



FOR A PROSPEROUS BHUTAN

BHUTAN TENDREL PARTY
MANIFESTO
4TH PARLIAMENTARY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS



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Our Vision

- BTP's vision is to create a vibrant and prosperous Bhutan, where every citizen is empowered to achieve their full potential and live a meaningful life founded on individual liberty and prosperity.
- BTP aims to recognize every household as the foundation of a robust national economy and enable their engagement in the development process by promoting rural and urban enterprises that are economically competitive and environmentally friendly.



Our Ideals

- Recognizing that the Druk Gyalpo is the symbol of unity and dignity for the Kingdom of Bhutan and its people;
- Knowing that political parties provide choices based on the values and aspirations of the people for responsible and good governance to promote national unity and progressive economic development and to strive for the wellbeing of the nation;
- BTP steps forward with the following set of ideals:
 - BTP is led by a president who is a doer (proven track record), approachable and empathetic in line with the party's belief;
 - BTP is supported by competent and experienced candidates and dedicated party workers; and
 - BTP is grounded on the principles of “Your voice, your hope” to:

Transition into clean, responsive and mindful governance;

Emphasize practicality and evidence-based solution, and the use of innovation and technology;

Nurture a cohesive and compassionate community rooted in our spiritual ethos and values;

Deliver efficient public services and improve business ecosystem;

Restore public trust and confidence in the democratic constitutional monarchy;

Enable a conducive environment for inclusive and participatory development; and

Leanfrog socio-economic development with the focus on enhancing household income.



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FOR A PROSPEROUS BHUTAN

Message from the President

Coming out of the worst pandemic, we have witnessed our economy recede, businesses suffering, people losing their jobs and livelihoods at stake. Thousands of young, talented and productive Bhutanese continue to leave the country in droves, in search of better opportunities abroad.

We are experiencing a brain drain as we lose the cream of nation, most intelligent and hard-working professionals. The morale of our civil servants is all-time low, the nascent private sector is in distress, and the hopes and aspirations of our youth are sinking. If this trend continues, we might be confronted with a situation of empty villages and a deserted nation in the times to come. This is, further, exacerbated by low fertility resulting in twin demographic challenges. In the absence of coordinated and regulated enforcement, prices of essential commodities have been increasing, and widening gap between imports and exports.

Bhutan is undergoing a historic transformation and reform to realize the profound vision of His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo. However, it is important to ensure that this vision leads to positive impacts in the lives of ordinary citizens, inspiring them to embrace the change and work towards our national goals.

As a bridge between the people and the state, government must be able to translate this noble vision into action in the best interest of our country and fulfill our people's aspirations. Bhutan Tendrel Party envisions creating a **Prosperous Bhutan** for all. A prosperity that is underpinned by good governance, smart policies, and strategies, driven by innovation, creativity, and enterprise, supported by a culture of hard work and determination.

For all this to happen, we believe that time and circumstances have made people wiser to know that people alone can initiate this change in a democracy, while a party that truly understands the current situation and empathizes with the sentiments of the people is crucial. With a sound and thorough understanding of the ground realities, equipped with the right team, TENDREL is determined and committed to bringing about the much-needed change. As His Majesty The Fourth Druk Gyalpo always emphasizes that a little effort on the part of the people will go a long way to complement the government's efforts in taking the country forward, TENDREL strongly believes that it must begin by empowering our people to engage in the nation's developmental process. Our slogan "Your Voice; Your Hope" has been founded on the premise that your voice is a powerful tool to initiate desired change and yield hope in difficult times. A voice gives your opinion a platform and values you as a citizen, irrespective of your ethnicity, race, status, or gender. It is a means to enhance every individual's welfare, livelihood, and interests, including vulnerable groups.

YOUR VOICE YOUR HOPE



Our manifesto is our peoples' manifesto; it is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Upholding the constitutional provision for the state to promote conditions that will enable our citizens to pursue Gross National Happiness, our manifesto has been laid out along the four broad themes:

1. Clean and Responsive Governance – From Regulator to Facilitator
2. Economic Transformation and Jobs Creation – Prosperity for All
3. Our People – Our Wealth
4. Our Environment – Our Gift.

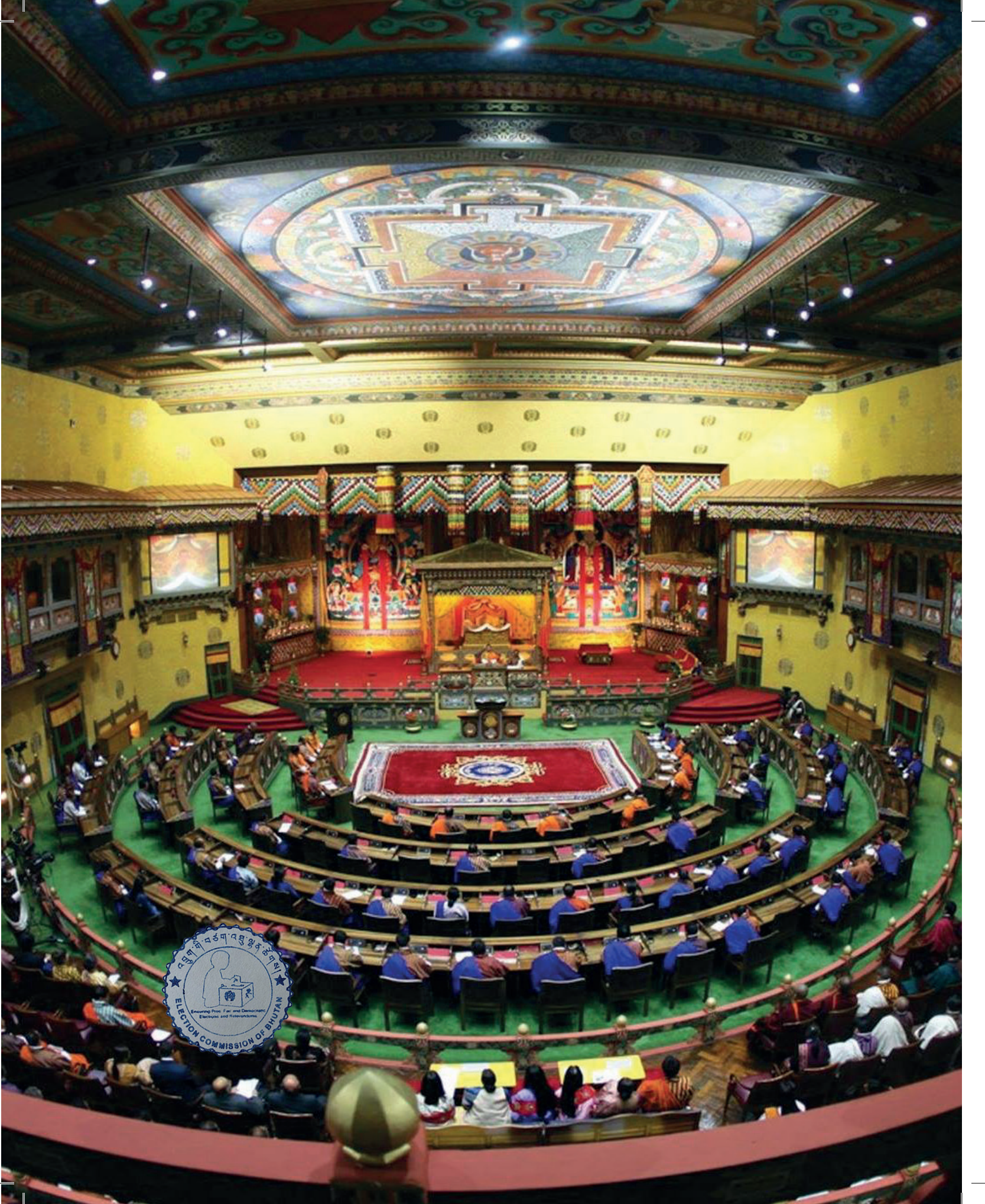
Your Voice and Your Hope will enable us to move forward together to give deeper meaning and understanding to democracy while redefining the narrative of politics and political parties in Bhutan.

As Tendrel connotes auspiciousness, wellness, and harmony, it symbolizes the unification and strengthening of all positive energies and then consecrates the way ahead for a good cause. For a country that is at an inflection point, Tendrel heralds the beginning of a new era, for every Bhutanese. TENDREL will respond to the call of the nation and strive to work very closely with the people.

Make your vote count by counting on us! Together we can make a difference!

Dasho Pema Chewang
President
Bhutan Tendrel Party





1. CLEAN AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE:

from regulator to facilitator

TENDREL is committed to providing a clean and responsive governance that endeavors in fulfilling the needs and aspirations of our people by upholding democratic principles, conventions, and delivering efficient public services as enshrined in the Constitution. We believe that the strength of our democratic political system rests on good governance. Moving from regulation-based to trust-based governance, TENDREL shall adopt policies and legislations that create enabling conditions to inculcate a strong sense of collective ownership, responsibility and accountability in pursuing our national goals and objectives. Some of the key areas of our focus are as follows:

1.1. Upholding the Rule of Law

“ཀླུ་པོ་ལུ་གཅེས་པ་འབངས།འབངས་ལུ་དགོས་བདེ་སྤྲོད།བདེ་སྤྲོད་ཀྱི་བརྩ་བ་ཁྲིམས།”

TENDREL is committed to upholding the rule of law to instill trust, confidence, and promote harmony within our society. When the rule of law is universally respected, it promotes fairness and reliability, creating a healthy social structure. An equitable, predictable, and just legal system can be achieved by enforcing and adhering to the fundamental legal principles encompassing the supremacy of the law, due process, equality before the law, separation of powers and participation in decision-making.

Recognizing that a well-functioning judiciary is the cornerstone of a democratic society, TENDREL believes in establishing and maintain-



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ing a robust judiciary that ensures timely delivery of justice, protection of human rights, and facilitation of equitable dispute resolution. Additionally, empowering citizens to hold their government accountable for its performance is vital to ensure that the government acts in the best interests of its constituents.

TENDREL shall:

1. Uphold the principle of separation of powers amongst the three branches of the state as enshrined in the Constitution and ensure effective checks and balances among relevant institutions.
2. Facilitate adequate support to the judiciary including establishment of additional bench for child, commercial/ financial cases, IT-enabled or e-litigation services, provision of legal aid for indigent persons to ensure equal access to justice for all citizen.
3. Develop a mechanism to enhance interaction among the judiciary, other constitutional and autonomous institutions for greater collaboration and coordination.
4. Enact relevant laws (e.g., Impeachment Bill, Interpretation Bill, Public Consultation Bill, Public Service Bill and Public Procurement bill etc.) and review existing legislations.
5. Review, streamline and do away with redundant and unnecessary rules and regulations that act as barriers to efficient public service, affecting the public. (e.g., rural building drawings, construction approvals, timber/sand/stone permits, etc.).

1.2. A Free, Responsible and Open Society



TENDREL believes that transparency is one of the cornerstones of good governance that promotes accountability, trust, efficiency, and social well-being. It is a fundamental aspect of a healthy and functioning democracy and can have far-reaching positive effect on the nation's development and stability. Similarly, trust deficit can have far-reaching detrimental impacts on the social, political, economic, and cultural fabric of a society. Building trust requires concerted efforts by institution, leaders, and broader community to address un-

derlying issues and restore faith in the systems and organizations that underpin society.

TENDREL shall:

1. Prioritize implementation of preventive measures to curb corruption by promoting ethical leadership at all levels of public institutions and ensure that laws, policies, and judicial system are fair and just.
2. Ensure that government institutions, organizations, and leaders are transparent in their actions and decisions, and internal control mechanisms are in place to improve the systems for prevention of corruption.
3. Create a more robust and inclusive system of government that is transparent, responsive and accountable to demonstrate consistency in actions and policies.
4. Adopt IT- enabled HR related mechanism to curb nepotism and favoritism.
5. Ensure adequate support and resources to establish platform for regular dialogues to strengthen linkages between local government and central government.
6. Promote citizen participation in decision-making processes and provide them with the tools and resources they need to engage in the democratic process.
7. Support responsible journalism to ensure that media plays a constructive role in building trust and informing the public accurately.
8. Designate a spokesperson at a senior level in every agency to promote openness and accessibility of information to citizens and other stakeholders.
9. Ensure regular press conferences and interactions with media houses.
10. Strengthen our relationships with countries and promote regional and international integration by participating in global initiatives.

We will review, streamline and do away with redundant and unnecessary rules and regulations that act as barriers to efficient public service, affecting the public.



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1.3. People-Centric Public Service

TENDREL believes that effective public service delivery is the hallmark of good governance. It builds trust between the government and its citizens and promotes efficiency, transparency and accountability in the system.

The need to enhance delivery of public services revolves around removing structural and administrative barriers that currently impede citizens' access to vital services, causing delays, expenses and frustration.

TENDREL shall:

1. Establish people-centric and integrated public service delivery center "Mimang Zhaptog Teywa" in each Gewog with a dedicated officer to provide commonly availed services.
2. Enact Public Service Delivery Bill that provides for developing a clear performance matrix and benchmarks to evaluate and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.
3. Endeavour to champion agencies in promoting a "facilitator mindset" by providing adequate support and resources.
4. Collaborate with non-government organizations, private sector, and civil society organizations to enhance service delivery and share resources for fast and high-quality service delivery, where ever necessary.
5. Standardize and streamline commonly availed services such as health, education and roads and remove redundant rules and regulations where necessary on a priority basis
6. Enhance the current Grievances and Redressal system under PMO by developing "My Grievance App".
7. Enhance and expand e-governance by adopting "Digital by Default" concept to enable access to government service delivery and foster culture of continuous improvement within public service agency encouraging innovation.





1.4. A Strong and Vibrant Private Sector

TENDERL believes that good governance and ease of doing business are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing; and those businesses and investments that are vital for economic growth, job creation and overall prosperity can only thrive in conducive environments. Creating conducive business and investment environment would necessitate review of conditions and development of strategies to improve ease of doing business to attract both domestic and international investments.

TENDREL shall:

1. Recognize private sector as a key partner of the government and strengthen collaboration between government agencies and the private sector.
2. Promote a business-friendly environment that encourages investment and entrepreneurship, while also protecting the rights of workers and consumers.
3. Fast-track, relax and streamline all business approvals/ permits/clearances/regulations.
4. Adopt "Register First and Regulate Later" (after 5 years) concept for cottage and small industries and simplify tax system and filing procedures.
5. Ensure clarity of regulations with ease of understanding and with stability and consistency in the application of policies and legislations.
6. Support and strengthen sectors' associations and include private sector in national economic decisions and policies.
7. Implement and enforce policies that favors competition to prevent monopolies and promote a healthy competitive business environment.
8. Balance labor regulations to protect workers' rights while also allowing flexibility for businesses to hire and adapt to changing market conditions.



1.5. Empowering Our Institutions

TENDREL believes that the good governance relies on the presence of institutions that are capable of formulating and implementing policies effectively. Obviously, institutions with strong capacity are better equipped to carry out their functions, including enforcing the rule of law, delivering public services, and managing resources transparently. However, in the process of transforming the institutions such as in civil services, the unintended consequences are expected, which could perhaps hinder the performance efficiency. Hence, it is important to identify and prevent those consequences at source.

To ensure efficient utilization of limited resources, it is found crucial to review the current resource allocation system, and adopt a model that prioritizes returns on investment with significant impact.

Additionally, there is an urgent need to bolster research and development efforts. Strengthening research capabilities and promoting innovation can facilitate informed decision-making and in formulating effective policies and solutions.

TENDREL shall:

1. Review the impact of civil and public service transformation exercises with respect to human resources, morale, attrition, efficiency, functionality and coordination and undertake corrective measures, if necessary.
2. Ensure the functional responsibilities that commensurate with financial, human resources and technical capacity at all levels (e.g. project tied, outsourcing from central to local).
3. Conduct comprehensive assessment of institutions' strength and weaknesses and invest in training and skills development program for staff based on specific needs of the institutions.
4. Allocate resources effectively and ensure that budgetary allocations are aligned with the institution's strategic priorities.
5. Revise existing salary structure for public servants and provide special allowances for the national workforce subject to the economy situation and fiscal position.



6. Review Individual Work Plan (IWP), MAX (Managing for Excellence) systems and Annual Performance Agreement (APA) in consultation with the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC).
7. Introduce systematic and timely promotion to civil servants.
8. Bring on board private sectors and community-based organizations including farmers' groups, cooperatives, and other relevant organizations for effective decision making.
9. Establish Bhutan Idea and Innovation Bank (BIIB) and allot certain percent of GDP for Research & Development.
10. Develop national level Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).
11. Review one-time RCSC examination system for graduates by doing away with Preliminary Examination and facilitate examination center in different regions in consultation with the RCSC.

1.6. Strengthening our Parliament and Local Government

To enhance the role of parliamentarians and local government members, building and maintaining public trust in their representatives is of utmost importance. Moreover, trust is recognized as the foundation of successful democratic process. Aligning to the above observations and needs, it is imperative to streamline coordination and collaboration between parliamentarians, executives, and local governments to ensure effective governance and implementation of policies that will eventually benefit the entire nation.

The elected members must prioritize their unwavering commitment in serving the Tsa-Wa-Sum (the King, Country, and People) with the highest moral principles for the best interests of the nation and its citizens.



TENDREL Shall:

1. Foster and strengthen the linkages between the Parliament, Executives and Local Governments.
2. Ensure engagements of Parliamentarians in facilitating Local Government for constituency developmental activities.
3. Strengthen the Parliamentary Committee systems for carrying out effective checks and balances and oversight functions.
4. Uphold the code of conduct for elected members.

We will review Individual Work Plan (IWP), MAX (Managing for Excellence) systems and Annual Performance Agreement (APA) in consultation with the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC).



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2. ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOBS CREATION: Prosperity for All

Bhutan aspires to becoming a high-income country by 2034. It means expanding the size of our economy to USD 10 Billion by 2034 from its current level of approximately USD 2.85 Billion in 2022. To attain the target, our economy will have to grow at an average rate of 12% or more over a decade against the projected average growth of 5.5 percent for the next 5 years.

Studies have revealed the following deficiencies in our economy.

- Our economy is highly import driven with Nu. 137 billion against export of 59.756 billion in 2022, making it highly susceptible to risk from negative shocks.
- Poverty has increased from 8.21% in 2017 to 12.4% in 2022 over the last five years and is largely a rural phenomenon.
- Labour and its productivity across the sectors have not transformed to match up the pace of structural transformation taking place in the country.
- There are not many jobs created over the past decade and majority of the jobs that are being created are not of high quality.
- Stagnant income with the rising inflation has eroded the purchasing power resulting in reduced disposable income, which is evident from a steadily falling national savings rate.
- The domestic market is small due to small population and low purchasing power and over regulated private sector.
- The access to finance is limited and the cost of finance is high.



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*We will accord
highest priority to
"Ju-Nor Nga"- the
five main drivers
of the economy
- Agriculture,
Tourism,
Infrastructure,
Energy, and
Mines & Minerals
(ATIEM).*



YOUR VOICE YOUR HOPE

TENDREL will propel Bhutan towards a high-income nation by 2034 to achieve economic self-reliance and promote open and progressive economy as enshrined in the Constitution. TENDREL recognizes every citizen and household as the bedrock of a robust national economy and we shall harness the power of the *Ju-nor Nga* (the 5 assets)- as the main economic drivers: Agriculture, Tourism, Infrastructure, Energy and Mines and Minerals (ATIEM) in attaining the medium and long-term goals by tapping on the natural endowments and by capitalizing on the competitive advantages. Moreover, recognizing that the human capital is the core engine to drive our economy, Tendrel shall accord highest priority to the development of human capital.

TENDREL also firmly believes in prudent fiscal and sustainable debt management to avoid placing of undue burden on our future generations. Our national debt has risen from 55.6% in 2011 to 136.8% by June 2023 amounting to Nu. 276.980 billion over the reign of successive governments. The current debt on a per capita basis translates to Nu. 360,000. A targeted expansionary fiscal and monetary policy measures is the need of the hour, in accelerating socio-economic growth and in enhancing quality of life.

2.1. Accelerating Economy and Maintaining Macroeconomic Stability

2.1.1. Doubling Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Over the past decade (2010-2022), our economy stagnated at an average rate of 3.5% as compared to 7.78% during 2000 to 2010. To overcome the existing stagnation, it is crucial that we broaden and diversify our economic base beyond hydropower and tourism.

Further, to achieve greater economic resilience, it is essential to promote domestic production, boost productive capacity, and reduce our reliance on imports. This entails a shift towards import substitution and export promotion. Moreover, fostering the growth of our industry and services sectors is also essential to pave way towards a more robust and dynamic economy. And for the economy to have sustained growth, role of private sector has to be more conspicuous with enabling policies, legislations and institutional support.

TENDREL Shall:

1. Constitute an Economic Advisory Council to advise the government on various aspects of the economy to achieve a high-income nation status by doubling GDP value to Nu. 500 billion and Nu. 1 trillion by 2029 and 2034 respectively; and per capita income of USD 7,500 and USD 15,000 by 2029 and 2034 respectively.
2. Accord highest priority to “*Ju-Nor Nga*” - the five main drivers of the economy - Agriculture, Tourism, Infrastructure, Energy, and Mines & Minerals (ATIEM).
3. Bring about structural transformation and economic diversification in our economy.
4. Enhance domestic production by providing targeted support to the cottage and small industries and export-led industries (e.g. construction materials, mineral products, fast moving consumable goods, agriculture and livestock products) and adopt “Bhutan First Policy”
5. Promote economic growth based on economic potential of Chiwog/Gewog/Dzongkhag to enhance household income.
6. Enhance collaboration and cooperation between government, DHI, RMA, financial institutions, government-owned SoEs and private sector to create a robust economy by reviewing the mandates of the SoEs and emphasizing on the role of private sector as a key economic player.

2.1.2. Reducing Poverty and Enhancing Household Income

Poverty has surged by 51% over the past five years; from 8.21% in 2017 to 12.4% in 2022, affecting 80,614 citizens. Overcoming poverty is therefore a priority for TENDREL.

Poverty will be addressed by augmenting household income and simultaneously enhancing the livelihoods of people. But, to secure a better income and enhanced livelihood, it requires a holistic approach with engagement of relevant stakeholders in the entire process of planning, implementation and monitoring of effective interventions.



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TENDREL Shall:

1. Half poverty level by the end of 2029.
2. Increase average annual household income by seven-fold; from the existing Nu. 406,134 to Nu. 3 million by the end of 2029.
3. Support informal businesses both in the rural and urban areas.
4. Ensure public participation in the initial public offering (IPO) of public enterprises by coordinating with the banks to finance share subscription.

2.1.3. Creating Secured Jobs

The national unemployment rate stands at 5.9%, affecting 18,198 people; and the youth unemployment, stands at 28.6%, affecting 8,496 individuals. Besides, the long-term unemployment stands at 1% affecting about 3,108 individuals. Conversely, it is projected that around 120,000 youths will enter the job market by 2032. The above scenarios call for prioritized interventions in addressing the unemployment issues.

TENDREL shall:

1. Develop a National Skills Policy to identify and address the future and chronic skills shortage across different occupations.
2. Assist every unemployed youth to reskill, retrain and reequip with 21st century skill in partnership with the private sector for 100% employability within and outside the country.
3. Endeavor to achieve full employment by 2029
4. Strive to reduce youth unemployment rate below 10%
5. Strengthen conducive ecosystem for entrepreneurs.
6. Launch and operate 'One Stop Career Centre' under PMO to facilitate youth employment in collaboration with Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE)
7. Conduct "Job Fair" on a regular basis to connect employers and job seekers in collaboration with Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE)
8. Facilitate gig economy to build digital skills (and increase income-earning opportunities, including improvement of access to digital infrastructure and payment options.



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2.1.4. Managing Inflation and Foreign Currency Reserves

Rising inflation and the cost of living in urban areas pose challenges for households, especially for low and middle-income families. It's imperative to shield citizens and households from the steep increase in the prices of goods and services. The inflation rate reached 7.35% in 2022, surpassing the above-average rate of 6% observed from 2008 to 2022.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan requires the Government to maintain a minimum foreign currency reserve that is adequate to meet the cost of not less than one year's essential imports. The foreign currency reserve has depleted to the extent of almost breaching the Constitutional requirements and needs immediate attention.

Additionally, there is a need to boost the inflow of foreign currency, making exchange easily accessible. This not only supports international trade but also strengthens the country's economic position on the global stage.

TENDREL shall:

1. Ensure to maintain inflation below 5% by reviewing and studying critical factors contributing to price rise such as monetary and fiscal policies, and encouraging fair competition based on market forces.
2. Maintain foreign currency reserves to cover at least 12 months of essential imports as per the Article 14 (7) of the Constitution through formulation of Long-term strategy to enhance international reserves.
3. Increase inflow of foreign currency reserves through promotion of tourism, export enhancement, import substitution and attract investment inflows.
4. Strengthen Office of the Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority to protect consumers from unfair price rise and deceptive trade practices and ensure efficient wholesale distribution of essential commodities to stabilize the price.



2.1.5. Managing Balance of Trade

A critical need exists to address the substantial trade deficit, which amounts to 34.35% of our GDP. In 2022, our total export was Nu. 58.757 billion, while the import was worth of Nu. 137.004 billion. Reducing the trade deficit is vital for achieving the desired economic growth.

TENDREL Shall:

1. Review and adopt national export strategy to manage the balance of trade by bringing down the trade deficit to 15% of the GDP by 2029.
2. Diversify export and enhance domestic production.
3. Encourage and support export-led industries.
4. Create right conditions for enhancing export and trade facilitation through enhancement of connectivity by identifying and formalizing designated ports, improving trade protocols and enhancing access to trade finance.

*We will
encourage and
support export-led
industries.*

2.1.6. Managing Public Debt and Fiscal Sustainability

While the Debt Sustainability Analysis conducted by the World Bank categorizes Bhutan as moderately distressed, it is important that debt servicing does not take away substantial national income and that the government does not crowd out private sector borrowings.

Our focus must be directed toward generating sufficient internal resources to cover our ongoing expenditures. This approach is central to achieving fiscal stability, reducing our reliance on external sources to meet day-to-day financial obligations, and ensuring a sustainable economic future.

TENDREL Shall:

1. Institute National Infrastructure Investment Board with the mandate to oversee investment aspects of the government, ensure productivity and prudence and explore innovative financing sources.
2. Develop and implement resource mobilization strategy and abide by the public debt policy.



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2.1.7. Improving the Financial Sector

Improving access to finance and promoting financial market is found crucial in improving the healthy growth of economy. Access to finance especially in priority sector is still a concern with majority of the loan portfolios being concentrated in service and housing sector, which constitutes more than 50% of the total loan portfolio. While less than 5% is lent out to agriculture and CSI sectors by financial institutions. To foster a healthier financial landscape, mitigating loan concentration risk and addressing non-performing loans is vital to be addressed with priority.

Equally important is the need to lower bank interest rates, which can positively impact borrowers and stimulate economic growth. Addressing these needs could collectively strengthens the financial ecosystem to support broader economic stability.

TENDREL Shall:

1. Initiate financial sector reforms with emphasis on easy access to finance, financial literacy, productive sector loans, fund management, capital markets, robust international/electronic payment gateway and cash-flow based financing.
2. Incentivize new bank accounts for all citizen to enhance financial inclusion such as culture of savings, investment, digital banking services.
3. Extend existing loan repayment deferments (monetary measures) on need basis for business impacted by pandemic in consultation with RMA.
4. Reduce interest rate for loans from financial institutions in consultation with RMA.
5. Initiate start-up loans and extend group loan scheme at concessional rate for all citizens through injection of capital in development bank.
6. Initiate Priority Sector Loans (cooperatives/farmer groups) at concessional interest rates.
7. Initiate one-time establishment loan amount of up to Nu. 150,000 at concessional rate for new employees (public/private).
8. Facilitate private sector/contract employees to avail consumer loan up to Nu. 500,000 from the banks.
9. Review and amend relevant financial policies and legislations



2.1.8. Attracting Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)

FDI is an important source of capital, knowledge transfer, and technology dissemination. FDI plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and facilitating the creation of high-income job opportunities. It therefore underscores the importance of fostering an environment that is attractive to foreign investors, which can, in turn, contribute substantially to our nation's economic advancement.

TENDREL Shall:

1. Target to attract FDI of minimum USD 1 billion by 2029.
2. Review and revise FDI Policy to attract foreign investments in key areas such as financial sector, manufacturing, ICT services, education, hospitality, medical care, infrastructure, entertainment, agriculture, telecommunications, airlines and other key potential areas.

2.1.9. Simplifying Taxation System

Currently, the tax revenue to GDP is around 13 percent. Two distinct yet interrelated concerns can contribute significantly to a more robust and responsive fiscal framework: First, it entails a comprehensive assessment of our fiscal policies, ensuring that they align with the evolving economic landscape and national priorities. Second, simplifying tax filing procedures is essential. Streamlining the process of tax compliance can not only ease the burden on taxpayers but also can enhance overall fiscal efficiency.

TENDREL Shall:

1. Review current taxation policies, legislations including property tax and systems to simplify and improve structure of taxation system and procedures and
2. Remove double taxation on dividends.
3. Review PIT slab exemption
4. Review fiscal incentive policy to attract private investment and encourage business establishment.
5. Strengthen the provision of tax holiday for startups up to 5 years.





2.2. Our *Ju-Nor Nga*- The Five Key Economic Drivers (ATIEM)

2.2.1. *Ju-Nor Dhangpa* - Agriculture: The Enabler of Rural Prosperity

Agriculture plays a pivotal role in sustaining livelihoods, both in urban and rural areas. However, our reliance on subsistence farming has forced us to meet a significant portion of our food requirements through imports. For instance, in 2021, our food imports were three times higher than our exports, resulting in a food trade deficit of Nu. 9.1 billion.

It is evident that our food imports could continue to rise unless we transit to commercial farming. This transition can be achieved by leveraging on modern technologies, adopting high-yielding and climate-resilient crop varieties, and implementing enabling policies that provide access to essential resources like finance, land, labor, and markets.

The agricultural sector, which currently employs 43.5% of the population and constitutes 60% of households in rural areas, holds the potential to serve as a launching pad for commercial farming. This shift towards commercial farming is crucial not only for food security but also for promoting economic growth in the agriculture sector.

TENDREL shall:

1. Prioritize transition from subsistence to commercial farming and double up the annual export earnings to Nu. 7 billion by 2029.
2. Ensure market access by facilitating trading of agriculture commodities with enabling policies through periodic changes in trade regulations to maintain stability in agricultural trade.
3. Enhance agriculture production and domestic market for agriculture products by linking directly with institutions.
4. Upscale existing food analysis laboratory to international standards.
5. Facilitate online trading of agriculture commodities by setting up essential infrastructures and networks in collaboration with relevant agencies.



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*We will
prioritize transition
from subsistence
to commercial
farming*



6. Construct cold storage and logistic facilities at strategic locations to prevent post-harvest losses.
7. Construct warehouses on need basis for food storage to maximize the value of our agricultural produce.
8. Introduce cold chain facilities (mini cold storage and refrigerated trucks and vans) to youth/farmer cooperative groups for effective delivery of goods to the market.
9. Initiate construction of primary and secondary processing plants for vegetable, fruits, tubers, spices, sugar, oil and cereals.
10. Enhance technical capacity of food processing industry by linking up with relevant institutions both within and outside the country.
11. Enhance production of cereals using effective irrigation technologies and high yielding varieties of seeds.
12. Revive cultivation of minor cereals in fallow lands to ensure food security.
13. Prioritize potential based large-scale farming of crops that has established markets aided with smart and precision technologies.
14. Integrate crop and livestock farming and associated farming culture with tourism to promote agro-tourism as a rural enterprise.
15. Initiate a land bank for privately registered fallow land for commercial farming.
16. Provide support for land development and management, farm mechanization and high-tech agriculture.
17. Facilitate the establishment of domestic fertilizer plants.
18. Facilitate youth, cooperatives, farmer groups, retirees to take up commercial farming and agro-livestock entrepreneurship.
19. Facilitate import of seasonal labor for agricultural farming to provide a ready workforce for various farming activities.
20. Mitigate human-wildlife conflict with provision of electric and chain link fencing at feasible locations and explore other alternative measures in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The fund will be solicited through grants primarily from environment and conservation windows, as human wildlife conflicts are conspicuous in conservation and wildlife corridors. Moreover, it is work in progress and BTP will continue recognizing its importance in enhancing our food security.
21. Frame an effective and enabling insurance policy to cushion farmers from heavy losses.

22. Promote production and marketing of high-value agriculture, livestock and non-wood forest, community-based forest enterprise, aromatic and medicinal products for the premium market.
23. Allow harvesting of timber on private land for commercial purposes.
24. Reform rural timber allocation for commercialization and allow direct export of timbers.
25. Establish a robust information system to improve access to information among relevant agencies that can facilitate better coordination and informed decision-making within the agriculture sector for efficient extension service delivery, improve farming practices and promote the culture of knowledge sharing among farmers.

2.2.2. *Ju-Nor Nyipa* - Tourism: Rethinking Tourism as a Holistic Industry

The importance of tourism industry in Bhutan's economy cannot be undermined. Apart from the obvious contribution from the SDF revenues to the government and foreign currency earnings for the economy, there are various positive upstream and downstream externalities of the tourism industry in Bhutan.

Being an import-driven and undiversified economy, the more immediate risk to Bhutan's macroeconomic situation is the drawdown of reserves. Tourism sector, which played a vital role of bringing in continuous and a significant amount of foreign currency within the economy, no longer plays that role. In addition, the twin deficit situation – fiscal and current account deficit – limits the role of government to carry out any stimulus plans, as it only results in increase in import and accumulation of debt stock. With limited financing options on the front of balance of payment it is important to take immediate measures to not just to stabilize the reserves but also to start building back the reserves.

Tourism continues to be a significant source of employment within Bhutan, offering a wide array of business and job opportunities. Tour operators have been promoting our country in the international market and guides have been the ambassador of our culture and people. We will craft a national tourism plan that builds upon our existing



foundation in a more coordinated and strategic approach to establish tourism as a holistic industry taking into account all the relevant stakeholders such as hotels, guides, tour operators, farmers, retailers, artists and craftsmen and transporters etc. This will collectively contribute to sustainable growth and diversification of our tourism industry while ensuring equitable distribution of its benefits and improved overall coordination.

TENDREL shall:

1. Promote tourism as a holistic industry and increase share of its contribution to the economy.
2. Carry out in-depth analysis of the amendments of Tourism Levy Act 2022 and Tourism Rules and Regulation 2022 in consultation with all the stakeholders on a priority basis.
3. Examine the sustainable development fee and provide an exemption or concessionary levy rate on the applicable SDF.
4. Promote and diversify tourism products (agro-tourism, geo-tourism, Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibition (MICE), regional, Cultural/Food festivals, sports and medical/wellness/spiritual/vajarayana tourism, student exchange programs, hot air balloon, ropeways, nature based, river rafting, fishing, film-making, biking etc.)
5. Remove SDF for MICE and student exchange, consultancies, businesses, and promotional purposes.
6. Introduce preferential SDF for tourists from SAARC countries in consultation with the Department of Tourism.
7. Remove SDF for tourists from India at border towns
8. Promote tourism to all Dzongkhags by developing Dzongkhag Specific Products (Destination management), community-based and domestic tourism.
9. Explore the introduction of additional international airlines and facilitate seamless international payment gateways and visa processing system in partnership with the stakeholders.
10. Allow tourist entry and exit from all the border gates
11. Make the existing domestic airports functional with frequent flights



2.2.3. *Ju-Nor Sumpa* - Infrastructures: Building with Vision and Quality

The importance of state-of-the-art infrastructure cannot be overstated, as it serves as a foundation for various aspects of our society. It plays a pivotal role in stimulating economic growth, facilitating job creation, enhancing healthcare services, and providing access to quality education. According to the World Bank, Bhutan ranks 97th out of 138 countries in Logistics Performance Index, primarily attributing to poor infrastructure and trade logistics.

In a fast evolving, technology-driven, and knowledge-based economy, we acknowledge that having high-quality infrastructure with robust connectivity is not merely an advantage but a necessity. It is an integral part of our strategy to address and overcome numerous pressing challenges.

While Bhutan has invested in infrastructure development, there are still gaps in rural road connectivity and access to essential services in remote areas including quality of infrastructure. Improving infrastructure is critical for economic development and in reducing regional disparities.

We also believe that a prosperous nation must prioritize and excel in infrastructure development. As such, our commitment lies in investing in infrastructure that not only meets our immediate needs but also stands resilient in the face of changing times, contributes to sustainability, and ensures inclusivity for all citizens. This commitment underscores our vision for a prosperous and thriving Bhutan.

TENDREL shall:

1. Formulate and implement the National Infrastructure Plan with an estimated investment outlay of Nu. 50 billion on a priority basis for the infrastructure investment in the first three years to stimulate economy, create jobs, enhance logistics efficiency, promote trade for optimal utilization of existing infrastructures and constructing innovative and quality infrastructure such as buildings, highways, Dzongkhag/GC/farm roads, inland waterways, railways, dry ports, industrial parks, bridges, hospitals, schools, airports, ropeways, tunnels, cable cars, electric sub-station and vehicle charging stations, roadside amenities and broadband connectivity etc.



*We will
formulate and
implement
the National
Infrastructure Plan
with an estimated
investment outlay
of Nu. 50 billion on
a priority basis*



2. Build helipads in each gewog on need basis and explore an alternative airport in the east.
3. Improve, upgrade and blacktop chiwog and gewog roads, and hand it over to the Department of Road.
4. Make farm and access roads pliable and construct new ones, where necessary.
5. Construct and up-grade highways and dzongkhag roads as per the need.
6. Improve roads in thromdes and establish electric charging station in all major thromdes to encourage electric vehicles and reduce import of fossil fuel.
7. Construct climate-resilient water and sanitation system for all dzongkhags and thromdes to ensure 24/7 water supply.
8. Construct water-based industrial infrastructures.
9. Construct integrated irrigation schemes in potential dzongkhags.
10. Provide opportunities to private sector to construct alternative infrastructures under the model of Design Build Operate Transfer (DBOT)/Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC).
11. Outsource road maintenance to ensure efficient transportation and communication.
12. Review procurement rules and regulation and propose legislation of procurement bill to ensure quality, build domestic capacity and achieve Bhutan First policy.
13. Undertake feasibility study of metro transport (green public transportation system).
14. Conduct pre-feasibility study of rivers with multiple use of electricity, water sports and parks, drinking water & irrigation and inland waterways transport.
15. Facilitate private sector to build construction of multipurpose convention for MICE, sports complex in all towns and Dzongkhags with subject to the pre-feasibility studies.
16. Facilitate construction of fuel and gas station at strategic locations.
17. Expedite establishment of railway link to border towns.
18. Start a national broadband connectivity strategy that enables every office, school, and hospital to connect to world-class communications infrastructure.

19. Develop and implement national digitization strategy by pursuing third International Internet Gateway, new disaster recovery data center, Fab labs and Innovation Centers, incentivize telecom companies to plan on deploying 5G in Bhutan, and expand IT Park model.
20. Develop existing *Yenglag Thromdes*, Dzongkhag Thromdes and small urban centers, where necessary.

2.2.4. *Ju-Nor Zhipa* - Energy: The White Gold

In 2022, Bhutan generated approximately Nu. 29.46 billion in revenue from 2,335 MW of hydroelectricity. However, the current hydroelectric capacity represents less than ten percent of the nation's total potential, which stands at a staggering 36,900 MW. Ongoing efforts aim to generate an additional 2,442 MW by 2028 and initiate an additional 8,886 MW by 2035, which would harness around thirty percent of this potential. This expansion is expected to eliminate seasonal electricity deficit, currently at 556 MW.

Our domestic energy market is poised for growth, driven by energy-intensive industries, particularly in mining and mineral processing. Building technical capacity in the energy sector including the conduct of Detailed Project Report (DPR) studies, with a specific focus on geotechnical assessments, building of necessary expertise in construction, project management and operation that will contribute to the overall success of our energy initiatives is imperative.

TENDREL shall:

1. Prioritize and complete construction of ongoing large hydropower projects to generate 2,442 MW to stimulate economic growth.
2. Initiate additional **8,886 MW** large and small hydro power projects (Large, Small and Alternate Renewable Energy) by exercising viable operational modalities that is mutually beneficial and efficient.
3. Facilitate and encourage participation of private sector in construction of medium and small-scale hydro-power projects to enhance skills and capacity.



4. Explore regional energy market integration to gradually replace fossil fuel-based energy in the region with renewable energy to mitigate carbon emission and global warming.
5. Generate solar power, diversifying our energy portfolio for long-term sustainability. Solar power generation target is 578 MW. Financial support will be solicited from ADB project, GCF, GRF and adaptation fund
6. Invest and generate additional energy from mini-hydel, wind, bio-gas, hydrogen etc. that will also help in curbing the seasonal variations in energy supply.
7. Register all the projects that qualify as Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) to obtain payment for the environmental services.

2.2.5. *Ju-Nor Ngapa* - Mines and Minerals: Our Treasure

Bhutan possesses a rich collection of mineral resources, including industrial minerals like dolomite, limestone, quartzite, and rare elements, as well as metallic minerals such as copper, gold, and iron. These resources play a pivotal role in driving economic growth and diversification, offering opportunities for export, job creation, and raw material supply to various industries.

The mining and mineral sector significantly contributes to Bhutan's economy, accounting for approximately 4 to 5 percent of the GDP, with Nu. 8.58 billion in contributions in 2019. The country also earned Nu. 6.8 billion from export of boulders and aggregates in the same year, while providing direct employment to 1,612 individuals in 2021. In 2022, Bhutan's top ten export commodities were all related to mining and minerals, collectively valued at about Nu. 28 billion. The projection for income from mineral exports, including stones, cement clinker, limestone, dolomite, and gypsum to India and Bangladesh, is substantial, with an estimated USD 19.968 billion (Nu. 2.2 trillion) from 2024 to 2041 and USD 2.4 billion (Nu. 204 billion) from 2024 to 2028. Additionally, the government is expected to receive direct revenue through royalties, forestry service charges, and mineral rent, amounting to USD 4.5 billion (Nu. 360 billion) from 2024 to 2041 and USD 417 million (Nu. 34 billion) from 2024 to 2028.



Recognizing the significance of the mining and mineral sector, we aim to reform the sector. The objective is to ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits among the people and the state, positioning mines and minerals as one of the five major economic drivers for the nation's prosperity.

TENDREL shall:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Generate annual earning of Nu. 20 billion from mines and minerals sector and recognize the economic potential of this sector to our overall economy |
| 2. | Amend Mines and Mineral Act 1995 for effective governance and management of the sector and to attract investment in this sector. |
| 3. | Revise the Mines and Mineral Management Regulation and relevant policies to keep abreast with best international practices and standards, and simplify the process for granting mining licenses. |
| 4. | Adopt smart policy on the value addition requirements based on geological knowledge and mineral economics of Bhutan and destination countries. |
| 5. | Adopt a policy of High-Volume High Impact for industrial minerals and construction material (stones and aggregates) for expansion of market radius, diversification of mineral and mineral products, and scaling up of mine productions and sales. |
| 6. | Promote broad-based ownership by allowing primary mining and sale of industrial minerals (raw or value-added form) to Broad-Based Companies and ensure greater equity in sharing the benefits derived from this sector. |
| 7. | Accord highest priority and fast track undertaking of Khepchishi Hill graphite mining and establishment of beneficiation plant project. |
| 8. | Prioritize undertaking of Nationwide Airborne (Magnetic and Gravity) and Geochemical Surveys. |
| 9. | Allow and promote the collection and sale of mineral crystals and lapidary units to enhance household or personal income. |
| 10. | Allow surface collection of stones and sand on privately registered land for commercial purposes. |





3. OUR PEOPLE: Our Wealth

Bhutan Tendrel Party believes that Education empowers and elevates social standing and economic growth that drives social cohesion and reduces inequality. Our prosperity should be shared fairly and every Bhutanese should have the chance to realize their talents and succeed in their lives. We want every Bhutanese to get a world class education so they stay ahead and be fit for the developed Bhutan. We will create platforms for our people to dwell into lifelong learning and recognize and credit their achievement. We look forward to keep our teachers motivated and their morale high at all times.

Health services are equally important for a nation's overall wellbeing. It is a known fact that investment on prevention of diseases today will help reduce cost on healthcare services in future. We support policies that promote wellness and prevent diseases for every Bhutanese including mental health.

Ensuring the safety and security of the population is important for any nation and in particular for a nation like ours that is driven by the philosophy and principles of Gross National Happiness. Youth are our future while seniors are assets, we will continue to celebrate the achievements of our seniors. Our sports and culture are our national identity bringing bonding to the community besides physical and mental well-being. BTP will work towards making community safer and sports and culture enjoyable.



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3.1. Education: Generation Next – Preparing for Our Future

3.1.1. School Education

Education empowers and elevates social standing and economic growth that drives social cohesion and reduces inequality. Every Bhutanese should have the chance to realize their potentials and succeed in their lives by ensuring that education is their top priority. TENDREL will ensure that every Bhutanese get a world class education to be prepared and work for a developed Bhutan and the world market. A conducive environment will be created for our students to acquire any soft skills for their wholesome growth by providing alternative education system. By giving recognition and due credit, TENDREL will also encourage our people to pursue lifelong learning.

TENDREL shall:

1. Institute Council for Education Reform to prepare education road map that meet the needs of the 21st century.
2. Introduce Education Bill to minimize political interference in the education system by empowering education professionals to assume a higher level of accountability and responsibility for quality learning outcomes.
3. Build teachers capacity through professional development programs within and outside the country to improve learning outcomes of students.
4. Ensure that no youths are left behind in securing basic education by focusing on formative assessment.
5. Provide school autonomy for effective and efficient management of schools.
6. Reinstate primary school on need basis.
7. Strengthen and facelift boarding schools and establish boarding schools on need basis.
8. Introduce specialized schools/academy (e.g. Arts and Creative Subjects, business, STEM, Sports) at strategic locations.
9. Open up career progression for teachers by easing conditions required to progress till ES 1A and allow other professionals to opt for teaching and health professionals and do away individual work plan (IWP).



10. Allow Principals and DEOs to change their Major Occupational Group.
11. Maintain optimal class size to ensure quality learning outcome.
12. Provide onetime allowance to purchase laptop for teachers to adopt smart learning methodology.
13. Call off normal classes on Saturdays and introduce alternative education.
14. Provide financial support to schools for alternative education programs (e.g. clubs, visits to government offices, TVET institutes, farms, construction, hydropower, industrial estates, hotels, sports, conferences, summits etc.).
15. Facilitate the private and non-governmental organizations to collaborate with schools to provide alternative education to reduce teacher's workload.
16. Adopt efficient succession and recruitment plan for teachers including regularization of contract teachers.
17. Provide modern facilities to schools including smart interactive boards and computer labs, digital textbooks, libraries, teaching and learning resources.
18. Establish modern public libraries in each Dzongkhag based on the existing infrastructure to serve as an information resource center and enhance reading habits.
19. Increase out/in-country scholarships/exchange programs to students, schools, colleges, and universities.
20. Establish Early Child Care Development in every chiwog on need basis and some urban areas in collaboration with local government based on our no child left behind policy.
21. Facilitate providing lunch in urban schools and continue with two meals for rural day scholar students.
22. Facilitate transportation services to schools on need basis.
23. Increase stipends for students to provide better nutrition and indirectly contribute in boosting the rural economy.
24. Reinstate Arts and humanities subjects in schools.



*We will
ensure 100%
employability*



YOUR VOICE YOUR HOPE

3.1.2. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

TVET education and training systems must prioritize skills development to produce competent employees. However, significant challenges currently impede progress in this area. There's a lack of strong government commitment to skills development, hindering the creation of a conducive learning environment. Facilities and infrastructure for skills development are often outdated, preventing effective hands-on training. Many skills development programs use outdated curricula and teaching methods, necessitating modernization. The duration of these programs needs optimization for efficiency.

A persistent shortage of skilled workers in the job market highlights the need for training new individuals and upskilling existing workers. There is a need to establish a robust skills development ecosystem, which is essential to create a competent workforce that contributes to economic growth.

TENDREL shall:

1. Re-align TVET education to create vibrant TVET culture in collaboration with renowned institutions abroad.
2. Empower private sectors to institute TVET programs.
3. Prioritize and support internships and accreditation.
4. Provide opportunity to every citizen to acquire TVET irrespective of their educational background.
5. Support with "collateral/mortgage free concessional loan" to pursue TVET programs to ensure 100% employability tied with enrolment certification.

3.1.3. Tertiary Education

Tertiary education should provide a dynamic and evolving education to equip students with relevant skills for the job market and global challenges. Standardizing facilities in colleges and universities ensures equitable and quality education for all students.

Creating pathways between subjects and courses in colleges helps students transition smoothly and tailor their education to their career goals. Increasing scholarships, both in-country and ex-country,

broadens access to education, especially for underprivileged students. A review of selection exams for technical graduates, like doctors and engineers, is required to ensure fair and effective selection processes, benefiting society.

Overall, these initiatives aim to improve education quality, relevance, and accessibility, preparing students for success both at local and global market with fairness and transparency.

TENDREL shall:

1. Facilitate tertiary institutions to:

• Modernize tertiary institute facilities.

• Attract scholars from abroad.

• Affiliate with the top colleges and universities in the World.

• Build pathways and linkages with the courses in the colleges.

• Increase number of slots for both in-country and ex-country scholarship programs.

• Provide internships/work training within the country and outside.
2. Facilitate coaching to prepare fresh graduates for general examinations by RCSC.
3. Collaborate and establish MoUs with world renowned universities or institutes for pursuing higher degree programs (Bachelors/Masters/PhD).
4. Reinstate Arts and Humanities courses.

3.2. Health: Gearing for a Smart Healthcare

Bhutan is a country that has always placed a high value on the well-being of its citizenry. Recognizing the crucial role of a healthy society, we will give top priority to our health reform initiatives. Our health manifesto is based on the premise that a healthy population is crucial to economic prosperity, personal fulfilment, and meaningful contributions to society. As we continue to move forward in the 21st century, marked by digital and AI advancements, it is imperative that we take a fresh look at our approach to delivering the “Sowai Zhabto”.

Tendrel will strengthen the six fundamental building blocks of health system; health service delivery, health workforce, health information,



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access to essential medicines, financing and leadership that forms the foundation of our healthcare system

3.2.1. Improving Health Service Delivery

1. Revitalizing Primary Healthcare for Sustainability

Primary Health Care is the cornerstone to achieving Universal Health Coverage and Health for All. Investing in the rebuilding of primary healthcare services (health promotion, disease prevention to treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care) can address up to 80-90% of people's healthcare needs.

TENDREL shall:

1. Prioritize allocation to healthcare financing and increase the primary health care spending accordingly.
2. Review the recent health sector reform including the reinstatement of the traditional medicine as an independent Department under the MoH.

2. Fast and Efficient Hospital Services

Each one of us is likely to have been frustrated with healthcare services, particularly at the national and regional referral hospitals. To optimize resources, reduce wait times, enhance access to specialized services, and address overcrowding in hospitals, while also ensuring the efficient utilization of underutilized services and facilities.

TENDREL shall:

1. Introduce family physicians in satellite clinics across Thimphu, who will serve as the primary point of care for our citizens. They will be responsible to authorize referrals, hospitalizations, and lab tests, while also facilitating access to specialist care (Gatekeeper). Under this arrangement, the physicians will schedule appointment with the specialist, easing the burden on patients.
2. Allow off-hour clinics and outsource a few select health services to ease the patient load at the National Referral Hospital, Thimphu. Further, immediate reforms in hospital administration, management and patient care will be administered as an urgent measure to enhance medical services.





3. Continue to provide medical certificates for employment, training, driving licenses while also committing to outsourcing the issuance of such certificates to private entities with appropriate regulations. We will extend medical checkups for visa purposes to all regional referral hospitals, including select strategic districts.
4. Undergo necessary modifications to become differently abled, ensuring that they can move and access facilities within the hospital freely/safely and provide assisted living or residential care facility for people with congenital or severe physical challenged considering the individual's (family) needs, preferences, and human rights.

3. Scaling up the diagnostic and referral services.

TENDREL shall:

1. Introduce laboratory services including test for NCDs in all referral hospitals to commence from 7AM to ease the rush hour clogging.
2. In addition to providing regular and routine diagnostic services, private participation will be invited to provide diagnostic services as an alternative option.
3. Review and revamp the patient referral systems to ease the challenges faced by patients and attendants including delays in referrals, accommodations and daily substance allowances for patients and caregivers.

4. Addressing life style related diseases

Non-communicable diseases are responsible for 71% of all premature deaths in Bhutan. As economic progress advances this percentage is likely to increase.

TENDREL shall:

1. Enhance accessibility to Non-Communicable Disease screening including scaling up dialysis services and improving access to recreational facilities and opportunities, while also integrating mental health and spirituality considerations into human settlement plans and policies.



2. Prioritise the strengthening the cardiac catheterization lab in JDWNRH on priority basis owing to high mortality rates from Cerebrovascular accident (CVA), commonly called stroke.
3. Institute post-stroke physical therapy.

5. Improving rural health through cluster care approach

TENDREL shall:

1. Ensure equality and equity of clinical service and expand effective cluster-care services. These cluster-care centers will offer specialized services in internal medicine, obstetrics, surgery, paediatrics, and dentistry.

6. Expanding dialysis services

Currently, only two hospitals (Thimphu and Mongar) offer dialysis services, causing significant inconvenience for patients from rural areas.

TENDREL shall:

1. Improve this situation by establishing dialysis facilities in cluster hospitals.

7. Mainstreaming physical rehabilitation and autism services

Rehabilitation is one of the five pillars of universal health coverage.

TENDREL shall:

1. Commit to offering a comprehensive array of services, including orthopedics, neurological, geriatric, and pediatric physical therapy.
2. Expand the prosthetic fitting and rehabilitation program.
3. Provide a wide spectrum of interventions that span from early childhood through the entire lifespan to support individuals and families with autism.

8. Addressing health emergency

Approximately, 67% of households are situated in rural areas, where valuable time is often spent arranging transportation for patients during health emergencies. The air medical services have played a



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very critical role in responding to health emergencies over the past years.

TENDREL shall:

1. Update the National Preparedness and Response Plan with lessons learned from COVID-19 response.
2. Impart regular first-aid training to trainees at the institutions and communities and maintained as an ongoing in-service program for educators.

9. Annual Sowai Zhabto for all citizen

TENDREL shall:

1. Introduce comprehensive annual screening for early detection and timely treatment while continuing with annual school health check-ups.

*We will introduce
annual Sowai
Zhabto for all
citizen*

10. Home care of the differently-abled and elderlies

TENDREL shall:

1. Provide palliative care to individuals with terminal illness, movement difficulties, and the elderly. Care attendants can conveniently contact the home health care unit, to optimize quality of life and mitigating suffering among people with serious, complex, and often terminal illnesses.

11. Primary Health Care vans

TENDREL shall:

1. Procure three mobile primary health care vans. It is a clinic on wheels to provide full range of primary health care services including check-ups, treatment for minor ailments, health promotions and education, immunisation, referrals, prescription renewal, etc.

12. Mitigating health hazards at the crematorium

Preserving dead bodies for a certain period before cremation is a common practice in Bhutan. However, this has been a challenge for families from low socio-economic backgrounds. In such cases, the



lack of proper preservation measures can lead to the proliferation of disease-carrying vectors, posing serious hygiene and sanitation risks.

TENDREL shall:

1. Provide proper shelter, kitchen, safe drinking water, proper drainage, waste disposable, and three deep fridges in each of the district crematorium.

13. Introducing family physicians in urban areas

TENDREL shall:

1. Introduce family physician at the satellite clinics in Thimphu.
2. Empower the family physicians to authorize referrals, hospitalizations, and lab tests. Family physicians will play a vital role in scheduling appointments with specialists, ensuring comprehensive, coordinated and continued healthcare services for all our citizens.

14. Smart Health care via “Digital Dungscho”

Mobile services are now accessible in all 20 districts, with a substantial subscription base of 778,008 individuals.

TENDREL shall:

1. Enhance healthcare delivery by collaborating with GovTech to develop an innovative mobile app called ‘Dungtso’ which is linked to ePIS to provide 24 hours smart health care. This app will establish a connection between each primary healthcare center and their community, enabling seamless communication and providing comprehensive services ranging from health promotion, to disease prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, palliative care, and beyond.

3.2.2. Addressing the chronic shortage of health worker

The ability of a country to meet its health goals depends largely on the knowledge, skills, motivation and deployment of the people responsible for organizing and delivering health services. As of September 2022, the Ministry of Health reported that Bhutan is still 50% behind its overall workforce requirements. In addition, there has been



a massive trend of healthcare worker migration, with an estimated 389 nurses leaving their jobs between 2019 and January 2023.

TENDREL shall:

1. Implement a flexible human resource deployment practice (workload-based deployment) that takes into account population size, expected workload, and population mobility. This system involves district health managers providing real-time updates on staff availability, movement, and prompt replacement and reinforcement of staff.
2. Explore potential solutions such as creating a dedicated medical cadre within the civil service or separating medical professionals from the civil service altogether, aiming to mitigate attrition and alleviate the shortage of healthcare professionals through special administrative packages.
3. Establish nursing college and also invite private sector to participate.
4. Recruit retired doctors, increase the retirement age of medical doctors and nurses. Mandate same location husband and wife work placements, increase out-country MBBS and Post Graduate slots.
5. Introduce flexible shift system for medical doctors and nurses, allow nurses who want to work past the end of their scheduled shift to help the nursing shortage and permit off hour nursing care to private homes including private practise.

3.0.3. Health Information System (HIS)

Sound and reliable information is the foundation of decision-making across all health system building blocks. Therefore, we need to frame what we know and what we need to learn.

TENDREL shall:

1. Define HIS improvements objectives, map ongoing and planned HIS strengthening interventions and formulate a roadmap including budget estimates.



2. Collaborate with GovTech, National Statistical Bureau and the private sector in driving operational efficiencies, clinical care delivery and enhancing patients care through smart/intelligent health care. Proportion of health facilities using ePIS to 100% including instituting GIS based real-time HF/HRH information system developed and rolled out. A quintessential part of this HIS will be the health information of patients across all communities, villages, and the nation.

3.0.4. Access to Essential Medicines.

TENDREL shall:

1. Continue to ensure equitable access to essential medical products, vaccines and technologies of assured quality, safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness.
2. Update and enforce national policies, essential drug lists, standards, guidelines and regulations where required.

3.0.5. Sustainable Health Care Financing

The provision of free health care is enshrined in the constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Government revenue is the predominant source of health financing.

TENDREL shall:

1. Explore diversification of financing measures to finance primary health care services for all time.
2. Invite private sector participation in delivery of selected health services namely in the cosmetic dental services, setting up private birthing clinics, family physicians, nursing services, medical evacuations and high-end FDI hospitals in border areas while continuing to provide regular free health care services.

3.2.6. Improving Welfare of the Patient and General Services

Each one of us is likely to have been frustrated with healthcare services, particularly at the national and regional referral hospitals; that was overcrowded, inflexible, impersonal and bureaucratic.



TENDREL shall:

1. Increase fund to improve patient diet.
2. Improve ward environment through decongestion.
3. Do away with the parking fees in hospital areas.

3.2.7. Leadership and Governance.

TENDREL shall:

1. Ensure evidence-based policies, transparency and accountability, effective oversight and promote ethical management and standards in health system.
2. Foster collaboration between government, health service providers and the citizens.

3.3. Youth: Hope of Our Nation

The challenges faced by our youths have become increasingly complex, spanning a range of issues that demand collective attention and action. Teenage pregnancy, school dropouts, and youth crime are interconnected issues requiring a comprehensive approach with sex education, access to education, and effective juvenile justice. A youth crime rate of 62% in 2021, as per NSB records, underscores the need to address root causes through crime prevention, rehabilitation, and community support. Youth substance abuse is on the rise, with incidents ranging from 291 to 620 in recent years. Preventive measures and accessible support for addiction are essential through awareness campaigns, counseling, and rehabilitation programs.

Rising youth unemployment rates are a particularly concerning problem, reflecting economic difficulties and breeding disillusionment among youths. Youth emigration reflects limited opportunities at home, requiring an environment that nurtures personal and professional growth to discourage talent outflows. To address this, it's crucial to prioritize job creation and vocational training for youth to equip them with workforce-ready skills.

Concurrently, a lack of entrepreneurial opportunities is glaring, hindering not only employment but also innovation and economic growth. Supporting young entrepreneurs with mentorship, funding, and a conducive business environment is vital.





Low participation in democracy among our youths is of concern, necessitating encouragement for youth engagement in political and community activities. The erosion of youth values is another worrying issue attributed to shifting societal norms and media influence. A dearth of entertainment and recreational facilities can lead to negative behaviors among youth. Investing in cultural and recreational infrastructure can provide positive outlets for their energy and creativity. Proactive measures, such as comprehensive educational programs and community engagement, are needed to reinforce strong ethics.

The impact of internet and social media brings cyberbullying, addiction, and privacy concerns. Equipping youth with digital literacy skills and offering counseling are vital. Supporting the digital economy and creative industries can offer innovation and employment for youth, fostering economic growth.

Tackling youth challenges demands a united effort from governments, communities, and individuals. Prioritizing education, job creation, mental health services, and value-based initiatives will empower our younger generation to overcome obstacles and build a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

TENDREL shall:

- 1. Introduce Youth Engagement Platform under PMO to give urgent attention to any youth related issues.
- 2. Review and provide support to implement National Youth Policy 2011 for collective attention and action.
- 3. Establish a robust skill development ecosystem for a competent workforce that contributes to economic growth such as providing internship schemes and opportunities to university/ TVET graduates for job experience.
- 4. Support development in sports, arts, creative industries, digital economy including providing scholarships and establishing linkages with renowned institutions.
- 5. Develop a strategy to help youth with substance abuse problems including a review of the legislations related to substance abuse, strengthen rehabilitation centers and devise an effective reintegration program by doing away of cooling period requirement.



6. Provide support to law enforcement agencies to create awareness and enhance surveillance.
7. Improve access to services such as youth-friendly health center and counselling center.

3.4. Seniors Citizens and Vulnerable Groups: Maintaining a Dignified Life

In an ever-aging society, it is imperative to prioritize the well-being of our senior citizens and vulnerable groups. One crucial aspect of this commitment is to strengthen and promote timely healthcare services. By doing so, we can significantly enhance the quality of life for these individuals, ensuring they receive the medical attention as and when they require it. This not only serves as a testament to our society's values but also reflects our dedication to creating a compassionate and equitable healthcare system for all.

Additionally, it is essential to address the financial security of both public and corporate employees, especially in the face of annual inflation. To meet this challenge, we must conduct a thorough review and revision of pension schemes and benefits. Indexing these schemes to annual inflation rates can help safeguard the financial futures of employees, allowing them to retire with dignity and peace of mind. This initiative not only benefits the workforce but also upholds the principles of fairness and economic stability within our society. However, the current status poses significant obstacles to achieving these goals. The lack of proper infrastructure, particularly in the realm of healthcare, is a glaring issue that needs immediate attention. Many senior citizens and vulnerable groups currently face the harsh reality of inadequate healthcare coverage.

By investing in infrastructure and expanding healthcare access, we can take meaningful strides towards improving the quality of life for our seniors and vulnerable populations, ultimately creating a more equitable and caring society.

We will introduce Youth Engagement Platform under PMO to give urgent attention to any youth related issues.



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We will introduce universal basic income (Phamai Drinlen Zurpho) to non-pensioner senior citizens above 65 years and (Jhamchong Zurpho) to differently abled citizens.



YOUR VOICE YOUR HOPE

TENDREL shall:

1. Adopt Social Security Policy which encompasses provision of allowances to old age, differently abled people, and other vulnerable groups on need basis.
2. Facilitate provident fund scheme to private sector employees.
3. Introduce universal basic income (*Phamai Drinlen Zurpho*) to non-pensioner senior citizens above 65 years and (*Jhamchong Zurpho*) to differently abled citizens.
4. Revise pension schemes tied to annual inflation rate and basic cost of living.
5. Strengthen priority treatment in availing public services.
6. Provide priority support to Special Educational Need (SEN) school.
7. Introduce differently-abled people friendly public infrastructures.

3.5. Overseas Migration and Demography: Finding Solutions to Twin Challenges

The current status of mass exodus, characterized by a significant outflow of skilled individuals, has a profound impact on our country. This phenomenon, often referred to as “brain drain,” leads to a loss of valuable human capital dividend. Highly skilled professionals, seeking better opportunities elsewhere, leave behind a workforce depleted of their expertise. This exodus can result in a “Gungtong” or a gap in the workforce, especially in sectors crucial to public service and business. The departure of skilled individuals can pose substantial challenges in ensuring efficient public service delivery and eventually impacting the quality of life for the population.

Furthermore, the business and economic landscape are not immune to the consequences of this mass exodus. Vacancies left by departing skilled workers can be difficult to fill, potentially slowing economic growth.

Simultaneously, lower fertility rates, with only 1.8 births per woman, combined with increased life expectancies averaging 71 years, paint a

complex demographic picture. While longer life expectancies are generally positive, they can lead to a declining working-age population and labor shortage. This, in turn, may result in decreased productivity and a reduced tax revenue base. The challenges posed by demographic shifts are multifaceted and require comprehensive planning and policy adjustments to address.

Addressing these interconnected issues, such as mass exodus and demographic changes, necessitates a holistic approach. Strategies to retain and attract talent, bolster education and skills development, and creating opportunities for economic growth are essential steps in mitigating the adverse effects on public service, business, and the overall economy. Balancing the demographic shift with policies that support a skilled workforce is crucial for sustaining productivity and the well-being of our societies.

TENDREL shall:

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| 1. | Prioritize accelerating of economy to attain the high-income economy. |
| 2. | Ensure job security with attractive remunerations and conducive working environment. |
| 3. | Promote investment avenues in the country for Bhutanese diaspora. |
| 4. | Expedite and facilitate with gig economy platforms to enable the youth to work and earn without having to migrate. |
| 5. | Equip individuals with the required skills relevant to domestic and international market (e.g. Nursing, IT, Engineering, Cookery, tourism and hospitality services, Manufacturing). |
| 6. | Support reintegration of overseas skilled returnees. |
| 7. | Formulate family-friendly population policies that help individuals and couples balance work and family responsibilities. (This includes paid parental leaves, flexible working arrangements, affordable child care services and financial incentives for having children such as tax benefits or subsidies for child related expenses). |
| 8. | Introduce yearly Alu Sarkey Tendrel Thue of Nu. 15,000 to all new born up to 18 years. |



3.6. Community Vitality & Security: For a Safe, Secure and Livable Community

Nurturing a cohesive and compassionate society that is founded on our traditional values and ethos is very important. In meeting this goal, we are committed to creating community vibrancy, safety, and overall well-being. Thriving communities are built on a foundation of safety, inclusivity, and shared values, and we are actively working to foster such environments. Preserving our traditions, culture, and values is another vital part of our mission. These elements are integral to our identity and heritage, and we are dedicated to safeguarding and celebrating them for future generations.

Recognizing that every Bhutanese must have a house to call it a home to guarantee basic physical security, there is a need to facilitate affordable housing for our people. Access to affordable homes is a fundamental right, and we must strive to make housing options more attainable for individuals and families.

We recognize the importance of revising life insurance policies to better meet the evolving needs of individuals and families and safeguarding the financial security of our communities. Managing borders and reducing crime is a priority. Ensuring security of our borders and reducing crimes at borders are crucial steps in creating a safe and stable environment for our communities to flourish. Through these initiatives and commitments, we strive to build a better future for our community, one that is inclusive, secure, and true to our cultural heritage and values

TENDREL shall:

1. Improve socio-economic opportunities and other basic amenities in rural places.
2. Preserve and promote traditions, culture, and values.
3. Promote Community vibrancy, safety and well-being.
4. Facilitate platforms for showcasing creativity, talents, and innovations to our children.



5. Build a Multi-purpose hall for sports, meetings, and film city in partnership with private sector.
6. Introduce one-time home loan to general public in rural areas at concessional interest rates.
7. Construct affordable public housing and incentivize private sectors to supply affordable housing.
8. Introduce Special Home Ownership quota to public servants who has served more than 30 years.
9. Increase rural life insurance compensation amount from Nu. 30,000 to Nu. 150,000
10. Institute crop insurance schemes for farmers to compensate for damages to crops and livestock caused by the natural calamities and disease outbreaks.
11. Ensure affordable and timely supply of timbers.
12. Provide financial support to differently-abled citizens.
13. Improve existing crematorium facilities and construct new ones on need basis.
14. Strengthen smart border management system.
15. Strengthen disaster management and develop a national contingency plan.

*We will build a Multi-purpose hall
for sports, meetings, and film city in
partnership with private sector.*



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4. OUR ENVIRONMENT:

Our Gift

Balancing economic progress with social and environmental considerations is a complex challenge crucial for sustainable development. In Bhutan, our abundant forest cover, which accounts for seventy-one percent of our land, has played a pivotal role in addressing Global Warming. It possesses an impressive carbon sequestration capacity of 8.5 million tons of CO₂, a quantity ten times greater than our national annual CO₂ emissions.

Despite our current carbon-negative status, there remains a pressing need for further action: Firstly, there's a need to reduce CO₂ emissions, particularly from the transportation and energy sectors. This reduction is essential to mitigate our carbon footprint effectively.

Additionally, mitigating the emissions of methane and NO₂ stemming from livestock farming and rice cultivation is crucial. These gases contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions.

To maintain the health of our environment, we must reduce the risks of soil acidification and eutrophication of river systems. This involves careful land management practices.

Addressing land degradation is of paramount importance, requiring adoption of appropriate mining and farming practices. These measures aim to combat the global warming threat while ensuring the stability of our ecosystem to preserve the rich diversity of flora and fauna.

Managing waste production is another vital aspect. Effective waste management not only improves the environment but also addresses associated risks to public health.



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By comprehensively addressing these facets, Bhutan aims to strike a harmonious balance between economic growth, societal well-being, and environmental preservation, ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for our citizens and the planet.

TENDREL shall:

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| 1. | Review and amend legislations and policies related to environment and forest. |
| 2. | Strengthen protected areas and national parks for conservation of biodiversity. |
| 3. | Promote sustainable land use practices, afforestation, reforestation, and habitat restoration initiatives. |
| 4. | Implement a climate action plan. |
| 5. | Invest in renewable energy sources, such as hydropower, solar, wind and bio-gas to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and negotiate for Green Bond financing mechanisms. |
| 6. | Promote and incentivize energy efficiency measures in industries, buildings, home appliances and transportation sectors. |
| 7. | Support fiscal incentives for purchase of electric vehicles. |
| 8. | Facilitate installation of adequate battery charging stations across the country. |
| 9. | Initiate planning for electric tram services in major cities and towns. |
| 10. | Strengthen climate resilience through awareness, adaptation and mitigation measures. |
| 11. | Support organic farming practices, agroforestry, and sustainable agricultural techniques. |
| 12. | Develop a comprehensive waste management framework, including waste reduction, recycling, and proper disposal systems. |
| 13. | Extend waste collection facilities to both urban and rural areas. |
| 14. | Encourage the adoption of circular economy principles to promote resource efficiency and waste reduction. |
| 15. | Implement integrated water resource management plans. |
| 16. | Encourage community-based initiatives for water conservation and efficient water use. |



17. Collaborate with international organizations, neighboring countries, and global initiatives to initiate cross-border electricity grid and to address transboundary environmental issues.
18. Participate actively in international climate negotiations and contribute to global efforts in combating climate change.
19. Share knowledge, experiences, and best practices with other countries in environmental conservation and sustainable development.
20. Encourage integrated wood-based industries and timber extraction.

We will develop a comprehensive waste management framework, including waste reduction, recycling, and proper disposal systems.



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