



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Royal Bhutan Police, The PEMA Secretariat, and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock sign a Tripartite Agreement to Establish Yarju OAP for Prisoners' Reintegration

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In a landmark collaboration aimed at fostering restorative rehabilitation, seamless reintegration, and entrepreneurial prison reform, the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP), The PEMA Secretariat, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MoAL) signed a Tripartite Agreement today to establish the Yarju Open-Air Prison for Prisoners' Reintegration by July 2027 in Wangduephodrang Dzongkhag, and to operationalize it thereafter.

This innovative initiative, aligned with His Majesty the King's vision of a compassionate and just society, seeks to transform the lives of prisoners through skill development, socioeconomic empowerment, and holistic rehabilitation.

Currently, 98.5% of the prisoners fall within the economically active age bracket, indicating a significant opportunity to harness the latent potential of this forgotten human capital by focusing on meaningful rehabilitation through agriculture, vocational training, restorative and rehabilitative care, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

This initiative builds on the ongoing collaboration between the PEMA Secretariat and the Royal Bhutan Police. Some of the notable joint efforts include the launch of Prison-based SUD Treatment and Care Services at Chamgang Central Prison on November 11, 2023, followed by its expansion to Lungzor District Prison on February 23, 2024, alongside various skilling programs for the prisoners. This collaboration will also establish agriculture farm in about 300 acres transforming lives through sustainable farming, which will not only self-sustain the food requirement for the RBP, but also generate revenue by selling surplus products in the local market.

The Yarju OAP shall endeavour to foster resilience and promote psychosocial and economic empowerment of the prisoners, enabling them to reintegrate into society as self-reliant and productive citizens, in pursuit of building a model correctional facility. An Executive Committee and Core Working Group will oversee the initiative, ensuring transparency, strategic guidance, and effective implementation.