

## Dignifying vocational jobs still a work in progress

**Tempa Wangdi, Chumey**

Although the wages vary, the challenge of working a blue-collar job transcends boundary.

### OCCUPATION

Being a road worker in Switzerland may not be as tough as it is in Bhutan, but its not easy either, according to road builders Kevin Bertschinger, 21, and Alain Zollig, 22, from Walo Bertschinger.

They were in Chumey Technical Training Institute (TTI) recently on a two-day exchange programme, as part of the 40 years of Bhutan- Helvetas relation celebrations, and shared their experience with Bhutanese students attending the national certificate (NC3) in masonry. According to the vocational qualification framework, NC 1 is the lowest and NC 3, the highest in terms of skill competency requirements or complexity at the vocational level.

While salary is better, both Kevin and Alain said blue-collar jobs even in Switzerland isn't as respected.

"Those working by the roads wearing high visibility safety apparel are looked down as someone who knows nothing," Kevin said.

"The safety apparel means you are nobody and menial," Alain added.

Such challenges and attitudes however did not deter both Kevin and Alain from

choosing to take up jobs as road builders. While it was a dream come true for Kevin, it wasn't anything less for Alain who enjoys working with sand, cement and asphalt.

"I wanted to become a road builder since my childhood," Kevin said adding that pursuing his dream wasn't given the objections from his parents. His parents wanted him to continue his apprenticeship in information technology (IT) because of the respect attached to wearing clean clothes.

"In the beginning, my parents weren't happy when I left the IT job to become a road builder," Kevin said. "But now my parents are happy because I am happy."

Although it has improved over the years, dignifying blue-collar jobs still remains a challenge for Bhutan.

TTI principal, Sangay Dorji said there is a dramatic improvement in the attitude of Bhutanese trainees since 2007 when officials from the institute had to travel to villages in search of students.

"Today, the institute has 198 students against 29 five years ago when the ratio of students and instructors stood at almost 1:2," Sangay Dorji said, adding there is still much to be done.

"Even now most students pursuing vocational trainings here are from humble families since well off parents discourage children from taking up blue-collar jobs," he said.



**Vocational education: Kevin and Alain work with the TTI trainees in Chumey, Bumthang**

A masonry trainee at the TTI, Thukten Jamtsho said societal pressure and stigma are the biggest challenges for Bhutanese youth who take up vocational education.

"Commuters pass unkind and discriminating remarks while we were helping with the road-widening works in Gytesa," he said, adding even school children pass harsh remarks at the trainees.

Another trainee Kinzang

Choden said parents and relatives are now however more supportive of children taking up vocational trainings but the communities are yet to share this attitude.

"Some friends who are holding better jobs look down on us because most still think TTIs is inferior," Kinzang Choden said.

While learning to be a skilled worker, those like her, both at home and abroad such

as Kevin and Alain have also learnt, if not mastered the skills to ignore the society's attitude towards vocational education. They take pride in being a skilled labour and that is what keeps them going.

"Only the trainees would know the importance of vocational skills," Kinzang Choden said while Kevin added, "as long as I love what I am doing, I don't care what the society says about my job."



### MINISTRY OF FINANCE

MoF/PRO/MFS/15/1083

#### CORRIGENDUM

The Ministry of Finance would like to inform all the intended bidders that the last date of submission of tender for the supply of duplex printer and blower machine has been changed to 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 instead of 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 and will be opened on 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 at 1130 hours. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. Sorry for the inconvenience caused.

**Chief Administrative Officer**

PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES Department of Revenue and Customs



### CORRIGENDUM NO: II



#### KHOLONGCHHU HYDRO ENERGY LIMITED

A Joint Venture of SJVN (India) & Druk Green (Bhutan)  
Incorporated under the Company's Act of  
Kingdom of Bhutan, 2000.

Kholongchhu Hydro Electric Project (600 MW)

Reg.No.U20150612TRI0481

Website:www.khepbhutan.com

#### Notice inviting Expression of Interest for Long Term Financing

The date of receiving of Expression of Interest issued vide No: KHEL/HOF/BOR/2015 is hereby extended up to **27.10.15 (15:00 hrs)**.

For any enquiry/clarification in this regard, Addl. GM (Finance) may be contacted in person or on **Tel. No: +975-17131397**. The detailed EOI can be downloaded from KHEL website ([www.khepbhutan.com](http://www.khepbhutan.com)).

**Sr. Manager, Procurement & Contract Deptt.**