

# DECHEN & DORJI GO GYALSUNG

## CHAPTER ONE (WHAT IS GYALSUNG?)



AT A SCHOOL IN RURAL BHUTAN, TWO FRIENDS DECHEN & DORJI TALK ABOUT THEIR SCHOOL DAY AS THEY MAKE THEIR WAY HOME.



... AND THAT'S WHY I WENT TO THE DZONGKHA TEACHER AND ASKED HER TO ADD ONE POINT TO MY TEST SCORE.

AND YOU'RE STILL THE SAME DORJI THAT ALWAYS GETS SCOLDED FOR PAYING MORE ATTENTION TO THE FOOTBALL FIELD THAN THE BLACKBOARD.

WOW! YOU'RE STILL THE SAME DECHEN THAT TOLD US IN CLASS I THAT YOU WANTED TO BECOME A DOCTOR.



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GYALSUNG

### ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

The Gyalsung initiative aims to offer guidance and inspire our younger generation to develop confidence and independent thought, enabling them to serve their nation effectively. It will create Bhutan's youth through a collective journey, serving as a common site of passage, regardless of their economic status or regional origins. The program strives to equip every young Bhutanese with the necessary personal qualities, discipline, and professional skills required for success in the 21st century, thus fostering their contribution to the nation-building process.

CALL 2024



MID-LAUGHTER, DORJI CATCHES A GLIMPSE OF A POSTER MENTIONING THE GYALSUNG NATIONAL SERVICE.

HEY DECHEN, HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THIS GYALSUNG NATIONAL SERVICE? I HEARD SOME OF OUR CLASSMATES TALKING ABOUT IT



OH YES!, YOU KNOW MY APA IS A TEACHER. HE TOLD ME GYALSUNG IS A YEAR-LONG PROGRAM WHERE BHUTANESE YOUTH LEARN LIFE SKILLS AND TRAIN AT AN ACADEMY AFTER CLASS 12.

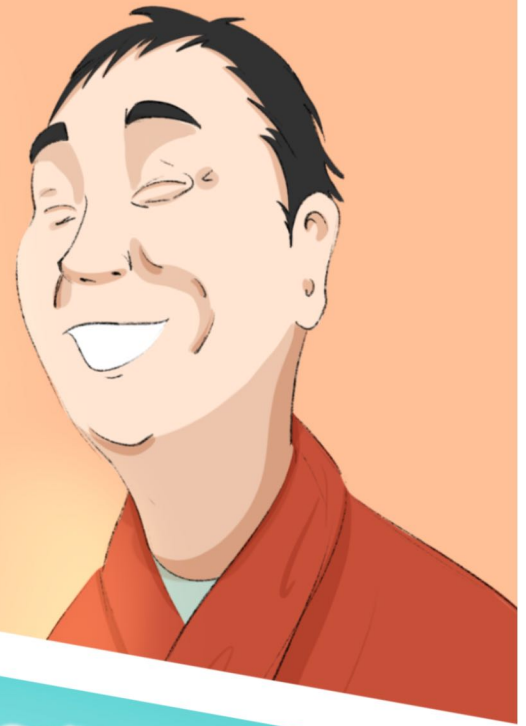
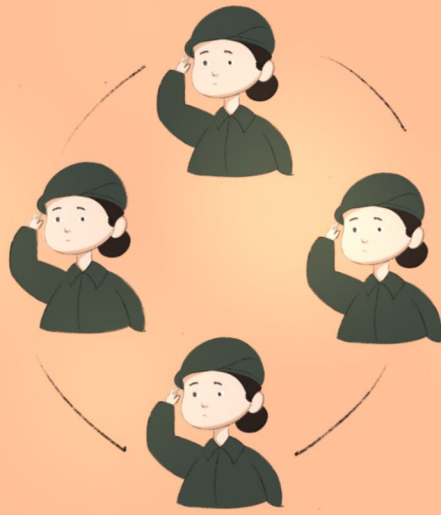
HAWWWW! MORE CLASSES AFTER 12TH GRADE??!! I THOUGHT I'D BE DONE WITH STUDYING ALREADY AFTER NEXT YEAR.

I THINK THE CLASSES WILL BE INTERESTING AND DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE LEARN IN SCHOOL BUT I HEARD THERE WILL BE SOME MILITARY TRAINING AS WELL. YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE DRILLS AND MARCH PAST.

MILITARY TRAINING?! THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING I'D BE GOOD AT.

HE BEGINS TO PRETEND TO MARCH AND SALUTES DECHEN, WHO GIGGLES.





BUT SERIOUSLY DORJI, MY FATHER TOLD ME THAT GYALSUNG IS A FUNDAMENTAL DUTY OF EVERY BHUTANESE AND THUS MANDATORY. EVERY 18-YEAR OLD BHUTANESE HAS TO ATTEND GYALSUNG.

OH MAN, REALLY?

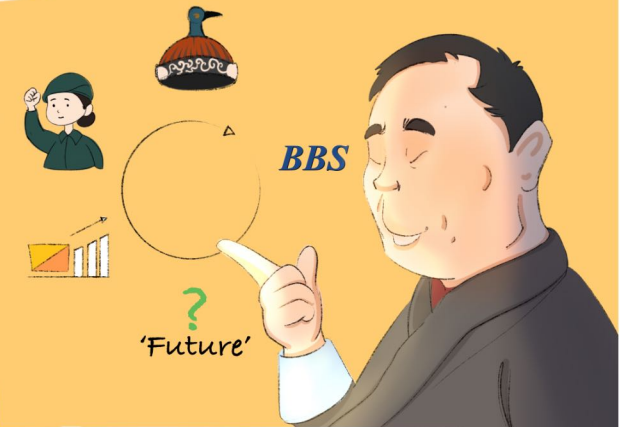


SOON THEY MAKE THEIR WAY TO AP DOPHU'S SHOP. AP DOPHU IS A DEAR FAMILY FRIEND AND A LIKE AN "AGAY" TO THE CHILDREN.



WE SAW A POSTER ABOUT GYALSUNG AND HOW IT'S MANDATORY. DECHEN AND I ARE EXCITED BUT A BIT UNSURE ABOUT IT.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TWO OF YOU?



GYALSUNG? FROM WHAT I SAW ON BBS, GYALSUNG HAS BEEN ENVISIONED BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING. IT IS DESIGNED TO EMPOWER YOUTH LIKE YOURSELVES TO SERVE THE COUNTRY. NOT ONLY DO YOU GET TO MEET PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER BHUTAN, IT WILL HELP YOU DECIDE YOUR PATH AND FIND YOUR CALLING.



NOT A CHANCE, AP DOPHU!

ONE YEAR MIGHT SEEM LIKE A LOT BUT IT WILL HELP YOU DEVELOP NEW SKILLS THAT WILL HELP IN YOUR FUTURE CAREER WHILE ALSO TEACHING YOU ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BHUTANESE. IF I WAS YOUR AGE, I WOULD BE THE FIRST TO REGISTER. NOT ONLY WOULD I BEAT DORJI AT DRILLS, I COULD ALSO RUN FASTER THAN DECHEN.



THE THREE OF THEM SHARE SOME ROASTED CORN AND GAZE ACROSS AP DOPHUS FIELD AS SUN SETS.

TO BE CONTINUED...