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Welcome to Faculty of Traditional Medicine

Introduction

The Faculty of Traditional Medicine (FTM) was established in 1971 as an Indigenous Training Centre at Dechencholing, Thimphu. As per the Resolution of the 32nd National Assembly, 8 students were recruited to undergo 3 years sMenpa training (diploma). The training programme for Drungtsho (degree) was started in 1978 following a Royal Command of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck the fourth King of Bhutan. The training centre was upgraded as the National Institute of Traditional Medicine in 1992 and shifted to the present site in Kawang Jangsa, Thimphu. Today, the institute functions as a member Faculty of Traditional Medicine under the University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan.

Traditional Medicine System

Traditional medicine was introduced as a part of the national healthcare system in 1968 under the Royal Command of His late Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the third King of Bhutan. Recognizing the benefits and importance of traditional medicine, the Royal Government of Bhutan has accorded high priority in the development of

traditional medicine as an alternative choice of treatment for the people of Bhutan. Today, traditional medicine services are integrated with modern medicine and available in all Districts Hospitals and Basic Health Units in the country. The Bhutanese traditional medicine is known as *gSo-ba Rig-pa*, and it has originated from Tibet in the 17th century.

Concept and Philosophy

It is based on the philosophy and principles of Buddhism. The Buddha traced the root cause of all sufferings to the concept of *Ma.rigpa* (ignorance) which obscures our mind from understanding the Law of Causality and Reality of Phenomena. The three mental poisons of attachment (*Dod.chags*), hatred (*Zhe.sdang*) and delusion (*gTi.mug*) give rise to *rlung*, *mkhris.pa* and *bad.kan* disorders respectively.

The body is composed of five cosmo-physical elements known as earth (*Sa*), water (*Chu*), fire (*Me*), air (*rlung*) and sky (*Namkha*). In their state of equilibrium, they maintain the health of an individual. Any imbalance in these five elements will result in suffering (illness). Therefore, health and wellbeing is defined as state of perfect balance between the five basic elements and three humors.

As per the traditional medicine, a long chain of karmic actions and effects of evil spirits can also cause sufferings to human beings. Such cases can be pacified through traditional rituals and offerings.

In general, treatment and therapy services are aimed at promoting balance of the five elements and neutralizing the three mental poisons that cause illness, through a holistic approach.



Hostel Block

Training Programmes

FTM offers two regular training programmes; 5 years Bachelor's degree programme and 3 years Diploma programme. The enrolment of students is based on the human resource requirement of the country.

In addition, the FTM also offers training for Pharmacy Technicians and Research Assistants for the Menjong Sorig Pharmaceuticals as and when required.

Plan is underway to introduce Master's degree programme in traditional medicine and up-gradation programme for diploma holders. The Institute also plans to develop and offer short courses on *gSo.ba Rig.pa* in English language.

Management and Administration

The Faculty of Traditional Medicine was under the Ministry of Health till 2008. From July 2008, it became part of the Royal University of Bhutan and benefitted greatly in terms of programme development and infrastructure. The Royal University of Bhutan was delinked from the Royal Civil Service Commission and functioned as an Autonomous and independent organization with effect from July 2011. On 29th November 2013, the National Institute of Traditional Medicine and the Royal Institute of Health Sciences were delinked from the Royal University of Bhutan and transferred to the University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan as per the Government directives.

Vision

The FTM aspires to become a centre of excellence in traditional medicine education and research that produces GNH inspired graduates with appropriate knowledge and skills to meet the international standards.

Mission

The FTM will strive to achieve excellence in the design, development and delivery of *gSo-ba Rig-pa* education programmes through research and innovation, blending the rich ancient wisdom and modern science to make the programmes relevant for the current health needs of the people.

Key Aspirations:

1. Incorporate the values and principles of Gross National Happiness (GNH) as educational foundation for all programmes.
2. Provide quality education and training in *gSo-ba Rig-pa* to both national and international students.
3. Enhance the quality of educational programs through increasing international partnerships and collaborations.
4. Serve as knowledge hub in traditional medicine by working closely with community and industry.
5. Contribute to opening up new paths to better future through research and inquiry.
6. Provide continuing medical education for enhancing knowledge and skills of the practitioners.
7. Diversify *gSo-ba Rig-pa* education programme based on current health needs of the country.
8. Preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of the country.

Core Values:

- Health and well being.
- Love and compassion.
- Research and development.
- Creativity and innovation.
- Spiritual healing and practice.
- Integrated approach to health care.



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Academic and MPH Block

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