

ROYAL CHARTER OF GELEPHU MINDFULNESS CITY SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

RECOGNISING the immense potential for Bhutan to benefit from opportunities arising from the dynamic economic and social transformation occurring in South Asia and beyond;

ACKNOWLEDGING the prospects for Bhutan to develop a dynamic, diversified, resilient, and globally competitive economy to realise the aspirations of our people and ensure sustained prosperity and well-being;

UNDERSTANDING the advantages of creating an economic hub to attract foreign investment, talent, and technology to meet our national goals in an accelerated manner;

ENVISIONING the development of an exemplary global city to foster growth and innovation which embodies conscious living and sustainable businesses, inspired by Buddhist wisdom, leveraging on Bhutan's vibrant cultural and spiritual heritage, rich natural environment, and timeless vision of Gross National Happiness;

CONSIDERING the unique potential of Gelephu as a strategic hinterland with suitable geographical features and well-established regional and global connectivity;

RESOLVING to establish the Gelephu Mindfulness City as an independent and autonomous Special Administrative Region, and the Gelephu Mindfulness City Special Administrative Region Authority, as an autonomous and independent body, with executive, legislative, and independent judicial powers to achieve the objectives, vision, and values of such a Mindfulness City;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, The Druk Gyalpo, by virtue of Royal Prerogative under the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, hereby, grant this Royal Charter for the establishment of the Gelephu Mindfulness City Special Administrative Region and the Gelephu Mindfulness City Special Administrative Region Authority on the First Day of the First Month of the Male Wood Dragon Year of the Bhutanese calendar corresponding to the Tenth Day of February, Two Thousand and Twenty Four.

The Druk Gyalpo

ARTICLE 1

ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

1. There shall be established the Gelephu Mindfulness City Special Administrative Region (GMC), a fully independent and autonomous region in the Kingdom of Bhutan, which shall enjoy executive, legislative, and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication.
2. The territorial limits of the GMC shall be determined by the Druk Gyalpo, from time to time, and all rights and powers of land acquisition shall be exercised solely by the Druk Gyalpo in consultation with the Gelephu Mindfulness City Special Administrative Region Authority (GMC Authority).
3. The GMC shall be directly under the authority of the GMC Authority.

ARTICLE 2

OBJECTIVES

1. The objectives of the GMC may be prescribed by the Druk Gyalpo, from time to time, by Royal Decree, and include the following:
 - a. Attract foreign investment and talent to create an economic hub that is favourable and conducive for commercial activities;
 - b. Generate employment and learning pathways for the people to lead meaningful and prosperous lives;
 - c. Promote well-being and happiness and strive to become an exemplary model of mindfulness living;
 - d. Facilitate investments in areas that are aligned to the objectives, vision, and values of the GMC including investments into traditional industries and new and emerging technologies;
 - e. Create an ecosystem that promotes innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship; and
 - f. Serve as a gateway to the world, markets, capital, ideas, knowledge, and technology.

ARTICLE 3

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GMC AUTHORITY

1. There shall be established the GMC Authority which shall be the highest decision-making body of the GMC.
2. The GMC Authority shall be an independent and autonomous organization, be a body corporate having a legal personality with perpetual succession and a common seal, be capable of suing and being sued under its name, and be able to acquire, possess, and dispose of property in its own name with all the powers of a legal and/or beneficial owner.
3. The GMC Authority shall be vested with executive, legislative, and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication.
4. The GMC Authority shall be chaired by the Druk Gyalpo. The GMC Authority shall comprise members appointed by the Druk Gyalpo for such term and scope as may be determined by the Druk Gyalpo. The members may comprise Bhutanese as well as non-Bhutanese.
5. The functions and duties of the GMC Authority shall be determined by the Druk Gyalpo, from time to time, and shall include the function and duty to carry out any activities which may be necessary, advantageous, conducive, or incidental to achieve the objectives, vision, and values of the GMC as set out under this Charter or under any other written law.

ARTICLE 4

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

1. The GMC Authority shall establish administrative and regulatory bodies and agencies, including a central bank for the GMC, an independent judiciary, and a legal system based on common law principles.
2. The GMC Authority shall be empowered to enact laws for the governance of the GMC including the discretion to adopt or adapt Bhutanese laws to the extent determined by the GMC Authority. All laws enacted by the GMC Authority shall be passed only with the Royal Assent of the Druk Gyalpo.
3. The GMC Authority shall operate independently and autonomously, and all Government agencies under the Royal Government of Bhutan and all organs of the State shall extend their fullest support and resources to, and work harmoniously with the GMC Authority.

ARTICLE 5

POWERS

1. The powers of the GMC Authority shall be determined by the Druk Gyalpo, from time to time, and shall include the power to perform any act advantageous, necessary, or helpful to fulfil the objectives, vision, and values of this Charter (including the issuance of any transitional provisions) or to discharge all of its duties and functions under this Charter or under any other written law, or which is incidental or conducive to the discharge of those duties and functions.
2. Without limiting Article 5(1) of this Charter, the powers of the GMC Authority include the power to:
 - a. Provide fiscal, customs, and tariff benefits and grants and other financial facilities, and issue licences and/or permits to businesses and investors for the purposes of incentivising investments and/or operating within the GMC and/or in Bhutan;
 - b. Oversee the development, management, and regulation of infrastructure and institutions within the GMC;
 - c. Formulate and promulgate laws and policies and enter into free trade agreements to create a conducive environment to attract both domestic and foreign investment, boost exports, and promote economic growth;
 - d. Carry out all forms of fund-raising, using any form of loans and financial facilities, including any forms of debt or equity financing and financing instruments, and to use all assets of the GMC as security or other forms of collaterals;
 - e. Establish investment funds of all forms including investment funds, pension funds, collective investment funds, and hedge funds;
 - f. Deal with all forms of movable and immovable assets, including shares, securities, funds, collective investment schemes, digital assets, commodities, precious metals, tangible and intangible assets, and real estate;
 - g. Establish companies (including subsidiaries and affiliated entities), joint ventures, partnerships, associations, or any other forms of corporate entities; and
 - h. Open, operate, and manage bank accounts of all types whether within Bhutan or elsewhere.

ARTICLE 6

SECURITY

1. The security of the GMC shall be under the jurisdiction of the Armed Forces of Bhutan.

ARTICLE 7

AMENDMENTS

1. No part of this Charter may be altered or amended, other than by Royal Decree.