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From the External Relations Division

Dear Readers,

The first half of 2025 has marked an exciting journey of connection, collaboration, and academic exploration. From hosting international delegations and launching groundbreaking partnerships to facilitating transformative dialogues and conferences, our colleges and communities have demonstrated Bhutan's growing presence on the global academic stage.

This newsletter reflects the dynamic spirit of our collective efforts—highlighting milestones, celebrating initiatives, and charting the path ahead. It has been thoughtfully compiled by the **External Relations Division**, with generous support from the **Research Officers (ROs)** of the respective colleges under the Royal University of Bhutan. Their contributions have been instrumental in showcasing the vibrant engagements of the past six months.

Guided by the spirit of innovation, creativity, and meaningful collaboration, we remain committed to building bridges across borders and disciplines.

Warm regards, *External Relations Division*



From Bhutan's first eDNA lab to student-led advocacy—real change begins where research meets purpose.

Sherubtse College Enhances Industry and Institutional Partnerships with New National Linkages

Sherubtse College signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with four key organizations; the Financial Institutions Training Institute (FITI), Bhutan Aero-Tech, Bhutan Ecological Society, and Nyingnor Data on May 30, June 5, and 6, 2025. These agreements aim to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry by offering students internships, guest lectures, capstone projects, and skill development opportunities. Faculty and students will also benefit from collaborative research and training programs.



President Tshering Wangdi emphasized the value of real-world experience in preparing students for the workforce. Representatives from the partner organizations shared their enthusiasm for mentoring students and engaging in joint research. These partnerships reflect Sherubtse College's commitment to aligning education with industry needs and enhancing student employability.

Airbus Delegation Visits CST to Boost Industry Ties

On May 22, 2025, the College of Science and Technology (CST) welcomed a delegation from Airbus, led by Dr. Jocelyn Tristan Pierre Gaudin, Vice President and Head of Engineering at Airbus India and South Asia. The visit aimed to strengthen ties between academia and industry and open global opportunities for Bhutanese students.

Students from CST and final-year Bachelor of Business Administration (Human Resource Management) at Gedu College of Business Studies (GCBS) engaged in discussions with the Airbus team on careers, internships, and future collaborations.

The visit supports CST's goal of enhancing student employability through global exposure. Airbus and CST plan to explore joint research, guest lectures, and curriculum development, positioning CST as a talent hub for high-tech industries.



CST Launches STAR-C Bhutan to Boost Solar Energy Education

The College of Science and Technology (CST), in partnership with the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MoENR) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA), has set up the Solar Technology Application Resource Centre (STAR-C Bhutan). Established through a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on April 14, 2024, STAR-C serves as a national hub for solar training, testing, and innovation.

Equipped with 27.5 kW of solar systems on campus, the center has already trained 42 participants from public and private sectors. The official launch is planned for October 2025.

CST aims to expand STAR-C through training programs and global partnerships, supporting Bhutan's target of 5,000 MW of solar energy by 2040.



CEAM Delegation Visits Samtse College of Education (May 5, 2025)

On May 5, 2025, four professors from the Council for Educational Administration and Management (CEAM), India, visited Samtse College of Education to strengthen academic collaboration. They joined the morning assembly and held discussions with college leaders on research, distance education, faculty roles, and exchange programs.

Professors Dr. Bobby Mahanta, Dr. Priya Rupam, and Dr. Savita Mishra also led a seminar for master's students and faculty, focusing on education, research, and culture.

On May 8, the team visited the Royal University of Bhutan's Office of the Vice Chancellor in Thimphu to explore broader partnerships. The delegation appreciated the warm welcome and fruitful engagements during their visit.



CST Team Visits Germany for “Bhutan Meets Germany” Project (May 12–18, 2025)

A team from the College of Science and Technology (CST) visited Hochschule Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSBI), Germany, to launch the “Bhutan Meets Germany” project, funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The visit coincided with HSBI’s International Week, bringing together participants from 35 countries.

Led by Dr. Cheki Dorji, Dr. Chimi Wangmo, and Mr. Namgay Tenzin, the CST team joined cultural events, campus tours, and sustainability workshops. They also shared insights on Bhutan’s education and energy sectors.

Key outcomes include:

- Student exchange to Germany in December 2025
- German faculty visit to Bhutan in March 2026
- Joint online courses and translated study materials

The visit strengthened academic and cultural ties between Bhutan and Germany.



DSP Experts Visit CST (Spring 2025)

In Spring 2025, the College of Science and Technology welcomed Ms. Joyce Maria Elizabeth Van De Vegte (Camosun College, Canada) and Ms. Zoe Van De Vegte (University of Victoria), experts in Digital Signal Processing (DSP). They taught SNP201: Signals and Systems to second-year Electronics and Communication Engineering students and led workshops on DSP hardware and software. Ms. Joyce also donated 20 STM32F407 development boards to the department.



School for Field Studies (SFS) Visit to the College of Natural Resources (March 9, 2025)

On March 9, 2025, the College of Natural Resources warmly welcomed 26 students from the School for Field Studies (SFS), USA, through a program organized by the Bhutan Ecological Society. To foster cultural exchange and connection, the college hosted a reception dinner, cultural night, and friendly sports matches, including volleyball and basketball.

JNEC Welcomes International Scholars under ERASMUS+ Programme (2025)

Jigme Namgyel Engineering College (JNEC) hosted several international scholars in early 2025 through the ERASMUS+ Mobility Programme, strengthening global academic ties.

These exchanges enhance JNEC's vision as a hub for engineering excellence and innovation.



1. Lodz University of Technology, Poland (May 2025)

- ✓ Prof. Michal Szypowski delivered lectures on Electrical Lighting & Smart Buildings.

2. University of Twente, Netherlands (Feb-Mar 2025)

- ✓ Dr. Nina Jakubeit & Dr. Max Trauernicht conducted a Design Thinking Workshop to enhance innovation and humanitarian engineering skills.

3. University of Innsbruck, Austria (Feb-Apr 2025)

- ✓ Prof. Anton Kraler taught Timber Engineering, including hands-on labs, during a 70-day national course.

4. University of St. Cyril and Methodius, Slovakia (Mar-Apr 2025)

- ✓ Rector Prof. Katarína Nováková & Vice-Rector Prof. Andrea Čajková explored collaborations with RUB colleges.

5. Lund University, Sweden (Feb-May 2025)

- ✓ Prof. Henrik Davidsson & team visited for teaching and partnership strengthening (March 2025).
- ✓ Master's student Ricardo Carreira researched AI-driven solar power forecasting for Bhutan.

6. Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (Apr-May 2025)

- ✓ PhD student Antoine Bercy optimized JNEC's biogas plant for renewable energy efficiency.

🎓 Conferences & Knowledge Exchanges



ICSciEnTec 2025 Held Successfully in Thimphu

The 3rd International Conference on Science, Engineering, and Technology (ICSciEnTec 2025), hosted by the College of Science and Technology (CST) and Construction Development Corporation Limited (CDCL), took place from April 28th – 30th at Namgay Heritage, Thimphu.

The event welcomed 122 participants, including researchers, academics, professionals, and students from Bhutan, Nepal, Malaysia, and Sweden. With 21 paper presentations, 16 posters, and multiple technical sessions, the conference fostered interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge sharing. Institutional representation included CST, CDCL, the Royal Society for STEM, and 36 invited guests.

Beyond research, international delegates engaged in cultural activities and site visits, showcasing Bhutan's heritage. The event aligned with CST's vision to advance science and technology education and Bhutan's national goals for sustainable development.

CST aims to build long-term partnerships through published proceedings, joint projects, and future initiatives, further positioning Bhutan as a growing center for scientific innovation.



8th Annual Joint Faculty Research Meet (AJFRM 2025), February 13-14, 2025

The 8th Annual Joint Faculty Research Meet (AJFRM 2025), hosted by College of Science & Technology, brought together faculty researchers from partner institutions across the Royal University of Bhutan. The two-day event highlighted interdisciplinary research, innovation, and collaboration.

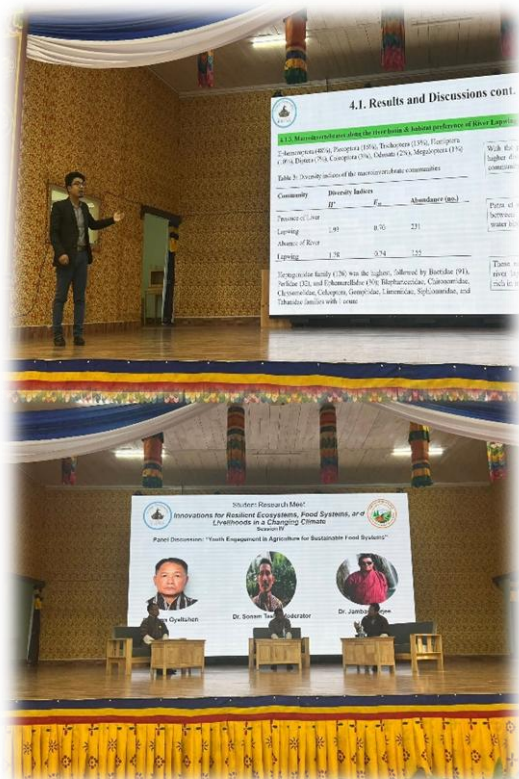
Day 1 featured seven paper presentations and a hands-on drone training session, showcasing diverse research in science and technology. Day 2 included three more presentations and a field visit to Bhutan Brewery Pvt. Ltd. and Milarepa Lhakhang, linking industrial practices with Bhutan's rich spiritual heritage.

AJFRM exemplifies CST's mission to generate knowledge through research and innovation that meets societal needs. We look forward to advancing this commitment in future editions.



5th Annual Student Research Meet (24 June, 2025)

The College of Natural Resources held its 5th Annual Student Research Meet on 24th June 2025, hosted by the Centre for Sustainable Mountain Agriculture (CSMA). The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of the Royal University of Bhutan, along with guests from various institutions, attended the event.



Students showcased their research through engaging oral and poster presentations.

A panel discussion on *“Youth Engagement in Agriculture for Sustainable Development Food Systems”* emphasized the vital role of youth in shaping sustainable food systems.

The meet also marked the release of:

- Policy brief on **Micro plastic pollution** in Bhutan's freshwater and fish
- Policy brief on **Brown trout** and its impact on native fish species
- Policy brief on **Securing small-scale farming communities**
- Fact sheet on **Bats in Bhutan**

The event celebrated innovation, collaboration, and student-led research for sustainable agriculture.

National Conference on Connecting Practitioners and Researchers (March 25-27, 2025)

The National Conference, focusing on Climate Crisis, Natural Disasters, Environmental Sustainability, Agriculture, and Food, was held at the College of Natural Resources. It was jointly organized by the Department of Academic and Research Services, the Office of the Vice Chancellor, and the Centre for Rural Development Studies, CNR.



The event brought together researchers from the Royal University of Bhutan, representatives from various government and non-governmental organizations, agri-entrepreneurs, practitioners, scholars, and experts. They presented papers on pressing and emerging issues concerning the climate crisis, natural disaster, environmental sustainability, agriculture, and food security. The conference was co-sponsored by the B-KIND Tarayana Foundation, Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (RSPN), and Asian Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (AFACI) based in South Korea.



Development & Awareness Initiatives



The Centre for Climate Change and Spatial Information hosted a one-day seminar titled ***“Breaking Barriers: A Gender Awareness Initiative for Promoting Equality in Bhutanese Society”*** on 31 May 2025.

Targeted at BA Population and Development Studies and BA Political Science and Sociology (III Year) students, the seminar focused on fostering gender equity through participatory learning and dialogue.

Students shared reflections, showcased advocacy activities, and discussed insights from their work—highlighting their role in promoting gender equality across Bhutanese communities.

The event encouraged meaningful conversations and celebrated youth-driven change.



SDG Seminar Explores Global Goals – February 2025

On 11 February 2025, Dr. Victor P. Karunun conducted an engaging seminar at the College of Natural Resources focused on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The session reviewed key milestones and ongoing challenges in achieving the SDGs, with an emphasis on innovative strategies to accelerate progress.

Topics covered included:

1. Climate change and its impact on sustainability
2. Technological shifts and global policy reforms
3. Barriers and breakthroughs in implementing SDGs

The seminar offered a valuable platform for discussion, encouraging participants to reflect on emerging global issues and collective actions for a sustainable future.

Seminar on Creative & Cluster Economies – March 13, 2025

Delegates from the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) held an insightful seminar for students at the College of Natural Resources on 13 March 2025. The session explored the role of creative and cluster economies in promoting sustainable development, offering fresh perspectives on innovation, collaboration, and economic resilience.



Financial Literacy Talk – March 20, 2025

As part of Global Money Week 2025, officials from Bhutan National Bank (BNB) delivered a seminar on financial literacy under the theme “*Think Before You Follow, Wise Money Tomorrow.*” The session empowered participants with practical tools for smart money management and future financial security.

Key Topics Included:

- Eight Golden Rules of Financial Literacy
- Navigating digital financial products safely
- Avoiding fraud and impulsive spending
- Building savings, emergency funds, and responsible credit habits

Both seminars encouraged critical thinking and provided students with real-world skills for sustainable economic empowerment.

A new Chapter in Conservation: eDNA Laboratory Launched (April 25, 2025)

On 25 April 2025, the College of Natural Resources celebrated the launch of the country's first eDNA laboratory—a major step forward in Bhutan's biodiversity conservation journey.



This cutting-edge facility enables researchers to collect DNA from environmental sources like water, soil, and air to identify species, monitor biodiversity, and track ecological changes with precision.

The initiative was made possible through collaboration among ETH Zürich, the Department of Forests and Park Services, WWF Bhutan, WWF US, the Royal University of Bhutan, Eidgenössische Forschungsanstalt WSL (Switzerland), the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation, and other government agencies.

The lab represents a promising advancement in science-based conservation efforts in Bhutan.

In every partnership we build, every innovation we nurture, and every opportunity we create, the External Relations Division is guided by a shared vision for a better tomorrow.

“We cannot change the past, but we can shape the future.” — His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck

THANK YOU!