

# Bhutan Human Rights Report 2013

Indra Adhikari

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**Prepared by  
Indra Adhikari**

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## **Forward**

This is my first human rights report in series. In addition to regular press freedom reports, I commit myself in producing annual human rights report on Bhutan, henceforth.

This report brings in the issues of human rights violations, government's effort towards promoting and protecting human rights of the citizens and gap/lapses seen between these. I endeavoured my energy to produce a qualitative and fact based issues for debates, discussion and policy formulation. This report neither intends to criticise government or any other third parties nor appreciates them but to find a balance and put in what has been there and what needs to be improved.

I welcome any suggestions, comments and criticism to make the report more accommodative, factual, unbiased and qualitative in future.

Indra Adhikari

# **Section A: Current Situation**



## State obligations

There are number of international conventions and laws that prescribe the role and responsibilities of a nation state to protect and promote human rights for equitable and just society. What a role a state and its government must have might differ with experts and issues but in many areas, they could be common. To be general, a nation state must abide by the following moral obligations:

- The state must not interfere directly with people realising their rights
- The state must stop others from interfering with people's rights
- The state must build the legislation, institutions, norms to realise the right
- The state must not discriminate in meeting its obligations
- Progress must occur at a rate that show commitment
- People must be able to participate in realising their rights
- There must be a remedy for violations of obligations

In principle, it does not need to be legally written that the government is obliged to work for the best interests of its citizens. This is because the basic concept of having a nation state is to uphold the common interest of the residents.

Alike others, Bhutan's constitution prescribes several obligations to the state and its organs for protecting and promoting human rights of Bhutanese citizens, which otherwise was not obligatory for the government before constitution was promulgated. Except some cases, Bhutan in general during the last one year made modest efforts towards guaranteeing enjoyment of human rights of its citizens.

There are not many areas to do for a new democracy but a lot when compared to matured democracies. The foremost necessity to uphold human rights of Bhutanese citizens is the need to have human rights monitors in the country at the earliest possible. That could either be a constitutional organ like Human Rights Commission or encouraging experts within the country to start human rights organisations as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). And there is need for debate on human rights monitoring. It does not necessarily mean pointing out faults of the government, as the Bhutanese ministers and bureaucrats generally understand at this stage, but for institutionalising the democratic culture, notion of equality and equity and empowering the state mechanism towards general welfare.

Neither the state actors nor the non-state actors have, at this stage, have started discussion on the need to have human rights monitors. Without a watchdog for judgement, state in many cases, violates human rights in the name of 'interest of the country and its people'. The explanation of 'interest of the country and its people' differs with person in authority and adequacy of information given out.



## Rights protection mechanism

Bhutan is making slow efforts to have legal instruments in place. The process has been slower than expected, which the leaders say is a well thought out process. Article 7 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan lists the rights entitled to Bhutanese citizens<sup>1</sup>.

- 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.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Article 7 available at [http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/constitution/Constitution\\_English.pdf](http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/constitution/Constitution_English.pdf) retrieved on December 27, 2012

*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*

One of few objectionable provisions in the constitution is it restricts children whose both parents are not citizens of Bhutan from being a Bhutanese national (Article 6.1) even if they are born in Bhutan. The provision that a person should prove his/her both parents as Bhutanese to be a Bhutanese national has complicated the process for children whose father was unrecognised – the culture prevalent in the northern Bhutanese community.

National Commission on Women and Children (NCWC) is responsible for issues related to women and children. The parliament has a human rights committee that barely held any meetings or discussion on issues of human rights violations in 2012. There hasn't been any specific mechanism other than these in place for upholding human rights in Bhutan.

## Women

Gender equality became the most debated issue this year, though it concentrated specifically on women's political participation. Since Bhutan's transition to Constitutional democracy, the issue of introducing gender quotas for women in politics has come up every now and then. But was rejected by the people in authority repeatedly. While large number of girls and women remain raped, molested and physically abused in villages and cities, raising awareness on women issues rarely set foot outside capital city. Most programs funded through donors and government did little towards addressing the mistreatment and discrimination Bhutanese women face.

The government's inactive role for women empowerment was solidly reflected on several statements from political leaders who rejected the special programs or quota for women in political offices. Women participation in civil service is far below compared to men. The first woman Dzongda (chief district officer – equivalent to assistant secretary level) took office this year<sup>23</sup>. Despite debates, political participation of women is not encouraging. The current parliament has only 10 women members as against 62 men. The local governments have about 100 women representatives of the total of more than 1000 leaders<sup>4</sup>.

Negative attitude towards women and stereotypes keep women away from high offices<sup>5</sup>. Except a few female members of the royal family, no women have ever served in as ministers, secretaries or other leading positions.

No records of gender based discrimination for access to education was observed in the year. There has also been positive development among women on equality and their rights at par with male partners.

This development, many feel, has to be backed by gender responsive budget. Pointing out the presence of inequality in education (tertiary and vocational),

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<sup>2</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17133>

<sup>3</sup> Business Bhutan, <http://www.businessbhutan.bt/?p=10342>

<sup>4</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10463> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>5</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/attitude-and-stereotypes-keep-women-away-from-the-high-offices-2/>

employment and political representation, experts suggested addressing the inequality in planning and budgeting process<sup>6</sup>.

Efforts are on but perception has not changed. The culture of night hunting still remains widespread. The legal instruments in place against sexual abuse have become absolutely futile in addressing this problem.

While it remains far below the voices raised against atrocities towards women in neighbouring countries like India or Nepal, young girls and single mothers continue to face acute sexual harassment and mistreatment, especially in central districts. Many such incidents go unreported. Young girls are sexually abused and forced to become mother at their tender age<sup>7</sup>. Thus, population of the children with unidentified fathers continue to increase. Many grown up children from this culture remain without citizenship, thus stripped off their rights as Bhutanese citizen.

The level of sexual abuse of women is reflected by the fact that one-third of men who took paternity tests discover they are not the father children assumed to be theirs<sup>8</sup>.

The laws and law enforcement agencies have not been effective. In very few cases, the rapists or abusers were given jail sentences. Illiteracy and lack of knowledge about their legal rights and ways of seeking justices, women rarely come forward to report the issue to police or state administration.

Ironically, women are banned from working as commercial sex workers. Women trying to earn a living as commercial sex workers have been punished<sup>9</sup> and no alternatives for livelihood have been provided.

Bhutan is one of the first countries to sign the Convention on Elimination of Violence Against Women and continues to observe the International Day on Elimination of Violence Against Women<sup>10</sup> amidst increasing cases of violence against women.

The National Assembly has endorsed the new law<sup>11</sup> aimed at addressing the domestic violence that includes sexual abuse of women and young girls. At the third reading of the Domestic Violence Prevention Bill 2012, National Assembly resolved that a woman and child protection unit will be instituted at every police station in the country. The unit will be adequately staffed with at least one female police staff with relevant expertise in domestic violence<sup>12</sup>.

Bill failing to get through National Council has hindered the state agencies to act swiftly on issues of domestic violence and sexual abuses.

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<sup>6</sup> Bhutan Observer <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/seeking-gender-equality-budgeting/>

<sup>7</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/a-17-yr-old-girl-forced-to-become-a-struggling-mother-of-twin-daughters-possibly-by-a-73-year-old/>

<sup>8</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/one-third-of-men-who-took-paternity-tests-discover-they-are-not-the-father/>

<sup>9</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/court-sends-woman-involved-to-five-years-imprisonment/>

<sup>10</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/bhutan-observes-global-day-for-elimination-of-violence-against-women/>

<sup>11</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14877>

<sup>12</sup> Bhutan Observer <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/na-proposes-domestic-violence-unit-police-station/>

Domestic violence is one of the factors for declining health of the women. According to the Annual Health Report 2012 published by Ministry of Health, domestic violence increases mental illness among females<sup>13</sup>.

Women have no choice but to accept the abuse and mistreatment at home. About 73 percent of the women in central Bhutan was accepting of their abusive husbands while its 72 percent in the east and 64 percent in western Bhutan.

A study on domestic violence by the National Statistics Bureau (NSB) revealed that a woman's acceptance of domestic violence was indirectly related to their level of education. For example, about 71 percent of uneducated women were accepting of their husband's behaviour. The "acceptance" is slightly less, 70.6 percent for women with a primary level of education and 62 percent for those with a secondary level of education<sup>14</sup>.

There has not been concerted efforts from the government side to design and implement programs to counter these social attitude and ensuring a dignified life for Bhutanese women.

Alike sexual abuse, domestic violence cases go unreported. In the first year RENEW (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women) was established, in 2004, no cases of domestic violence were registered. In the second year, it received only three cases. Since then the number is increasing steadily.

The head of Community Outreach Unit of RENEW, Meenakshi Rai, says that the cause for this increased influx of cases could be growing awareness among women who are victims of domestic violence<sup>15</sup>.

## Children

Most children in Bhutan have now access to primary education but not to adequate health facilities. According to UNDP, Bhutan is on tract to achieve the universal primary education by 2015<sup>16</sup>. The primary school enrolment in Bhutan is well above the SAARC member countries<sup>17</sup>.

Most schools in southern Bhutan, that remained closed since 1990s are now open. Except a few cases in remote regions, children of schools going age are in schools. The enrolment has rapidly increased in the last one decade. In 1998, Bhutan's 50 percent children were out of school<sup>18</sup>. Today, according to government, enrolment rate in primary education is 98 percent.

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<sup>13</sup> Bhutan Observer, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/domestic-violence-contributes-mental-illnesses-women/>

<sup>14</sup> Yangzom, Dechen, Asia News Network available at <http://ph.news.yahoo.com/domestic-violence-acceptable-bhutan-finds-study-121001390.html>

<sup>15</sup>The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/renew-has-secret-shelter-for-domestic-violence-victims/>

<sup>16</sup> UNDP, [http://www.undp.org.bt/mdg\\_two.htm](http://www.undp.org.bt/mdg_two.htm)

<sup>17</sup> World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.ENRR/countries/BT-8S-XN?display=graph>

<sup>18</sup> UNESCO,

[http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/global\\_co/policy\\_group/children\\_out\\_of\\_school.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/global_co/policy_group/children_out_of_school.pdf)

Though most children have access to education, the study environment is not encouraging. Unless the government takes initiative to improve environment in schools, enrolment figures are unlikely to stay stable.

Mistreatment of students in schools has not stopped yet. Teachers take it as their right to tame students. There are many forms of mistreatment such as poking, molesting and sexual abuse.

A Dzongkha language teacher Tshokey, of Budhashi Community Primary School under Goshing block, Zhemgang, was sent on compulsory retirement effective from November 20, 2012 after an internal investigation by the Ministry of Education confirmed that he had used a syringe to poke students<sup>19</sup>.

Some district administrations have implemented Comprehensive School Discipline Policy for students have come into action targeting students who misbehave in schools<sup>20</sup>. Teachers also feel the need of corporal punishment for students to inculcate in them good qualities<sup>22</sup>. However, there aren't any policies against misbehaving teachers.

Nutritional deficiency appeared a new health concern of the children living in boarding houses managed by schools. Nutritional deficiency was detected in students of a school in Mongar district<sup>23</sup>. Two students die of vitamin deficiency in food provided in the schools in March<sup>24</sup>. Similar problem was seen in Lhuentse district as well. Following several such incidents, the Ministry of Education decided to increase the stipend given to schools from Nu 700 to Nu 1,000 per head for three meals a day<sup>25</sup><sup>26</sup> as an effort to improve diet.

Child labour has appeared to be a big issue. Labour Ministry and the UNICEF have said, "There are children in Bhutan, who are deprived of their fundamental rights and this requires attention. Although, the scenario is not that grim in Bhutan, but, this form of labour does exist in the country."<sup>27</sup>

Here is a typical story of child labour in Bhutan<sup>28</sup>.

### ***The boy who was sold for 27 CGI sheets***

*By Tashi Deki*

*Twenty-seven second – hand CGI sheets, 50 kilograms of rice, three bed sheets, one school bag and a Tiffin-box.*

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<sup>19</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/syringe-wielding-teacher-earns-compulsory-retirement-for-his-misconduct/>

<sup>20</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15613>

<sup>21</sup> Business Bhutan, <http://www.businessbhutan.bt/?p=10320>

<sup>22</sup> Sonam Palden, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/corporal-punishment-evil/>

<sup>23</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/nutrition-deficiency-suspected-in-a-mongar-community-school/>

<sup>24</sup> Bhutan Observer, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/education-ministry-improve-food-quality-schools/>

<sup>25</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/increase-in-stipends-will-help-solve-nutritional-deficiency-in-the-boarding-students/>

<sup>26</sup> Bhutan Observer, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/education-ministry-improve-food-quality-schools/>

<sup>27</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/child-labor-finds-its-way-into-bhutan/>

<sup>28</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/the-boy-who-was-sold-for-27-cgi-sheets/>

*This was the cost of 14-year-old Sunil Limbu from Tendruk gewog, Samtse whose mother allowed 40-year old Phub Nidup originally from Haa but now resettled in Samtse to hire her son.*

*According to the boy's mother, Gori Maya Limbu, who has four other children, Phub Nidup hired Sunil for a period of one year as a cowboy. She consented when he came to their place repeatedly asking her to give him the boy.*

*However, Phub Nidup said that they had a two-year term agreement made on 1 Nov 2010.*

*Gori Maya said she does not remember signing such an agreement.*

*The statements the two gave were also conflicting because Gori Maya said her child was hired in 2009 which means it was more than two years since he started working for Phub Nidup.*

*Gori Maya said her son was in Samtse for nine months and he was then taken to Haa without consulting her. Sunil Limbu was reportedly kept in Haa for two years.*

*Asked to return her child, Phub Nidup turned a deaf ear though he justified his stance saying that the child was unwilling to leave him at the point of time.*

*Tendruk gewog Gup Pema Wangchuk said, he investigated the case after the mother complained. Considering it to be a serious issue he informed the police.*

*The Sibsoo police said that the case was reported on 30 April. They asked Phub Nidup to bring back the child who was at Haa and the boy was finally returned on April 9.*

*Police said Gori Maya withdrew the case after coming upon a mutual agreement with Phub Nidup.*

*Since the child, according to Phub Nidup, was returned before the agreed term ended, Gori Maya had to pay the former a sum of Nu 3,250. But she was exempted from paying.*

*What perhaps is more disturbing is the fact that an official of Sibsoo police station said such practices are "common" in the area.*

*"People come here to complain about cases like this frequently."*

*The Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007 states the employment of a child between 13 to 17 years of age shall be limited only to the categories of work and in work places as specified in the rules and regulation to this act subject however, to the conditions laid down under section 9.*

*This particular incident was a case of debt bondage which falls under section 9 (a) of the Labour Act, said labour officials.*

*The Act says a person who contravenes section 9 shall be guilty of offence, which shall be felony of the third degree.*

*But labour officials said, “We don’t have the right to take action on private cases,” adding that no cases have been reported but such incidents occurring is a possibility they cannot rule out.*

*Bhutan’s Strategy Paper entitled Bhutan 2020, A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness states “Basic education is an inalienable right of every Bhutanese”.*

*The government’s vision is to gain 100% universal primary school full enrolment.*

*However, Gori Maya said, “We could not afford to enrol the child so we kept him to work at home but now I have realized that I should enrol him in school.”*

*The Tendruk Gewog Gup said that now school admissions are easier unlike previous years so she must have changed her mind with regard to educating her son.*

*National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) reports of 2009 revealed proxy prevalence of 28% of children between 5-14 years engaged in some forms of work and the fact that they were not enrolled in primary schools.*

*The NCWC report also stated that Bhutanese children enter the labour market because of three main reasons; poverty, broken families and lack of farm hands.*

*The Constitution of Bhutan also states that “The state shall provide free education to all children of school going age to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all on basis of merit.”*

*But the problem of child labour in Bhutan continues to persist either in secret or openly as displayed in the above case despite there being Labour Act policies that are supposed to protect children’s rights.*

*The Act defines someone below 17 years of age as a child in Article 171.*

*However Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Article 1 states that a child ‘means every human being below age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child majority is attained earlier’.*



This particular story of child labour is a testimony that government's claim of 98<sup>29</sup> percent primary enrolment rate may not be correct or not all children enrolled in school attend classes regularly.

The government's Tenth Five Year Plan (2008- 2012) addresses the issues of poverty reduction and education. The plan proposes reducing poverty through income and employment generation, expanding rural access to markets and improving living conditions for the rural poor. It also aims to increase school enrolment by establishing and improving local primary schools<sup>30</sup>.

The Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007 sets the minimum age for work at age 18. However, children ages 13 to 17 can work provided they are not exposed to physical harm, dangerous machinery or an unhealthy working environment <sup>31</sup>

The Penal Code prohibits commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children for prostitution and lays out penalties for these offenses<sup>32</sup>.

There is no age to which education is compulsory<sup>33</sup>. The lack of standards in this area may increase the risk of children's involvement in the worst forms of child labour as young children are not required to be in school but are unable to legally work. The government offers education free, but some children may have trouble accessing educational services due to informal fees. For example, children often have to pay enrolment fees and contribute to the school-feeding program<sup>34</sup>.

According to the Labour Force Survey 2011<sup>35</sup>, nationally as many as 4,400 children aged 13-17 were found to be working outside home. The Bhutan Multiplier Indicator Survey shows child labour prevalence at 18.4%, with the proportion of girls being higher than boys. Many of them-86.5%, go to school, but are from poorer families with little or no proper facilities to help them lead a better life. Many of these children work in the informal sectors as domestic helpers, street vendors and in automobile workshops and restaurants.

Labour Minister, Lyonpo Dorji Wangdi, said the government was deeply committed to doing everything possible for proper upbringing of Bhutan's children to make them realize their fullest potential, and prevent and eliminate all forms of exploitation and abuse.

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<sup>29</sup> Global Education Digest 2011, Regional profile: South and West Asia, UNESCO institute for statistics available at [http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/GED2011\\_SWA\\_RP\\_EN.pdf](http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/GED2011_SWA_RP_EN.pdf) Also see Bhutan Broadcasting Service new report here <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9626>

<sup>30</sup> Gross National Happiness Commission, Tenth Five Year Plan 2008-2013, 2009, 24; available from [http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/5yrplans/Tenth\\_Plan.pdf](http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/5yrplans/Tenth_Plan.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007, (2007), para. 170-171; available from [http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/Acts/labour\\_act.pdf](http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/Acts/labour_act.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Penal Code of Bhutan, available at [http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/Acts/penal\\_code\\_of\\_bhutan\\_2004.pdf](http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/Acts/penal_code_of_bhutan_2004.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2011: Bhutan," section 6.

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Bhutan," in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010, section 6; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/sca/136086.htm>. See also UNICEF, *Analysis of Children and Women in Bhutan*, 48-49

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhrsite/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Final-LFS-2011.pdf>

The National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) is in the final stages of completing the mapping and assessment of child protection in Bhutan in order to address the plight of child labourers<sup>36</sup>. Updates are not yet available.

### Minorities' issues

There are number of small ethnic groups in Bhutan, including Adivasi, Birmi, Brokpa, Doya, Lepcha, Tibetan and Toktop. These smaller groups, though adding great diversity to Bhutan's ethnic make-up, represent approximately 10 per cent of the total population<sup>37</sup>.

However, the government has never released figures on population of ethnic groups in Bhutan. This has made it difficult for the donors to identify the needy community and support for their development. This also has impact on devising strategies to concentrate on special region or group of people.

### Crime and security

Crimes are increasing and underground outfits continue to disrupt peace and stability in the country of Gross National Happiness (GNH).

Youth related crimes in Bhutan have been a major concern for some years now. Extremely violent acts like stabbing have become almost regular phenomenon and blames go to school dropouts and unemployed youths. These acts are not once or twice but the media is reporting these cases every other day. BRI recorded 41 cases of youth related crime in between December 2011 and November 2012 that appeared on newspapers.

Family environment, education, and unemployment are blamed to be the root causes of youth violence.

Big number of students does not get through to next grades every year, leading to dropouts out of frustrations. Some suggested for all zero failure up to grade 10 as this is basic education rights for children. According to UNICEF reports, only around 50 percent students reach secondary level<sup>38</sup>.

Director of Sherubtse College, Singye Namgyal suggests Bhutan must make sure that almost 100 percent of students in the education system should complete Year XII<sup>39</sup> as one of the measures to address youth related violence.

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<sup>36</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/child-labor-finds-its-way-into-bhutan/>

<sup>37</sup> Minorities Rights Group International <http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=5544&tmpl=printpage>

<sup>38</sup> UNICEF Bhutan, [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/bhutan\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/bhutan_statistics.html)

<sup>39</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/youth-violence-multi-party-approach-to-addressing-the-issue-part-1/>

One of the alleged causes for criminal activities is unemployment. Media reports say unemployment rate stands at 2.5 percent<sup>40</sup> while ministry report claims at 2.1 percent<sup>41</sup>.

The Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) run several programmes in partnership with schools, colleges, parents and communities to control youth-related crimes. The Youth Partnership Programme has become quite successful in drawing attention of the young graduates yet inadequate to control the crime. Absence of good record keeping system in the agencies involved in addressing the youth crime and agencies' inability to trace the criminals contributed to increasing incidences number of crimes.

Agencies like, RBP, BNCA, rehabilitation centres and hospitals have records of youth who have been in conflict with the law. Linking such records of those inclined to criminal activities since school days is important so that law enforcement agencies have a good lead of the case and can intervene with more ease<sup>42</sup>.

### Political freedom

Political activism has increased. By end of the year, more political parties have appeared and increasing number of young graduates have shown interest for political career but not adequately to meet the demands of the five parties<sup>43</sup>, some of whom are struggling to find candidates.

Bhutanese citizens have enjoyed more political freedom but not absolutely. The year saw more political groups coming up expressing interest to take part in the second parliamentary elections due for mid 2013. Bhutan Kuengnam Party (BKP) and Druk Chirwang Tshogpa (DCT) have received certification of registration while Druk Nyamrup Tshokpa (DNT) has applied for registration with the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB)<sup>44</sup> while Druk Mitser Tshogpa (DMT), failing gather enough candidates for election, decided to stand as youth wing of the People's Democratic Party (PDP)<sup>45</sup> – current opposition in the parliament.

More political parties is an indication of greater political freedom and greater choices for the people. Bhutanese, who fear talking about political parties, are now open on debates on parties and election to be held this year. The open politics, on the other side, has perplexed the older generation who grew up in system directly commanded by king and his ministers. Younger generation has come forward to make best use of this open politics.

The scars of old wound still remains. Personal sources say, government has agreed to provide No Objection Certificate (NOC) to those whose relatives

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<sup>40</sup> Bhutan Observer, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/irony-unemployment-bhutan/>

<sup>41</sup> Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, Annual Report (Fiscal year 2011-12)

<sup>42</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/youth-violence-multi-party-approach-to-addressing-the-issue-part-3/>

<sup>43</sup> By the time this report was prepared, four parties have been legally registered.

<sup>44</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=21032>

<sup>45</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/druk-miser-nazhoen-tshogpa-joins-pdp/>

were involve in 1990 and 1997-98 demonstrations but still deny the documents to those who were allege to be involved personally. Without NOC education to children is denied, getting a job and owning a business license is impossible.

Leaders who demanded political change in 1990 and 1997-98 still remain in jail. This is greatest irony against Bhutan's 'democratic changes'. There has never been any public discourse about them and is unlikely in near future. There are 15 known political prisoners from 1997-98 demonstrations in eastern Bhutan <sup>46</sup> and similar number from 1990 demonstrations in southern Bhutan.

### Right to expression and information

Right to expression has become the most powerful tools in the evaluation period. Private media have become vocal<sup>47</sup>, who remained subdued or suppressed for years. Ministry of Information and Communication's research team, comprising of students from Columbia University (CU), working under Professor Annya Schiffrin in New York, said RTI will improve socio-economic development and good governance<sup>48</sup>.

The Draft Right to Information Bill of the Ministry of Information and Communication was put on the ministry's website in late July 2012 to solicit public feedback. Media report says the bill was finalised and forwarded to the cabinet. The government decided not to introduce the bill in the last session of the first parliament rather forward to the next parliament<sup>49</sup>.

The RTI Bill will not only lead to sharing of information but also have a strong impact on reducing corruption, enhancing good governance, improving transparency and encouraging people's genuine participation in democracy.

The final bill proposed by the ministry is not available for view now but the first draft of the bill has few objectionable clauses<sup>50</sup>. One of the sub sections of section 31 under Chapter 5 states that information can be denied if "The overall harm caused by release of the information would outweigh the public interest in having such information disclosed."

Without defining what does a 'public interest' mean, the clause can have a retrospective implication – the government can deny any information on pretext of harming public interests.

Subsection 2 of this section says, "The disclosure of the information is barred under this Act or any other law for the time being in force" which is

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<sup>46</sup> Bhutan Today, Vol XI No 1 pp4, Druk National Congress, available at <http://www.bhutandnc.com/bt%202009.htm>

<sup>47</sup> Adhikari, Indra, Our World Today, <http://ourworldtoday.com.au/news/article/media-bhutan>

<sup>48</sup> Dorji, Minjur, The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/moics-research-team-says-rti-will-improve-socio-economic-development-and-good-governance/>

<sup>49</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/government-breaks-its-rti-promise-to-the-people/>

<sup>50</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/strengthening-the-right-to-information-bill-part-1/> Also see <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/strengthening-the-right-to-information-bill-part-2/>

in conflict with section 2 of the Bill which says “the provisions of existing laws and regulations that are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed” and so should be deleted.

Section 32 (subsection 3) says the public authority may refuse to disclose any information if, “It contains deliberations necessary for the candid advice and consent for the functioning of government.” This could derail the basic objective of the bill to promote government accountability.

Section 32 (subsection 6) says the public authority may refuse to disclose any information if, the disclosure relates to an ongoing legal proceeding of a pending case or a case subjudice.

The danger with Section 32 (subsection 6) is that in many cases RTI is used when a person is under legal pressure. A public authority, which may have information that can save the liberty of the individual and also bring on true justice, can withhold such information using this section.

The Act under section 41 says that a person who does not get information within thirty days can appeal to local courts/National Tribunal and section 47 says a person not happy with local courts/National Tribunal can file an appeal within ten days to the High Court. The bill also proposes Information and Media Officers in all government agencies, as necessary to provide information on demand.

Earlier a Member of National Council (Upper House) Sangay Khandu sponsored a RTI bill to the parliament<sup>51</sup>. However, the council denied accepting the bill for discussion saying it is too early to adopt it<sup>525354</sup>.

The absence of RTI was felt in the later part of the year when issue of land scam involving senior leaders including Prime Minister Jigmi Thinley, Home Minister Minjur Dorji and Speaker Jigme Tshultim surfaced. There was big dispute between media and the government on the issue of land scam of Trowa Theatre in Thimphu, Denchi in Trashiyangtse and Gyalposhing in Mongar. Without giving to the public what is correct about the issue, two arms of the government – Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) and Office of the Attorney General (OAG) – are fighting against and for the government respectively.

The government, reading these and many other critical news reports, was not happy with the way right to expression was being exercised by the media. In response, the Ministry of Information and Communication issued a secret circulation instructing the government agencies not to provide any advertisement to The Bhutanese<sup>55</sup>.

The secret circular rang alarm bell in Bhutan and across border. International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), expressed concern over the circular by the Ministry of Information and Communication.

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<sup>51</sup> Read Khandu’s version of RTI in his blog [http://www.sangaykhandu.com/?page\\_id=749](http://www.sangaykhandu.com/?page_id=749)

<sup>52</sup> Adhikari School of Thought <http://www.ipajournal.com/2012/05/23/rti-private-bill-garners-less-support-from-nc-members/>

<sup>53</sup> The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/rti-bill-to-die-an-early-death-in-the-national-council/>

<sup>54</sup> Bhutan Observer, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/minister-its-miscommunication/>

<sup>55</sup> Business Bhutan <http://www.businessbhutan.bt/?p=10418>

IFJ said, “the government’s directive forbidding advertising to be placed in The Bhutanese is believed to be in retaliation for the publication of articles critical of possible abuse of power and corruption, arising from the government’s use of its discretionary powers.”

“We call on the government of Bhutan to review these directives and to follow the official policy which protects an independent media,” said the IFJ Asia-Pacific<sup>56</sup>.

### Religious freedom

Buddhism is the state cult (spiritual heritage)<sup>57</sup> and Hinduism is second religion state has recognised. King is the protector of all religions (Article 3.2) yet followers other than Buddhism and Hinduism are prosecuted for open activities. The constitution provides religious freedom yet public functions or prayers performed by other than Hindus or Buddhists are taken as proselytising<sup>58</sup>. There aren’t restrictions for Christians or other religious groups to conduct rituals at private houses but conversion from Buddhism or Hinduism to other religions is publicly discouraged and penalised. However, it is not so in case people from other religions are converted to Buddhism.

The government, after years, has extended support to organise Hindu religious functions in capital and in districts. Hindu Dharma Samudaya of Bhutan is active in organising Hindu rituals including Bhagawat Purans.

### Education

The government provides education at minimal costs but there is no age to which education is compulsory<sup>59</sup>. Except those not producing NOC are able to join education courses or send their children to schools. Government maintains it has achieved the universal primary education goal set by the UN. The primary enrolment rate is 98 percent.

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<sup>56</sup> International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), <http://asiapacific.ifj.org/en/articles/changes-in-government-ad-policy-threaten-bhutans-independent-media>

<sup>57</sup> Article 3.1, Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, available at [http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/constitution/Constitution\\_English.pdf](http://ipajournal.com/uploads/2011/bhutanlaws/constitution/Constitution_English.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> Arora, Vishal, Christian Examiner (CDN) available at

[http://www.christianexaminer.com/Articles/Articles%20Nov10/Art\\_Nov10\\_13.html](http://www.christianexaminer.com/Articles/Articles%20Nov10/Art_Nov10_13.html)

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2011: Bhutan,” section 6 available at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dliid=186462>

This is a good achievement Bhutan has made as committed to millennium development goals. However, there are concerns over timely availability of textbooks, thus hampering education of the children<sup>60</sup>.

Though the country has successful story of enrolment, ensuring continued education for these young people is a challenge. Not all cross grade 10. It is time the Ministry of Education revised its student-teacher ratio. The current ratio of 1:32 is still too high. Although schools located in rural places may have 10-15 students or less in a class schools in urban places still suffer from overcrowded classes with over 50 students. The student-ratio should be revised to 1:25 but this should not be a general formula to work out teacher requisition in small and rural schools<sup>61</sup>.

There are few obstacles in remote villages where schools could not function due to inadequate children. Families who can afford a little decide to send their children to better schools in district headquarters or nearby city for studies. Many families migrated to urban areas leading to sparse population in villages. Though the current ruling party, during election campaign, made public commitments to set up schools where children need not walk for more than an hour, it appears impossible for now.

The continuing education for school leavers and other convicts came as major boost to increase the country's illiteracy rate. The continuing education centres and non formal education centres are not uniformly scattered around the country – despite the need for more centres in populous southern districts such as Chukha, Samtse (Samchi) and Sarpang (Sarbhong).

There aren't any updates about the progress made on information education provided to inmates. The programme was initiated in 2011.

Education ministry's zero tolerance policy of not allowing terminated students to be admitted in any other school has become hugely unpopular among a section of educationists and parents<sup>62</sup>. The policy mandates that a child who has been expelled or terminated from one school due to breach of conduct cannot obtain admission in any other school<sup>63</sup>.

## Road safety

Road accident is the major killer in Bhutan and motor accidents contribute to disability. Despite increasing number of road accidents, the government has not initiated programmes for road safety. Till end of September 2012 (in four years), a total of 14, 281 cases on traffic violation were recorded with

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<sup>60</sup> The Bhutanese, <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/exams-are-round-the-corner-where-have-the-textbooks-gone/>

<sup>61</sup> Namgyel, Dr Singye, The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/youth-violence-multi-party-approach-to-addressing-the-issue-part-1/>

<sup>62</sup> Tenzin, Pema, Bhutan Observer, <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/educations-tolerance-policy-criminalises-students/>

<sup>63</sup> Ibid

the Thimphu traffic division with 80 deaths caused by accidents across the country.

The number of cases recorded with the Thimphu traffic division till 30 September, 2012, show that in a span of four years since 2009, traffic violation has increased by almost three folds.

A total of 3,230 cases of traffic violations were reported in 2009, then in following year 3377 cases were registered and in 2010, it increased to 4175<sup>64</sup>. Royal Bhutan Police recorded 1,374 cases of vehicle accident in the country last year (2011-12)<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Dema, Chenko, The Bhutanese <http://www.thebhutanese.bt/14-281-cases-of-violation-and-80-deaths-in-nine-months/>

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/motor-accidents-contribute-disability/>



## **Section B: Event Briefs**

This is compilation of the incidents of human rights violations or promotion. They occurred between December 2011 and November 2012. We have made Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) as basis of compilation, thus not all incidents are included.

### December 2011

A one year and nine month old baby girl was killed in a road accident at Lingmithang in Mongar on December 2 when she was taken to her relatives' house. A relative had just stepped inside a shop to buy something when a taxi came and hit the baby<sup>66</sup>.

Thimphu police have apprehended seven boys for beating up three police constables near the Thai Pavilion on December 3. Four of them were arrested immediately after the incident while others were arrested later. The boys had named their gang as F4D. Two of the policemen were injured when the boys beat them. One suffered multiple cuts on his head. The other, bruises on his body and hands. The third escaped unhurt. In their police statement, the boys said they had gone to fight another group of boys<sup>67</sup>.

Thimphu District Court on February 6 imposed three-year sentence for a boy involved in the incident. Other 17 were given 18 months each and rest nine boys got nine months each. Two boys were sent to Youth Rehabilitation Centre in Tshimasham, Chukha<sup>68</sup>.

One more session of police-youth partnership programme ended up in the capital on December 5. The programme was started by the Royal Bhutan Police to tackle the growing youth related crime. At the conclusion note, the Home and Cultural Affairs Minister Minjur Dorji promised these 22 out of school youth jobs and training opportunities. As part of the partnership program, the youths for two weeks accompanied police personnel on patrolling duty. They were familiarised with juvenile crime and the legal provisions and provided career counselling and guidance<sup>69</sup>.

A falling boulder killed the 34-year-old Bolero Camper driver on spot in Khelekha, Wangduephodrang on December 4. A passenger in the vehicle escaped unhurt<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7523> Retrieved: 16 Nov 2012

<sup>67</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7530> Retrieved 16 Nov 2012

<sup>68</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9233> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>69</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7548> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>70</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7558> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

Police in the capital arrested two grade 12 science students of Yangchenphug Higher Secondary School on December 5 in connection with the assault on the school's caretaker. The school caretaker was critically injured in skull when a group of young men assaulted him on November 28. The incident occurred when students tried to steal the board exam papers<sup>71</sup>.

Gelephu (Gaylegphug) police on December 5 detained a 24-year-old woman for stealing Nu.70,000 from the Gelephu (Gaylegphug) sub-division office in June. The suspect worked as a block accountant at the Gelephu (Gaylegphug) sub-divisional office<sup>72</sup>.

Twenty-three students of Orong Higher Secondary School were admitted hospital in Samdrupjongkhar on December 14 with swelling, loss of feeling and numbness in the leg. Earlier in the month, two students died with similar symptoms<sup>73</sup>. Investigation later found they had nutritional deficiency.

A forty four-year-old man was killed on the spot when the DCM truck he was travelling in went off the road at Lampelri near Phuentsholing on December 16. Of the four men in truck, including driver, two passenger suffered injures while driver escaped unhurt<sup>74</sup>.

Four men were stabbed in two separate incidents in Gelephu and Thimphu on December 18. Three men, aged 19, 24 and 25, were stabbed after a fight broke out among seven men. In another unrelated incident, two men have been apprehended after they stabbed a man in Thimphu. Police said, they stabbed the man because he dashed into them while they were walking through the town<sup>75</sup>.

Residents in Gola bazaar of Samtse (Samchi) were complaining against the local authorities for tagging land as 'illegally occupied'. Residents say, as they paid taxes regularly, they never realised they need Tharm or land ownership certificates to own a land. There are about 50 plot owners in the town. Most of them have bought the land from the previous owners in between 1960s and early nineties. The Dungkhag office has also no clear records of the plot registration. The government stopped collecting land tax from 1993 onwards<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7560> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>72</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7621> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>73</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8101> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>74</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8103> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>75</sup> Wangmo, Kuenga, Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7771> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>76</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8116> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

Three people were killed in a vehicle accident on December 22 at about 29km from Samdrup Jongkhar towards Trashigang. The driver, 31, and the owner of the vehicle, 51, were killed on the spot along with a women passenger. The Mahindra jeep they were travelling fell some 800 feet below the road. The three others are seriously injured<sup>77</sup>.

Police detain a former Gup of Khebisa in Dagana on suspect of his involvement in murder of an Indian labourer on December 23. The 21-year-old labourer died after the former Gup came from behind and hit him on his head with piece of wood<sup>78</sup>.

Police in Phuentsholing arrested three men in connection with illegal transaction of controlled substances, who were trying to enter Bhutan through the Phuentsholing gate from across the border in an Indian taxi on December 28. Police recovered cough syrups, tablets and packets of marijuana<sup>79</sup>.

## January 2012

Hyundai Tucson hit a 27-year-old man on 2 January in the area popularly known as the Hongkong market in Thimphu. The man was seriously injured.

The injured man was reportedly fleeing after hitting a man with a whisky bottle following a scuffle when the driver of the Hyundai Tucson accidentally hit him and fled the scene<sup>80</sup>.

A 17-year-old boy lost left eye after he was stabbed with a knife on January 1. He was driving back home at around 2am after dropping his friends when he stopped his car to answer a call of nature near the Bangladeshi Embassy. A group of men appeared out of nowhere and assaulted him<sup>81</sup>.

The parliament passed Child Adoption Bill 2011 on January 5 after a prolonged debate on Sections 29 and 30 that describe adopting their own relatives. Despite disagreement from health minister Zangley Dukpa, the house decided to erase those sections. The bill states that 'a Bhutanese Citizen who is of good moral character, financially secured, not convicted of a crime, capable to support and care the child and who is at least 30 years of age and the age difference

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<sup>77</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8121> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>78</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8124> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>79</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8137> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>80</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8152> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>81</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=7998> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

between the adoptive parent and the child to be adopted shall be at least 15 years may apply for the adoption a child'. The bill also gives right to the adopted child to have the right of inheritance of property of the adopting parent in accordance with the inheritance law<sup>82</sup>.

Thimphu district court was burgled on the night of January 2. Nu. 575,000 had been stolen. The Police said, the door was not broken down but it was pulled hard from outside<sup>83</sup>.

Police in Trashigang arrested a 47-year-old man suspected of murdering his 40-year-old cousin sister on January 6. The murder took place on December 31 in Thongrong village under Phongmey block in Trashigang. The dead body was found buried<sup>84</sup>.

A 29-year-old man from Samdrup Jongkhar died after a falling boulder hit him on his head on Jan 5 at Jangjangma in Trashigang. The deceased was working at the Sakteng road construction site with three other men when the accident occurred. His colleagues managed to escape uninjured<sup>85</sup>.

A couple in their late fifties was killed on the spot in a road accident at about 19 kilometres from Gedu towards Chhukha on January 9. The driver of the van and his 12-year-old daughter escaped with minor injuries<sup>86</sup>.

The Tsirang (Chirang) District Court sentenced six Indian construction workers to prison, ranging from four-and-half to nine-and-half years, for voluntary manslaughter on January 10. Five accused were sentenced to four-and-half years each for aiding while the main accused, who hit the deceased on the head with a piece of wood, received nine-and-half years. The incident took place on November 21 the previous year<sup>87</sup>.

In Bumthang, a 33-year-old man was killed on the spot in a bus accident at Tashipokto, 9km towards Trongsa from Bumthang. Two other passengers sustained minor injuries. In another accident in Haa, a 23-year-old car driver was killed when his vehicle veered off the icy road<sup>88</sup>.

A 19-year-old man was stabbed by a group of boys at Olakha in Thimphu on January 11. According to the medical report, the knife

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<sup>82</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8159> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>83</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8158> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>84</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8163> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>85</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8162> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>86</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8224> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>87</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8241> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>88</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8273> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

has pierced an inch into the victim's ribs, damaging his lung<sup>89</sup>. Police arrested 25-year-old suspect on January 22 from near the Olakha workshop while he was attempting to flee to Punakha in a taxi<sup>90</sup>.

Four people including one woman were killed when vehicle veered off 800 m below the road in Samdrup Jongkhar on January 14 at Lamsarong, Samdrup Jongkhar. Of five people in the vehicle, the driver was critically injured<sup>91</sup>.

The Thimphu city police detained two men for stabbing a 24-year-old man January 15. The victim sustained a 15-inch stab wound on his stomach. The suspects, aged 74 and 44, were allegedly under the influence of alcohol when the incident took place<sup>92</sup>.

The Women and Child Protection Unit of the Royal Bhutan Police detained a woman from Changangkha, Thimphu for battering a 10-year-old minor, who was working as a baby sitter with the woman. The minor has sustained injuries on the face, beaten by belt. The child was handed over to RENEW<sup>93</sup>.

An unidentified person has attacked a 72-year-old man with a knife in Phuentsholing on January 21. The assailant placed a knife on his neck and demanded for his mobile phone. When he said he did not have one and screamed for help, the unidentified man fled the scene after slitting his throat. The wound was only skin deep and was not life threatening<sup>94</sup>.

A 19-year-old-boy died after he was stabbed in Gyalpoizhing, Monggar January 24, in a fight over bicycle. The deceased's elder brother claims it was during their evening walk that the suspect came and snatched the bicycle from the deceased. The victim and the youngest brother followed the suspect near the NHPC colony, where the victim was stabbed<sup>95</sup>. The Monggar district court convicted a 22-year-old man to nine years and three months imprisonment for the convict in May. The convict was asked to pay Nu. 106,300 as compensation to the deceased's family<sup>96</sup>.

Three men including an Indian national were buried to death by boulders in Tendruk in Samtse (Samchi) on January 28<sup>97</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8086> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>90</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8652> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>91</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8328> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>92</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8363> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>93</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8625> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>94</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8631> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>95</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8704> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

<sup>96</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12982> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>97</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8814> Retrieved 16 Nov. 12

## February 2012

A grade 10 student of Samtse (Samchi) was stabbed at Hong Kong market in Thimphu on February 1. The victim suffered deep cut on the right rib cage. The incident was outcome of alcohol consumption. His own friend stabbed the victim accidentally while he was holding one of the boys to be stabbed<sup>98</sup>.

Five students and the driver of the school bus met with an accident in Assam on February 3. The bus was carrying 24 students and a teacher. They were returning home after attending the YES camp in Gyalpoizhing, Monggar<sup>99</sup>.

The 19-year-old-boy, who was alleged to have robbed Ugyen Pelri Lhakhang in Thimphu on 6 February, was arrested two days later. Two copper statues were stolen from the Lhakhang<sup>100</sup>.

Three school dropouts from Wangduephodrang stabbed two men in two different places were arrested from Thimphu on February 14. Police said, the first incident occurred on February 13. The three boys, using knives, injured taxi driver they were hiring to come to Thimphu, looted car keys and Nu 3000 and fled to Punakha. The next morning, these boys stabbed another taxi driver in Punakha, injuring him severely and looting his Nu.6,000 and mobile phone and fled to Thimphu. Police caught the boys from Olakha in the alto car they had stolen. The boys changed the number plate of the car and replaced with a taxi number plate. The yellow taxi colour was also covered with plastic tape. Along with the stolen items belonging to the victims, police also seized a samurai sword, one Khukhuri, two daggers and 92 tablets of N10<sup>101</sup>.

The IED blast in Rinchending on February 17 damaged a forest check-post office and injured one police constable. Few minutes before the explosion, the attackers fired at the police and immigration check-post, which hit the constable. After the incident, police recovered four empty bullet cartridges of AK 47 rifle from behind the forest check post. The explosion blew-off a part of the office's walls and pillars made of bamboo sheets. No other documents or equipment damages were reported<sup>102</sup>.

The Thimphu Police apprehended two men, 30 and 19, for carrying some 1,600 sticks of Wills Cigarette. The 19-year-old boy from Samtse (Samchi) confessed to have carried the cigarettes as per the demand of the other man traveling with him. The 30-year-old businessman from Shelam in Phojikha confessed that the cigarettes were for sale<sup>103</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=8993> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>99</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9102> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>100</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9326> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>101</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9563> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>102</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9727> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>103</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9814> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12



A student of Motithang Higher Secondary School was stabbed above the weekend vegetable market in Thimphu on February 22. The victim suffered multiple injuries on his head and back. Another man of age 27 was also stabbed on the following day but report did not mention about the place of incident<sup>104</sup>. Police arrested two suspects involved in first stabbing case on February 25 from Chubachu and Olakha. Both are school dropouts<sup>105</sup>.

The government made efforts to improve the living standard and economic status of the nomads in the country. Nomad festival was organised in Bumthang in February to provide the nomads a platform to sell their products and find markets. However, the festival did not attract much crowd<sup>106</sup>.

Police in Phuenstholing apprehended a 38-year-old man in connection with illegal transaction of controlled substances on February 25. He was caught with 10 files of Nitrosun 10 and 60 files of Relipen tablet. The man also carried a packet of marijuana worth Nu. 3,500<sup>107</sup>.

A 67-year-old man died in a vehicle accident in Paro on February 26. The alto car, the deceased was driving, collided with a Prado. Three other passengers in the car, including a child, were injured. The cause of the accident was the slippery road, caused by water flow from field above<sup>108</sup>. The child died while undergoing treatment at National Referral Hospital in Thimphu on March 6<sup>109</sup>.

A 26-year-old man died while undergoing treatment at the National Referral Hospital in Thimphu on February 29 from stab injuries. He was attacked by a 30-year-old man at Yusagang village under Dangchu Gewog in Wangduephodrang a day earlier<sup>110</sup>.

Her own Indian-father reportedly raped a 12-year-old minor in Bumthang. The incident took place in January when the mother was in her village in Sarpang (Sarbhong). Mother reported to the police on February 27. Mother is from Bhutan<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>104</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9900> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>105</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9960> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>106</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9927> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>107</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=9954> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>108</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10004> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>109</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10327> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>110</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10165> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12  
<sup>111</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10281> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12



## March 2012

With an aim to promote women's political leadership and governance two-day conference on Gender Responsive Governance Index was held in Thimphu. The sensitisation began against the backdrop of women participation in politics. Women's participation at local government is only 2 percent while it is 14 percent at the national level<sup>112</sup>.

A 22-year-old heart patient (who did valve replacement in India) died on her way to the Mongar Regional Referral Hospital March 6. The cause of death is linked to shortage of medicines for her heart illness for months. The hospital did not have more than 50 different types of vital and essential drugs at the time of incident. All the six eastern districts depend Mongar Hospital for all kinds of cardiac diseases<sup>113</sup>.

However, the Health Ministry denied the allegations that the cause of the death was of lack of anticoagulants or INR reagents. But said it was due to failure of the replaced valve and another one to function<sup>114</sup>.

Another workshop aimed at encouraging women for political participation was held in Paro in second week of March. Organised by National Commission for Women and Children, the workshop was attended by over 70 elected women representatives. It was aimed taking stock of opportunities and challenges confronting elected women representatives at the national and local levels and build network among women leaders in the country<sup>115</sup>.

Police in Tsirang (Chirang) detained two men for illegally possessing Nu 1000 counterfeit notes in second week of March. The accused were brothers by relation from Tashiding Block in Dagana<sup>116</sup>. The police in Tsirang (Chirang) recovered sixty-six additional counterfeit notes in last week of March. The fake notes were found below the road, near Sunkosh town<sup>117</sup>.

The country experienced the one case of cyber security and online black mailing. It was observed, women are vulnerable to black mailing<sup>118</sup>.

A strategic planning workshop for South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children held in Paro in March with aims at enhancing protection of children in South Asia, especially the most vulnerable, from all forms of violence through enhanced advocacy, raised awareness and strengthened capacity of the implementing

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<sup>112</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10191> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>113</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10398> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>114</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10458> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>115</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10766> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>116</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10817> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>117</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11177> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>118</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10815> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

institutions and the target population. During deliberations, participants looked into creating a common understanding on its objectives and expected outputs within the project's life span and defined roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved in the implementation of the project<sup>119</sup>.

Police in Thimphu arrested two suspects in connection to the Thimphu court burglary on March 20. The burglary took place on the night of January 2. The couple, 34 and 25, were arrested for breaking into the court and robbing Nu. 575,000<sup>120</sup>.

Two people were killed in an accident at Lamsarong in Samdrup Jongkhar. The oil-tanker deceased were travelling in fell-off about 50 metres below the road. Tanker was carrying diesel. The other passenger, who is the husband of the deceased, has suffered severe injury<sup>121</sup>.

Police arrested a 26-year-old man, of Gelephu (Gaylegphug), on March 21 from Thimphu for possessing more than 1,000 contraband substances<sup>122</sup>.

Police in Phuentsholing arrested two men in connection with illegal transaction of controlled substances from the Rinchending check-post on March 28. Police, however, failed to trace the suspect's vehicle. Upon receiving additional information, deployed police team arrested the men from Rinchending check post. The suspects were caught with 544 Spasmo Proxyvon (SP) capsules and 200 Nitrosun (N10) inside the cabin. Upon interrogation, they confessed having purchased the substances from Dental Clinic in neighbouring town of Jaigoan<sup>123</sup>.

Two boys 20 were stabbed in Gelephu on March 31. They were under alcohol influence when met with other group, turned into fight<sup>124</sup>. The Gelephu police arrested three of the four suspects involved in a stabbing case on second week of April. The suspects were all students, between 18 and 20 years. They confessed to the crime<sup>125</sup>.

## April 2012

Police in Thimphu detained three suspects (approx. age 18-25) on April 6 in connection with two different incidents that occurred on March 21. They had stolen Nu. 500,000. They were caught with goods believed to have purchased with the stolen money. Police recovered

<sup>119</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10808> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>120</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10850> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>121</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10907> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>122</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=10904> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>123</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11175> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>124</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11274> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>125</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12001> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

cash amounting to over Nu. 70,000 and some packets of marijuana from them<sup>126</sup>.

Two policemen died on the spot and 17 others injured in an accident in the capital when the DCM truck they were travelling veered-off the road on April 8. There were 23 policemen on the truck<sup>127</sup>. Two other policemen were critically injured. One suffered brain injury and the other a lung injury<sup>128</sup>.

Two people were killed in a road accident at Deorali under Dorokha Dungkhang in Samtse (Samchi) on April 6. The Bolero jeep carrying 10 passengers fell 60 feet below the road. One passenger died on the spot, while the others suffered injuries<sup>129</sup>.

Pelkhil School in Thimphu withdrew its complaint from the police against a UNICEF official for assaulting one of its teachers. The case, which school officials had claimed to be de-motivating for the whole of the teaching community, was withdrawn after just three days since the incident. According to the school principal, the complaint was withdrawn after the accused had met with the victim and apologised for his actions<sup>130</sup>.

Two non-national workers were killed in an accident in Wangdue Phodrang, when a tripper truck went off the road, on April 18. The helper was killed on the spot, while the driver succumbed to injuries at the Wangdue hospital. The tripper truck belongs to the Hisdustan Construction Company at the Puna Tsangchhu hydropower project phase one<sup>131</sup>.

A 16-year-old boy, who went missing since September last year from Zhemgang was found in Mumbai, India. The boy was found in Mumbai in March this year. He was said to have been kidnapped by some unknown people while on his way back from school in Zhemgang. The child was taken to Mumbai and sold off. Mumbai police found the boy and was kept at Dongri Children's Home<sup>132</sup>.

Two teachers of Sengten lower secondary school died in a road accident, on April 25 in Samtse (Samchi), caused by bad weather. One was killed on the spot and the other died on the way to hospital<sup>133</sup>.

Two men aged 27 and 32 died on the spot when the Tata Manza car they were travelling in veered off the road on April 29 near Phuentsholing. The car plunged 250 metres below the road<sup>134</sup>.

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<sup>126</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11482> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>127</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11542> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>128</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11585> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>129</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11574> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>130</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=11954> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>131</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12059> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>132</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12225> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>133</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12243> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

Five men died on the spot when the Santro car they were travelling in veered off the road at Takti, about 70 kilometres from Phuentsholing on April 30. In another accident an 18-year-old boy died in a car accident in Thimphu on the same day. The over-speeding Hyundai Tucson he was driving fell 245 feet below the road. His friend, 20, escaped with minor head injuries<sup>135</sup>.

## May 2012

Media freedom is undermined by a lack of information infrastructures and also skills and literacy to access and evaluate information. This was one of the talking points at the World Press Freedom Day marked in Thimphu. “Right now the question that confronts us is not so much on how much media should we have; the question is what kind of media, the content and information newspapers and radio stations are providing us. Like, do they cater us information that we need in new democracy. We need to be informed much better on what is happening and not just non-stop entertainment for instance,” said Siok Sian Pek-Dorji, Executive Director of the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy<sup>136</sup>.

Coinciding with the Tarayana fair, a Memorandum of Understanding, MoU, was signed May 4 between the Tarayana foundation and the BUSSI-EN Social Welfare Corporation, Japan to initiate cooperative projects and programmes to improve the social welfare and enhance sustainable development of the most vulnerable communities in Bhutan<sup>137</sup>.

Bhutan Youth Development Fund initiated a community-based project in the village to improve the livelihoods of the people of Umsang village in Bumthang in first week of May. The project is carried out by Y-VIA, Young volunteers in action under the Youth Development Fund<sup>138</sup>.

To further upgrade the mental health care system in the country, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry of Health and the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand on May 7<sup>139</sup>.

The Gedu College students and the telecom officials have come to an agreement and withdrawn the complaint on the battery incident reported to the police last month. According to the telecom officials,

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<sup>134</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12297>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>135</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12365>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>136</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12395>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>137</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12431>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>138</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12466>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>139</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12500>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

they withdrew the case on the request of the students' parents and also after thinking about the future of the students. However, the College has terminated two of three students involved in the incident. According to the College Discipline Committee, the termination was not done based on the incident but for the violation of college norms. The students were terminated once in 2010 but were re-admitted on humanitarian grounds this year. After re-admission, they had signed a legal undertaking to avoid being involved in any in-disciplinary actions henceforth. The incident took place on April 28 when three students got involved in a brawl with two telecom employees<sup>140</sup>.

Police has recovered 5 laptops and 10 mobile phones worth over Nu. 300,000 stolen from a shop in Olakha on May 12. Two people were involved in the burglary were arrested on May 15. One suspect is a class 12 student in Thimphu. The other is a former employee of a private firm<sup>141</sup>.

First case of nutrition deficiency in school was observed on May 13. 12 students with symptoms of fever, stomach ache, diarrhoea and vomiting were admitted to hospital<sup>142</sup>.

Gelephu (Gaylegphug) police arrested a 34-year-old businessman for allegedly raping a minor, a 14-year-old school going girl on May 18. The incident occurred in Gelephu (Gaylegphug) on April 26. Accused confessed to the crime and said it was consensual<sup>143</sup>.

The police recovered more than 3,500 tablets and 100 bottles of corex on May 14. Based on the information give by the trick driver carrying the substance, a person aged 32 sending the goods in the form of parcel was apprehended the same day. The other 34-year-old man, intended to receive the parcel, was arrested on May 17. Police after raiding his car seized about 600 tablets. In another case, a 33-year-old man who runs a mobile shop in the Hongkong market was found in possession of drugs. He sold drugs from his mobile shop. Police recovered as many as 1,800 spasmoproxyvn tablets from the shop<sup>144</sup>.

National Commission for Women and Children organised a National consultation on violence against children<sup>145</sup>.

The 3rd edition of Mountain Echoes- a literary festival highlighted the Hindi poetry recitation but failed to include the language used within the country. There was minimal use of Dzongkha language as well<sup>146</sup>.

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<sup>140</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12537>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>141</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12769>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>142</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12799>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>143</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12876>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>144</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12872>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>145</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12932>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>146</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12928>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

Police in Thimphu arrested six men including two former monks, aged between 20-25 years old, in connection to the murder of a 26-year-old widower on May 22. The suspects along with the deceased and his friends were in the same bar in Changiji where the brawl broke out among them. There were multiple cuts on his face, neck and on the left side of the collar bone. Two other friends of the deceased were also stabbed<sup>147</sup>. The monks were arrested on the same day while others were arrested the following morning<sup>148</sup>. Police arrested five more people in connection with the incident later. The Thimphu District Court slapped these 11 people sentences, ranging from one month to 10 years in November. The main culprit, a former monk from Punakha, was sentenced to 10 years and asked to pay a compensation of Nu 2,62,866 within a year to the deceased's family and Nu 15,000 to one of the victims within 10 days<sup>149</sup>.

A 24-year-old man was arrested in Mongar for allegedly raping a 34-year-old mother of two on May 30. The accused told police that it was a consensual sex. The victim denied this. The incident took place on May 25<sup>150</sup>.

## June 2012

A 54-year-old man died on June 3 after a Maruti car he was traveling in went off road and fell more than 100 feet down the Thrumshingla pass. The driver was injured critically. The third person escaped without injuries<sup>151</sup>.

The Mongar police detained a 57-year-old man from Changshing Pek on suspicion of attempt rape of his disabled daughter. The victim's mother had reported the matter to the police<sup>152</sup>. Mongar District Court sentenced a 57-year-old man to five years and one month to prison for attempting to rape his disabled stepdaughter. The verdict was passed on August 14<sup>153</sup>.

A three member high-level delegation from the United States called on the Prime Minister, Jigmi Y Thinley and Foreign Minister Khandu Wangchuk on June 7. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the US State Department, Kelly Clement, lead the delegation. The delegation discussed a wide range of issues relating to US-Bhutan relations including the issue of Bhutanese refugees<sup>154</sup>.

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<sup>147</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=12987>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>148</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13037>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>149</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19298>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>150</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13249>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>151</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13586>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>152</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13710>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>153</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16317>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>154</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13827>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

On June 7, Chukha police arrested a 35-year-old man suspected of attempting to rape a 13-year-old school girl on June 1. The girl was returning home from school when the suspect stopped her, saying he was sent by her father to fetch construction tools from their hut. Since she knew the suspect as her father's co-worker, she accompanied him home. But once inside the hut, he tried to rape her<sup>155</sup>.

The Mongar Court has dropped charges against a suspect of an alleged rape on June 8 saying it was consensual. A 26-year-old man from Balam in Mongar was accused of rape in April this year, after which he was detained for 27 days<sup>156</sup>.

In a move to foster growth of media organisations in the country that would help improve the situation of right to information of the Bhutanese citizen, the Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF) came up with a strategic plans for the next five years. The plans include series of trainings for the media professionals ranging from reporters, editors, photographers, designers, marketing and circulations. Foundation held consultation on its plan with stakeholders on June 10<sup>157</sup>.

A 24-year-old man from Chaling in Mongar died on the spot when the DCM truck he was driving went off road and fell 35 metres below, on June 10. The two other passengers in the truck were injured<sup>158</sup>.

New labour force survey results for previous year were out. As many as 4,400 children were found working outside their homes. They were aged between 13-17 years. They were found working in informal sectors such as farm workers and domestic helpers<sup>159</sup>.

Thimphu police arrested two suspects in connection to robbery at Amankora on June 11. The Police recovered cash amounting to over Nu. 40,000 along with weapons. The suspects were former employees of the resort. The 24-year-old and the 31-year-old suspects confessed to the crime<sup>160</sup>.

A 37-year-old man died in a road accident at Narphung, Samdrup Jongkhar, on June 14. He was driving a recovery van towards Wamrong, when the vehicle veered off road and fell below the road<sup>161</sup>.

A 40-year-old archer, who was hit by an arrow, succumbed to injuries on June 17. He was hit on June 15 and was admitted to the national referral hospital in Thimphu. Doctor said it was a penetrating injury.

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<sup>155</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13833>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>156</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13893>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>157</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13962>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>158</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=13950>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>159</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14014>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>160</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14095>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>161</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14146>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12



The arrow hit the right back and entered some nine inches deep inside between the 7th and the 8th ribs near the spine. Doctor said the major blood vessels in the lungs were damaged which lead to uncontrollable bleeding<sup>162</sup>.

A 37-year-old man died on the spot at Ganglakha, about 32 km from Phuentsholing towards Thimphu when the fuel tanker he was driving went off road and fell 120 meters below the road on June 19. The 19-year-old handy boy travelling with him suffered head injury and fractures. In another accident, an ambulance skidded off road at Chazam in Trashigang on June 18<sup>163</sup>.

The Right to Information enactment to be discussed during the 10th Session of the Parliament as an Urgent Bill was shelved after the move garnered just nine votes in the National Council on June 27. Eight members abstained from voting and six voted 'No'. Gasa's National Council member, Sangay Khandu, had moved the motion in 10<sup>th</sup> session of the parliament with two recommendations, calling the attention of the government to conduct RTI awareness not just in the capital and among the literate but also take it to the rural areas. The other recommendation was to discuss RTI as an Urgent Bill during the 10th session of the parliament<sup>164</sup>.

## July 2012

A 55-year-old Indian labour, died on the spot when the Mahindra jeep they were travelling in, went off road at Yongphula Zero Point in Kanglung on July 2. The driver and the four other passengers escaped with minor injuries<sup>165</sup>.

The Sunkosh River washed a man in his mid fifties away in Karmaling block in Dagana, on July 2 when the three workers working for Sunkosh project were trying to get drilling equipment across the river, from Nichula to Karmaling, on a bamboo raft. The one who jumped into the river to save the man was injured<sup>166</sup>.

The Gelephu (Gaylegphug) Dungkhag Court on July 2 sentenced a 57-year-old man to 1 year and 1 month imprisonment for smuggling tobacco. The man was charged for petty misdemeanour. He was given option to pay in lieu of the imprisonment. The man, who is from Tsirang, was caught smuggling eight bundles of chewing tobacco in

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<sup>162</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14225>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>163</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14268>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>164</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14674>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>165</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14755>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>166</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14794>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12



September last year. In another incident, the court also sentenced a 34-year-old man from Lhuentse to 9 years and 4 months imprisonment last month for raping a 16-year-old girl. The crime took place in August last year<sup>167</sup>.

Nutritional deficiency in food supplied to students in schools and colleges were under scanner by MPs in parliament session. The Education Minister, Thakur Singh Powdyel, said the education ministry along with agriculture ministry is working to curb the low nutritional diet in boarding schools. He said the health ministry has already started supplying vitamin supplements and iron tablets to the students. He also added that the agriculture program in schools is being strengthened. As an immediate measure, the government has increased the school feeding stipend to Nu.1,000 from Nu.700 per month<sup>168</sup>.

Fifty-one-year old Ramjar Gup of Trashiyangtse died on the spot when the Alto car he was driving, went off road at Mugthangkhar, along the Trashigang-Trashiyangtse highway on July 6. The two passengers in the vehicle escaped with minor injuries. They were on their way back to Ramjar from Trashigang<sup>169</sup>.

A Royal Bhutan Army personnel was shot dead in an ambush on the Gelephu-Sarpang (Gaylegphug-Sarbhong) highway early morning on July 8. Another personnel suffered minor injury on his right ring finger. The rest escaped unhurt. The six army personnel were walking towards Dargathang outpost under Dekiling (Bhur) Block from the nearby army camp. The outpost is located 25 kilometres from Gelephu (Gaylegphug) towards Sarpang (Sarbhong). 18 shells fired from an AK 47 rifle were recovered from the scene. A home-made gun or Khaduwa, a camouflage bag, a cap, small bag, torch light, rain coat and gun powder were also found. United Revolutionary Front of Bhutan or URFB was blamed for the incident<sup>170</sup>.

A Professor from Thailand and an employee of Agriculture Machinery Centre died in a vehicle accident on July 7. They were travelling to Thimphu from Haa when the vehicle veered off road and fell some 200 feet below the road<sup>171</sup>.

An 11 years old girl, a student of Trashigang Middle Secondary School, was drowned after she slipped in a pit measuring six feet at a new building construction site at Lungzor in Trashigang July 10. The police say no foul play was suspected<sup>172</sup>.

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<sup>167</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14792>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>168</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14845>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>169</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14933>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>170</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14978>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>171</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=14995>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>172</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15104>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

Thewar river washed away a 43-year-old man in Gelephu (Gaylegphug) on July 10. He was returning home along with his friend, after shopping. His friend managed to swim across<sup>173</sup>.

On July 12, king met family with the members of Late Gopa Tenzin Dorji- the RBA soldier who was killed in an ambush in Sarpang (Sarbhong) last week. King and Queen spent over an hour with the bereaved family<sup>174</sup>.

A 31-year-old man died on the spot in a road accident on July 16 near Punakha Dzong parking. The deceased was a park ranger at Jigme Dorji National Park under Gasa Dzongkhag<sup>175</sup>.

To bridge the gender disparity in the country better, gender responsive budgeting was discussed in Thimphu. The gender responsive budgeting is a tool of allocating budgets adequately, by mainstreaming gender. The National Commission for Women and Children's Executive Director (NCWC), Phintsho Choeden, said gender responsive budgeting is about having a budget that is more responsive. The United Nations Resident Coordinator, Claire Van der Vaeren, said in the field of tertiary education and unemployment rate, the female ratio still stands more compared to the male ratio<sup>176</sup>.

Earlier this month, police in Bumthang detained two sisters for allegedly beating a five months pregnant woman at Chamkhar town. Police said, the day before the incident, the accused passed on a message to the saloon owner asking the victim to return the money borrowed<sup>177</sup>.

The body of the 15-year-old boy who went missing seven days ago in Kurichu in Mongar was taken out from the reservoir of the Kurichu Hydropower plant on July 25. The boy did not return after he went swimming with his friends<sup>178</sup>.

## August 2012

The reporters of The Journalist who have covered a story on the suicide of a student in Kamji Middle Secondary School requested the Journalists Association of Bhutan (JAB) to investigate and determine whether they have violated the journalistic ethics while covering the

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<sup>173</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15106>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>174</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15141>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>175</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15310>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>176</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15362>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>177</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15446>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>178</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15615>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

story. The reporters have put up a letter to the JAB seeking intervention after the Education Minister during the 22nd Meet the Press accused The Journalist for having sensationalised the news and instigated the students to misbehave. JAB did not act<sup>179</sup>.

Three people were arrested in connection with prostitution on August 2 in Tshongdue, Paro. Police charged a 26-year-old Bhutanese woman with prostitution and a 20-year-old Indian man for patronising a prostitute. Police also charged a 46-year-old businesswoman with the offense of promoting prostitution. She was also charged for possessing tobacco products beyond permissible quantity. 1,600 packets of cigarettes, over 200 rolls of bidis and many different brands of chewing tobacco were discovered from her shop<sup>180</sup>. The following day, four more women were arrested in Paro on charges on promoting prostitution<sup>181</sup>.

The newly constructed Hindu temple in Gelegphu (Gaylegphug) was inaugurated on August 9 coinciding with the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna. The Temple has Lord Shiva as the main statue. The 18 decimal land on which the temple stands was donated by the government. The government contributed Nu. 300,000 and the donation from the public amounted to about Nu. 1.7 million<sup>182</sup>.

25 local government officials from four Class A municipalities jointly proposed for pay raise. The reasons they said was their workload does not commensurate with the salary they get. They get Nu. 5,000 a month and a mobile voucher allowance of Nu. 500. “With a salary of Nu. 5000, forget about meeting our monthly expenses, it is not enough to meet our transport cost. Frankly speaking, it’s not even enough to buy doma and snacks in a month. Now our only request to the government is that, considering the matter if government could raise our pay like that of Mangmi,” one of them<sup>183</sup>.

A bus conductor was severely injured on August 12 in a suspected armed robbery. Stone hit the 18-year-old conductor. The incident occurred near the Ministry of Economic affairs office in Thimphu. He was also robbed of Nu.500. The Police have arrested two suspects who confessed. In separate incidents, two teenage boys were stabbed that morning in Thimphu. The 19-year-old boy suffered from lower back injury. The 18-year-old boy suffered from injuries on shoulder and scalp. The police have arrested three suspects who confessed<sup>184</sup>.

Phuentsholing Police arrested a 22-year-old man from Wangdue in connection with illegal transaction of controlled substances on August

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<sup>179</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15797>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>180</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=15875>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>181</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16035>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>182</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16128>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>183</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16118>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>184</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16198>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

10. Police raided his home after a tip off. He was caught with a bag of capsules worth about Nu.8,000<sup>185</sup>.

A 33-year-old Indian teacher of Peljorling Higher Secondary School in Sibsoo (Sibsu) was arrested detained for official misconduct and child molestation on August 15. It was reported, the teacher gave the two girls eight questions bearing 25 marks in return for girls agreeing to watch porn movies at his house and later physically abusing<sup>186</sup>.

A 26-year-old man died on the spot when the tripper truck he was travelling in toppled at Dzongkharlum on August 17. He died of serious head injury and excess bleeding<sup>187</sup>.

The Gelephu (Gaylegphug) sub-divisional court sentenced a 34-year-old man to nine years in prison for raping a neighbour minor. The verdict was announced in second week of August. The man is from Phangkhar in Zhemgang. The crime took place at the victim's house in April this year<sup>188</sup>.

Two men were killed on the spot, when the truck they were travelling in went off road in Sarpang (Sarbhong) district on August 21<sup>189</sup>.

Another case of nutritional deficiency among students in government school was observed in Chapcha Middle Secondary School in Chukha. The officials from the Department of Public Health visited the school on August 21 to investigate the case<sup>190</sup>.

Three Tshogpas (village-level elected representatives) elected during the local government elections have put up applications for resignation to the Election Commission of Bhutan. They are from Betso Doomchog Constituency in Haa, Tami Damchu Thang-Bjidemkhong in Punakha and Shompangkha Constituency in Sarpang (Sarbhong) on medical grounds. After few elected representatives threatened to resign if salary was not increased, election commission issued a notification in August second week saying resignations will be accepted on medical grounds<sup>191</sup>.

Sherubtse College terminated a student and suspended six students on charges of breaking windshield of a car under alcohol influence in third week of August. Four shopkeepers were fined for selling alcohol illegally following a surprise raid by the Regional Trade and Industry office in Mongar. Sale of alcohol is banned in Kanglung since 2008<sup>192</sup>.

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<sup>185</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16215>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>186</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16366>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>187</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16430>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>188</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16556>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>189</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16727>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>190</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16693>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>191</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16687>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>192</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=16889>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

The country's first woman Chief District Officer, Ngawang Pem, officially assumed office on August 30. His Majesty the King had appointed her as Tsirang (Chirang) Dzongda (Chief District Officer) on the 26th of last (sic) month<sup>193</sup>.

## September 2012

To encourage more women participation in politics, "La, Aum Lyonchhen" a media advocacy campaign was launched on September 1. "La, Aum Lyonchhen" project was a continuation of an initiative, Inspiring Bhutanese Women to lead. At the launch, a documentary film "La Aum Lyonchhen: lessons from Denmark" was also screened, featuring challenges faced by two of the women members of the Parliament, MP Sangay Zam and MP Karma Lhamo, while drawing lessons from Denmark<sup>194</sup>.

Police arrested two prisoners who were on the run, from Haa. The prisoners had escaped from Thimphu City Police detention centre on September 1. One of the prisoners, Nawang Dorji, 23, from Yangtse Block in Trashiyangtse was arrested from Phuentsholing in May as the main accused of a car racket. Pemba, 21, from Chungsekha village in Wangduephodrang was arrested in May for burglary<sup>195</sup>.

A 33-year-old woman died in a road accident at Migtangkar in Samdrupjongkhar on September 6. The Bolero, in which 7 people including driver were travelling, fell some 250 metres below the road. Two women and a man were also injured in the accident<sup>196</sup>.

A 56-year-old man allegedly killed a 42-year-old woman in Mewang block, Thimphu in first week of September. The suspect was living with the victim for since three months. The suspect also looted Nu.10,000 and clothes after breaking the closet<sup>197</sup>.

Dewathang (Deothang) Primary School in Samdrup Jongkhar is suffering from overcrowded classrooms this year. Each classroom has more than 40 students. To make the matter worse, some of the classrooms are under maintenance and classes are being conducted in the school library. According to the School's Principal Ngawang Thinley drastic increase in the enrolment this year lead to the overcrowded classrooms. In the beginning of this year's academic

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<sup>193</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17133>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>194</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17215>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>195</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17399>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>196</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17437>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>197</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17596>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

session, armies who were transferred to Dewathang (Deothang) came in droves to the school for their children's admission<sup>198</sup>.

A 42-year-old man was killed in a road accident in Takti, Wangduephodrang On September 13. He succumbed to major rib injuries. Three other passengers were also injured when the vehicle they were travelling fell off the road and fell about 60 metres below the road<sup>199</sup>.

The second phase of Police and Out of School Youth Partnership programme was organised in the capital in second and third week of September. The programme intended to involve the youth to assist the police to prevent and reduce crimes in future. A total of 20 out of school youth participated in the 15 days programme. They were sensitised on the relevant legal provisions<sup>200</sup>.

Though Bhutan does not has its own democracy day, it celebrated International Day of Democracy with a theme Democracy Education for the first time in September. To mark the day, the Parliament and the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy, organized a panel discussion where Resident Representative of the UNDP in Thimphu Claire Van der Vaeren, said democracy in Bhutan "has come about as vision of an enlightened Monarch, His majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo." "It is very important for people to begin to learn their role, their rights and their responsibilities in bringing about a modern Bhutan."<sup>201</sup>

A 23-year-old woman was killed when a car hit her while cross the road in expressway on September 17 in Thimphu. She succumbed to severe head and chest injuries after reaching hospital<sup>202</sup>.

The Dagana police arrested a 36-year-old man on September 19, for allegedly shooting a man with an arrow and killing him on the spot. The deceased succumbed to excessive bleeding from nose and mouth after the arrow pierced his chest five inches deep<sup>203</sup>.

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion under Hordung Zampa- the suspension bridge, over Sunkosh River in Nichula block under Lhamoizingkha sub-division on September 18 did not cause any damage. Police said, they found, from a distance of about 15 metres, the IED was connected to a wire, which was then joined to a 12V battery to trigger the explosion. Police recovered a brochure

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<sup>198</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17627> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>199</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17691> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>200</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17673> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>201</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17726> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>202</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17820> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>203</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17889> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

belonging to the Bhutan United Socialists Democratic Party (BUSDP)<sup>204</sup>.

A 50-year-old man allegedly murdered his 37-year-old pregnant wife on September 20 at Sephu block in Wangduephodrang. The man brutally murdered his wife by cutting her throat and stabbing her in the stomach<sup>205</sup>. Villagers captured him in Lotey and handed over to the police on September 24. The accused reportedly confessed to killing<sup>206</sup>.

A man in his twenties died on the spot when the Maruti car he was travelling in veered off road and fell about 350 metres below the road in Trongsa (Tongsa) on September 24. Two others were injured<sup>207</sup>.

A 35-year-old-man died on the spot after the Wagon R Taxi he was driving fell some 15 feet below the road at Toeb Menchuna in Wangduephodrang on September 27<sup>208</sup>.

The Punakha police on September 30 arrested a 20-year-old man for allegedly killing his 22-year-old friend. Police said both the victim and the suspect were drunk on the night of the incident<sup>209</sup>.

## October 2012

The body of a 42-year-old man from Chuzargang (Danabari) block in Sarpang (Sarbhong) was found on October 1 at the Chuzargang-Bagmari border. The man was washed away by Mao River on October 25 while he was trying to cross the river<sup>210</sup>.

Wangduephodrang district court sentenced a 30-year-old man to nine years imprisonment for voluntary manslaughter. He had stabbed a 24-year-old cab driver in the stomach suspecting the victim of having an illicit affair with his wife in February at Dangchu in Wangduephodrang<sup>211</sup>.

Following a tip off, the Phuentsholing police arrested four men between the age of 17-29 in possession of contraband substances worth Nu.15,000, on October 5<sup>212</sup>.

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<sup>204</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17880> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>205</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=17920> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>206</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18006> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>207</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18004> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>208</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18163> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>209</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18241> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>210</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18220> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>211</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18281> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>212</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18334> Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

A five-year-old girl child was killed when a DCM truck hit her in Thimphu on October 7. The 33-year-old driver of the DCM was arrested and charged<sup>213</sup>.

A 58-year-old man died on the spot when the truck he was travelling in veered off road and fell some 130 metres below Yongla Pokto road at Layme under Trashigang Dzongkhag on October 7<sup>214</sup>.

Workshop was organised with the objective to equip the prison inmates convicted for drugs related offence with necessary life skills. The two-day workshop is the first of its kind to be initiated was held on October 18 and 19. Thirty prisoners, aged 18-30, convicted for the drugs related offence attended the workshop<sup>215</sup>.

Tobacco products worth about Nu.200,000 was seized from the passengers and travellers alike, in a surprise check by Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency team along with Law Enforcement officials from the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP), Customs, and RSTA at Damchu, in Phuentsholing-Thimphu Highway on October 18. A total of Nu.154,500 collected as penalty<sup>216</sup>.

The Thimphu District Court sentenced a 33-year-old woman to three years imprisonment for selling tobacco products in Thimphu in early October. The report does not mention the date<sup>217</sup>.

A man died on the spot when the Santro car he was travelling in fell into Riju River, a few kilometres away from Trashigang town on October 22<sup>218</sup>.

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded at Samtenling, 200 meters below the Gelephu (Gaylegphug) airport on October 23. The IED was planted inside a hole dug in an abutment of a small concrete bridge on the Gelephu-Sarpang Highway. No damage was reported. The incident comes a day before the launch of the Gelephu airport. That was the second IED explosion in October. The first one happened on the night of October 16, where the IED was planted under the Bhur Khola Bridge<sup>219</sup>.

A 33-year-old Bhutanese man stabbed to death in Hashimara, Assam on October 25. The deceased who succumbed to a stab injury on the right side of his neck was a forester at Rinchending check post, went to Samtse (Samchi) and was returning to Phuentsholing on the day<sup>220</sup>. The Jaigoan police on November 11 arrested four men involved in the

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<sup>213</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18377>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>214</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18397>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>215</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18723>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>216</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18719>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>217</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18748>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>218</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18863>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>219</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=18906>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12

<sup>220</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19013>

Retrieved 18 Nov. 12



murder. All the four arrested have confessed to the crime. Of the four arrested, two men aged 25 and 28 were Bhutanese from Chhukha and others were Indians<sup>221</sup>.

## November 2012

Two labourers were killed on the spot when the Tata Winger they were travelling in, fell 70 feet off the road on November 6 in Gelephu (Gaylegphug). Of the 11 passengers, including the driver, two of the passengers were seriously injured and admitted in Gelephu (Gaylegphug) Hospital, others escaped with minor injuries<sup>222</sup>.

After 18 long days, the missing taxi driver returned home on November 8. He was let go after his father-in-law paid the kidnappers a sum of Nu. 2,10,000. The kidnappers called him demanding cash in Indian currency, a few days ago. He immediately reported the matter to the police. At around 9:20 a.m. on that day, the father-in-law drove some 30 kilometres in between Gelephu (Gaylegphug) and Santa Bari and crossed the border at Shanti Pur. He was asked to drive some three kilometres into the jungle where he met some people to whom he gave the money. The taxi driver had gone missing on October 22 from Dekiling (Leopaney) in Gelephu (Gaylegphug)<sup>223</sup>.

Self Employment and Livelihood for Women in South Asia met for the first time in Thimphu with the aim to exchange best practices and lessons for empowering women and building capacity for improved livelihood opportunities<sup>224</sup>.

Three Bhutanese men, aged between 25 and 60 died in an explosion while clearing the roadblocks in Chhukha district on November 9. One died on the spot while another died on the way to the hospital. The third man died at Phuentsholing hospital while undergoing treatment<sup>225</sup>.

Six men possessing 10 sacks of dried marijuana plants weighing more than 300 kilograms were apprehended at Jomotshangkha in Samdrup Jongkhar on November 11. The consignments belong to a man in his 40s, one of the six caught<sup>226</sup>.

A 24-year-old man from Tsirang (Chirang) died on the spot on November 14 when a tripper truck he was driving fell 200 feet below

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<sup>221</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19444>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>222</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19261>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>223</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19296>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>224</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19333>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>225</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19368>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>226</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19418>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

the road at Jalakhu, about 13 kilometres from Punakha towards Gasa<sup>227</sup>.

A 60-year-old man was abducted at gunpoint from his neighbour's house in Gakidling (Hilley) under Sarpang (Sarbhong) district on November 16. A group of men barged into the house and forcefully took Dorji away. Dorji's wife, Sangay Dema, son Sangay Norbu and his neighbour's wife and their children were all present. While the children managed to escape, Dorji was held at gunpoint. He was taken across the border. The family had come to live in Gakidling from Kurote six years ago under resettlement programme<sup>228</sup>.

A 35-year-old man from Punakha died in a road accident on November 19. The Tuscon SUV he was travelling skidded off and fell about 80 feet below the road<sup>229</sup>.

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded on November 21 near the RNR RDC centre in Samtenling (Bhur) block in Sarpang (Sarbhong), about eight kilometres away from Gelephu (Gaylegphug). The IED was planted, five hundred metres below the Gelephu-Sarpang Highway in a gully. No damage to property or casualty was reported. Police said they found a pamphlet of the Bhutan United Socialist Democratic Party<sup>230</sup>.

The police have apprehended two men in connection with assault on a woman in Kawajangsa Thimphu on November 24. The main offender was from Dorokha under Samtse (Samchi) district and his accomplice was from Wangdue Phodrang<sup>231</sup>.

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<sup>227</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19580>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>228</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19628>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>229</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19740>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>230</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19810>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

<sup>231</sup> Bhutan Broadcasting Service, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=19972>

Retrieved on 22 December 2012

## Section C: Recommendations

There must be appreciation on Bhutan's efforts towards democratisation and ensuring that fundamental rights of the citizens are protected. In pursuing that goal, Bhutan has many areas to improve.

There is a need to have human rights monitoring agencies in place to advocate whether the state is sincere enough towards protecting human rights. A watchdog will not only give a space for general public to make a complain about incidents of human rights violation from the state party but also gives the government an opportunity to be informed of its constitutional obligations and procedural lapses.

Adopting alternative measures are necessary to contain increasing criminal behaviour seen among young people. Most cases have occurred and it invites a need for night vigilance either through local community groups, security agencies or technologies.

There is mismatch between enrolment and child labour. Achieving 100 percent enrolment is not a guarantee that children's right to education is protected. Besides ensuring 100 percent enrolment, the government has the responsibility to keep these children at school at least until they complete primary education. There is high school drop out rates and this leads not all children attain qualification as demanded by market. Drop out rates must decrease to avoid these children ending up as cheap child labourers.

Women empowerment is not just the political game. It's about providing opportunities for women to demonstrate their skills and intellect. Providing quota for women means opportunities for them to get involved in nation building process. The political leadership should understand the reality that women need more support and opportunities to perform at par with men.

Right to expression hasn't improved over the years. The government still reins, through various means, to control the free flow of information in media outlets. The media must be given fearless playing field to disburse independent and unbiased news.

The government must play a role to end fear among general public they cannot criticise the government actions and activities. It's time Bhutan should not rely on anonymous bloggers to see what's wrong with the government. This will open up forum to make distinction on good and not good activities of the government.

# Annex

## Incident graphs

	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
<b>Road accident</b>	4	9	1	2	8	5	4	4	3	5	3	4
<b>Battery</b>	2	1	1		1	1		1				2
<b>Burglary</b>	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1			
<b>Rape/sex</b>				1		2	2		3			
<b>Stabbing</b>	3	7	4	1	2	2	1		2	3	3	
<b>Substance abuse</b>	1		2	3		1		1	1		3	1
<b>Law and order</b>		2	1					1		1	1	3
<b>Cyber crime</b>				1								
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>