



དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་གཞུང་ སྤྱི་འབྲེལ་ལྷན་ཁག

Department of Bilateral Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Royal Government of Bhutan

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**PRESS RELEASE**

Ashi Tashi Chodzom Dorji was conferred the insignia of Honorary Officer within the General Division of the Order of Australia at a formal Investiture Ceremony hosted by Her Majesty Gyalyum Ashi Kesang Choeden Wangchuck at the Chimi Gatshel Palace, Motithang on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

The insignia was conferred by the Ambassador of Australia to Bhutan, H.E. Mrs. Harinder Sidhu on behalf of the Australian Government. Their Majesties The Queen Mothers, Their Royal Highnesses, Lyonchhen Dashi Tshering Tobgay, family members and friends of Ashi Tashi Chodzom Dorji and senior government officials attended the Investiture Ceremony.

The Order of Australia is an order of chivalry established on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1975 by Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia to recognize Australian citizens and other persons for personal and meritorious service. The Order consists of four levels, in both general and military divisions. Honorary awards in the Order of Australia are given to persons who are not Australian citizens.

Ashi Tashi Chodzom Dorji, daughter of Gongzim Sonam Tobgay Dorji and Sikkim Princess Rani Choeying Wangmo Dorji was awarded the insignia for her contributions to fostering Australia-Bhutan relations, particularly in the education sector and, her efforts towards opening up Bhutan to the outside world. Ashi Tashi Chodzom Dorji laid the foundation for the growth of excellent relations between Bhutan and Australia, which today continues to be marked by excellent collaboration in the education sector.

Ashi Tashi Chodzom Dorji was instrumental in securing Bhutan's membership to the Colombo Plan in 1962, the first international organization that Bhutan joined. Joining the Colombo Plan was an important milestone in Bhutan's foreign relations, which eventually led to Bhutan's admission as a member of the United Nations in 1971.

Ashi Tashi Chodzom Dorji is the first Bhutanese national to receive the insignia of the Order of Australia.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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