



Assistant principal detained as suspect in girl murder case

Body of the 13 year-old student found under the suspect's bed

Tempa Wangdi, Bumthang

The assistant principal of Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School (YMSS) was detained as the prime suspect in the murder of a class seven student after her body was recovered from his house on October 16.

CRIME

The girl, 13, who went missing from the class on the morning of October 16 was found dead under the assistant principal's bed.

The suspect was found sleeping on the bed with the deceased under when the search team entered the house located outside the school campus around

“The victim had marks of strangulation on her neck,”

A health official YGH

200 meters away.

Health official from Yebilaptsa general hospital (YGH) who conducted the postmortem and forensic investigations said the deceased was possibly strangled to death.

“The victim had marks of strangulation on her neck,” a health official from YGH said, adding the victim was probably killed in the morning. Medical examination ruled out rape. “No signs and presence of any sexual intercourse was found during the medical examination of the victim’s genital areas,” the health official said.

The possibility of suicide has also been ruled out.

While it is unknown how the deceased, who was seen in the school’s morning Socially Useful Productive Work (SUPW) went to the suspect’s place that day, YMSS principal, Dorji, said that the victim was related to the detainee. Even the suspect was seen at the SUPW the principal said.

Pg.3



Bayul Dewaling: His Eminence Pedseling Truelku Kunzang Tenzin Jamtsho presides over the consecration ceremony of the GNH centre in Bumthang (Story on Pg. 3)

From the Alps to the Himalayas

A series of events are planned to celebrate 40 years of Helvetas-Bhutan relationship

Sonam Pelden

Forty years ago, a new page was turned in the Bhutan - Switzerland relationship.

HELVETAS

One of Bhutan’s oldest friends, Swiss industrialist Fritz von Schulthess, and chairman of the Swiss Foundation pro Bhutan felt the Bhutan Program needed better professional guidance and be given a secure long term financial foundation.

He sought the advice and support of Swiss Agency for Development Corporation, which recommended him to seek collaboration

with Helvetas, Switzerland’s oldest non-government organization.

“The collaboration proved successful and the Swiss federal government guaranteed the Helvetas funding,” Helvetas’s former secretary general and former resident coordinator to Bhutan E Werner Külling recalled in the publication ‘Far apart and close together- Bhutan and Switzerland, Partners in Development since 1950.’

The journey, which Bhutan and Helvetas travelled together in the last 40 years, first began with a personal relationship between the third King, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and Fritz von Schulthess, and his

wife, Monica, who visited the kingdom in 1952.

It’s this friendship inspired corporation and the quality of relationship between the Bhutanese and the Swiss, which are as resilient as the Alps and the Himalayas that signifies the Bhutan-Helvetas relationship, Country Director Hansruedi Pfeiffer said.

“This relationship at several levels, from the relationship with the King and many Dashos to the civil servants and private sector people, this relationship also worked at the very practical level between the Swiss and local farmers and has allowed relatively good results,” he said. **Pg.2**

IN BRIEF »

Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation workshop
» A three-day regional workshop on National Programme Managers of Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation begins today at the Le Meridien, Paro.

HOME

» Statue of Phurpa Palchhen Dorje Zhoenu consecrated | PG.5

WHAT'S INSIDE »



DZONGKHAG

» Layaps go for vegetables | PG. 9



years on | 1975 - 2015
40 Helvetas Bhutan
 Celebrating Forty Years of Development Partnership

40 Years of Development Partnership between Helvetas and Bhutan *everyone is invited to join the anniversary events*

Exhibition: Tradition and Innovation in Architecture
 Open from: October 24th – November 1st 2015, 10am-5pm
 Location: RUB Auditorium (opposite the VC's Office)

Seminar: Education for Jobs?
 Oct 21 2015, 4pm @ Tarayana Conference Hall
 Panel Discussion: Tradition and Innovation in Architecture
 Oct 27 2015, 4pm @ RUB Auditorium

From the Alps to the Himalayas

From Pg.1

Among others, the Bhutan-Helvetas relationship is marked with the successful production of potatoes from a food crop to a cash crop, the more than 200 bridges it built benefiting over 300,000 people, and its support programs in the forestry and the education sector.

But what stands out as another significant aspect of the relationship, Hansruedi Pfeiffer said is the institutional and individual capacities that Helvetas has helped build in all areas it was involved in.

"We have always tried to not only build splendid islands but tried to work to bring an impact and change not only at the field level, but also at the institutional and policy levels," he said. "Building a college of teacher education, for example, is an achievement of national significance."

Architecture – The core thrust of Swiss assistance to Bhutan

Since building institutions for development is at the core of building nations, the architecture created under the Bhutan-Helvetas collaboration in building the 'Swiss dzongs' in the country have been chosen as a focus of the celebrations to mark the 40 years of collaboration this year.

"We could have chosen potatoes, livestock, cheese making or any other topics but we were told by Bhutanese that they liked the kind of buildings that were established under the relationship between Bhutan and Helvetas," Hansruedi Pfeiffer said. "We chose architecture, which can also be expanded to building institutions that help build a young nation or to build the social infrastructure for a modernizing nation that is seeking its place in the world."

Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay will inaugurate an exhibition "Tradition and innovation in architecture" on October 23 at the Royal University of Bhutan's (RUB) auditorium.

The institutions selected for the exhibition are the Wangduechoeling hospital in Bumthang, College of Natural Resources (former NRTI),

Lobesa, the Renewable Natural Resources Research and Development Centre, Jakar, Rural Development and Training Centre, Zhemgang and the RUB auditorium and IT/Library in Thimphu.

The College of Science and Technology and the Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland will together also conduct a workshop on the exhibition.

Architect and project manager for Bumthang hospital and NRTI, Daniel Schwitter in the publication wrote that the most important buildings Helvetas initiated in Bhutan go back to 1987 when it built the Bumthang hospital and when the Paro Teacher Training College was built in 2000.

"The Swiss dzongs in Bumthang, Lobesa, Paro among others, as the locals call them, are a result of a successful merger of both the traditional and the modern styles," he wrote. "They can be taken as an example for sustainable development that combines excellent Swiss quality and western technology with the charming traditional Bhutanese handicraft."

The visibility and success of Helvetas' work in Bhutan and its contribution towards its own vision as an NGO for a just world, among others, Hansruedi Pfeiffer said was because of the policies of the kings and the government.

"The policies have been absolutely essential in our contribution becoming more effective, and the smallness of the country has also resulted in these contributions becoming more visible," he said. "That is why many in the Swiss Government and in Helvetas have always appreciated the Bhutan programme because there was a good environment, policy, leaders and political stability. Without these, it is much more difficult to achieve good results."

In case of Bhutan and Helvetas's vision for a just world, the Country Director said, the organization has contributed towards this vision. "Bhutan today has excellent access to primary and secondary educa-

Events:

1. Tradition and Innovation in Architecture Exhibition Inauguration on October 23. Open to public from October 24 - November 1

2. Seminar on Educating for Jobs? October 21 at 4pm, Tarayana Hall

3. Documentary on Bhutan-Switzerland relation through Helvetas October 23, RUB Auditorium

4. Evening on Architecture October 27, 4pm, RUB Auditorium

tion across the country and I think education is an excellent instrument for greater equity because if you have good basic education, your chances of getting a higher education and job are better," he said. "Building institutions such as teacher colleges, primary and secondary schools to ascertain access for everyone proves to be in the light of today's situation, just one important step."

While several success stories highlight the Bhutan-Helvetas partnership, there are few areas, which according to the Country Director could have been done better. Being over-ambitious with the projects and not investing enough in learning and reflecting, he said have caused some projects to suffer.

"Personally I think that we should have stayed engaged in vocational training. We were engaged in vocational training but phased it out more or less and took it up again," he said. "There are other examples such as Helvetas' involvement in town planning in Bumthang in the 80s and it was not implemented, because the country was perhaps not ready for it yet."

The livestock sector is another example he cited where the collaboration wasn't as successful and effective as expected. "The reasons are of a similar nature as in vocational training.

There is a stigma in blue colored work, and in livestock, there are socio-cultural factors which can be an impediment to the success of a livestock project."

Way forward

"I think we will not venture into totally new areas," Hansruedi Pfeiffer said. "For us, to partner with Bhutan on local governance and civil society sector remains important for the future."

Should Helvetas decide to stay engaged, he said, it would be in these two sectors, in community forestry and vocational training. "When I say vocational training, I would include building institutions for vocational training but also to professionalize agriculture, the farming profession," he said. "If we continue beyond 2017, we would not add but we believe that the sectors we have chosen are demanding and long-term and will remain our main areas of engagement."

Helvetas, he said, has always greatly benefited from financial and conceptual contributions of the Swiss government and its expenses in Bhutan for development activities have already reduced substantially. "The main reason is because the Swiss government has decided that it would like to terminate its collaboration with Bhutan in 2016," he said.

Hansruedi Pfeiffer said Helvetas is also an independent organization that is currently involved in three areas: governance and peace, education and vocational training, and rural economy. These programmes will be evaluated next year.

"This evaluation will assess what has been our contribution to Bhutan's development or to a just Bhutan or how Helvetas has been effective in making a change in Bhutan's development," he said. "The board will decide on the continuation of the programme and one element of information to judge whether one should continue or not is this evaluation."

What Bhutan wants, he said, is another element in this decision. "Do the Bhutanese leaders have a vision of what

kind of an international development collaboration it wants to have and with whom they want to collaborate internationally?"

In principle, a new decision or new confirmation on whether or not a relationship should be continued is needed from both sides, he said. "Behind all these, one is certainly aware that the whole graduation is related much with picking up of the country's GDP," he said. "The figures don't tell enough about distribution or strengths of institutions. How is the wealth distributed from hydropower income, and what is the strength of local institutions for the country's wellbeing and autonomy?"

However, personally, the Country Director hopes that the good relations will continue with or without Helvetas through individual and business relationships, friendship associations, cultural or institutional exchanges.

The former deputy resident coordinator for Helvetas, (Dr) Pema Gyamtsho noted in the publication that, it was the human dimension and the geopolitical similarities that could have "made a little mountainous country in the European Alps and another little mountainous country in the heart of the Himalayas in Asia to click as sustainable development partners."

Hansruedi Pfeiffer said that for Bhutan, having diversified relations - foreign and international relations, which also touch European countries in particular and Asian countries like Japan are extremely important.

"I think that was pretty much the visions of your Kings starting with the Third King. There is an emotional tie and emotional basis, and I hope these 40 years are a strong foundation for private and civil society sector relationships to remain alive, vibrant, lively and fruitful."

*Additional reporting by
Thinley Zangmo*