

र्धयाः सुरायनुगायानुरा

Royal Government of Bhutan

PRIME MINISTER

ब्रैकेश 23/03/2016 स

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न्ययाञ्चरायतुषायातुरा

Royal Government of Bhutan

C-2/248

23 March, 2016

[Translated Text] **GOVERNMENT ORDER**

Sub: National Suicide Prevention Plan

It is alarming to note that there is a rapid increase of suicide cases in our country committing suicide around 7 people every month and many more are treated in the health facilities for suicide attempts and deliberate self harm. There must be still many others not even seeking care and treatment which is a great concern for a small country like ours. This situation is in contradiction to the great emphasis we place on the self preservation and incalculable value on human life. Suicide is a tragic loss of life and cause of extreme suffering both for people living with the loss and to the society as a whole. But we must not forget the fact that to a large extent, suicide is preventable with appropriate interventions provided at a right time. For a nation committed to upholding the values of Gross National Happiness and promoting happiness as a goal of human existence, there is a great sense of urgency to overcome this unhealthy trend in our society. The government agencies, non-government organizations and civil society organizations have significant roles in suicide prevention.

As a government, we are deeply concerned and committed to addressing suicide prevention as a top social priority. The Royal Government has approved the nation's first comprehensive National Suicide Prevention - A Three Year Action Plan (July 2015 - June 2018) in the 74th Lhengye Zhungtshog held on May 12, 2015. Our main goal is to have zero death by suicide; no families, villages, communities and neighborhood would desire anyone dying of suicide. A three year Action Plan for suicide prevention offers us an opportunity to exercise our roles in suicide prevention and in creating a harmonious society. The plan is comprehensive addressing universal prevention targeting general population through mass media and social mobilization, to providing specific services for individuals at high risk of suicide and those affected by suicide. The plan offers the most practical ways of addressing suicide prevention in a short time frame and has the potential to save many lives.

Therefore, I call upon all the 20 Dzongkhags, other government agencies, nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and private sectors to ensure the implementation of the activities as detailed in the action plan to save lives by preventing further suicidal deaths in the country. The actual implementation of the suicide prevention work



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plans should occur in the Dzongkhags and local governments. All Dzongdags, Thrompons and Gups have the major responsibility to ensure appropriate implementation of suicide prevention work plans.

The following key steps should be taken to ensure appropriate implementation of the plan. All Dzongkhag administrations should launch the Action Plan at the Dzongkhag level and the following key steps should be taken to ensure appropriate implementation of the plan.

- The Dzongkhag administration authorities through an executive order appoint a
 focal unit and inform the chair of the National Suicide Prevention Steering
 Committee (NSPSC) established in the Ministry of Health at the central level in
 writing.
- 2. Ensure that suicide prevention activities are embedded within the Government Performance Management System (GPMS).
- 3. The suicide prevention and rescue efforts must be operated under the direct notice of Dzongdags.
- 4. Establish Dzongdag's Suicide Prevention Response Team (DSPRT) in the Dzongkhags. The key function of the DSPRT is to ensure effective response to rescue suicide attempts and deliberate self harm incidents occurring in the communities.
- 5. The District Health Office/Thromdey health office will be the secretariat and the coordinating body for implementing the action plan under the direction of the Dzongdag/Thrompon.

The National Suicide Prevention Programme (NSPP), Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health through the National Suicide Prevention Steering Committee (NSPSC) at the central level, should coordinate the timely implementations and the progress with all Dzongkhags and other stakeholders.

One suicide death is too huge a loss to the society. We must act together with urgency.



र्ययास्वातन्त्र्याम्बुरा

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PRIME MINISTER Copy to:

- 1. All Dzongdags for information and immediate necessary compliance.
- 2. Secretary, Ministry of Health for information and immediate necessary action.
- 3. Secretary, Ministry of Education for information and immediate necessary action.
- 4. Secretary, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs for information and necessary follow-up and action.
- 5. Secretary, Dratshang Lhengtshog for information and immediate necessary action.
- 6. Chief of Police, Royal Bhutan Police for information and immediate necessary action
- 7. President, Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan for information and immediate necessary action.
- 8. Director General, Bhutan Narcotic Control Authority (BNCA) for information and immediate necessary action
- 9. BICMA for information and immediate necessary action.
- 10. Director, RENEW for information and immediate necessary action.
- 11. President, JDWNRH for information and immediate necessary action.