



## A spider that terraces



**4 October, 2007** - Austria has donated a spider excavator worth 180,000 euros (Nu 10.1 million) to the agriculture ministry, specifically designed to terrace farmland.

With the machine, the ministry will terrace at least 50 acres of dry land in farms in every dzongkhag, according to Penjore, the senior programme officer of the ministry's central machinery unit (CMU) in Bumthang. "The mechanization of terracing dry land farms will be the cornerstone of the project," said Penjore.

From October 10, the machine will move to Bjabcho gewog in Chukha dzongkhag to terrace 115 acres of dry farm land belonging to 40 households.

### The Austrian donated excavator

The excavator, with complete accessories, was handed over to the CMU in Bumthang on September 29 by the coordinator of the Austrian coordination office, Maria Christine Weinberger.

A junior engineer (mechanical) with the CMU, N B Chhetri, said the machine could be hired on full and subsidized charges.

Full hire charges come to about Nu. 29,496 per day (for eight hours), payable by private and business users. Government users will be charged a subsidized amount of Nu. 15,032 a day. Activities related to construction of farm roads, agricultural land development and bank protection works are eligible for such subsidies. Individuals, farming community and dzongkhags are entitled to avail this facility.

Rural communities, that need the machine when building farm roads, could also hire the excavator and pay only for the cost of fuel consumed, said a CMU official.

Under the project, two people have been trained in Switzerland on operation and maintenance.