

## **Audit uncovers financial irregularities at Sherubtse College**

December 23rd, 2024

### **Dorji Choden**

The Royal Audit Authority (RAA) has revealed significant financial irregularities at Sherubtse College, totaling Nu 2.672 million.

The findings highlight non-compliance with regulations and lapses in financial management, with particular attention drawn to advance payments, overdue penalties, and misuse of funds.

The audit identified two main categories of financial mismanagement: non-compliance with established rules, amounting to Nu 0.017 million, and financial deficiencies, which totaled Nu 2.655 million.

A substantial portion of the irregularities involves advance payments totaling Nu 0.785 million, disbursed to two staff members from the college's Institutional Development and Current Deposit account for personal use, with Nu 500,000 given in 2018 alone.

The RAA has recommended the college to conduct an inquiry into the irregular approval and delayed recovery of these advances to avoid any perception of favoritism.

Additionally, Sherubtse College has been unable to enforce penalties on overdue library books, amounting to Nu 445,000. Since 2019, 19 lecturers have failed to return borrowed books, some of which have not been returned for years.

The RAA has advised the college to recover the overdue books and impose the required penalties.

Three officials received repatriation benefits worth Nu 228,000 for travel allowances, transfer grants, and transport charges, violating the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) Human Resource Rules and Regulations 2017. These rules require two years of active service to qualify for such benefits

The RAA has instructed the college to recover the funds and deposit them into the Audit Recoveries Account.

Five employees were paid Nu 192,000 as Daily Subsistence Allowance for international travel to Colombo, Sri Lanka, despite meals being provided by the event organisers.

The RAA has recommended the Sherubtse College to provide valid documentation or recover the excess payments.

As of December 22, 2023, Sherubtse College had outstanding advances totaling Nu 855,000 across 15 employees, related to research, tours, and gift purchases.

The RAA has urged the college to recover these amounts promptly and deposit them into the Audit Recoveries Account.