

SEVENTH ISSUE

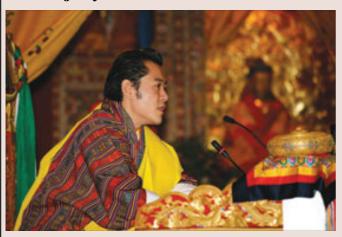
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A Newsletter of the National Assembly Secretariat

VOL-7

His Majesty's address at the First Session of Parliament



address this inaugural session of Parliament. After all, it is in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity that we are gathered today to celebrate our nation's historic achievement of a unique democratic transition.

Therefore, I commend the sense of duty and service that motivated the members of our first Parliament under

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Democratic Constitutional Monarchy. You have been a part of a transition that shall enter the history of our nation as one of our greatest endeavors.

JANUARY

Our nation has always provided security, tranquility and happiness for our people irrespective of the dramatic changes that have taken place in the world and the region around us. The primary reason for our achievements has been the hard work and sacrifices of our forefathers and the selfless leadership of successive kings since Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck, the first king of Bhutan. Shining even amidst our proud history of service, loyalty and affection for our nation, is the legacy of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the fourth Druk Gyalpo. In the 34 years of his reign, we have grown far beyond our own expectations and today created history as a nation that has not only given birth to the unique philosophy of Gross National Happiness, but also achieved an unprecedented transition to democracy. His Majesty has shown that there is no other duty for a king than to serve the people.

Therefore, I take this opportunity to offer on behalf of all Bhutanese, our gratitude to our forefathers, our kings and to the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Let us abide by their great example and pledge our unwavering loyalty and service to the Tsawasum.

The highest achievement of one hundred years of Monarchy has been the constant nurturing of Democracy. This has culminated today with the first sitting of Parliament and the start of democracy, whereby my father the Fourth Druk Gyalpo and I, hereby return to our People the powers that had been vested in our kings by our forefathers one hundred years ago. We do so with absolute faith and confidence, offer our complete support and our prayers for the success of democracy.

As King, henceforth, it is my sacred duty to ensure the success of our new democracy so that it will serve to fulfill the aspirations of our people always.

As you, the members of Parliament, begin to shoulder the immense powers and responsibilities as representatives of the people, I wish to share my own hopes for Bhutan. It has always been my prayer that we will all be united in our efforts to build a stronger nation, so that at the end of our lives, when we hand over our country, our children will inherit a stronger nation where all obstacles to their happiness and prosperity will have been overcome and where we have

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created the conditions for the fulfillment of their aspirations. And above all, that they will be better than us, more qualified and capable. We should not have insecurities in this regard. If Bhutan is to excel, our future generations must always be better than those before them.

To realize this prayer we must first build a strong democracy. In doing so, our new politicians must be mindful of the experiences of nations where democracy failed and hardship, disunity, internal strife and violence have plagued their people. We must never allow, at any time, the conditions to develop for such occurrences in Bhutan. Our effort to build a democracy is another important step towards strengthening our country. It continues the work of nation building started by our forefathers and our kings. We must remember that our greatest strength throughout history has always been the unity of spirit and purpose of our people. One nation, one vision.

Members of the first Parliament of Bhutan; Speaker; Chairperson of the National Council; Leader of the Opposition; ministers of the Lhengye Zhungtshog, Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba, Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Lyonpo Wangdi Norbu, Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering, Lyonpo Zangley Drukpa, Lyonpo Minjur Dorji, Lyonpo Pem Gyamtsho, Lyonpo Nandalal Rai, Lyonpo Thakur Singh Powdyel, Lyonpo Dorji Wangdi; and the first Prime Minister under democracy Lyonchhen Jigmi Yoezer Thinley – from this day forth, we place in your hands our unique nation, our greatest treasure in this world.

As democracy's first government, you have the responsibility of setting the right examples, laying strong foundations and promoting the best practices of democracy. We, the people and King, have complete confidence and faith in the new government. As long as you work to serve the country and people, you will have our full support. If you should falter in your service to the nation, then the duty to counsel you also rests with the people and King.

However, with your experience and qualifications, and your loyalty and commitment to the Tsawasum, I am confident that you will work hard to bring greater progress and growth for our people.

May the unity of our people and the fruits of democracy ensure that the sun of peace and prosperity continues to shine on our Nation, the Land of Buddha's Teachings; blessed by the Guru Padmasambhava and our Guardian Deities; and founded on the Vision and Legacy of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

Election of National Council and National Assembly

Bhutan's newly elected *Chitshog* or bicameral Parliament comprises of Druk Gyalpo or the King of Bhutan, *Gyelyong Tshogde* (National Council) and *Gyelyong*

Tshogdu or the National Assembly. The National Assembly is the elected lower house of Bhutan's new bicameral Parliament. The newly formed National Assembly consists of 47 members elected by the people from 47 constituencies spread across the country in the general elections held on March 24, 2008.

The Delimitation Commission of Bhutan completed the delimitation process and divided the country's 20 dzongkhags into 47 constituencies. Trashigang Dzongkhag, with five constituencies, had the highest number of representation in the National Assembly.

The Election to the National Assembly, the First Parliamentary Elections for Democratic Constitutional Monarchy in the Kingdom was announced and the Election Schedule and details conscerning constituencies, nomination, Electoral Rolls, EVMs, polling stations, polling officiasl, polling management and security arrangements were also released on 17th January 2008.

The polling for National Assembly Elections in the 47 Constituencies was conducted and results were announced in the same evening via Bhutan Broadcasting Service. In the election, the *Druk Phuensum Tshogpa* won a landslide victory bagging 45 of the 47 total seats.

The Members of Bhutan's new parliament received an Audience with His Majesty the King at the Garden Palace, Lingkana on 4th April 2008. Bhutan's first elected Prime Minister received the auspicious five-coloured dhar from His Majesty the King. Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley received the symbolic scarf and sword in the Throne Room of Trashichhodzong on 9th April 2008.

The National Council consists of 25 members out of which 20 members have been directly elected by the people from 20 Dzongkhags on December 31, 2007 and January 29, 2008 while five members have been nominated by the Druk Gyalpo.

Members of the National Assembly take Oath

Preceding the registration of the members on 21st April 2008, blue colour 'NAMZA' (Kabney), a gift from His Majesty the King was placed on the respective seats of the National Members in the *Gyelyong Tshokhang*. The members of the National Assembly then registered with the Secretariat and submitted a copy of their election certificate.

In a symbolic representation of the King, the "Kusung Thukten" to the Golden Throne was received inside the National Assembly hall and placed at the Throne in a simple ceremony. After the Zhugdrel Phuensum Tshogpai Tendrel and the Marchang Ceremony, the members clad on their new blue 'Namza'.

With a brief welcome address from the Secretary of the National Assembly Secretariat, the Members of National Assembly took the Oath or Affirmation of Office as provided in the Third Schedule of the Constitution in front of the Golden Throne. It was administered by Hon'ble Lyonpo Sonam Tobgay, Chief Justice of Bhutan.

The election of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker was administered through secret ballot and conducted through use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM). The Speaker nominee Dasho Jigme Tshultim secured 46 out of 47 votes and was elected as the Speaker to the highest decision making body of the National Assembly. The Deputy Speaker nominee Yangku Tshering Sherpa secured 47 out of 47 votes and was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan.



Members of National Assembly taking the Oath or Affirmation of Office

The Prime Minister, Speaker, Cabinet Ministers and the Deputy Speaker took the Oath or Affirmation of Secrecy as provided in the Fourth Schedule of Constitution.

Later in the afternoon, His Majesty the King granted an audience to the members of the National Assembly at the Tashichhodzong.

The day's event concluded with a simple ceremony of offering 'Tashi-Khader' to all the members by the well wishers at the Conference room of the Gyelyong Tshokhang.

Speaker and Deputy Speaker elected

Dasho Jigme Tshultim was elected as the Speaker of the National Assembly through secret ballot. Similarly, Yanku Tshering Sherpa was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly.

His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo granted Dakyen to the Speaker of the National Assembly on 30th April 2008.



Speaker of National Assembly

The Speaker also visited the Goenkhang and offered butter lamp at the Tashi-chhodzong. He was escorted to his Office at *Gyelyong Tshokhang* in a *Chibdrel* procession. At the Office, he was received by the Opposition Leader, Secretary General, Members and the staff of the Secretariat at the courtyard.

After the *Marchang Ceremony* and *Zhugdrel Phuensum Tshogpai Tendrel*, the well wisher offered *Tashi-Khader* to the Speaker.

The Speaker, Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim graduated with Bachelors degree in Arts and later obtained post graduate Diploma in Public Administration . He was the first senior most Civil servants to join the Politics. Dasho Jigme Tshultim had served the government for almost 32 years in different capacities. Before resigning he was serving as Bhutanese Ambassador to Bangladesh.



Dy. Speaker of National Assembly

Orientation Programe for Honourable Members of National Assembly

An Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of the National Assembly was conducted on afternoon of May 5 and on May 6, 2008.



Members of National Assembly during the Orientation

Members were briefed on the *Chibdrel* procession and Order of Precedence, Decorum and Code of Conduct, the Session Agenda and submission of points, Arrangement of Business and orders of the day, and the Legislative Procedures. As part of programme, members were also briefed on security services by the Royal Bhutan Police and a session on Parliament and the Media to raise awareness among parliamentarians about importance of open and responsive interaction with media.

Address by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India to the Joint Session of the Parliament of Bhutan on May 17, 2008

Your Majesties

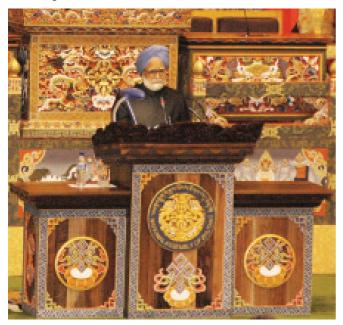
Your Royal Highnesses

Hon'ble Speaker of the National Assembly, Lyonpo Jigme Tshultrim

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Lyonchen Jigmi Thinley Chairman of the National Council, Mr. Namgay Penjore Hon'ble Members

It is a great privilege for me to address the Joint Session of the National Assembly and the National Council of Bhutan. I bring to you the warmest greetings and felicitations of the Government and people of India.

I am delighted to be in your beautiful country at this historic time, and to celebrate with the people of Bhutan their towering achievements.



The Prime Minister of India delivering his address to the Joint Sitting of Parliament of Bhutan

This is the centenary year of the Wangchuck Dynasty, the year of the coronation of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck as the King of Bhutan and of Bhutan's transition to a democratic constitutional monarchy.

It is a tribute to the enlightened leadership and statesmanship provided by His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck that Bhutan has succeeded in reaching these milestones in an atmosphere of utmost peace and stability while steadily improving the welfare of her people.

During His Majesty's reign, Bhutan has witnessed unprecedented social and economic development. He is the architect of Bhutan's constitution and polity. Today His Majesty's vision of vesting sovereignty in the people of Bhutan has borne fruit.

As Bhutan enters a new era in its history, you can continue to count on India, as a friend and – may I say – an admirer

of Bhutan. India will stand by you as a factor of stability and support in your quest for greater prosperity and happiness.

As the first ever elected representatives of your people, you bear a special responsibility, and have a unique opportunity, to translate the aspirations of your people into reality.

While we in India have considerable experience in attempting to bring about socio-economic transformation within the framework of a democratic polity, we do not claim a monopoly of wisdom and knowledge.

But we do know that democracy is not merely about holding elections. Democracy requires sustained commitment to tolerance and the judicious exercise of power as a societal trust to be used for public good. It requires a deep commitment to the rule of law. It requires the building of strong institutions of governance and respect for the other's viewpoint.

I can assure you that you have our wholehearted support as you enter this new and exciting phase in your country's history. We will work with you to realize your full potential, in a manner and pace that suits your own chosen path of development and your priorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

India is proud of its exemplary relations with Bhutan. Our bilateral relationship is no artificial political construct. It draws its strength from geography, from history, scholarship, religion and culture and ancient commercial and people-to-people contacts. The shared aspirations of our common destiny have been given expression by contemporary statesmanship.

Just as strands of many colours are woven together to make a beautiful *Kira*, so the many and varied strands that constitute the tapestry of our relationship come together.

Guru Padmasambhava and many learned Buddhist thinkers carried Lord Buddha's wisdom and learning from the great universities of India to these mountains. But no less have the Himalayas been a source of inspiration for India over the centuries. Our sages and thinkers have sought enlightenment here.

In the modern era, the foundations of our relations were laid by the late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. 50 years ago Pandit Nehru travelled to Bhutan and witnessed the love and affection showered upon him by the men and women and children of Bhutan. Pandit Nehru's visit left an indelible impression on him and convinced him of the potential and richness of India-Bhutan relations. He said at that time, and I quote:

"Our only wish is that you should remain a independent country choosing your own way of life and taking the path of progress according to your will. At the same time, we two should live with mutual goodwill." (unquote).

Based on this vision, India and Bhutan have created a unique, unparalleled and time-tested partnership of peace and friendship.

Today our relations are a model of how two neighboring counties, uneven in physical size and attributes, can coexist in perfect harmony and understanding. Both our countries have a vital stake in each other's well-being and prosperity.

We have evolved a comprehensive framework for economic, commercial and trade linkages. Our development cooperation encompasses varied areas such as health, education, infrastructure, culture, urban development, human resource development, media and telecommunications.

Time has, however, moved on, and so have our two countries. As we enter a new era in out ties and a new century, I come to seek and reinforce the same meeting of minds, the same depth of understanding and the same confluence of thoughts and aspirations that have characterized our relations thus far, to guide us in the future. As partners, confident in our friendship and mutual security, we will work together to make our friendship gain added strength with the passage of time.

The signing of the India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty in February 2007 was a watershed event. The treaty enshrines the principles that continue to underpin our relations. It has laid the basis for a relationship that is responsive to each other's national interests, a relationship that is consultative, and a relationship that ensures mutually beneficial cooperation. The Treaty symbolizes our conviction that stability, peace and economic advancement are the most durable guarantors of peaceful co-existence and mutual respect for each other.

We applaud the vision for Bhutan that has been laid down by His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. His Majesty's deep concern for the people of Bhutan and determination to create a policy framework that maximizes their potential holds great promise for Bhutan.

In the coming years, the challenge before both Bhutan and India will be to evolve a model of sustainable, inclusive and equitable development. We would like you to know that we remain at your disposal to share our experiences, including in those areas where we have had some success.

Bhutan is a shining example of an industrious people blessed with a wise leadership. We have much to learn from you on how to pursue economic development that is neither at the expense of a fragile eco-system nor a country's social and cultural traditions. The concept of Gross National Happiness has particular resonance in today's world of unbridled materialism and consumerism.

An India-Bhutan partnership for the future must harness our mutual strengths and complementarities. Our desire is to create a framework that puts people at the heart of our cooperation. The young profile of our two populations makes it incumbent upon us to meet their aspirations. Economic strategies would need to be employment friendly. We have to invest much more in the area of human resource development, skill generation and education.

The Indian market offers vast opportunities for Bhutan's agriculture, industry and services sectors. We will work towards the further improvement of connectivity between our two counties so that our borders become the gateways for mutually beneficial undertakings. There is vast scope for the further expansion of people-to-people contacts, exchange of scholars and experts.

We should evolve a development and economic cooperation strategy that complements our mutual resource endowments. We know we are on the right path when electricity generated in the mountains and valleys of Chukha, Kurichhu and Tala lights homes in Bihar, West Bengal and Delhi and generates wealth for Bhutan.

India and Bhutan are well placed to create a new paradigm for inter-governmental cooperation in the areas of water security and environmental integrity. The Himalayan glaciers are our common asset and we can do much more together to devise strategies to combat global warming.

Over the past four decades and more our two countries have worked closely in the process of Bhutan's planned development. We remain committed to working with Bhutan in support of the 10th Five-Year Plan. This period will lay the building blocks for Bhutan's development and support your vision for tomorrow. We will develop our cooperation during the 10th Plan with imagination and flexibility, in accordance with your priorities in human resource development, education, information and communication technologies, health, infrastructure and numerous other fields.

We also look forward to strengthening institutional linkages with the Bhutanese judiciary, the Election Commission and other constitutional bodies. Our parliamentary resources and facilities remain available to you to draw upon.

In the area of hydropower development, we will work with Bhutan to develop two new mega hydropower projects, Punatsangchhu-II and Mangdechhu. We will commence the preparation of detailed project reports for four new projects. Implementation of these projects will help us to achieve the target of export of at least 5000 megawatts of electricity from Bhutan to India by 2020, in a manner that is environmentally sustainable.

I am particularly happy to inform this august House that we will begin construction of the first ever rail link between India and Bhutan, connecting Hashimara to Phuentsholing, called the "Golden Jubilee Rail Line". This link will connect Bhutan to the entire railway network of India.

We will also institute a Nehru-Wangchuck Scholarship to encourage students from Bhutan to study in leading Indian universities and institutions.

As we draw all these threads together, our bilateral economic engagement with Bhutan over the next five years will be of the order of Rs. 100 billion.

My audience with His Majesty the King and my discussions with His Excellency Prime Minister Lyonchhen Jigme Thinley have convinced me that the future of our relationship is bright. In this great hall of democracy, I sense an air of optimism and self-confidence. You stand on the threshold of change, and you have our best wishes for your success.

India desires to see a South Asia which is at peace with itself. We wish to contribute to ever widening circles of security, peace and prosperity in our region. It is with this objective that we look towards working further with Bhutan, in both the bilateral and regional context. A Bhutan that is sovereign, prosperous and secure is central to our vision for the future.

I thank you for your attention and Tashi Delek!

Up gradation of National Assembly Hall

The National Assembly Hall has been up-graded to a modern Parliament House. The Hall has hundred seats arranged in an arc-shape with visitors' gallery and a separate seating arrangement for the press. The Hall has digital conference, security and surveillance and video archival system. Simultaneous interpretation machine and individual electronic voting machine has also been put in place.

The up gradation work in the Hall is complete and all the facilities are in use during the current National Assembly Session. The National Assembly session is conducted at the *Gyelyong Tshokhang* while the National Council will have its sitting in the Royal Banquet Hall which is converted as their meeting hall. The joint-sitting will be held at the National Assembly Hall.



Re-furbished setup of the new Parliament

The up-gradation of the National Assembly Hall is funded under the DANIDA Project: Strengthening the National Assembly and its Secretariat.

Call on by H.E. Zhang Yan, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, New Delhi

H.E. Zhang Yan, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, New Delhi called on the Hon'ble Speaker, Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim and the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition Tshering Tobgay on 13th May, 2008. Following the call on, the delegates visited National Assembly Hall.



The Chinese Ambassador with the Speaker and Secretary

Friends who left us

Mr. Tshering Dorji, Finance Officer of the Secretariat was transferred to the Department of Public Accounts with effect from January 2008. Mr. Tshering Dorji joined the Secretariat on transfer from the then Office of Legal Affairs on $2^{\rm nd}$ April 2002. The Tshogdu family wish him a successful and rewarding career at the Department of Public Accounts, Ministry of Finance.

Friends who joined us

Mr. Dorji Gyeltshen, Accounts Officer joined the Secretariat on transfer from RSTA with effect from 12th February 2008 against the post of Mr. Tshering Dorji who was earlier transferred to the Department of Public Accounts. While welcoming him to join us as a member of the Tshogdu family, we also wish him a happy and a rewarding career in the National Assembly of Bhutan.

Ms. Dema Lham, Lawyer joined the Secretariat on appointment by the RCSC from 1st January 2008. She completed her law degree from Government Law College, Mumbai University. The *Tshogdu* family would like to welcome her and wish her a very successful career in the National Assembly.

Hon'ble Members of the First National Assembly of Bhutan



Speaker Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim Radhi-Sakteng



Lyoenchen Jigme Y. Thinley Nanong- Shumar



Hon'ble Tshering Tobgay Sombaykha



Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba South Thimphu



Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk Lamgong -Wangchang



Lyonpo Wangdi Norbu Bartsham-Shongphu



Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering North Thimphu



Lyonpo Zangley Drukpa Khar-Yurung



Lyonpo Minjur Dorji Kanglung – Samkhar-Uzorong



Lyonpo Thakur Singh Powdyal Dorokha-Tading



Lyonpo (Dr.) Pema Gyamtsho Choekhor-tang



Lyonpo Nandalal Rai Shompangkha



Lyonpo Dorji Wangdi Panbang



Hon'ble Yangku
Tshering Sherpa
KikhorthangMendrelgang



Hon'ble Karma Wangchuk Chumey-Ura



Hon'ble Ugay Tshering Bongo-Chapcha



Hon'ble Chencho Dorji Phuentsholing



Hon'ble Sonam Jamtsho Drujeygang-Tseza



Hon'ble Hemant Gurung Lhamoy-Zingkha-Trashiding



Hon'ble Kinley Dorji Goenkhamey-Lunana



Hon'ble Damchoe Dorji Goenkhatoe



Hon'ble Ugen Tenzin Bji-Katsho-Uesu



Hon'ble Karma Rangdol Gangzur -Minjay



Hon'ble Tshering Tenzin Menbi-Tshenkhar



Hon'ble Ugyen Wangdi Dremitse-Ngatshang



Hon'ble Sonam Penjor Kengkhar-Weringla



Hon'ble Karma Lhamo Monggar



Hon'ble Chencho Dorji Doga-Shaba



Hon'ble Choida Jamtsho Nganglam



Hon'ble Tshering Penjor Kabji-Talo



Hon'ble Namgay Wangchuk Lingmukha-Toewang



Hon'ble Ugyen Dorji Dewathang-Gomdar



Hon'ble Norbu Wangzom Jomotshangkha-



Hon'ble Prahlad Gurung Pugli-Samtse



Hon'ble Durga Prasad Chhetri Sipsu



Hon'ble Lila Pradhan Ugyentse-Yoeseltse



Hon'ble Prem Kumar Gurung Gelephu



Hon'ble Choeki Wangmo Thrimshing



Hon'ble Lhatu Wamrong



Hon'ble Dupthob Bumdeling-Jamkhar



Hon'ble Kesang Wangdi Khamdang-Ramjar



Hon'ble Rinchen Dorji Drakteng-Langthel



Hon'ble Nidup Zangpo Nubi-Tangsibji



Hon'ble Nar Bahadur Gurung Patalay-Tsirangtoe



Hon'ble Passang Thrinlee Athang-Thedtsho



Hon'ble Gyem Dorji Nyisho-Sephu



Hon'ble Tshering Dorji Bardo-Trong

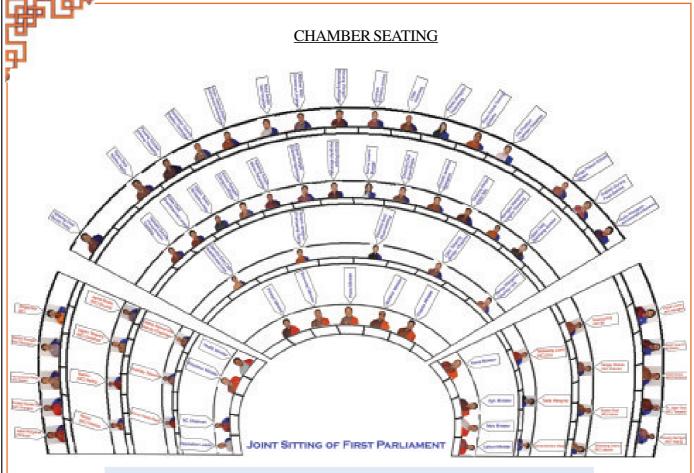
Members of Parliament National Assembly 47 Representatives

* 4 women representatives

National Council
25 Representatives including
5 eminent persons nominated
by the Druk Gyalpo

6 women representatives

T S H O G D U-News



Contributions of articles

To enable the Secretariat to produce the Newsletter on a regular basis, we would like to encourage the Honourable Members to contribute news and articles about their respective constituencies and other issues relating to the National Assembly.



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