

Covid -19 in Bhutan

The year was 2019, when I first heard about the outbreak of coronavirus in China, Wuhan and Hubei. I lived in Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan doing my degree studies in Royal Thimphu College. I never expected that the virus will be scattering so fast around the world. It was a sudden zephyr of bittersweet memories zipping me in a world of dreadful and terrifying one. After a few months, life goes on as usual and we put an efforts to fall back into our routines. Suddenly, on Friday 6th March 2020, the first Covid-19 case was confirmed by the Prime Minister of Bhutan Lotey Tshering and the patient is a US tourist who arrived here via Guwahati, Assam. After hearing the news broadcast and order form the government, schools and colleges of three district, (Punakha, Thimphu and Paro) were called off for three weeks as the patients visited those places and the health officials and other applicable agencies are in the progression of carrying out the primary diseases management and contract tracing it.

Hearing the news of Covid-19 entrance in our country, made me feel so unhappy and tears fall down and everyone around me were so blue. Personally, for me it was like receiving an unwelcomed gift of shutting down of world into pieces. I struggled to figure out what all of this meant to me because I was so surprised and couldn't believe it. The situation was worst for every Bhutanese people to believe it and accept the reality. The routine I had before totally changed and new world came into us. I was absorbed by the news I heard days ago and the atmosphere was fraught with emotions and grief. I couldn't avoid the current issues rising in our nation and it was enough for me to accept it. So, days just pass by and eventually, everybody else did the same and yes, life must go on with the challenges and difficulties of Covid-19 pandemic.

If I talk about the greatest challenges I faced during the Covid-19 pandemic in Bhutan, the biggest challenges as a student was accepting a new learning approaches of comprehensive education and living a life of materialistic world. As we all know that our Bhutan is small in size and number, but Bhutan had always hold an awareness of Synthesis capacity despite of being isolated and breaking down. Bhutan open its door to help every individual people and gave a full support to fight against the virus.

During 7th century Bhutan faced many problems like external and internal conflicts and in this 21st century Bhutan is facing an economy cost due to pandemic. The spiritual and material aspect of life between economic development (Paljor Gonphel) and happiness (Gakid) had suddenly being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic but the regime have always supported it. The support from our perfect role model of his majesty, followed by Prime Minister, doctors, De-suung (Guardians of peace), armies and people of nation take a risk spending many sleepless nights, touring the nation to scrutinize and had the arrangements at different vital points, guiding the management and local equipment in taking measure to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in nation.

As of date, the worst countries outside China, Italy, Iran, France, Germany, and Italy is in lockdown and had the uppermost death toll. In Iran the virus plague-ridden a number of high bureaucrats that counted in one of the vice presidents, representative health minister and 24 members of assembly. 125 countries are affected by the infection and its getting most horrible every day. The virus disrupted Bhutanese life and their business but it appear under control for now. Our country the religious nation, conducted rituals over **dratsang**, **shedras** and **goendets** to stay away from virus. As surveillance is the chief route of protection against, morality and integrity of Bhutanese is of extreme importance.

So, far the update on covid-19 case on 17th June 2020, it says that we have 67 total confirmed case and 16 isolated in Hospital and 27 are de-isolated. So far we have zero death in the nation and 24 recovered and we are really thankful for receiving a best care from 16 dedicated health personal and our doctors , nurses and health worker who work really hard for nation by risking their own lives. As the nation is on high risk of country to get infected, every individual's duty is to protect and secure sovereignty, regions integrity, safety and harmony of Bhutan should be taken care by us and keep county in safer side. So, to keep our nation in safer side our guidance the Druk Gyelpo have asked for voluntary to participate in De-Suung the (Guardians of peace and Harmony) to guide the people and protect the nation. So, the ultimate object of nation building on this pandemic was firstly to keep nation in safer side, his majesty announced 38th batch De-suung training to held with 125 volunteer candidates (80 males and 45 females) it went successful and are serving the nation. Our sovereign required more of guidance of peace so, the 39th batch with 2520 candidates (2016 males and 504 females) are trained and deployed

in border area and currently, 40th batch are under preparation and working out. As of now, we have 12,848 volunteer to serve the nation.

Coming to economic response to covid-19 case in Bhutan, the royal monetary authority declared a series of methods designed at helping businesses and citizens, counting by on condition that operational investment, waiving interest on loans and issuing microloans for food production exports, and tourism. On the World Bank estimations that Bhutan's real GDP growth rate will drop to 2.2-2.9 percent, down from its pre-crisis estimate of 6.5 percent. Bhutan have diverse a four stage COVID-19 prepared organization and at this time Bhutan is in stage three, which contributes confirmed case without evidence of secondary transmission. Parallel to other countries in south Asia, Bhutan spears to be keeping the disaster under control. But then again according to the interview of Dr. Tandin Dorji Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan says that the 6 -7 percent GDP growth target in country twelfth five year plan (2018-2023) is expected to drop to 4-5 percent growth if the situation remain same as the economic forecasts are difficult to improve as it impact national, regional, and global containment measure. Tourism is largely impacted as it has 43 percent of GDP of the nation and this days because of virus the tourist are restricted to visit our country.

According to UNICEF/Bhutan millions of Children from place to place including children in Bhutan are at upsurges danger of their live move growing due to covid-19 pandemic. 170,000 children in Bhutan from class PP-XII are nowadays affected by the school closure. Many of this students are taking online classed and spending more time on virtual platforms, which can lead to online exploitation.

COVID-19, a novel and something poisonous respiratory illness that is believed to have invented in a live animal market in China, has spread quickly all over the country and world. So, as such period, we must display the power that comes out of our smallness, continue united and comfort one another. During such remarkable environments, the regime will take the duty of alleviating any misery to the societies due to the virus. After the report of first covid-19 case it brought people of Bhutan into united and made people realize that importance of being together is a battle to this pandemic as **“ONE PEOPLE, ONE NATION”**.

(Creator redacted)

