



TSHOGDU

News

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Felicitations on the occasion of the new year of the Female Water Snake 2013

On the joyous occasion of the new year of the Female Water Snake 2013, the Speaker, Members and the Secretariat of the National Assembly would like to join the nation in praying for everlasting peace and happiness in the country under the dynamic leadership of our beloved Druk Gyalpo. May this year bring more prosperity and harmony to the Bhutanese people.

In This Issue

1	<i>His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo appoints new Secretary General</i>
2	<i>Smile is a magical expression-Hon Prime Minister</i>
3	<i>"The Legal system of a country should be firmly rooted in its culture" Sir Robert Owen</i>
4	<i>His Excellency Fritz Neugebauer, Second President of the Austrian National Council called on the Hon Speaker</i>
5	<i>President of Senate of the Thai Parliament Calls on Hon'ble Speaker</i>
6	<i>Visitors from Switzerland interact with the Hon MP</i>
7	<i>Parliamentary delegation visits India</i>
8	<i>"We have strong Democracy"-Speaker of the National Assembly</i>
9	<i>The 6th Conference of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians in Islamabad, Pakistan</i>
10	<i>EU Ambassador calls on Hon Speaker</i>
11	<i>Cultural Exchange fosters Bhutan-Arunachal Pradesh relations</i>
13	<i>Officers from the secretariats of Parliament undergo study tour in Sri Lanka</i>
12	<i>Thai senators praise GNH</i>
14	<i>Farewell to Ex-Secretary General Mr. Nima Tshering</i>



His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen being received by the Members of Parliament during the Opening Ceremony of the 9th session

The Acts enacted by Parliament in 2012

8th session

Child Adoption Act of Bhutan 2012
 Consumer Protection Act of Bhutan 2012
 Public Finance (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012
 Sales Tax, Customs & Excise (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012
 Tobacco Control (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012
 University of Medical Sciences Act of Bhutan 2012

9th session

Bhutan Education City Act 2012
 Druk Gyalpo Relief Fund Act 2012
 Tax Act 2012
 Supplementary Budget Appropriation Act For The Financial Year 2011-12
 Budget Appropriation Act For The Financial Year 2012 -13

His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo appoints new Secretary General

As per Article 2 Section 19(n) of the Constitution, His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo appointed Mr. Kinzang Wangdi, Sarpang Dzongdag as the new Secretary General of the National Assembly Secretariat. Mr. Kinzang Wangdi succeeds Mr. Nima Tshering as the 5th Secretary General of the National Assembly.



Officers of the secretariat welcoming new Secretary General

Smile is a magical expression-Hon Prime Minister of Bhutan

On 29th of February 2012, the Hon Prime Minister Jigme Y Thinley hosted a high tea for the officials and staff working at various offices in the Gyelyong Tshokhang to mark the new year of the Dragon. Also present during the event were Hon Speaker Tshogpon Jigme Tshultim and Hon Minister for Foreign Affairs Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering.

His Excellency the Prime Minister emphasized on the importance to foster the community feeling which is an essential element of the GNH. His Excellency said that smile is a magical expression and two people smiling at each other leads to a relationship built on love and respect. Further, His Excellency offered prayers for the long life of their Majesties, everlasting peace and happiness for the country and the Buddha Dharma to flourish forever.

His Excellency also advised that service to the parent should come first which is indeed a service to the society and ultimately a service to the nation.



“The Legal system of a country should be firmly rooted in its culture” Sir Robert Owen

On 13th April 2012, Sir Robert Owen, the chairman of the civil committee of the Judicial Studies Board in Britain called on the Hon Speaker. Sir Robert Owen said that he was very impressed with the developments taking place in Bhutan and underlined that the Constitution of Bhutan was a remarkable work. He also added that Bhutan was exceptionally fortunate for having outstanding monarchs.

The Hon Speaker highlighted on Bhutan's achievement over the last four years and conveyed his opinion on the legislative process in the country. Congratulating on the impressive legislations passed by the Parliament, Sir Robert Owen said that the Legal system of a country should be firmly rooted in its culture.



Sir Robert Owen with the Hon'ble Speaker

Visit of His Excellency Fritz Neugebauer, Second President of the Austrian National Council.

On 30th of April, 2012 His Excellency Fritz Neugebauer, Second President of the Austrian National Council called on the Hon Speaker. Hon Speaker expressed his profound gratitude for the assistance rendered by the Austrian Government in various fields of development in Bhutan. His Excellency Fritz Neugebauer expressed his happiness to be in Bhutan and encouraged Bhutan to join the International Anti Corruption Academy which is located in Austria.



President of Senate of the Thai Parliament Calls on Hon'ble Speaker

A seven member delegation from the Senate and National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand led by H.E Gen (Retd) Teeradej Meepien, President of the Senate called upon Hon'ble Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan on 18th July, 2012

The Hon'ble Speaker extended warm welcome to the delegates on behalf of the National Assembly of Bhutan and shared about the development of parliamentary democracy in Bhutan. He said that democracy in Bhutan has been very successful mainly due to the strong and able leadership of His Majesty the King and the Hon'ble Prime Minister. He also shared about achievements of the present government in terms of delivering public facilities and utilities such as electricity, telecommunications, drinking water and road connectivity

The delegates in turn expressed their appreciation for the warm hospitality provided by the Bhutanese government and their admiration for the Bhutan's smooth transition into democracy. The delegates also demonstrated strong desire for the need to establish a Parliamentary Friendship Group between the two parliaments to encourage more contacts in fostering greater exchange of information and knowledge to learn from each other.



Thai Senators with the Speaker & members of NA

Visitor from Switzerland Interact with the Hon MP

Mr. Mario Fehr, Member of the Government of the Canton Zurich and Mr. E. Werner Kulling former Secretary General of Helvetas called on the Hon'ble Speaker of the National Assembly on 27th July, 2012. The visitors also met with the Members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National Assembly and made

presentation on the Federal Assembly-The Parliament of Switzerland.

The presentation covered various aspects of their National Council, The Council of States, Committee Systems, Parliamentary Procedures and Parliamentary Services. Besides the Members of the Foreign Relations Committee, other Members of the National Assembly also attended the presentation and engaged in very fruitful exchange of ideas and discussion.



National Assembly Members meet their counter parts from Switzerland

Parliamentary delegation visits India

A ten member joint Parliamentary delegation from the Parliament of Bhutan visited New Delhi and Goa from 5- 10 August, 2012. The delegation was led by the Hon. Chairperson of National Council. The delegation also called on the Hon President of India, Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha and Leader of Opposition during the five days visits.

The Hon'ble Opposition Leader, the Secretary General and the Dy. Admin Officer from the National Assembly of Bhutan were part of this joint parliamentary delegation. This was the third of such visit to India. The first visit was led by the Hon'ble Speaker of National Assembly in 2008. These visits are aimed at enhancing partnership, cooperation and continued interaction between the Parliaments of Bhutan and India.

"We have strong Democracy"-Speaker of the National Assembly

A five member Japanese delegation led by Hon'ble Araki Kazuyuki, Member of Prefecture Assembly (MLA) and Professor Yoshihiko Wada called upon the Speaker of the National Assembly on 22nd August, 2012.

Welcoming the delegation, the Speaker said it is always a pride and honor to have guests from a friendly country

like Japan who plays a vital role as development partner. “Democracy in Bhutan may be young but is firmly rooted in the democratic values and principles” said the Speaker. He said that strong emphasis is placed in the growth and freedom of media as a the crucial tool of democracy.

The delegates expressed their appreciation for the rich cultural heritage, pristine environment and stable democratic government of Bhutan. They expressed their hope and confidence in furthering and deepening the bonds of friendship and relations between Bhutan and Japan



Hon'ble Speaker with the Japanese delegation

The 6th Conference of the Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians in Islamabad, Pakistan

The 6th Conference of the Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians commenced in Islamabad, Pakistan on 4th November 2012. The inaugural ceremony was graced by His Excellency Asif Ali Zardari, the President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan which was held in the Presidency House of Pakistan. Led by Hon'ble Speaker Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim, the Bhutanese delegation comprised of Hon Members Karma Rangdol and Leela Pradhan from the National Assembly, Hon'ble Members Dr. Jagar Dorji and Tashi Wangmo from the National Council and the Secretary General and officials from the National Assembly Secretariat

In her inaugural address, Dr. Fehmida Mirza, the Hon'ble Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan and the president of the conference welcomed the delegates and urged for a vibrant SAARC Parliamentary Association which would ensure strong voice for South Asia in all international forums.

His Excellency the Hon'ble Speaker Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim delivering his statement to the conference em-

phasized that Bhutan is fully committed to the SAARC family as envisioned by its founding fathers. He also added that Bhutan has benefited immensely as a member of the Association and called on the members to strive harder to make the Association more meaningful to alleviate people from poverty, hunger and terrorism.



Hon Speaker being recieved by a young Pakistani boy at the National Assembly of Paskistan

Bhutan was represented by Hon Member Karma Rangdol on the theme 'Meaningful Participatory Democracy in South Asia-Parliaments Affirmative Action' while Hon Member Tashi Wangmo shared Bhutan's perspectives on Targeting Food Security in the Region-Parliaments role in realizing MDGs.

On the sidelines of the conference the Bhutanese delegation also held bilateral talks with the Speakers and Parliamentarians of Pakistan, India, Maldives and Bangladesh.



Secretaries General of the SAARC Parliaments

EU Ambassador calls on Hon Speaker

H.E. Joao Cravinho European Union Ambassador to Bhutan called on Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim Hon Speaker of the National Assembly on 29th November, 2012. After the exchange of greetings, the Ambassador said that the EU was interested in further strengthening and consolidating relations with Bhutan. He said that he intends

to visit Bhutan at least twice a year to maintain the regularity of contact to intensify the exchanges between the EU and Bhutan.

During the meeting, Hon Speaker said that EU has played a vital role as Bhutan's development partner who stood by Bhutan as a true friend through thick and thin. He also shared his insights on the current political situation and perspectives on the elections in 2013. "Democracy is good for the country and its people and rule of law has always prevailed in Bhutan" said the Speaker. The Speaker also shared that the First Parliament of Bhutan has been an effective forum in passing very important legislations for the welfare and benefit of the Bhutanese people. He also shared the achievements of the current government in terms of providing road, drinking water, electricity and telecommunication facilities to the people.

The Ambassador thanked the Hon Speaker for his warm welcome and assured that EU would strive to further strengthen and deepen the relations between Bhutan and European Union.

Cultural Exchange fosters Bhutan - Arunachal Pradesh relations

Led by the Hon'ble Dupthob of Yangtse-Bumdeling constituency, a 19 member cultural delegation visited Arunachal Pradesh from 9 to 21 November 2012. The cultural delegation comprised of people from across the country including those working in the film industry and the Royal Academy of Performing Arts (RAPA). The visit was aimed at further deepening the friendly relation Bhutan shares with Arunachal Pradesh. During the visit, cultural programs were performed in districts of Tawang, West Kameng and state capital of Itanagar by the Bhutanese delegation. The delegation also met with the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh General (Retd.) JJ Singh and Chief Minister Nabam Tuki.

The Hon'ble Dupthob who initiated the cultural exchange said that Arunachal Pradesh in its best manner cherished its relationship with Bhutan and his delegation was accorded with state level hospitality. He further added that the cultural exchange with Arunachal Pradesh was a grand success and the people of Arunachal Pradesh have also expressed their desire to send their delegation to Bhutan on a cultural exchange in the near future.



Hon MP Dupthob and the Bhutanese delegation with Governor JJ Singh of Arunachal Pradesh

Officers from the secretariats of Parliament undergo study tour in Sri Lanka

A 6 member officers' delegation from the secretariats of the Parliament led by the Secretaries General of the National Assembly and National Council visited Sri Lanka from 3rd to 11th December 2012. The study tour was aimed at orienting the officers on gender and politics from Sri Lankan perspective. During the study tour, the officers were briefed on the status of women in mainstream politics and social cultural arena in Sri Lanka. Interactive sessions were also conducted with gender experts coming from various backgrounds of political science, community services, law and teaching fraternity.

In addition, the delegation visited some of the principal NGOs focused on empowering women and underprivileged children in Sri Lanka and learned about their endeavors and challenges. The study tour was conducted by the MDF Institute for Training and consultancy funded by the UNDP, Bhutan.

Similarly, two groups of Hon'ble MPs and officials from the Parliament also underwent training on gender and politics at Andhra Pradesh and New Delhi in India.

Thai senators praise GNH

A 13 member delegation led by the Hon'ble Jitipot Viriyaroj, chairperson of the committee on Constitutional Organization & Budgets committee from the Senate of Thailand visited the National Assembly on 18th of December 2012. Welcoming the delegation, the Hon'ble Dy. Speaker emphasized on the friendly relations that Bhutan shares with Thailand and informed on the achievements of the 1st Parliament since 2008. He also informed the Thai delegation about the GNH principles and how

development activities were guided by this philosophy. On behalf of the Thai delegation, Hon'ble Jitipot Viriyaroj expressed that it was an honour to be in Bhutan and added that peace is very important for the development of a country and in this context Bhutan has set an example. He said that Thailand is very appreciative of the GNH principles and further expressed that GNH could be adopted in Thailand as well. The delegation also met with their Bhutanese counterparts- the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament and held bitateral talks.

Farewell to Ex-Secretary General Mr. Nima Tshering

The outgoing Secretary General Mr. Nima Tshering was transferred as the Director General to the Department of National Properties after 7 years of his dedicated service to the National Assembly of Bhutan. During his tenure as the Secretary General, the National Assembly saw phenomenal progress in terms of infrastructure and in the execution of the parliamentary affairs.



He was a keen player when it came to the strengthening of the National Assembly Secretariat and this is visible through the efficient organizational structure of the National Assembly Secretariat we have in place. The National Assembly and the Secretariat would like to wish him a very fruitful and promising future ahead.

The 14 Standing Committees of the National Assembly:

1. Legislative Committee
2. Public Accounts Committee

3. Foreign Relations Committee
4. Ethics and Credential Committee
5. Human Rights Committee
6. Culture (GNH) Committee
7. Labour and Employment Committee
8. Women and Children Committee
9. Private Sector Development Committee
10. Poverty Reduction Committee
11. Environment/ Land/ Urban Development Committee
12. Youth and Sports Committee
13. Media and ICT Committee
14. Education Development Committee

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