

Bhutan
HISTORY
CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
CLASS IX



Department of School Education
Ministry of Education and Skills Development
Royal Government of Bhutan
Thimphu



“Your parents, relatives, and friends would be very proud of what you have achieved. At your age, to have completed your studies is your personal accomplishment. Your knowledge and capabilities are a great asset for the nation. I congratulate you for your achievements.

Finally, your capabilities and predisposition towards hard work will invariably shape the future of Bhutan. You must work with integrity, you must keep learning, keep working hard, and you must have the audacity to dream big.”

- His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck



Published by
Department of School Education (DSE)
Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD)
Royal Government of Bhutan
Thimphu

Provisional Edition: 2023

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Reprint 2024

Foreword

Bhutan, a land renowned for its breath-taking landscapes, vibrant culture, and timeless traditions, holds a history that is as captivating as it is inspiring. Our country's heritage is a tapestry of events, people, and ideas that have shaped the very essence of who we are today. From ancient epochs to the modern era, every chapter in Bhutan's history reflects the struggles, triumphs, and aspirations of our forefathers, creating a legacy that has withstood the tests of time.

With great pleasure and a profound sense of responsibility, we present this new Bhutan History, Civics and Citizenship Education coursebook for Class IX. We aim to take learners on a captivating expedition through the rich tapestry of Bhutan's past, allowing them to discover the threads that have woven the unique fabric of our beloved nation. We have endeavoured to present history not merely as a collection of facts and dates but as a living, breathing narrative that enables learners to connect with the past on a profound level. It is our hope that learners will gain not only knowledge but also develop a sense of wonder and appreciation for the journey that has led us to the Bhutan we cherish today.

We have designed this coursebook with a learner-centric approach, ensuring that it aligns with the dynamic world of the 21st century. Learners will delve into four strands of History curriculum, historiography, evolving civilization, governance and peace, and identity, spirituality and culture. We encourage learners to engage in critical thinking, reflect on historical events, and consider their impact on our present and future. Moreover, it places great emphasis on fostering compassion, responsibility, and a profound sense of national pride. We hope to instill in learners a deep appreciation for the values that define us as Bhutanese individuals and as a united nation. Our aspiration is that learners will be equipped with valuable life skills, empowering them to become confident, creative, and compassionate leaders who contribute positively to our society and the world.

With this coursebook, we invite learners to explore the past, understand the present, and envision a future rooted in our glorious heritage. Embrace this opportunity to become informed citizens who can shape the destiny of our nation with wisdom, humility, and an unwavering commitment to peace and progress. May your journey through Bhutan's History curriculum be transformative and enlightening. Together, let us celebrate our remarkable past and strive towards a future that reflects the best of Bhutanese values and aspirations.

I hope this coursebook will help learners enrich their knowledge, enabling them to develop and strengthen their love and dedication to tsa-wa-sum and become constructive and contributing citizens.

Tashi Delek!



Karma Galay
Director General

Introduction

The "Bhutan History, Civics, and Citizenship Education" course book is designed to help learners explore the living past of humankind and the intricate tapestry of human interactions, societies, and governance. History is not just a collection of facts, it is the story of our shared past, an attempt by people throughout the centuries to reconstruct, describe, and interpret their own history. Through this course book, we aim to uncover the rich history of Bhutan while delving into the essential principles of civics that shape our present and guide us towards the future.

History, as the living past, plays a crucial role in developing our identity and understanding the subject from personal, national, and international perspectives. It is a lens through which learners can view the evolution of social, political, cultural, and economic conditions, not only in Bhutan but also around the world. By informing about the past, this textbook aims to justify the present and equip learners with the knowledge to make informed decisions that will shape the future.

Through the History and Civics curriculum, learners will be able to explore the remarkable history of Bhutan, a nation known for its unique blend of tradition and modernity. From its ancient roots to its contemporary challenges and triumphs, you will journey through time to understand the people, places, and events that have shaped this beautiful Himalayan kingdom.

But this textbook is not just about history, it also introduces the fundamentals of civics. Civics is the study of how societies are organized and governed, and it is essential for understanding the structures and functions of governments, both in Bhutan and globally. Learners will gain insight into the principles of democracy, citizenship, and civic responsibilities that are vital for active and informed participation in our society.

Moreover, History and Civics Education encourages independent learning and research skills through activities like collaborative projects. It provides learners with opportunities to engage critically with historical sources, explore different interpretations of events, and develop a deeper understanding of the world.

Therefore, History aspires to instill in learners a sense of belonging that leads to unity, solidarity, and the protection of not only yourselves but also others. Through the exploration of Bhutan's history and the principles of civics, we hope to inspire learners to become responsible citizens who contribute positively to the community, nation, and the global society at large.

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Chapter One

Choegyal Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal: *The Architect of the Nation State- Palden Druk*

KEY TERMS

Zhabdrung	Dzongpoen
Lhomon Khazhi	Ngachudrugma
Chagzoed	Palden Drukpa Choglay Namgyal
Jekhenpo	Choeje
Vanquished	Adversary

Introduction

The Zhabdrung's self-imposed exile in Bhutan in 1616 was the outcome of dispute in Tibet. There, his status as rebirth of Pema Karpo had been challenged by political rivals hoping to wrest control of all the Drukpa monasteries and properties. The two candidates for recognition as the rebirth of Pema Karpo were Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal (1594-1651), who had already been installed as the Ralung hierarch and Pagsam Wangpo. After several years of low-level skirmishing, the dispute came to a head over possession of the 'self-created image of Avalokitesvara,' called Rangjung Kharsapani. It was said to have emerged miraculously from the cremated remains of Tsangpa Gyarey Yeshey Dorji. Circumstances propelled Zhabdrung Rinpoche to head to Bhutan. With the arrival of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the southern land gradually evolved as a Unified Nation State amid various internal and external hurdles.



Figure 1.1: Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal

Arrival to the Land of Lhomon

In the CE 1616, when Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal entered Bhutan from the northern part of the western frontier, Buddhism has been already introduced to the land. Several prominent Buddhist figures have already visited Bhutan mostly in the west beginning from the 10th century. This was followed by the establishment of religious schools and centres in Bhutan beginning in the 12th century.

By the time Zhabdrung came to Bhutan, there were several Vajrayana Buddhist schools and centres established in the western part of the country. The schools of Drikung and Drukpa Kagyue, the Nyenyingpa, Shingtapa, Nyingma and Sakya have all founded their schools and centres. There was no ruler as such at that point of time in the western part of Bhutan. The religious lords of these schools and centres exercised leadership influence and dominion over the communities and the societies within their outreach. However, the Drukpa Kagyue School under the lordship of Phajo Drugom Zhigpo and his *choeje* family was expanding its dominion in the west over other religious schools. This expansion of religious dominion of Drukpa in the west played an important role in receiving and assisting Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in Bhutan.

Activity 1:

Discuss the hypothetical scenario in Bhutan if Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal's status as the rebirth of Pema Karpo had not been challenged by Pagsam Wangpo.

Process of Unification in Western Bhutan

In the CE 1626 after Zhabdrung completed a three years retreat, he saw several visions that directed him to form the land of *Lhomon* into a state of Drukpa. Following the visions, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal at the age of 33 in the CE 1627 composed the sixteen I, *Nga Chudrugma*, which became the emblem and his seal. With this emblem and the seal, he declared that all the non-humans and humans within the realm of *Lhomon Khazhi* fall under his dominion from that day onwards. The edict bearing this seal of emblem was dispatched and placed at various strategic places across the country, mostly covering the western regions. This marked the declaration of his intend to form a state of Drukpa and to become the temporal and spiritual ruler of the state.

In the CE 1629, he laid the foundation of his first fortified monastery known as the dzong, which played an important role in his process of unification as the centre of both spiritual and political administration. He built the Punakha, Wangdue and Paro *dzongs* in the following years as part of his strategic expansion of dominion in the west.



Figure 1.2: Dzongs in the process of Western Unification

It was after the completion of the construction of Punakha *dzong*, that an organised administrative system was formally launched in Punakha dzong. In the CE 1640 Zhabdrung organised his dual administrative system under his rule by appointing a *Je khenpo* as the spiritual head and *Chagzoed* as administrative head. Pekar Jungnye was appointed as the first *Je khenpo* to overlook the spiritual system of monastic administration and Tenzin Drukgyal as the *Chagzoed Chenpo* to overlook political system of administration, which later becomes Druk Desi in the CE 1651. At the same time, Pekar Rabgye was appointed as the first Punakha *Dzongpoen*.

Zhabdrung's assertion of Bhutan as a Nation State

Nga Chudrugma the Transcendental “I”

The composition of sixteen “I” or “me” known as *Nga Chudrugma* by Zhabdrung marks his intend to build a unified Drukpa state. It also signifies the moment he attained the level of trust and confidence. Zhabdrung realised in his destiny to lead and initiate the nation building of the state of Drukpa that would become Bhutan in the later time.

He was by then known as *Thuchen* Ngawang Namgyal for having attained the control in the magical powers that defeated his enemies by CE 1624, mainly his arch rival Tsangpa ruler, who died in the CE 1621 after contacting small pox.

The sixteen “I” is therefore a transcendental composition that declares his position as an omniscient powerful master whose attainment is incomparable for anyone to challenge.

Sixteen “I”

“I am he who turns the wheel of the dual system (of spiritual and secular law).
 I am everyone’s good refuge.
 I am he who upholds the teachings of the Glorious Drukpas.
 I am the subduer of all who disguise themselves as Drukpas.
 I achieve the realisation of the Sarasvasti of Composition.
 I am the pure source of moral aphorisms.
 I am the possessor of an unlimited view.
 I am he who refutes those with false views.
 I am the possessor of great power in debate.
 I am he before whom all rivals tremble.
 I am the hero who destroys the host of demons.
 I am he whose power cannot be repulsed.
 I am mighty in speech that expounds religion.
 I am wise in all the sciences.
 I am the incarnation prophesied by the patriarchs.
 I am the executioner of false incarnations”.

Box 1.1: Nga Chudrugma

The sixteen “I” arranged into a spoke of wheel was designed as his seal and the emblem, becoming the seal of the highest authority during his time. In general, the sixteen “I” is briefed into one line that reads “*Palden Drukpa Choglay Namgyal*,” meaning the glorious Drukpa that is victorious of all enemies or at all directions, which is even used today as the text accompanying Bhutan’s national emblem.

Activity 2:

Discuss the insights you derive about the character and leadership of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal from your interpretation of the significance of ‘Ngachudrugma.

Tibetan Attacks during Zhabdrung's era

The known historical record of the external attacks to Bhutan started since the early part of the 17th century after the arrival of Zhabdrung. The main reason being the Zhabdrung's adversary with the Tsang ruler, which started over the dispute on the incarnation of Kuenkhen Pema Karpo that led to Zhabdrung's escape from Tibet to Bhutan.



Figure 1.3: Ngachudrugma

The first Tibetan invasion took place in 1617. The Tsangpa ruler threatened Zhabdrung calling on him to return to Tibet after the ruler seized all of Zhabdrung's estates. Zhabdrung responded by reminding that he could not be true incarnation of Pema Karpo if he failed to eliminate Tsangpa ruler. This thoroughly provoked the Tsangpa ruler sending his army to attack Zhabdrung, storming Druk Choeding monastery in Paro from where he escaped. The local leaders led by Zarchen Choeje and the families of Phajo Drugom raised a local army to counter the Tibetan invasion leading to the first war between the Tibetans and the Bhutanese. Zhabdrung moved towards Thimphu while the Bhutanese army countered the Tibetans from following Zhabdrung.

1617	First Tibetan Invasion
1634	Second Tibet Invasion
1639	Third Tibetan Invasion
1644	Fourth Tibetan Invasion
1648	Fifth Tibetan Invasion

Box 1.2: Time Line of Tibetan Invasions

This situation of rivalry between the Tsangpa ruler and the Zhabdrung provided advantage to the local religious rivals who were worried of Zhabdrung's growing influence and dominance. In the CE 1634, the local religious rivals, who instigated the Tsangpa ruler Karma Tenchog Wangpo, son of Tsang *Desi* Phuntsho Namgyal invited the second Tibetan invasion to Bhutan. This time the invasion came from three northern entry gates of Paro, Gasa and Bumthang supported by the local armies of the religious rivals. The invaders and their associates succeeded in taking over Semthokha *dzong*. However, as a stock of ammunition in the *dzong* caught fire, the armies of the enemies were weakened having many fallen in the incident, the remaining had to route back. The *dzong* however was completely destroyed soon after its consecration. It was later rebuilt only in the CE 1671. This helped Zhabdrung to regain the territory and control of the region, a victory credited to the guardian deities.

The third Tibetan invasion was in the CE 1639. The invasion as usual had local support from the rival religious factions. The Tsangpa ruler sent his armies through Paro and Gasa with an objective to overtake the two new *dzongs* Zhabdrung has then already built, the Punakha and Wangdue Phodrang *dzongs*. Although, the invaders surrounded the *dzongs*, they were not able to overtake the *dzongs*. Meanwhile around this time, the Tsangpa ruler was already interested in taking a diplomatic resolve to end the warring adversary between him and Zhabdrung. His general Galungpa was asked to withdraw his troops from Bhutan on advice of his mediator.

The adversary with the Tsangpa ruler was resolved to some extent with Zhabdrung acknowledging that he had no ill feeling for the young ruler Karma Tenchog Wangpo as he merely inherited the adversary from his father. On the other hand, Karma Tenchog Wangpo recognised Zhabdrung as one of the incarnations of Pema Karpo and was offered the control over most of the major Drukpa Kagyue monasteries in Tibet while Pagsam Wangpo was given Druk Sangag Choeling founded by Pema Karpo. The dispute over the incarnation also came to its natural end when Pagsam Wangpo died in the CE 1641. After the end of this war and the resolve between the Tsangpa ruler and Zhabdrung, the instigation of war from local religious rivals also faded away with no external support to rely on. Thus, Zhabdrung turned out unchallengeable and an undisputed ruling figure in Bhutan acknowledged from within and outside. An enthronement ceremony was also held in the CE 1642 attended by high figures from both within and outside offering gifts and respect in recognition.

But the peace could not last long. After the Tsangpa ruler was stripped of the political power by the Mongol forces offering, power and authority over Tibetans to the 5th Dalai Lama by the Mongol King Gushri Khan, Zhabdrung looked to the Dalai Lama administration for a new relationship. However, the high hope of the new relationship even before reaching Dalai Lama, his secretary Sonam Chopel turned down the offering by demanding Zhabdrung to give back all the estates he took over from the local religious rivals and to return back to Tibet. When Zhabdrung retaliated with furious response to this demand, a fresh rivalry between the Drukpa in the south and the new Tibetan government broke out. This resulted in the Tibetan and the Mongol king sending an army of about 700 soldiers mix of Tibetans and Mongolians to Paro. The battle first fought in winter lasted until spring. It ended with defeat of the invaders with at least three Tibetan commanders said to have been arrested by Bhutanese troops.

Another carefully planned invasion with larger army was dispatched to Bhutan by the Tibetan government in the winter of CE 1648. One battalion composed of armies from central Tibet was sent to Punakha through Gasa and a battalion composed of armies from Tsang was sent to Paro via Phari. Similar to the earlier invasions, the enemies were vanquished.

Fifth Tibetan Invasion

During Tibetan's attack on Bhutan in 1648, the Tibetans camped at the area of current Paro town. There they met with a surprise attack from the Bhutanese troops led by Paro *Dzongpoen* Tenzin Drukdra forcing the Tibetan troops led by Depa Norbu escape in defeat leaving everything behind.

Meanwhile, the Tibetan troops sent to attack Punakha were of huge in number compared to the number of Bhutanese soldiers stationed in Punakha. When the Tibetan troops were stationed at Jiligang facing Punakha *dzong*, some Bhutanese suggested to negotiate a truce with the Tibetans fearing the size of army their opponent have. However, Zhabdrung instructed his soldiers move in line entering from one gate and moving out from another, which successfully deceived the Tibetans to think that the Bhutanese were well prepared with enough soldiers guarding the *dzong*. In the meantime, upon hearing the news of their leader and his troops at Paro having escaped in defeat, the morale of Tibetan soldiers at Punakha was at the lowest. A forest fire on the hillside where the Tibetans were stationed sent them fleeing in panic leaving behind their belongings. The war yet again ended in defeat for the Tibetans.

Box 1.3: Event of Fifth Tibetan Invasion

While Tibetans would invade Bhutan several times again in the following years, the invasion in the CE 1648 was the last Tibetan invasion during the time of Zhabdrung.

Activity 1.1

Fill in the table

Tibetan Invasion	Causes	Outcomes/Significance

Sharchog Khorlo Tsibgyed as the Legacy of Zhabdrung

The idea of extending the campaign for the state of Drukpa towards east appeared sometime after Chogyal Minjur Tenpa became the first Trongsa Poenlop in around the CE 1643. Until that time, regional rulers ruled the regions in east of Trongsa starting from Bumthang. When the two rulers of Khaling known as Dewa and Drukgyal were in conflict, a Tibetan official known as Dhingpon Tensung was invited to negotiate and resolve the conflict

between the two. However, the Tibetan official ended up murdering two disciples of Tsasey Lama Namsey. Lama Namsey revenged his disciples by confronting the Tibetan official and managed to escape to Trongsa, where he sought refuge under the Poenlop. The Poenlop presented Lama Namsey to Zhabdrung in Punakha who advised and directed the two to return and expand the state of Drukpa to the east.

Since then, the two began their campaign to bring the fragmented regions under their local rulers of eastern regions under the Drukpa rule. They first launched their campaign against the two most powerful local rulers of Bumthang, the Choekhor Deb and Ura Dung Nagpo. After several fights with the two rulers, they were defeated in the CE 1647 up on marching with combined forces of Mangdue led by Lama Namsey, and central forces of Wang Tshochen Gyed



Figure 1.5: Process of the unification for Sharchog Khorlo Tsibgyed

led by Zhung Droenyer Druk Namgyal. Bumthang composed of four local units known as Bumthang Dheyzhi was then brought under control when the two most powerful rulers of the region fled to Tibet.

The campaign then moved towards Lhuentse, then known as Kurilung invited by the families of a ruler known as Lhabu Dhar who was killed by his rivals. Chogyal Minjur Tenpa's campaign successfully brought under control the local rulers of Phadung and Kyidling bringing under submission the region of Kurilung which is composed of four local units known as the Kuri Dozhi.

On the way from Kurilung, as the campaign passed through Dongla and Kholong Toed, the rulers of the regions submitted without any resistance after hearing the defeat of the powerful rulers of Bumthang. This brought the five local units of Trashiyangtse known as Yangtse Tshonga to submission without resistance.

As they continued from Yangtse, Zhongar's Karpo Dung requested Trongsa Poenlop to aid him in fighting his rival the Tongphu ruler. The campaign took it into its advantage subduing the Tongphu ruler and also successfully winning submission from rest of the rulers in the vicinity without having to use force. Zhongar Tshoduen the seven local units of Zhongar region thus bowed in submission.

Lama Namsey then led an army towards Udzorong and returned with rulers of the ten local units of Trashigang region known as Trashigang Tsho-chu, including the Merak Lama Nagseng offering initial submission in peace. As the campaign returned from Zhongar through Tunlabi to Kheng region, most of the local rulers of Kheng submitted in peace. Nyakhar dung who was said to have resisted was brought under control through force winning the submission of the three divisions of Kheng region known as Khengrig Namsum.

The campaign led by Chogyal Minjur Tenpa, Zhung Droenyer Druk Namgyal and Lama Namsey took about eight years in covering the entire eastern and central region to bring under a unified state of Drukpa. However, the eastern region could not be fully brought under control even at the end of the campaign. In the CE 1655, Lama Namsey and Umdze Damchoe Padkar suppressed several rebelling rulers of the east. These eastern regions were grouped as the eight spokes of the eastern wheel known as the Sharchog Khorlo Tsibgyed, which includes Dungsam Dosum that covers today's Samdrup Jongkhar and Pemagatshel districts and Mangdue Tshozhi of today's Trongsa.

Sharchog Khorlo Tsibgyed

- *Mangdue Tshozhi* (four blocks of Mangdue),
- *Bumthang Dheyzhi* (four sub-divisions of Bumthang)
- *Kurtoe Dozhi* (four valleys of Kurtoe),
- *Yangtse Tsho Nga* (five blocks of Yangtse),
- *Khengrig Namsum* (three different regions of Kheng),
- *Zhongar Tshoduen* (seven blocks of Zhongar),
- *Trashigang Tshochu* (ten blocks of Trashigang),
- *Dungsam Dosum* (three valleys of Dungsam).

Box 1.4: Eight Spokes of the Eastern Wheel

Conclusion

The land, which was earlier inhabited and fragmented under different rulers, got unified under the banner of Palden Drukpa in the 17th century due to the efforts laid by Zhabdrung Namgyal in no time. The unification of Bhutan was achieved amid a tedious and difficult process.

Zhabdrung had to confront internal as well as external oppositions due to his earlier confrontation back in Tibet. In spite of the hurdles posed by these rival factions, he repelled the repeated Tibetan invasions and built a fortress in each valley of the country thus, establishing firm political and religious control over the region. He emerged invincible and became even more popular. With this popularity, Zhabdrung succeeded in establishing the nation-state of Bhutan. Truly, he was a peerless leader.

Chapter Two

Monarchy: *An era of Stability and Reforms* Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck

KEY TERMS

Consolidate, Hereditary, Internal threat, External threat, Tsatong tax, Sarim tax, Woola

Introduction

The Second Druk Gyalpo of Bhutan, Jigme Wangchuck ruled Bhutan from 1927 till 1952. The political system formed in 1907 was still new. The roles and responsibilities of other institutions of power, established during the era of Zhabdrung, were not clearly defined. Additionally, power blocs, such as the Poenlop of Paro still existed. Beyond Bhutan, India was fighting for independence from British India. Bhutan's relations with British India were guided by the Treaty of 1910. When India became independent in 1947, there was uncertainty about the way in which India would look at Bhutan. A new Treaty was signed with India in 1949, which remained the main basis of Indo-Bhutan relations until it was revised in 2007. It is due to these reasons that the Second Druk Gyalpo is called the "Consolidator."



Figure 2.1: Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuk

While Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck could not initiate development works, he embarked on the process of development. Building on what his father had left, he strengthened Bhutan's education system, agriculture and health services. He laid the foundations for establishing the armed forces. He also built and renovated *lhakhangs* and *dzongs*. The Second Druk Gyalpo resolved some of the problems that were a burden to the people. In doing so, he brought about administrative changes in the country.

When he passed away on 30th March, 1952, the monarchy was further strengthened and consolidated. There were no imminent dangers confronting Bhutan, both internally and externally. This enabled the Third Druk Gyalpo to focus on and commit to the country's development and constitutional reforms.

Early Life

An issue that concerned Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck was the absence of a son to succeed him. His first wife, Azhi Rinchen Lhamo, had given birth to three sons, but unfortunately, none of them survived. Seeking a solution, he consulted various Buddhist masters and astrologers, including Geshe Mindu, a monk and scholar. Upon their advice, the First Druk Gyalpo married Azhi Tsundru Lhamo. Unfortunately, Geshe Mindu passed away shortly after the marriage, and it is believed that he was reborn as Jigme Wangchuck. Additionally, Karmapa Kachab Dorji had prophesied that Azhi Tsundru Lhamo would give birth to a son.

When Ashi Tsundru Lhamo was nine months pregnant, Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck, who was then the Trongsa Poenlop, saw a dream that made him very happy. He saw a golden thunderbolt descend and fall into his hands from the sky. He believed it was a sign that a son would be born to him. When the time came for the birth of the child, he organized several religious ceremonies and made offerings at different monasteries and temples to ensure the survival of the child.

In 1905, Jigme Wangchuck was born at Thinley Rabten Palace. It was a moment of great joy, especially for Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck, as he had prayed and yearned for the birth of an heir.

Understanding the importance of modern education, the First Druk Gyalpo had established Bhutan's first modern school at Wangduechooling Palace in Bumthang. When Crown Prince Jigme Wangchuck was nine years old, he attended this school with fourteen friends. At the school, he learned Hindi and English. Additionally, the Crown Prince obtained instructions on religion, local literary skills and sacred mantras from several Buddhist masters. The Crown Prince was an attentive and diligent student, who also excelled in horse riding and archery. He listened to the radio in Hindi regularly. This would later help him immensely while communicating with the British and Indians.



Figure 2.2: Thinley Rabten Palace

However, he received his main education from his father as he began to attend the royal court at a very early age. Just like his father, he began from the lowest position and served his father as an attendant. From the many tasks that he had, one was to report the works of the palace workers to his father. When he attained the age of 13, Crown Prince Jigme Wangchuck became Trongsa *Droenyer* or chief of protocol. As *Droenyer*, his main duty was to manage the appointments of visitors who came to meet his father.

Few years later, in 1922, Her Majesty Azhi Tsundru Lhamo passed away. By then, the Crown Prince became a very responsible person and he looked after most of the activities during his mother's funeral at Kurje, Bumthang. In 1923, he was formally promoted as Trongsa *Poenlop*, a post which is a prerequisite for a Crown Prince to become Druk Gyalpo. He was then 18 years old.

He later married Azhi Phuntsho Choden at Thinley Rabten Palace. She was the daughter of Azhi Damcho and Dasho Jamyang. Dasho Jamyang was the hereditary Lord of Chume Trakar, the descendant of Terton Pema Lingpa's Heart son, Thukse Dawa Gyeltshen. This intermarriage strengthened the bond between the nobles of Pema Lingpa's descendants. In 1932, His Majesty married Her Majesty Azhi Pema Dechen. Being the only sister of the First Queen, the two Queens lived in close accord, devoting their lives to religious activities and spiritual pursuit.

Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck did not live to see his son crowned as Druk Gyalpo as he wished. In 1926, he fell sick and subsequently passed away. The time had come for Crown Prince Jigme Wangchuck to become Bhutan's Second Druk Gyalpo.

Coronation

Five months after his father passed away, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck, who was then Trongsa *Poenlop*, began his journey to Punakha for the official coronation. He carried with him gifts for the state monk body, which included a copy of the Buddhist *kanjur* and *tanjur* canons, sets of silk costumes for mask dances and a Mithun bull. On March 14, 1927, Crown Prince Jigme Wangchuck was formally crowned as the Second Druk Gyalpo.

The coronation was held in the presence of Jigme Dorji, the 6th mind incarnation of Zhabdrung, Sizhi Namgyal, the 58th Je Khenpo and almost all the leaders and powerful people of Bhutan. The British representatives were led by Fredrick Marshman Bailey, popularly known as FM Bailey. It was during this time that the insignia of Companion of the Indian Empire (C.I.E) was presented to the new Druk Gyalpo. During the coronation, FM Bailey assured the Druk Gyalpo of British support to Bhutan.

As his father had expired just five months back, the coronation was kept as a low-key affair. However, food and drinks were offered to all guests and the people. According to Buddhism, making of offerings during such occasions would benefit a departed soul. In addition to the gifts that were offered to the monk body, the new Druk Gyalpo commanded installation of golden pinnacle (*sertog*) on Punakha Dzong. The coronation of Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck is important as it saw the peaceful transition of power from the First to the Second Druk Gyalpo of Bhutan.

The Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck's reign

The reign of the Second Druk Gyalpo saw the beginning of development activities in Bhutan. While it was the Third Druk Gyalpo who ultimately introduced modern development, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck also initiated development in several sectors.

Taking on from his father, the Second Druk Gyalpo expanded the education programme. While the two schools in Bumthang and Haa were upgraded, new ones were constructed at Paro, Wangduephodrang and Trashigang. Bhutanese who had earlier studied at Haa and Kalimpong became teachers of these new schools. In 1942, thirty boys, fifteen each from Mangde and Shar Dar Gyed, were selected for modern education. Some of them went to Kalimpong to study medicine, agriculture, forestry and education.

In addition, the Druk Gyalpo began efforts to introduce biomedical services in Bhutan. Vaccinations and medicines were provided to the people especially for venereal diseases. By 1932, Bhutan had her first doctor. Several British doctors also visited Bhutan.

His Majesty also initiated the process to build motor roads from India and establish wireless stations in the country. In the field of agriculture, he introduced the growth of cash crops in Southern Bhutan. At Bumthang, he experimented with rice cultivation.

At his command, the production of printing blocks, religious paintings and various other religious artifacts began. He also promoted several mask dances and revived some of the religious transmissions that were lost, apart from constructing and renovating dzongs and palaces. In 1929, Kuenga Rabten dzong was built. Three more residences were further built at Samdrupcholing, Domkhar and Kuenga Rabten. In 1937, another residence for the Second Queen was built at Domkhar Trashicholing. Commanded by His Majesty, Trashigang Dzongpoen Thinley Tobgyal (also known as Sey Dopola) renovated Trashigang Dzong in 1936. Together with Azhi Phuntsho Choden, His Majesty established and renovated several monasteries.

While Bhutan's modern armed force was formally established by the Third Druk Gyalpo, its foundations were laid by Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck. Around 1932, fifteen young men were sent to be trained under the Gurkha Rifles in Shillong, India. Upon their return, they recruited and trained about a hundred men who formed the first Bhutanese modern army. By 1940, more than a hundred men were trained under the Gurkhas.

His Majesty's endeavour to introduce modern development remained modest because of the lack of adequate funds. Internal revenue was nominal. On the other hand, the British were reluctant to fund big projects. The 1930's revenue system highlights the above facts. Out of Rupees (Rs.) 200,000 that His Majesty's government received as subsidy from the Government of India, Rs. 79,000 went to support the state monasteries, Rs. 24,000 to the Court officials, Rs. 40,000 for the Palace administration and just Rs. 57,000 for the general state expenses. Due to this, His Majesty requested the British Government to increase its annual subsidy. The increase came only after the 1949 Treaty was signed with independent India.

Box 2.1: The Druk Gyalpo's reign

Internal security

In 1928, British Political Officers cautioned Bhutan following a rapid increase in the population of settlers in southern Bhutan. Then, in 1946, His Majesty was alarmed by rising immigration levels. Encouraged by political developments in India, settlers at Dagapela staged a protest in 1946. The Second Druk Gyalpo successfully resolved the issues. In one of his Kashos, he instructed officials to contain the flow and, in the same Kasho, restricted any officials from authorizing the felling of forests. All these actions are evidence of his proactive and cautionary approach.

After China's occupation of Tibet, the third significant event occurred, leading to a flow of Tibetan refugees into Bhutan. Over the 1940s and 1950s, refugees gradually entered the kingdom. Some chose to depart for India, while others made their homes in Bhutan.

By then, Bhutan had developed a small modern armed force. In 1932, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck sent 15 young men to be trained under the Gurkha Rifles in Shillong, India. Upon their return to Bhutan, they recruited and trained about a hundred other men, who formed Bhutan's first modern army. At that time, Bhutan possessed about 1,900 rifles. Using these forces at his disposal, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck successfully suppressed the 1946 protesters.

The larger security question was tied to Bhutan's relations with foreign countries, which was essentially to deal correctly with British India. Like his father King Ugyen Wangchuck, His Majesty was a staunch ally of British India, just as British India was an ally of Bhutan.

External Security

When Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck ascended as the second Druk Gyalpo, a significant development was unfolding in neighbouring India. The Indian independence movement was gaining momentum and posed a concern for Bhutan. Following the policy of his late father, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck maintained a very good relationship with British India. According to the Treaty of 1910, Bhutan was receiving annual subsidies of Indian Rupees 100,000 for the annexation of the duars. In 1934, the Druk Gyalpo, Queen, and Crown Prince Jigme Dorji Wangchuck accompanied by large entourage were invited to Calcutta (Kolkata) by the British. This visit further strengthened the goodwill between Bhutan and British India. During World War II, Bhutan once again became an ally of British India, and His Majesty supported British India in its war effort by contributing cash to the British.

In 1947, just before India became independent, Authur Hopkinson the last political officer of Sikkim, visited Bhutan. Like others before him, he was very supportive of Bhutan and concerned about the future of Bhutan after the British left India. India became independent

on 15th August, 1947. In the same year, Bhutan participated in Asian Relations Conference which was held in Delhi. In 1948, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck sent a Bhutanese delegation led by Gongzim Sonam Tobgay to meet Indian Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. As a result, historic the Indo-Bhutan Treaty was signed between two countries on 8th August, 1949 at Darjeeling which replaced the Punakha Treaty of 1910 signed with British India. Therefore, this treaty laid down basic framework for a mutually beneficial relationship between two independent nations and began a new chapter in the history of Bhutan's international relations.

Right from his coronation, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck maintained a very close relationship with the British. During his reign, he hosted several British visitors to Bhutan including five political officers based in Gangtok, Sikkim. His visitors were overwhelmed by the warm reception and hospitality and remained staunch supporters of his rule and development initiatives. They even recommended for an increment in the subsidy and development aid for Bhutan. In 1942, the subsidy was increased by one lakh rupees. It is this relation and the goodwill developed with the British which made British officers speak for Bhutan at the critical moment of Indian independence.

The signing of the 1949 Treaty is a milestone in the history of Bhutan. It is one of the biggest achievements of Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck. It remained the foundation of relations between India and Bhutan until the revision of the Treaty in 2007. While the Treaty was largely similar to the Treaty of 1910, a notable change was the inclusion of the title “Druk Gyalpo” instead of “Maharaja.” Bhutan agreed to be guided by India in its foreign affairs while it kept internal administration in its own hands. India returned to Bhutan the thirty-two square kilometre tract of Dewathang and raised the subsidy to Rupees 5 lakhs. India also agreed to permit free trade between the two countries. The development of relations between Bhutan and India was important for both the countries.



Figure 2.3: Signing of Bhutan-India Friendship Treaty of 1949

Activity 1:

Explore the contemporary benefits that Bhutan continues to derive from the Treaty of 1949 signed in Darjeeling between Independent India and Bhutan.

Tax and Administrative Reforms

Bhutan's taxation system was a heavy burden to the people when His Majesty Jigme Wangchuck ascended the throne. In some areas, the existent tax impositions were so oppressive that people fled from the country or moved to secluded places beyond the reach of the taxmen. As soon as His Majesty ascended the throne, he started to systematically study the tax system. He began to assess the incidence, severity, effects and value of the various taxes.

The investigations made His Majesty realise that the layers of administration that had accumulated over the centuries were the main reason for the extremely high tax levels. There were gewogs, upon which were drungkhags. Further up the multiple tiers of administration, there were dzongkhags, before finally ending up with central bodies like the Punakha Dratshang, where a portion of tax was delivered directly by the taxpayers. According to the biography of Desi Sherab Wangchuk, in the mid-18th century, Bhutan had 126 drungkhags. This could have been roughly the number of drungkhags that existed during the Second Druk Gyalpo's time.

As a result, His Majesty boldly dismantled numerous dungkhags to alleviate the tax burden on the people. The Second King reduced and standardized taxes throughout the country, making a sweeping decision that led to a significant reduction in both the variety and amount of taxes people had to pay.

His Majesty abolished some forms of taxes that were not rational and burdened the people, such as the Tsatong Tax, the Sarim Woola and others. Tsatong or vacant household tax was a tax that the entire community had to pay when a household became empty. There were several instances when a household in a community became vacant due to the deaths or migration of people from the house. In such instances, the remaining households of the community had to collectively pay the tax that members of the empty household used to pay. However, no one was allowed to occupy and use the vacant house or property.

Apart from removing this form of tax, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck permitted the use of vacant house and property by others in the community.

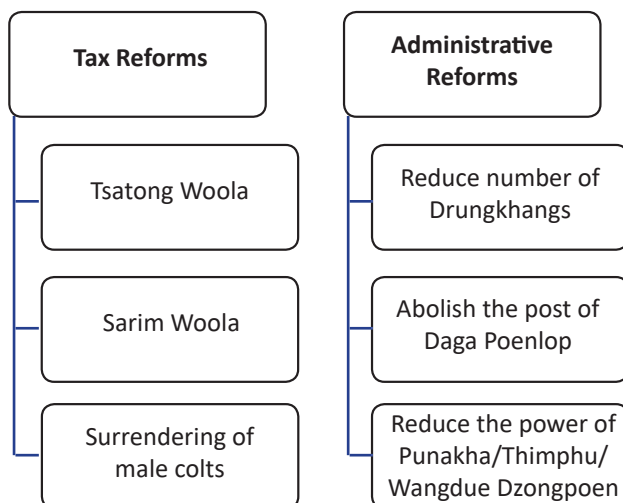


Figure 2.4: Principal reforms of The Second Druk Gyalpo

Sarim Woola was a form of labour tax that was used in the express delivery of goods and messages. People from a community had to offer their services in the delivery of goods, messages and others. For instance, a person would come with a message from one community. Upon arrival at a different community, it was the duty of someone from that community to take the message and goods forward to the next region or community. People had to do this under all circumstances, irrespective of whether it was night or in the rain. The Second Druk Gyalpo removed this woola too.

Additionally, His Majesty abolished the system of taking away male colts born to horses that people bred. Before this was abolished, people had to surrender all male colts to the government as it needed horses for the transportation of officials and goods.

After studying the kind, severity and incidences of taxes, His Majesty Jigme Wangchuck boldly undertook an administrative reform leading to the reduction in the number of drungkhags. This reduced the amount and kind of taxes people had to pay. Alternatively, The Druk Gyalpo made taxation uniform throughout the country. He also abolished several forms of taxes and woolas that were absurd and affected the people.

Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck was very well aware about the threats posed by powerful regional leaders. After assuming the role of the Second Druk Gyalpo, he ushered in an administrative reform that saw the centralization of power. This was important for him and the country and for the consolidation of Monarchy. He established a simple hierarchical system over which he had absolute power, in the religious and secular fields.

His Majesty wanted to improve the system and bring it into the line with the requirements of modern state. The central government was maintained in a small and compact form with the King as its head. At the highest level, the King was assisted by four important officials of ministerial rank constituting the *Nangi Lhengye Zhi* (Central Cabinet). They were *Zhung Kalyoen* (Executive Minister), the *Zhung Droenyer*, (Chief of Protocol), the *Zhung Zimpoen* or *Gongzim* (the Chamberlain) and the Thimphu *Dzongpoen/ Punakha Dzongpoen*.

In summer, the Thimphup joined the Central Cabinet and in winter, when the Cabinet moved to Punakha, the Punap joined the Cabinet. The Gongzim most of the time lived in Kalimpong as political agent for Bhutan. He worked with other political officials from the British government stationed in Kalimpong. Gradually as the other Poenlops and Dzongpoens died, their posts were not filled in and the regions came under the direct control of the Druk Gyalpo. Through such administrative reforms, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck soon succeeded in establishing total supremacy of the monarchy throughout the kingdom.

Activity 2:

Analyse the contributions of the Second Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck in relation to the stability of the nation.

Her Majesty Gyalum Azhi Phuntsho Choden Wangchuck - *Patron of Dharma*

As Queen, Azhi Phuntsho Choden, was kind, capable, open-minded, and generous. Throughout her life, she received teachings, empowerments and reading transmissions from renowned lamas in the Drukpa Kagyu, Karma Kagyu, Dudjom, Peling and Nyingthik traditions. Her Majesty passed away at the age of 92 in 2003.

Deeply ingrained in spiritual life, Azhi Phuntsho Choden played an important role in maintaining and strengthening Bhutan's rich Buddhist heritage, as well as promoting the Dharma. She built a legacy of religious institutions, established spiritual learning centers, and preserved the rich imagery that forms the core of Bhutan's religious history. When Bhutan embarked on the delicate task of balancing the promotion and preservation of its culture while engaging with the modern world, she extended the reach of Buddha dharma beyond Bhutan into India and Nepal.



Figure 2.5 Azhi Phuntsho Choden (left) with The Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck (right)

The Queen's commitment to Buddhism was born from great devotion. In 1955, while camped near the shores of a lake, she dreamt of a girl adorned with flowers and silk scarves, carrying a bowl of milk. The girl sang a song that began: *'I offer this song to the Three Jewels: the ultimate refuge. There is none other than you to rely on.'* The song went on to describe the location where the Ninth Gangtey Trulku would be reincarnated. After hearing the song in her dream, the Queen sent a message to the monks of Gangtey, informing them that their trulku's incarnation could be found at the source of the Mangde Chu river in central Bhutan. Later, the Dzogchen yogi Polo Khenpo Rinpoche, HH Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche, Jigdre Yeshe Dorji, and HH the Gyalwang Karmapa recognized the trulku as the unmistakable reincarnation of Gangtey Tulku, the body emanation of Pema Lingpa.

When she was in her 20s, Azhi Phuntsho Choden renovated Kurje Lhakhang, where Guru Rinpoche left an imprint of his body after subduing local demons in 746 CE. Apart from



Figure 2.11: Phuentsholing Goenpa

this, she restored murals of the Guru Tshengye (Eight Manifestations of Guru Rinpoche) of the Lhakhang. Later, she commissioned paintings of Buddha Shakyamuni and statues of Jo Jampa (Maitreya), Terton Pema Lingpa, Buddha and his retinue, and Guru Rinpoche.

Numerous other lhakhangs and drubdeys around Bhutan were built at her initiative. Some of these are: Lhakhang at Sherubtse College, Kanglung built in 1960; Phuentsholing Goenpa in 1966; Dewathang Lhakang in 1967 and the Dechenchholing Goenpa in 1967.

Her Majesty initiated plans for Bhutan's national library, which was established in 1967.

In 1972, following the passing of her son, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, Her Majesty presided over the *salang tendrel* to construct the National Memorial Chorten at Thimphu. Established in memory of the Third Druk Gyalpo, the National Memorial Chorten is a landmark in Bhutan.



Figure. 2.12. National Memorial Chorten

Her Majesty the Queen Mother commissioned many other chortens and lhakangs (temples), including temples in India and Nepal, and sponsored the printing and distribution of thousands of volumes of religious texts and rare mandala miniature paintings. Outside Bhutan, she built the Namgyal Choling lhakhang in Darjeeling, and the Dongag Choling lhakhang in Phagpa Shingkum in Nepal. Additionally she established a shedra at Kalimpong. In 1984, Her Majesty initiated construction of a Lhakhang at Bodh Gaya, India.

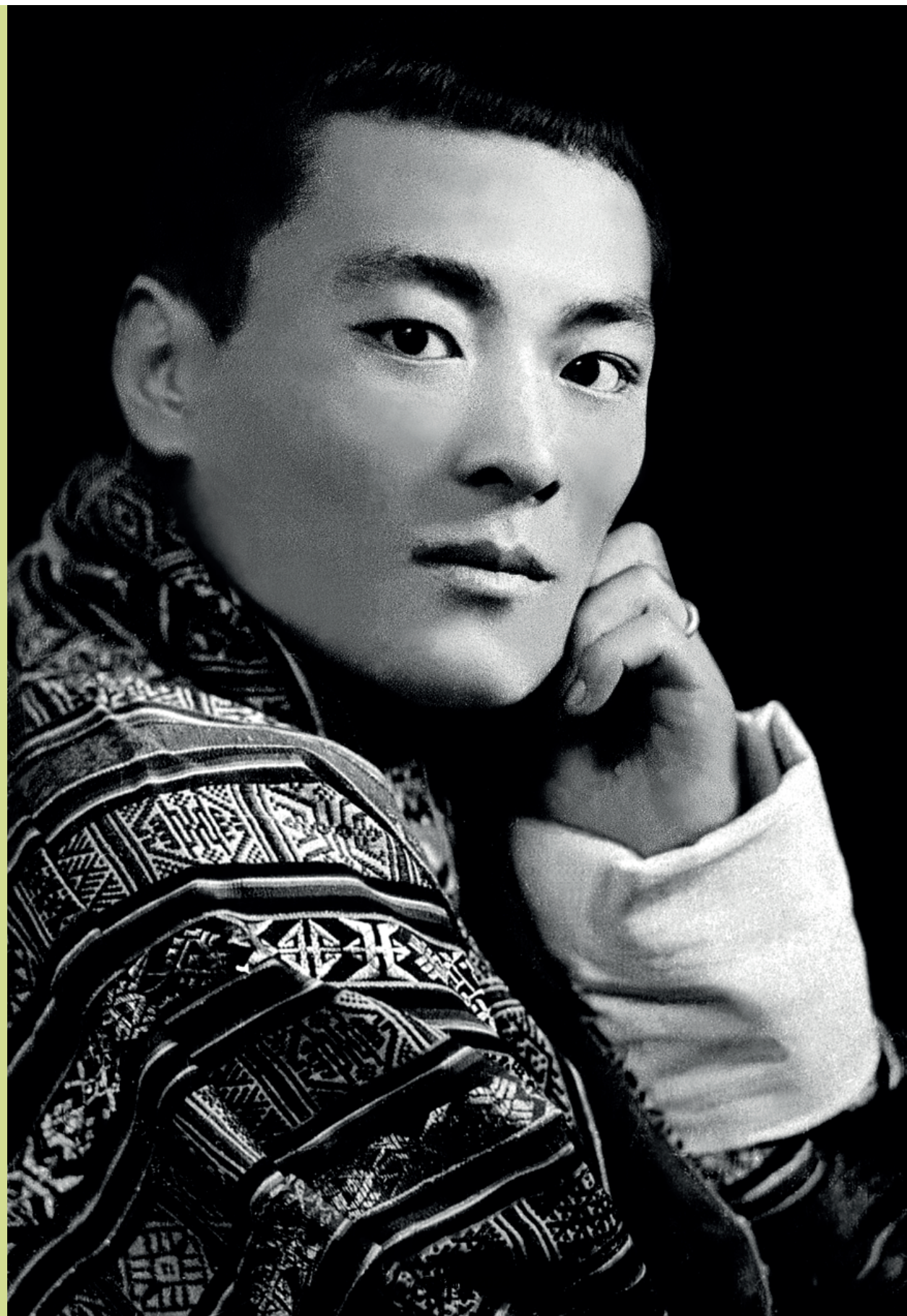
Conclusion

Known as the Consolidator, His Majesty Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck took over from his father, inheriting a unified country with a system of hereditary monarchy introduced. However, this system was still new to the people of Bhutan.

Additionally, His Majesty reigned at a time when India was undergoing major political turmoil, fighting for independence from the British. Having established a very close relationship with British India, the future of Bhutan after Indian independence was uncertain.

Using his close association with the British and political acumen, His Majesty steered Bhutan forward and secured the nation's independence and sovereignty. During his reign, Bhutan signed a treaty with independent India, which became the foundation for Bhutan's relations with India.

In order to reduce the tax burden on the people, His Majesty pursued a bold administrative reforms and abolished several taxes that were unreasonable. He passed on to his son, Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, a stronger and secure Bhutan, which enabled the Third Druk Gyalpo to focus on socio-economic and constitutional reforms.



Chapter Three

Monarchy: An era of stability and reforms *Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck*

KEY TERMS

Grant, Five Year Plan, inheritance, sustenance, decentralize, herald, domestic resources, delegation, mutual goodwill, multi-lateral, bilateral, international community

Introduction

The Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck inherited from his father a country that was consolidated and had signed a historic treaty with independent India. As a keen and visionary monarch, the Third Druk Gyalpo initiated several social, economic, and political reforms. During his twenty-year reign, Bhutan gradually moved away from a policy of self-imposed isolation to modern development, becoming a member of the international community. Within the country, Druk Gyalpo introduced significant reforms in governance and established a new relationship with India. In doing so, he laid the foundations for the future of Bhutan. For these reasons, the Third Druk Gyalpo is fondly remembered as the Father of Modern Bhutan.

Early Life

Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck was born on 2nd May, 1928, at Thruelpang Palace, which is very close to Trongsa town. His birth was celebrated for more than a month in Trongsa. It was an event to rejoice, as an heir to the King was born. It signalled the continuity of the Wangchuck dynasty. People gathered in Trongsa with scarves and gifts to welcome the prince. Alongside the celebrations, religious ceremonies were performed for his good health and long life.



Figure 3.1: Thruelpang Palace

In 1931, when the Crown Prince was three years old, Sir Charles Bell, who was then the Political Officer in Sikkim, visited Bumthang to present the Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire (CIE) Insignia to King Jigme Wangchuck. He also dedicated the insignia to the young prince.

Crown Prince Jigme Dorji Wangchuck was an intelligent child whose social and personal conduct was above those of other children. At the age of seven, he began his education under Babu Tazhi and Geshe Ajo Pasang. The former taught him English and Hindi and the latter local literary skills and Buddhist subjects.

When his parents visited Calcutta (Kolkatta) in 1935, Crown Prince Jigme Dorji Wangchuck accompanied them. This was his first exposure to a world beyond his home. During this visit, the Crown Prince met his future Queen, Azhi Kesang Choden, the youngest daughter of Gongzim Sonam Tobgye and Rani Choying Wangmo Dorji of Sikkim.

Crown Prince Jigme Dorji Wangchuck also studied in Kalimpong and later in England. It was during his time in England that he also traveled to Switzerland. Jigme Palden Dorji, the eldest son of Gongzim Sonam Tobgye, accompanied him during his stay in England. Their hosts were King Jigme Wangchuck's close friends, George Sheriff, who together with Frank Ludlow, had come to Bhutan to collect botanical specimens.

The Second World War broke out when the Crown Prince was in England. This was a significant moment, as it was an eye-opening to a global incident. It made him realise the importance of enhancing a country's security. It is no coincidence that he began conveying to his father the significance of modernising Bhutan's military capacity, a suggestion well received.

Like his father and grandfather, he also learned by serving his father at court. He began this at the age of fourteen and one of his first assignments was to escort guests to the King's chambers. Gradually, he performed other duties. In 1943, he became Trongsa Droenyer. Even in this important post, he had to be barefoot while attending to his father. As Droenyer, he spent most of his time examining the book of accounts. He was soon awarded the red scarf by his father. In 1950, His Royal Highness became Paro Poenlop.

A year later in 1951, His Royal Highness married Azhi Kesang Choden. The ceremony was held at Ugyen Pelri Palace, Paro. Unfortunately, King Jigme Wangchuck could not grace the wedding. Due to poor health, the King could not travel from Bumthang to Paro.

Coronation

When in Kalimpong, the Crown Prince, who was then the Paro Poenlop, received word that his father was seriously ill at Kuenga Rabten. He immediately departed from Kalimpong. On 30th March, 1952, the Second Druk Gyalpo passed away at Kuenga Rabten Palace in Trongsa. Paro Poenlop Jigme Dorji Wangchuck arrived at the palace two days after his father had passed away.

After completion of the funeral rites, preparations were made for departure to Paro. The royal residence was to be shifted from Bumthang to Paro. Azhi Phuntsho Choden had also decided to leave for Paro. For a very long time, Trongsa and later Bumthang had been the bases of power. This decision to move to Paro was the beginning of the shift in power base which would ultimately culminate in Thimphu becoming the capital of Bhutan.

As soon as Crown Prince Jigme Dorji Wangchuck arrived at Paro, preparations for the coronation which was to be held seven months after the demise of the Second Druk Gyalpo began. Druk Gyalpo travelled to Punakha with a party of over a hundred men and several horses to receive the five-coloured scarf from the shrine of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal.

The enthronement was held in Paro on 28th October, 1952 in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen Mother Azhi Phuntsho Choden, Her Majesty Azhi Kesang Choden Wangchuck and other royal family members. Others present during the Coronation were His Holiness the Je Khenpo Samten Jamtsho, the representative of Chogyal of Sikkim, the political officer in Sikkim H. Dayal, and representative of Indian Prime Minister Nehru, B.K. Kapur. The chibdreI proceeded from Deyangkha to Paro Dzong with frequent intervals of gunfire. At the main entrance, two women served them milk and water from two pitchers, symbolizing good luck and purification. The morning programme ended with the marching ceremony, after which Druk Gyalpo retreated to his residence. Druk Gyalpo was formally crowned in the afternoon.

The Reign of Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck

Covering the unfortunate demise of the Third Druk Gyalpo in its 23rd July, 1972 edition, The New York Times wrote that King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck had a dream. “*The dream was that somehow, in some way, his tiny nation of 1.1 million mostly Buddhist and largely illiterate people would become as modern as any nation on earth,*” it said. The paper also quotes the Third Druk Gyalpo telling a group of visiting Americans. “*This is the 20th century... We are working to make sure that Bhutan truly belongs to this century.*”

True to his words, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck made sure that Bhutan became a part of the 20th century. Moving away from the policy of self-imposed isolation, he opened Bhutan

to the region and the world. Planned development activities were instituted, together with reforms in governance. Bilateral relations with India took a new turn. Bhutan became a member of the United Nations and other international organizations. Until his last days, he ensured that his dreams were realized. When he passed away in 1972, he had turned his aspirations to achievements. It is because of these reasons that the Third Druk Gyalpo is remembered and called as the Father of Modern Bhutan.

Relations with India

The Second Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck had established a relationship with independent India through the Treaty of 1949. During the reign of the Third Druk Gyalpo, this relationship was further strengthened. The foundation for the special and globally acknowledged relation, that Bhutan and India today share was established. A relationship beyond the scope of the 1949 Treaty was developed and nurtured. India began to assist Bhutan in its development programmes.



Figure 3.2: Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck welcoming Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India.

Additionally, through the support of India, Bhutan became a member of several international organizations. The Third Druk Gyalpo's role in moving forward and initiating the growth and development of a very special bond with independent India is one of the most significant hallmarks of his reign.

The Third Druk Gyalpo visited India in 1954 and was the Chief Guest for India's Republic Day. While the main purpose of the visit was to acquaint himself with Indian leaders, it became the beginning of a historic moment in the histories of the two countries. During the visit, a formal invitation to visit Bhutan was extended to the Indian Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Indian Prime Minister reciprocated and, accompanied by his daughter, Indira Gandhi, who was also to become India's Prime Minister later, travelled on horseback and on yaks over the high Himalayan passes in a historic visit to Bhutan in September 1958. The Indian guests were received by the Third Druk Gyalpo, Her Majesty the Queen Azhi Kesang Choden Wangchuck, and senior Bhutanese officials at Paro. In Paro, the Indian delegation visited places of religious and cultural significance, hosted a dinner for the National Assembly members, and conducted rituals at Paro Kyichu Lhakhang. The seventeen-day visit is a milestone in Indo-Bhutan relations.

Prime Minister Nehru made a strategically important speech to the people of Bhutan on the grounds of the Ugyen Pelri Palace in Paro, a speech that was translated by the King himself. The Prime Minister declared India's policy regarding Bhutan with the following statement:

“Some may think that since India is a great and powerful country and Bhutan is a small one, the former might wish to exercise pressure on Bhutan. It is, therefore, essential that I make it clear to you that our only wish is that you should remain an independent country, choosing your own way of life and taking the path of progress according to your will. At the same time, we two should live with mutual goodwill. We are members of the same Himalayan family and should live as friendly neighbours helping each other. Freedom of both Bhutan and India should be safeguarded so that none from outside can do harm to it.”

At a time when Bhutan had sensed the need to open up, Prime Minister Nehru's visit and the personal friendship and rapport he enjoyed with the Third King encouraged Bhutan to end its policy of self-imposed isolation and embark on the process of planned development. The generous offer of friendship and support extended by Prime Minister Nehru was received with appreciation and trust by Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck.

The visit of Jawaharlal Nehru was followed by a series of activities all linked to the development of the country. The following year, in 1959, a delegation led by Bhutan's Prime Minister, Jigme Palden Dorji, visited New Delhi to discuss the development needs of the Kingdom. This was followed by a visit to India by Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. Construction of the first roads connecting Phuentsholing to Paro began in 1960. And in 1961, the first Five-Year Plan was launched, fully supported by the Indian government. The budget for the plan period was 1,747 lakh rupees. Thereafter, with technical and financial assistance, largely from India, Bhutan achieved rapid socio-economic development in a relatively short span of time.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru died in 1964, and the new Indian Prime Minister was his daughter, Indira Gandhi. She visited Bhutan in 1968, which further strengthened Bhutan's relation with India. It was during the same year that formal bilateral relations between Bhutan and India were established. The relationship developed with India was discussed in the National Assembly of Bhutan, which during its Autumn Session in 1967 resolved as follows:

“After prolonged debate, the National Assembly by a majority vote agreed to the appointment of a senior Indian officer in Bhutan whose main functions would be to prevent delays in release of funds for Indian-aided projects in Bhutan, and generally act as a Liaison officer between the two Governments in matters relating to release of foreign exchange, Inner Line Permits.....”

Following the resolution, a special officer of the Government of India to Bhutan was appointed. On May 14, 1968, the India House (Embassy of India in Bhutan) was inaugurated. Resident representatives were exchanged on 17th May, 1971.

The relation forged by the Third Druk Gyalpo and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru led to Bhutan receiving development assistance from India, which enabled Bhutan to pursue socio-economic development projects. Through Indian support, Bhutan became a member of regional and international organisations. Indo-Bhutan relations were firmly cemented and a mutually beneficial relation between a large and a small country began, which is visible even today.

International Relations

Apart from India, Bhutan did not have relations with any other countries and the international organisations. However, Druk Gyalpo was well aware of events at the international stage as he had good friends in India and abroad. He discussed matters with his friend from Switzerland, Fritz von Schulthess, and with lamas coming out of Tibet. The Sixteenth Karmapa Rangjung Rigpai Dorji was his close friend. Druk Gyalpo knew that Bhutan should establish relations with other countries and join international organizations. Bhutan had become a member of the Universal Postal Union in 1969. All these were important for Bhutan's independence and sovereignty. The relations with India helped the Third Druk Gyalpo. In 1962, Bhutan became a member of the Colombo Plan. The membership was sponsored by India.

Becoming a member of the Colombo Plan led to Bhutan's recognition as an independent country. In 1962, Australia's Prime Minister, Sir Robert Gordon Menzies, invited Bhutan to be an observer at the Colombo Plan meeting in Melbourne, Australia. A delegation from Bhutan travelled to Australia to observe the meeting. This further developed Bhutan's relations with Australia and in 1970, the Australian government provided 54 trucks, hybrid sheep and wool.

In 1958, Dr Sasuke Nakao, a university teacher at Osaka Prefecture University in Japan, was in Bhutan to study Himalayan plants. His help was sought for an agriculture expert from Japan to help Bhutan develop its agriculture sector. As there were no bilateral or multilateral relations between Bhutan and Japan, and consequently Japan could not send anyone. After membership to the Colombo Plan, Bhutan became eligible to receive assistance from donor countries like Australia, India, Japan and New Zealand. Thus, Japan could send Keiji Nishioka in 1964 to help Bhutan modernize its agriculture sector. He was conferred the red scarf by His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck in 1980.

As India had sponsored Bhutan's membership to the Colombo Plan, the Third Druk Gyalpo was confident that India would do the same when it came to the United Nations (UN). Druk Gyalpo expressed this desire to the Indian government. Once again, India supported Bhutan and on 21st September 1971, Bhutan became the 125th member of the UN. Lyonpo Sangay Penjor was sent to New York as the permanent representative to the UN.

His Royal Highness Prince Namgyel Wangchuck, Representative of Druk Gyalpo and leader of the Bhutanese delegation, emphasised the following when he addressed the 26th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 21st September 1971:

"It is now only a decade or so since we ended our age-old policy of national isolation and opened up our country to the outside world. The policy of national isolation was motivated in the past by self-interest due to geo-political considerations and not because of a lack of desire or capacity to play an active role in the international community. The policy served its end and was instrumental in preserving the country's sovereignty and independence. With the changing circumstances in the world and our desire to participate actively in the functioning of the international community, the policy lost its relevance when we joined the Colombo Plan for Cooperation Economic Development in South and South-East Asia in 1962.....That we should today have succeeded in gaining admission to this organisation whose aim represents the highest aspirations of mankind, whose contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security has been substantial, and whose work in nation-building has done so much for the progress of mankind, is an occasion for great happiness and rejoicing in my country."

Membership to the UN opened the doors for Bhutan to become members of UN related agencies and also develop ties with other countries. Apart from strengthening security and sovereignty, membership to international organizations and ties with different countries also increased Bhutan's opportunities to get aid and other developmental benefits.

In 1971, there was a war between West Pakistan and East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh). Thousands of Bangladeshis were killed, followed by famine and diseases that profoundly affected the people. The Third



Figure 3.3: Prince Namgyel Wangchuck representing Bhutan at the UN in 1971.



Figure 3.4: Hoisting of Bhutan's National Flag at the UN Headquarters.

Druk Gyalpo was personally involved in generating support to provide funds for the affected people. On the eve of a cultural programme organised to raise funds, Druk Gyalpo stated, *‘Bhutan is a close neighbour of Bangladesh. As Buddhists, we should help our friends in trouble and pain. I wish to donate Ngultrum five lakhs on behalf of our government and people for the cause of those victims through the Indian Government’*.

After Bangladesh declared independence, Bhutan was the second country after India to recognise Bangladesh as an independent country. This led to the development of relations with Bangladesh which exists even today.

Activity 1:

The Third Druk Gyalpo ended Bhutan’s long self-imposed isolation from the rest of the world. Discuss the potential economic impacts if Bhutan had continued this isolation.

Social reforms and initiatives

Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck initially focused on political and social reforms, deferring economic and infrastructural changes until a dependable long-term partner could be found to assist Bhutan. The reduction of taxes was a continuing aim from the second Druk Gyalpo onwards and His Majesty continued to make significant reductions. One such tax was the individual labour tax, which everyone between the ages of 18 to 60 had to contribute compulsorily. This could not be removed as people were required for construction works in different areas. In a major reform, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck ensured that labour tax was imposed only for activities that directly benefitted the people. This included works in the renovation of dzongs, construction of roads, and other community projects. Moreover, monetary compensations were paid to the workers.

In 1955, His Majesty intensified the conversion of commodity taxes to cash taxes by implementing a system of assessing land for cash taxation. Land holdings were measured through cadastral surveys using simple chain links. Although cash taxes were nominal, the shift from commodity taxes to cash taxes represented a radical step.

A Kasho issued in 1962 saw further reforms in labour contribution. It stated: “Till today there were clergies, district officials, subdivision *Drungpas*, from teachers to local leaders, who were supported by the people in the form of in-kind contributions, and from this year onwards (1962), only the government officials will be supported by the people while others will be not.” In 1968, a milestone in the taxation system was seen as Druk Gyalpo introduced in-cash tax system, ending the practice of taxes given in kind.

The abolishment of serfs by the Third Druk Gyalpo in 1956 is another major social reform that was initiated. *Drabs* and *Zabs* were the two main types of serfs prevalent during the third Druk Gyalpo's time. *Drabs* worked and cultivated fields of their masters in return for small holdings of land which were allotted to them for personal cultivation. On the other hand, *Zabs* worked fully for their masters and were provided basic needs like food and clothing. Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck freed these groups of people in 1956.

When Druk Gyalpo moved from Bumthang to Paro and then Thimphu, there were concerns that the eastern part of Bhutan would not receive the attention from the King. In 1958, Druk Gyalpo went on a tour of eastern Bhutan. The purpose was to meet the people of the region and find out the real needs. After this visit, a reform that concerned land was undertaken. Till then, the people of Eastern Bhutan were not permitted to migrate to the fertile lands of western Bhutan. Druk Gyalpo noted that land in eastern Bhutan was not fertile and productive. The issue was brought to the National Assembly, which was approved. This led to the migration of people from eastern Bhutan to work and make a living in the fertile western Bhutan valleys.

Development and economic initiatives

The commitment from the government of India to support and assist Bhutan in her development aspirations led to the initiation of Five Year Plans (FYPs) for the very first time in the Himalayan Kingdom. However, even before the First FYP began in 1961, the Third Druk Gyalpo started and strengthened the works of the former Kings, such as the constructions of schools. For instance, in 1958 and 1959, schools were established at Yurung in Pemagatshel and Mongar respectively. In infrastructure development, the construction of Bhutan's first road from Phuentsholing to Thimphu began in 1960.

Nonetheless, it was after the First FYP, which began in 1961 that very concrete evidences of economic development began to be seen in Bhutan. Similarly, the fruition of the Third Druk Gyalpo's economic aspirations is clearly visible in the outcomes of the two plans that were completed before his untimely demise in 1972.

The 1960s witnessed the execution of the first two Five-Year Plans in the country over the period of 1961-71. The two Five-Year Plans, Bhutan formulated in consultation with the Planning Commission of India were launched in 1961 and 1966 with a total outlay of Nu.175 million and Nu. 200 million, respectively. The entire expenditure under these plans was financed by the Government of India in the form of a grant. These plans were aimed at creating basic infrastructural facilities like roads, power, communication systems, transport, and a suitable administrative setup, besides developing agriculture and animal husbandry. The success of these plans is shown in the outcomes, which are also indicators of the Third Druk Gyalpo's economic initiatives and achievements.

A major thrust was seen in the creation of infrastructural facilities. Over 1,000 kms of roads were constructed, that included the 180 kms road linking Phuentsholing to Paro and Thimphu. Work for the 520 kms, East-West lateral road between Haa and Trashigang which had begun in the First Plan Period, was nearly completed. In 1964, the Bhutan Government Transport Service started. In 1962, a regular Postal Service was established in Bhutan. A telegraph service was instituted to communicate between Thimphu and Siliguri in India. Hydel Projects at Thimphu, Paro and Wangdiphodrang were completed. The foothill towns of Sarpang, Bhur, Gelephu, Samdrup Jongkhar and Dewathang were linked with the Assam Electricity Grid for supply of power.

Before planning commenced there was only 36 lower primary schools and 23 upper primary schools in various parts of the country. During the first five-year plan over 108 schools including two public schools, one teacher training institute and technical school were established. Bhutanese began to be sent to study in India and towards the end of the Second Plan, there were about 500 students studying in India.

Similarly, the number of hospitals increased from four to six, and over forty dispensaries have been established. BCG vaccination and malaria eradication programmes were undertaken. Vaccination against smallpox was also introduced during the First Plan Period. A number of compounders and nurses were trained both in Bhutan and India.

Assisted by the Geological Survey of India, measures to discover deposits of coal, dolomite, graphite, gypsum and lime stone started during the First FYP. The production capacities of the fruits processing plant and distillery at Samtse were increased. Marketing and sale of products from the plants were organised both within the country and India. Trade relations with India were improved. In 1968, the Bank of Bhutan was established as a further step towards full monetisation. By this time most salaries were paid in cash, rather than in kind.

In order to implement and monitor the plans, there was a need of new departments and other institutions. This led to the establishment of the Development Secretariat. The departments of education, health, human resources, electricity, telecom, agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and postal services were established in the Plan Periods.

Although the Third Druk Gyalpo initiated the plan, he could not see his aspirations of the third Five Year Plan materialise. In order to plan and implement the programmes of the third Five Year Plan, Bhutan's Planning Commission was constituted in March 1972, presided over by the Crown Prince and Druk Gyalpo himself, with all ministers as members.

The Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck initiated planned development through the incorporation of the cyclic Five-Year Plan system. He clearly understood the needs of Bhutan and focused mainly on infrastructure development in the First Two Plan Periods.

Simultaneously, revenue generators like agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and mining were prioritised. Platforms for trade within and beyond the country were opened. The first bank was established and the National Currency introduced. Departments to implement and monitor development programmes were established. At the centre, the Planning Commission was formed to ensure that Bhutan reaped the benefits of planned development. Foundations for harnessing hydropower started with talks for the construction of the Chukha hydro power project.

Additionally, the social sectors were steadily strengthened. More schools and hospitals were established. Bhutanese started to avail scholarships for pursuing further studies in India. Within the country, infrastructures and institutions for strengthening human resources in technical, education and health services began. The Third Druk Gyalpo laid the founding stones for the progress of Bhutan during the times of his successors. He is rightfully known as the Father of Modern Bhutan.

Constitutional Reforms

Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck's reference as the Father of Modern Bhutan is not only linked to what he did for the socio-economic development of Bhutan. Years before the Indian Government committed to assist Bhutan in development and the Five-Year Plans began, Druk Gyalpo initiated very significant reforms in the governing structure of the country. He brought the people closer to governance, consulted representatives of the people in major decisions, made himself accountable to the people, drafted laws and legislations and strengthened the Judiciary. Just as he began planned development and laid the foundations for Bhutan's enhanced socio-economic progress in the times of his successors, the stepping stones for most of the reforms and initiatives that his son, the Fourth Druk Gyalpo would later institute in governance were laid by the Third Druk Gyalpo. He is thus, the Father of Modern Bhutan even from the angle of governance and the constitutional structure.

The first visionary initiative taken by the Third Druk Gyalpo was the establishment of *Tshogdu* (National Assembly of Bhutan) in 1953. This was the first approach to participatory form of government and the involvement of people in development and governance. Through the National Assembly, Druk Gyalpo could meet and interact with representatives from all gewogs of the country and know their real needs. The King was also able to share his vision of the country with the people.

Druk Gyalpo involved the National Assembly in several other areas. Together with the National Assembly members, new laws such as rules for the Speaker of the National Assembly, Tourism and Custom Regulations, Citizenship Act, Motor Vehicle Act were

enacted. The National Assembly discussed the draft *Thrimzhung Chenmo* (Supreme Law) beginning from 1953, until it was adopted in 1959.

However, the involvement of the National Assembly meant that all issues had to wait for the Assembly to convene. Therefore, when there were urgent and important issues, the solution came in the form of the *Lodre Tshogdu* (Royal Advisory Council), which was established with eight members in 1965. The King sought the advice of these members on issues of grave national concern.



Figure 3.5: the first National Assembly session held in Punakha Dzong in 1953

In 1954, Druk Gyalpo established the office of Commissioner of Southern Bhutan (*Lhotsham Chichab*). This was based in modern Sarpang and the office remained functional until new dzongkhags of the south were formed during the Fourth Druk Gyalpo's time. The establishment of this office for the south is another indication of decentralised governance that the Third Druk Gyalpo instituted.

Another initiative of the Third Druk Gyalpo, which exists even today, is the judiciary and the laws. The draft *Thrimzhung Chenmo* (Supreme Law), was discussed and debated in the National Assembly. In 1959, the National Assembly approved it and the *Thrimzhung Chenmo* was adopted. With the *Thrimzhung Chenmo* in place, a system for the implementation of the laws became necessary. His Majesty decided to initiate the establishment of judiciary, first with the appointment of *Thrimpons* (now called *Drangpons*) in districts, and then finally with the High Court in 1968. These administrative and social reforms were prior to any economic modernisation programmes.

Activity 2:

Explain the Third Druk Gyalpo as the Father of Modern Bhutan with focus on socio-economic and constitutional reforms.

Others

The Third Druk Gyalpo endeavoured to promote Buddhist teachings and preserve the rich cultural heritage. In 1966, Druk Gyalpo commissioned golden calligraphic work on *Kanjur*, the one that was written during the rule of Desi Ngawang Tshering in 1701. A fire had destroyed most of them.

On the initiative of The Druk Gyalpo, the making of 10,000 statues of Buddha, built purely out of copper and gold began. The Druk Gyalpo also presented a new thongdrel to Kurje temple, dedicating it to the late Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru and the victims' of 1968 landslides in India.

Besides renovating several temples and monasteries, The Druk Gyalpo opened the Buddhist centres at Phajoding, Tshangkha and Tango. In 1961, Druk Gyalpo opened a Rigney School in Wangditse, Thimphu, which was later, shifted to Semtokha. New rabdeys were established in Zhemgang and Mongar in 1966.

On the security front, Druk Gyalpo established the Trencholing Army Headquarter in 1959. Several army camps were set up in the northern borders of Bhutan. The Royal Body Guard was formed in 1958 and the Royal Bhutan Police in 1965.

Druk Gyalpo passed away on 21st July, 1972 at Nairobi in Kenya. Druk Gyalpo was just 45. The body was flown from Kenya and received at Hashimara, India. Thousands of people came to pay their respects when it was moved from Phuentsholing to Dechencholing Palace, Thimphu. Many leaders from neighbouring countries came to pay their last respects to His Majesty. Among them were the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Ministers of Nepal and Bangladesh, the Prince and Princess of Sikkim, heads of different missions and ambassadors.

The body was conveyed to Bumthang on the 13th Day of 9th Bhutanese Calendar Month in 1972. The funeral was performed at Kurje temple on the day coinciding with *Lhabap Duechen*.

Azhi Kesang Choden Wangchuck - Dharma and Cultural Patron

Her Royal Grandmother, Azhi Kesang Choden Wangchuck, is one of the most influential figures in the history of Bhutan and a significant patron of the cultural and spiritual heritage of the country. The Royal Grandmother has supported and facilitated the flourishing of traditional architecture, woodcarving, sculpture, painting, and silversmithy. As the Patron of Dharma, the Royal Grandmother's roles are manifested in her vast contributions to the monastic communities, monasteries, and spiritual lineages in Bhutan.



Figure 3.7: Her Royal Grandmother Azhi Kesang Choden Wangchuck

The Royal Grandmother developed her interests in arts and crafts, inheriting them from her mother, Rani Choying Wangmo Dorji. Rani Choying Wangmo Dorji was a scholar with a profound fascination for the history and culture of Tibet, Bhutan, and Sikkim. Much like her mother, Her Majesty Gyalyum Kesang Choden Wangchuck has played a pivotal role in influencing and encouraging numerous individuals and institutions in their endeavours to preserve Bhutan's culture, traditions, and craftsmanship.

In the 1970s, The Royal Grandmother refashioned motifs such as peonies, dancing yaks, deer, snow lions and birds, particularly parrots into Bhutanese silver *chakar tri-me* and brooches. Her Majesty also introduced gold thread into the traditional designs of Bhutanese weaves. Due to Her Majesty's personal interest, these traditional art forms have not been lost and continue to flourish.

In a move that led to the development of skills and the sustenance of arts, the Royal Grandmother enlisted a team of committed artisans from across the country. Her Majesty not only asked these craftsmen for excellent quality workmanship but also for close attention to the artistic and cultural intricacies found in historic monasteries.

One of The Royal Grandmother's significant and recent contributions has been revival of the living tradition of traveling altars called *Tashigomangs*, together with their custodians



Figure 3.7: Tashi Gomang

known as *Lam Manips*. Found only in Bhutan, this was on the verge of extinction, with only two old *Lam Manips* left. Her Majesty inspired the creation of the *Tashigomang* Trust for the revival and continuity of this unique tradition.

As the Patron of Dharma, The Royal Grandmother's devotion and faith are also manifested in her daily routines, where she dedicates a significant part of the day to prayers for the security, welfare, and well-being of the people and Kingdom of Bhutan. On the other hand, it is difficult to find a sacred place or institute in Bhutan untouched by The Royal Grandmother's gracious hand. Through her initiatives and inspiration, Dharma continues to flourish in Bhutan.

In 1966, as advised by His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Her Majesty and her mother Rani Choying Wangmo Dorji built a new Guru Lhakhang adjacent to the sacred seventh century Jowo Lhakhang, comprising of a one-storey Guru Nangsid Zilnon as its principal image in Kyichu, Paro.

In 1974, The Royal Grandmother built the Langchen Palgyi Sengye Chorten, at Taktsang. Langchen Palgyi Sengye, one of the 108 translators and one of the twenty-five main disciples of Guru Padmasambhava, is said to have visited and blessed the sacred site of Taktsang Monastery in the eighth century. Dedicated to Langchen Palgyi Sengye and to strengthen the sacred sanctity of Taktsang Monastery, the construction of the chorten was for the benefit of the Kings, the Royal Family, the people and Kingdom of Bhutan.

While Her Majesty's meritorious actions are too numerous to list comprehensively, some of the most well-known include the enlargement and repair of Kyichu Lhakhang in Paro in 1968. Her Majesty construction of a third temple at Kurje Lhakhang in Bumthang, and the created 108 stupas surrounding the complex on the model of Samye in Tibet. In 2008, Her Majesty, also established the Zangdo Pelri temple near Kurje.

In 2014, Her Majesty contributed to the restoration of the Drechagling temple in the Phobjikha Valley, which had been one of the seats of the great 14th-century master Longchen Rabjam. In 2015, Her Majesty sponsored the creation of the thongdroel at Silung Pekar Choling monastery in Paro Dawakha. All these remarkable and enduring projects involved the expertise of the best craftsmen and artists from across Bhutan, including clay sculptors and exceptional painters.

On 15th November 2019, the consecration ceremony of Paro Duntse Lhakhang was held. The Lhakhang has been restored to its former glory by the Duntse Lhakhang Restoration Project Team of Her Majesty the Royal Grandmother Azhi Kesang Choden Wangchuck.

The above are a few of the dedicated services The Royal Grandmother has been involved with. She is also a major patron of the annual prayers conducted for the well-being and security of the King, the People, and the Country of Bhutan. Sponsored by Her Majesty, hundreds of monks study and practice the Dharma in different parts of the country.

The Royal Grandmother has also achieved recognition for her selfless endeavours. On 21st May, 1986, The Royal Grandmother received the Order of Druk Thuksey from The Fourth Druk Gyalpo. On 15th November 2008, Her Majesty became one of the first recipients of the highest medal, the Order of the Druk Gyalpo (Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo), conferred by Druk Gyalpo Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. These prestigious honours were conferred upon The Royal Grandmother in recognition of her lifetime service to the people and the Kingdom of Bhutan. She continues to serve as a royal patron of culture, religion, and the arts.

Conclusion

Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck's reign from 1952 to 1972 marked a pivotal and historic period for Bhutan and its people. Immediately upon ascending the throne, he initiated governance reforms. His visit to India marked the beginning of a special relationship between the governments of India and Bhutan. On the international stage, Bhutan joined several organisations and, in 1971, became a member of the United Nations. These actions strengthened the security and sovereignty of Bhutan. For these reasons, Druk Gyalpo is fondly remembered as the Father of Modern Bhutan.

Chapter Four

Parliament, Judiciary and Local Government

KEY TERMS

Parliament	Legislature	Executive
Judiciary	Bicameral	Bill
Local Government	National Assembly	National Council

Introduction

The government is the organization responsible for administering a country. The executive, the legislature, and the judiciary constitute the three branches of government. These branches are established based on the principle of the separation of powers, ensuring that authority is not concentrated in the hands of a single institution or a few individuals. This framework introduces checks and balances, preventing one institution from encroaching on the domain of another. In other words, it prevents a single institution or a group of public servants from simultaneously making laws, implementing them, and passing judgments, as such a scenario could lead to the abuse of power.

Parliament

The Parliament of Bhutan serves as the supreme legislative authority or in which all legislative powers are vested under the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. It consists of the Druk Gyalpo, the National Council and the National Assembly. The National Council comprises a member elected from each of the twenty dzongkhags and five eminent members nominated by The Druk Gyalpo. Meanwhile, the National Assembly consists of forty-seven elected members from the Ruling Party and the Opposition Party. The National Assembly is led by the Speaker, elected from among the members of the Ruling Party, while the National Council is headed by the Chairperson, elected from among its members. Parliament ensures that the Government safeguards the interests of the nation and the people through the public review of policies, issues, bills, and other legislations.

Role of the National Assembly (Gyalyong Tshogdu)

The National Assembly is one of the chambers of Parliament of Bhutan. It is political in nature because it is formed by elected members from two political parties, the Ruling Party and the Opposition Party. The role of the National Assembly includes the following:

- **Legislative role:** The National Assembly holds the constitutional mandate to enact and amend laws. The House can introduce new bills or propose the review and amendment of existing laws.
- **Oversight role:** The National Assembly fulfills its oversight role by establishing parliamentary committees that study and discuss matters of public interest beyond the purview of the House's legislative functions. These committees are tasked with scrutinizing government activities, the functioning of public institutions, and public policies and decisions.
- **Representational role:** Members of the National Assembly are mandated to visit their constituencies at least twice a year to identify issues affecting the people and find ways to address them. The forty-seven members of the House represent the forty-seven constituencies spread across twenty dzongkhags. What they bring to the House for deliberation is expected to be representative of the voice of their constituents, people who voted them into the House.



Figure 4.1: National Assembly of Bhutan

Role of the National Council (Gyalyong Tshogde)

The National Council is the non-partisan chamber of the Parliament of Bhutan. It is also referred as the House of Review. It comprises of twenty members elected from each of the twenty dzongkhags, who do not belong to any political party, and five eminent members nominated by Druk Gyalpo. The role of the National Council includes the following:

- **Legislative role:** Similar to the National Assembly, the National Council holds the



Figure 4.2: National Council of Bhutan

constitutional mandate to enact and amend laws. The House can table new bills, with the exception of money and financial bills, or propose the review and amendment of existing laws.

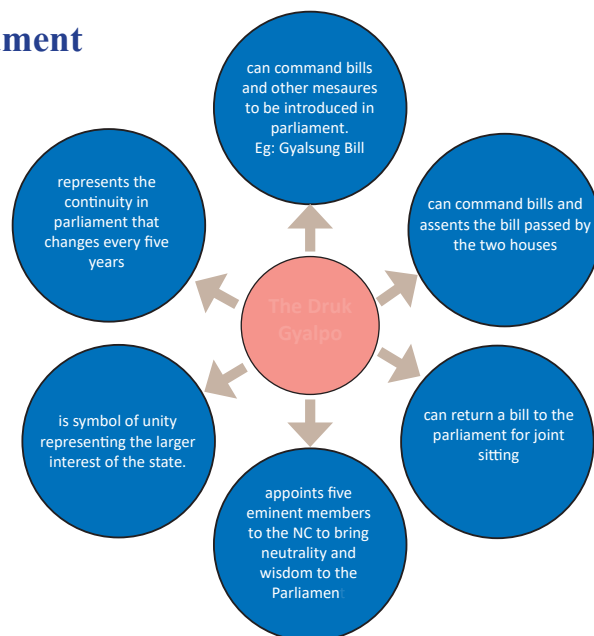
- **Review role:** Beyond its legislative functions, the National Council acts as the House of Review on matters affecting the security, sovereignty of the country, and the interests of the people. The House is mandated to bring such matters to the notice of Druk Gyalpo, the Prime Minister, and the National Assembly. Through its committees, the House reviews and comments on policies, plans, programmes of the government. It reviews the government's performance, the implementation of resolutions and laws passed by parliament, and reviews issues of national importance.
- **Representational role:** The twenty elected members of the House represent the people of the twenty dzongkhags in the National Council. Each dzongkhag serves as a constituency for a member of the House, which is at least two times larger than the constituencies of the National Assembly. During their constituency visits, National Council members identify issues affecting the people and explore ways to address them.

Activity 1:

Examine the distinctive difference in roles of the National Assembly (Gyalyong Tshogdu) and the National Council (Gyalyong Tshogdu).

Role of The Druk Gyalpo in Parliament

The Druk Gyalpo is an indispensable part of the Parliament of Bhutan. He has equal legislative and review powers as the National Assembly and the National Council, although he does not take part in the parliamentary deliberations in person or through a direct representative.



Just as the National Assembly and the National Council can initiate bills, The Druk Gyalpo, in the exercise of his Royal Prerogative, can command bills and other measures to be introduced in Parliament. The Gyalsung Bill is expected to be the first bill initiated and introduced to Parliament by The Druk Gyalpo.

The bill passed by the two Houses of Parliament will become a law only with the assent of The Druk Gyalpo. The Druk Gyalpo may not grant assent to a bill and return it to Parliament with amendments or objections.

The Druk Gyalpo may respond to a motion in Parliament in writing or by addressing a joint sitting of Parliament in person or through a representative. Besides, The Druk Gyalpo appoints five eminent members to the National Council who, as independent and eminent members of society, bring neutrality and wisdom to Parliament.

As the head of the State, The Druk Gyalpo is the symbol of unity representing all institutions of the State. Therefore, The Druk Gyalpo in Parliament represents the larger interest of the State and the unity of people in Parliament representing diverse voices. Moreover, The Druk Gyalpo represents continuity in Parliament that changes every five years.

Bills

A bill is a draft of a proposed new law or a proposal to change an existing law presented to Parliament for debate and discussion. In simple terms, it is a draft law. After Parliament deliberates on it and passes it, it becomes an act or law. A Bill passed by Parliament shall come into force upon Assent of the Druk Gyalpo.

Types of Bills

In Bhutan, Bills are broadly classified into three types:

- **Government Bills or Public Bills** are bills introduced to Parliament by a government minister or the chairperson of a parliamentary committee. Most bills introduced in Parliament are public bills.
- **Private Members' Bills** are introduced by individual member MPs in Parliament.
- **Urgent Bills** are bills introduced in Parliament to address threats to the security and sovereignty of the country. Unlike other bills, urgent bills must be passed in the same session of Parliament.

Box 4.1: Types of Bills

The Procedure for Passing Bills

A bill introduced in either House of Parliament must follow the procedures set out in the Rules of Procedure of the two Houses. In short, the Parliament of Bhutan follows the following rules of procedure.

- Money Bills and Financial Bills shall originate only in the National Assembly, while any other legislative bill originate in either the National Assembly or the National Council.
- A bill pending in either House will not lapse if a session discontinues.
- A bill is passed by a simple majority in either House or by not less than two-thirds of the members present in a joint sitting.
- A bill introduced and passed by House A (say National Council)) is presented to House B (say National Assembly) within 30 days from the date of passing the bill. If House B also passes the bill, it is submitted to Druk Gyalpo for Assent within 15 days from the date of passing the bill. However, if House B does not pass the bill, it is returned to House A with amendments or objections for re-deliberation. If the bill is subsequently passed, it is submitted to Druk Gyalpo for Assent within 15 days from the date of passing the bill.
- However, if House A refuses to incorporate the amendments and objections recommended by House B, it submits the bill to Druk Gyalpo who will command House A and House B to deliberate and vote on the bill in a joint sitting of Parliament.
- While an ordinary bill passed by one House may be passed by the other House during the next session of Parliament, urgent bills must be passed in the same session. Other bills must be put aside to prioritise the deliberation on the urgent bill.

Executive

The executive refers to the government. The responsibility of the executive is to put laws made by Parliament into action, make plans and policies, and govern the country. In Bhutan, the executive refers to the Lhengye Zhungtshog, which consists of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister. The responsibilities of Lhengye Zhungtshog as enshrined in the Constitution include:

- a) Assess the state of affairs arising from developments in the state and society and from events at home and abroad.
- b) Define the goals of State action and determine the resources required to achieve them.
- c) Plan and coordinate government policies and ensure their implementation.
- d) Represent the Kingdom at home and abroad.

Judiciary

The judiciary refers to the system of courts. The responsibility of the judiciary is to interpret laws made by the legislature and administer justice. The judicial authority of Bhutan is vested in the Royal Courts of Justice comprising of the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Dzongkhag Court, the Dungkhag Court, and other courts and tribunals established from time to time by the Druk Gyalpo on the recommendation of the National Judicial Commission.

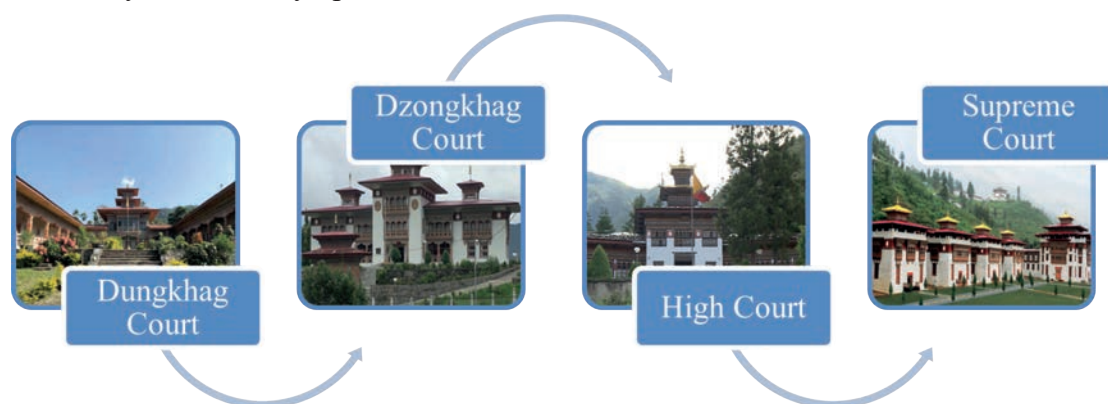


Figure 4.3: Judicial system of Bhutan

The responsibility of Bhutan's judiciary, enshrined in the Constitution, includes the following key aspects:

The Judiciary shall safeguard, uphold, and administer Justice fairly and independently without fear, favour, or undue delay in accordance with the Rule of Law to inspire trust and confidence and to enhance access to Justice.

Local Government

Local government is an administrative unit at the district level. His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo defined local government in the most succinct terms:

Local government is NOT the lowest level of government; it is the nearest and closest level of government for our people. For rural Bhutanese, local governments are indispensable avenues for participation in democracy and development. In the long run, the success of democracy in Bhutan will be determined by the success of local governments.



Figure 4.4: His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo granted dhar and kabney to gups elected in the first local government election, 27 June 2011

In Bhutan, each dzongkhag has a local government comprising the Dzongkhag Tshogdu (formerly Dzongkhag Yargay Tshogdu established in 1981), Gewog Tshogde (formerly Gewog Yargay Tshogchung established in 1991), and Thromde Tshogde. Their members (*Gups, Mangmis, Chiwog Tshogpas, Thrompons, and Thromde Tshogpas*) are elected among the people by the people from within the given local territorial jurisdictions. Local government underlines the importance of decentralisation to enable greater participation of the people.

Role of Local Government

Local government decentralises power to the people at the grassroots level. It promotes self-governance by tapping and developing local resources and capabilities, and promoting local interests. The Constitution underlines that local government will ‘facilitate the direct participation of the people in the development and management of their own social, economic and environmental well-being.’ The Constitution mandates local government to play the following role:

- a) Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities.
- b) Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner.
- c) Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local governance.
- d) Discharge any other responsibilities as may be prescribed by law made by Parliament.

Activity 2:

How do the roles of Local Government contribute and serve to justify the needs of the local community?

Conclusion

For the separation of government’s powers, there are three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judiciary. Each branch has its own powers and responsibilities that ensure the government is effective and citizens’ rights are protected. To further supplement effective governance in the country, local government enables people at the grassroots level to have direct participation in the decision-making process. The local government forms the basis on which people can act, participate and decide not only on issues of their concern but also address issues that have a greater bearing.



Chapter Five

Pema Lingpa: *A Spiritual and Cultural Luminary of the Soil*

KEY TERMS

Peling, Trade Mark, Liturgical, Choeje, Zhelngo, Luminary

Introduction

Pema Lingpa was a native Bhutanese saint and scholar, well-known in the Himalayan Buddhist world. His artistic creations continue to contribute to Bhutan's socio-cultural identity, while his scholarly revelations shape Bhutanese thoughts and ideologies in the form of spiritual and religious doctrine.

He was also the only Bhutanese *tertoen* among the numerous Buddhist treasure revealers and was one of the five king *tertoens* or major treasure revealers widely regarded even beyond Bhutan. Pema Lingpa, therefore, is unquestionably an unmatched Bhutan's own spiritual and cultural luminary.

Peling Tradition

Tradition is generally defined as an inherited or an established folk custom, thoughts and behaviours in the culture of religious or social practices. Therefore, by definition, Peling tradition means the folk customs, thoughts or behaviours inherited from or established by Pema Lingpa. It is called the Peling tradition because it has characteristics unique to only the generation of practitioners and followers of Pema Lingpa and his lineage. His traditions can be broadly categorised as the spiritual and cultural traditions of Pema Lingpa. At the same time his spiritual, cultural and secular legacy can also be considered as part of his tradition. This is because, they form the part of the establishment or the institution started or associated to Pema Lingpa and his works of influence.

Treasures discovered by Pema Lingpa

The spiritual traditions of Pema Lingpa are formed by his discovered treasure, teachings, and the later works by himself and other students following and practising his teachings.

Pema Lingpa discovered thirty-two hidden treasures, out of which thirteen revelations were textual discoveries containing major spiritual practice and teaching, while the nineteen revelations contained various scrolls and material treasures.

From his thirteen revelations, he uncovered at least seventeen volumes of spiritual practices and teachings which formed the foundation of the spiritual tradition of Pema Lingpa.

As a treasure discoverer and a Buddhist master, he taught many Buddhist philosophical thoughts and spiritual practices throughout his life based on his treasure revelations. Besides the treasure texts he discovered, he also composed several other philosophical, liturgical, and other works of spiritual value to the societies, which has at least twenty-one volumes of Peling Choekhor compiled by Dudjom Rinpoche Jigdrel Yeshe Dorji. However, a recent compilation of Peling Choekhor by the Gangteng Monastery in Wangdue Phodrang has thirty-two volumes. This Buddhist philosophical thoughts and practices he taught and left in the form of both oral and textual heritage remain unbroken in its lineage of transmission in Bhutan and across the Himalaya which forms the spiritual tradition of Pema Lingpa.

Pema Lingpa's Contribution to the Spiritual dances of Bhutan

Terton Pema Lingpa is not only a spiritual master but a cultural creator and a craftsman, as he established monastic traditions to promote his teaching and spiritual practices. He instituted several religious and cultural traditions such as the annual rituals, festivals, and customs which formed his tradition of culture. The most extraordinary cultural tradition of Pema Lingpa is his visionary *Chham* (mask dances) known as *Peling-ter Chham*, the treasure dance. The treasure dance of Pema Lingpa is a national cultural heritage celebrated across the country. Some of the most popular treasure dances of Pema Lingpa are as follow:

Peling Gingsum: Pema Lingpa, based on one of his visionary experiences, while visiting Zangdog Pelri, witnessed how Guru Rinpoche miraculously subjugated the evil spirits by through the three *Ging* dances. On this account, Pema Lingpa introduced the sacred mask dances known as the *Peling Gingsum* representing the three dances of *ging* or emanations of Guru Rinpoche in the Pema Lingpa tradition. These dances include *Juging* (dance holding stick), *Driging* (dance holding sword), and *Ngaging* (dance holding drum). The *Peling Gingsum chham* is considered extremely sacred, and those who witness it are believed to accumulate great merit. It is practiced in all the Dzongkhag Tsechus and most of the monastic festivals.



Figure 5.1: Peling Gingsum (Juging, Driging and Ngaging)

Drametse Ngachham: *Drametse Ngachham* is the most popular mask dance performed throughout Bhutan during festivals held in honour of Guru Rinpoche. Commonly thought to be first introduced by Khedrup Kuenga Gyeltshen in the 16th century at Ogyen Thechog Namdroel Choeling monastery in Drametse, Mongar. Many believe he was a brother of Pema Lingpa's great-granddaughter, Ani Choeten Zangmo, who settled in Drametse. It is believed that during a meditative retreat, Khedrup Kuenga Gyeltshen visited the celestial palace of Zangdog Pelri, where he witnessed the heavenly attendants of Guru Rinpoche transform themselves into wrathful and peaceful deities, performing a dance using drums and drumsticks. Inspired by this vision, he introduced the dance in Drametse. The significance of *Drametse Ngachham* is manifold: its performance helps the Mahayana teachings flourish, brings peace to sentient beings, prevents calamities and internal strife, and brings good fortune to the country. This is the only intangible culture of Bhutan inscribed with UNESCO on the representative list of Bhutanese intangible culture.



Figure 5.2: Drametse

Pachham: It literally means the dance of the 'heroes' and is generally considered among the treasure dances of Pema Lingpa. *Pachham* was introduced in the 15th century by Tertoen Pema Lingpa after he saw the *pawos* and *pamos* perform this dance in the Zangdo Pelri (copper palace) while he visited in his vision. Pema Lingpa introduced this dance to lead those who witness it into the presence of Guru Rinpoche. Pachham is the dance performed in a peaceful form for the benefit of sentient beings.



Figure 5.3: Pachham

Zhingsheg Pemo: Also, among the many treasure dances of Pema Lingpa, it is performed in pairs of two, four, and sometimes even more. This *chham* is performed mostly with the *Soeldeb Leuduenma* (seven chapter prayers to Guru Rinpoche) recital rite during religious ceremonies, rituals, and festivals.



Figure 5.4: Zhingshed Pemo

There are several other *chhams* across the eastern regions associated with and inspired by the works of Pema Lingpa, exhibiting his artistic influence and contribution to the country. Pema Lingpa was a craftsman known for his skills in metal crafting, trained by Garwa Yonten Gyaltsen. His works of art include the masterpiece known as Bumthang *tsendre* for the swords he crafted and the *Peling Golang* for the pans he created from metal. Chain-linked body armours, crafted through his blacksmithing skills, are preserved in temples in Bumthang, including Tamzhing Lhakhang. He also crafted stone grinders for watermills to grind flour from cereals. All of these are preserved as masterpieces of his original craftsmanship and as relics of an accomplished master. Each masterpiece is said to bear his thumbprint as a trademark. Therefore, he is not only an artist and a craftsman promoting arts and crafts but also a figure contributing to spiritual, religious, and cultural traditions. His creations form a unique cultural identity of their own. It is Pema Lingpa's rich traditions of spiritual and cultural practices that have shaped Bhutan's cultural identity and nationhood.

The Spiritual Legacy of Pema Lingpa

Pema Lingpa, we understand, was the native spiritual and cultural hero of the country, a renowned Bhutanese personality across Himalayan Buddhist societies. The spiritual tradition and religious cultures he established are integral to many Buddhist communities across the Himalayas. The monastic centres founded by him, his son, and their followers played vital roles in the spread and preservation of the Peling tradition to this day. The main monastic centres responsible for the Peling tradition and its lineage are at Tamzhing, Drametse, and Gangteng monasteries in Bhutan, as well as Lhalung Monastery in Tibet.



Figure 5.6: Tamzhing, Drametse and Gangteng Monasteries

Pema Lingpa was highly respected and regarded across Bhutan. Subsequently, this respect extended to his family and the incarnate line of the tradition in later times, which continues to thrive. For instance, during the unification process under Zhabdrung, when other Buddhist traditions in the country faced conflict with the Drukpa authority, the Peling tradition enjoyed significant recognition and respect. Gyalsey Pema Thinley, Pema Lingpa's grandson who founded Gangteng Monastery, was respected and acknowledged by Zhabdrung Rinpoche as a spiritual figure of the soil. This recognition was primarily because Pema Lingpa had not only established great respect for himself but also for the entire tradition and the succeeding holders of the tradition he established as the founder.

He enjoyed a significant following of students, patrons, and followers across and beyond Bhutan. Besides his spiritual attainment as a master, he was admired for his neutrality, respect, and regard for everyone associated with him, regardless of individual differences among his disciples. This is why Pema Lingpa is the only Bhutanese spiritual leader who had influence not only in Bhutan but also across the border in Tibet and Monyul. He is said to have traveled at least twenty-four times to Tibet and twice to Monyul, now in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Many important figures and families from Tibet and Monyul regularly visited and consulted him throughout his life, seeking both spiritual and secular advice and guidance. The large gatherings of people and prominent personalities from these places became integral to his sermons and teachings, helping him extend his spiritual and social influence. The offerings and gifts he brought back from these visits, which included large herd of horses are said to have greatly benefited the economy back home.

His spiritual legacy and influence continue to contribute to the lives of Bhutanese people through the unbroken line of transmission sustained by his sons, students, and patrons. His sons, Kencho Zangpo, Dawa Gyaltsen, and Dragpa Gyalpo were the three heart sons who equaled his realization. Khedrup Kuenga Wangpo and Gyalsey Sangdag were the two lineage sons whose family line later played important secular roles in Bhutan. Out of the huge assembly of his other students, he had seven chief disciples, such as Khenchen Tsultrim Paljor, Trulku Natshog Rangdrol, and Sumthrang Choeje Paldhen Zangpo. Six attained the status of masters, including Karchen Kuendrag, six were treasure discoverers like Lethro Lingpa and Trulku Chogdhen Goenpo, and six revealed signs of realizations, such as Lama Kuenam Rakshita.

Today, the spiritual legacy of Pema Lingpa is mainly continued by the three incarnate lines of the Peling tradition. They are Peling Sungtrul, the incarnate line of Pema Lingpa himself, Peling Thuksey, the incarnate line of his son Thuksey Dawa Gyaltsen and Gangtey Trulku, the incarnate line of his grandson Gyalsey Pema Thinley, taking care of the monastic institutions of Drametse, Tamzhing, and Gangteng, respectively.

Political influence of Peling Lineages

As much as the spiritual influence and legacy of Pema Lingpa, he had a great deal of secular influence and legacy which contributed to Bhutanese lives.

The connections and network of followers he had with important figures and families who became his patrons and supporters across and beyond Bhutan offered him the secular mileage of political influence within and outside.

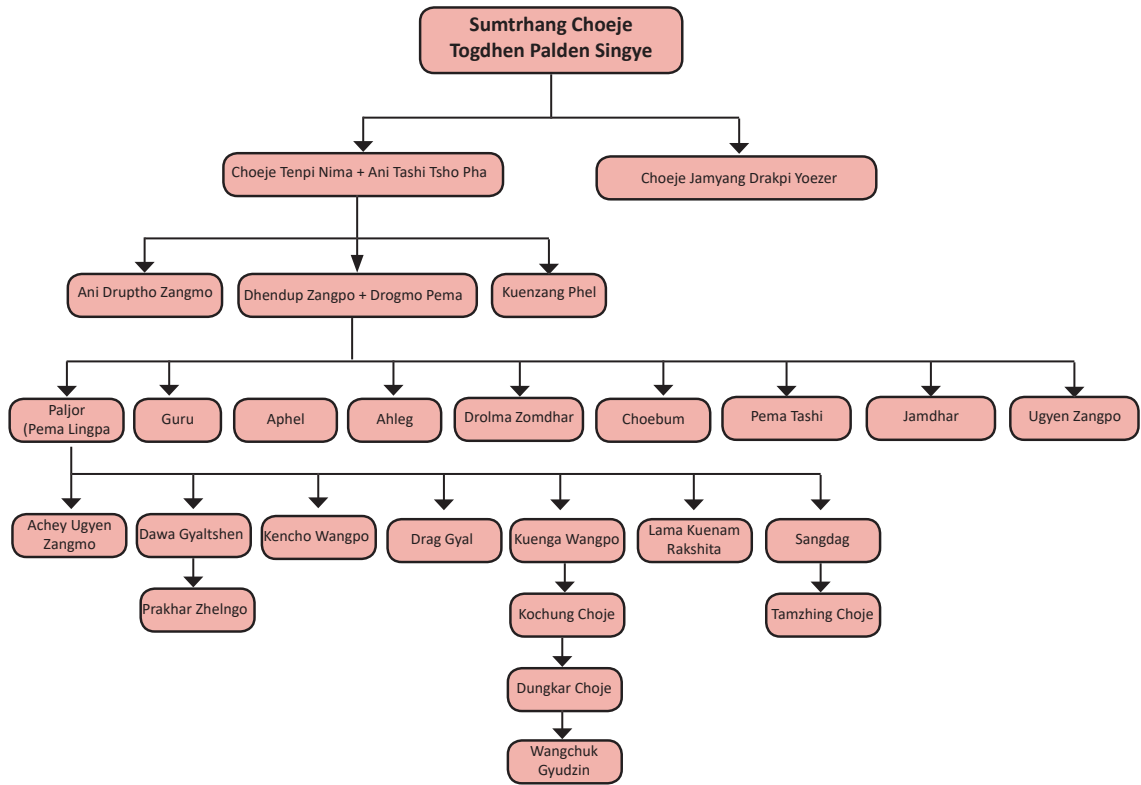
Patrons of Pema Lingpa

Some of the lay patrons and disciples of Pema Lingpa known from Bhutan during his time include Dung Lhawang and Jowo Namgyal Tashi of Ura, Choekhor Deb Thuba Tashi and Choekyi Tashi. To the north of Bhutan in Tibet, he enjoyed the support and patronage of disciples such as Sonam Lhendup and Gyalwa Dhendup, the Nangso (regional governor) of Lhalung, Tashi Dargyal, a ruler of the Ja clan, and Dhakchen Dhendup Phagpa, a hereditary governor of Gyantse in Tibet. Pema Lingpa was also followed and revered by Tibetan aristocratic families, including Depa Yargyaba, Depa Kyishopa, rulers of Phagmodru, and the Nangso of Ngakartsepa and Taglung.

In the northeastern part of India, King Jophag Dharma of Shar Dongkha in today's Arunachal Pradesh, otherwise known as Nilambar, the last ruler of the kingdom of Kamata, and King Dharma of Monyul were also his disciples and patrons. They depended on Pema Lingpa for both spiritual and secular advice.

Meanwhile, the family line of the Peling tradition remains an important secular legacy of Pema Lingpa in shaping Bhutan. The Peling descendants from the family line of his sons produced many historically important spiritual and secular figures who shaped the socio-cultural identity of Bhutan.

The Tamzhing Choeje, Khochung Choeje, Trakar Zhelngo and Drametse Choeje, all of which are part of Pema Lingpa's family legacy, became the origin of many other Peling family establishments across Bhutan. These main and the extended family line of Pema Lingpa produced many spiritual figures, including several incarnate lines of Zhabdrung and medieval political figures who became Desis, Poenlops, Dzongpoens and other key figures responsible for shaping Bhutan.



However, Dungkar Choeje originated from the Khochung Choeje family of Pema Lingpa's son Khedrup Kuenga Wangpo, remains the most important part of the legacy as the origin of Bhutan's monarchs. Bhutan's monarchy, the Wangchuck dynasty provided the leadership in bringing Bhutan out of the medieval instability beginning with the leadership in Jigme Namgyel.

Having established a stable nation, the Wangchuck dynasty continues to guide Bhutan through the 21st century, playing the vital role in the lives of Bhutanese people and remaining the important secular legacy of the Peling family institution.

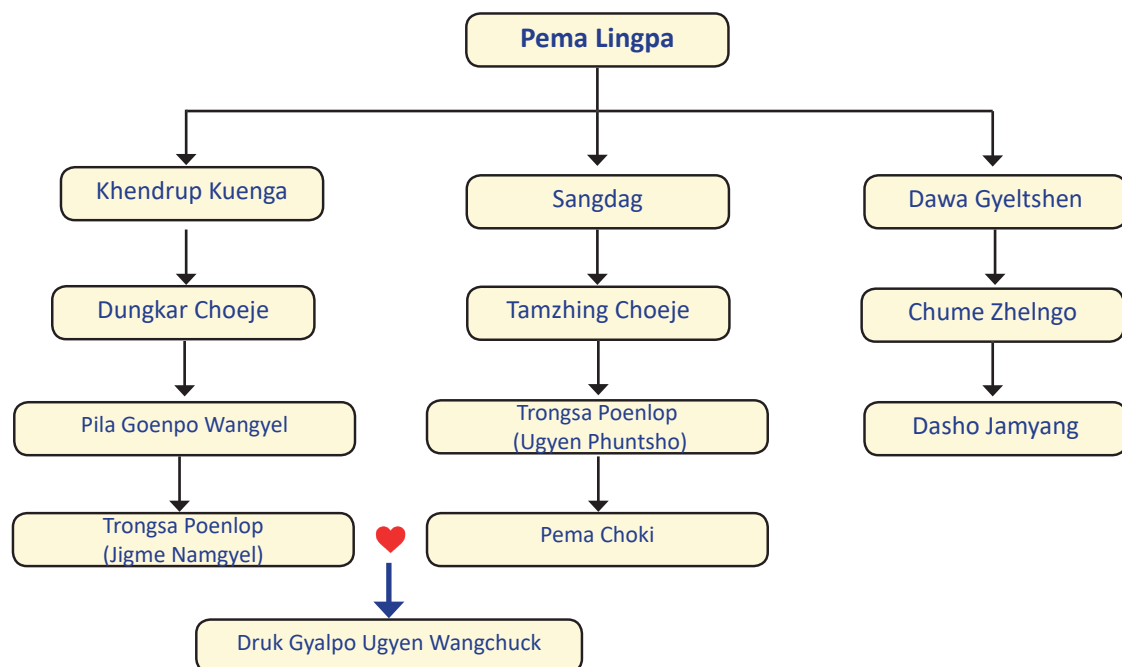


Figure 5.7: Union of three family lineages of Tertoen Pema Lingpa

Activity 1:

On the third day of the first month in the Bhutanese calendar, which coincides with the death anniversary of Pema Lingpa, the day has been officially observed since 2020 and is celebrated as Pema Lingpa Day. Explore and discuss the significance of celebrating Pema Lingpa Day for the Bhutanese.

Conclusion

Among the numerous Tertoen, Pema Lingpa was by far the greatest Tertoen to have been born and made discoveries in Bhutan and beyond. He was one of the five great king treasure discoverers (*Tertoen Gyalpo Nga*), prophesied by Guru Rinpoche by name in the biography ‘*Kathang Duep*.’ With his wide range of talents and the various roles he played in religion and society, he undoubtedly remains the greatest among the numerous Tertoen in Bhutan. Many of Bhutan’s cultural expressions are derived from Pema Lingpa and his works. The texts he discovered, the dances he composed, and the works of art he commissioned are the national heritage of Bhutan. Through his descendants, Tertoen Pema Lingpa continues to shape Bhutan’s socio-cultural and political history. Pema Lingpa is undoubtedly the greatest saint ever born in Bhutan.

Chapter Six

Driglam Choesum: *Bhutanese Ethos*

KEY TERMS

Driglam Choesum, Bhutanese Ethos, Citizenship, Legal Status, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, National Community, *Lay-gyudrey*, *Tha-damtshig*, *Rangdoen*, *Zhenphen*, National Consciousness

Introduction

Driglam Choesum refers to the traditional Bhutanese code of etiquette. It encompasses the customary practices of polite behaviour, speech, and attitude. *Drig* means systematic or harmonious conduct, *lam* means path or method, and *choe* means dharma or the teachings of Lord Buddha. *Driglam Choesum*, therefore, signifies the path of harmonious behaviour through the practice of dharma, which is the source of all good conduct. *Driglam Choesum* consists of Bhutanese ethos such as *Lay-gyudrey* and *Tha-damtshig*, *Driglam Namzha* or the code of etiquette, *Zhenphen*, which represents the common good. Learning about citizenship in Bhutan and the Fundamental Rights and Duties of Bhutanese citizens helps in better understanding *Driglam Choesum* and Bhutanese Ethos.

Citizenship

Citizenship is more than mere belonging to a country by virtue of birth or residence. It is about a person possessing the skills, willingness, or natural inclination to contribute to society through communal activities and fulfill the role of a citizen. Citizenship, as viewed through the lens of *Driglam Choesum* and Bhutanese Ethos, becomes a holistic commitment to cultural and ethical principles that emphasise the importance of harmonious conduct, speech and attitude. It involves a dedication to knowledge, skills, and a genuine willingness to actively contribute to society, deeply rooted in principles that promote harmonious coexistence and the common good.

To understand the different dimensions of citizenship, let us briefly discuss citizenship by legal status, citizenship by knowledge and skills for participation, and citizenship by disposition and willingness to engage.

Citizenship by legal status

Citizenship by legal status refers to a person fulfilling the legal requirements to be a citizen. Such a person is entitled to civil, political, and social rights and obliged to fulfil corresponding duties.

In Bhutan, citizenship by legal status is enshrined in the Constitution, under Article 6, into three categories:

- i. Natural-born citizens.
Natural-born citizens are those whose parents are citizens of Bhutan.
- ii. Citizens who acquire citizenship by registration.



Figure 6.1: Categories of citizenship

Citizens who acquire citizenship by registration are those who lived in Bhutan on or before December 31, 1958 and whose names are registered in the official record of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

- iii. Citizens who acquire citizenship by naturalisation.
Citizens who acquire citizenship by naturalisation are those who apply for citizenship and fulfill the following conditions:
 - a) Have lawfully resided in Bhutan for at least 15 years;
 - b) Not have any record of imprisonment for criminal offences within the country or outside;
 - c) Be able to speak and write Dzongkha;
 - d) Have a good knowledge of the culture, customs, traditions and history of Bhutan;
 - e) Have no record of having spoken or acted against the Tsawa-sum;
 - f) Renounce the citizenship, if any, of a foreign State on being conferred Bhutanese citizenship; and
 - g) Take a solemn Oath of Allegiance to the Constitution as may be prescribed.

Citizenship by knowledge and skills to participate

Citizenship, based on knowledge and skills, refers to an individual's possession of specific knowledge and skills necessary for active engagement as a member of society. A citizen is expected to be a contributing member of a political and socio-cultural group. To

fulfill this role, a citizen needs to possess basic knowledge of the country's culture and traditions, understand the structure and functions of the government, comprehend the roles and responsibilities of democratic institutions and elected officials, and be aware of civil society and media functions. Participation skills of a citizen include the ability to engage in democratic discussions, negotiate and assert one's rights, initiate civic engagement, use the media intelligently, and resolve conflicts peacefully.

The legal requirements for citizenship in Bhutan also emphasize the importance of basic cultural knowledge. Eligibility for Bhutanese citizenship involves the ability to speak and write the national language, as well as having a good understanding of the culture, customs, traditions, and history of Bhutan.

Citizenship by disposition and willingness to engage

Citizenship by disposition and willingness to engage is the most crucial dimension of citizenship. While a citizen may fulfill all legal requirements and possess the necessary knowledge and skills, without a good character to work for the common good, the fulfillment of a citizen's duty becomes challenging.

Citizenship by disposition and willingness to engage encompasses the character and behaviour that enable a citizen to actively participate in the affairs of the country with a sense of personal responsibility. It involves cultivating the right attitude to take responsibility for building communities, addressing local and national issues, and influencing public policies. Voting, as an example, is a demonstration of taking responsibility for the common good and is considered a fundamental duty of a citizen because it calls the right disposition.

Fundamental Rights and Duties

Fundamental Rights

Fundamental rights are a group of special rights, enshrined in the Constitution. These rights, fundamental to the life and livelihood of every citizen of a country, reflect the values of respect and dignity upheld in Bhutanese culture. Fundamental rights reinforce the principle of treating each individual with reverence, irrespective of religion, gender, or place of birth. They uphold the principles of equality and justice, fostering harmony and unity among diverse communities.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, under Article 7, provides for the fundamental rights to all Bhutanese citizens. These fundamental rights are classified as follow:

1. *Rights to Equality (clauses 1, 8, 11 and 15)*

It means everyone is equal in the eyes of the law. All citizens have the right to life, are equal

and are entitled to equal protection of laws and shall not be discriminated on grounds of caste, creed, sex, race, religion, politics, language or other status. Equal opportunities are guaranteed in matters of employment including public services and there shall be equal pay for equal value of work.

2. *Right to Freedom of Speech, Expression and Religion (clauses 2 and 4)*

Citizens have freedom of speech and expression as long as they do not infringe others' rights.

A citizen has the freedom to profess any religion but cannot compel anyone to convert.

3. *Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association (clause 12)*

A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to peaceful assembly and right to form associations so long as it is not detrimental to the harmony of the society and the security of the nation.

4. *Right to Freedom of Movement (clause 7)*

A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to movement and residence in any part of Bhutan so long as the movement is not harmful to the interests of the nation.

5. *Right to Freedom of Property (clauses 9, 14)*

A Bhutanese citizen has the right to own property but cannot sell to a person who is not a citizen of Bhutan. It further states that a citizen cannot be deprived of his/her property. If the citizen is deprived of his/her property for public purpose, it can be done so on payment of compensation in accordance with laws.

6. *Right to Freedom of Profession (clause 10)*

This states that a person can practice any profession, trade or vocation so long it is not detrimental to public interest and the security of the nation.

7. *Right to Freedom of Media and Information (clauses 3 and 5)*

Right to freedom of media is regarded as fundamental to individual rights. These rights allow freedom of media for dissemination of information to all citizens as they have the right to be informed.

8. *Right to Freedom of Vote (clause 6)*

This right allows all citizens who are above 18 years of age and mentally sound to cast their vote in an election.

9. *Right to Intellectual Property (clause 13)*

It says a Bhutanese shall have the right to material interest resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he or she is the author or creator. In other words, if anything is invented or discovered, composed and written, or created in the form of arts, movies, films, drama and so on, these scientists, authors, artists and directors shall have the right to claim their patent rights.

10. *Right to Constitutional Remedies (clause 23)*

The Fundamental Rights are justifiable. It means if citizens feel deprived of their rights, they can seek justice for the enforcement of their rights. The Supreme Court and High Court have been empowered by the Constitution to initiate appropriate proceedings for the enforcement of the fundamental rights.

11. *Right to Justice (clause 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21)*

A person charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty. Clause 17 prohibits any torture or inhuman treatment to a person. Clause 18 protects a person from capital punishment. According to clause 19, a person cannot be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy or correspondence or unlawful attacks on reputation. Clause 20 prohibits arbitrary arrest or detention of a person.

12. *Restrictions on Fundamental Rights (clause 22)*

Although the Fundamental Rights can be protected and guaranteed by a written constitution, nothing can prevent the Government from imposing reasonable restrictions when it concerns:

- the peace, security, sovereignty, unity and well-being of the nation;
- the interests of friendly relation with foreign countries;
- incitement to an offence on the ground of race, sex, language, religion or region;
- the disclosure of information received regarding affairs of the state or in discharge of official duties; or
- the right and freedom of others.

Article 7 Fundamental Rights

1. All persons shall have the right to life, liberty, and security of person and shall not be deprived of such rights except in accordance with the due process of law.
2. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech, opinion, and expression.
3. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to information.
4. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. No person shall be compelled to belong to another faith by means of coercion or inducement.
5. There shall be freedom of the press, radio and television and other forms of dissemination of information, including electronic.
6. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to vote.
7. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to freedom of movement and residence within Bhutan.
8. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to equal access and opportunity to join the Public Service.
9. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to own property, but shall not have the right to sell or transfer land or any immovable property to a person who is not a citizen of Bhutan, except in keeping with laws enacted by Parliament.
10. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to practice any lawful trade, profession or vocation.
11. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to equal pay for work of equal value.
12. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, other than membership of associations that are harmful to the peace and unity of the country, and shall have the right not to be compelled to belong to any association.
13. Every person in Bhutan shall have the right to material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he or she is the author or creator.
14. A person shall not be deprived of property by acquisition or requisition, except for public purpose and on payment of fair compensation in accordance with the provisions of the law.
15. All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal and effective protection of the law and shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion, politics or other status.
16. A person charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in accordance with the law.
17. A person shall not be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
18. A person shall not be subjected to capital punishment.
19. A person shall not be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence nor to unlawful attacks on the person's honour and reputation.
20. A person shall not be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention.
21. A person shall have the right to consult and be represented by a Bhutanese Jabmi of his or her choice.
22. Notwithstanding the rights conferred by this Constitution, nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from subjecting reasonable restriction by law, when it concerns:
 - a) The interests of the sovereignty, security, unity, and integrity of Bhutan;
 - b) The interests of peace, stability, and well-being of the nation;
 - c) The interests of friendly relations with foreign States;
 - d) Incitement to an offence on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion, or region;
 - e) The disclosure of information received in regard to the affairs of the State or in discharge of official duties; or
 - f) The rights and freedom of others.
23. All persons in Bhutan shall have the right to initiate appropriate proceedings in the Supreme Court or High Court for the enforcement of the rights conferred by this Article, subject to section 22 of this Article and procedures prescribed by law.

Box 6.1 Article 7 from the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan

Fundamental Duties

Fundamental Duties are a set of special duties of all citizens enshrined in the Constitution, constituting the moral responsibility that every citizen holds toward the state. These duties are essential for nurturing a harmonious and unified nation, promoting mutual respect, and encouraging dedicated service to the country. As citizens fulfill these duties, they contribute to the collective well-being of the nation, fostering an environment of unity and cooperation. In doing so, they play a pivotal role in building a strong and prosperous society, which is vital for the progress and lasting success of the country.

The Constitution of Kingdom of Bhutan, under Article 8, enshrines the Fundamental Duties. These duties are classified and illustrated as below:

Classification	Descriptions
Duty to Nation (clauses 1,2,4,8,9,10, 11)	Every Bhutanese has the duty to preserve, protect and defend the sovereignty, to protect environment, to protect and respect the culture and heritage of the nation, to respect the National flag and the National Anthem, to pay taxes in accordance with the law, to uphold justice and act against corruption, to act in aid of the law, to respect and abide by the provisions of the Constitution.
Duty to Society (clauses 3 and 7)	Every Bhutanese has the duty to foster tolerance and mutual respect for the people of Bhutan irrespective of religion, language, or other differences, and to safeguard public property.
Duty to Humanity (clauses 5 and 6)	Every Bhutanese has the duty to not to torture or kill another person, abuse women and children and take steps to prevent such acts and to render help to the people and country in times of natural calamities.

Table 5.1 Classification of Fundamental Duties

Fundamental Duties counterbalance the Fundamental Rights granted by the Constitution. In other words, rights come with duties. If all citizens claim their rights without fulfilling their duties, it could undermine communal harmony, national unity, and the spirit of brotherhood. For example, a citizen is obliged to fulfill the duty to foster tolerance even as he or she exercises the right to freedom of speech.

Article 8 Fundamental Duties

1. A Bhutanese citizen shall preserve, protect and defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and unity of Bhutan and render national service when called upon to do so by Parliament.
2. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the duty to preserve, protect and respect the environment, culture and heritage of the nation.
3. A Bhutanese citizen shall foster tolerance, mutual respect and spirit of brotherhood amongst all the people of Bhutan transcending religious, linguistic, regional or sectional diversities.
4. A person shall respect the National Flag and the National Anthem.
5. A person shall not tolerate or participate in acts of injury, torture or killing of another person, terrorism, abuse of women, children or any other person and shall take necessary steps to prevent such acts.
6. A person shall have the responsibility to provide help, to the greatest possible extent, to victims of accidents and in times of natural calamity.
7. A person shall have the responsibility to safeguard public property.
8. A person shall have the responsibility to pay taxes in accordance with the law.
9. Every person shall have the duty to uphold justice and to act against corruption.
10. Every person shall have the duty to act in aid of the law.
11. Every person shall have the duty and responsibility to respect and abide by the provisions of this Constitution.

Box. 6.2: Article 8 from the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan

National Community

The term national community refers to a group of people within a geographical territory, sharing common socio-economic, political, cultural, and historical identities. The key concept here is community, signifying a group of people living in the same place with shared characteristics and values. The term national denotes a country, as opposed to local, which signifies being restricted to a specific area. Thus, a national community refers to a nation, such as Bhutan, whereas a local community describes a group of people living in a smaller area, such as a village or town near your school. Your school can be considered a local community.

Exercising rights and duties as citizens is critical to maintaining a peaceful, harmonious, and just society. Rights help preserve the security of life and property, as well as human dignity while duties help instill in citizens a sense of care and responsibility for the common good. Rights ensure that individual citizens are protected from unreasonable actions of the government and public institutions. For example, several sections under Article 7 protect individuals from cruel treatment by public institutions such as torture, arbitrary arrest, and capital punishment.

On the other hand, duties ensure that individual citizens are not negligent in exercising their rights. For example, Article 7 Section 2 of the Constitution grants a citizen the right to the freedom of speech, opinion and expression. However, Article 8 Section 3 requires

him or her to foster tolerance, mutual respect, and brotherhood amongst all the people of Bhutan. This means that even though citizens have the right to express their opinions freely, they also have the responsibility to do so in a way that promotes understanding, respect, and unity among the diverse population of the country. The connection between the two articles emphasise that fundamental rights are not absolute and must be exercised with consideration for others and in harmony with the overall well-being of the society.

The right to the freedom of expression and the duty to foster tolerance and brotherhood play out at the national level in the form of media reports and parliamentary debates. Debates and discussions are conducted with a reasonable degree of self-censorship. This can be practiced in a local community such as your school. You can start by agreeing to this simple rule: everyone has the right to speak express their views, but everyone has the duty to listen to others with respect and openness. This fosters an environment of healthy communication and mutual understanding, encouraging a culture of tolerance and respect within the community. In conclusion, freedom of expression should coexist with a sense of responsibility and consideration for others, promoting a more harmonious and understanding society at both the local and national levels.

Driglam Choesum

Driglam Choesum refers to the traditional Bhutanese code of etiquette. It is the customary practice of polite behaviour, speech, and attitude. It is often interchangeably used with *Driglam Namzha*, although their literary meanings differ. *Drig* means systematic or harmonious conduct, *lam* means path or method, and *choe* means dharma or the teachings of Lord Buddha. *Driglam Choesum*, therefore, signifies the path of harmonious behaviour through the practice of dharma, which is the source of all good conduct.

‘What we call *Driglam Choesum*– the manner with which we work, communicate, interact and behave with each other, is a precious legacy, safeguarded and passed on for generations by our ancestors, and there is great wisdom in it.’

‘The Bhutanese have high emotional intelligence, because we have been brought up with *Driglam Choesum*. As a result, we have safeguarded and protected our country successfully for millennia. If we value our cultural legacy, and recognize its importance, we will continue to succeed, as individuals and as a Nation.’

- His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck

When His Majesty The King granted an Audience to 174 students who received scholarships to study abroad after excelling in their Class XII examinations on 11th March 2014.

(Courtesy: The Bhutanese Newspaper)

In short, *Driglam Choesum* refers to courteous bodily conduct, polite speech, and positive thoughts. It encompasses a wide range of human behaviours and interactions such as the manner of dressing, the manner of serving and eating, the manner of walking and greeting, the manner of calling upon a superior and making offerings, and the manner of speaking in different settings.

Lay-gyudrey and Tha-damtshig

Lay-gyudrey refers to the causes and effects of one's actions or deeds. In Buddhism, every deed (lay) is believed to cause (gyu) an effect or consequence (drey). Good deeds result in positive consequences and bad deeds result in negative consequences.

In the simplest terms, *lay-gyudrey* means reaping what we sow. If we sow maize, we will reap maize, not rice or some other crop. Similarly, we cannot expect to be happy if our actions cause only unhappiness for others. The law of *lay-gyudrey* is said to be faithful and binding. It rewards virtue and punishes vice. Wealth, power, and success are believed to be the results of good deeds while poverty, destitution, and misfortune are the consequences of bad deeds.

Tha-damtshig refers to moral principles such as fidelity, loyalty, uprightness, filial respect, gratitude, commitment. Literally *Tha-damtshig* means the vow or commitment one must honour but it has come to mean many other things.

For citizens, *tha-damtshig* means loyalty to the *Tsawa-sum* – King, Country, and People. For working people, *tha-damtshig* means being loyal to the chain of command and committed to their duty. In marriage, *tha-damtshig* means being faithful to their spouse. For children, it means being respectful and grateful to their parents. For students, it means being respectful and grateful to their teachers. In general, *tha-damtshig* means being grateful for good things in life and maintaining moral sense of repaying kindness.

Tha-damtshig is essential to any society and is reinforced by the concept of *lay-gyudrey*. Individuals who lack *tha-damtshig* may accumulate negative deeds or karma leading to negative consequences. Upholding *tha-damtshig* is believed to be a virtuous deed leading to positive consequences. Therefore, *tha-damtshig* is an important value for individuals, families, communities, and nations. It keeps everybody morally upright.

The communal ethos of Bhutan

Ethos refers to a set of collective beliefs and ideas characteristic of a group of people or community. It can be socio-cultural, religious, or communal in nature.

The communal ethos of Bhutan consists of traditional moral principles, concepts, and values. They include moral precepts such as *lay-gyudrey* and *tha-damtshig*, *driglam namzha* or the code of etiquette, *zhenphen* or common good, *Tsawa-sum*, and Gross National Happiness. They have become so integral to the Bhutanese way of life that they are embedded in everyday life.

We have learnt about *lay-gyudrey*, *tha-damtshig*, and *driglam namzha* above. We will discuss the concept of *zhenphen* separately below. Here, we will briefly learn about the concept of *Tsawa-sum* and Gross National Happiness (GNH).

While other concepts mentioned above are ancient and have religious origins, *Tsawa-sum* and GNH are secular and modern concepts. *Tsawa-sum* refers to the King, Country, and People. The concept of *Tsawa-sum* or three roots is central to public service. When citizens serve *Tsawa-sum*, they serve all constituents of the state, from the sovereign to the territorial integrity to the masses.

Gross National Happiness represents the ultimate goal in various developmental areas. Propounded by the Fourth Druk Gyalpo in the 1970s, GNH stands for holistic development, one that goes beyond mere economic development, which is limited. GNH underlines that holistic development constitutes a) sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, b) preservation and promotion of culture, c) conservation of natural environment and d) good governance. They are popularly referred to as the ‘Four Pillars of GNH’.

Self-interest and Common good

In any society, there are two powerful forces at play – self-interest (*Rangdoen*) and common good (*Zhenphen*). Self-interest means prioritizing one’s own interests and welfare above those of others. Common good means putting other’s interests and welfare above one’s own. In western thought, these concepts are known as individualism and collectivism respectively.

Self-interest and common good are fundamental to Buddhist teachings. Overcoming attachment to self and self-interest and developing compassionate regard for others lead to the enlightenment of individuals and societies. Altruistic thoughts and actions for common good are considered essential, as it indicates enlightenment is out of reach without serving the common good.

Looking at it from another perspective, in a highly interdependent world, serving the common good is in the best interest of oneself, whereas self-interest is self-defeating. For example, you will never be at peace if your community or country is at war. Therefore, contributing to communal or national peace helps you achieve peace. A Bhutanese saying underlines this concept: If you are good, you are being good to yourself, not to others; if you are bad, you are being bad to yourself, not to others.

Activity 1:

Do you believe that pursuing self-interest can contribute to the common good? Justify your response with examples.

A shared national consciousness for a National Community

A shared national consciousness is crucial for any country. National consciousness means a shared sense of history and geography, values and principles, culture and traditions, as well as purpose and priorities. The development of a shared identity among citizens forms the basis of a national community.

In Bhutan, His Majesty the King, as the unifying figure, gives the people a shared sense of vision for the future. The celebration of National Day on 17 December brings the entire nation together with a shared sense of purpose. Wearing the *gho* and *kira*, and speaking Dzongkha provide us with a shared sense of identity. Even enjoying the same fiery ema datshi gives the Bhutanese people a shared sense of cultural identity. Such shared identities and values contribute to building a collective national consciousness.

For a nation, a shared consciousness must be conscientiously built. All citizens, for instance, should collectively embrace a vision for the country's future. This shared vision will guide them in electing the right leaders and making informed decisions. Additionally, shared cultural experiences, such as enjoying the same type of mask dance or listening to the same type of music, contribute to the formation of a national consciousness.

A family cannot gather around a television screen with unity if its members do not share an appreciation and enjoyment for the same show. Furthermore, the way they appreciate and enjoy the show is profoundly influenced by the upbringing and education of the children. Similarly, a nation characterized by dissimilar values and tastes may struggle to hold together. Therefore, the cultivation of a shared national consciousness becomes critical for the strength and unity of the national community.

Conclusion

Driglam Choesum, the path of harmonious behaviour through the practice of dharma, is the source of good conduct. This source of good conduct is also evident in the principles of Citizenship, Fundamental Rights, and Fundamental Duties, in addition to the traditional moral principles, concepts and values. These fundamental principles not only demonstrate *Driglam Choesum* but also reflect the profound influence of Bhutanese values such as *lay-gyudrey* and *tha-damtshig*.

The essence of *Driglam Choesum* is shaped by the communal ethos of Bhutan, encompassing moral values such as *lay-gyudrey* and *tha-damtshig*, *driglam namzha* and *zhenphen* which represent the common good. Additionally, the essence of *Driglam Choesum* is further enhanced by secular and modern concepts of *Tsawa-sum* and the philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). These values cultivate a collective national consciousness for the Bhutanese community. In Bhutanese culture, *Driglam Choesum* serves as the thread weaving together the rich fabric of tradition, guiding individuals and the nation towards a communal well-being and harmonious coexistence.

