

Reconstruction of Lingzhi Dzong – Built To Commemorate Bhutan's Victory Over A Tibetan Invasion In 1668

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Lingzhi Dzong (Source: Yeshe Dorji/Blogspot)

By Dechen Tshomo | Kuensel

Located at about 4,300m above the sea level, the ruins of the Lingzhi

Dzong (Monastery) still stand majestically on a hilltop in Lingzhi, Thimphu.

Also known as the Lingzhi Yugyal Dzong, the dzong was built by the third Desi Chogyal Minjur Tenpa to commemorate the victory over a Tibetan invasion in 1668.

It used to house the drungkhag's administration and monastic body until it was further damaged in an earthquake in September 2011. Before that, the dzong was first destroyed in an earthquake in 1867, rebuilt in the 1950s, and partly renovated in 2005.

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Map: Pinterest/Dalva Oliveira

Lingzhi's Drungpa, Mani Sangye revealed that the Lingzhi Dzong

conservation project has a budget outlay of about Nu 400 million for the 12th Plan and is funded by the Government of India.

Significance of Lingzhi Dzong and the damages it has suffered

According to Drungpa Mani Singye, in the northern frontier, the dzong plays an important role in terms of providing sovereignty and security for the people of Lingzhi.

Lingzhi Dzong controlled the border between Tibet and Bhutan and was one of the main defensive fortresses in the north of Bhutan. It also houses the dratshang and drungkhag office.

After the dzong was badly damaged in the last earthquake, the whole structure has to be reconstructed.



Photo: Kuensel

Once the construction is completed, the dzong will house the drungkhag

office as well as the monk body that has been moved to Barshong in Naro gewog after the dzong was damaged. The monk body consists of about 30 monks and a lam.

Reconstruction work done so far

The preparatory works to reconstruct the dzong include the transportation of construction materials such as stones, timber and building camps for workers.

The Thimphu Dzongdag, Dorji Tshering said that the dismantling of the utse (central tower) of the dzong is underway. Utse has a three-storied structure, of which two storeys have already been dismantled.

“Once the ground floor is dismantled, we will start building the utse first and then other structures,” Dorji Tshering said.

Challenges faced in the restoration of Lingzhi Dzong

He also mentioned that while the target is to have the construction completed within the 12th Plan, nothing could be certain as of now because there are some challenges faced in transporting construction materials.



Photo: Flickr/[Ian Cochrane](#)

“Even if we have a shortage of a single timber, it takes about five days to have it transported to the site from a place called Dzhodhu,” he explained.

In addition, the working period is limited in Lingzhi due to the cold weather which normally starts around November till March. Work typically restarts only in April.

In the last one month, the dzongdag said that the workers had been able to dismantle two storeys of the utse.

Previously, they were collecting stones, timbers and other materials from Dzhodhu, which is about two days’ walk from Lingzhi.

Moreover, with about 50 men joining the workforce last week, about 100

men will be working on the reconstruction of the dzong now.

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