

Editorial

I am pleased to present to you the fourth issue of *Rig Tshoel: Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College*. Whereas the contributions to the first three issues were all researched and written by faculty of Royal Thimphu College, the call for submissions for this fourth issue was extended to all colleges in the country, as well as reached institutions abroad. The result was a very large number of submissions, more than we could reasonably handle and publish. We had to make some difficult decisions in what to track for peer-review and what to turn down immediately, and in what to finally accept for publication in this issue. We are very grateful to all those who submitted their work to this journal. What we offer you here is a selection of the best submissions we received, both from within and outside Bhutan.

We also witnessed a steep increase of articles in Dzongkha we received, and I am happy to say that this issue carries 7 articles written in English and 7 articles written in Dzongkha. I would like to express my gratitude to Lopen Sonam Tobgay, the Dzongkha editor of the journal, for successfully enlarging the scope of this journal for researchers writing in Dzongkha. The English and Dzongkha articles together engage a rich variety of topics, themes, and theories and I would like to encourage our readers to not just read the article that interests them the most, but to savour each one of the articles. I encourage them to do this, for they might encounter new ideas or find greener pastures for future research, ideas and pastures that they may not have been aware of so far.

This issue of *Rig Tshoel* opens with an article by Dawa Zangmo and carries the title: ‘An Account of Historical Background and Significance of Chokhor Nyi Lhakhang in Punakha.’ Dawa Zangmo discusses the historical, religious and cultural implications of the Chökhör Nyi Lhakhang in Punakha and calls for its preservation, and not just in the material sense of the term. Next we have an article by Choki Wangchuk titled: ‘A Study on Historical Background and Authority Declination of Mongar Ngatshang Naktshang in Eastern Bhutan.’ Choki Wangchuk presents a rich discussion of the Ngatshang Chokpa Naktshang in Mongar, focusing in particular on its historical and cultural legacy, and its political significance. Like the article by Dawa Zangmo, Choki Wangchuk makes an ardent call for the preservation of cultural heritage. The third article is by Karma Tshering Wangchuk and is titled: ‘Bhutan, and India’s Free Trade Agreement (FTA), and World Trade Organization (WTO): A Critical Appraisal.’ This article offers a critical assessment of bilateral and international treaties, at once dealing with the past, present, and possible future scenarios.

The fourth article is by Olivier Afron and carries the title ‘Buddhism and Digital Communication: connecting the Guru, the Master and the Disciple through Digital Tools.’ Olivier Afron looks at how, amid the global pandemic, Buddhist networks, including prayer and the dissemination of knowledge, are progressively shifting online, now also manifesting through digital tools. The fifth article is by Shashik Silva and Nipunika O. Lecamwasam and is titled: ‘Ideal vs Practice: Narratives on Clientelism, Democracy and Participation in Local Government Authorities in Sri Lanka.’ This article explores the notion of participatory democracy in Sri

