciously engaged in the discussion, addressing concerns and queries raised by the college community. Their insights were invaluable.

Creating a platform for dialogue between students and politicians not only empowers students to drive societal change but also allows the Hon'ble Members to clarify their positions on critical issues.

### **Seminar on the State of International Development**



Dr. Catherine Lott, Director for Local, Faith, and Transformative (LFT) Partnership Hub at the U.S Agency for International Development, hosted a seminar discussing challenges such as climate change, declining democracy, and rising authoritarianism. USAID, the largest development agency, administers civilian foreign aid and development assistance, with a budget of over \$40 billion per year. Dr. Lott highlighted the SDGs, Official Development Assistance (ODA), and its spending for international development. She also discussed the challenges faced by the world today.

### **First Seminar for the Semester with the Anti-Corruption Commission of Bhutan**



An insightful programme incorporating the launch of the Student Leader Programme booklet, a comprehensive presentation on leadership, ethics, and integrity by the ACC spokesperson. The seminar also included provision of latest statistics on Bhutan's Corruption Perception Index and its moderation delivery, concluded by an open discussion.

### **Seminar on Financial Literacy**



The seminar at the college, featuring Project Founder Tshering Dorji, discussed financial inclusion and literacy, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bhutanese Ngultrum and Global Money Week, and highlighted key statistics. The seminar highlighted IPO and secondary market discussions, privatization of BLDC, and DHI's role in profit generation. The Ngultrum Initiative aims to promote financial literacy.



## Sherubtse student leaders and two faculty members visit Fazi Ali College for a cultural exchange program

3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2024.



A group of 30 student leaders from Sherubtse College embarked on an enriching cultural exchange program at Faizl Ali College in Nagaland. The program kicked off with a dynamic first day, filled with exciting activities.

1. **Introductions:** The student leaders had the chance to introduce themselves, fostering connections and building friendships across institutions.
2. **College Facility Tours:** They explored the campus facilities, gaining insights into the academic and extracurricular offerings at Faizl Ali College.
3. **Cultural Workshop at Ketshangriju:** Led by Padmasgree T Senka Ao, an indigenous skills training center, the workshop provided hands-on experiences and cultural immersion. Students learned about traditional practices, crafts, and local wisdom.
4. **Hostel Campfire Night:** In the evening, the FAC Hostel Committee hosted a campfire night. This cozy gathering allowed for meaningful cultural exchange, as student leaders shared stories, songs, and traditions from their respective backgrounds.

The program promises to be a memorable experience, bridging cultures and fostering understanding among these young leaders.

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## Airbus Day

29<sup>th</sup> April, 2024



The College of Science and Technology (CST), Bhutan, hosted a delegation from 'Airbus', a world leader in aerospace innovation, led by Mr. Suraj Chhetri, Regional Director of Human Resources, Airbus India & South Asia. Their visit included lab tours, discussions with students and staff, and an enriching exchange of expertise and insights.

During their talk, Airbus shared their journey and offered valuable industry perspectives, leaving a lasting impact on our community. The interaction provided CST with unique insights into the workings of a major aerospace organization.

Excitingly, Airbus conducted on-site interviews and selected three outstanding students from Gedu College of Business Studies as HR interns. This collaboration underscores the importance of bridging academia and industry. The selected interns will gain hands-on experience in human resources management within a global aerospace leader, contributing to their professional growth.

The event fostered connections and paved the way for future collaborations. We eagerly anticipate the remarkable opportunities that lie ahead through continued partnerships with Airbus, as we collectively strive for growth, innovation, and excellence.

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## **Bhutan National Bank Invests in the Future: New Scholarship Initiative Launched**

10<sup>th</sup> May, 2024



The Bhutan National Bank (BNB) has unveiled a new initiative as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility. This program will grant full scholarships to two financially disadvantaged students annually, enabling them to pursue undergraduate degrees at the College of Science and Technology (CST).

On 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2024, a significant milestone was reached when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Thimphu, officially launching the scholarship program at CST. Looking ahead, the bank plans to extend this initiative to other colleges under the Royal University of Bhutan on a rotational basis, starting next year.

Beyond financial assistance, this scholarship program offers more than just support. Upon graduation, sponsored students will have the opportunity to explore career paths within BNB. By empowering disadvantaged families and providing educational opportunities, BNB aims to shape a brighter future for Bhutan through academic dreams and contributions from these talented individuals.

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## Building Resilience: Jajarkot Earthquake Assessment Seminar at CST

20<sup>th</sup> May, 2024



The Center for Disaster Risk Reduction and Community Development Studies (CDRR&C) collaborated with Geohazards International (GHI) to host a seminar at the College of Science and Technology (CST). This event aimed to raise awareness and share knowledge on the Jajarkot earthquake assessment and disaster risk reduction strategies.

A distinguished panel of experts led the session:

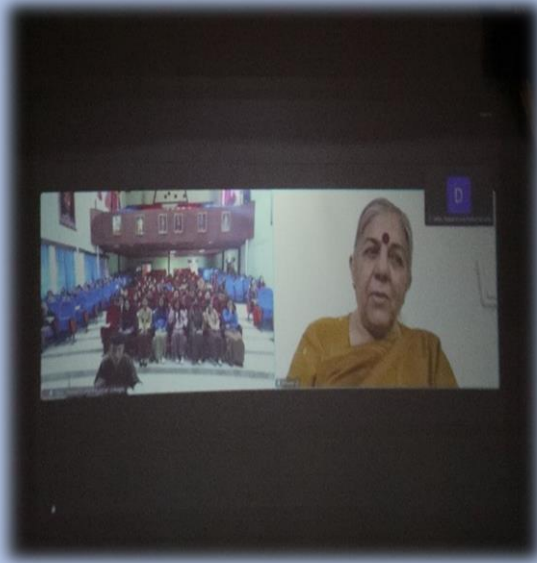
- *Ms. Veronica, President & CEO of GHI*, provided an insightful overview of GHI's program in western Nepal following the earthquake. Her presentation highlighted GHI's mission, global activities (including those in Bhutan), and the specific challenges faced in Nepal.
- *Dr. Hari Kumar* focused on fire safety. He emphasized the crucial role of effective fire prevention and mitigation strategies in residential areas, schools, and public buildings. He offered practical advice on both preventing and responding to fire hazards.
- *Mr. Yeshe Lotay* shared his firsthand observations and lessons learned from his recent assessment visit to Jajarkot. He provided valuable insights into the earthquake's impact and emphasized the need for robust disaster response mechanisms and resilient infrastructure.

The seminar was attended by faculty members and students from the Civil Engineering and Engineering Geology Departments. We extend our sincere gratitude to the GHI team for dedicating their time to educate and inspire our students. The knowledge gained from this seminar will significantly enhance our understanding of geohazards and play a key role in developing effective mitigation solutions for future projects.

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## Renowned Environmental Activist Dr. Vandana Shiva Engages Sherubtse Students on Climate Change

22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2024



Dr. Vandana Shiva, a physicist and interdisciplinary researcher, delivered a virtual talk on climate change to Sherubtse students. The event, organized by the Centre for Climate Change and Spatial Information, drew students from various academic programs, reflecting widespread interest in environmental issues. During her talk, Dr. Shiva emphasized the challenges faced by women in agriculture and water collection. She underscored the importance of inclusive climate policies that empower women and advocated for their active participation in decision-making processes. Additionally, she praised Bhutan's leadership in organic agriculture and highlighted community-led initiatives as effective solutions to environmental challenges.

## Entrepreneurship Boot Camp Sparks Innovation in Bhutan

24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2024

The recent Entrepreneurship Boot Camp, organized by GCBS CBRED in collaboration with Startup first, ignited creativity and venture-building in Bhutan. The program focused on Agri-Tech, Fin-Tech, Food-Tech, and Environment-Tech.

### Key Highlights:

- *Promoting Entrepreneurship:* Participants gained skills and resources to develop innovative business ideas.
- *Fostering Innovation:* Immersive learning and mentorship stimulated problem-solving.
- *Collaboration:* Networking and interdisciplinary teamwork were encouraged.
- *Capacity Building:* Practical tools like the Lean Business Model and Design Thinking were shared.
- *Sustainable Development:* Solutions addressing societal and environmental challenges were emphasized.

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**Outcomes:**

- *Innovative Ventures:* Prototypes in Agri-Tech, Fin-Tech, Food-Tech, and Environment-Tech.
- *Enhanced Skills:* Business model development, market validation, and pitching.
- *Collaborative Networks:* Connections with mentors and investors.
- *Seed Funding:* Winning teams eligible for support.
- *Economic Growth:* Job creation and sustainable development.

Eight incubates participated, with Trout of Himalayas and Aggregators Networks of Chukha emerging as winners. The program nurtured Bhutan's startup ecosystem



**International Society for Teacher Education – 2024**

The ISfTE 2024 conference was held in Utah, USA in May of this year. Dr. Kezang Sherab and Dr. Kinley Dorji, accompanied by three faculty members, participated in the conference.



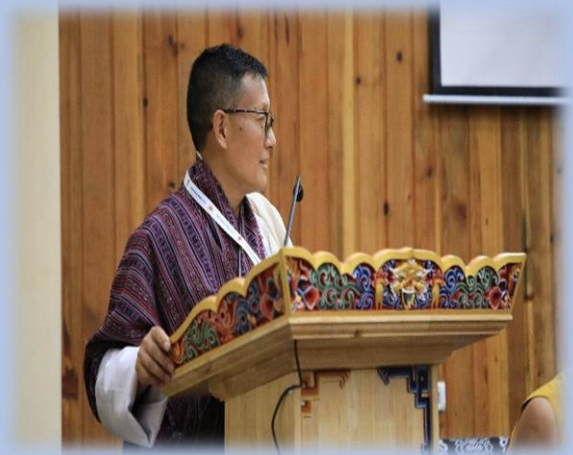
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## Reimagining Education from a Gross National Happiness (GNH) Perspective International Symposium

1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2024



The Paro 2024 International Symposium, titled "Reimagining Education from a GNH Perspective," is hosted at the Paro College of Education. This event aimed to explore a transformative approach to education that reflects its highest potential. At its core is the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH), a Bhutanese developmental paradigm striving for a balanced approach between materialistic gains and sustainable human development. GNH emphasizes a holistic understanding encompassing individuals, communities, society, ecology, and life itself. In 2010, Bhutan's Ministry of Education introduced the "Educating for GNH" initiative nationwide, intending to integrate GNH values such as awareness, kindness, respect, compassion, gratitude, and resilience into every aspect of school life. Reflecting on its progress, the initiative faced challenges in implementation, program development, assessment, scaling, and sustainability, leading to limited outcomes compared to its original vision.



However, Bhutan now seeks to revitalize its commitment to GNH-based education. The Office of the Vice Chancellor of the Royal University of Bhutan and Paro College of Education are spearheading efforts to reignite academic discourse and action, aiming to deepen understanding and application of GNH principles. The goal is to leverage this framework to enhance the quality of education and contribute to a more enlightened humanity.

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## On Campus Recruitment at Gedu College of Business Studies

14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2024

The Gedu College of Business Studies initiated campus recruitment drive for Druk Holding & Investments Limited and Tashi Group. The purpose of the campus recruitment drive was to provide graduates with the opportunity and means of employment in respectable organizations.



- *Applicants:*
  - *DHI:* 30 students applied for the Associate Analyst position.
  - *Tashi Group:* 38 students applied for various positions.



- *DHI Selection Process:*
  - Written exam on June 14.
  - 18 candidates shortlisted for final interviews.
  - Selected Associate Analysts: Mr. Kezang Wangchuk, Ms. Dechen Choden, and Mr. Yeshe Singye.



- *Tashi Group Selection:*
  - Campus recruitment on June 18.
  - Positions filled: Associate Manager (Store), Associate Manager (HR), Associate Manager (Marketing), and Associate Manager (F&A).

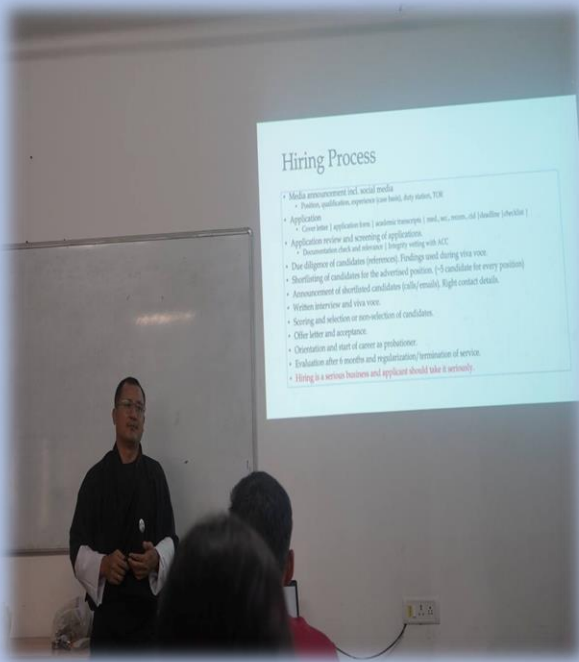
*All the selected candidates must join the respective organization with effect from July 1, 2024.*

The Gedu College of Business Studies would like to thank the organizations for their continued assistance and participation in this recruitment drive.

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## “Mastering the Art of CV Writing and Interviewing Skills” Workshop

20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2024



The College of Science and Technology conducted a workshop on "Mastering the Art of CV Writing and Interviewing Skills." Led by the Guest Speaker: Mr. Sherub Namgay, Managing Director of Bhutan Board Products Limited.

### Key Takeaways:

- **Crafting a Standout CV:** Participants learned essential components and tailoring techniques for effective CVs.
- **Interview Confidence:** Successful interview strategies for written and oral formats were covered.
- **Mock Interviews:** Students practiced with valuable feedback from Mr. Namgay.

**Outcome:** Every participant left with a polished CV, ready for their job search.

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## Successful Conclusion of College of Science and Technology Campus Recruitment

20<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2024



We are delighted to share that the CST Campus Recruitment event was a tremendous success. Our students had the unique opportunity to engage with prominent companies, fostering meaningful connections and gaining valuable insights.

### Participating Companies:

- Thuendrel Consultants
- Datanetworks
- Druk Wang Alloys Limited
- Yang Khor Private Limited
- NGN Technologies
- GiANT Bhutan Private Limited
- Druk Green Power Corporation Limited
- Rom Tech - His Majesty's Secretariat

We extend our gratitude to all participating companies and also acknowledge the interest expressed by other organizations who were unable to join this time. We look forward to their participation in future events.

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## **CST and DrukSmart Private Ltd. Sign MOU to Promote Academic-Industry Collaboration**

21<sup>st</sup> June, 2024



The College of Science and Technology (CST) and DrukSmart Private Ltd. signed a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote collaboration between academia and industry. This strategic partnership aims to create valuable opportunities for both students and faculty at CST, while also benefiting DrukSmart by providing access to fresh talent and innovative research.

The MOU outlines several key areas of cooperation:

- Student Internship Programs
- Joint Research and Development Projects
- Capacity Building Events
- Exchange of Experts
- Scholarship Opportunities

We believe that this collaboration will empower our students for success in the workplace and contribute to DrukSmart's growth and innovation.

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### Student Exchange Program- Spring semester 2024



Paro College of Education has facilitated a student exchange program with the University of Heidelberg in Germany. Ms. Svenja Eichert and Ms. Katharina Beigel took part in this initiative, engaging in inclusive module studies at PCE for one semester. Additionally, Ms. Samantha Shepherd, a recipient of the British Columbia scholarship, Australia also selected Bhutan as her study destination. She has successfully completed one semester at PCE.



Mr. Pema Tenzin, student of a Master in Inclusive Education (PCE) has been sent to Heidelberg University for a 5-month study period. He is currently pursuing his studies there and is scheduled to return to Bhutan in August upon completing his exchange program.

### Faculty mobility – Internationalization



Dr. Dorji Thinley and Dr. Kezang Sherab visited Adamas University in India as part of an internationalization initiative and for future collaboration efforts.



## **JNEC Soaring High with Technology: Final Year D2ECE Students Innovate with Quadcopter Drone Development**

The final year students of the D2ECE program at Jigme Namgyel Engineering College (JNEC) have embarked on an extraordinary journey of innovation by designing and developing a quadcopter drone. This ambitious project, under the mentorship of Mr. Deo Raj Biswa, a lecturer in the Electronics and Communication Engineering Department, showcases their remarkable dedication and learning.



- *Project Overview:*

- Final year D2ECE students embarked on an ambitious journey to design and develop a quadcopter drone.
- Utilized the KK2.1.5 flight control unit (FCU) under the mentorship of Mr. Deo Raj Biswa.
- Team members explored aerodynamics, electronics, and control systems.

- *Technical Skills Acquired:*

- Comprehensive study of quadcopter design principles.
- Configuration and optimization of the KK2.1.5 FCU for stable flight.
- Proficiency in coding, mechanical design, and electronic circuit assembly.
- Mastering troubleshooting techniques.

- *Challenges and Resilience:*

- Overcame obstacles, from design flaws to technical issues.
- Mr. Biswa's guidance encouraged resilience and determination.
- Emphasis on teamwork and mentorship.

- *Successful Outcome:*

- Fully functional quadcopter drone with stable flight performance.
- Integration of complex systems for real-world applications.
- Equipped students for future challenges and innovation.

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Under the guidance of Mr. Deo Raj Biswa, the students not only built a sophisticated piece of technology but also laid the foundation for lifelong learning and achievement in the field of electronics and communication engineering. Their journey serves as an inspiring example of what can be achieved through teamwork, perseverance, and the pursuit of knowledge.

### **"Discussion on the State of Disability in Bhutan" at Sherubtse College**



The Hon'ble Members of the Social and Cultural Affairs Committee of the National Council, in collaboration with Sherubtse College, organized an interactive session to address the state of disability in Bhutan. The participants included Y-PEER, Y-Via, Tarayana Club, Media Students, SSU, GNH Club, interested faculty members from Arts and Social Science, and other students.

- **Objective:** Informed decision-making for reviewing the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.
- **Key Topics:**
  - *UNCRPD and National Policy:* Urgent need for wider advocacy despite a detailed national policy; awareness gaps among the public.
  - *Role of CSOs:* Despite funding challenges, CSOs play a crucial role in advocating for and supporting Bhutanese with disabilities.
  - *Best Practices:* Insights from neighboring regions on disability support services.
- **Highlighted Issues:**
  - Quota system for employment and educational access.
  - Making hospitals, schools, and colleges more disability-friendly.
  - Educational programs (sign language, braille) for better communication.

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- Improving entrepreneurial opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Bridging the gap between disabled individuals and service providers.
- Bhutan's readiness to extend incentives for people with disabilities.
- Consideration of a commission for people with disabilities.

This collaborative effort aims to enhance inclusivity and support for Bhutanese with disabilities.

### **Y-adapt Training for Youth Volunteers from Sherubtse College**



#### ***Congratulations to Sherubtse College Volunteers!***

- *Achievement:* 37 youth volunteers successfully completed the three-day Y-adapt training.
- *Inspiring Commitment:* Their dedication to learning and addressing climate change is commendable.
- *Acknowledgment:* Thanks to the college President for empowering these young leaders.
- *Shared Vision:* Together, we can create a more sustainable future.

**THANK YOU!**

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