

Citation – Dasho (Sir) Kinley Dorji

Wednesday, 6 November 2019 – 11.30am

Presiding Pro-Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Dasho (Sir) Kinley Dorji for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) in recognition of his exceptional service to the field of journalism.

Kinley is internationally recognised for his journalism career in Bhutan. As part of Bhutan's move to democracy, he brought modern media to Bhutan, and new ways of thinking about a broad range of subjects from media to international scholarships.

Kinley began his career in journalism in Australia in the 1980s, as one of the early waves of young Bhutanese students to travel overseas to study. Kinley studied print journalism at Mitchell College in Bathurst (now Charles Sturt University), graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications in 1986. During his studies in Bathurst, Kinley regularly travelled to Sydney to work in the kitchen at International House at the University of Sydney where he shared a job with another Bhutanese student.

When Kinley returned to Bhutan, he embarked on starting the concept of public discourse, developing a government newsletter, *Kuensel*, into Bhutan's first newspaper. This task was a challenging one, as Bhutan was a small, oral culture, where reading was mostly a task that civil service employees were paid to do.

Over the next two decades, Kinley trained journalists to work alongside him, increasing the publication of *Kuensel* to bi-weekly editions in three languages, English, Dzonghka and Lhotsamkha, and setting up a second printing press in a remote eastern district to ensure the nation-wide distribution of *Kuensel*. Most importantly, Kinley encouraged critical reflection of Bhutanese society, through his editorials. He believed that media should serve to elevate society, a belief that was in line with the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, a concept pioneered by the Fourth King of Bhutan. Kinley developed Bhutan's media space according to the four pillars of Gross National Happiness, being good governance, sustainable socio-economic development, preservation of culture and environmental conservation.

Kinley was a pioneer among thousands of Bhutanese to travel to study at Australian universities, many of whom have gone on to become Bhutan's civic leaders including Bhutanese parliamentarians, government leaders, business leaders, and educators. Over the last decade alone more than 400 Bhutanese have completed Masters or Doctorates in Australian universities, and more than 500 scholarships have been awarded.

In 2006, Kinley was awarded the prestigious Red Scarf by the Fourth King for his exceptional service to Bhutan. The Red Scarf is the Bhutanese equivalent of a knighthood, reflected in the title Dasho (Sir).

In 2009, after serving as editor-in-chief and managing director of *Kuensel* for 20 years, Kinley was appointed as Secretary to the Ministry of Information and Communications, where he initiated media, ICT, and communications policies. In addition, he published Bhutan's first book on Literary Journalism, titled *Within the Realm of Happiness*, which includes 13 personal essays on Bhutanese culture. Kinley also completed a Master of Journalism from Columbia University in New York, and, in 2007, was awarded a John S. Knight Journalism Fellowship at Stanford University for his development of media in emerging democracies.

In 2016, Kinley established a bi-annual academic publication, *The Druk Journal*, a journal of thoughts and ideas on topics of national importance to Bhutan. It is a leading journal with contribution from Bhutan and international experts, academics, and journalists.

Through his writings, Kinley has been a catalyst for critical thought within the Bhutanese community, helping shape Bhutan to be a digitally connected democracy.

Presiding Pro-Chancellor, I present Dasho (Sir) Kinley Dorji for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) and invite you to confer the degree upon him.