

THIRD PARLIAMENT OF BHUTAN

SEVENTH SESSION



Resolution No. 07

PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN

June 2 - July 5 2022

Speaker: Wangchuk Namgyel

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**RESOLUTION OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE THIRD
PARLIAMENT OF BHUTAN**

1. Proceedings of the Opening Ceremony

The Seventh Session of the Third Parliament of Bhutan commenced on the 3rd Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year, corresponding to 2 June 2022. His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo was received by the Members of Parliament and escorted to the Assembly Hall in a Chipdrel and Serdang procession followed by an elaborate Zhugdrel Phuensum Tshogpai ceremony.

In the Opening Address, the Speaker, on behalf of the Parliament welcomed and expressed gratitude to His Majesty the King for gracing the Opening Ceremony.

The Speaker also welcomed members of the Royal Family, senior government officials, foreign diplomats and dignitaries, and the students to the opening ceremony.

The Speaker said that the people are grateful to His Majesty the King for continuously traveling across the country undertaking several benevolent deeds and granting kidus to the people.

Further, he submitted that His Majesty the King, concerned for the country's economy and employment, established the De-sung Skilling and Reskilling programmes. His Majesty the King's golden words of

advice to the youth - advised the youth to make best use of the skills that have helped build self confidence among the youth.

The Speaker informed that the Gyalsung National Service for youths aged 18 and above was established to provide proper guidance, instill self-discipline, and provide professional skills needed to succeed in the twenty-first century and contribute meaningfully to nation-building. Despite the hurdles presented by the global pandemic, the project is making good progress.

Speaker reiterated that His Majesty the King's exemplary role model of selfless acts for the wellbeing of the country and people extends beyond Bhutan to the world. The Parliament on behalf of the people of Bhutan expressed the utmost admiration and deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King.

Furthermore, the Speaker expressed gratitude to His Majesty the King for granting citizenship to 308 people in addition to granting other Kidus enabling the citizens to live an honorable and peaceful life.

The Speaker submitted that despite the relaxation of restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, around 50% of the population around the world have not had the opportunity to get vaccinations. However, with the graciousness of His Majesty the King, all the citizens in the country have received a minimum of three rounds of vaccinations. For this, the

Parliament, on behalf of the people of Bhutan, expressed gratitude to His Majesty the King.

The Speaker also expressed heartfelt gratitude to the monastic body led by His Holiness the Je Khenpo and other religious masters for performing numerous prayers and religious activities. The Parliament also expressed deep gratitude to the Central Monastic Body for having commemorated the 400th Anniversary of Central Monastic Body's establishment by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel.

The Speaker on behalf of the Parliament expressed sincere gratitude to Her Majesty the Queen, Her Majesty the Queen Mothers, and the members of the Royal Family for looking after the welfare of His Majesty the King and also for taking utmost care of their Royal Princes.

The Speaker further informed on the legislative business of the House assuring that the proceedings will be carried out as per the existing procedure to ensure that the implementation of the decision by the relevant agencies will benefit the people.

In conclusion, the Speaker offered prayers for fruitful deliberation and successful conclusion of the Seventh Session under the wise leadership and guidance of His Majesty the King and the members of the Royal Family; prayers from His Holiness the Je Khenpo and monastic bodies; collective merits of the Bhutanese people; and massive support from the

Resolution of the 7th Session of the 3rd Parliament

members of Parliament and the Civil Servants and hence, the opening ceremony was concluded. **The opening speech is annexed in annexure 1.**

2. Question Hour Session

Group A – Questions to the Prime Minister, Minister for Works and Human Settlements, and Minister for Information and Communications

The Speaker informed the House that 10 oral and 1 written questions were tabled for the question hour Group A. He reminded that the supplementary questions may be allowed subject to availability of time .

The Speaker reminded the House that the question hour be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. A question shall be provided three minutes and seven minutes for answering the question. Supplementary questions, if any, shall be allocated two minutes and answers should be completed within five minutes.

A. Oral questions

1. 3P7S/Q638 Government's initiatives and strategies to revive the economy of the country

The member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency stated that the country's economy is going through an acute crisis and questioned the Prime Minister on the initiatives and strategies of the government to revive and improve the country's economy.

The Prime Minister in his response said that the negative growth rate of the economy was reflected due to the calculation of the GDP and the numerous restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. The Prime Minister added that while the economy experienced a slightly decreasing trend, the overall economic situation of the country remained stable. The Prime Minister also stated some of the economic recovery measures implemented in the past three years included the various activities initiated under the kidu program of His Majesty the King under which huge investments are made for the activities. He further reminded that there was a need to focus on the quality of goods being imported and at the same time promote the use of domestic products.

2. 3P7S/Q639 Government's plan and measures to revive the tourism sector in the country

The member from Khar-Yurung constituency asked the Prime Minister about the Government's measures and plans to revive the tourism sector in the country.

The Prime Minister in his response stated that the tourism sector has been prioritized for over two decades, and the government is drafting a revised policy based on the existing policy of high value and low volume.

The Prime Minister added that the draft policy, while focusing on tourism, aims to generate substantial revenue, incur immediate benefit for every individual and strengthen the youth involved in the tourism

sector. He informed that the policy was being drafted in consultation with both national and international experts. The Prime Minister added that there will be an opportunity to discuss this in detail after 20 June 2022.

3. 3P7S/Q640 Ministry's plans and measures to support the media

The member from Jomotshangkha-Martshala constituency questioned the Minister for Information and Communications regarding the Ministry's plans and measures to support the media, stating the importance of media in the democratic system.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs representing the Minister for Information and Communications in his response stated that a Media Council was established as per the Information, Communication, and Media Act of Bhutan to support and promote media and its effectiveness in the process of democratic system. While the media has the right to freedom of expression, they should ensure accountability and report any kind of news in line with the media policy. The Minister also added that the Government does not restrict the freedom of the media and Bhutan's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index reflects the support provided by the Ministry to the media.

4. 3P7S/Q641 Status of 13th Five Year Plan

The member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency questioned the Prime Minister on the status of draft 13th Five Year Plan (FYP) and

requested to update the House about the Government's plans and programs to continue the drafting.

The Prime Minister in his response reported that the FYP will continue as usual because the Government only expressed the intention to revamp the drafting and implementation of the FYP and did not intend to do away with the FYP. The Prime Minister also stated that while the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) was drafting the 13th plan, the Government has instructed GNHC to have a clear basis either for budget or the plan. The Prime Minister also added that the estimated expenditure for 13th draft plan is between Nu. 700 to Nu.800 billion, whereas the current Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is roughly Nu. 260 billion. Therefore, the Government has also provided advice on the importance of looking into the pros and cons of going ahead with the estimated expenditure. The Prime Minister also stated that the 13th draft plan is uploaded in the GNHC's website for feedback from the public.

5. 3P7S/Q642 Decision on the Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project Authority (PHPA-I)

The member from Bardo-Trong constituency questioned the Prime Minister on Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project Authority (PHPA-I). He mentioned that, even though the dam has been damaged by the natural calamities and its completion has been deferred, he asserted his awareness of the independent reports of alternative solutions from the third parties being produced. Therefore, he asked for the status of the

choice of alternative solutions for expeditious execution of the delayed project.

The Prime Minister in his response informed the House that around 80-90 percent of the work in the Project has been completed. However, with regard to the construction of a dam, since the Government had no authority to decide as per the past documents, the Government reported to the Government of India (GoI) on the constructing of a barrage after a study by three independent experts found out that it is not feasible to construct a dam. He reported that the Government is currently waiting for their response, so it is not clear yet on whether to construct a dam or barrage, however, the Government stands with the idea of constructing barrage.

6. 3P7S/Q643 Feasibility of farm road construction in chiwogs under Yalang Gewog

The member from Khamdang-Ramjar constituency raised a question to the Minister for Works and Human Settlements regarding the feasibility of construction of farm road in chiwogs under Yallang Gewog.

The Minister for Works and Human Settlements in his response stated that the Thragom road extends till Yalang. Although Rolang, Buzur, Melongkhar, and Duti are not connected with farm roads, there is a high probability of the farm road being constructed after conducting a formal discussion with Dzongkhag and the Ministry. The Minister added that in

the case of Tsholabtscha, considering the numerous households, the need for a farm road is genuine and that the Government will work towards it.

7. 3P7S/Q644 Measures taken up by the Government to reduce the fuel price

The member from Bumdeling-Jamkhar constituency asked the Prime Minister to highlight the measures taken by the Government to reduce the fuel price considering the recent price hikes of the fuel that has led to a huge inflation rate within a short period of time.

The Prime Minister in his response stated that although the Government is importing oil from three non-governmental organizations, the pricing is carried out based on their own rules and regulations. In the case of our country, the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MoEA) has been fixing the prices for the oil since 2016, and in the year 2020 and 2021, the Ministry has proposed to increase prices for the oil which the Government has requested not to during the pandemic. The Prime Minister also stated that the Russia-Ukraine war has led to an increase in fuel prices and he also warned that the conflict would increase food prices. He also clarified that the Government has no other rights in the issue other than providing subsidies or doing away with 5% each of green tax and sales tax respectively.

8. 3P7S/Q645 Status of increasing the national wage rate

The member from Lhamoi-Dzingkha-Tashiding constituency questioned the Prime Minister about the status of the increase in national wage rate and its implementation.

The Prime Minister in his response stated that the workforce is categorized into skilled and unskilled laborers and the majority working in various Dzongs have their wages revised for almost two-three years ago. The Prime Minister added that the Government has not revised wages for those unskilled workforces working under the Department of Road but it was found that it is justifiable to revise their wages to around Nu. 420 - 450 after close discussions with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Works and Human Settlements. However, he stated that the implementation will depend on the economic situation of the country.

9. 3P7S/Q646 Measures to prevent risk from road widening

The member from Maenbi-Tsaenkhar constituency asked the Minister for Work and Human Settlements about the widening work of the east-west highway which extends from Ura (Bumthang) till Youngkala (Mongar). According to him, the widening work has worsened the road conditions posing high risks to travelers. Thus, he requested the Minister to update the House about the number of contractors deployed to ensure the timely completion of work.

The Minister for Work and Human Settlements in his response highlighted that due to a huge landslide in Namling, the East-West Highway road widening has been delayed, and even the recruited experts could not come up with concrete solutions due to the continuous occurrence of landslides. However, he stated that the Department of Road is facilitating support to the travelers traveling through the area. Regarding the contractors, it was reported that eight contractors are deployed and that half of the road is ready to start with blacktopping. The Minister stated that even though the weather condition is worrisome, the Government will strive hard to complete the works.

10. 3P7S/Q647 Government's measures and interventions to address the issue of Bhutanese leaving for abroad

The member from Monggar constituency questioned the Prime Minister about the capable and competent Bhutanese seeking employment opportunities abroad. She requested the Prime Minister to report to the House regarding Government's measures and interventions to address the issues.

The Prime Minister in his response responded that the Government does not have any intention to frame a policy to restrict Bhutanese from traveling abroad. He further added that the Government is facilitating those who want to travel abroad by supporting the conduct of IELTS within the country and by providing other necessary support.

B. Written Question

1. **3P7S/Q648** The member of Kengkhar -Weringla constituency asked the Minister for Works and Human Settlements to update on the status of road construction between Wama, Silimbi Gewog under Mongar Dzongkhag, and Khomshar village, Bardo Gewog under Zhemgang Dzongkhag. The member also asked the Minister to mention the budget allocated for it in the upcoming FY (2022-2023) and the expected date of its completion.

Response from Hon'ble Minister for MoWHS:

Details of road status between Bardo and Wama under Zhemgang Dzongkhag.					
No.	Place		km	Status	Remarks
1	Thirang	Bardo	14	Connected	Blacktopping under progress
2	Bardo	Khomshar	11.50	Connected	Blacktopping under progress
3	Khomshar	Phumchu	8	First cutting completed	First cutting to the standard of farm road
4	Phumchu	Wama	22	Not initiated	No Budget

Note: Detailed Question and Answer's deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately (On the 4th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 3 June 2022)

3. **Resolution of Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly of Bhutan 2022**

The Chairperson of the House Committee, member of Parliament from Dewathang-Gomdar constituency presented the review report of the

Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly of Bhutan

2022 as follows:

He stated that in all Parliaments throughout the globe, revision of its rules has become a continuous process. Although the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly has been amended in 2015, the Procedure requires amendment to certain provisions and new inclusion of certain provisions with time and necessity. Thus, the Chairperson requested the House to support the proposals where deemed appropriate.

The Chairperson submitted that, major provisions of amendments and inclusion of new provisions were approved during the Plenary on the Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly of Bhutan 2022. However, the Plenary directed the Committee to further review a few provisions and report to the House. In his review report, the Chairperson informed the House that, in the new section after section 75 of the procedure under the new Chapter titled Motions inserted after section 74 of the procedure as section 76 regarding the admissibility criteria of motion, the Committee opined it as an inevitable provision and hence proposed to retain the provision as recommended.

During the deliberation, few members submitted that the sub-section 6 under the admissibility criteria of motion poses restriction on the moving of motion henceforth and proposed to repeal the sub-section. Likewise, other members also proposed that all 14 sub-sections are not required

and recommended to repeal a few other sub-sections after segregating properly.

In the clarification provided by the Chairperson, he submitted that the provisions under the admissibility criteria of motion are appropriate and proposed after thorough research on international best practices. He also clarified that sub-section 6 will not extend to money related Bills and thus urged members not to worry about it. However, some members supported retaining the sub-section. After an intensive deliberation, while ascertaining support to segregate the 14 sub-sections under admissibility criteria of motion by show of hands, it could not acquire simple majority support and therefore decided to retain as it is.

Subsequently, while ascertaining the decision of the House to repeal sub-section 6 under the admissibility criteria of motion, it could not acquire the support of a simple majority and the House resolved to retain the clause as proposed by the Committee.

Likewise, while reporting on the new annexure being incorporated for the procedure of electing the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Committees under section 320 of the Procedure, the recommendation was endorsed by the House as there was no disagreement from any members in the House.

While ascertaining support on the Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly of Bhutan 2022 by voting, out of 38 members present and voting, 34 voted “Yes”, 1 voted “No”, and 3 “Abstained”

thereby getting two third majority votes to adopt the Procedure as provided in **Annexure 2**.

In the dissenting opinion, the member of Parliament from Maenbi-Tsaenkhar constituency submitted that while he is in favor of the amendment in general, he could not support as he is against the sub-section 6 under the admissibility criteria of motion related to money Bills which may pose inconveniences in the future to move a motion. With this, the House adjourned the sitting. **(On the 4th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year of the Bhutanese calendar corresponding to the 3rd Day of June 2022) (The voting result is provided in Annexure 3)**

4. National Budget Report for Financial Year 2022-2023

The Finance Minister presented the National Budget Report for the Financial Year (FY) 2022-2023 as per Article 14 section 8 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and the section 47 of the Public Finance (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012.

Introduction

In the introduction the Finance Minister said that the National Budget for FY 2022-2023 was formulated in keeping with the vision of our beloved Monarchs, the aspirations of the people of 20 Dzongkhags, and expectations from the private sectors. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the country's economy and the livelihood of individuals have been adversely impacted. However, under His Majesty's prescient leadership, the economy was able to remain afloat without any major

social and economic disruptions with timely and substantive support to individuals and businesses through the kidu system, implementation of the interest payment support, and timely implementation of the various fiscal and monetary measures.

The theme for FY 2022-2023 is shared as “Accelerating Economic Recovery through strategic investments in the areas of food self-sufficiency, human capital development, sustainable infrastructure development, and improved social security.” The theme was developed based on the following key budget principles:

1. Recurrent budget will be met from available domestic revenue at all times and a controllable recurrent budget is provided as an annual block grant to agencies
2. Agencies to ensure strategic capital investment in order to realize the desired outcome
3. The FY 2022-23 budget will ensure the optimum use of available domestic resources whilst ensuring non-essential imports are minimized
4. The Local Governments (LGs) must align their local priorities with overall national priorities, i.e., Water, Road, Agriculture, Health, and Education to ensure better harmonization of priorities; and
5. The budget FY 2022-23 is made more people-centric, while at the same time inculcating the sense of ‘fundamental duty to the state’ as a citizen of this country.

The Finance Minister also mentioned that the current National Budget Report presents the public debt situation, fiscal risks, and updates on the financial position of the public sector institutions and investment.

Economic performance and outlook

1. Economic Situation in FY 2021-2022

The Finance Minister stressed that regions across the globe have been facing a double shock as the pandemic triggered a demand shock and supply disruptions while economies were recovering. He highlighted that the Russia-Ukraine conflict has exacerbated the issue of supply disruptions and triggered energy price hikes. However, in Bhutan, the economy has made significant progress in terms of per capita income and witnessed unprecedented expansion over the last four decades. Inflation remained in single digits while macro-fiscal stability remained strong.

However, due to the implementation of strict public health measures against the Pandemic, the Minister said that the economy experienced the worst full-year recession of negative 10.1 percent in 2020.

The Finance Minister also projected that the economy will eventually rebound to 3.7 percent with ease in containment measures in the first quarter of 2021. Moreover, the rise in inflation in 2021 was largely due to supply-side bottlenecks and a stronger than anticipated rebound of demand, and an increase in both food and non-food prices. Food prices

contributed to about 60 percent and non-food contributed to 40 percent of the overall inflation rate of 7.4 in 2021.

B. Economic Outlook for FY 2022-2023

The Minister stated that although the country's economy has dropped due to risks of inflation and external shocks, the Government is hopeful for the opportunities to fulfill the objectives and missions as per the budget. He also stated that policies of rapid vaccination roll-outs backed by swift and strong policy responses by the Government and transition to Phase II of COVID-19 management have helped to improve the economic growth.

He further added that growth of the economy was expected at 4.5 percent but with the beneficiary economic sectors like agriculture sector, industry sector, and service sector, the Government was hopeful to achieve the economy growth at 5 percent.

C. National response to COVID 19

The Finance Minister stated that the National Resilience Fund supported the grant of the Druk Gyalpo's Relief Kidu in the form of income support for individuals directly affected by the Pandemic and interest payment support for individuals and business entities. For instance, over the last two years, His Majesty's Relief Kidu has benefitted 58,659 individuals. His Majesty's Relief Kidu has also benefited from interest payment support (IPS) granted Nu.14,230 million between April 2020

Resolution of the 7th Session of the 3rd Parliament

and December 2021. Furthermore Nu. 8158.384 million were used as covid-19 related expenditures.

D. Economic Recovery Measures

The Finance Minister stated economic recovery measures focus on ensuring rapid recovery of the economy within a period of 1 year through monetary, fiscal, and regulatory reforms. Moreover, the recovery measures have been reviewed based on our strategic actions and priorities to address the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on the economy. The recovery measures are broadly focused on fiscal measures, monetary policy measures, and policy and regulatory interventions

E. Transformation Initiatives

The Minister stated economic measures and stimulus, targeted sectors, and areas have been identified under the Transformation Initiative focused mainly on areas such as energy, technology, infrastructure, water, and food. The overall transformation initiative is estimated at Nu.45,132.700 million for a period of 10 years. Of the estimated total, Nu.1130.620 million is included for FY 2022-23 to initiate the programs.

F. Public Financial Management Reforms

The Finance Minister also presented that as emanated from the Royal Commands, the Government has initiated Public Financial Management Reforms in taxation, expenditure, procurement, and financing. The

reforms are initiated to overcome challenges arising from the pandemic and as a precursor to greater economic transformation by creating an enabling environment for greater private sector participation, improved public service delivery, and finally to enhance economic revival for macroeconomic stability.

G. Fiscal Performance and Outlook

Revised Fiscal Performance FY 2021-2022

The Minister stated that the resource position for FY 2021-2022 has been revised to Nu. 60,288.165 million from the approved budget of Nu.56,765.582 million and the increase in the revised budget is mainly attributed to the increase in external grants. The total budget excluding lending and repayments has been revised upward from Nu.73, 919.335 million to Nu.77,786.268 million and the upward revision of about 5.2 percent is mainly on account of an increase in capital expenditure, he added. The Minister informed that, with this revision, the fiscal deficit is estimated at 9.3 percent of GDP amounting to Nu.17, 498.103 million.

Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill

The Finance Minister presented the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill where the total budget of Nu. 84,350.083 million was revised from the initial budget of Nu. 80,483.150 million due to incorporation of external funded activities and projects including COVID-19 related activities.

Fiscal Outlook for FY 2022-2023

The Finance Minister presented that the total resource is estimated at Nu. 51,925.754 million, of which domestic revenue is estimated at Nu. 36,368.270 million for FY 2022-23. Within the domestic revenue, tax revenue constitutes 70 percent and non-tax revenue constitutes 30 percent. Similarly, the total expenditure for FY 2022-23 is estimated at Nu. 74,807.887 million which constitutes 37 percent of GDP. From the total expenditure, Nu. 36,340.942 million is allocated for recurrent expenditure and Nu.38,466.945 million for capital expenditure. The fiscal deficit for FY 2022-2023 is estimated at Nu. 22,882.133 million, which is 11.25 percent of the GDP. The total public debt stock is estimated at Nu. 268,708.500 million for FY 2022-2023 which is 132.1 percent of GDP.

H. Budget Priority Areas for FY 2022-2023**Policy Priorities of the Budget for Economic Recovery**

The Finance Minister stated that the Government will undertake the following targeted strategic interventions to accelerate the economic recovery process. These include:

- For an economy to progress and develop is to ensure macroeconomic stability to foster a secure and sustainable economic path; For this, investments in human capital development will be critical.
- Scaling up the development of critical infrastructure in the country such as roads, energy, water, and technology.

- Enhance investments in key economic sectors for broad-based sustainable recovery by leveraging agricultural productivity, facilitating the growth of CSIs, creating an enabling environment for the growth of manufacturing industries, and opening the tourism sector.
- Improve the existing work geared towards improving access to quality social services in health and education.

Spending Priorities for FY 2022-2023

The Finance Minister highlighted the Government spending priorities for the financial year 2022-2023. This includes:

For the FY 2022-2023, Nu.13,316.135 million has been allocated to the education sector, Nu.10,572.400 million for the health sector, Nu. 7,075.557 million is allocated for agriculture and food security, and a budget of Nu. 333.777 million has been allocated for human capital development and skilling.

Similarly, a budget of Nu.8,979.609 million has been provided for sustainable infrastructure development, Nu.3,097.226 million for mining and manufacturing industries, and Nu.123.462 million has been provided for tourism.

In order to have sufficient housing, quality urban development, and public amenities, a budget of Nu.4690.887 million has been provided. Similarly, Nu.2,111.565 million and Nu.1,201.793 million has been allocated for the communication and energy sectors respectively.

Furthermore, a budget of Nu.1,769.313 million is allocated for religion and culture services, Nu.3,228.064 million for law and order services, Nu.15,182.745 million for general public services, and Nu.73.326 million has been provided to the Bhutan Olympic Committee to support the sports sector.

The budget allocation for LGs is Nu.22,769.208 million of which Nu.12,745.172 million is for recurrent and Nu.10,024.036 million is for capital. The LGs will receive 26 percent of the total capital budget. However, considering the centrally executed activities of Nu.7,795.476 million by various central agencies, the actual budget allocation to LGs is about 46 percent of the total allocation.

Budget Appropriation Bill FY 2022-2023

The Finance Minister presented that based on the resources and the priorities of the Government, out of the total budget of Nu.81,827.311 million, Nu.36,340.942 million is for current expenditure, Nu.38,466.945 million for capital expenditure, Nu.5,740.524 million for principal repayment, and Nu.1,278.900 million for on-lending.

Public Debt

The Minister stated that the Government has taken major loans with minimal interest rates to invest in hydropower projects in the country. These public debts aid foreign currency reserves which help towards faster economic growth and smoother management of repayments and borrowings from foreign and within the country.

The total public debt stock as of 31 March 2022 was Nu.247,681.514 million, accounting for 130.9 percent of estimated GDP. It consisted of Nu.222,107.077 million of external debt constituting 89.7 percent of total public debt and Nu.25,574.437 million of domestic debt constituting 10.3 percent of total debt.

As of 31 March 2022, the hydropower debt was Nu.162,197.993 million, accounting for 85.7 percent of estimated GDP and constituting 73 percent of total external debt. The non-hydro debt was Nu.59,909.084 million, accounting for 31.7 percent of estimated GDP and constituting 27 percent of total external debt. The 31.7 percent non-hydro-to-GDP ratio for the external debt was well within the Public Debt Policy threshold of 35 percent.

The Gross Financing Need (GFN) - the sum of fiscal deficit, principal repayments, and net lending for FY 2022-2023 is estimated at Nu.25,826.928 million. The GFN is projected higher as compared to the previous FY owing to the adoption of expansionary fiscal policy for economic recovery and to complete the capital activities of the 12th FYP.

I. Performance of State Owned Enterprises under Ministry of Finance

In the year 2021, State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) contributed Nu. 311.042 million in the form of tax (Nu. 201.042 million) and dividend (Nu. 110 million). As of December 2021, the combined net asset value of SOEs was Nu. 11,387.361 million which was an increase of 15

percent as compared to the previous year. In the FY 2020-21, Nu. 398.7 million was transferred as subsidies to SOEs, which is an increase of 24.7 percent as compared to the previous year.

Performance of Druk Holding Investments

In the year 2021, Druk Holding Investments (DHI) generated gross revenue of Nu.8,336.803 million, an increase by 12 percent from Nu.7,443.526 million in 2020. During the year, DHI contributed to Nu.5,475.06 million to the domestic revenue in the form of taxes (Nu.2,454.06 million) and dividend (Nu. 3,021 million).

Performance of National Pension and Provident Fund

Performance of National Pension and Provident Fund (NPPF) recorded a total membership of 65,890 as of 30 June 2021, representing about 8.5 percent of the population. The number of pensioners grew from 7,634 in FY 2019-2020 to 8,294 in FY 2020-2021. In the FY 2020-2021, a total of Nu. 4,293.040 million was received as a monthly contribution toward the pension and provident fund, an increase of 6.4 percent against the previous contribution of Nu. 4,033.470 million.

Foreign Direct Investment

The Finance Minister presented that as of 31 December 2021, there were a total of 96 Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects worth Nu.43,329.320 million. The hospitality sector constitutes 38 percent of these FDI projects followed by IT/ITES at 22 percent. Investments from within Asia remain the top source at 65 percent share. Within Asia,

55 percent of the projects in the country are from India followed by Singapore with 16 percent.

Conclusion

The Minister concluded that the current budget report is drafted with emphasis on the economic recovery and on behalf of the Government and the people thanked His Majesty The King and the Members of The Royal Family for their concern for the welfare of the Bhutanese people and continued guidance to safeguard the nation from the pandemic.

The Minister also expressed immense gratitude to His Holiness the 70th Je Khenpo, Zhung Dratshang, and other religious organizations for the special prayers. The Minister also expressed gratitude for the services rendered by the health professionals, armed forces, and De-suups for their services. Finally, he expressed his gratitude to all people for rendering timely support to the Government.

The House acknowledged the Finance Minister for presenting the detailed budget allocation for the FY 2022-2023 on behalf of the Government. In accordance with the procedures of the House, the Bills tabled were referred to the Economic and Finance Committee and the Speaker directed the Committee to thoroughly review the Bills and present its review report during the third reading scheduled on 15 June 2022. With this, the sitting was adjourned for the day. **(On the 7th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 6 June 2022)**

Resolution of Economic and Finance Committee’s Review Report on National Budget for the Financial Year 2022-2023

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee, member of Parliament from Gangzur-Minjey constituency presented the Committee’s review report on the National Budget for the Financial Year (FY) 2022-2023.

Introduction

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee stated that although COVID-19 pandemic had impacted globally in the past few years in terms of human health and economy, Bhutan has been able to withstand it. He also stated that due to ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia, it will be more difficult to revive the economy due to which there will be sharp increase in the price inflation of food and fuel at a time. Keeping all these in mind while reviewing the Annual Budget for FY 2022-2023, the Committee focused on the need to revive the economy by emphasizing on health, education, food security, domestic economy, job creation, and development of private sectors in general. With this the Committee presented its four observations and five recommendations in the House for its adoption.

The Chairperson presented that the Government unveiled a National Budget of Nu.81.827 billion for FY 2022-2023, predominantly formulated with an aim of “Accelerating Economic Recovery through strategic investments in the areas of food self-sufficiency, human

resource development, sustainable infrastructure development, and improved social security”.

Basis for the Review of the Budget Report

The Chairperson informed that the Committee reviewed the Budget Reports in keeping with the provisions of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Public Finance Act, National Assembly (Amendment) Act 2014, and the Terms of Reference of the Committee. The Committee also considered the following important aspects in reviewing the reports, which are, concerns about increasing public debt, strengthening private sectors, price inflations of fuel, the status of the funds committed by the government of India (GoI) and other external funds, supply disruption of fertilizers in the market and, import substitution. Keeping these aspects in mind, the Committee had thoroughly consulted relevant agencies while reviewing the report.

Committee’s Observation

Under the Flagship programs, the total budget outlay for the Digital Drukyl was Nu. 2,676 million and the total expenditure as of 31 May 2022 was Nu. 1,361.77 million, accounting to 50.89% of its total budget. The Committee observed that, although overall physical progress was at 64.33%, due to lack of proper coordination between the relevant agencies, it was causing difficulties in achieving the objective.

Recommendation

The Department of Information Technology and Telecom (DITT) being the main agency, the Committee recommended it to liaise and coordinate to achieve the collective mandate of digital governance and transformation.

Committee's Observation

Although the industry and service sector are one of the highest contributors to the economy, it has been hit the hardest since the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020. The implementation of stringent containment measures in the import of foreign workers and travel restrictions on tourists have greatly affected the private sector development. The Committee observed that with the slowdown of virus spread and progressive ease of containment restrictions, economic activities were resumed after the first quarter of 2021 which has supported the monetary measures.

Recommendation

Nevertheless, the two sectors are still progressing at a slow pace of growth for which policy intervention is needed. Therefore, the Committee recommended the Government to further ease the COVID19 restrictions to increase the inflow of tourists and foreign workers in the country.

Committee's Observation

In terms of trade deficit, the Committee observed that, in the past few years there were difficulties in the exports, specifically agricultural

products such as potatoes, ginger, areca nuts, orange, cardamom, and vegetables. Subsequently, the import exceeded Nu. 32,072.84 million, from export in 2021 (35.5%). Overall, the economy is facing challenges of increasing imports contrary to exports.

Recommendation

The Committee recommended that the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest coordinate effectively to enhance exports. Further, the Committee recommended the ministries to jointly institute a clear system for import regulation of both essential and non-essential items.

Committee's Observation

The Committee shared that with the initiative on Granular Sub-Base (GSB) for farm roads in Chiwogs by the Government, it has helped the farmers to a great extent for transportation of their products to market with better road conditions at lower hiring charges. The allocation of Nu. 3,190.562 million in the FY 2022-2023 for the second GSB phase II second priority across the country is expected to further contribute in uplifting the rural economy. However, the performance-based condition attached to GSB phase I could potentially deprive those Chiwogs where the works of GSB phase I have remained incomplete.

In addition, the width of the farm roads restricted to 3.4 meters ideal for power tillers should now be reviewed with increasing traffic and

rural development. Moreover, in some places due to GSB works, it has congested drainage, thus requiring further widening of the roads. Again in some cases, due to gradient, weather, and other conditions, GSB was found ineffective.

Recommendation

To this, the Committee recommended the Government to provide budgets targeted to Chiwogs for the GSB phase II second priority, removing the performance-based condition. Further, the Committee recommended that GNHC in collaboration with MoWHS to frame a convenient guideline for future farm road constructions and GSB surfacing based on gradient, weather, and other conditions.

Committee's Observation

The Chairperson also said that having reviewed the budgets for consecutive fiscal years, realized that the Ministry of Finance and the relevant agencies are required to submit the action taken report on the resolutions passed based on recommendations submitted by the Economic and Finance Committee to Parliament. The Committee felt that this will enhance scrutiny and accountability, thus fulfilling the oversight mandate of the Committee.

The Committee acknowledged that the Budget for the Financial Year as proposed by the Government is well justified as it would ensure macro-economic stability, smooth transition and revival of economic

growth. Given this justification, the Committee submitted the following for endorsement by the House: The Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2022-2023 amounting to Nu. 81,827.311 million, the current budget of Nu. 36,340.942 million, and the capital budget of Nu. 45,486.369 million. The Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill FY 2021-2022 amounting to Nu. 3,866.933 million.

Conclusion

The Committee thanked the Ministry of Finance, Gross National Happiness Commission, and DITT for providing all necessary assistance during the course of review of the National Annual Budget FY 2022-2023. The Committee also thanked other agencies for providing unequivocal support in helping to review the budget. Also, on behalf of the Government and the people of Bhutan, the Economic and Finance Committee offered humble gratitude to His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen for their selfless welfare services to people and benevolent leadership, and with the prayers and blessing from His Holiness the Je Khenpo and other religious organizations.

In addition, the Committee with an objective to enhance the economy and particularly to improve the private loans recommended the Government in consultation with RMA to discuss on the issue of high interest rates and also to come up with measures to make uniform rates as per the existing valuation with regard to differing valuation rates of collateral by the financial institutions. The Committee requested the Finance Minister

to coordinate and submit the report within the same session and with this the House deliberated on the recommendation.

Deliberation

While deliberating on the first recommendation, the member from Athang-Thoedtso constituency, Opposition Leaders, and others expressed that to have an effective Digital Drukyul project, it has to depend on the professional capabilities of the ICT officials and since the ICT officials are not under the purview of the Department of Information and Telecom (DITT), it was important to pool all the officials under the department to avoid future inconveniences. However, other members raised their concern that it would be better to keep it open for the competition so that skilled youths can have opportunities to participate and with this reminded the House that it was important for the House to consider the issue once more.

Moreover, it was important to provide support to the Digital Drukyul project as it has been passed on from the first and second Government and also included in the 12th FYP. Therefore, it is important to make specific recommendations on the level of desired achievement of Digital Drukyul within this tenure. On this, although the Opposition Leader expressed his support for the pooling of staff under the DITT as proposed, he suggested that the recommendation could be looked into under the ongoing civil service reforms. The Opposition Leader suggested a new

recommendation stating the DITT should work in unison with the Royal Civil Service Commission for the integration of staff under the DITT. While voting by show of hands, the recommendation did not receive support hence it was passed as presented by the Committee.

Some members stated that the reason behind achieving only 50% success for Digital Drukyul was solely due to the lack of collaboration and cooperation between the agencies; however, some of the members did not agree. The members added that since the funding was provided by the government and outsourced to contractors, the recommendation should also specify whether the concerned ministry should be responsible for the failure or the report should present the detailed cause of failure. Thus, pooling of ICT officers under one department was seen as inappropriate and not recommended.

Moreover, out of eight projects under Digital Drukyul, the report stated that two projects are identified as unachievable and if the digital school is included, the House needs to consider this as an important issue and also sought clarification on which 2 projects are labeled as unachievable. A member from the Committee clarified that the projects were delayed as all projects were executed simultaneously at a time and to ensure sustainability, explicit consultations were done with expertise from outside therefore two projects were likely to be delayed. A member also suggested the need for collaboration among agencies and the ministry.

Some members also shared that to avail faster services from one place by the public, requested the Government to prioritize this project so that it will greatly benefit the public at large. Moreover, requested the Committee to present the findings on development of an effective electronic patient information system.

To this, the Finance Minister stated that although he supported the recommendations made by the Committee, he requested the House not to misunderstand that there is a lack of coordination among the agencies. He also submitted that ICT officers being under DITT, their transfers are also coordinated by the DITT and therefore requested the House not to be concerned on this issue. Moreover, he also stated that since the objective of Digital Drukyul is to provide services from one portal, services are being provided from one portal in consultation with DITT, therefore there was no requirement of this recommendation.

The Chairperson of the Committee also stated that in addition to the electronic patient information system initiated by the current Government going well, the system with four different features will be executed on pilot basis from next month starting from BHUs to JDWNRH. The chairperson further clarified that a proposal made by some members earlier on clubbing the ICT officers under DITT was not about authorizing limits and control but to achieve collaboration between the sectors.

After a long discussion on the first recommendation, the House approved the first recommendation through a majority of show of hands.

On the second recommendation, the member from the Bartsham-Shongphu constituency along with other members stated that the recommendation presented by the Committee is only for a short term so requested for an additional recommendation on coming up with measures to reduce loan interest to improve the growth of industries and service sectors as they play a vital role in the private sector development. The House ascertained support on the recommendation, it was passed with a majority support of 23 members out of 43 members present thus, the recommendation was passed to the Committee for review.

Moreover, some members stated although the recommendation should be in line with the health experts and guidelines, there was need for the Committee to look into the issues like numbers of tourists who arrived after the relaxation of Covid protocol, challenges faced by business people, delegating and monitoring the activities of government to private sectors for sustainable economy development and prioritizing on the giving of loans to small scale business at low interest rates, and fiscal and monetary measures by a financial institution to promote exports.

In response, the Finance Minister stated that the reduction of loan interest will depend upon the country's economic situation and he stated that if there is no business avenue for the private sectors then there is

no use in lowering the loan interest rates by the Government. He also said that it will be difficult for the banks if the Government does not support them. And with regard to submission of report to the Committee by the Ministry of Finance and financial institutions, he stated that the Committee after reviewing the arrival number of tourists in the country, the situation in the quarantine facility centers, and challenges faced by business operators, the Committee kept the recommendation broad as it would be more convenient for the executive while implementing the recommendation.

After that on the review of recommendation on lowering the loan interest rates by the Committee, the House while ascertaining the support through the show of hands, out of 43 members present in the house, 29 members supported and passed the recommendation.

On the third recommendation, the Minister for Agriculture and Forests clarified that one of the challenges faced in exporting agricultural produce is because there is focus only in the production and not on the quality of domestic products. And there is also a need to export the products beyond countries like India and Bangladesh. Secondly, the focus should be on the reasonable pricing of domestic products according to their quality and to have warehouse for storing the products to be sold during higher demands

Moreover, he stated that the report does not have an update on the declining imports in the past two years and he also submitted that

manufacturing sectors need to be supported. He also re-emphasized on the need for collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Ministry of Agriculture and Forests.

To this, few members stated that besides exporting quality products and expanding the commercial areas to curb the issue of difference in export, support should be given to manufacturing sectors as well. Further, the Government should come up with good strategies and policies so that not only the agricultural products but also forest resources like boulders can be exported with ease. Moreover, they shared that we should focus on increasing the export of domestic products and decreasing imports. After this while voting to ascertain the support to the recommendation, the House fully supported the recommendation.

While deliberating on the fourth recommendation, the member from Maenbi-Tsaenkher constituency and other members submitted that although the Government has allocated Nu. 1.6 million per kilometer to construct GSB, the budget is insufficient to construct walls in eroded places. They also requested the Government to continue the support with the budget and furthermore asked if granular sub-base work left in some gewogs is in accordance with the policies or were left undone with budget constraints. And members also requested for the need to amend the system of first priority and second priority.

In addition, the concerned agencies should be held responsible for failure in carrying out the GSB and the budget should be distributed

equally for the second prioritized activities. For example, the Dzongkhag administration doesn't authorize the construction of roads that run through the forest to provide easier lives for communities. For this issue, the Ministry of Works and Human Settlements and Gross National Happiness should review carrying out granular sub-bases on the roads for the convenience of communities.

Some of the members mentioned that although there are three stages in the general GSB procedure, the quality remains low as the granular laying is done only once by the workers. They also stated that there is a need to change the policies for GSB and recommended doing it at least till the second stage if it cannot be done till the third stage. They asserted that there is enough budget from the Government and institutions for laying the GSB and central Government to be responsible for monitoring it. As much as the budget incurred in the stages for granular sub-base, members also urged the Government to construct proper drainage together and recommended changing the policies which they said could be a great legacy of the third Parliament.

Some members also reminded the Government to be mindful of the difficulties faced by the farmers of southern districts while exporting agricultural products like ginger, betel nut, and cardamom and should give importance to exporting domestic products. Also, the Government should look into the matter concerning the farmers getting stuck at the checkpoints before reaching the transportation port.

The Minister for Works and Human Settlements mentioned that GSB is provided through a supplementary budget by the central Government as the second priority. The GSB work is currently progressing in every Dzongkhag and Gewogs and each Gewog has roughly completed 4 to 5 Chiwog roads with the laying of GSB. Moreover, he said that the Gewogs which are left out of GSB work during the first priority will eventually be included in the second priority.

As the Government rolled out the budget for the second phase, social committees were formed in order to use the budget appropriately and also to ensure the quality of work. The budget of around 17 lakhs/km covers both the GSB and drainage works. So it's up to the committee whether to use the budget for GSB, blacktopping, or base course.

Although there is a clear guideline for ordinary roads, a short guideline prepared for use by Dzongkhag engineers has been developed and informed that it will be distributed when the budget for the second priority is disbursed. Moreover, he also shared that the guidelines for maintenance of GSB, which are currently in the drafting stage, are expected to have substantial benefits in the next 5 to 10 years.

On this, the House directed the Ministry of Works and Human Settlements to distribute the copy of guidelines on GSB to all the members before the conclusion of the Session. While ascertaining the support on the recommendation, all the members unanimously supported the

recommendation through show of hands and the sitting was adjourned

(On the 16th Day of 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 15 June 2022)

Continuation of deliberation on Financial Year 2022-2023 National Budget Review Report

On the 17th day of 4th month of Water Male Tiger year corresponding to 16 June 2022 in the continuation of deliberation on review report presented by the Economic and Finance Committee on Financial Year 2022-2023 National Budget, the Committee reviewed the proposals of the House and recommended the Government to take up the prevailing high-interest rate issue with the RMA with the objectives to boost private sector borrowings in specific and the economy in general. Further, the Committee recommended rationalizing the differing collateral values estimated by financial institutions for the same collateral.

On this, the members expressed that the waiver of interest on the import of essential raw materials required in the manufacturing and construction sectors would reduce the gap between lending and saving interest rates. Moreover, the huge difference between trade and collateral rate would have an impact on access to finance and the loan repayment capacity of the people, therefore, it should be solved with practical implementations to revive the economy.

Some members expressed that there was a need to come up with measures to boost the economy to make the country stronger. There was

also a need to frame policies to have trade relations with Bangladesh and other countries which will reduce the balance of trade and for that the free trade agreement signed between the trading countries should also be reviewed.

Moreover, the requirement to adhere to rules of financial institutions to start their business after availing loans has caused problems to the citizens. The House also questioned the banks role towards the economic development as they have the have been earning huge profits, and also suggested the need to rationalize the high lending rates and low saving rates charged. They also shared that if the SOE banks in the country lowers the loan interest rates, the private banks would induced to lower the interest rates which the Royal Monetary Authority has to look into.

Similarly, the other members mentioned that there is a challenge for not being able to avail the loans by needy ones and the banks not being able to lend the loans. They stated that the Government should explore the means to lend the loans to the private sectors for local development by framing adequate policies and rules instead of the Government availing the loans. Although the interest rate has decreased compared to the last 15 years, there is also room in the current scenario to lower the interest rates. And to solve the non-performing loans, the Royal Monetary Authority and Finance Ministry should work together to develop the private sector which solely relies on the loans.

In addition, few members expressed that should there be any cases of bankruptcy, there should be some alternative measures to solve the case instead of directly taking to the court and also suggested lowering the interest rate for non-performing loans. They also shared that apart from education and health, the agriculture sector is also important for a country's self-sufficiency, therefore, an adequate budget should be allocated to the agriculture sector.

For this financial year, out of Nu. 8052 million budget allocated for the General Reserve Fund, the budget of Nu. 800 million is allocated as the Capital budget and according to the Financial Guidelines 2012, the General Reserve fund should be used only as the technical adjustment on other projects and occurrence of uncertain situations. However, last year's General Reserve Fund of Nu. 19 million was utilized that was against the guidelines and therefore submitted that if the Finance Ministry has the authority to use the funds as wished, the proper guidelines are required to avoid any issues regarding this matter.

On this, some members stated that food security is national security and according to the report, the allocated budget for the agriculture sector was around 7 billion which is around 9% of the total budget. The agriculture sector contributes around 15% to the nation's domestic products and the population engaged in the agriculture sector is between 50-60% with a productive citizen compromising 50%. Therefore, the budget allocated with just 9% of the total budget for the agriculture sector should be

reviewed. In addition, some members stated that the General Budget Allocation should focus on the need-based activities rather than equal distribution among the Ministries.

Moreover, a member questioned the plans for those areas where there are no farm roads as a huge budget was allocated to GSB for farm road renovation this year. Also, requested to include mule track renovation plans in high altitude areas as one of the key programs in comparison to budget for highway and Dzongkhag road renovation. To achieve the aim for economic development, all the Ministries, Dzongkhags, and the Local Governments had to work in coordination and questioned the House on the present coordination level among them.

Some members submitted that both Government and Opposition party had the equal responsibility in improving the livelihood and economy of the country, and therefore stated their assurances for a better result during these remaining 15 months of the Government. With regard to the economic situation, there are seven issues such as fiscal deficit, convertible currency reserve, debt, inflation, youth unemployment, non-performing loan, plan prioritization and budget allocation. Members stated that in the beginning of the 12th FYP, although the fiscal deficit was 29 billion, towards the end of 12 FYP, the 57 billion fiscal deficit was recorded with a difference of 27 billion.

This year the capital budget is accumulated through borrowings from which 60% of the capital budget of Nu. 38 billion is on loan which

would affect the developmental activities. The loan as of the end of June 2022 is 229 billion and by the end of 2023, the loan would be 239 billion, and in the following year 2024, from the internal revenue the loan is expected to rise by 129%. Moreover, there would be inflation which consists of 60% on edible items that would naturally affect people at large. Therefore, the Government and Royal Monetary Authority should come up with better solutions, and stated that following the existing rules on the General Reserve Fund 2004 on the utilization of the budget, would be convenient.

Likewise, the members pointed out that in order to meet the food security targets, the farmers should be provided with necessary items such as seeds and better markets to sell the local produce through value addition which in long run would balance the trade deficit, and questioned as why the additional budget for the same is not included in the budget for the financial year. Also, the members suggested the Government review the policies that would boost the export and to reduce the human wildlife conflict.

Since the budget policy for the financial year 2022-2023 has stated that the recurrent budget should be funded from internal revenue, the members asked for clarification as to from where the Government plans to manage the capital budget since the provision for the same is not mentioned. The member also cautioned to verify while they award the GSB works. The members shared concerns on the unemployment rate

of 5% with 16600 people unemployed in Bhutan as stated in the report.

The member suggested the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources to pay some amount of cash so that youths will be encouraged to take up farming to make the youths self-sufficient instead of providing skill development programmes. Moreover, the damage to the crops by pests and diseases has discouraged the farmers from doing the agricultural works, therefore requested the Government to come up with measures to curb such problems.

Despite allocating adequate budget to the Local Governments, the members raised that there is no outcome as per the plans and due to absence of engineers and accountants in Gewogs, all the tendering works has to be processed by the Dzongkhag Administration and approval for expertise has to be sought from the Central Government which has further caused hindrance in achieving good outcome. Further they stated that to achieve better outcomes, there should be proper monitoring from the central Government and also suggested the Government frame clear policies whereby private sectors can participate for private sector development.

Furthermore, some of the members submitted that the Government should allocate a budget for awareness programmes and training to encourage more female participation in elections in the future. The members also urged the Government to address issues such as the human wildlife conflict, accelerated mother and child program, and

rehabilitation programmes for prisoners. The members further asked for the clarification on how the Government would fund the Bajo town II extension work with a limited budget for Wangdue Dzongkhag and on huge allocations made through supplementary budget allocations far more than the actual appropriation for the Financial Year 2021-2022. They also sought clarification whether the supplementary budget of Nu. 4737 million for health service is enough to fund the diagnostic and curative services as mentioned in the financials budget.

To this, the relevant Ministers and the Committee clarified that the Government is coming up with measures to solve the difference in the collateral rates for rural and urban assets. They also clarified by stating that there is no big difference in the interest rates of the Government owned banks and privately owned banks as the banks have to keep savings for their financial security. They stated that with the current economic situation, instead of lowering the loan interest rates, it was important to render support through proper marketing strategies and policy interventions.

While the Ministry for Agriculture and Forests has received Nu. 5 billion to tackle the trade balance, however, only Nu. 172 million from the total requisition budget of Nu. 500 million was allocated for marketing strategy, for which the members shared concerns on the funds sufficiency. To streamline the trade routes, a member asked to explore the marketing through air transport and not only by road. Likewise, the members

requested the House to approve a budget between Nu.300 million and Nu. 400 million to support the natural resource-based industries.

And with regard to the General Reserve Fund, the Finance Minister reported that the General Reserve Fund was used according to the guideline and supplementary budget was given not only to Paro Dzongkhag but also to other Dzongkhags who had put up requisition. He stated that the supplementary budget was allocated with Parliament's approval although the way of execution of the budget was done in different ways. Lastly, he reported that the budget utilization rules and guidelines are ready as required by the Royal Monetary Authority.

To reduce the import, the members suggested prioritizing improving the quality of local produce and creating awareness on encouraging the use of local produce through appropriate pricing mechanisms. The members also shared concerns of people not cooperating for cost sharing strategies implemented by the Ministry. For example; to reduce the import of edible oil, high variety seeds are being provided and private sectors are giving machines on cost sharing benefits to which people are not taking interest.

They added that due to the Ukraine-Russia war, the cost of food essentials has risen dramatically and the neighboring countries may impose restrictions on exports in future, therefore, it was important to prioritize the local produce despite having high prices. The Minister

also stated that one amongst those National Flagship Programme is National Water Flagship Projects which has already commenced 400 projects with estimated cost of Nu. 1653 million funded through grants and internal revenue. On top of that, the success of GSB works on farm roads after 15 months will help to boost the market access which will help in fulfilling the aims of food security in the country.

He also clarified that a separate budget for maintenance of mule track for high altitude places was not allocated as it was included in Annual Grant starting from the year 2019. Likewise, there is a separate fund of Nu. 41 million for the highlanders and Nu. 135 million for value addition of local produce. The current budget has to be met from the internal revenue and moreover the authority has been given to the Gewogs and Dzongkhags Administration for the GSB fund to be used in blacktopping works. And with regard to accelerated mother and child programmes, the Government would provide if the House supported through Supplementary Budget Appropriation.

The reasons for allocating an additional supplementary budget to the Cabinet Secretariat is due to the expenses spent by Cabinet Secretariat during Pandemic to fund isolation and other management expenses. Also, the National Environment Commission is allotted a supplementary budget to fund the waste management and dog control programmes. It was also reported that the Ministry of Health has spent 7.1 billion during Pandemic to fund the isolation, quarantine facilities, and to

procure Covid-19 vaccines. It was reported that in the Five Year Plan out of nine programmes under the health, specific diagnosis services for cervical cancer, breast cancer, stomach cancer will be carried out in all the 20 Dzongkhags and likewise an extra budget of Nu. 500 million is allocated to Ministry of Health to procure new treatment machines and other medication purposes.

The House following the deliberation on the recommendation proposed by the Economic and Finance Committee to reduce the interest rate of the private sectors, the House through show of hands supported and endorsed the recommendation. With regard to recommendation to the Government to adjust from the existing budget appropriation bill and provide additional funds to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests towards achieving food security, the House through show of hands unanimously supported the recommendations and the House concluded the deliberation.

Adoption of the Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2022-2023

The member in-charge of the Bill, the Minister for Finance submitted that after introducing the Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2022-2023 and presentation of review report by Economic and Finance Committee, the House had thoroughly deliberated the review report of the Committee. He submitted to the House to endorse the Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2022-2023 amounting to Nu 81,827.311 million.

The House while ascertaining the support on the Bill, all 42 members present and voting, unanimously endorsed the Bill. After that the Speaker declared the Bill as Money Bill and announced it to be transmitted to the National Council. **(On the 18th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger year corresponding to 17 June 2022.)** **(The voting result is provided in Annexure 4)**

Adoption of the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2021-2022

The member in-charge of the Bill, the Minister for Finance submitted that after introducing the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2021-2022 and presentation of a review report by the Economic and Finance Committee, the House had thoroughly deliberated the review report of the committee. Accordingly, he requested the House to adopt the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2021-2022 amounting to Nu 3,866.933 million.

The House while ascertaining the support on the Bill, all 43 members present and voting unanimously endorsed the Bill. After that the Speaker declared the Bill as Money Bill and announced it to be transmitted to the National Council. **(On the 18th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger year corresponding to 17 June 2022.)** **(The Voting result is provided in Annexure 5)**

5. Question Hour: Group B- Questions to the Minister for Agriculture and Forests, Minister for Finance, and Minister for Labour and Human Resources.

The Speaker informed the House that there were 6 questions tabled for oral responses to the Ministers in Group B. The Speaker informed that the 6 questions will be discussed as scheduled and supplementary questions would be allowed after all the questions have been answered. The members were also reminded to be mindful of the time.

Oral Questions

1. 3P7S/Q649 Human Wildlife conflict

The Member from Nanong-Shumar constituency questioned the Minister for Agriculture and Forests about the damages and threats posed by the wild animals on crops and asked the Minister to inform the House on the Government's plans and policies to curb the challenges faced.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests in his responses stated that in order to encourage food security, the farm products are a priority and that the damages and threats posed by wildlife is a national concern. To mitigate and curb the challenges faced, the Ministry in discussion with the Cabinet, Gross National Happiness Commission, and Ministry of Finance has been providing enough funds for such programs.

Moreover, the Ministry in order to protect the crops has firstly provided barbed wire, secondly the rubber poles followed by the pest control

mechanisms and community support. He also added that the government continued to work towards resolving the issues by developing strategies and inviting expertise from both within and outside the country.

2. 3P7S/Q650 Suspension of Loans

The member from Khar-Yurung constituency questioned the Minister for Finance on the temporary suspension of loans by the three financial institutions (FIs) as reported in the Kuensel newspaper recently. The member requested the Minister to clarify and inform the House.

The Minister for Finance in his response clarified that the directives were not from the Government but from the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA). The three financial institutions (FIs) temporarily suspended disbursement of loans due to high Non-Performing Loans (NPL). The RMA as per the Financial Services Act of Bhutan 2011 instructed the three Financial Institutions to formulate remedial measures to resolve NPL. Moreover, the Minister informed that despite temporarily suspending the loans, services are being provided without interruption for already approved loans.

In response to the supplementary question asked by the member on the possible date of lifting the temporary suspension, the Minister stated that remedial measures are being explored to resolve the problem and it may take approximately one to two weeks if everything goes as planned. However, if it does not work as planned, it may take years and years to resolve the issue.

3. 3P7S/Q651 Preventive Measures and Protection on Crops damaged by Pests and Diseases

The member from Maenbi-Tsaenkhar constituency questioned the Minister for Agriculture and Forests about the challenges faced by the farmers due to pests and other diseases. The member submitted that although there are scientific protection and preventive measures available, people have not received adequate support and services. Therefore, the Member requested the Minister to inform the House on the reforms and plans of the government to enhance the services to the farmers.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests in his response stated that the damages posed by pests and other diseases on crops are natural calamities and its occurrences are difficult to predict. However, the Ministry has been consistently looking into the problems. The Minister also informed that to provide the appropriate services to the farmers, firstly, the Government has requested to deploy adequate Agriculture Extension Officers with the ongoing Civil Service Reforms, results are expected. Secondly, the Local Government should immediately notify and report to the relevant agencies, in case of any damage to the crops, thirdly the National Plant Protection Center will monitor the situation, fourthly the staffs of the regional offices will provide trainings and skills, fifthly the Emergency Response Division will be established and lastly the reports to be exchanged through online platforms. He also

mentioned the importance of those reforms and plans to be given the top priority.

4. 3P7S/Q652 Credit Guarantee Scheme for Private Sectors

The member from Drametse-Ngatsang constituency questioned the Minister for Finance regarding the collateral free loans provided to the private sectors by the Government. The Member mentioned that the details on the collateral free loans were presented in the Annual Budget report yesterday and does not need further clarification and asked the Minister to inform the House about the preventive measures taken by the Government in case the private sector fails to repay the loans.

The Minister for Finance in his response stated that the written question he received and the question asked are not the same. However, the Minister informed that the collateral free loans are provided so that the skills of the youth are not wasted and that the loans are provided in three categories; agriculture and livestock, industries and construction, and other services. The Minister also informed the House that a committee has been formed with the strategies and measures ready to solve the problem if it ever arises.

5. 3P7S/Q653 Unemployment issue in the country

The member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency questioned the Minister for Labour and Human Resources to inform the House and highlight five major plans, programmes, and activities of the government

to solve and curb the alarming rate of rising unemployment problems in the country.

The Minister for Labour and Human Resources in his response stated that the issue of youth unemployment is a global concern and in Bhutan, the unemployment rate stands at 5% and youth unemployment rate at 20%. In order to solve the issue, the Ministry has, firstly, allocated Nu. 1627 million to provide the right set of skills and training for the youths and so far 1936 youth have been trained through 108 training sessions. Secondly, in addition to the self-sufficient policy, the Ministry has been providing basic entrepreneurship training to the youths and thirdly, 49 specialized firms have been established under the Build Bhutan Project. Fourthly, the Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP) has been established. Therefore, the Minister submitted that these activities were implemented to help solve and curb the existing unemployment issue.

In response to the supplementary question asked by the Member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency on the estimated reduction on the unemployment rate by next year, the Minister replied that the Ministry plans to reduce the unemployment rate to 3% in 2023.

6. 3P7S/Q654 Clarification on the provision of fencing at 50% discount

The member from Jomotsangkha-Martshala constituency questioned the Minister for Agriculture and Forests on the implementation status

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of the resolution from the past session regarding the distribution of the barbed wire to the farmers at a discount of 50%.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests in his response stated that the Ministry had acknowledged the resolution and has been working on it. He also informed that the Ministry has developed strategies and is continuously being implemented by integrating it through the Local Government's programs. In order to protect the crops, 6485 kilometers of electric fencing has been provided till now, which has benefited over 3536 households in the past three years. Additionally, an amount of Nu. 259.4 million has been allocated as supplementary budget for it and the Government has been providing the barbed wires with more than 50% discount at 60% to 70%.

Note: Detailed Question and Answers deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately. (On the 8th Day of 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 7 June 2022)

6. The First and Second Reading of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crimes (UNTOC) and The Protocol To Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol)

In the first reading of United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol), the member in-charge of the Bill, the Minister for Home and

Culture Affairs introduced the Bill. He stated that due to globalization and rapid economic development, it has challenged the peace of the society and there has been an increase in crime such as organized crime from one country to another, especially trafficking of women and children for which it was important to prevent such crimes. To prevent those crimes internationally, he submitted that these two conventions are considered very imperative. Consequently, the House unanimously through show of hands supported the introduction and agreed to deliberate on the Convention and the Protocol.

Accordingly, the member in-charge moved a motion for second reading of the Bill where he informed the House that UNTOC was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the year 2000 and 190 states had ratified the Convention till date.

The Minister stated that the Convention has 41 articles and out of 3 subsidiary protocols, the current important protocol proposed for ratification is the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (TIP protocol). The main objective of the Protocol is to promote cooperation among state parties in preventing and fighting transnational organized crime in a more effective way.

The Minister submitted that the special characteristics of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women

and Children (TIP protocol) was that it was the first global legally binding instrument with an agreed definition on trafficking in persons and till date, 178 states had ratified the Protocol. The Minister supplemented that, the Protocol had 20 articles and the main intention behind the ratification of the Protocol was to facilitate convergence in national approaches with regard to the establishment and implementation of domestic criminal offenses. He added that the procedure for the approval of the convention was started in 2016. In the Asian Pacific Group convention report, it was stated that Bhutan had to adopt the agreement, and since then the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs had started working on the convention with the guidance from the concerned Ministries, agencies, institutions and the Cabinet.

Subsequently in 2020, as per the Human Trafficking Rules of the US Department of State, Bhutan was required to follow-up on 9 issues, amongst them the most important was ratification of Human Trafficking Framework Protocol. In case it is not ratified, Bhutan will face difficulty in receiving funds from the international projects and the donor agencies.

The Minister further shared that in case any Bhutanese studying and working overseas face any problem related to trafficking, the Royal Government of Bhutan would not be able to assist. Therefore, the member in-charge of the Bill sought the support of the House for ratification of the convention which would further help to maintain sovereignty of the country and also make our laws at par with the international laws. This

would also help in implementing the resolutions of the US Department of State's report and the Asian Pacific Region's report. And there is a procedure to include two reservation clauses in the convention.

The Minister submitted that the reservations were on articles 16.5(a) and 35(3) of the Convention and article 15 (3) of the Protocol. He stated that reservations were made because there is an opportunity for the House to include reservation which helps to maintain the sovereignty of the nation. He added that after becoming a member state, there are opportunities to attend international conferences and also to make voluntary donations of funds. Moreover, member states would have the responsibility to amend or enact certain domestic laws and with this the Minister urged the House to support and ratify the convention and the protocol thereto.

During the deliberation, the Member of Parliament from Drujeygang-Tseza constituency expressed his view considering its benefit to the nation and extended his support to the convention. While the Opposition Leader questioned the necessity of Bhutan to be a member of this convention immediately, he reminded the Committee to take into account the advantages and disadvantages of the Convention while reviewing it. He also stated that 11 domestic laws have to be amended, therefore requested the Committee to keep this in mind while reviewing the convention and protocol.

Subsequently, the House referred the Convention and the Protocol to the Human Right and Foreign Relations Committee to review and directed

the Committee to present its review report to the House on 8 July 2022 for the third reading. However, the Chairperson of the Committee requested the House to defer the discussion of the report considering its importance on which the House approved and with this the day's sitting adjourned. **(On the 8th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 7 June 2022)**

Third Reading of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes (UNTOC) and Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol).

The Chairperson of the Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committee, the member of Parliament from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency presented the review report on United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes and Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children as follows.

The Chairperson stated that, in the view of the country's peace and tranquility, and future security, there was a need for appropriate involvement and alignment of international transformation of policies and laws. Considering the importance of these Bills, the Government prioritized tabling the Convention before the House in this Session and accordingly it was referred to the Committee after the first and second readings presented by the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs.

The Committee following the directives of the House while reviewing the Convention referred various laws including the Constitution of Bhutan, manuals, laws and policies and moreover, the opinions from the House were discussed extensively with the related agencies and stakeholders. The Committee after thorough review of reservations on articles 16.5(a) and 35(3) of the Convention and article 15(3) of the Protocol observed there was more benefit than disadvantages, therefore accepted as proposed by the Government with reservations and urged the House to extend support on the convention and protocol.

While deliberating clause wise, the Opposition Leader and some of the members said that while they accept the convention and protocol as proposed by the Government and Committee, they said it would be better if it was ratified without any reservations because we do not have to sign separate extradition treaties with other 190 countries. They also added that there was a risk factor of other countries not willing to sign the extradition treaty if there is reservation.

They also raised that at present Bhutan has an extradition treaty only with India and in the future, if Bhutan wants to sign an extradition treaty with other countries then Bhutan may have to request that country. They also reminded that although there is a clause for protection of sovereignty of the nation, it was important to consider the future sovereignty of the nation before the ratification of convention and protocol. The House also questioned the Committee and the Government regarding the

impact on the existing laws of the country, based on the ratification of the Convention.

In response to the questions, the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs said that while consulting with relevant ministries and agencies, and based on the final national interest analysis report, observed that it was not required to make a separate extradition treaty with 190 countries. He stated that the Royal Government of Bhutan would do it according to the country's laws, policies and prioritization, therefore, urged the House not to worry about it.

In case of an extradition treaty, considering the situation of the political governance and the mission of a country, it has to be established with the countries near to the border. If the House raises an objection, it will have greater advantage. In the future, while all 190 countries will eventually be involved, this can be established as per country's situation and the bilateral agreement. Therefore, findings recommended that if the House supports the reservation, it will have substantial benefit and requested the House to support the same.

In case of amending the relatable Acts, all Acts registered under National Interest Analysis do not have to undergo amendment. The amendment is needed only in Extradition treaty of 1991 and term 'illegal trading of children' under Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011. Moreover, he clarified that draft Mutual Legal Assistance Act was ready from

MoHCA's side and with the show of hands, the House unanimously supported the recommendation of the Committee to place reservation on article 16.5 (A) of the Convention.

The article 35 (3) of the Convention and the article 15 (3) of the protocol were deemed similar in principle and these articles were deliberated together. While deliberating on these articles, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and a few members mentioned that while they accept the recommendations of the Committee and the Government, yet being a developing country it is one of the opportunities similar to that of developed countries and therefore proposed to remove the reservations.

The Prime Minister along with the other members said that, although there is no provision for reservation in most of the international conventions, this reservation is an opportunity for Bhutan and in case of conflicts between Bhutan any other country, the other country cannot take Bhutan to the international court, thus focusing on alternative dispute resolution. Moreover, the Prime Minister added that it will reduce the financial costs and will also preserve the country's sovereignty and reputation. Thus, the House while ascertaining the support on the two reservation articles by show of hands, the House through majority passed the reservations on two articles.

After that, the House supported and passed the overall convention through majority by show of hands. The House also passed the convention and

protocol a clause by clause discussion through show off hands. The sitting adjourned after the Speaker informed that the Convention will be put to vote as per Legislative procedure on 10 June 2022 and with this ended the deliberation. **(On the 10th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 9 June 2022)**

Adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes (UNTOC) and Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol).

The member in-charge of the Bill, the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs moved a motion for the ratification of UNTOC and TIP Protocol after deliberating it thoroughly. Accordingly, while ascertaining support for the Convention and the Protocol by voting, it was adopted with unanimous support of all 45 members present and voting. **(On the 11th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 10 June 2022) (Voting result is attached as Annexure).**

7. The First and Second Reading of Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The member in-charge of the Bill, the Minister for Finance moved a motion for the first reading of the Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022 to repeal Section 56 (1), under Chapter 7 of Part II of the Fiscal Incentive Act of Bhutan 2021 to which the House through show of hands supported to deliberate on the Bill.

Subsequently, during the second reading of the Bill, the member in-charge of the Bill submitted that Fiscal Incentive Act of Bhutan 2021 will be beneficial to all the private sectors and also added that even though the Fiscal Incentive Act of Bhutan 2021 has eight chapters divided into two parts namely; Direct Tax Incentives and Indirect Tax Incentives, it has been providing service to the people equally.

However, during the implementation of the Act, there were some provisions which needed to be harmonized with rules and regulations of some agencies. According to section 56(1) of Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2021, the manufacturing sectors earning convertible currency from the export of their finished goods after using the imported raw materials were applied customs duty on the reduced rate of 3% which at present should be actually according to Foreign Exchange Rules and Regulations 2020 (FERR) of Royal Monetary Authority (RMA).

Any matters related to the earning of convertible currency and expenditure of foreign currency should be as per the Royal Monetary Authority Act of Bhutan 2010 and it will be more convenient if the RMA is given the responsibility on these matters. Therefore, he requested the House to provide support and repeal section 56 (1) of the Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2021.

To this the member of Parliament from Dramedtse-Ngatshang constituency stated that if the proposed section 56 (1) under Chapter 7 of

Part II of the Fiscal Incentive Act of Bhutan 2021 has to be repealed to harmonize with foreign exchange rules and regulations, then will RMA has an authority to approve if there is an earning of convertible currency from export and import of goods.

He also expressed that although the Fiscal Incentives Act has the provision, the RMA has the authority to disapprove considering the inadequacy of general reserve at present situation. However, if the section is repealed, he added that there is a risk of not being able to receive the benefit, if the situation of the country improves in future, therefore he sought clarification from the Ministry of Finance.

To this the Finance Minister stated that 8 chapters of the Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2021 is categorized into three parts namely; Direct Tax Incentives, Indirect Tax Incentives, and General Incentives Tax and since the exemptions on sales tax and customs duty on the import of raw materials by the manufacturing sectors is clearly mentioned in section 56 of the Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2021, the section 56(1) was considered redundant and thereby proposed for repeal.

The Minister further added that all the foreign exchanges have to be as per FERR 2020, so even if the section 56(1) of the Fiscal Incentives Act is repealed, it will be covered under section 51 of the Fiscal Incentives Act and the manufacturing sectors will continue to receive the benefit under this section.

The member of Parliament from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency expressed that if the section 56(1) is repealed, it will benefit in the development of private sectors, reduce import and help in harmonizing the inconsistent provisions and with this he extended his full support to the proposal of the Government.

However, he questioned whether the Government had consulted RMA before putting up the Fiscal Incentives Act 2021 in the 6th session and also said that such re-introduction of the same Bill again and again would lead to waste of time and resources for which he sought clarification from the Minister.

The Finance Minister clarified that although the tenure of Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2017 expired in December 2020, due to pandemic the Bill was deferred by a year upon the approval in the winter Session in 2020. During the deferment period, the Bill was thoroughly reviewed and consulted with various agencies. In the Fiscal Incentive Act of Bhutan 2021, the Direct Tax Incentives was divided into three categories (of Exemption, Reduction, and Investment benefits) and clearly mentioned which sectors receives the tax exemption and does not receive the exemption and which sectors would receive tax benefit from capital investment.

The Indirect Tax Incentives is retained the same as it was in the Fiscal Incentive Act of Bhutan 2017 and said that the law is in favor of the

industrial sectors and also mentioned that it is important to support and develop the industrial sectors to boost export.

The Opposition Leader shared that re-introduction of the Bill in every session (winter and summer) indicates that the Government did not review or carry out thorough consultations on the Bill. He added that it is worrisome if the law passed by Parliament needs to undergo amendment due to some rules adopted by some agencies. Further mentioned that, if the Government hereafter, introduces the Bill that is appropriate and factual, the opposition party will be ready to acknowledge and support the Bill.

The Minister for Finance stated that when the Government introduces the Bill in the House, there is a difference between the ordinary Bill and the Money Bill. And said that prior to the introduction of the Bill in the House for deliberation, as a prerogative of the Government and as per the current economic condition of the country they consult with the relevant stakeholders for the evaluation and fact-finding and then introduce the Bill in the House as per the legislative procedure which show the respect to the Parliament.

The member of Parliament from Khatoed-Laya constituency submitted that it is the mandate of the Parliament to deliberate and pass or amend the Bills submitted by the Government considering the situation of the country. Moreover with the current amendment, he said that there is an

opportunity to benefit the industrial sectors, enhance export and reduce imports.

With this, the House referred the Bill to the Legislative Committee for further review and directed to present its review report for the third reading on 17th June keeping in mind the views and opinions shared by the members. **(On the 9th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 8 June 2022)**

Third Reading of the Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, member of Parliament from Bongo-Chapchha constituency submitted the Committee's review report on the Fiscal Incentive (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022.

The Chairperson submitted that the manufacturing sector who earn their own convertible currency through export were eligible for full sale tax and customs duty exemption and those which do not earn convertible currency were applied custom duty on the import of raw materials. She added that the FERR adopted by the RMA has no preconditions of earning convertible currency to avail exemption of taxes. She further submitted that in order to give exemption on sales tax and customs duty to all the sectors equally, they had given a concession of 3 percent.

However, since the Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2021 could not be amended, the exemption on sale tax and customs duty was rendered

irrespective of whether the manufacturing sector earned convertible currency through export or not. Hence the concession of 3 percent to those manufacturing sectors who do not earn convertible current is not applicable due to which the Government has proposed to repeal section 56(1) of the Fiscal Incentives Act of Bhutan 2021. She added that the Committee accepts the Bill as Proposed by the Government and urged the House to support the same.

While ascertaining support on the Bill through show of hands, the House unanimously supported the Bill. **(On the 18th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 17 June 2022)**

Adoption of Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The member in-charge of the Bill, the Minister for Finance submitted that only one section was proposed for amendment in the Bill and depending on the changing time and economic situation of the country and for nurturing of the private sectors the amendments were inevitable. Moreover, the Minister submitted that the Bill was expected to strengthen and develop private sectors as well and urged for the support of the House in adopting the Bill.

While ascertaining the support of the House on the Bill, the Bill was adopted with the unanimous support of all 44 Members present and voting. The Bill was declared as Money Bill and ordered to be presented to the National Council. **(On the 22nd Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 20 June 2022.)**

8. First and Second Reading of the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The member in-charge of the Bill, Minister for Finance moved a motion to introduce the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022 in the first reading. During its first reading, he presented to defer its enforcement date to which the House through show of hands supported to deliberate on the Bill.

Subsequently, the member in-charge of the Bill submitted the three reasons for deferment of the Bill: firstly due to the economic situation and the imports dependent on rising prices of goods globally, secondly due to the war in Ukraine, and the energy crisis were some factors which attributed to the deferment of the implementation of the Act. Further, the country is experiencing one of the highest inflation rates (8.15% in 2021 and 7.91% in 2022) and the introduction of the GST during such time is not appropriate as it would have an adverse impact on the business entities and the public at large.

Furthermore, the Bhutan Integrated Taxation System (BITS) is one of the critical components for the successful implementation of the GST and for that Thimphu Tech Park Limited (TTPL) was contracted for the BITS development, however, they could not deliver the required BITS solution and their contract was terminated. The deployment of a new vendor for the BITS development and its complete delivery of the system are estimated to take at least two years. If support is provided

to the present amendment, it would be beneficial to both the economy and the Government. In general if all the taxes could be improved by summarizing together, then in this 21st Century, there is a possibility to institute a common taxation system.

The present tax system has a value addition which would help to solve lapses in the filing of tax, auditing, tax evasion, and the unreachable cases. Since the system is being developed by TTPL by hiring experts from outside, it would take two years with a deferment date till July 2024 to which the committee urged the House to support the recommendation according to the situation of the country.

The member of Parliament from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency supported the amendment of the Bill. However, the member sought a clarification on the Government's aim of implementation of the Bill when tabled for the first time in the House, and the necessity for the Bill to be introduced at this time around. The member also reminded the House that they had raised whether the Bill has to be construed as a Money Bill and not like other Bills, so that they would get enough time to thoroughly deliberate on the Bill.

In addition he also stated that it would be better if the enforcement date could be kept open instead of specifying a fixed date so that the future Governments can implement according to their comfort and readiness. To this the House reminded that Goods and Services Tax (Amendment)

Bill 2022 being a money Bill, it would cause inconveniences if the enforcement date is kept open.

The Prime Minister on behalf of the Government supported the deferment of the Bill in the earlier Session as proposed by the member of Parliament from Drametse-Ngatshang constituency. However, the Government had assumed that there was still a year to complete the system and the date for the commencement of the Bill was agreed from this July. Also, though the taxation system is in place, the implementation was at suspended due to its inadequate quality and given the harsh situation of our economy, the date of commencement was deferred.

The Prime Minister reminded the Committee to undertake thorough consultation with the stakeholders on the Bill, keeping in mind the above issues and informed that the Government had agreed on the enforcement date based on the recommendations of the experts.

The Finance Minister informed that the research and study has been conducted in consultation with the experts for the implementation of Goods and Services Tax and accordingly started working on it. Regarding the expenditure, from the total allocated budget of Nu. 500 million, Nu. 200 million had been incurred so far, of which only Nu. 30 million was paid to the foreign expert.

Moreover, the Minister stated that a task should not be carried out in rush, as the system should be able to meet at least 80 to 90 percent in terms

of functionality. While the registration and the tax payment system is ready, however, the mobilization, lapses management, and tax period are not in a standard form. Therefore, the Ministry and its Department had committed to provide any further clarification when the Committee reviews the Bill.

On that, the House concluded that it would be prudent to adopt the Bill, however, if failed to, the taxation would also be covered by the other tax related Acts. It was also reminded that, if the enforcement date is kept as indefinite, it would not be considered as the Money Bill, and there would be possibility to consider like any other Bills, and the House would not accept the Bill. The House directed the Committee to look into scope of implementation timeline and date during review and directed to report to the House on 17 June 2022 for the Third Reading. With this the sitting for the day was adjourned. **(On the 9th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 8 June 2022.)**

Third Reading of the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, member of Parliament from Bongo-Chapchha constituency reported the review report during the Third Reading of the Goods and Service Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022.

The Chairperson reported that since the Act has to be implemented with effect from 1 July 2022 as endorsed by the Parliament in earlier Session,

the Government though made effort to complete establishment of the system but due to the unavailability of the necessary equipment and chances of lapses in the tax payment system and incomplete audit norms application in the system, the Government proposed for deferment of enforcement date to which the Committee accepted. Accordingly she urged the House to endorse the same.

During the deliberation, the member of Parliament from Bartsam-Shongphu constituency submitted the five options: 1) to withdraw the Bill; 2) to implement during the tenure of the current Government; 3) to defer with a specific date; 4) deferring indefinitely; and 5) to deliberate the Bill as ordinary Bill and not as Money Bill. However, he recommended the withdrawal of the Bill as it would be the best option.

The member of Parliament from Dramedtse-Ngatshang constituency submitted his reservation for deliberating on the Bill repeatedly in the House and proposed that the implementation date has to be effected from the date the Parliament endorsed when the taxation system is ready. The House through show of hands supported the proposal and with this, the deliberation concluded and the sitting for the day was adjourned. **(On the 18th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 17 June 2022.)**

Adoption of the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The member-in charge of the Bill, the Finance Minister submitted that with the current instance, the tax reform is one of the momentous reforms and due to the emergence of unexpected inconveniences in the tax system, the implementation date of the Bill has been deferred and the Bill will come into force upon endorsement of Parliament when the taxation system is ready. He then moved a motion to support the Bill.

While ascertaining support on the Bill, the House adopted the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022 with the majority support of 38 “Yes” votes, 2 “No” votes, 1 “Abstaining” out of 41 members present and voting. No member opted to raise the dissenting opinion and the deliberation was concluded. **(On the 22nd Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 20 June 2022)**

Question Hour**Group C: Questions to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Economic Affairs, and Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs.**

The Speaker informed the House that there were 11 oral questions and 1 written question tabled for the question hour for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs in today’s sitting. He reminded that the supplementary questions may be allowed subject to availability of time. The speaker also reminded the House regarding the timings and proceedings of the question hour session.

Oral Question**1. 3P7S/Q655 Gungtong issue in rural areas**

The member from Monggar Constituency asked the Minister for Home and Culture Affairs on the increasing number of Gungtongs in rural areas. The member said that Gungtong results in labour shortage and increased human-wildlife conflict. Moreover, it creates congestion and unemployment issues in the urban areas. Therefore, the member asked the Minister to share the plans and strategies developed, if any, to address the Gungtong issue.

The Minister for Home and Culture Affairs in his response said that the people migrating to urban areas is an indication of a country's development and it may not be an issue to some extent. However, he said that at the policy level, the Government is working to formulate strategic measures and policies to provide basic infrastructure services to retain people in rural areas. Moreover, he expressed his hope that the huge budget allocated to the Local Government would help to address the problem.

2. 3P7S/Q656 Government's plan on foreign relations

The member from Jomotshangkha-Martshala constituency questioned the Minister for Foreign Affairs with regard to the Government's pledge to establish foreign relations with five countries within five years out of which only relations with two countries were established by the Government so far. The member asked the Minister

to name the remaining three countries that the government planned to establish relations with.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs in his response said that the Government had established relations with Germany and Israel so far. It is not the intention of the Government to establish relationship with all the 5 countries as planned during the Government's tenure but would consider following the middle path in establishing relations which would be in our national interest in keeping with reforms that are taking place within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

3. 3P7S/Q657 On the Solar Alliance.

The member from Drukjeygang-Tseza constituency questioned the Minister for Economic Affairs on solar energy. He stated that after the cancellation of the solar project in Bumthang, he had requested the MoEA to set up the Project in Apai pang and Amai pang which comprises more than 55 acres of Government land in Tseza Gewog under Dagana Dzongkhag. Thus, he requested the Minister to update the House about its plan and implementation status.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that there are seven areas identified for the solar plant installation amongst which Appai Pang and Amai Pang in Dagana dzongkhag are also included. However, the Asian Development Bank is carrying out the feasibility study of this mega-project, and the project deadline would be confirmed after the receipt of the project report.

4. 3P7S/Q658 Office for Tshogpas

The member from Maenbi-Tsaenkhar constituency questioned the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs on the Government's pledge to establish offices for Tshogpas. He said that the Government has pledged to establish one office each in every Chiwogs to ensure convenient and expedited services to the people. Therefore, he requested an update and the status of the offices constructed and plans to construct the offices.

The Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs in his response informed that though it is one of the pledges of the Government, the office for Tshogpas could not be established due the Pandemic. Further, he reported that the Tshogpas' offices shall be prioritized after thoroughly studying the roles and responsibilities of Tshogpa as per the country's developmental needs. He also added that the Local Government has the sole authority to decide on this matter on need basis.

5. 3P7S/Q659 Samtse-Haa National Highway

The member from Phuntshopelri-Samtse constituency questioned the Minister for Economic Affairs on the Government's future plans and strategies to improve and shorten the Samtse-Haa National Highway for the import of goods to Thimphu from other countries through Samtse and Haa.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that the Government is discussing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the

Indian Government in drawing up the plan and strategies. Moreover, the Minister highlighted that the Samtse to Haa road is still under development and once it is completed, it can be used as an alternate way for the West-South region of the country's transportation system. The Minister also added that in the past, Phuntsholing was the only entry point for the import of third-party goods. However, the Government has a plan to open import entry through places like Samdrup Jongkhar, Gelephu, Nganglam and Samtse in the near future.

6. 3P7S/Q660 Government's plans to re-open the border gates

The member from Khamaed-Lunana constituency questioned the Minister for Foreign Affairs about the Government's plans to re-open the border gates.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs in response said that the international borders have been closed since the outbreak of Covid-19 in the country and due to the spread of Covid-19 in the world. Furthermore, five days quarantine was made mandatory under the directives of the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the covid-19 task force. Therefore, the Minister clarified that the re-opening of border gates will depend on the directives of the World Health Organization, MoH and the National Covid-19 Taskforce.

7. 3P7S/Q661 Export of boulders.

The member from Dewathang-Gomdar constituency asked the Minister for Economic Affairs about the Government's measures to

resolve the problems associated with the export of boulders to Bangladesh and India.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that the Government has not been able to resolve the problems related to the export of boulders to third countries since the Government could not hold a Border Coordination Committee meeting with different districts in India due to the pandemic. However, the Government is planning to export the goods via land and railways. Furthermore, the Government is working with the Indian Government to allow the Bhutanese trucks to travel through the Indian states. The Minister further supplemented that with the completion of road development in the areas connecting Bangladesh and India, the export of boulders to Bangladesh would be facilitated.

8. 3P7S/Q662 Integrated Check-Posts of Nganglam and Samdrup Jongkhar

The member from Bumdeling-Jamkhar constituency asked the Minister for Home and Culture Affairs to update the House with the deadline to open an integrated check-posts (ICPs) in the eastern Dzongkhag (Nganglam and Samdrup Jongkhar).

The Minister for Home and Culture Affairs in his response reported that the establishment of an ICPs along land borders is important not only for the efficient management of border crossings but also for facilitating

cross-border trade and movements of people. However, the Minister reported that it was revealed by the design report that the existing ICP in Samdrup Jongkhar needs to be expanded and the Check-Post being in the close proximity to the Indian border has no enough space for the extension. While there is no budgetary and policy restriction from the Government, upon finalization of the plan the construction will begin immediately.. Meanwhile, the Integrated Check-Post in Nganglam has been completed and is in full operation from February 2019.

9. 3P7S/Q663 Matters relating to private sector development

The member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency asked the Minister for Economic Affairs about the Government's strategies to develop the private sector.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response reported that in 2019, the Government constituted the Private Sector Development Committee (PSDC) to discuss and bring about the private sector development reforms. To further help the private sector to develop, the Minister submitted that the government provided interest waivers, demand charges waivers, working capital, and support for non-performing loans and skill development programs for the youths to help the private sector.

The Minister also said that the Government is working on reforming and implementing supportive policies to build a vibrant private sector as a driver of economic growth. Despite this, the Minister also mentioned

the Government's initiatives in creating business infrastructures such as industrial estates and dry ports as a way forward in helping the private sectors. The Minister also reported that the Government has been helping the private sectors to facilitate the import of expatriate workers through one window services. Further, the Government has been supporting the private sector in international trade fairs. While the Preferential Trade Agreements with Bangladesh had been completed, the government is working on entering into the Preferential Trade Agreement with Thailand and Nepal.

10. 3P7S/Q664 Hydropower Project

The member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency asked the Minister for Economic Affairs on Hydropower Projects. He submitted that considering the fact that Hydropower Projects contribute substantial revenue, the current Government has pledged to start the new projects. Excluding the mega-projects of Punatsangchu I, II & Mangdechu, Detailed Project Reports (DPR) of a few projects in eastern, central, and western parts have been completed during the tenure of the past Government and some of the projects' DPR were in the process. Therefore, the member asked the government about the number of projects planned to be implemented during its tenure.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response stated that the country has benefited from the Hydropower Projects. However, considering that there are other sources of energy emerging in the world, the Government

felt it imperative to complete the ongoing projects. With regard to the Dorjilum project, the DPR is being updated with financial support from the World Bank. The Neyra Amari project requires a total budget of USD 1.5 billion while the Sunkosh Project is estimated at Nu. 200 billion. The Government is exploring finance for the above projects and it is also in the discussion to mobilise internal experts for the projects.

11. 3P7S/Q665 Reviving exports and reducing imports

The member from Bardo-Trong constituency asked the Minister for Economic Affairs about the Government's strategy and plans for promoting exports and reducing imports.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response submitted that it is in the process of studying the list of imports and exports by the National Export Statistics. He also submitted that a trade agreement has been made with Bangladesh and the government is discussing trade routes by land, water and train with the Government of India.

B. Written Question

1. 3P7S/Q666 Foreign Direct Investment

The member from Kengkhar-Weringla Constituency asked the Minister for Economic Affairs, on the number of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) that has been approved and how many projects have been begun during this Government's tenure. How much invested? How many jobs were created? And where are those projects located and asked for the lists attached?

Hon'ble Minister for Economic Affairs responded as follows:

1	The total approved projects of FDI since 2018.	51
	Established projects under implementation.	20
	Projects on construction and not being started	29
	Withdrawal of FDI & called off projects	2
2	The total expenditure for existing projects in the implementation and those in constructing process	11,486.00
3	Employment opportunities	Total
	In existing commercial sectors on implementation	544
	In projects on constructing process	3,254
4	The place of projects' establishment and those on construction	Total projects
A) Projects on Implementation		20
	Thimphu	16
	Samdrup Jongkhar	3
	Chhukha	1
B) On construction process/ approved projects		29
	Thimphu	7
	Paro	9
	Chhukha	1
	Wangdue Phodrang	2
	Punakha	1
	Samtse	2
	Samdrup Jongkhar	1
	Bumthang	1
	Sarpang	4
	Zhemgang	1

Note: Detailed Question and Answer's deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately (On the 11th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 10 June 2022.)

10. Third Reading of Nature and Conservation of Bill of Bhutan 2021.

The Chairperson of the Environment and Climate Change Committee (ECCC), member of Parliament from Draagteng-Longthil constituency presented the review report of the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021 for the Third Reading. He stated that the review was carried out because the Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan 1995 was not reviewed for the last 26 years and he also added that it was important to harmonize the existing Acts with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and to provide services conveniently to the citizen .

In addition, he stated that with significant sections on Water, Waste Management, Wood-based Industries, and Human-Wildlife Conflicts included in the present Bill which otherwise were absent in the Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan 1995, it would significantly benefit the nation and public at large.

The Chairperson also reported that in keeping those objectives in mind, the Committee has consulted not only relevant Ministries but also Agencies, Dzongkhag Administration, the leaders of Local Government, Regional Forest Offices, members of Community-based Forest, the owner of the Wood-based Industry, Collectors of land-based products and the Mining sectors for their opinions on the Bill.

He also reported that the Committee has reviewed the Bill thoroughly and amended 131 out of 245 sections and added a few new Sections. Then he proposed to the House for further discussions on these sections.

The House deliberated extensively for six days on the Bill and adopted the amendments, new sections, and other provisions as per Annexure 9. Thereafter, the House adjourned the deliberation as per the legislative procedure by announcing that the bill be adopted on 24.06.2022 through voting. **(On the 25th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year, corresponding to 23 June 2022.)**

Adoption of Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021

The member in-charge of the Bill, Minister for Agriculture and Forests moved the motion to adopt the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021 as per the legislative procedures.

While ascertaining support on the Bill, it was adopted with the majority support of 38 “Yes” votes, 2 “No” votes, and 2 Abstaining out of 42 members present and voting to pass the Bill.

Subsequently in the dissenting opinion, the member of Parliament from Khar-Yurung constituency stated that Bill was adopted with a provision allowing the landowners to lay traps and snares instead of coming up with different ideas to manage human-wildlife conflict. Such laying of trap and snares would injure the innocent animals because of which she could not extend her support to the Bill. After that Speaker declared that Bill be presented to the National Council and with this ended the deliberation. **(On the 26th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 24 June 2022.) (The voting list is provided in Annexure 10)**

11. Question Session

Relevant Group D: Questions to the Minister for Education and Minister for Health.

The Speaker informed the House that ten oral questions and one for written question are tabled for the question hour Group D. He reminded that the supplementary questions may be allowed in the end if there is remaining time after the questions.

A- Oral Question

1. 3P7S/Q667 Relocation of National Hospital of Traditional Medicine

The member from Chhumig-Ura constituency questioned the Minister for Health on relocation of the National Hospital of Traditional Medicine from Kawang Jangsa to the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital (JDWNRH) premises. Since it would incur a huge financial implication, the member sought the rationale of the plans and the costs.

The Minister for Health in her response submitted that the decision to relocate the National Hospital of Traditional Medicine was not finalized and that it would be decided only after carrying out studies. She added that the main reason for relocating is to provide inclusive public health services from one place and the JDWRH also has a Multi-Disciplinary Super-Specialty Hospital (MDSS). There is also the issue of limited parking space in the current National Hospital of Traditional Medicines. She added that the relocation is aimed to create awareness on traditional medicines and its availability and to provide both traditional

and allopathic medicines under one roof so that the public receives a comprehensive package of services. This was also to encourage the doctors to work together and to provide them with the same benefits.

2. 3P7S/Q668 Challenges faced in enrollment of Class 10 and 12 failed students in schools

The member from Monggar constituency informed that although the classes 10 and 12 failed students are given the opportunity to continue their studies, due to lack of seats in the schools, the students and parents are having hard times. Therefore, the member questioned the Minister for Education on the measures taken to address this issue by the Government.

The member from Gangzur-Minje constituency also raised the question to the Minister for Education about the importance of providing more than a second chance for those who could not qualify class 10 in comparison to class 12 failures since it is mandatory to provide basic free education till class 10 as enshrined in the Section 16 of Article 9 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Some schools provided opportunities thrice while some schools didn't allow them to study again. Therefore, he asked for clarification on the policy that barred students from repeating thrice and plans of the government to amend the policy if it is prevalent.

The Minister for Education in his response mentioned that in 2021 due to the Pandemic, although there were concerns regarding conduct

of exams for classes 10 and 12 students. However, under His Majesty's noble leadership, education fraternity and the support from the parents, the students were provided with the opportunity to appear for the examinations. Of the total of 12,557 students who appeared for class 10 exams, 3749 students could not pass the exam and while 13,942 students appeared for the class 12 examinations 2487 could not pass the exam. The main reason for that is; that the criteria which require students to obtain 40 per cent each in continuous assessment and examination were initiated for the first time.

He added that there were 8 students who could not pass in continuous assessment from class 10 and 12 students from class 12 and the rest could not pass the general examination. Although faced with a shortage of space to let students repeat, the Prime Minister passed a special order to override the existing system and provided the students with an opportunity to study again.

The Minister also informed that a total of 1716 students who could not pass in class 10 exams were given opportunity to study in Government schools and 2133 students were provided in private schools. In class 12, only 560 students were provided in the government schools and the rest were provided in the private schools.

4. 3P7S/Q669 Governments plans to promote population growth

The member from Bumdeling-Jamkhar constituency raised concern to the Minister for Health regarding the population growth of the

country. He said that since Bhutan is an underpopulated country the population has decreased over the last three years. Considering that other countries are facing the problem of an aging population which has negatively impacted the economy and given rise to various other problems, the government has decided to provide incentives to mothers for a few months. Additionally, the government should also look into the issue. The member asked the minister about the future plans and strategies in this regard.

The Minister for Health said that while this was not a new issue, policies have been formulated however results have not been achieved. The responsibility to increase the population lies on the Ministry of Health, parents and every individual. While a policy was necessary, it was also important to consider the financial and economic implications.

The Ministry of Health has increased the maternity leave to 6 months, accelerating mother and child care in the plans. Let alone the child's incentive, the moment a mother conceives, protection and services are provided for two years at the nearest health care centers under the order from the Prime Minister's office. Once the child is born, a guide to examination and assessment of the child are all provided for in the handbook. Medications for the malnourished children have also been initiated in the year 2020. Further, the treatment and counseling for women, who are not able to have children are also being provided with.

5. 3P7S/Q670 Plans and Programs or remote schools

The member from Phuntshopelri-Samtse constituency questioned the Minister for Education on the policies, plans, and programs carried out by the Ministry for those students who have to rent places to stay as their schools are located in remote areas without road access.

The Minister for Education said that this problem was not for the students but also for the teachers in all the 20 Dzongkhags. Construction of a school at Saurini was also discussed but considering the sparse population, it wasn't feasible. Within 20 Dzongkhags, the construction of a boarding facility is going on in Panbari and 33 schools provide one nutritious meal and 377 schools that provide meals twice a day. There are around 20 large boarding primary schools which could accommodate 350 to 700 students and extension schools numbers are also increased. Furthermore, the problems will be eased with reopening of schools that were previously closed.

6. 3P7S/Q671 Renovation and up-gradation of Yoeseltse BHU

The member from Ugyentse-Yoeseltse constituency stated that although all 4 gewogs under the constituency have grade 1 BHU, the existing BHU at Yoeseltse is in dire need of renovation and extension. In this regard, the member questioned the Minister on the policy and plans to develop and install the necessary facilities.

The Minister for Health in her response stated that the BHU has been renovated with the funding of 1.1 million and it's just waiting for the

handing-over from the contractor. The main aim is to provide services to the public along with the commencement of ultrasound services to the 20 hospitals in 12 Dzongkhags and except for Dechencholing BHU, X-ray services are also provided to the health centres that have more than 10 beds in 50 hospitals in 7 Dzongkhags.

Moreover, besides providing hematology and biochemistry services in 14 health centres, h-pylori tests and cervical cancer tests in 11 Dzongkhags have been completed. In most of the Dzongkhags, an endoscopy testing facilities were also installed.

7. 3P7S/Q672 Shortage of Teacher quarter and drinking water in remote schools

The member from Tashichoeling constituency raised a question to the Education Minister on the shortage of rental apartments in remote villages for the teachers and the shortage of drinking water supply in the schools which hinders provision of quality teaching due to a lack of motivation. This year, since the Ministry of Education has allocated a higher budget in comparison to other ministries, she asked for the plans and strategies of the Ministry to tackle the problems.

The Minister for Education in his response mentioned that even despite the huge budget allocated to education there was still insufficient funds. Concerning the challenges faced by the teachers and students in the remote villages, the Ministry has a plan to construct residences which will be able to accommodate 80% of teachers in the 12th five-year plan.

However, due to the pandemic situation, the aforementioned plan of accommodating 80% was not realized but construction of 39 residential buildings have been completed and government plans to construct in 26 schools. As of now, 13 residential buildings have been handed over and 26 buildings are still under construction. The ministry has a plan to provide about 300-400 comfortable residences to the teachers of remote villages. The local government has also provided some residences to the principals.

8. 3P7S/Q673 Up-gradation of Dagana BHU to Hospital

The member from Drukjeygang-Tseza constituency questioned the Health Minister on the plans and activities of the Ministry to upgrade the Basic Health Unit II to Hospital in Dagana Dzongkhag similar to other Dzongkhags for providing services to the patients. He submitted that there are over 35,000 people in two constituencies in the Dagana Dzongkhag.

The Health Minister in her response stated that leaders of the Local Government and the public have been submitting the petition for specialists in the hospital and since there are limited specialists, the courses for specialist, nurses, and GNM have been increased to 100% in Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan (KGUMSB). However, due to the long course duration, it is very difficult to provide them as quickly as possible. However, by assessing the populations, premises and issues, the inclusive specialists will be prioritized and

provided to the public. She added that facilities will be provided by seeking support from others and public services were provided as efficiently as possible during the pandemic too. Further, there are plans and programs to address issues related to 5 specialists and other related diseases.

9. 3P7S/Q674 Allowing classes 10 and 12 students to repeat only twice not lawful

The member of Dramedtse-Ngatshang constituency submitted that classes 10 and 12 students are allowed to repeat twice as announced by the Ministry. It is against the law because education is free to all children of age up to the tenth standard and now till the twelve standards as instituted in the Constitution. Such policy is inappropriate and will hamper the youth. So, the Ministry of Education should immediately abolish such a policy. Even though higher education is generally available and equally accessible to all based on merit as per the Article 9 (16) of the Constitution, some students who repeated in class 12 with good results do not get Government Scholarships and such a policy is against the Constitution. Thus, there is a need to amend the policy to allow the right to avail Government scholarship .

10. 3P7S/Q675 Continuing studies for class 12

The member from Khenkhar-Weringla constituency also asked the Education Minister that the class 12 passed students are deprived of pursuing higher education both in private and Government colleges in the country. The member submitted that previously there were practices

of going abroad but due to pandemic situations, both students and parents are showing interest to pursue within the country. However, due to limited seats, it is difficult to get admission. Thus, the members insisted on the Government's current plans to resolve the issue and plans to establish more colleges for the long term sustainability.

The Minister for Education in his response to questions 9 and 10 said that there are differences between the supplementary students and repeater students with regard to availing scholarships. While repeaters are eligible for scholarships both within and outside the country, supplementary students are not allowed scholarships outside the country but are eligible within the country. The Minister also submitted that the supplementary students are availing opportunities even though they have scored well and this is being done to provide the same opportunities.

Moreover, the Minister submitted that the establishment of more colleges is under the purview of the Royal University of Bhutan and the Ministry has no mandate to increase the number of colleges. As per the Ministry of Education's mandate, it has been enhancing the opportunities and welfare of students up to class 12.

B- Written Questions

3P7S/Q676 Employment issues for teachers

The member from Khar-Yurung Constituency raised a question about those trainees who graduated from two Colleges of Education (training institutes of teachers) in the country. She submitted that many youths

have graduated from these Colleges but some of them still find difficulty finding jobs. In this regard, she requested the Minister for Education to share the details of how many trainees graduated, how many are employed and how many are substitute teachers from 2018 onwards.

The Minister for Education in his response submitted that from the total of 1980 trainees who graduated from 2018 to 2021, 1312 trainees were employed as regular teachers. He added that although the remaining trainees were recruited as Regular Contract Teachers (RCT), the issue of inadequate teachers keeps on emerging and the Ministry of Education (MoE) in collaboration with the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC) recruited general graduates as National Contract Teacher (NCT).

Taking all into consideration, a total of 900 Contract Teachers were recruited in the last four years. In 2022, 377 were recruited as NCT and in general, the MoE in collaboration with RCSC have been providing opportunities to the trainees.

Note: Detailed Question and Answer's deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately. (On the 18th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 17 June 2022.

12. First and Second Reading of Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022

The member In-Charge of the Bill, Minister of Finance moved the motion for the first and second reading of the Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022

to which the House unanimously through show of hands granted leave for the introduction and deliberation on the Bill.

Subsequently, during the second reading, while presenting on the principle and statement of objects and reason of the Bill, the Minister submitted that in accordance with the Act and Government's transformation procedures, few works were initiated in 2020. However, following the pandemic, the Government's transformation was initiated so that it will help in achieving self sufficiency for the present and future, thus, the Bill was presented to increase the sustainable development fee from USD 65 to USD 200 for a tourist.

Additionally, the Minister stated that the tourism policy was implemented in 1991 with the Minimum Daily Package Rate (MDPR) at USD 250 in which it also included the USD 65 of sustainable development fee, which had not been revised for almost 30 years. And now with the change of time, the sustainable development fee was proposed to be increased to USD 200, the tourists need not pay the MDPR which includes USD 65. The minister submitted that there were 3 reasons for the reforms.

In order to implement the country's tourism policy of High Value, Low Volume effectively, the Government submitted a completely new Bill. The Minister submitted that the main reform was increasing the Sustainable Development Fee from USD 65 to 200 and doing away with the USD 250 minimum daily fee. He also said that the bookings confirmed within 20th June 2022 are excluded from the scheme and

further clarified that it doesn't mean that the Government is imposing tax because of the budget shortage but rather doing so for the sake of future security and expecting support for the new scheme.

On this, the Opposition Leader and other members said that the people working in the tourism sector must support the Government's reform on tourism policy. However, they expressed to hold the Bill until the winter session in order to conduct thorough consultation meetings with the tourism stakeholders and international agencies. They said that before the Bill was tabled, it was pertinent to conduct thorough research on how the tourism institutes, employees, hotels and homestay will be benefited and requested for clarification from the Government.

On top of that, they also asked for clarification on the benefits of the Bill to the Government in terms of revenue generation and economic gain and benefits in the development of balanced regional tourism. The Committee was also reminded to see whether section 8 of the Bill was in line with the Article 14 (1) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, and therefore, requested the Committee to come up with a middle path.

Generally, while acknowledging timely deliberation of the Tourism Levy Bill by assuring support in the House, they said that the Bill lacked a detailed deliberation of its aim and objective, background, principle, and associated cost entailed as per the provision given in the Rules of Procedure of National Assembly. Moreover, the forecasted middle and long-term benefits of the Bill need to be clarified in the House.

They also stated that it would be better if some of the related sections from the Tourism Levy Act of Bhutan 2020 could be harmonized with sections 6 and 8 of the Bill while ensuring that they are in line with Article 14 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Also, as raised by the above members, requested to defer the Bill for some period of time so that proper consultations can be carried out and also reminded the Committee to take note of the views while reviewing the Bill.

On this, the Prime Minister clarified that they had consulted with the tourism sector and other related stakeholders before introducing the Bill in the House. On the other hand, Bhutan is one of the tourism-related institutions and Bhutanese people are involved in it, therefore, it is important to think about the future benefits and not just about the present benefits.

The tourism policy of 1991 “High Value, Low Volume” should be benefiting the Bhutanese, but it has not been able to benefit its relevant stakeholders such as tour guides and a handful of youth involved in the tourism industry such as guides, and those involved in hospitality. Based on this, the Prime Minister clarified that the Government has devised a solution to cover benefits to the whole section of people equally, by increasing the minimum daily package rate from USD 65 to USD 200.

Following this, the House referred the Bill to the Economic and Finance Committee for review, and to submit a review report thereof for the Third Reading. With this, the deliberation on the first and second reading

22nd Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to the 20 June
2022)

Third Reading on the Tourism Levy (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee, the member of Parliament from Gangzur-Minjey constituency presented the review report of the Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022 for third reading in the House. The Chairperson stated that while undertaking the review task, the Committee consulted a wide range of people involved in the tourism industry, including those employed in the tourism sector, after which, the Committee while going through the Bill in detail observed only few clerical errors in the preamble and title. However, he submitted that the Committee had made a slight amendment in section 6 which was presented to the House for deliberation and adoption.

During deliberation , the Opposition Leader and a few other members acknowledged the objectives of the “High Value, Low Volume” tourism policy and its contribution to the economic growth of the tourism industry and its overall contribution to the revenue generation of a country in the last five decades after being initiated under the leadership of Fourth King. Moreover, said that they were hopeful that the present government’s reforms in the tourism policy will strengthen not only the tourism sector but also help those involved in the sector.

However, members raised their concerns on increasing the SDF from USD 65 to USD 200, since the policy seems to be lacking thorough research on the short, medium and long-term benefits and it also lacked research on the number of tourists expected to visit the country. In case the number of tourists declines in the future due to the increase in the SDF, it will impact the country greatly which the Government is not able to clarify.

Actually as per the general procedure, the Money Bills must come into force from the day it was first introduced in the National Assembly by the Finance Minister. However, its sudden change in the proceedings due to individual interpretation of late is a matter of concern. Moreover, in the face of challenges entailed in terms of implementation by the sudden change in the policy, the tourism institutions both within and outside the country need to be given enough time to plan and consult the stakeholders so that they have enough time to transition to adapt to the new policy. In line with this, it was proposed that the Bill be deferred by at least 6 months.

According to some of the Committee members, the Committee could not come to a common consensus while discussing the matter because some of the stakeholders proposed the Government to consider deferring the Bill for at least 6 months, some wanted to defer it for one year while others wanted it to defer for two years. The Committee proposed for the deferment considering the grievances shared by stakeholders hoping that it will help the stakeholders to prepare for successful implementation of

the Bill. They also said it is not a standard norm to receive support from the House for deferment, however, requested the Government to kindly consider the matter.

On this, the Speaker informed the House that according to section 46B of the Public Finance (Amendment) Act, the Money Bills have to come into effect from the day the Finance Minister introduces the Bill in the House. However, it was clarified that the date could be deferred according to the situations which were important to be noted by the House.

The Committee Chairperson stated that while consulting with all the stakeholders on commencement date on section 6 of the Bill, everyone agreed and none raised an objection. They fully agreed to comply with the policy changes though some raised concerns about the SDF increasing from US Dollar 65 to US Dollar 200. The Committee justified that they recommended deferring the Bill because the Committee could not obtain data and enough evidence from the tourism institutions to analyze the policy reforms.

Generally, public acknowledges the reforms and the committee while assessing the people's request to defer the Bill for at least 6 months or one to two years, came to understand that six months deferment was enough to provide time for the tour operators to get ready with their plans and the hotel owners to pay back their loans.

Likewise, as per the statistics of the Tourism Council of Bhutan, there were 27,262 tourists who confirmed the travel between September 2022 and June 2023 and it was decided that it will be extended till June 2023. For this, while meeting with the tour guides and handicraft shopkeepers, last year 75,000 tourists stayed only for 6 days on an average in the country. If they visit the southern and eastern parts, it would take 9-10-15 days. He also submitted to the House that to be able to increase the days or not, the verification needs to be carried out and the Bill has to be considered for deferring till 31 December 2022.

Regarding this, the Prime Minister and some Ministers submitted that they have a plan to reopen entry for tourists and border gates after the pandemic situation gets better. However, they are tentatively planning to reopen tourism from September this year. They questioned proper consultation conducted with those working in the tourism sector considering the reason for increasing the fee because it was already widespread news that coming to Bhutan would cost US Dollar 200. Members also stated that there was no need to postpone the commencement date since the tourism council was ready with the preparations for the reopening of tourism.

Moreover, members were requested to think beyond the increasing of US Dollar 200 and consider other matters like improving the granting of work permits and travel permits to make it convenient. Moreover, guides are being given relevant training and likewise, these policy

changes were drafted after consulting the citizens of Bhutan which he hoped would benefit the citizens in the long run. Also on the number of tourist arrivals in the country within one to two years, he said that it would be convenient if the reopening of tourism and border gates could be done together.

Further, he submitted that although there was doubt on the arrival of tourists after the enactment of the new policy, it was not sure whether postponing the commencement for another 6 months would address the concerns of the people working in the tourism and allied sector. Moreover, he asked whether the Committee had consulted those people working in the tourism sector whose salary ranged from only six to seven thousand a month and said that it would help to solve those problems after the enforcement of the new policy.

Moreover, it was submitted that such issues and difficulties would arise in the future even though it was postponed for another 6 months. For example, during the consultation meeting with the public under the supervision of the Minister for Foreign Affairs while drafting the Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2020, there were several requests from the tourism and allied sectors to revoke the SDF limit of USD 250 and to allow the hotel owners to accept tourists directly. Therefore, keeping in mind the changing time and circumstances for the future betterment of a country, the Minister requested the House to retain as proposed in the Bill.

It was also submitted that the benefits from the new Bill would not only go to those in the sector but it would also provide opportunities to the farmers in trading quality agricultural produce. He also expressed that citizens were alarmed due to the increasing fee of US Dollar 200 but he said that there was always room to change the policy depending on the situation, hence urged the House to support the Bill.

On that, a few members mentioned that they fully support the Committee's decision as the reopening of border gates has nothing to do with the reopening of tourism. The public should not worry about the limited number of tourists that would visit the country within one to two years. They submitted a proposal to amend one clause stating that a tax would be levied from the date the Government announces the reopening of tourism and not to fix a specific date similar to the Goods and Services (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan.

Those coming to Bhutan via flight will be affected due to the Pandemic situation, however, the tourism and allied sectors, tour guides, and hotel owners could be benefited if the border gates in Samtse, Gelephu, Samdrup Jongkhar, and Nganglam reopens. Moreover, the tourists will be able to visit the southern and eastern Dzongkhags as well. Therefore, they were ready to support if the Government reopens the gates as early as possible and urged the Government to carry out the preparations if it's not ready keeping in mind the well-being of the nation and its people.

Although the revision of the tourism policy is disheartening to those working in the tourism and related sectors, they said the people should be ready to accept the tourists. The people should be happy and proud about the opportunities to attract tourists to Samtse Dzongkhag, therefore, extended their appreciation to the Government. One of the members requested an explanation on the increasing SDF to USD 200 and revenue implication from the Government. They also stated that the reason for deleting later part of section 7 which states “ A tourist shall be liable to pay a tourism levy known as the Sustainable Development Fee of USD 200 per night, which may be revised by the Competent Authority from time to time.” was because it contradicted Article 14 of the Constitution as the prerogative to impose or alter the taxes, fees and other forms of levies vest with the Parliament.

On that, the Prime Minister clarified that there was no inconvenience in deleting the sentences ‘which may be revised by the Competent Authority from time to time’ of section 7 of the Bill. However, he said that it was due to differing interpretation and it doesn’t contradict the Constitution. Moreover, he said that if read carefully, it means that it has to be done as per the law and not necessarily put in the Parliament. The Prime Minister urged the House to delve deeper and if authority is given to the institute, there would be no inconvenience as reported by the legal experts. Otherwise, some inconveniences might arise if it has to be done as advised by the legal experts.

Following the discussion on chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Bill, the House adopted those provisions through simple majority support by show of hands. However, while ascertaining the support on section 6, only 13 members out of 45 raised their hands in favor, thus the section was resolved to retain as per the Bill. After that, the Speaker concluded the deliberation by informing the House that the Bill will be put to vote on 24 June 2022. **(On the 25th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 23 June 2022)**

Adoption of the Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022

The Minister for Finance, a member in-charge of the Bill moved the motion for adoption of the Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022 as per the Rules of Procedure. While ascertaining support on the Bill, it was adopted with the majority support of 36 “Yes” votes, 3 “No” votes, and 3 members abstained out of 42 members present and voting. The Bill was declared as Money Bill and announced to be presented to the National Council for deliberation and with this the deliberation for the day concluded. **(On the 26th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Tiger Year corresponding to 24 June 2022) (The voting list is provided in Annexure 11)**

13. Question Hour Session

Group-A: Questions to the Prime Minister, Minister for Works and Human Settlement, and Minister for Information and Communications

The Speaker informed that nine oral questions were tabled while the House did not receive any written questions for Group A. The Speaker

also reminded the House to be mindful of time during the question hour session.

A- Oral Question

1. 3P7S/Q676 Activities of the 12th FYP

The member from Nanong-Shumar constituency submitted that during the reprioritization of the 12th FYP last year, the Government had deferred several national infrastructure projects including roads and bridges due to the pandemic. Thus, the member questioned the Prime Minister on the possibility of continuing the deferred activities with the gradual improvement of the pandemic situation.

The Prime Minister in his response stated that inconveniences were faced due to the stringent covid protocols and repeated lockdowns, and considering that the construction sector relied on expatriate workers. Prioritized activities such as construction of road, drinking and irrigation water, and quarantine facilities in the border areas would be continued with the gradual improvement of the pandemic situation and after studying the available funds. The Prime Minister also added that activities included in Annual Budget 2022-2023 will be carried out and if not included then it was to be understood that the activities would not be implemented in the 12FYP.

2. 3P7S/Q677. Construction of an embankment along the Sungkosh and Kalikhola rivers.

The member from the Lhamoizhingkha-Tashiding constituency asked the Minister for Works and Human Settlement on the Government's plan

to construct a permanent embankment along Sungkosh and Kalikhola rivers. The member submitted that during the monsoon season there is a risk of flood which causes damage to the land and properties, and mishap to the lives of people residing along the river. The member also raised concerns about the measures taken by the Government to those farmers affected by the flood.

The Minister for Works and Human Settlement in his response said that considering the obvious risks of landslides and floods, the Government had spent more than Nu. 100 million in construction of embankments along Sungkosh river and diversion work. The Minister said that the comparative study of the past decade through google earth map had proven the effectiveness of embankments where the Sungkosh river had been diverted towards the border instead of towards the Lhamoi-dzingkha. However, in Kindred Thang the risk still persists and experts are still working on estimates and design. In the case of the Kalikhola river, private individuals were asked to extract the boulder along the river to construct an embankment. However, as it has been found that there are not many boulders, the government has decided to construct the embankment for which experts are working on the design and estimates.

3. 3P7S/Q678. Plans and policies to enhance transport services

The member from Jomotsangkha-Martsala pointed out that transportation services are one of the indicators of a country's

development. Land transportation services such as buses, taxis, and truck services, especially bus services which benefit the public have improved a lot in the country. The member said that the taxi and truck drivers make their livelihood from it and spend on their children's education, and repayment of loans from these services.

Without permanent work and lack of long-term plans their livelihood as well as loan repayment are being affected. Considering the importance of having long-term plans and strategies, the member questioned the government on plans and policies to enhance and develop the transportation sector.

The Prime Minister in his response informed that there were more than 19000 kms of motor roads and 1700 km of highway and ideally if it could be increased to 5000kms then it would be connecting all the Dzongkhags in the country. The government continues to work on improving the national highways and on the construction of new roads which directly benefit the public. For instance, the plan to construct highways in Samrang, Jomotsangkha, and Kuri Zomsa in Sherichhu was completed.

The Prime Minister informed that the Government was still assessing the construction of the highway from Zhemgang to Gyalpoizhing and Wangdiphodrang to Dagana, and studying sites for construction of airport in the eastern region similar to Paro airport as commanded by His Majesty the King.

4. 3P7S/Q679. Commercial buildings in Mongar.

The member from Mongar constituency in her question to the Minister for Works and Human Settlement said that Mongar town as the center for the eastern region is facing issues of crowding and housing shortages. The member said that although Traling and Changshingpek are under the jurisdiction of the municipality, they are not allowed to construct commercial buildings in the area. The member asked the minister for clarification why commercial buildings were not allowed and if the National Housing Development and the Ministry have plans to construct housings.

The Minister for Works and Human Settlement in his response informed that the Local Area Plan (LAP) for Monggar in six areas was completed including plans for Traling and Changshingpek as per their area. Further, the Government as well as the National Housing Development have prioritized the construction of housing in the second phase and expects to roll out the plan.

5. 3P7S/Q680. Foreign currency reserve

The member from Khar-Yurung constituency raised a question to the Prime Minister on the importance of the country's foreign currency reserve stating the section 7 of Article 14 of the Constitution, to maintain a minimum foreign currency reserve that is adequate to meet the cost of not less than one year's essential import. However, in the Annual Budget Report FY 2022-2023, there is a decrease to USD 1328.025 million in

fiscal year 2021-2022 from USD 1559.250 million in fiscal year 2020-2021. The convertible foreign reserve is only USD 1157.408 million and the report state that it is in line with the constitution to meet the requirement.

The member submitted that the country's import keeps on increasing yearly, foreign direct investments and donor funds are waning and this would impact the country's procurement and import of essential items. Therefore, the member asked on the government's plans and policies to enhance the stability of the foreign reserves.

The Prime Minister in his response said that the Royal Monetary Authority has reported to the Government that the foreign currency reserves would be sufficient for the next two and half years. Most of the foreign currency reserves are Indian rupee and at the current situation, it is sufficient which consists of more than 12 billion. The decrease in foreign currency reserves was mainly due to the pandemic and decline in tourist inflow. The Prime Minister said that in relation to the import to increase and stable foreign currency reserves, the Government foresees the plans in two ways. Firstly, to reduce and stop imports if the country's situation worsens and secondly to increase the foreign direct investment in potential mega projects.

6. 3P7S/Q681 Highway between Mongar and Zhemgang

The member from Bardo-Trong constituency raised a question to the Minister for Works and Human Settlement. He stated that connecting

the highways of Mongar and Zhemgang dzongkhags from Khomshar in Zhemgang via Wama to Silambee in Mongar would greatly benefit six eastern dzongkhags. This could also resolve the inconvenience of roadblocks to commuters caused by snowfall in the winter. Further, the road would also be useful for commuters who travel from Pangbang via Nganglam when travel restrictions are imposed during a pandemic. The member, therefore, insisted the Government should prioritize and connect the highways.

The Minister for Works and Human Settlement said that generally for a country to be developed, one of the key components is the development of its transportation services. In Bhutan, 95% of the transportation depends on road transportation. Roads are fundamental to strengthen the country's economy, therefore about 8 or 9 new roads to connect dzongkhag to dzongkhag and gewog to gewog have been planned.

The road construction between Khomshar and Wama is important to the public and currently, there are 3 routes from Mongar to Thimphu. After completion of construction of the road from Khomshar to Wama, the number of routes will increase to 5 increasing the travel route options. People will have the choice to travel from Mongar to Thridangbee, Silambee, Khomshar via Wama, from Khomshar to Digala, Redibee and Tingtabee and from Khomshar to Nimshong and Buli via Threrang. The Minister informed that from the total of 30 km, 50% of the construction has been completed and the Ministry was trying hard to complete the rest.

7. 3P7S/Q682 Unemployment

The member from Khenkhar-Weringla constituency raised a question to the Prime Minister regarding lack of employment opportunities in the country. He said, to resolve the issue, the Government needs to review the existing policies and plans including improvements in earlier policies and programs on skills and vocational skills to provide opportunities. Further, he asked the Prime Minister for an update on the status of reforms, its outcome, and future plans with regard to technical and vocational skills.

The Prime Minister in his response said that considering the current situation, a study needs to be carried out to assess the contribution of graduates to the development of the country and the type of skills required by the graduates to make contributions to the country's economy. Studies of developed countries show that a minimum of 60 % of the population require vocational skills to contribute to the country's development and in meeting their livelihood. The Prime Minister informed that since 2019, teachers and vocational teachers have been given additional and hands-on training and expatriates have also been invited to give them the trainings and to implement what has been taught.

8. 3P7S/Q683 Sungjoen App

The member from Tashicholing constituency asked the Minister for Information and Information and Communications regarding the Government's pledge of Sungjoen App services. The member asked if this pledge can be fulfilled in the 12th Five Year Plan.

The Minister for Labour and Human Resources representing

the Minister for Information and Communications in his response said that the pledge was made for the Sungjoen App considering its several benefits it would accrue for the country. One of the benefits of developing the Sunjon App is to address the security concerns. The Minister said that currently 60% of the apps used in the country are apps imported by the Bhutan Telecom and Tashi cell. With the introduction of the Sungjoen apps, 60% can operate through Sungjoen App without having to rely on imported internet. It was also aimed to provide free WIFI services through Sungjoen App. The Minister submitted despite the several advantages, due to scarcity of the budget the government will not able to fulfill it in the 12th Plan and it could be continued in the 13th Plan.

9. 3P7S/Q684. Plans and Policies to improve Transportation Services

The member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency asked the Prime Minister that, during the National Day Celebration in the year 2019, His Majesty the King had commanded the Government to design a clear economic road map. Accordingly, the Government has started to draft the road map. In the draft, His Majesty mentioned that Bhutan should transform to a high income country and by 2030 the income should reach USD 10 million.

However, after reviewing the report, if the economic growth rate decreases by 5 percent it is estimated that the Gross Domestic Product

and debt rate would reach 200 percent. The member questioned if it was the right time to implement the economic road map and asked for the status of 21st century economic roadmap implementation.

The Prime Minister in his response said that while there was no separate 21st century economy roadmap the discussions of the House would be the basis of 21st century economy roadmap. The details and contents of the 21st century economy roadmap has been uploaded on the Gross National Happiness Commission's website. The draft contains the way forward for the Hydro Power Project although the Government had declared that it would not implement the hydro projects. Additionally, the Prime Minister said that the 21st century economic roadmap also includes tourism, investment in human capital, upskilling, and bringing reforms to the teachers and lecturers of schools and colleges.

Note: Detailed Question and Answers deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately. (On the 23rd Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 21 June 2022.

14. Resolution on the follow up resolution of the Annual Anti-Corruption Commission Report 2021

The Chairperson of the Good Governance Committee, the member of Parliament from Khatoed-Laya constituency reported on the follow up resolution of the Annual Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Report 2021 and presented the three recommendations that were passed in the

6th session as follows:

1. The Judiciary shall establish a separate bench to resolve corruption related cases; and
2. The Office of the Attorney General and Anti- Corruption Commission should recover embezzled funds at the earliest;
3. The Anti-Corruption Commission should be provided with Human resources until its full independence.

He reported that in line with the directives of the House, the first recommendation was to be reported by the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, second recommendation to be reported by the Prime Minister, and the third recommendation to be reported by the Good Governance Committee.

On the third recommendation, he stated that the Committee had consulted with relevant agencies and officials and moreover, two houses could not reach consensus on the Anti-Corruption Commission (Amendment) Bill of 2021 which was in the Joint Committee stage, therefore, he submitted to present his report during the joint sitting of the Bill. He also stated that the Committee would present a review report of the next annual ACC report in the winter session.

During the deliberation, the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, the member of Parliament from Bongo-Chapchha constituency submitted that while discussing with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, out of 37 benches in the 20 dzongkhags, 31 cases of corruption

were about to be completed and there was no need to establish separate bench for it. Further she reported that most of the pending cases were related to the property and the parties failed to submit the evidence on time. Therefore, the Chairperson reported that pending cases were not because of the increasing number of corruption cases but it was due to lack of time in collecting evidence by the parties.

The Opposition Leader accepted that a separate report from the committee was not required as it will be discussed in the joint sitting of the Anti-corruption Commission (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021. However, he reminded that a report on data and information on the availability of current human resource power under ACC by the committee would help them to have better deliberation later on. Moreover, the response given by the Supreme Court regarding establishment of a separate bench was rational and therefore, he also supported the explanation.

The Speaker expressed that as submitted by the Chairperson of the Good Governance Committee, the report on providing human resource support to the Anti-Corruption Commission will be discussed during the joint sitting of the Bill after two to three days and moreover, there were chances of passing separate resolutions on the same issue. However, he mentioned that it does not indicate that the committee has not worked to which member of Parliament from Athang-Toedtsho also supported the view.

On the second recommendation of restitution of the financial deficit, the Finance Minister on behalf of the Prime Minister reported that till June 2021, there was Nu. 412.3 million which could not be restituted, however, in the past one year, Nu. 121.3 million was recovered with remaining balance Nu. 291 million. The Minister also reported that they need to look at the inconveniences between the ACC and Office of Attorney General while recovering the remaining amount.

The Minister said that some people from whom money has to be recovered could not be arrested while those who are arrested are in a miserable situation to recover the amounts. The only option is to arrest the person and put him behind the bars and it is further worsened when the person is sentenced to life imprisonment. Moreover, there were cases where the funds were misused by the foreigners and some cases where the alleged person had absconded from the country, making it more difficult and challenging to recover the misused amounts.

It was reported that out of Nu. 121.3 million restituted from cases related to corruption in 2020-2022, Nu. 86.8 million was deposited in the cash account, Nu. 77.9 million was deposited as the National Sustainable Fund, and Nu. 18.6 million to Government's Revenue Accounts.

During the deliberation, the Opposition Leader stated that the House was delighted to know that Nu. 412 million related to corruption during the previous year was collected. Within this one year, the restitution amount stands at Nu. 21 million (amounting to 24%) and the remaining balance

of 29% had to be recovered. With regard to general restitution of Nu. 412 million, the Opposition Leader requested for a clarification whether the amount was from the current corruption cases or the previous pending cases. He also emphasized on the need of proper accounts in a table format so that members will have no doubts.

15. Resolution of the follow up report on the South East West Highway

The Minister for the Works and Human Settlement reported that though the East-West highway in the south started from Tendruk Norgaygang to Tshathang Zangthing in Jomotsangkha, the present Government has to connect four national highways which include Lhamoidzingkha to Sarpang, Gelephu to Panbang, Nganglam to Dewathang and Jomotsangkha to Samrang. Out of this, the most important was Jomotsangkha to Samrang highway which was being prioritized and even completed. While the detailed Project Report was being prepared looking into the Japanese way of doing, there was a contradiction between the completion of the work and the quality of work.

Therefore, if the construction was to be done immediately, it was going to affect the quality and if it was quality driven, indeed time is required. However, from the Government's side, taking into account the middle path, the detailed project report of the road from Dewathang to Nganglam is in the process of completion and also reported that the road between Gelephu to Pangbang was also blacktopped till Taraythang considering it as Secondary National Highway.

Subsequently, the Minister said that for the construction of a bridge at Nichula before the construction of Lhamoidzingkha to Sarpang national highway, the site has been identified and calculation of total cost of the project is underway. The construction of the national highway road from Lhamoidzingkha to Sarpang will start as soon as the construction of Nichula Gewog's bridge is completed. Moreover, the construction of the road in the North will be completed in June 2023 while Ura to Thrumshingla is nearing completion. The Minister also said that the road construction from Thrumshingla to Yotongla via Sengor was given to the contractor recently and it would take time. For other roads cost estimation is being prepared and would be expediting the completion of the work.

The Opposition Leader said that there was a difference in what the Ministry has submitted and what the Minister had informed. The Government has not started the construction of Dewathang to Nganglam National Highway though it was in the 12th FYP. Moreover, the road which was announced to the people during election pledge, to ensure that the road did not remain as a party pledge but to fulfill the wishes of people of Dewathang and Samdrupjongkhar, he said that the Government need to expediate the commencement of the work than to prolong on the pretext on non-completion of the detailed project report. Members also mentioned that they are not satisfied with the government's inaction as there was already a consultation report with DANTAK in 2019.

While the detailed project report for the Dewathang and Nganglam highway is being prepared, there are no concrete results being shown. Generally, in regard to the Gelephu Panbang highway, the establishment of the highway for the Gyalsung Project at Tareythang should also be considered as a result achieved by the Government. The Minister also reported that the detailed project report will be ready by the end of the month for Nganglam to Chhokorling and Chhokorling to Dewathang highways. In addition, Lhamoidzingkha, Sarpang, Gelephu and Panbang's detailed project report's status needs to be submitted to the House so that deliberations can take place for the 13th FYP. Moreover, a reminder was provided on the three features during the course of action which include inclusion, quality and time bound to achieve the desired results.

The Minister also said that the construction of the road from Ura to Yongkorla was given to the contractors and if contractors could explore and add five to six machines so that the work can be completed earlier and the Government must also ensure strict monitoring.

Furthermore, the Minister said that the road from Lhamoidzingkha to Dalbari which is 7 Kilometers was also in line with the 12th Five Year Plan to be widened and do maintenance from the current financial year and should be done accordingly.

The Minister further clarified that it will take at least two summer and winter seasons and one year in information collection followed by

inspection to get a comprehensive data for the detailed project report; however, considering the limited time, they took the middle path. And for east west national highway and Bumthang to Lingmithang National highway targeted to be completed in 2022 December, cannot be fulfilled and it would cause inconvenience due to the postponement of the deadline to 2022 June as per the contract period.

However, if the Ministry could carry out complete research to have a comprehensive DPR, it will be convenient for the project to start in the 13th Five Year Plan. Moreover, the pledges to connect East West Highway made by all the three political parties during the election would have been completed. With that the day's session adjourned on discussion of the follow up report of 6th session. **(On the 25th Day of 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 23 June 2022)**

16. Motion

Motion on the increasing price of goods and services (Inflation)

On the 26th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year, corresponding to 24 June 2022 the member from Khengkar-Weringla constituency submitted that the domestic products are very limited leading to higher import of goods which had negatively impacted the balance of trade of the country, increased challenges to the growth of domestic industries, and led to the depletion of the foreign currency reserve. The situation was further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic which had escalated the price of goods and services. The

member therefore asked the government's plans to resolve the economic issues faced and also moved the motion to establish a special committee or a joint committee at the earliest to carry out an in-depth study of the issue and submit a report to the House.

During the deliberation on the Motion, the Prime Minister and some Ministers expressed that the pandemic had led to the increase in consumer items, gas, and agricultural products across the globe. This was further aggravated due to the ongoing war between the two countries namely Russia and Ukraine .

It was pointed out that a multi-sectoral committee headed by a government secretary was already established as moved by the member. The House was however requested to form a new committee if it did not have the confidence in the existing committee.

It was pointed out that there was a need to increase exports and reduce imports and the formation of the multi-sectoral committee could benefit in classification of the goods and services that are required to be imported and exported and to better understand the economy. The report of the committee could also benefit the government in the formulation of the 21st century economic roadmap.

The House voted on the motion and was not passed with 14 Yes, 21 No, and 6 Abstain out of 41 Members present and voting.

17. Question Hour

Questions to Ministries of Group B, Minister for Agriculture and Forests, Minister for Finance, and Minister for Labour and Human Resources.

The Speaker informed the House that 11 Oral and 1 written questions have been tabled for the Ministries in Group B. Supplementary questions would be allowed subject to availability of time. The House was reminded to adhere to the question hour procedures and timing during the session.

A. Oral Question

1. 3P7S/Q685 Issues related to Contract Teachers

The member from Khamed-Lunana constituency said that most job opportunities for contract teachers were given to fresh graduates leaving the self-financed PGDE graduates with less opportunity. The member therefore asked the Minister to inform the House on the government's plans and programs to provide employment opportunities for the self-financed PGDE graduates.

The Minister for Education informed that self-financed PGDE graduates were allocated 5 additional points during the selection process and were provided equal opportunity. The Minister clarified that those who could not make the selection process could be due to lack of submission of complete documents. Moreover, they have been

provided 80% of the opportunities recently. The Minister also informed that the government plans to give the PGDE self-finance graduates the opportunity to teach in private schools and abroad, and enroll as english teachers in Dratshang Lhentshog as and when required.

2. 3P7S/Q686 Treasury Bill and related issues

The member from Dewathang-Gomdar constituency asked the Minister for Finance regarding the benefits of treasury bills and bonds and requested the Minister for a report on its sale. He further asked the Minister on the government's debt and its future plans and programs.

The Minister for Finance in his response stated that the treasury bills and bonds are important instruments for the management of the fund. The Minister informed that the government's treasury bills are worth Nu 19 billion. Of which, the government offered T-Bills worth Nu 3.5billion for sale and that the worth will drop to Nu 15.5billion this month. The Minister informed Nu. 3.5 billion worth of treasury bills was taken from the World Bank with an interest rate lower than 1%. The Minister added that, beginning 2020, Nu. 8.2 billion were collected from which Nu. 7.5 billion was invested in the National long-term fund out of which Nu. 700 million was invested in the National CSI Bank. Further, a course of action is being undertaken to convert the treasury bill into warranty worth Nu. 4 billion.

3. 3P7S/Q687 Build Bhutan Project

The member from Khar-Yurung constituency questioning the Minister for Labour and Human Resources regarding the Build Bhutan Project, pointed out that the objective of the project was to address unemployment and to create skilled jobs for 7000 youth within two years of its establishment. The member said currently, the unemployment rate stands at 4.6% while the youth unemployment rate is 20.9 %. The member said that the Desuung Skilling Program also helped in easing unemployment to a great extent. The members therefore asked the Minister on the number of youth employed during the two years and the future plans and status of the project.

The Minister for Labour and Human Resources in his response informed that the Build Bhutan Project from 2020 till date, the project had provided employment to 1739 youth through specialized firms in the field of private construction and hydro power. Additionally, 2121 youths have been supported through skilling programs in masonry, stone crafting, carpentry, painting and welding. The project had employed 4000 out of the targeted 7000, this was mainly due to lack of interest in the jobs provided by the project. The minister informed that the ministry had also established 49 specialized firms related to the construction sectors and it will continue to support skilling programs for the youths.

4. 3P7S/Q688 Agriculture Marketing and Cooperative

The member from Khatoed-Laya constituency stated that there was a need to transform and improve the three departments under the

agricultural marketing and co-operatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests to further the economic development of the country. He said that the department should be transformed and should be given the responsibility of creating an enabling environment for farmers to export their products within the region and to support private exporters. The Member asked the minister to report on the reforms initiated to improve marketing of agricultural products. He also asked the minister to report on the supplementary budget allocated to the 20 Dzongkhags to improve the production of agricultural goods during the pandemic and to name the five Dzongkhags that performed well and three achievements of these Dzongkhags.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests informed that the Ministry had developed an agricultural marketing policy and market centers within the country had also been internally mapped. Further with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, plans to export products to places other than India and Bangladesh were also being formulated. Moreover, the ministry was also working towards better testing and certification of domestic goods for export. Plans and priorities were set to motivate and encourage the private sectors, farmers and youth. Commercial agricultural products were established in 9 areas of 7 Dzongkhags. The Minister also added that, supplementary budget of Nu. 200 million had been allocated and, Dzongkhags like Dagana, Tsirang, Zhemgang, Trongsa, and Sarpang had reported highest agricultural production.

5. 3P7S/Q689 Town delimitation

The member from Monggar constituency said that, when the former Government delimited the town area, most of the nearby town area residents were required to pay taxes at par with town area residents. This was causing inconveniences to the people in particular to the residents of Nagling village which is located right next to Monggar town, but do not have access to town amenities. Therefore, the member asked the Minister for Finance to issue an executive order or review the inconsistencies in the Act to resolve the issues faced by the people.

The Minister for Finance in his response stated that the issue of taxation had been and is prevailing across 20 dzongkhags in the country as there is no clear taxation policy regarding property tax and currently the Revised Taxation Policy 1992 is being implemented. The Minister informed that similar issues were faced during the first and second governments and as an interim measure rural tax was imposed for those places that did not have town amenities. The Minister pointed out that to resolve the issue a new policy needs to be formulated and the Revised Taxation Policy 1992 repealed.

6. 3P7S/Q690 Establishment of Employment and Livelihood Corporation

The member from Chhumig-Ura constituency questioned the Minister for Labour and Human Resources on the status of the establishment of Employment and Livelihood Corporation to create employment and manage employment.

The Minister for Labour and Human Resources in his response said

that, in order to establish the corporation, the Ministry is preparing and the detailed project report had been formulated. In addition, the detailed report would be ready within a year and the Ministry would look into the progress of the corporation in the first 2 months. The Minister said if the progress was good, the corporation would be established within 6 months. As a temporary measure, the Ministry had established an interim office in May this year with the appointment of an interim Chief Executive Officer with the first objective to provide the opportunity to Bhutanese by looking to employ expatriates from outside the country. In this, they will collaborate with business entities especially with the construction sector since the sector provides maximum employment opportunities.

Moreover, the housing construction certificate holder was provided to facilitate the earning. In addition, the construction sector employs 80,000 expatriate workers in a year. Therefore, they aim to increase employment since there are 20,000 Bhutanese workers in the sector. In order to accomplish this objective, the Ministry had also set up a system to streamline the number of job seekers and to provide employment opportunities. The Minister said that for now the corporation was focusing on the construction industry and it would focus on other sectors if it goes as planned.

7. 3P7S/Q691 Government's measures to sell agriculture products

The member from Shompangkha constituency stated that due to the rise in the import of livestock products the farmers and cooperatives were not able to sell their products. In this regard, the member questioned the Minister for Agriculture and Forests on the plans and measures to support them.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests in his response answered that, the business involving agriculture and food items were risky as there seemed to be higher agricultural products with little or no marketing plan and tools. While prohibition of import of products would entail inconveniences, it was important to raise the quality of product to improve sales. Towards this the government, with huge investment, is preparing strategies to improve the sale of products at reasonable prices.

8. 3P7S/Q692 Sayli road under Gakiling Gewog

The member from Sombaykha constituency stated that the road construction of Sayli under Gakiling Gewog was under mid-term review and the construction upon completion would benefit 336 households under Samar and Gakiling Gewog and the lands in Gakiling Gewog could be used for agricultural purpose. Moreover, the construction of new road would decrease the distance between Haa Dzongkhag to Saytena and Phentana under Gakiling Gewog by 110 km from 140 km. Therefore, the member questioned the Minister for Finance on the status of road construction.

The Minister for Finance in his response stated that, as mentioned by the member, the road construction was of utmost importance to the people. Although the government had allocated a budget for the road construction, there had been complaints from the public which hindered the progress. However, if the community does not have any issues, the Dzongkhag would resume the works in the financial year 2022-2023.

9. 3P7S/Q693 Orange export

The member from Lhamoi-Dzingkha Tashiding stated that the citrus plants have been dying since 1990 due to diseases which hampers the income generation of people. The member therefore, questioned the Minister for Agriculture and Forests on the policies, strategies, and measures to address the issue to protect and promote the products of citrus plants in the Southern dzongkhags.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests in his response said that the diseases affecting the crops was a global issue, however the government had been working hard to solve the issues but still remained a challenge. The issue had been challenging as the eradication of the diseases causing the crop would require complete removal of old crops and planting of new ones, which the people do not support. The import of orange saplings had been restricted and the government had started supplying the seedlings and saplings of other fruits. He added that it was also very important to diversify the plantation of fruit trees and His Majesty's Million Fruit Tree Plantation project would also benefit the public.

10. 3P7S/Q694 Plan and programs to improve the export of Agriculture product

The member from Jomotshangkha-Martshala constituency questioned the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture and Forests about plans and programs to expedite and explore export of eastern region agriculture products to India through Samdrup Jongkhar and Nganglam.

11. 3P7S/Q695 Identification of areas for export of domestic products

The member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency said as informed by the Minister, the ministry should also look at exporting agricultural products to other countries similar to India where the list of products for exports had been increased and discussion on the system of export . The member asked the Minister for Agriculture and Forests, on the new items added to the existing export list and if any other areas of export had been identified and plans and programs to improve the quality of exports.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests in his response to question 10 and 11 clarified that the government was focusing on the water flagship programmes, and connecting the villages and improving farm roads, which were mainly for the farmers so that their products could reach the markets. Moreover, the Minister added that the Government established the potato segregation and grading facility including a cold storage at Khaling. An integrated entry and exit point at Nanglam and a value chain processing economic hub was also being explored. Further, to support

local products, the government had started to supply the hospitals and schools with feeding programs with domestic agricultural products and had also established facilities to produce feed for the domestic animals.

The minister also informed the House that the seven new agricultural products approved for export to India include beans, chilies, cabbages, cauliflowers, red carrot, peas, and ginger, while the export of potatoes was expected to be agreed upon by the end of June. The Minister added that the Ministry had sent samples of quinoa and wheat to Malaysia, potatoes to Nepal and Thailand for possibilities of export and similarly the government was exploring export of cardamom powder to middle-east countries.

B- Written question

1. 3P7S/Q696.

The member from Khar-Yurung constituency questioned the Minister for Finance regarding the status on the loan availed from National Credit Guarantee Scheme by the Cottage and Small Industries (CSIs). The member urged the Minister to update the House on the project's details, the places approved for the projects, and on the status of business operators under non-performing Loans.

The Minister for Finance in his response stated that the National CSI Development Bank had released Nu. 2.18 billion in the past one and half years and 6325 people had availed the loan services since the

commencement of the service. The outstanding loan of the bank stands at Nu. 1.74 billion. In order to reduce the rate of non-performing loans and to change the scenario, the Ministry aims to reduce the rate to 7 percent. The reasons stated by the Minister for existing non-performing loans were:

1. Restriction of foreign workers due to the pandemic;
2. Negative impact on long term business on agriculture products due to inflation in goods;
3. Increase in prices of animal fodder which affect the sustainability; and
4. Subsidy issues since livestock products were for a certain season.

In addition, the arbitration of accounts took a longer time.

The Minister also added that, under the National Credit Guarantee Scheme, the credit had been issued through state owned financial institutions for those businesses that had the feasible project to create employment opportunities and substitute export with import.

Note: Detailed Question and Answers deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately. (On the 26th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 24 June 2022)

18. Re-deliberations on the Bills

18.1 Re-deliberation on the Budget Appropriation Bill FY 2022-2023

On Clause 4.10.7 under the road sector in the National Annual Budget for FY 2022-2023, the National Council of Bhutan had recommended

the Government to allocate an adequate budget for Jyenkhana to Sangbaykha, Haa-Samtse SNH being spill over activity which will be executed by the Thimphu DoR office. During the deliberation, the member of Parliament from Sangbaykha constituency clarified that the present Government had been allocating an adequate amount of budget every year considering the importance of the SNH. She also added that the construction of bridges at Namchakhola and Rongtsey Ney had achieved the desired results. While ascertaining the support of the House through the show of hands, the recommendation could not obtain the support of the House.

Clause 7.6 of the National Annual Budget for FY 2022-2023: Hydropower

On the first recommendation which states, “In order to prevent the extension of Punatsangchhu hydropower projects 1 and II, and Kholongchhu hydropower project, to limit estimated budget expenditure and to harness benefit for the people and the country, the National Council recommends the Government for a quick decision.”

The Minister for Economic Affairs and the Prime Minister clarified that PHPA-I being a bilateral project it takes lots of time for bilateral discussion . An independent committee had reviewed the construction of a barrage report. The geological structure on the right side of the river bank of the project was found unstable while carrying out a technical assessment and on top of that land was still not stable due to which it found not suitable for the construction of the dam. Regarding

the PHPA-I, the Government after assuming office had hired three independent consultants in carrying out research and recommended that construction of barrage will be feasible instead of the dam. Thus, the Minister said that the Government was still waiting for the response from the Government of India.

On this, some members expressed that more than anyone, the Government was apprehensive on the issue of the project. Since the project area was under Athang-Thedtsho constituency, the people are skeptical on the completion of the project and were asking different questions. Moreover, setting a deadline for the project completion might cause inconvenience for the Government but they would support if the work is to be done with commitment. In general, providing a deadline for the project completion and status on resolving the prevailing issues should be presented in the House for better understanding of the public.

KholongChhu HydroPower Project

One of the members stated that for the KholongChhu project, the expenditure increased to Nu. 53 billion from the estimated amount of Nu. 33 billion. The project had huge implications on the economy and the security of the country which was a matter of concern for everyone and therefore, the member stated that there was a need for clarification on the reasons to delay the project as it has incurred a huge amount of money and the public had expressed their concerns too.

On this, the Minister for Economic Affairs and the Prime Minister clarified that detailed project report (DPR) was prepared based on 2006 cost estimates and since the report had to be re-prepared, it had incurred extra cost and they also added that every project had to prepare DPR atleast three times which incurred extra cost. They further added that the project being a joint venture between Bhutan and India, there were some problems and moreover, while reviewing the past agreements and the 2016 agreement, it was found that the agreements were in contravention to our Constitution as well as to the Hydro Power Project policies.

In addition, the Minister said that before starting the hydropower project, it was necessary to resolve all the issues and hoped to expedite the project. Since the project would benefit the public and the country, they do not have plans to stop the construction of the project. He also added that it would be better if the National Council could provide appropriate measures to address the issues along with the recommendations

The Minister further stated that Kholongchhu project had to be delayed as there were lot of issues and one of the issues being that, although it was mentioned in the document that the project would award 20 % of the main work to the Bhutanese firm , , however, the Government of India took over the whole project and award only 20% of the civil works related to road connectivity and housing construction to Bhutanese construction companies. And another major issue was on export power tariff which was not clear in the agreement which was discussed and made clear to get at higher rates for the electricity export.

Sunkosh Hydropower Project

On the 2nd recommendation which states, “people under three gewogs of Lhamoidzingkha and nearby residence have not benefited through this developmental project. The National Council recommends the Government to fix a start date for the project in order to benefit the general public through the basic infrastructures of the project”. Few members asked the Government to confirm on the project and if yes, then on the start date of Project so that people around the area could prepare for the basic necessities and it is important to specify in the 13th Five Year Plan if the project is not certain in this FYP. On matter, some members expressed that there were inconveniences in the implementation of hydropower projects and suggested that establishing hydropower projects in other places would be best after completing the ongoing PHPA-I and II.

To this, the Minister for Economic Affairs stated that although the Sunkosh Hydropower Project was viable, it could not be initiated because there were emergence of many other alternative sources of energy globally. In addition, if a huge amount of budget was invested for the hydropower project, besides risk of causing substantial environment damages, ultimately there were risk of not being able to sell power. He also added that the Sunkosh Project was estimated to incur a cost of Nu.200 billion and with the changing sources of energy, it would be wise if the people residing there could undertake important projects in

consultation with the Dzongkhag Administration and do not have to wait for the project to commence. For the Sunkosh Project to commence, it would take around 6 years. Accordingly, while ascertaining the support for the recommendation with show of hands, the recommendation was not passed.

Education Loan

On the recommendation, “Parents in order to provide support in educating their children considering the importance of education in improving the characteristics of a person, the National Council recommends the government to discuss with the Royal Monetary Authority to increase the term for education loan up till 15 years”, the Minister for Finance and other cabinet ministers stated that it was convenient for those who had a mortgage but will create inequality to those who cannot afford to get loan without mortgage. The Minister added that in most of the financial institutions, education loan is sanctioned till 10 years and therefore, supported the recommendation.

The Minister further said that it is easier for the banks to disburse loans and despite having problems of repayment, it is like community welfare rather than making profit. The issue regarding the loan repayment isn’t an issue rather it is an investment for the country and it should be supported. The Ministry of Education had put on hold education related loans which they used to give in the past years and as per the Royal University’s plans, around 60% had to be invested in providing skill training and another 40% in the colleges of Royal Universities.

Moreover, the Minister said that out of Nu.150 million as education related loans, Nu. 138.9 million were sanctioned and Nu. 5.1 million had been repaid. With regard to the report on repayment of loan after completing the studies, one member said that the reason for providing education loans was to develop skills and to build expertise for future generations, thus required to establish a separate agency to sanction education loans.

While ascertaining the support of the House by show of hands, the House supported extending the education loan term up to 15 years. The House passed two recommendations out of four recommendations made by the National Council and with this ended the re-deliberation on Budget Appropriation Bill for FY 2022-2023.

18.2 Re-deliberation on Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

In order to avoid violation of section 46B of the Public Finance (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012, the National Council of Bhutan had recommended to withdraw the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022 and to amend the Public Finance (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012. The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, the member of Parliament from Bongo-Chapchha constituency submitted that the National Council had objected to the deferment of commencement date and insertion of few sections to which the committee could not accept and therefore, requested to retain the recommendation of the National Assembly as adopted earlier.

The Minister for Finance said that all the Money Bills were not of the same nature. While some could be implemented immediately after the introduction, some were not feasible to do the same. Moreover, the Minister said that, as per the section 46 of the Public Finance (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012, a Money Bill or Financial Bill was a Bill which contained matters related to imposition or increase of any taxes or abolition, reduction or remission of any existing taxes, and Government spending that was appropriated or payment of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund which could be implemented either as Money Bill or Financial Bill. He further stated that there was no way to export natural resources to other countries if the Goods and Service Tax (Amendment) Bill was not implemented.

To this, the Opposition Leader along with other members said that, although the Bill was considered important, the outcome did not meet the requirements. Moreover, he said that it had affected the mandates of legislation as the differentiation between Money Bill and Financial Bill was clearly stated in the Constitution of Bhutan. Although the Bill was supported as a Money Bill when it came to adoption, it was not in a proper manner. Furthermore, according to section 46B of the Public Finance (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2012, the Money Bills had to come into effect on the day the Finance Ministers first introduces the Bill in the National Assembly, he said that unless the Public Finance Act is amended, the Bill remains inconsistent.

Additionally, he mentioned that, even if the Bill was withdrawn, the usage and preparation of the software for the tax system could be continued lawfully. He added that it would be a waste of resources if the present Government doesn't continue as a ruling in next term to continue the task.

While ascertaining support of the House on the recommendation of the National Council of Bhutan, the recommendations failed to acquire the support and hence the Bill remains passed with the recommendations as earlier adopted by the National Assembly. The Speaker informed that the Bill would be submitted to the Druk Gyalpo for the Royal Assent and the deliberation was concluded. **(On the 29th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 27 June 2022)**

18.3 Re-deliberation on Framework Agreement for the establishment of International Solar Alliance (ISA)

The Chairperson of the Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committee (HRFC), member of Parliament from Khenkhar-Weringla constituency presented the review report of the committee for re-deliberation on Framework Agreement for the establishment of International Solar Alliance (ISA). He informed that, in line with the due legislative procedure, the agreement was forwarded to the National Council of Bhutan after it was thoroughly discussed in the 6th session of the National Assembly. The Chairperson reported that upon thorough review of the National Council's recommendations, there were no changes in the meaning of

content but only few changes in translation of the text. Therefore, the committee had accepted the National Council's recommendation and presented accordingly to the House for re-deliberation.

The amendments were supported by the House through show of hands and while ascertaining the support through voting, the amendments were passed with all 42 members present and voting unanimously supporting the amendments. **(On the 29th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 27 June 2022). (The Voting result is provided in Annexure 12)**

18.4 Re-deliberation of Biodiversity Bill of Bhutan 2021.

The Chairperson of the Environment and Climate Change Committee, the member from Draagteng-Langthil constituency moved the motion for re-deliberation of Biodiversity Bill of Bhutan 2021. The Chairperson submitted that after thoroughly reviewing the National Council of Bhutan's recommendations by the Committee, the Committee observed that there were no major amendments in the content of the sections except for changes in words and sentences. However, the chairperson reminded the House to review the National Council of Bhutan's amendment on section 11 of the Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture and Forests acknowledged the new section under section 12, however, he submitted his reservation on amendment to section 11 justifying that the recommendation may pose inconvenience in future while implementing the Act. After several discussions on the

issue, some members supported it as adopted by the National Assembly while others supported the recommendation of the National Council of Bhutan. Nevertheless, while ascertaining the support of the House, the majority of the House by show of hands endorsed the National Council of Bhutan's recommendation.

And while ascertaining the support on the recommendations of National Council as per the due legislative procedure, the recommendations were adopted with the majority support of 44 “Yes” votes and 1 Abstaining. **(On the 29th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 27 June 2022) (The voting result is provided in Annexure 13)**

18.5 Re-deliberation on Tourism Levy Bill 2022

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee, member of Parliament from Gangzur-Minje constituency reported that the House adopted the Bill and presented it to the National Council as a Money Bill and received back from the National Council with recommendations for re-deliberation. He stated that the Committee had reviewed the recommendations received from the National Council which were just few alterations of words without changing the meaning. He added that the National Council had included three new sections which were accepted by the Committee and urged the House to do the same.

During the deliberation, although the House supported the recommendations as submitted by the Chairperson of the Committee,

the member from Chhoekhor-Tang constituency urged the House to support the recommendation of National Council on section 6 of the Bill to delete the words ‘paid’ for the general convenience which states “...a tourist who had confirmed the tour under the Tourism Levy Act of Bhutan 2020 on or before 20th June 2022 shall continue to benefit...”

Likewise, the member of Parliament from Dramedtse-Ngatshang constituency along with other members said that, if the word ‘paid’ was removed it would be more convenient and questioned the Government if it would pose issues for implementation. The Government clarified that, it would be more convenient if this was captured elaborately in the rules and proposed that appropriate social media platforms must be identified in the rules based on the situation of other countries to record as evidence of confirmation of the tour.

On this, other Ministers along with the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed that, when the Government drafted the Bill, in order to avoid the concerns raised by the members, the issues were well captured in the rules and regulations. Further the confirmation had to be validated through evidence and hence he assured that the concerns of the members would be taken care of by the rules. The Minister said that the Tourism Council would be working on this and that the House need not had to worry about it. And the House endorsed the recommendation with a majority show of hands.

On section 7 of the Bill which states, “A tourist shall be liable to pay a tourism levy known as the Sustainable Development Fee of USD 200 per night, which may be revised by the Competent Authority from time to time”, the member from Dramedtse-Ngatshang constituency said that, during the deliberation in the National Assembly the members recommended to delete the later phrase “...which may be revised by the Competent Authority from time to time”, considering its legality, he informed that the Government turned down with the justification that it was in accordance with the laws. However, when the National Council of Bhutan had made the same recommendation, both the Government and the Committee was in favor and for that he reminded that, as legislators it would be appropriate to correct the legality issues and make it consistent with the existing laws in one’s own capacity, without relying on other agency’s intervention.

To this, the Prime Minister said that, if the Committee submits the National Council’s recommendation to remove the mentioned phrase of the section 7 based on the justification that it violates the Constitution then he wouldn’t be supporting the recommendation, if not he would support the National Council’s recommendation for section 7. Further, he said that substituting ‘tax’ with ‘levy’ was a turnabout sentence and supports the National Council’s recommendation as they had consulted law experts.

The member from Chhoekhor-Tang constituency also said that in the section, when the Committee reviewed the removal of the mentioned

phrase, it was discussed and submitted that if it was removed, then it would affect section 8. However, the member said that the Committee agreed to the recommendation submitted by the National Council after detailed discussions because the tourism council could grant concessionary exemption, but the raise in fee must route through Parliament.

After that, while ascertaining the support of the House through show of hands, the House through simple majority passed the National Council's recommendation.

Subsequently, the House accepted the recommendations on section 8, new section 10(6) after 10(5), and amendment of new section and definition after section 11 and 12. While ascertaining the support on the recommendations of the National Council, it was adopted with 38 “Yes” votes, 1 “No”, and 1 Abstaining out of 40 members present and voting. **(On the 30th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 28 June 2022.) (The voting result is provided in Annexure 14)**

18.6 Re-deliberation on Royal Bhutan Police (Amendment) Bill 2021

The Chairperson of the Social and Cultural Committee, member of Parliament from Chhumig-Ura constituency moved the motion for re-deliberation on amendments of the National Council on the Royal Bhutan Police (Amendment) Bill 2021. He reported that the Committee had agreed to accept all 25 sections of amendments forwarded by the

National Council and presented to the House for re-deliberation.

Firstly, the House approved the changes made by the National Council regarding introduction and commencement date of the bill.

The National Council's amendment on section 16(A) by inserting two new sections as section 16(B) and 16(C) was disapproved by the House as it was already covered under section 16A. However, the House approved the amendment made by the National Council on section 27 and 28 of the Bill.

With regard to forwarding the case to the office of attorney general under section 41(d), the National Council had recommended withdrawing the amendment; however, due to the principle of conflict of interest, the House could not agree to the recommendation made by the National Council. Since there was no change in section 43, it was adopted as it is.

The National Council's amendment on section 60 by inserting new words 'requiring the approval from the police headquarter for crime prevention activities at local level', the House could not accept the amendment as it had changes in the content of the section.

Likewise, the House could not accept amendments by the National Council on section 71; however, the House accepted amendments on section 88 and 91.

With regard to new sections 125 and 125(A), the majority of the members could not provide support, however, the amendments by the National Council on sections 149, 195, 202, 208, and 209 were accepted and incorporated by the National Assembly.

Except for the 9 disputed clauses, while ascertaining the support of the House on the amendments of the National Council, it was adopted with 37 “Yes” votes, 3 “No” votes, and 1 Abstaining out of 41 members present and voting. (On the 30th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 28 June 2022). (The voting result is provided in Annexure 15)

19. Question Hour

Group C: Questions to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Economic Affairs, and Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs)

The Speaker informed the House that 8 oral questions were tabled for the 17th sitting for the ministries in Group C. He reminded the House to adhere to the rules on the question hour.

A. Oral Question

1. 3P7S/Q697 land encompassed under the power line.

The member from Dewathang-Gomdar constituency stated that only 7.8% of the total land coverage is cultivable and the percentage continues to decline when these lands are further divided for inheritance. Further he added that, land owners who had power transmission lines on their land have no authority to carry out any construction activities on their

own land, except paying the taxes. He added that there is a risk of causing death due to electrocution while working under these lines during the monsoons. Moreover, victims of such incidents and landowners who face these problems have not been compensated till date. The member therefore asked the Minister for Economic Affairs on the plans of the Government to resolve the issue.

The Minister for Economic Affairs said that land and electricity are both very important requirements for the people. He added that in the earlier days considering the need for electricity, our parents agreed to provide their land, along with a no-objection letter, for the installation of electrical poles and transformers. The government had also paid compensation and substitute land for those lands occupied by the large transformers.

The government in 2011 revised the safety code developed by Bhutan Electricity Authority in 2006 to allow the construction of small houses after due approval. The Minister also said that there was also a system of provision of land substitutes for those who were affected, after proper verification by the Local Government and the National Land Commission. However, in the future electrical lines would be installed only on state land and if private land had to be used then land substitutes would be provided in accordance with the Land Act.

2. 3P7S/Q698 Renovation of Zhemgang Dzong

The member from Bardo-Trong constituency submitted that the sacred and historic Dzong of the Khenrig Namsum people had deteriorated. Moreover, due to the rain and the earthquake that occurred in the year 1997, caused further damage to the Dzong. During the discussion on the renovation of the Dzong in the first session of the Parliament, the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs had said that the plans would be formulated and proposed in the 13th Five Year Plan. The member therefore asked about the status of the proposal and the status of the renovation plan.

The Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs in his response said that the Dzong is a sacred monument for the country and in particular to the people of Khenrig Namsum. He informed that the renovation for the Dzong was initiated in the 9th Five Year Plan and currently the Department of Culture under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs was carrying out the detailed project report.

The Minister added that the work on the detailed project report commenced in March 2021. The Dzongkhag and Rabday leaders along with the concerned agencies carried out a study on the architectural design and current situation of the Dzong. The Department of Culture had prepared two main plans, from which plan B was selected. However, the Minister said the final consultation would be held in the next month and the ministry aimed to complete the plan towards the end of the year. The Minister also said that although the plan had not been included

in the current financial year, the renovation of the Dzong had been prioritized in the 13th Five Year Plan.

3. 3P7S/Q699 Issues faced by the people due to the suspension of the Kholongchhu Hydropower project

The member from Bumdeling-Jamkhar constituency questioned the Minister for Economic Affairs regarding the inconveniences caused by the suspension of Kholongchhu Hydropower Project to the people of Trashiyangtse Dzongkhag. He said that the people took loans for construction of houses in the hope of renting it out. However, with the suspension of the project, the houses were vacant, ultimately affecting the house owners and loan repayment. He asked the Government, its plan to address the issue. Secondly, developmental plans such as blacktopping, construction of schools, and hospitals which were previously included in the plan were withdrawn saying these will be carried out by the project. Now that the project has been suspended, the member asked if those developmental plans will be implemented.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response stated that the Kholongchhu Hydropower Project was a joint venture and that it cannot be continued further. He said that talks would have to be held with external partners to either continue or discontinue the project. If the partner agreed to support the project then there was an opportunity to resolve internal issues. He said that the developmental works such as blacktopping, construction of schools, and hospitals would be suspended as well.

4. 3P7S/Q700 Quarry and Nyera AmaChhu hydropower Project

The member from Jomotsangkha-Martshala constituency expressed that the people of the four gewogs were very happy to hear the news about news about Nyera AmaChhu hydropower Project and quarry in Samdrup Choling Dungkhag, under Samdrup Jongkhar. The member said that the State Mining Corporation Limited had once given an opportunity to the local public as expected. The Detail Project Report (DPR) for the Nyera AmaChhu Hydropower Project was started in 2016 and completed in 2017 and it was expected to be commissioned by 2018. However, the commission date of the hydropower project was still not clear. The member asked the Minister for Economic Affairs about the status of the hydropower project and its commissioning.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that the DPR was carried out between 2017 and 2018, however the DPR on Nyera AmaChhu could not be prepared properly. The Government had asked Druk Green Power Corporation to update the report in which it states that the 404 MW Nyera AmaChhu hydropower needed to be carried out in two stages. One to be established in Gomdar while another would be at Seytsa in Martshala. The project is estimated to cost a total budget of Nu.33 billion.

However, the minister added that it would be difficult to export the power as it would cost Nu. 4.8 per unit and hence the economic viability was slim. The Minister informed that the details of the project had been

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submitted to the Asian Development Bank for support and the project would be taken up if loan could be secured .

5. 3P7S/Q701 Renovation of old Lhakhangs and Goendays.

The member from Chhumig-Ura constituency said that the people faced difficulty in getting the approval to renovate old and scared Lhakhang and Goendays from the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs. He said that although there were no issues related to Lhakhangs under the Zhung Dratshang and Shedras, issues were faced when it came to getting approval for renovation of monasteries and lhakhangs owned by the communities . He therefore asked the Minister on the measures and plans to change the policy to ease the approval process.

The Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs in response to the question stated that it is the mandate of the Ministry to preserve old temples and grant approval for renovation. He informed that the Ministry could only approve 26 out of 300 requests submitted last year. He said that approvals had been granted as per procedure and it entailed more time as the approval had to pass through the Gewog, Dzongkhag, and had to be further reviewed by the Department and undergo site visit and monitoring process. This was carried out with the objective to preserve the architectural design and ensure that the sanctity of the temples was maintained.

The Minister also added that the problem of limited human resources and lack of submission of proper and complete documents as required by the

applicants lead to delay in the approval. The Minister further clarified that while the private individuals could submit applications anytime, the application for government owned Lhakhangs and Goendeys was only open from July to September. However, the Minister informed that the Ministry plans to authorize the Gewogs to grant approval for renovation of small temples and aims to provide approval from the Ministry within a week for applications for renovation and within a month for new construction.

6. 3P7S/Q702 Issues related to vehicle import companies/ agents

The member from Monggar constituency questioned the Minister for Economic Affairs regarding the import of vehicles. The member said that a buyer was required to pay an advance of up to Nu.300,000/- to vehicle dealers when placing an order. However, the delivery takes more than a year after an advance payment. Therefore, the member asked the Minister to clarify whether the concerned buyer could directly import the vehicle after paying tax to the Government and the possibility of the government implementing strict rules and regulations to ensure that the companies deliver the vehicles within 3 months of advance payment.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that the issue was raised previously and the office of Consumer Protection carried out an investigation and the issue was under discussion with the Department of Trade and Vehicle Import Agents like Zimdra and STCBL. The

Minister clarified that a buyer could choose to buy a vehicle himself after payment of tax to the Government and it was not compulsory to buy from agents. The Minister also highlighted that the reason for having the local vehicle dealer was to provide efficient after-sale services. The least time taken to buy a vehicle ranges from 3 to 6 months and it was in accordance with the agreement made between the buyer and the dealer. However, due to the pandemic, vehicle production gets delayed at the factory, and in such case, the dealers had no control over it. He added that the Government was reviewing the terms and conditions of the agreement and also looking for better alternatives to address the issue as the vehicle agents were mostly operating as monopoly.

7. 3P7S/Q703 Assistance from foreign countries

The member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency questioned the Minister for Foreign Affairs regarding assistance from foreign countries. The member asked that as we graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) to medium-income country by 2023 assistance like grants, low-interest loans, and other technical assistance that we receive from other countries might stop or reduce. Further, the country's current economic framework is not very good, so the member asked for the Government's preparation policies and plans to offset the possible impact.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs in response stated that the country has 3 years to prepare and would continue to get assistance during this period. He informed that firstly, international support would continue

for the next three years as a transition phase. Secondly, a transition strategy prepared by Gross National Happiness Commission was ready and would be implemented in the 13th FYP. He also informed that the World Bank and Asian Development Bank had been providing grant and preferential interest loans at par with Least Developed Countries and would continue despite graduation. Even though the official development assistance might be stopped, it had been just 5% of the gross domestic product (GDP) since 2017, so it might not have a huge impact. He also reported that the support from India would continue irrespective of graduation. Japan and the European Union would also continue their support till 2027. He also submitted that the support from the United Nation and related organizations might decrease but marginally. He submitted that we need not worry much till 2028. He also expressed his hope that the transformation initiatives would further pave the way for the country to become a high-income country.

8. 3P7S/Q704 Energy security and protection

The member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency asked the Minister for Economic Affairs about the Government's plans and policies to strengthen energy security in the country. The member highlighted that the hydropower project is the main security for the country's economy but natural calamities are the challenges behind it. Although our country gained 11 billion by selling hydropower, due to the import of petrol and fossil, the country ran a loss of 9 billion. The member outlined that the

country can produce 12,000 MW of solar energy and 760 MW of wind energy but as of now the country could produce 9 percent of non-hydro energy. The member also asked the minister about the percentage of our energy security.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that although Bhutan had aimed to produce 10,000 MW of hydropower by 2020, the plan failed due to many other challenges. The minister added that solar, wind, thermal and nuclear, and hydrogen are other sources of energy amongst many others to strengthen the energy security of our country.

In 2021 the Government formulated a new policy on Hydropower Projects. While the Government was looking for the possibilities of green hydrogen, it was also in the process of amending the Alternative Energy Policy. During summer, energy generated by renewable energy sources was 2326 MW and decreases to 411 MW during winter, requiring additional energy of 500 MW. The Minister said that it would be possible for Bhutan to be stable by 2030 when the country produces an extra 1400 MW of renewable energy. The Minister added that the Government is working on solar energy and its procedures to overcome the challenges faced today.

Supplementary question 1

The member from Chhumig-Ura constituency asked the Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs to clarify if there were any policy restrictions

on expansion of small Lhakhangs considering the government's policy to maintain and preserve original structures.

The Minister for Home and Cultural Affairs in his response stated that the approval for expansion of lhakhangs was usually not granted, however the ministry provided approval for construction of structures surrounding the Lhakang and expansion of few lhakhangs had been granted on the condition that the existing architecture and structure was maintained.

Supplementary question 2

The member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency asked the Minister on the percentage of energy security in the country currently although the Minister had said that the country does not have any energy security at the moment.

The Minister for Economic Affairs in his response said that technically Bhutan has 99 percent of energy security but the situation keeps changing. However, he said if in few year time if two to three hundred of solar energy projects be implemented it would benefit in securing energy security of the country.

Note: Detailed Question and Answers deliberations can be viewed in the Question Hour verbatim booklet published separately. (On the 29th Day of the 4th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 28 June 2022)

65 Oral questions and 4 Written questions were tabled in the 7th Session of the Third Parliament

20. Resolution on Report of Public Accounts Committee

20.1 Royal Kasho for Joint Sitting

The Royal Assent is hereby granted to convene the Joint Sitting of Parliament on 29 and 30 June 2022 to present the Review Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Annual Audit Report 2020-2021 and the Review Report of the Performance Audit Reports. **(On the 29th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year)**

By Warrant under His Hand

Druk Gyalpo

19.2 Resolution of the Review Report of Public Accounts Committee

Upon reading the Royal Kasho by the Secretary General, the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee, member of Parliament from Tashichhoeling constituency presented the Committee's review report on reports submitted by the Royal Audit Authority (RAA).

The Chairperson informed that unlike in the past practice, PAC on a pilot test conducted the consultative meetings with its stakeholders without involving the officials of the RAA to exercise its legislative and oversight functions and to see the difference. She informed that the Committee's report was divided into four chapters:

Chapter 1: Review Report on Annual Audit Report 2022-2021 and three recommendations of the Committee;

Chapter 2: Follow up Report on Annual Audit Report 2010-2020 and three recommendations of the Committee;

Chapter 3: Review Report on Performance Audit Report on Operations of Natural Resources Development Corporation Limited and three recommendations of the committee;

Chapter 4: Follow up on Implementation status of 5th and 6th session Resolutions and Committee's observations and recommendations.

The Chairperson urged the House for a fruitful deliberation of the report

While deliberating on the recommendation 1 of Chapter 1, the National Council Member from Sarpang Dzongkhag supported by a few members expressed their concerns on the annual increase in fiscal deficit, loans, and underutilization of capital budget. They also recommended that the Parliament should take responsibility to resolve the audit irregularities resulting from violation of laws and the system. While ascertaining the support of the House for inclusion of new recommendation by show of hands, only 30 members out of the 67 members present supported it, therefore the recommendation could not be accepted.

On behalf of the Committee, the Eminent Member of National Council, Phuntsho Rapten clarified that the Committee did not submit a recommendation on an increase in the fiscal deficit since the Government and Royal Monetary Authority had discussed and clearly specified the measures in the Annual Budget Report. The Committee also mentioned that underutilization of the capital budget for FY 2020-2021 was due to pandemics and he also clarified that committee had recommended to mention those fiscal deficits in the Annual Performance Agreement of the Government to resolve the audit irregularities,

Similarly on Committee's finding 5, the member of National Council from Zhemgang Dzongkhag along with few members said that there was an opportunity to resolve the irregularities if RAA implemented it according to its Act and laws on accountability fixation. They also questioned whether the Committee had discussed with RAA or not and

raised their concerns whether it would really help to resolve irregularities by mentioning in their Annual Performance Agreement. They even shared that it might be due to procurement rules and regulations for which they sought clarification from the Committee.

To this, the Finance Minister and few members expressed that the Committee should be mindful about challenges and practicability while submitting the recommendations. He also expressed that it would be better if recommendations were submitted along with a solution to rectify the sections if there were problems in the laws instead of criticizing. He further added that it was important to clarify whether the Committee had met with the individual defaulters to find out the reasons for their defaults.

Moreover, the Minister added that looking at major irregularities in the Gewogs, it indicates whether the Local Governments were fully aware of financial knowledge or not and also on the need to provide adequate financial knowledge to them if not given. He also reminded that the fiscal deficit was due to decrease in internal revenue, therefore, it was important to focus on increasing the internal revenue.

On this, the Committee members clarified that recommendation to include the financial irregularities in the Annual Performance Agreement was made in line to support the National Reforms and moreover, the Committee submitted that if the head of the agencies worked hard then

it was easier to resolve the irregularities. And for accountability fixation, although it was clearly mentioned in the relevant laws, some lapses were observed in the implementation. For instance, in the case of Penden Cement Authority Limited, there was a problem in buying the land between the members of the Authority to construct an office in Gelephu. But the accountability was fixed on the Secretary who was not at all involved in the case and the Committee clarified that the Committee had been working accordingly with the findings and recommendations of the Royal Audit Authority.

To this, the Prime Minister said that from the capital budget, the construction sector was allocated with the maximum share of the budget. However, in the past years, the budget was underutilized due to restrictions on the importation of foreign laborers during the time of pandemics and with regard to procurement, new guidelines were framed. In addition, the existing inflation was due to inflation in India where Bhutan had no option when the price increased in India. However, it was also important to note that Bhutan had strived to maintain the inflation rate below 6 percent

The Chairperson of the Committee stated that delay in the completion of PHPA-I was mainly due to the occurrence of landslides at the site and was not able to construct a reservoir. She also added that the House should discuss new ideas and strategies to solve it rather than repeating the fixation of accountability. She also clarified that proper accountability measures were in place to address any issues.

Moreover, the budget for PHPA I was 1.6 billion and it was not a huge amount as compared to the overall expenditure of the project, so if there was support from the Parliament and Government, there was opportunity that the irregularities could be solved at the earliest.

On this some members stated that as per the Committee's first findings on the irregularities in the relocation of the dam, it was not convenient, therefore, it would be better if the RAA and PHPA discuss and come up with measures to resolve the irregularities. And to limit the Government debt and resolve the irregularities, the Parliament should come up with specific measures and advise the construction of a barrage instead of a dam to minimize the debt burden. Henceforth, in order to avoid deficit and waste budget, the Parliament should come up with better alternatives. A Committee member also clarified that there were financial irregularities in PHPA I because it was a big project, therefore, the Committee urged the House to look into consideration for the waiver and the Committee had not recommended for complete withdrawal of the irregularities.

Other members claimed that the Committee's second recommendation should be on working together with the Royal Audit Authority and PHPA I on how to solve the irregularities rather than including the findings on the unresolved irregularities that were more than 5 years. Moreover, the member reminded the House that as the Project being a joint venture between the Indian and Bhutan Governments, the modality of the funding was 30:70 .

In case the audit irregularities from PHPA I had to be waived off, then it should be done in accordance with RAA Act and with regard to waiver of irregularities which were more than 5 years, the RAA and PHPA-I should discuss to resolve the remaining irregularities. In case the irregularities could not be resolved then appropriate recommendations should be submitted and discussed in the next session. Since the second recommendation was policy related and it does not have a clear background, the members could not support the recommendation. On this, after the Minister for Economic Affairs clarified the importance and benefits of constructing dams in the Hydro Project, the House adopted both the recommendations.

While ascertaining the support of the House by show of hands on the first recommendation, the House fully supported the first recommendation and on the second recommendation, 39 members out of 65 members present supported the second recommendation.

Chapter 2: Follow up Report on Annual Audit Report 2010-2020

During the deliberation on follow up report on Annual Audit Report 2010-2020, the National Council member from Trashigang Dzongkhag along with Opposition Leader and other members stated that since most of the irregularities were from ministries, the Ministers should take extra responsibilities and guide them to solve those irregularities. The Committee was asked for clarification on the reasons behind unsolved irregularities from FY 2018, 2019, and 2020 and they also shared their

concerns on waiver of irregularities of PHPA-I as it might set precedent and give opportunities to other agencies to ask for the same.

Moreover, they said that the Committee's findings on irregularities from FY 2010-2017 and having irregularities of 91% within 2018-2019-2020 was worrisome and asked for the clarifications from the Committee on their findings and suggested a need for specific recommendation on the irregularities which couldn't be resolved internally. While some irregularities could not be resolved because the court verdicts could not be implemented after the person had absconded, the irregularities were reported annually and if the Parliament does not come up with measures, the issues would be reflected in the report every year.

For that, the Committee clarified that they had to submit annually on the irregularities for the year 2010-2015 since the alleged persons had either expired, couldn't be traced, absconded hiding in the border areas or some were convicted and serving the prison term. Therefore, this required a clear policy decision or RAA had to decide according to their policies and laws. They also asked the Committee to discuss with RAA to resolve the irregularities and urged not to submit the same irregularities while reporting to the House in the subsequent session. As the Judiciary had established a judgment enforcement unit to resolve and submit a report to the PAC, they hoped that it would be beneficial.

While ascertaining the support of House by show of hands on the three recommendations, the House adopted all the three recommendations of

the Committee and the discussion for the first day was adjourned. (On 30th Day of the 4th Month of Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 29 June of 2022)

On the second day, the PAC continued the discussion on Chapter 3: review report on the performance audit report on operations of Natural Resources Development Limited (NRDCL). While deliberating, the National Council member from Punakha Dzongkhag and few other members expressed that in the findings of both RAA and Committee, the dual role of NRDCL as both commercial and community services created problems and to resolve the two conflicting roles, they recommended for segregation of commercial and community services of NRDCL. And said that, ideally the Corporations should be made solely responsible to provide community service. The member also asked clarification from the Committee whether the recommendation would be clubbed together with recommendation 3 or not. Moreover, they said that authority and responsibilities of the Corporation should be clearly mentioned to provide better services to the country and its people in the long run.

Furthermore, the responsibilities of the Corporation to handle both the commercial and community services roles should be delineated for operational convenience. The forest produce such as stone, sand, tree, other produce, and the independent mandate of natural products should not only benefit the Corporation but also the communities. In this regard, people should be provided with opportunities to utilize the

natural resources and it should be made equally available to all. If not, the natural resources would get wasted, therefore, it is important to address such issues.

On this matter, some of the members expressed that, in absence of NRDCL offices in few Dzongkhags, the Government and private sectors in few Dzongkhags, Gewogs and in rural areas were facing challenges in timely availing of natural resources for developmental activities. To address this issue, all Dzongkhags should have one stop service center to provide services to the people to avail adequate natural resources which would ensure convenience to the people. One of the vital services required by the people was funeral pyre wood. For instance, people in the capital had easy access through the Kidu service or commercial outlet. Similarly, the pyre wood for cremation purposes in other Dzongkhags should also be given priority and made readily available like in Thimphu.

In this regard, the Minister for Agricultural and Forests stated that, in the interest of the nation, the NRDCL was made the sole responsibility to regulate forest resources and on the other hand, it had to provide vital natural products such as stone, sand, and timber to the people. The dual responsibilities had caused much inconvenience to the management staff and also to the people in availing the services. To address this issue, the Ministry had submitted the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan which was discussed in the National Assembly and submitted to the National Council. The Minister apprised the House to make it

convenient through the Bill to provide efficient service delivery and benefit the people through the services provided by the Corporation employees.

On this, the Committee clarified that there was no requirement to include a separate recommendation made by the National Council member from Punakha Dzongkhag since it is already included in recommendation 3. The Committee also requested the House to be aware that Corporation's commercial responsibilities to sustain it and during the current economic crisis, the Corporation would face hurdles to achieve its objectives, if it had to provide community services to people by establishing offices in all the Dzongkhags. The Committee also shared its concern on the recommendation if the House passed it.

Some of the members expressed that the main responsibility of the NRDCCL was to distribute stone, sand, and timber to the people in the Dzongkhag, Gewog, Thromde, and rural areas at an affordable price. Although the Corporation had been distributing timber in the management areas, timber extraction areas and industries, it had failed to distribute timber in the Gewogs and rural areas since there were no offices in the Dzongkhags, They also requested the Committee to review recommendation 2 which stated that the sole responsibility of NRDCCL was to distribute timbers.

Moreover, in the year 2007, His Majesty had decreed that for the welfare of the people, NRDCCL was mandated to provide easy accessibility

of the natural resources such as stone, sand and timber to the people at an affordable prices within reasonable time from the NRDCL. In addition, it is important to harmonize the present mandate of NRDCL as both commercial and to provide services to the public with Article 1 (12) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and they also sought clarification from the Committee whether the concerns raised were covered under recommendation 3 or not. Moreover, they said that irrespective of whatever laws were put in place, it mainly depended upon the rural experience of the field officers. If the field officers were well aware of the rural situation and experienced, the applications put up by the public were verified and services were provided easily but at the same time, if the field officers did not understand the rural situation and inexperienced; then it would take years and years to provide services to the people which needed to be carefully reviewed and looked into.

The Committee clarified that the NRDCL had been carrying out the dual role i.e. His Majesty's desire in fulfilling people's welfare and functioning in line with the commercial mandate of Druk Holdings and Investments (DHI). In view of the above, the RAA had recommended the DHI and MoAF to review the responsibilities of NRDCL to come up with clear guidelines. The Committee further clarified that issues related to distribution of timber and other natural resources had been adequately addressed in the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan.

Some of the members expressed that it would be better if the recommendations made by RAA and Committee could be improved instead of saying that it would be covered in another Bill and regulations. They also suggested that it would be better if recommendations could be submitted including both NRDCL and Department of Forest.

On the proposal submitted by a National Council member from Punakha Dzongkhag to task NRDCL with either social mandate or commercial mandate, the House through show of hands agreed to discuss the proposal and the House directed the Committee to review the recommendation.

The National Council member from Haa Dzongkhag proposed a new recommendation to study and come up with measures to establish a service center by the NRDCL in all the Dzongkhags in order to make the natural resources such as sands, stones, and timbers available at a reasonable rate to the public throughout the country. The House agreed to deliberate on the proposal with 35 ‘Yes’ votes out of 65 members through the show of hands.

To this, the member of Parliament from Athang-Thedtso constituency and a few other members mentioned that in the third recommendation, the words such as Enterprise resource planning gave an impression of profit making, therefore, he suggested to use the words such as “robust control and social benefit measures”. Moreover, including such terminology did not breach the policy of DHI and directly benefited the

people. It should not hinder the NRDCL's board to make a decision to provide services to the public and henceforth, he reminded the House to be mindful while making such recommendations.

The Committee members made a clarification to the House that the mandates of the NRDCL would be aligned once the civil service transformation exercise was completed. The Committee would present a follow-up report in the next Session. With regard to the second recommendation, the Committee informed the House on the challenges being faced by NRDCL with regard to harvesting and distribution of timbers. The House was also informed that the NRDCL current mandates of both profit making and community service provision were in line with the DHI policy. The Committee further stated that other companies under DHI functioned in the similar manner and they also clarified on the intent of retaining the words 'Corporate Strategic Plan'.

The Opposition Leader, Prime Minister, and few other members asked for clarification from the Committee that whether the three recommendations had incorporated all the 16 recommendations including all its sub-sections that had been provided by the RAA or whether there was an opportunity to discuss separately on these issues or not. Further, as per the mandate tasked by the Royal Government to NRDCL in 2007 for effective implementation based on three fundamental principles and for a successful outcome, it required support from the public as well. Currently, the NRDCL shouldering responsibilities of commercial

activities and community services are feasible . Therefore, separation of mandates was not necessary, instead it needed to be supported through policy interventions. They also stated the necessity of establishing office not only in all the Dzongkhags, Gewogs, Thromdes and satellite Thromdes but in all those feasible locations.

Moreover, it was necessary to submit recommendations and measures, if the mandate ofNRDCL was not mentioned clearly and they also requested the Committee to evaluate and submit similar recommendations. As NRDCL being a state owned enterprise, the Government had been providing the community services till date and however, if NRDCL was to be mandated only with community services, then the whole mandate and accountability of NRDCL had to be changed.

Some of the members expressed that concerns raised by some members on the issues related to allotment of timbers were covered in the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan which had been discussed in the National Assembly and transmitted to National Council and there was an opportunity to include additional necessary sections while discussing in the National Council. Moreover, one of the necessary services in the community was saw-mill and the Committee reported that it had submitted the report to the Government. The members also asked the Committee to clarify whether it would violate the Public Finance Act if two mandates of NRDCL: commercial mandate and community services are segregated.

The Chairperson of the Committee stated that the commercial and community services mandates were in line with the mandate of NRDCL and even the agencies under the DHI had been serving in a similar manner as well. The Committee did not support the recommendation to segregate the responsibilities of the NRDCL as it would be in contravening section 80 of chapter 5 the Public Finance Act of Bhutan. Regarding the establishment of the service center, the Committee submitted that there were around 6 to 7 regional offices and such services were also available from the online platform. Further, the establishment of the service center in all Dzongkhags would cost a considerable amount of money and submitted that in the future it could be established depending on the feasibility. Therefore, the Committee said that it could not support the recommendation of the members and urged the House to retain the Committee's recommendation.

Accordingly, the House while ascertaining the support on the three recommendations of the Committee through show of hands, all the members unanimously endorsed the 3 recommendations under Chapter 3.

1. The House unanimously adopted recommendation one, through show of hands, which states “Ministry of Agriculture and Forests to review, enforce, and monitor the Natural Resources Pricing Committee rates and raise awareness to the consumers”, and directed the Minister for Agriculture and Forests to take responsibility and submit a report on the implementation status to the House in next Session.

2. The recommendation two “Review Timber Extraction and Distribution Modality (TEDM) 2017 to enable NRDCL as a sole distributor of timber (log form) in the country” was also unanimously adopted by the House through show of hands and directed the Minister for Agriculture and Forests to take responsibility and provide a review report on the measures undertaken in the next Session.
3. For the recommendation three “The NRDCL should operationalize its Corporate Strategic Plan CSP through annual plans and enhance robust control measures and formalize the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to optimize cost efficiency and productivity”, was also endorsed by the House unanimously through show of hands and directed the PAC to take responsibility to present the report on the implementation status of strategic plans in the next session.

Follow up report on the Annual Audit Report 2020-2021

1. The Committee’s recommendation which states that “As a significant proportion of unresolved irregularities are categorized under the non-compliance to law, rules and regulations, and shortfalls lapses and deficiencies, the Government may consider mainstreaming these parameters in the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) to assess the overall financial prudence of agencies” was adopted unanimously by the House and directed the Prime Minister to assume the responsibility

in reporting the implementation status on the incorporation of audit irregularities in APA in the next session.

Audit irregularities of PHPA I

1. The Committee recommended “Royal Audit Authority and PHPA-I to come to a consensus to resolve the remaining irregularities as some of the observations are of policy issue and are seen carrying on for more than 5 years now”; and
2. The Committee also recommended “The geological conditions of the right bank dam area are seen as force majeure conditions of nature, so irregularities pertaining to Dam Site development may be considered for dropping if the barrage option gets through”.

Both the Committee’s recommendations were adopted unanimously by the House through show of hands and directed the Minister for Economic Affairs to take responsibility and present an implementation report to the House in the next session.

Similarly, the Committee’s three recommendations on the follow up review report of AAR 2010-2020 was adopted by the House unanimously through show of hands and directed to the PAC to report in the next session.

Subsequently, the member of the Committee, the National Council member from Paro Dzongkhag presented a detailed report on the

implementation of the resolutions by the agencies and Ministries under Chapter 4 which was adopted during the 5th session of the Parliament.

During the deliberation on recommendation one on notary office, some of the members expressed that currently most of the youths were availing marriage certificate (MC) for the purpose of traveling abroad and due to inadequate employees in the office, they had to travel to their respective Dzongkhags to obtain their MC although they live in Thimphu causing them unnecessary inconveniences. The members requested the Government to discuss with the Royal Court of Justice to employ additional staff in the notary office to solve the issue, furthermore, the members asked for clarification on the measures taken by the Royal Court of Justice on the establishment of offices in all the Dzongkhags to address the issue despite the shortage of staff so that all can avail equal benefits from the notary services.

The members submitted their appreciation to the Prime Minister's Office and Office of the Attorney General who had commenced working on providing legal aid services to the public through the United Nations Development Program fund. The House passed the resolution stating that relevant institutions and agencies should enforce the past resolution effectively and if they failed to implement the resolution, the Parliament could conduct public hearings as an oversight role. Therefore, the Committees in both the Houses and Constitutional Committees had the responsibilities to conduct public hearings and fix accountability

on the respective agencies. With regard to recommendation one, the Committee also stated that in order to provide adequate support for the establishment of the Public Notary office, it was necessary to come up with measures through contract employees, volunteers, and De-suunps.

After that, a member of the Committee, National Council member from Paro Dzongkhag reported on the follow-up of the implementation status of the resolution from the 6th Session of the Third Parliament from chapter 4.

During the deliberation, the Opposition Leader and the members stated that it would be beneficial for the deliberation and decision making, if the Committee could provide the justifications on the status of implementation of the resolutions by the agencies. Moreover, they also stated that it would be beneficial for the Parliament if the deliberation could be held on procurement related issues which consisted of 15 types in the report of RAA rather than discussing only on the PAC's findings and recommendations.

On this, the Speaker mentioned that the Committee had reviewed and adopted the findings and recommendations stated by RAA in the reports and moreover, 11 recommendations in Performance Audit Report (PAR) and 6 recommendations in General Audit Report were assigned to the Committee to review. He further clarified that those recommendations submitted by RAA were not undermined and as per the procedure,

the House had to deliberate on the review report of the Committee, and reminded the House that any deliberation should be based on the recommendations of the Committee.

After that, the House deliberated and adopted the above mentioned recommendations through show of hands and while ascertaining the support of House through voting, all the 61 members present unanimously supported the 9 recommendations of the Committee and passed as a resolution.

Subsequently, the Speaker declared the following performance audit reports submitted by RAA as public document:

1. Performance Audit Report on Farm Road Development and Management in Bhutan and;
2. Performance Audit Report of Safe and Sustainable Road Transport System and declared it as a public document. Further, the Speaker directed the PAC to review and report on these reports during the next session of the Joint Sitting of the Parliament.

(On the 1st Day of the 5th Month of the Water Tiger Male Year corresponding to 30 June 2022) (The voting result is provided in Annexure 16)

21. Joint Sitting on the disputed clauses in the Bills

21.1. Civil Society Organization (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021

The Chairperson of the Joint Committee, Eminent Member of Parliament, Phuntsho Rapten of the National Council stated that the

Joint Committee was formed to review the disputed clauses in the Civil Society Organizations (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021 as per the Legislative Rules of Procedure following which the Committee had arrived at a consensus on the 24 disputed clauses in the Bill and urged the House to support the recommendations of the Committee.

While deliberating on the disputed clauses, clarifications were sought on section 9 with regard to the Chairperson of the Authority. It was raised that keeping the Minister of the Home and Cultural Affairs as the Chairperson of the Authority might get affiliated to politics and with the civil service reform, concerns were raised on how appropriate it would be to appoint the civil servants as a member of the Authority.

On this, the Committee clarified that as the Authority also had members from other agencies, it won't be possible to have political affiliation rather it would help to get external funding if the Minister was appointed as the Chairperson. The Committee added that the civil service reform under RCSC was under progress, not listing members under the Authority won't be appropriate. The House through a show of hands, endorsed the recommendation along with other recommendations of the Committee.

While ascertaining the support of the joint sitting, all the recommendations presented by the Committee were unanimously adopted with all the 68 members in favor of the Bill and the deliberation adjourned. **(On the 2nd Day of the 5th Month of the Water Tiger Male Year corresponding to 1 July 2022.)**
(The voting result is provided in Annexure 17)

21.2 Report of Joint Committee on United Nations Convention against**Anti-Corruption (Amendment)**

The Chairperson of Joint Committee, the National Council member from Paro Dzongkhag reported the background of the convention and task carried out in the past. At the same time the Committee submitted its findings and two recommendations to the joint sitting as follows;

1. To re-accede to the Convention with reservation to Article 66 (2) of the UNCAC to safeguard the long-term national interest and uphold the rule of law and protect the supremacy of Parliament; and
2. The Government to see where the lapses have actually occurred, fix accountability and submit the action taken report to Parliament.

During deliberation, the Eminent Member of National Council, Ugyen Tshering submitted that when the expert team and the Office of the Attorney General conducted final national interest analysis of the convention in 2015, it was found to benefit the country. However, he said that if Bhutan accepted Article 66(2), it would pose inconveniences and moreover, mentioned that the Convention being similar to the other laws must be followed similar procedure and, he reminded the House to keep in mind the supremacy of Parliament and the security of the country in doing so.

On this, the member of Parliament from Bongo-Chapcha constituency submitted that although it had been mentioned in observation 3 of the committee that it would pose inconveniences if ratified without

reservation on Article 66(2), she said that similar reservations were not submitted while ratifying Framework Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and European Investment Bank (EIB) Governing Activities in Bhutan and the Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) on the Privileges and Immunities of the GCF.

The National Council member from Gasar Dzongkhag and some members supported the recommendation made by the Joint Committee and mentioned that, if the recommendation of the Joint Committee was opposed, the existing Convention would be repealed and hence urged the House to support the Committee's recommendation to continue with the reservation.

The Eminent Member of National Council, Dasho Tashi Wangyel added that Anti-corruption Commission had requested for reservation considering the present and future situation of the country and he also mentioned that as per section 19 of the Vienna Convention of Treaties, the countries were allowed to place reservation on the Convention and informed that some 40 countries had placed reservation on section 66 (2) of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

The member of Parliament from Athang-Thedtso constituency mentioned that the objective of the United Nation was to support and give justice to economically weak countries while facing conflicts with powerful

countries. Thus for the security of our nation, he said the reservation was not necessary.

The Prime Minister stated that although the justifications for placing the reservation was mainly to protect the security of the country and Bhutan being unable to compete with other countries due to weak economy and lack of experts on international law. But at the same time, the Prime Minister mentioned that it won't affect the country's security and there was no right that Bhutan won't be taken to the international court of justice just like any other country if the Convention was ratified without reservation. He further added that Bhutan being a county like any other country should also be ready to appear before the international court of justice if need arises and moreover, till now several conventions and agreements had been ratified without reservation and he hoped that it would not make any difference even if passed without reservation.

Finally, the House while ascertaining support on the first recommendation of the joint committee, 33 members voted "Yes", 30 members voted "No", and 4 members abstained out of 67 members present and voting. Therefore, the recommendation was not passed.

On the second recommendation, the House directed the Government to review and submit a implementation report to the joint sitting in the 8th session and with this, the deliberation on the Bill ended. **(On the 2nd Day of the 5th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 1 July 2022) (The voting result is provided in Annexure 18)**

21.3 Review report of Joint Committee on Anti-Corruption (Amendment)**Bill of Bhutan 2021**

The Chairperson of the Joint Committee on Anti-Corruption (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021, the member of Parliament from Drametse-Ngatsang constituency reported the review report on the disputed clauses in the Bill between the two Houses. The Chairperson reported that the Committee consulted many relevant agencies like Anti-corruption Commission, Royal Civil Service Commission, Judiciary, and the Executive and also conducted four Committee meetings to resolve 34 disputed clauses of the Bill.

While deliberating on section 8 (1) and (2), and section 28 (1) of the Bill regarding Human Resources Independence for ACC, some members mentioned that even though ACC was a constitutional body and it was important to render human resources independence, at the same time its impact and benefits should be considered. Some members opined that the current ongoing transformation was likely to address the issue and sought clarification for the need of certain criteria that need to be set if human resource independence be given. For that the Chairperson clarified that it depended on the budget allocated by the Ministry of Finance and also added that the main reason for the Commission to have human resources independence was because they had 139 staff while their actual requirement was 172.

After thorough discussion, while ascertaining support on the recommendation, 20 members voted “Yes”, 37 members voted “No”, and 5 members abstained out of 62 members present and voting, therefore, the recommendation could not be passed thereby repealing sections 8(1) and (2), and 28(1). (The voting result is provided in Annexure 19)

Subsequently following the deliberation on the offenses and penalties provisions from section 42(3) to 73 of the Bill, while ascertaining support on the recommendations of the Committee by voting, the recommendations were adopted with two-thirds majority support of 48 “Yes” votes, 13 “No” votes, and 3 Abstaining out of 64 members present and voting. (Voting result is attached as Annexure 20)

Finally, while ascertaining support of the House on whole recommendations by voting, it was adopted with two-thirds majority support of 44 “Yes” votes, 14 “No”, and 8 Abstaining out of 66 members present and voting. **(On the 5th Day of the 5th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 4 July 2022)(Voting result is attached as 21)**

22. Concluding Ceremony

22.1 Concluding Address by Speaker.

The Speaker on behalf of the members of the Parliament, welcomed and expressed deep gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for gracing the concluding ceremony of the Seventh Session. He also welcomed the members of the Royal Family, senior government officials, foreign

dignitaries, donor representatives, students and other invitees to the concluding ceremony.

The Speaker offered sincerest prayers for the good health and long life of His Royal Highness The Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck. He submitted that the taking on of the Royal Duties by His Royal Highness The Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck ensured the security and sovereignty of the country and that the people continue to enjoy peace and prosperity.

The Speaker also expressed gratitude to His Majesty The King for tirelessly touring the south and west part of the of country , granting audience to the De-suup trainees engaged in multiple De-suung service projects which had inspired the youth to serve the country and community and also become self -reliant.

The Speaker, on behalf of the Parliament, offered gratitude to His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo for granting land kidu to a total of 150,000 people and also for granting land kidu to 113,000 people of Tsirang and Sarpang Dzongkhags recently.

The Speaker on behalf of people of Bhutan, and in particular, the Parliament of Bhutan offered congratulatory wishes with sincere prayers for the long life of His Majesty the Fourth King of Bhutan His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, on being conferred the Blue Planet Prize 2022.

The Speaker, on behalf of the Parliament, offered deepest gratitude to His Majesty The King and Her Majesty Gyalyum Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck for the Royal initiative and His Holiness the Je Khenpo for conferring vows of Gelongma for the nuns for the first time.

In conclusion, the Speaker reported on the deliberation of the National Assembly and the Joint Sitzings during the current Session. He offered prayers for the long life of His Majesty The King, members of the Royal Family and His Holiness the Je Khenpo and for continued peace and prosperity under His Majesty's leadership.

22.2 Concluding prayers

The Seventh Session of the Third Parliament concluded on the 6th Day of the 5th Month of the Water Male Tiger Year, corresponding to 5 July 2022 in the presence of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo. Following the Speaker's closing address, the members offered Zhabten and Tashi Moenlam to His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo.



July 5 2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Wangchuk Namgyel'.

Wangchuk Namgyel

SPEAKER

Address by Hon’ble Speaker on the Opening Ceremony of the Parliament session on the 2nd June 2022

1. The Parliament session commences today on this auspicious day. On behalf of all Members of Parliament and on my own behalf, I would like to humbly welcome and express my deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King for gracing the opening ceremony.
2. The Parliament would like to welcome Her Majesty the Queen, Members of the Royal Family, senior government officials, and foreign diplomats and dignitaries to the opening ceremony. (If it pleases Her Majesty the Queen and Members of the Royal Family attending the Opening Ceremony)
3. If I may seek permission from the Golden Throne and make an attempt to share the selfless service of His Majesty the King for his Country and the people, time and my capacity would be simply inadequate to cover all aspects of the noble deeds as they are immeasurable. The country was progressing very well on the path of self-reliance in its economic development path under the leadership of His Majesty the King. However, with the outbreak of Covid, times had become challenging. His Majesty the King, leaving behind his precious Princes and the Queen and the family, had chosen to care more for the wellbeing of his people. He has been tirelessly travelling across the country disregarding his personal

safety and health in combating Covid. The people are so grateful for the King's benevolence and hold it dear to their heart. The parliament, on behalf of the people, would like to thank His Majesty the King for the care and concern.

We all know His Majesty the King's deep concern for the meaningful engagement and welfare of the youth has led to the establishment of De-suung Programme. And we all are aware of the hard work and their selfless service of Dessups to the nation.

With his deep concern for the Dessups in particular and the youth of Bhutan in general, his Majesty the King has launched massive De-suung Skilling and Reskilling Programmes across the country to provide gainful employment. His Majesty has personally visited all the Skilling Programmes centres to ensure effectiveness and advised the youth to make best use of the precious time in the centres and to work towards earning a decent livelihood to serve the nation. The golden words of advice from His Majesty have been very reassuring and inspirational in building selfconfidence.

Furthermore, the institution of the Gyalsung National Service by His Majesty the King has been of higher order dedicated to nurture the young people. It is meant to give proper guidance, instil self-discipline and provide professional skills required to succeed in the 21st century and to contribute meaningfully to nation-building. Despite the hurdles

presented by the global pandemic, the project has been progressing as desired.

For all these selfless acts for the wellbeing of the country and the people by His Majesty the King, the exemplary role model extends beyond Bhutan to the world. The Parliament on behalf of the people of Bhutan would like to offer our utmost admiration and deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King.

4. His Majesty the King, apart from granting numerous support and welfare to the people of Bhutan, has continued to grant citizenship. This year, Citizenship has been granted to 308 people enabling the citizens to live a honourable and a peaceful life.
5. His Majesty has commanded the Government to set up Royal Bhutan Helicopter Service regional offices. It is going to be very beneficial for the people especially during medical emergencies and creates scope in enhancing communication connectivity in the future. The Parliament, therefore, would like to express our deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King for the direction.
6. Even though the COVID-19 restriction around the world has been relaxed, about half the population around the world didn't get the opportunity to avail vaccination to shield against COVID-19. Bhutan

has a success story. With the graciousness of His Majesty the King, all the population from young to old have had the opportunity to avail a minimum of three rounds of COVID-19 vaccination. In this regard, the Parliament, on behalf of the people of Bhutan, would like to thank His Majesty the King.

7. The monastic body led by His Holiness the Je Khenpo and other religious masters have been performing numerous prayers and religious activities for the prevention and the protection against the global pandemic. Moreover, this year, upon the command from His Majesty the King and His Holiness the Je Khenpo, the Central Monastic Body while observing the 371st death anniversary of Zhabdrung Rimpoche, had also commemorated the 400th anniversary of Central Monastic Body's establishment by Zhabdrung Nawang Namgyel in a grand manner befitting the occasion. The auspicious occasion telecasted through the national television and live streamed to the general public has enabled the people to pay their homage and facilitated in the reminiscences of past glories. For this, the Parliament expresses our heartfelt gratitude to the Central Monastic Body.
8. The Parliament would like to express sincere gratitude to Her Majesty the Queen, Her Majesty the Queen Mothers, and the Members of the Royal Family for standing close behind and looking after the welfare

of His Majesty the King and also for taking utmost care of Their Royal Princes and for grating welfare support to the communities.

9. If I may present a brief report on the business of the House during this Session: Besides the Legislative and parliamentary functions including Question Hours and Motions, as conducted in the past, the National Assembly in this Session will deliberate on:
- a) Budget Appropriation Bill for the Financial Year 2022-2023;
 - b) Third Reading of the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021;
 - c) Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022;
 - d) Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022;
 - e) Tourism Levy (Amendment) Bill Of Bhutan 2022;
 - f) Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly of Bhutan 2022;
 - g) United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol).
 - h) Three Follow Up Reports on the Implementation Status of the resolutions of the Sixth Session;
 - i) Re-deliberation on the Biodiversity Bill of Bhutan 2021; and
 - j) Re-deliberation on the Royal Bhutan Police (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021 along with deliberations on several other Bills.

Annexure 1

10. The Joint Sitting of the Parliament will deliberate the following:
- a) Royal Audit Authority's Annual Audit Report 2021;
 - b) Two Performance Audit Reports;
 - c) Follow up report on the Implementation Status of the resolutions;
and
 - d) The Disputed Bills between the two Houses,
 - The Anti-Corruption (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021
 - The Civil Society Organizations (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021; and
 - The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) (Amendment).
11. The Parliament will ensure deliberations that would enable framing laws that are beneficial to the country, people and implementing agencies.
12. Lastly, under the wise leadership and guidance of His Majesty the King and the Members of the Royal Family, prayers from His Holiness the Je Khenpo and monastic bodies, collective merits of the Bhutanese people, massive support from the Members of the Parliament and the Civil Servants, I would like to offer prayers for fruitful deliberation and successful conclusion of the Seventh Session.

Thank You

The National Assembly of Bhutan deliberated on The Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly 2022 on the 4th day of the 4th month of the Water Male Tiger Year corresponding to 3rd June 2022 and adopted as follows:

1. Chapter 2- Submission of certificates and Oath of Office/Secrecy

Section 2

~~A member-elect who have been elected shall present their certificate of election to the Secretary General for registration before the day on which the National Assembly convenes for its first sitting, the first time. Following the election.~~

2. Oath or Affirmation of Office

Sec 5

~~The members~~ **A member-elect** of the National Assembly shall take an Oath or Affirmation of Office as provided for in the Third Schedule of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, **during the first sitting in the Hall as prescribed in Annexure 1 of this Procedure.**~~before assuming their responsibilities.~~

3. Oath or Affirmation of Office

New section after section 5

A member-elect, who is elected in the bye-election, shall take an Oath or Affirmation of Office as provided for in the Third Schedule of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan in the Hall and shall follow the procedure prescribed in Annexure 2 of this Procedure before assuming responsibility.

4. Oath or Affirmation of Secrecy

New Section after section 6

The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly shall take an Oath or Affirmation of Secrecy, as provided for in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kingdom of Bhutan in the Hall, before assuming responsibility.

5. Procedure for administering Oath or Affirmation of Office /Oath or Affirmation of Secrecy

New sections after section 6

The procedure for administration of Oath or Affirmation of Secrecy shall be as prescribed in Annexure 1 of this Procedure.

6. Orientation Program

New sub-section after section 6

A member shall undergo an orientation program organised by the Secretariat.

7. Session

Sub-heading after section 6 will be inserted as new chapter

New Chapter 3:

SESSION

8. Session

Section 8

The Druk Gyalpo shall summons the first sitting of Parliament after each general election.

9. Section 10

When a session is called at short notice, ~~an announcement of date and place of the session shall be made in the media and members shall be informed by the Secretariat.~~ **the Secretariat shall inform the members and announce the date and place of the session in the media.**

10. Section 11

The Speaker shall submit to ~~inform~~ the Druk Gyalpo of the date of commencement of every session.~~before issuing the summons.~~ **However, the Secretary General shall submit to the Druk Gyalpo the date of first sitting.**

11. Prorogation

Section 14

Amended in Dzongkha

12. Attendance of Members

New section after sec. 14

A member shall note attendance in the Roll of members for every sitting before taking his or her seat.

13. CHAPTER 3

OPENING AND CONCLUDING CEREMONY OF PARLIAMENTARY SESSION ~~OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY~~ SESSION

14. Section 18

Amended in Dzongkha

15. Opening

Section 19

The opening ceremony of **a parliamentary session** ~~the National Assembly~~
shall begin as follows:

16. Section 19(b)

The *Chibdrel* ceremony shall be conducted **as per the** ~~in the following~~ order
of precedence **prescribed in Annexure 3 of this Procedure.**

17. New section after section 19

**The Druk Gyalpo may address the Parliament, as and when deemed
expedient.**

18. Concluding of the National Assembly

Section 21

~~Concluding of the National Assembly~~**Concluding Ceremony of the
Parliamentary Session**

After the Speaker delivers his concluding speech, the members and the six monks from the Central Monastic Body shall recite *Trashī Moen-Lam* led by one of the five Lopens. The Lopen shall receive the *Moenddar* from the Speaker and shall offer to the Druk Gyalpo for his long life. The seventeen monks from the Central Monastic Body shall perform Tashi Jaling and **Serdeng**(closing ceremony) outside the National Assembly Hall and conclude the session.

19. Chapter 4- Commencement and Adjournment of Sitting

Section 23

Amended in Dzongkha

20. Section 24

In case of any changes in the days, time, **place**, and programme of sitting of the National Assembly, the Secretary General shall serve a notice to this effect to the members.

21. Election Procedure

New sub-section after section 33(a)

If there is only one nominee, the election shall be decided by “Yes” or “No” votes.

22. Powers and Functions of the Speaker

Section 34f

Amended in Dzongkha

23. section 34(h)

Fix the date for each session of the **Parliament in consultation with the Chairperson of the** National Council; ~~Assembly;~~

24. Section 34(k)

Nominate one **member** from the **ruling party and one from opposition party in consultation with the Opposition Leader** ~~National Assembly~~ to the National Committee ~~on Parliamentary Entitlements~~ to advise Pay Commission on Parliamentary Entitlements;

25. Section 35

Election **Procedure** and the Powers of the Deputy Speaker

The **same** procedure prescribed for the election of Speaker shall apply, ~~mutatis mutandis~~, for the ~~purposes of the~~ election of the Deputy Speaker.

26. Section 38

When a vacancy occurs in the office of Speaker or Deputy Speaker, the Secretary General shall report the vacancy to the House at the earliest opportunity and the House shall proceed to elect a new Speaker **or Deputy Speaker**. ~~in accordance with election procedure prescribed above. No session shall be held without a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker.~~

27. Motion for the removal of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker

Section 49(e)

~~Intentional~~ violation of Constitutional provisions.

28. Plenary Sitzings

Section 54(a)

Issues raised by the people during the constituency visits;

29. Sub-heading for section 55

Orders of Business

30. Section 56

Amended in Dzongkha

31. Section 57

The Secretariat shall compile and table in the preliminary meeting the Government report, the petitions routed through the members and Local Governments, and Ministries—and Bills, **International conventions, Covenants, Treaties, Protocols and Agreements** received for deliberations. ~~shall be compiled and tabled in the preliminary meeting to be deliberated in the House.~~

32. Section 58

Following the approval of the ~~petitions~~**agenda** in the preliminary meeting, the Secretary General in consultation with the Speaker shall formulate and distribute the order of business.

33. Withdrawal of Agenda

New section after section 59

Withdrawal of Agenda

Any agenda item finalized in the preliminary meeting may be withdrawn with the leave of the House.

34. New Section after section 59

Follow up report

Relevant Ministers shall report the matters under section 59 of this Procedure during the post Session plenary.

35. Member to Address Chair

Section 60

~~Member to Address Chair~~ **the Speaker**

~~Members shall speak standing at their places and shall address their remarks solely and directly to the Chair. They may not address other members, individuals in the gallery, or persons who might be observing through the media.~~

Members shall address their remarks solely and directly to the Speaker by standing at their seats. They shall not address other members, individuals in the gallery, or persons who might be observing through the media.

36. Sub-heading after sec 60

Podium

37. Member to Address Chair

Section 61

Prime Minister's address on state of nation and ~~VVIP foreign delegates~~**foreign Head of the States or Head of the Government or any other guest as determined by the Speaker** if required shall address the House from the grand podium located in-front of the Golden Throne.

38. New section after Section 61

Where a foreign Head of the States or Head of the Government attends in the Parliament, the siting arrangement shall be as prescribed in Annexure 7 of this Procedure.

39. Section 62

Druk Gyalpo's Kasho, Anti-Corruption Commission's annual reports, Annual Audit reports and Budget reports shall be ~~addressed~~**presented** from the podium located at the right side of the Golden Throne.

40. Section 63

Reports others than **stated in** sections 61 and 62 **of this Procedure**, including introduction of new Bills shall be presented from the ~~perspective~~ **respective** seats of the members unless otherwise Speaker directs to.

41. Calling of Members

Section 67

Members who have placed request to speak shall be displayed in the House. Unless otherwise determined by the Speaker, the members shall be called in order of request.

42. Order of Sitting

New section before section 69

The seat of the Speaker shall be in the centre seat with relevant officials of the Secretariat on the left and right in-front of the Golden Throne as prescribed in Annexure 6 of this Procedure.

43. Seating of Secretariat Staff in the House

New section after Section 69

Seating of Secretariat Staff in the House

Relevant staff from the Secretariat shall be seated at the right and left side of the grand podium located in front of the Golden Throne to record the resolution of the House.

44. Time Limit for Speeches

Section 70

Amended in Dzongkha

45. Section 71 of RoP 201448 as amended as sec 5 of RoP (Amendment) 2015
Members shall refer to other members by either Dzongkhag or constituency and not by name.

46. Section 74

~~No matter shall be proposed for discussion which is the same in substance as a matter that has been discussed during the same session.~~

47. CHAPTER 11 (Title)

Amended in Dzongkha.

48. Section 94

~~Question may be asked for the purpose of obtaining information on a matter of public importance within the special cognizance of the Minister.~~

A member may ask question to the relevant Minister on a matter of public importance.

49. Section 85

Amended in Dzongkha text

50. Sub-heading of sec 89

Amended in Dzongkha text.

51. Supplementary Question

Section 99

The Speaker shall ~~withdraw~~**reject** the supplementary question, if:

52. Section 99(c)

~~It seeks confirmation or denial of an opinion.~~

It infringes general rules for questions.

53. New subsections under section 101

b) (vi) a matter which a Minister is not officially concerned;

(b) (vii) a matter discourteous to a friendly foreign country;

54. Heading for section 105

Nature of Petitions

55. Sub-Heading for section 114

Petitions referred to a Minister and response tabled and published

Amended in Dzongkha

56. Section 114

The Secretary General shall refer a copy of the petition and not deliberated in the House to the Minister responsible for administration of the matter which is the subject of the petition.

57. Section 115(a)

Amended in Dzongkha

58. Section 117

Amended in Dzongkha

59. Section 118

Amended in Dzongkha

60. Section 119

The Committee shall examine the petition and if the petition complies with **the National Assembly Act and this Procedure Act**, the Committee may direct that it be circulated.

61. Section 120

Amended in Dzongkha

62. Chapter 13(Title)

Amended in Dzongkha

63. Sec 121 of RoP 2014 amended as sec 9 RoP(Amendment)2015

Amended in Dzongkha

64. Section 122

A member who wishes to move a resolution shall give the notice of motion to the Secretary General to that effect at least three days before the allotted day and shall submit, together with the notice, a copy of the resolution which he or she intends to move.

65. Section 123

(d)~~A~~**Calling** attention to a matter or situation for consideration by the Government; or

66. Section 124

Amended in Dzongkha

67. Section 125

The Speaker may disallow any resolution or a part thereof, if, in his or her opinion, it does not comply with **the National Assembly Act** or this **ProcedureAct** or is an abuse of the right of moving a resolution.

68. Section 127

Amended in Dzongkha

69. Section 128

Amended in Dzongkha

70. Section 129

Amended in Dzongkha

71. Section 130

Amended in Dzongkha

72. Section 131

Amended in Dzongkha

73. Section 132

Amended in Dzongkha

74. Section 134

The Minister concerned shall ~~report to~~ **inform** Parliament in the next session, if not earlier, of the action, ~~if any,~~ taken by Government on a resolution passed by the House.

75. Chapter 14

Legislative Procedure

Amended in Dzongkha

76. Sub-heading for section 137

Amended in Dzongkha

77. Section 137

~~Two copies of a Bill should be received from the Cabinet one or two months before the day on which the Bill is proposed to be introduced in National Assembly~~

The Secretariat shall obtain two copies of Bill from the Cabinet or the member in-charge incase of Private member's Bill one month prior to the session.

78. Section 138

~~The copy is examined by The Secretariat~~ **shall to ensure that :**

- (a) ~~Whether~~ the Bill contains a statement of object, memorandum of delegated legislation and financial memorandum; and
- (b) ~~Whether~~ the Bill is in conformity with the Constitution, other prevailing laws and maintaining uniform drafting standard

79. New sec after sec 138

The Secretariat shall obtain two copies of signed International Conventions, Covenants, Treaties, Protocols or Agreements from the Cabinet one month prior to the session.

80. new sec after sec 138

The Secretariat shall ensure that the International Conventions, Covenants, Treaties, Protocols or Agreements contains the Final National Interest Analysis and is in conformity with the Constitution, other prevailing laws and maintain uniform drafting standard.

81. new sec after sec 138

Language of the House

- (1) Proceedings of the House shall be conducted in Dzongkha language.**
- (2) The Secretariat shall publish the resolutions of the House both in Dzongkha and English.**
- (3) The Secretariat shall table the Parliamentary documents in Dzongkha along with a translated version in English.**

82. Section 150 (d)

~~The ratification shall go through first and second Reading.~~

83. sec 154 and Subheading

~~Printing and circulation of Bill~~

84. Section 164

If any member desires to amend **or object** any provision contained in a Bill as reported ~~by~~**from** the Committee, the member may move that the Bill be recommended either wholly or in respect of some particular amendment.~~or amendments.~~

85. section 165

~~The consideration of the Bill as reported from the Committee shall commence upon the lapse of three days following the day on which such report is laid on the Table of the Assembly.~~

The Committee shall table its report three days prior to the deliberation.

86. Section 171

Amended in Dzongkha

87. Section 173

If a Bill other than money Bill passed by the Assembly and transmitted to the **National** Council is returned with amendments, the member in charge of the Bill may move for the consideration of the said amendments forthwith or on future date. **The House may refer the amendments to a relevant Committee and the Committee shall present its review report to the House.**

88. Section 193

Amended in Dzongkha

89. Section 197

~~Only the~~ **The** Finance Minister ~~shall~~**may** introduce a Money Bill in the **National** Assembly.

90. Section 202

Amended in Dzongkha

91. New section after 203

During the re-deliberation, the House shall vote only on the sections referred by the National Council with recommendations and not on the Bill as a whole.

92. Section 205

When a Bill is passed by the Houses and it is in possession of the Assembly, **three copies of Bill** shall be signed by the Speaker and submitted to the Druk Gyalpo for assent within fifteen days from the date of passing of the Bill.

93. Section 206

One copy of the ~~Bill~~**Act** so Assented by the Druk Gyalpo shall be preserved for verification and record and shall not be allowed to pass out of the House without the permission of the Speaker.

94. New Section after Section 206

Three copies of the Act signed by the Speaker shall be presented to the Druk Gyalpo and each to the relevant institutions for implementation and record.

95. Section 219**Constitutional Amendments Bill**

Subject to the provisions of **section 26 of Article 2 and section 9 of Article 33 of** the Constitution, Parliament shall have the power to amend by way of addition, variation or repeal the provisions of the Constitution.

96. Section 220

Notices of the Constitutional Amendments bills shall not be admitted if the bill does not contain the title indicating that it is a constitutional amendment bill.

97. Section 221

A Motion to amend the Constitution shall be initiated by a simple majority of the total number of members of Parliament at a joint sitting and on being passed by ~~not~~ less than three fourth of the total number of members of Parliament, the constitution shall stand amended on the assent being granted by the Druk Gyalpo.

98. New section after sec 264**Decision and Voting**

Resolution of the House must be honoured and treated respectfully.

99. New section after section 283**Deciding vote of Speaker**

In the event of a tie, the Speaker shall cast the deciding vote.

100. Section 297

~~Salary, Allowances, benefits and other emoluments of the members of the National Assembly shall be in accordance with the Parliamentary Entitlements Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan.~~

101. Section 301

Amended in Dzongkha

102. Section 302

Amended in Dzongkha

103. CHAPTER 22 (title)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE SITTINGS ~~OF PARLIAMENT~~

104. Sec 304 of RoP 2014 as amended as sec 15 of in 2015

A member of **the National Assembly** ~~Parliament~~ shall be entitled to casual, earned, maternity, paternity, ~~and~~ medical leave, and bereavement leave.

105. Title of chapter 23

Amended in Dzongkha

106. New section after section 311

Committee shall develop an annual work plan and submit a copy to the Speaker.

107. RoP 2014 as amended as sec 17 in 2015

A member shall serve in **a** minimum ~~two~~ **of one** and maximum **of two** ~~three~~ Committees.

108. Section 320

A Committee shall elect its Chairperson and Vice Chairperson **during its first meeting** from amongst its members by consensus or by majority vote annually, as the Committee deems fit and proper, to preside over the meeting. **The procedure for the election of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall be same as prescribed in Annexure 8 of this Procedure.**

109. Sec 325 of RoP 2014 as amended as sec 18 in 2015

If a member, without the permission of Chairperson is absent from:

- (a) Three Committee meetings, **chairperson of the concern Committee shall report to the House Committee who shall serve a written** ~~submit an official reprimand letter with a copy to the Hon'ble Speaker. with explanations.~~
- (b) Four Committee Meetings, the **House Committee shall move a motion** ~~may be moved to in the House by from such for removal of such member from the Committee. shall be reported to the House~~ **However, this shall not apply to Ad Hoc Committee meetings.**

110. New sub heading and new sections after sec 322

The Chairperson shall:

- (1) Define the Committee's mandates and prioritize them;**
- (2) Coordinate the proceedings of the meetings;**
- (3) delegate responsibilities to the members as per endorsed workplan;**
- (4) Align members to the mandates of the Committee to enable them to effectively contribute to the Committee's activities;**

- (5) Provide directions to Committee secretary for managing the activities of the Committee;**
- (6) Ensure that planned program, schedule, time and agenda for every meeting is informed to the members;**
- (7) Preside over the Committee meetings and ensure that the meetings are conducted in time with proper decorum;**
- (8) Provide members with equal opportunity to share their views in the Committee meetings;**
- (9) Ensure that required quorum is met for a meeting;**
- (10) Carry out all the Committee related official communication between the Speaker and the Committee;**
- (11) Ensure that all the Committee records are preserved and published for public information;**
- (12) Ensure that witnesses and relevant stakeholders before the Committee are treated fairly and respectfully;**
- (13) To inform the Speaker regarding Committee functioning; and**
- (14) Correspond and communicate on behalf of the Committee.**

111. Sub heading of sec 330

Sittings in private

Closed door meeting

112. New sections under subheading Role of Committee Secretary
After section 351

1. The Committee Secretary shall:

- (1) Provide procedural and professional advice to the Committee;**
- (2) Carry out research with regard to any matters to be discussed in the Committee;**
- (3) Coordinate Committee meetings effectively and efficiently;**
- 4) Facilitate in preparation of Committee work plan in consultation with the Committee;**
- (5) Maintain the Committee records;**
- (6) Draft Committee reports;**
- (7) Draft resolution for Committee related deliberation in the House;**
- (8) Follow up with relevant agencies on the implementation of resolution passed by the House related to Committee;**
- (9) Assist Committees during field visits;**
- (10) Serve in Committees until the completion of the tenure;**

113. New sec after the Roles of the Committee Secretary

Committee Visits

A Committee may undertake field visits to consult, review, and ascertain issues that are under its consideration.

114. Sub-heading of sec 355

National Assembly Committees

Committees of National Assembly

115. Section 375

There shall be a Public Accounts Committee consisting of three members from National Assembly and two members from National Council.

116. Sec 377 of RoP 2014 as amended as sec 38 in 2015

~~The Terms of Reference of the Committee shall be:~~

The Public Accounts Committee shall function as per its own Rules of Procedure.

117. Section 435

A member shall declare all gifts and benefits received in connection with their official duties, in accordance with the **existing laws**, ~~rules prescribed by Anti Corruption Commission.~~

118. New section after section 435

A member shall declare assets annually in accordance with the existing laws.

119. New sec after sec 481

When a member receives personal invitation for meeting, seminar or conference, the invited member shall report to the Speaker for approval.

120. New Chapter before Chapter 30

Term End Sitting

End of Tenure

- 1. The term of the National Assembly shall be for five years from its first sitting and there shall be term-end sitting at the end of its tenure.**
- 2. The Speaker shall deliver the closing statement.**
- 3. The Speaker shall sign the Term End Order.**

121. Chapter 30

~~AMENDMENT, SUSPENSION, INTERPRETATION~~

~~AND AUTHORITATIVE TEXT~~

Miscellaneous Provisions

Annexure 1

Procedure of the first sitting of the National Assembly after the General Election

- (1) Registration of members**
- (2) The members take their respective seats in the Hall (*Alphabetical order of name of the Dzongkhags*)**
- (3) Welcome statement by Secretary General**
- (4) The Secretary General reads out the Royal Kasho to convene the first sitting of the National Assembly**

- (5) Members change their *Namza* and wears *Patang* or *Gyentag*
- (6) Administration of Oath or Affirmation of Office or Secrecy
- (7) Secretary General ushers the Chief Justice of Bhutan and the Zhung Dratshang Lopens in the Hall (*Seats as per Annexure 4*)
- (8) Ushering of Ku-Sung-Thuk-Ten of His Majesty the King
- (9) Zhug-Drel Program
- (10) Members take Oath or Affirmation of Office
- (11) Chief Justice of Bhutan administers Oath or Affirmation of Office from the right Podium
- (12) Members sign the Oath or Affirmation of office before Chief Justice of Bhutan from the Podium located in-front of the Golden Throne
- (13) Members receive thuechu from the Zhung Dratsang Lupon and return to their seats
- (14) The Chief Justice of Bhutan shall administer the Oath or Affirmation of secrecy to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker at the National Assembly hall. (*The procedure for Oath or Affirmation of Secrecy is similar to the procedure for the Oath or Affirmation of Office of the members*)
- (15) Short recess
- (16) Election of Speaker and Dy. Speaker
- (17) Secretary General reads out the election results
- (18) Vote of Thanks

Annexure 2

Procedure for administration of Oath to Members-elect through Bye-Election

- (1) Registration of members
- (2) The members take their respective seats in the Hall
- (3) Welcome statement by Secretary General
- (4) A Secretariat official ushers the Chief Justice of Bhutan and the Zhung Dratshang lopens in the Hall (*Seats as per Annexure 4*)
- (5) Member-elect changes *Namza* and wears *Patang* or *Gyentag*
- (6) The Chief Justice administers the Oath of Office from the right Podium
- (7) Member takes the Oath or Affirmation of Office
- (8) Member signs the Oath or Affirmation of office before Chief Justice of Bhutan from the Podium located in-front of the Golden throne
- (9) Members receive *Thruochu* from the Zhung Dratsang Lupon and return to their seats
- (10) Vote of Thanks

Annexure 3**Order of Precedence for Chibdrel ceremony**

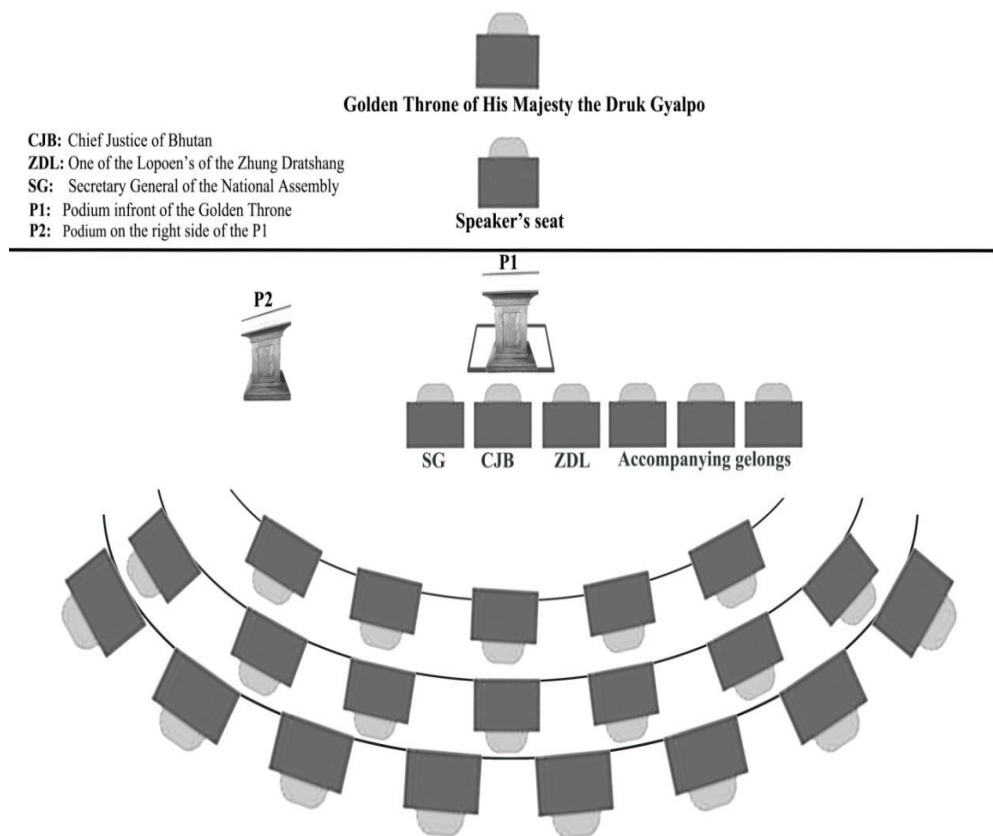
The *Chibdrel* ceremony shall be conducted in the following order of Precedence:

- (1) One *banga*;
- (2) One *Ting Ting*;
- (3) Two *Mangep Jalings*;
- (4) One *Chogdar*(directional flag);
- (5) One *Tsendar*(flag associated with a deity);
- (7) One *Rudar*(coy flag);
- (7) Five *Chogdog dar na nga*(five kinds of scarves);
- (8) One *Gyaldar*(victory banner);
- (9) Two *DzongNga* (ritual drum);
- (1) Two *Chabsub*(cloth containers used by the lay, elite and monks);
- (11) Five *Phozhey*;
- (12) Five *Mozhey*;
- (14) Seven *Pachham* dancers;
- (14) *Ramjam*;
- (15) *Drangpon*;
- (16) *Dzongda*;
- (17) Secretary General to the National Council;
- (18) Secretary General to the National Assembly;
- (19) ~~Opposition Leader~~; **Cabinet Ministers**;

- (20) ~~Cabinet Ministers~~; **Opposition Leader**;
- (21) Chairperson of the National Council; **Prime Minister**;
- (22) ~~Prime Minister~~; **Chairperson of the National Council**;
- (23) Speaker;
- (24) One *Gelong* as *Poephor*(Incense carrier);
- (25) Two *Gelongs* as *Jalings*(Clarionet players);
- (26) One *Thrikheb* carrier (Throne cover);
- (27) One *Jadong* carrier;
- (28) One *bhatra* carrier;
- (29) One *Kudrung*;
- (30) Gyalpoi Zimpon;
- (31) Druk Gyalpo and
- (32) Officers of the armed forces and other attendants.

Annexure 4

Sitting Arrangements of Chief Justice and Lopens during the Oath taking ceremony



Annexure 5

Form for notice of motion

Date:.....

To

The Secretary General

National Assembly Secretariat

Gyelyong Tshokhang

Sir,

I hereby give notice of my intention under section 73 of the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly of Bhutan, 2014 to move the following motion during the ensuing/current session of the National Assembly:

“That.....
.....
.....
.....

Hon’ble member:

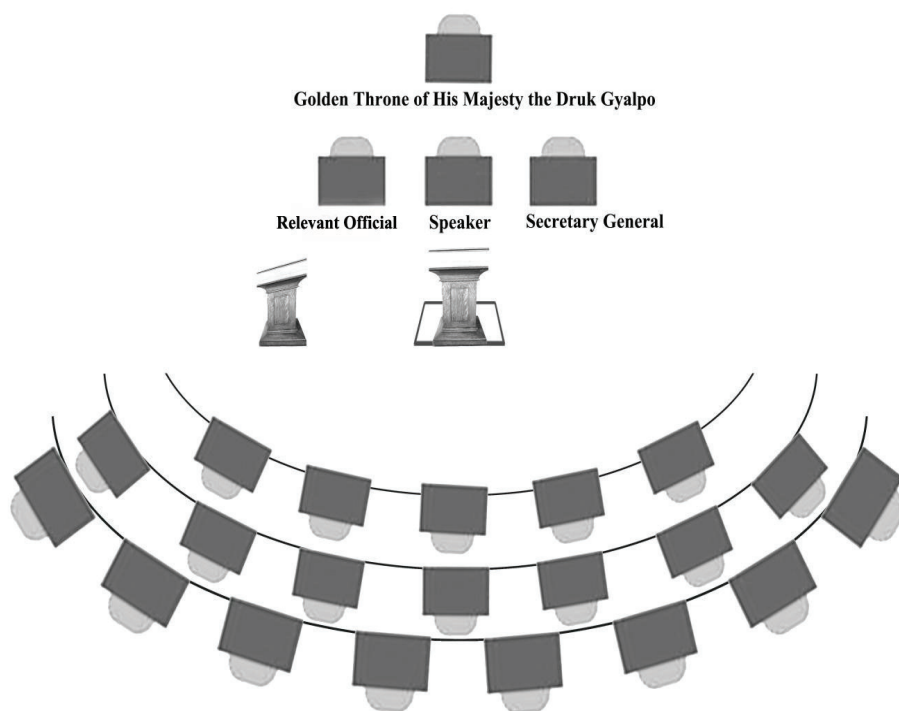
Constituency

Approved/Disapproved

Speaker

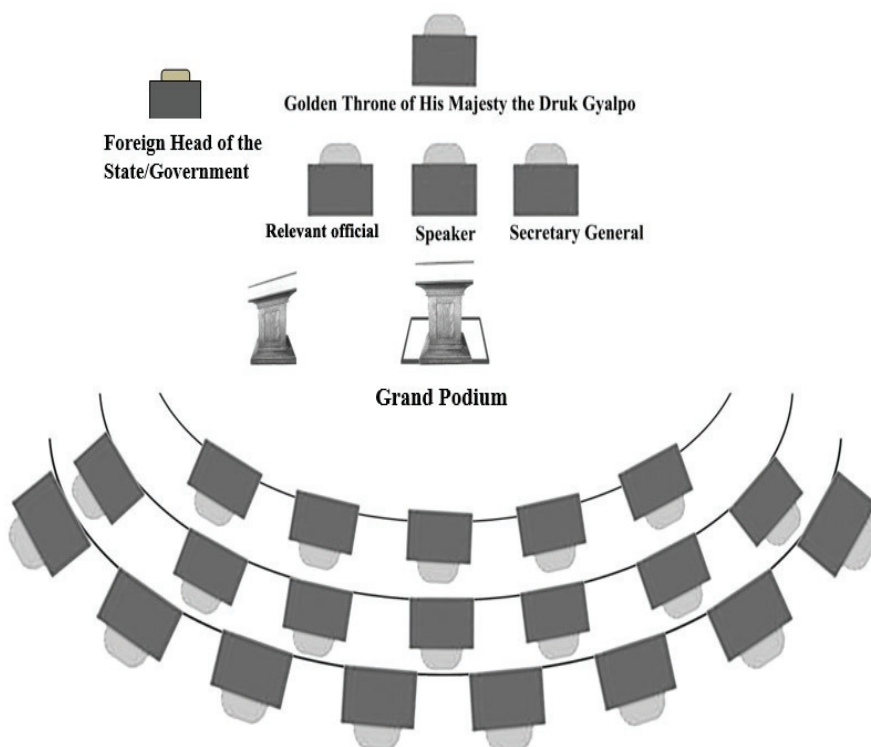
Annexure 6

Sitting arrangements of the Speaker, Secretary General and the relevant official during the session sittings



Annexure 7

Sitting arrangements for the Prime Minister's address on State of nation and Foreign Head of the States or Head of the Government in the Parliament



Annexure 8

Election procedure of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee

- (1) Speaker commands election of Committee Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.
- (2) Committee Secretary briefs on the purpose of the meeting.
- (3) Committee Secretary invites expression of interest from the members.
- (4) A member who have expressed interest must be seconded by another member.
- (5) if there is no member expressing interest, the Committee shall nominate among the members with acceptance from the member.
- (6) Committee Secretary reads the list of members who expressed interest or list of members nominated by the Committee.
- (7) The Committee votes on the list of members through secret ballot or show of hands or consensus.
- (8) Committee Secretary declares the voting result.
- (9) Elected Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson delivers acceptance speech.
- (10) Meeting concludes with deliberation on future plans of the Committee and finalization of next Committee meeting by the Chairperson.

CHAPTER 10

MOTIONS

Nature of Motions

73. A member may propose a subject matter for discussion or a draft resolution for approval.

New Section after Section 73 is inserted as:

Any discussion on a matter of public interest may take place on a motion being moved by a Member.

Section 74 is repealed

~~74. No matter shall be proposed for discussion which is the same in substance as a matter that has been discussed during the same session.~~

Section 75 is amended in Dzongkha

Discussion on a matter of public interest

75. Discussion on a matter of public interest shall take place on a motion made with the consent of the Speaker.

New Section after Section 75 is inserted as:

Admissibility Criteria for Motion

In order that a motion may be admissible, it shall:

- 1) raise substantially one definite issue;**
- 2) not propose for discussion which is the same in substance as a matter that has been discussed during the same session;**

- 3) not contain arguments, inferences, ironical expressions, imputations, defamatory statements or un-Parliamentary language;**
- 4) not relate to any matter which is under adjudication by a Court of Law;**
- 5) not breach any enactment or rule of law or be contrary to the public interest;**
- 6) not contain matters relating to Money and Financial Bills;**
- 7) not contain matters relating to personal gain;**
- 8) not raise a question of privilege;**
- 9) not contain false statements;**
- 10) not refer to the conduct or character of persons except in their public capacity;**
- 11) not anticipate discussion of a matter which is likely to be discussed in the same session;**
- 12) not ordinarily relate to matters which are under consideration of a Parliamentary Committee;**
- 13) not ask for an expression of opinion or the solution of an issue, legal opinion or of a hypothetical proposition;and**
- 14) not refer discourteously to a friendly foreign country.**

Section 76 is amended as:

Notice of Motion

76. The notice of motion shall be submitted to the Secretary General in writing 48 hours prior to the sitting and the Secretary General shall table a signed

copy of the motion in the House **one day prior to the sitting allocated for motions.**

New Section after Section 76 is inserted as:

A member moving the motion shall submit the notice of motion in the form prescribed in the Annexure 5 of this Rules of Procedure.

New Section after Section 76 is inserted as:

The Secretariat shall table the motion both in Dzongkha and English.

Section 77 is amended in Dzongkha

77. Except with unanimous concurrence of all the members present, no motion shall be moved on the day which notice thereof is given.

Three new Sections after Section 77 is inserted as:

Examination of Motion

The Speaker shall examine the motions that have been submitted, and ensure those that are accepted are tabled in the House.

A member shall not move more than one motion in one sitting.

Section 78 is amended in Dzongkha

Admissibility

78. Any motion rejected by the Speaker ~~in consultation with the Secretary General~~ shall be notified to the member concerned with reason.

Any motion

Section 79 is amended in Dzongkha

Withdrawal of motions

79. A member who has moved a motion may **withdraw with prior approval of the Speaker.** ~~move that it be withdrawn.~~

New Section after Section 79 is inserted as:

After the Speaker has proposed the question on the motion, the motion shall not be withdrawn without the leave of the House.

Allotment of time and discussion of motions

80. The Speaker may, after considering the state of business in the House, allot a day or days or part of a day for the discussion of any such motion.

Section 81 is amended in Dzongkha

Acting for an absent Member

81. A member may give notice of a motion on behalf of an absent member, provided he or she has been authorized to do so in writing by the absent member.

New Section after Section 81 is inserted as:

Procedure for deliberation of Motion

Procedure for deliberation of motion is as follows:

- 1) the House shall deliberate on a motion once it is incorporated in the Order of Business.**
- 2) on the sitting allocated for motions, the Speaker shall call on to the Member moving the motion, to move the motion in the House.**
- 3) a member in charge of the motion shall move the motion during the allotted time.**

- 4) **Before the deliberation, the Speaker shall call on to the minister or member or committee concerned to respond to the motion.**
- 5) **the Speaker shall open the House for deliberation and debate on the Motion.**
- 6) **the deliberation on the motion shall be strictly limited within the subject matter of the motion.**
- 7) **the member in-charge of the motion may speak again by way of reply in between the deliberation.**
- 8) **at the end of the deliberation on the motion, if a member in-charge of the motion is not satisfied he or she may speak again calling for further debate.**
- 9) **the motion may be voted as proposed or the House may modify or amend the proposal of the motion upon acceptance of the member who moved the motion.**
- 10) **the House shall vote on the motion.**
- 11) **the motion proposed for the decision of the House shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present and voting.**
- 12) **after the vote has been cast, the result of the vote shall be shown on the screen at the order of the Speaker. The Speaker shall then declare the motion carried or defeated.**
- 13) **if the motion fails to acquire the majority of votes of the members present and voting, the motion stands defeated.**
- 14) **if the motion is adopted by the House, it is referred to the relevant minister or agency or committee concerned for their action.**

Five New Sections after Section 81 is inserted as:

Implementation of Resolution on Motion

- 1) The Secretariat shall transmit the motion adopted by the House to the ministry/agency or committee concerned for implementation.**
- 2) The Secretariat shall, before the next session, avail the implementation status report on the resolution of the motion from the ministry/agency or committee concerned.**

Reporting to the House

- 3) The Secretariat shall table the implementation status report on the resolution of the motion received from the ministry/agency or committee concerned in the House during its next session.**
- 4) The ministry/agency or committee concerned shall report to the House, of the action taken, on the resolution of the motion passed by the House.**
- 5) If resolutions of the motion is not implemented by the end of next session, it shall be continued in the following sessions unless the Parliamentary tenure ends.**

**Voting Subject: Voting result on Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the
National Assembly of Bhutan 2022**

Date: 03/06/2022

Yes 34 Abstain 3 No 1 Total 38

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (PrimeMinister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
6.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
7.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
8.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
9.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
10.	Jurmi Wangchuk (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
11.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
12.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
13.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
14.	Dorjee Wangmo (Sangbaykha)	Yes
15.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
16.	Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
17.	Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
18.	Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
19.	Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes

20.	Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
21.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
22.	Norbu Wangzom (Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
23.	Ganesh Ghimiray (Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
24.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan (Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
25.	Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
26.	Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
27.	Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk (Kanglung-Samkhar-Udзорong)	Yes
28.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
29.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
30.	Karma Gyeltshen (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
31.	Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
32.	Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
33.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
34.	Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
35.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Abstain
36.	Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Abstain
37.	Dil Maya Rai (Tashichhoeling)	Abstain
38.	Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	No

Voting Subject: Adoption of the Budget Appropriation Bill for the Financial Year 2022-2023

Date: 17/6/2022

Vote Result: Yes 42 Abstain 0 No 0 Total present 42

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
10.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
11.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
12.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
13.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
14.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
15.	Jurmi Wangchuk (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
16.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
17.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
18.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
19.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes

20. Dorjee Wangmo (Sangbaykha)	Yes
21. Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
22. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkar)	Yes
23. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
24. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
25. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
26. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
27. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
28. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
29. Norbu Wangzom (Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
30. Ganesh Ghimiray (Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
31. Dil Maya Rai (Tashichhoeling)	Yes
32. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
33. Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk (Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
34. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
35. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
36. Karma Gyeltshen (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
37. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
38. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
39. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
40. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
41. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
42. Dorji Wangdi (Opposition Leader)	Yes

Voting Subject: Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the Financial Year 2021-2022

Date: 17/6.2022

Vote Result: Yes 43 Abstain 0 No 0 Total present 43

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
8.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
12.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
13.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
14.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
15.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
16.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
17.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
18.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
19.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
20.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes

21. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
22. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
23. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
24. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
25. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
26. karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
27. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
28. Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
29. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
30. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
31. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
32. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
33. Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
34. Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron	Yes
35. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
36. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
37. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
38. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
39. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
40. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
41. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
42. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
43. Dorji Wangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes

Voting Subject: Voting on: Adoption of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organization Crime and Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons.

Date: 10/06/2022

Yes 45 Abstain 0 No 0 Total present 44

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
10.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
11.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
12.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
13.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
14.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
15.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
16.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
17.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
18.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
19.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes

Annexure 6

20. Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
21. Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
22. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
23. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
24. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
25. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
26. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
27. Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
28. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
29. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
30. Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
31. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
32. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
33. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
34. Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
35. Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
36. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
37. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
38. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
39. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
40. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
41. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
42. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
43. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
44. Dorji Wangdi (OppositionLeader)	Yes

Voting on: Adoption of the Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

Date: 20/6/2022

Vote Result: Yes 44 Abstain 0 No 0 Total present 44

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
7.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
8.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
12.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
13.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
14.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
15.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
16.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
17.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
18.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
19.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
20.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes

Annexure 7

21. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
22. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
23. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
24. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
25. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
26. Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
27. karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
28. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
29. Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
30. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshorgpelri-Samtse)	Yes
31. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
32. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
33. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
34. Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
35. Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
36. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
37. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
38. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
39. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
40. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
41. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
42. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
43. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
44. Dorji Wangdi (OpositionLeader)	Yes

Voting on: Adoption of the Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022

(20/6/2022)

Yes 41, Abstain 1, No 2, Total present 44

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
7.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
8.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
12.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
13.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
14.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
15.	Hemant Gurung (Lhamoi Dzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
16.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
17.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
18.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
19.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
20.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes

Annexure 8

21. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
22. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
23. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
24. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
25. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
26. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
27. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
28. Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
29. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
30. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
31. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
32. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
33. Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
34. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
35. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
36. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
37. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
38. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
39. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
40. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
41. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
42. Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Abstain
43. Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	No
44. Dorji Wangdi (Opposition Leader)	No

Adoption of Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021

After thorough deliberation in the House, the National Assembly of Bhutan has made the following Amendments and adopted the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2022.

Preamble

ENSHRINED in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan to maintain at least 60 percent of the country's geographical area under forest cover for all time to come **and secure ecologically balanced sustainable development while promoting justifiable economic and social development;**

RECOGNIZING the value of protection, conservation, and preservation of areas of natural landscape and cultural heritage of national **and local** importance, sustainable management of forest, conservation of flora and fauna; and natural resources as an integral conservation regime to enable sustainable development, mitigation, and adaptation to the impacts of climate change;

BEARING in mind, Bhutan's commitment as a member to the International Conventions and Treaties on ecological and biological diversity;

CONVINCED that a representative ecosystems, habitats, traditional knowledge, natural, and cultural landscape; and integrating their management into protected area and other forest management regime is crucial for the effective **protection, conservation, and preservation** ~~conservation, preservation and protection~~ of biodiversity;

ENSURING sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of National, Regional and Global Communities, by developing various management regimes and through effective governance of the State Reserved Forest Land; Parliament of **the Kingdom** of Bhutan hereby enacts the ~~Forests and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan, 20....~~ as follows:

New section 1 after section 1

Commencement

This Act comes into force with effect from >>> day of the >>> Month of.....corresponding to >>> Day of the >>> Month of the Year.....of the Bhutanese calendar.

New section 2 after section 1

Extent

This Act extends to the whole of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Section 2(1)

Repeal

Amended in Dzongkha text

New sub-section after Section 2(1)

This Act ~~shall~~ repeals:

Sections 490, 491, 492, and 493 of Penal Code of Bhutan 2004 and Sections 30 (k)(i) and (k)(ii) of National Environment Protection Act of Bhutan 2007.

Section 3**Saving**

Any permit, forestry clearance or certificate that ~~have~~ **has** been issued or granted under the Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan, 1995 shall continue in effect until the expiry of the term.

Section 5(1)**Guiding Principle**

The implementation of this Act shall be guided by the following principles:
Protect, conserve, and enhance the environment and ~~safeguard the~~ forests of the country by promoting ecologically balanced socio-economic development;

Section 5(2)

Protect and conserve wild ~~flora and fauna~~ ~~fauna and flora~~ in accordance with the principle of sustainable management for the benefit of present and future generation;

Section 5(3)

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 5(5)

Restore, protect, and improve ~~watershed and~~ wetland ~~and watershed~~ for sustained flow of water.

Section 6(1)

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 6(9)

~~Propose to National Environment Commission as required by the National Environment Protection Act, for recommendation to the Parliament for declaring any part of the country to be a National Park, Wildlife Reserve, Nature Reserve, Protected Forests, Biosphere Reserve, Critical Watershed, Biological Corridor, significant wetland of international importance, and any other categories meriting protection.~~

Section 6(13)

~~Propose to the National Environment Commission, for recommendation to the Parliament to approve listing and delisting of species under Schedule I of this Act in consultation with relevant agencies.~~

Section 7(8)

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 7(9)

Carry out national inventory on forest, **medicinal, and wild flora and fauna** ~~and flora~~; and; wetlands as per the international standard ~~with support in collaboration with from~~ relevant agencies ~~sy within the Ministry~~, in accordance with the technical guidelines.

New sub-section after section 7(9)

Promote, conduct, and streamline research related to wild flora and fauna in consultation with relevant agencies.

Section 7(11)

Propose the listing and delisting of species **including medicinal species** under Schedule I, II and III **of this Act**, depending on the level of threat, risk of being endangered or becoming extinct in consultation with relevant agencies as recommended by the Scientific Authority.

Section 8

The Department shall constitute expert group as the Scientific Authority **consisting of members from relevant agencies** to advise the Management Authority on:

Section 15**Power to Search with Warrant**

The forestry official shall have the right to enter into any ~~private~~ premises in search of evidence related to forest produce or product with Court warrant upon showing probable cause.

Section 16**Power to Search without Warrant**

Any forestry official ~~shall~~ **may** conduct search in the Forest-Based Industry including construction site without Court warrant in presence of the **proprietor or** management upon receipt of information or sighting commission of offence.

Section 17

Any forestry official may stop and search any conveyance **suspected of** carrying forest produce or product at the designated forest check gate or checkpoint.

Title of Section 20

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 25

Power to Sseize and confiscate forest produce

The forest produce confiscated shall be disposed **in a transparent manner** as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

~~**Section 26**~~

~~The livestock used for transportation of illegal forest produce shall be seized and released upon completion of registration of offence for illegal transport of forest produce with the concerned Forest Office.~~

~~**Section 27**~~

~~**Power to confiscate vehicle, equipment and machinery**~~

~~The Forestry Official shall exercise the power to confiscate any vehicle, equipment or machinery used in commission of forest offence.~~

Section 28

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 30

Will be inserted before section 234 under Miscellaneous chapter

Section 31

Will be inserted before section 234 under Miscellaneous chapter

Section 32

Will be inserted before section 234 under Miscellaneous chapter

Section 33

Will be inserted before section 234 under Miscellaneous chapter

Section 34

Forestry Hammer

The forestry hammers shall be the property of the State and the Department shall maintain a registry of the hammer as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 35

The Department shall design and distribute forestry hammers to the field office under the Department.

Section 37

STATE RESERVED FOREST LAND

~~Any land in Bhutan shall constitute as State Land, which are not State Land or private registered land shall constitute State Reserved Forest Land.~~

State Reserved Forest Land shall constitute any land in Bhutan which is not State Land or Private registered Land.

Section 40

Declaration of Protected Area and Other Management Regimes

The Parliament may by law, declare any part of the country to be a National Park, Wildlife Reserve, Nature Reserve, Protected Forest, Biosphere Reserve,

Critical Watershed, Biological Corridor, significant wetland of international importance, and such other categories meriting protection ~~upon the recommendation of National Environment Commission~~ based on the proposal of the Ministry.

Section 43

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 46

Forest Produce in State Reserved Forest Land

~~Any forest produce found within the road right of way or transmission line corridor shall belong to the State and shall be disposed of by the Department as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.~~

Any prospective forest produce found within the road right of way or transmission line corridor shall belong to the State and such forest produce shall be allotted to authorized agency or communities by the Department prior to developmental activities.

Section 47

~~The allotment of timber from any State Reserved Forest Land within 600 feet uphill and 300 feet downhill or 100 feet on both sides of the flat land from the centre of the national highway; 400 feet uphill and 200 feet downhill or 70 feet on both sides of flat land from the centre of the Dzongkhag Road and 200~~

Annexure 9

feet uphill and 100 feet downhill or 50 feet on both sides of flat land from the centre of the farm road and other roads shall not be permitted except in forest road as per the Management Plan.

The allotment of timber from any State Reserved Forest Land along the roads shall not be permitted in:

- (1) any critical ecological sites;**
- (2) landslide prone area;**
- (3) risk of damaging roads and bridges; and**
- (4) significant landmarks and heritage sites.**

New section after Section 47

Where any tree that endangers or obstructs the passage of vehicles or pedestrians or interferes with the view of drivers, the Department may facilitate to trim or cut it to remove the cause of the danger, obstruction or interference.

Section 50

Forestry Clearance

Forestry clearance shall not be issued for ~~any activity~~ **activities** in State Reserved Forest Land which fall in:

Section 50(2)

~~High forest, declared wetland, within 600 feet uphill and 300 feet downhill~~

~~or 100 feet on both sides of the flat land from the centre of the national highway, 400 feet uphill and 200 feet downhill or 70 feet on both sides of flat land from the centre of the Dzongkhag Road and 200 feet uphill and 100 feet downhill or 50 feet on both sides of flat land from the centre of the farm road and other roads, inside forest plantation with more than 25 percent survival rate, outside 200 meters of existing settlement or slope greater than 45 degrees except for national developmental activity;~~

- (a) **High forest;**
- (b) **declared wetland; and**
- (c) **any critical ecological sites along the roads, landslide prone area, risk of damaging roads, and bridges and any significant landmarks or heritage sites.**

Areas within ~~100~~ **50** feet from the bank or edge of any water body except for collection of River Bed Material from the identified site **and developmental activities;**

Section 50(5)

Areas within 500 meters from the plinth of the monastery or Dzong where there ~~is~~ **are** no settlements nearby except for construction of access road, ~~and~~ **water supply**, and power supply line; and

Section 51

Payment for Ecosystem Services

~~The Department may institute mechanisms for realizing resilience against climate change impacts, payment for ecosystem services, green accounting and financial plough-back through public participation and partnership for conservation and sustainable management of forest resources and ecosystem services.~~

Payment for Ecosystem Services

The Department through public participation and partnership for conservation and sustainable management of forest resources and ecosystem services may institute mechanisms for:

- (i) realizing resilience against climate change impacts;**
- (ii) payment for ecosystem services; and**
- (ii) green accounting and financial plough-back**

Section 59

The Government **or Local Government** shall exercise right to implement and execute any developmental activity of national **or local** importance in the Community Forest. In the event the Community Forest is taken over for **developmental activity** ~~by the government~~ a fair compensation **or replacement** determined by the Department may be **provided** paid to the Community Forest Management Group.

Section 61

Private Forest

Annexure 9

Any private registered land may be managed as private forest or **agro forestry** for domestic and commercial harvest of forest produce **which shall be facilitated and promoted by the Department.** ~~as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules~~

Section 63

Institutional Forest

~~Notwithstanding anything contained in Section 62, the institution leasing land for long term may be allowed to use the forest produce for institution use other than commercial purpose upon approval from the Ministry as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.~~

Notwithstanding anything contained in Section 62 of this Act, the tree or Non-Wood Forest Produce planted after the allotment or lease of land shall be managed and belong to the concerned institution and its use shall be as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 72

Plantation in State Reserved Forest Land

The Department or any authorized agency or Community Forest Management Group shall carry out reforestation **and afforestation** ~~after harvesting of the timber~~ as per the Technical Guidelines.

New section after section 74

The Department shall monitor the compensatory plantation in the state Reserved Forest Land under section 74 of this Act.

Section 75

The Department may **promote and** establish anurseriesy on need basis to carry out plantation.

Section 76**Forest Fire**

~~It shall be the fundamental duty of every Bhutanese to prevent and protect forest from fire hazard and setting of forest fire to State Reserved Forest Land shall be prohibited except as allowed under Section 80.~~

Prevention and protection of forest fire hazard shall be the fundamental duty of every Bhutanese.

New section after section 76

Unless otherwise provided under section 80 of this Act, setting of forest fire in State Reserved Forest Land shall be prohibited.

Section 79

The Department shall **coordinate and** carry out post-forest fire management for restoration of the damaged area.

Section 82**Pest and Disease**

The Department shall collaborate with relevant agencies to prevent spread of forest and wildlife pests and disease from internal movement or import of plant and plant products and **wildlife and wildlife products.**

Section 83

The Department shall adopt appropriate measures to combat outbreak and prevent spread of disease to wildlife ~~animals~~ in State Reserved Forest Land in collaboration with relevant agencies.

Section 84**Forestry Research**

The Ministry shall approve ~~all forestry and biodiversity~~ **any** research in State Reserved Forest Land in the country.

Section 85

~~Any forestry or biodiversity~~ research in State Reserved Forest Land shall be as per the research procedure adopted by the Ministry.

Section 88**Nature Conservation**

Any wild flora and fauna ~~and flora~~ in Bhutan are protected; ~~whether or not in State Reserved Forest Land~~ and killing, injuring, destroying, capturing, collecting, possessing, breeding, raising, cultivating, and trading of any wild **flora and fauna** ~~and flora~~ specimen or product **whether or not in State Reserved Forest Land is prohibited** ~~not allowed~~ unless permitted by this Act.

Section 93

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 95

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 96

~~Any person feeding wild fauna except in enclosure and for scientific research and disturbing wild fauna in State Reserved Forest Land by use of electronic device, call playback or flushing shall be prohibited.~~

Feeding of wild fauna in State Reserved Forest Land by any person is prohibited except in enclosure and for scientific research.

New sub-section after section 96

Disturbing of wild fauna in State Reserved Forest Land by any person by use of electronic device, call playback or flushing shall be prohibited except for:

- (1) wildlife in enclosure;**
- (2) for scientific research; and**
- (3) for the purpose of eco-tourism except during breeding season.**

Section 98

Conservation of Wild Flora

Any wild flora listed in Schedule I **of this Act** shall not be collected, possessed or traded except, for scientific research and population management including

conservation breeding or **plantation** on the recommendation of the Scientific Authority.

(This section will be inserted before section 91)

Section 99

This section will be inserted before section 91

Section 108

Confiscated wild **flora and** fauna ~~and flora~~ specimen

Any confiscated wild **flora specimen listed in Schedule I of this Act** and wild fauna specimen **whether alive or dead** listed in Schedule I **and II of this Act** ~~and wild flora specimen listed in Schedule I~~ shall be surrendered to the Department by the ~~Chief Forestry Officer~~ **Forest Office** upon settlement of the case.

Section 109

Any wild **flora and** fauna ~~and flora~~ specimen surrendered under ~~S~~section 108 **of this Act** shall be curated, preserved or mounted for use in scientific research and education or **traditional medicine**; or disposed off by the Department as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 110

Any confiscated wild **flora specimen listed in Schedule II and III of this Act** ; ~~fauna specimen listed in Schedule III;~~ and **wild fauna specimen whether**

alive or dead listed in Schedule III of this Act shall be disposed off by the ~~Chief Forestry Officer~~ **Forest Office** as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 115

Fishing

The Department **in collaboration with relevant agencies** shall carry out delineation of any river, stream, lake or natural pond into different category to manage and regulate fishing as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 116

Fishing by river diversion, ~~using large net, trap or snare~~, use of poison, dynamite, explosive, electrical device, **and** building dam is prohibited.

Section 117

Fishing ~~for consumption~~ shall be prohibited during the days and months specified in the Rules.

Section 119

Human Wildlife Conflict Management

The Ministry ~~may~~ **shall** adopt and implement science, **technology** and research, based innovative measures to prevent and mitigate human wildlife conflict.

Section 120

The Government shall institutionalize appropriate measures **with compensation** to address loss of life or cause of permanent disability to a human or damage to **property**, crop, and livestock by wildlife.

New section after section 120

Notwithstanding to section 97 of this Act, laying of trap or snare may be allowed on the farm land to protect crops, livestock, private property, and threat to human life.

New section after section 97

Any wild fauna species listed in Schedule I and II killed of this Act or captured under new section after section 120 of this Act shall be reported to the nearest Forest office.

Section 122

Watershed

The Department **in consultation with relevant agencies** shall carry out technical assessment to classify watershed in the country.

Section 123

The watershed classified as degraded shall be managed **in collaboration with concerned agency for** appropriate management interventions.

Section 125**Wetland**

The Department **in consultation with relevant agencies** shall carry out technical assessment of wetland to ensure its protection and conservation.

Section 126

The Ministry shall ~~on the recommendation of the Department~~ propose to the Parliament, for declaration of significant wetland of international importance.

Section 127

The wetland declared under ~~S~~section 126 shall be protected, **mapped**, and managed by the Department under appropriate Management Plan approved by the Ministry.

New sub-clause after section 134(1)

If there is no authorized agency to supply timber in that area;

New section after section 134

The Ministry may directly allot commercial timber in standing form or through authorized agencies for renovation and restoration of lhakhangs, sheldras and other religious sites of local and national importance and it shall qualify criteria specified under section 134 (2) and (3) of this Act.

Section 136**Allocation of Forest Produce for Other Use**

The Department may allot firewood, ~~and fencing post in rural areas, and~~ **pyre wood**, flag poles, **timber for construction of livestock shelters, and makeshift shack in rural areas** at ~~commercial rural~~ royalty rate as per the quantity and allotment procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 137

The Department may designate any authorized agency to supply firewood and fencing post, **pyre wood, and flag poles** outside rural areas as per the allotment procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 140

Non-Wood Forest Produce for Rural and Commercial Use

The Department shall facilitate **and promote** formation of Non-Wood Forest Management Group to encourage **its** sustainable **use and** management of ~~Non-Wood Forest Produce~~ by the rural communities to derive socio-economic and environmental benefits.

~~Section 144.~~

~~Harvest and collection of Non-Wood Forest Produce from State Reserved Forest Land except for the wild flora listed in Schedule I shall be allowed upon payment of fees and royalty at commercial rate for commercial use.~~

Section 146**Timber and Non-Wood Forest Produce from Private Registered Land**

Any tree or Non-Wood Forest Produce on the private registered land shall belong to the land owner; and removal and utilization **of timber** shall be allowed upon authentication of *Thram* from the **concerned Gewog or Thromde** ~~Local Government and Dzongkhag Land Sector~~; and verification of forest resources **timber** by the **forest field office**. ~~Department as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.~~

FOREST BASED INDUSTRY**Classification****Section 149**

The Department shall **facilitate and** promote establishment of integrated wood-based industry for value addition and minimization of timber waste.

~~Clearance-150~~

~~The Department may issue forestry clearance for obtaining business license to establish any primary wood-based industry under this Act provided there is an adequate and sustainable supply of forest produce in accordance with applicable Management Plan.~~

~~Section 151~~

~~The Department shall suspend issuance of forestry clearance for one or more primary woodbased industry based on resource availability through public notification.~~

Section 152

Establishment of **primary and** secondary wood-based industry **under this Act** shall not require forestry clearance from the Department for obtaining business license.

Section 154**Registration and Certification**

Any Forest-based industry shall be duly registered with the Department **upon the production of valid business license.** ~~that shall issue the certificate for registration.~~

Section 155

Any **mobile and** stationed ~~and portable~~ machinery shall be registered with the Department ~~that shall issue certificate of registration~~ for **the record of** possession of such machinery.

New section after section 155

A person may use mobile machinery registered with the Department in the private forest, residential or inside State Reserved Forest Land.

Section 157**Trade and transport of forest produce**

All export, re-export and transit of the wild **flora specimen listed in Schedule I of this Act** and fauna specimen listed in Schedule I, II and III **of this Act**

~~and flora specimen listed in Schedule I~~ for scientific research, conservation breeding and education purpose shall require permit from Management Authority.

New section after section 161

Notwithstanding to section 161 of this Act, export of timber in log form and sawn form, and firewood from the private registered land shall be allowed.

Section 165

Internal Movement

The Department shall regulate movement of forest produce **and facilitate movement of dismantled wooden structure from Heritage or religious sites** as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 168

Permit

The Department shall issue permit for harvest, collection, research, and **academic purpose, education,** movement and trade of any forest produce as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.

Section 171

Civil Offence

Illegal Fishing

Annexure 9

Any person fishing by river diversion **or building dam** using large net, trap or snare is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for fines and confiscation of fishing gears as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 177

~~Illegal mining, quarrying and developmental activity~~

~~Any machinery and equipment used for illegal mining, quarrying and developmental activity carried out under Sections 173, 174, 175 and 176 shall be confiscated and disposed off as per the procedure prescribed in the Rules.~~

Section 187

Disturbance to wild fauna

~~Any person d~~Disturbing wild fauna in State Reserved Forest Land by **any person** by use of electronic device, call playback or flushing is an offence **except in accordance with** under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines and confiscation of equipment as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 188

Release of rescued domestic animal

Any person or agency releasing rescued domestic animal in State Reserved Forest Land **is an offence under this Act** except in the area leased area for **that purpose** is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 197**Killing or injuring of wild fauna listed under Schedule II and III**

Any person killing, injuring, destroying, capturing, collecting, breeding, and raising of wild fauna species listed under Schedule II and III **of this Act** is an offence **except in accordance with** this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines and confiscation of specimen and equipment as prescribed in the Rules. ~~Except for approved fishing, scientific research, population management, defense against attack or imminent threat on human life or livestock, damage to crop or other private property.~~

Section 198

Use of ~~animal~~ **livestock** to transport illegal forest produce

Any person using ~~animal~~ **livestock** for transportation of illegal forest produce is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines as prescribed in Rules and animal shall be released upon completion of registration of an offence.

Section 199**Laying of trap and snare**

Any person laying trap or snare in State ~~Forest~~ Reserved **Forest** Land, State Land or private registered land to kill or capture wild fauna species is an offence **except in accordance with** ~~under~~ this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines and confiscation of equipment as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 203

Removal of ~~Timber forest produce~~ from private registered land

Any person removing ~~timber forest produce~~ from private registered land without **authentication of Thram from the concerned Gewog or Thromde and verification of timber by the forest field office** ~~valid permit and hammer marking impression in case of timber or without valid permit for non-wood forest produce~~ is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 204**Illegal operation of Forest based Industry**

Any person operating Forest based Industry without **valid business license and registration certificate** is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines as prescribed in the Rules. ~~and confiscation of machinery and equipment.~~

Section 205**Illegal use of timber in Forest based Industry**

Any Forest based Industry involved in sawing, processing or utilizing illegal timber is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines, compensation at fair market value, **and** confiscation of the timber ~~and cancellation of registration certificate~~ as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 206

Misuse of subsidized timber and forest produce allotted for other purpose

Any person misusing subsidized timber granted under Section 131 **of this Act** and ~~or forest produce allotted as firewood, fencing post, flag pole or for handicraft items~~ under Sections 136 to 138 **of this Act** other than for intended purpose is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines and compensation at fair market value and confiscation as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 209

Non registration of Mobile Machinery

Any person using mobile machinery in **private forest, residential Forest based Industry** or inside State Forest Reserved Land without registration ~~certificate~~ is an offence under this Act and shall be liable for payment of fines as prescribed in the Rules and confiscation of the mobile machinery.

Section 229

The grading of illegal fishing by use of poison, explosive or electrical device shall be **petty** misdemeanor.

Section 232

Smuggling of wild **flora or** fauna ~~or flora~~ specimen

A defendant shall be guilty of an offence of smuggling wild **flora and** fauna ~~and flora~~ specimen under this Act, if the defendant discretely or illegally

imports or exports or re-export wild fauna and flora specimen listed in Schedule I, H ~~and~~ **HH** of this Act; or import, export or re-export wild **flora and** fauna ~~and~~ flora specimen not native to the country.

New section after section 233

The grading of reporting of false information on commission of offence under this Act shall be petty misdemeanor.

Section 234

Immunity

No legal proceeding or suit shall be brought against any official of the Department ~~that carries out its duty in~~ **while** exercising ~~se its~~ **one's** official function.

Sub-title of Section 236

~~Intelligence, Information and Informant~~ **Confidentiality of identity of Complainant or Informer**

༼དྲིན་ཚན་ ༢༣༩ བཞེ་བྱ་ལ་ལས་བཙུགས་ནི༽

Section 237

~~Intelligence, Information and Informant~~

Reporting of false information

An informer reporting the information on commission of forestry offence shall be done in good faith and shall not report false information to ~~a~~ harass the other person.

(This section will be inserted after section 233)

Section 239

The Ministry may, revise Schedule I **of this Act** species from time to time and propose to ~~National Environment Commission for recommendation to the~~ Parliament for approval.

Section 242

Amended in Dzongkha text

Definitions**Section 245(5)**

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Buffer Zone” ~~shall~~ means an area within a protected area adjacent to core and transition zone that provide cushioning function when the core or transition ~~zone~~ zones are located in the immediate vicinity of anthropogenic disturbances both from within and outside of the protected area.

Section 245(6)

“**Forest Check gate**” ~~shall~~ means the established check gates in the country.

Section 245(7)

“**Forest Checkpoint**” ~~shall~~ means any strategic point along the motorable road or footpath for conducting inspection of forest produce by the forestry official.

Section 245(13)

“Confiscation” ~~shall~~ means forfeiture of seized forest produce or ~~goods~~ **machineries and equipment** to the Royal Government. The process of

confiscation shall be ~~affected~~ **effected** only upon completion of Court adjudication in criminal case and after settlement of offence with the Department in civil case.

Section 245(16)

“Conveyance” shall means any vehicle, **livestock, aeroplane air transport, train, device, machine, water transport, bullock carts, push carts, bicycle** or others used in gathering or transporting forest produce.

Section 245(22)

Amended in Dzongkha text

Section 245(27)

“Forest Management Unit” shall means an area of State Reserved Forest Land designated **primarily for commercial production and extraction of natural resources as per the approved scientific management plan** ~~for scientific management of forest.~~

Section 245(29)(b)

“Forest Produce” shall include any of the following:

Wild animal including fish and parts or products of wild animal including skin, hide, feather, fur, horn, antler, tusk, bone, bile, musk, honey, **bird nest, bird beak and crest, eggs, quills, scales, insects, microbes, wax, and lac,** and any other produce that comes out of the forest ~~tax~~; and

Section 245(30)

“Forest Road” ~~shall~~ means the road constructed primarily for the purpose of harvesting timber from area identified by the Department. ~~of Forests and Park Services.~~

“Forestry Official” ~~shall~~ means any forestry **personnel** ~~personal~~ trained as a forester and appointed as **an employee** ~~civil-servant~~ under Department of Forests and Park Services to enforce any provisions of this Act.

Section 245(35)

“High Forest” ~~shall~~ means trees grown by means of natural seedling or **by plantation** and when the forest canopy cover is 40% and more, **if trees are of economic values and social benefits.**

Section 245(36)

“Inspection” ~~shall~~ means careful examination of **forestry activities** ~~something~~, to determine its legality on a regular basis.

Section 245(38)

“Invasive Alien Species” ~~shall~~ means any wild **flora or fauna** ~~or flora~~ that are non-native to a particular ecosystem and **its** ~~whose~~ introduction may cause economic or environmental harm or adversely affect human health.

New section after section 245(39)

“Local importance” means any activity carried out by the Local Government in the interest of local inhabitants for long and medium term.

Section 245(57)

“Protected Area” ~~shall~~ means an area, which has been declared to be a National Park, Wildlife Reserve, Nature Reserve, Protected Forest, Biosphere Reserve, ~~Nature Reserve~~, Strict Nature Reserve, Critical Watershed, Biological Corridor or any other area meriting protection.

Section 245(59)

“Range Officer” ~~shall~~ means any forestry official ~~above the rank of Ranger~~, who heads the Range Office.

New section after section 245(59)

“Special class timber” means high grade timber produced by the species of special class trees which have superior strength, natural durability and appearance, and are less in occurrence, commercially more valuable and has religious, cultural or national significance.

Section 245(77)

“Violation” ~~shall~~ means **non-adherence to the** ~~violation of any~~ provisions of this Act and its Rules for which the offender shall be liable to pay fines and compensation or cost at fair market value or both as prescribed in the Rules.

Section 245(85)

“Wildlife Specimen” ~~shall~~ means any **wild flora and fauna** ~~animal or plant~~, whether alive or dead; and any readily recognizable parts or derivative thereof.

Section 245(86)

“Wood-based Industry” ~~shall~~ means any industry or processing unit whose primary raw material is wood or wood-based product. ~~but doesn’t include bamboo and its product.~~

Voting on: Adoption of the Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan**2021**

Date: 24.6.2022

Yes 38, Vote Result Abstain 2, Vote Result No 2, Vote Result Total present 42

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
12.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
13.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
14.	Hemant Gurung (Lhamoi Dzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
15.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
16.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
17.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
18.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
19.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
20.	Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes

21. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
22. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
23. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
24. Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
25. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
26. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
27. Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
28. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
29. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
30. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
31. Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
32. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
33. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
34. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
35. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
36. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
37. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
38. Dorji Wangdi (OpositionLeader)	Yes
39. Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Abstain
40. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Abstain
41. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	No
42. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	No

Voting on: Adoption on Tourism Livy Bill of Bhutan 2022

Date: 24/06/22

Vote Result Yes 36, Abstain 3, No 3, Total present 42

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
12.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
13.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
14.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
15.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
16.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
17.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
18.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
19.	Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
20.	Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
21.	Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes

Annexure 11

22.	Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
23.	Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
24.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
25.	Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshorgpelri-Samtse)	Yes
26.	Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
27.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
28.	Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
29.	Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
30.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
31.	Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
32.	Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
33.	Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
34.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
35.	Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
36.	Dorji Wangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes
37.	Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Abstain
38.	Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Abstain
39.	Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Abstain
40.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	No
41.	Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	No
42.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	No

Voting on: Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)

Date: 27th June, 2022

Yes 42, Abstain 0, No 0, Total present 42

1. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
2. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
3. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
4. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
5. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
6. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
7. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
8. Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
9. Dorji Wangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes
10. Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11. Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
12. Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
13. Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
14. Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
15. Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
16. Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
17. Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
18. Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
19. Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes

Annexure 12

20.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
21.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
22.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
23.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
24.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
25.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
26.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
27.	Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
28.	Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
29.	Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
30.	Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
31.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
32.	Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
33.	Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshorgpelri-Samtse)	Yes
34.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
35.	Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
36.	Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
37.	DSilp Meaakyear)Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
38.	Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
39.	Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
40.	Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
41.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
42.	Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes

Voting on: Biodiversity Bill of Bhutan 2022

Date: 27th June, 2022

Yes 43, Abstain 1, No 0, total present 44

1.	Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
10.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
11.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
12.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
13.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
14.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
15.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
16.	Hemant Gurung (Lhamoi Dzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
17.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
18.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
19.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
20.	Dorjee Wangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes

Annexure 13

21. Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
22. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
23. Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
24. Rinzin Jamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
25. Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
26. Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
27. Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
28. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
29. Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
30. Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
31. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
32. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
33. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
34. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
35. Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
36. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
37. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
38. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
39. Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
40. Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
41. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
42. Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
43. Dorji Wangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes
44. Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Abstain

Voting Subject: Adoption on Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022

Date: 28/06/2022

Yes 38, Abstain 1, No 1, Total 40

1.	Dr. LotayTshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. TandinDorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	YesheyPenjor (MOAF)	Yes
5.	DechenWangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MOEA)	Yes
7.	NamgayTshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	UgyenDorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	TshenchoWangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
12.	JurmiWangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
13.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
14.	HemantGurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
15.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
16.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
17.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
18.	DorjeeWangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
19.	KingaPenjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
20.	UgyenWangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes

Annexure 14

21.	RinzinJamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
22.	UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
23.	LungtenNamgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
24.	Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
25.	UgyenDorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
26.	Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshoggelri-Samtse)	Yes
27.	Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
28.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
29.	TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
30.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
31.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
32.	Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
33.	GyemDorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
34.	BimalThapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
35.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
36.	KinleyWangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
37.	GyamboTshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
38.	DorjiWangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes
39.	TsheringChoden (Khar-Yurung)	Abstain
40.	Norbu Wangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	No

Voting subject: Adoption on Royal Bhutan Police (Ammendment) Bill 2021

Date: 28/06/2022

Yes 37, Abstain 1, No 3, Total 41

1.	Dr. LotayTshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. TandinDorji (MOFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	YesheyPenjor (MOAF)	Yes
5.	DechenWangmo (MOH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MOEA)	Yes
7.	NamgayTshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
10.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
11.	TshenchoWangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
12.	Jurmi Wangchuk (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
13.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
14.	HemantGurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
15.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
16.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
17.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
18.	DorjeeWangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
19.	KingaPenjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes

20.	RinzinJamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
21.	UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
22.	LungtenNamgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
23.	KarmaDorji (MoLHR)	Yes
24.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
25.	NorbuWangzom (Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
26.	Ganesh Ghimiray (Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
27.	Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
28.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan (Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
29.	TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
30.	Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
31.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
32.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
33.	GyemDorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
34.	BimalThapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
35.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
36.	GyamboTshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
37.	DorjiWangdi (OpositionLeader)	Yes
38.	Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Abstain
39.	UgyenWangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	No
40.	TsheringChoden (Khar-Yurung)	No
41.	KinleyWangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	No

Voting: On Public Accounts

Date: 30/06/2022

Yes 61, Abstain 0, No 0, Total present 61

1.	Dr. LotayTshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. TandinDorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	YesheyPenjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	DechenWangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	NamgayTshering (MoF)	Yes
7.	UgyenDorji (MoHCA)	Yes
8.	DorjiTshering (MoWHS)	Yes
9.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
10.	TshenchoWangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
11.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
12.	TshewangLhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
13.	JurmiWangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
14.	HemantGurung (Lhamoi Dzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
15.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
16.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
17.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
18.	DorjeeWangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes
19.	KingaPenjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
20.	ChokiGyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
21.	UgyenWangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes

22.	RinzinJamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
23.	UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
24.	TsheringChoden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
25.	LungtenNamgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
26.	karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
28.	NorbuWangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
29.	Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshoggelri-Samtse)	Yes
30.	Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	Yes
31.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
32.	TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
33.	Dr. PassangDorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
34.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
35.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
36.	GyemDorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
37.	BimalThapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
38.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
39.	KinleyWangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
40.	GyamboTshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
41.	DorjiWangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes
42.	JigmeWangchuk (Dy.Chairperson)	Yes
43.	DashoTashiWangyal(Eminent Member)	Yes
44.	UgyenTshering (EminentMember)	Yes
45.	KesangChukiDorji (EminentMember)	Yes

Annexure 16

46.	PhuntshoRapten (EminentMember)	Yes
47.	SangayDorji (Chhukha)	Yes
48.	SurjamanThapa (Dagana)	Yes
49.	DorjiKhandu (Gasa)	Yes
50.	TempaDorji (Lhuentse)	Yes
51.	SonamPelzom (Monggar)	Yes
52.	UgyenTshering (Paro)	Yes
53.	ChoiningDorji (PemaGatschel)	Yes
54.	Lhaki Dolma (Punakha)	Yes
55.	Tirtha Man Thapa (Samtse)	Yes
56.	AnandRai (Sarpang)	Yes
57.	TshewangRinzin (Thimphu)	Yes
58.	Karma Gyeltshen(Trashiyangtse)	Yes
59.	TashiSamdrup (Trongsa)	Yes
60.	Dhan Kumar Sunwar(Tsirang)	Yes
61.	PemaDakpa (Zhemgang)	Yes

Voting on: Civil Society Organizations (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021

Date: 01/07/2022

Yes 68, Abstain 0, No 0, Total present 68

1.	Dr. LotayTshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. TandinDorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	YesheyPenjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	DechenWangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	NamgayTshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	UgyenDorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Jai BirRai (MoE)	Yes
10.	DorjiTshering (MoWHS)	Yes
11.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
12.	TshenchoWangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
13.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
14.	TshewangLhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
15.	JurmiWangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
16.	HemantGurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
17.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
18.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
19.	Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
20.	DorjeeWangmo(Sangbaykha)	Yes

21. KingaPenjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
22. ChokiGyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
23. UgyenWangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
24. RinzinJamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
25. UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
26. TsheringChoden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
27. LungtenNamgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
28. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
29. UgyenDorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
30. NorbuWangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
31. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
32. Dil Maya Rai (Tashichhoeling)	Yes
33. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
34. TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
35. Dr. PassangDorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
36. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
37. Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
38. Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
39. GyemDorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
40. BimalThapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
41. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
42. KinleyWangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
43. GyamboTshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
44. DorjiWangdi (Oposition Leader)	Yes

45. TashiDorji (Thrizin)	Yes
46. JigmeWangchuk (Dy.Chairperson)	Yes
47. DashoTashiWangyal(Eminent Member)	Yes
48. UgyenTshering (EminentMember)	Yes
49. KesangChukiDorji (EminentMember)	Yes
50. PhuntshoRaptan (EminentMember)	Yes
51. Nima (Bumthang)	Yes
52. SangayDorji (Chhukha)	Yes
53. SurjamanThapa (Dagana)	Yes
54. DorjiKhandu (Gasa)	Yes
55. UgyenNamgay (Haa)	Yes
56. TempaDorji (Lhuentse)	Yes
57. SonamPelzom (Monggar)	Yes
58. UgyenTshering (Paro)	Yes
59. ChoiningDorji (PemaGatshel)	Yes
60. Lhaki Dolma (Punakha)	Yes
61. Tirtha Man Thapa (Samtse)	Yes
62. AnandRai (Sarpang)	Yes
63. TshewangRinzin (Thimphu)	Yes
64. Lhatu (Trashigang)	Yes
65. Karma Gyeltshen(Trashiyangtse)	Yes
66. TashiSamdrup (Trongsa)	Yes
67. Dhan Kumar Sunwar(Tsirang)	Yes
68. PemaDakpa (Zhemgang)	Yes

**Voting: Voting on the recommendation of the joint committee on UNCAC
(admendment)**

Date: 01/07/2022

Yes 33, Abstain 4, No 30, Total present 67

1.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
2.	HemantGurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
3.	ChokiGyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
4.	UgyenWangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
5.	RinzinJamtsho (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
6.	TsheringChoden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
7.	NorbuWangzom(Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
8.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
9.	Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
10.	KinleyWangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
11.	DorjiWangdi (OpositionLeader)	Yes
12.	TashiDorji (Thrizin)	Yes
13.	JigmeWangchuk (Dy.Chairperson)	Yes
14.	DashoTashiWangyal(Eminent Member)	Yes
15.	UgyenTshering (EminentMember)	Yes
16.	KesangChukiDorji (EminentMember)	Yes
17.	PhuntshoRaptan (EminentMember)	Yes
18.	Nima (Bumthang)	Yes
19.	SangayDorji (Chhukha)	Yes

20. DorjiKhandu (Gasa)	Yes
21. UgyenNamgay (Haa)	Yes
22. TempaDorji (Lhuentse)	Yes
23. SonamPelzom (Monggar)	Yes
24. UgyenTshering (Paro)	Yes
25. ChoiningDorji (PemaGatshel)	Yes
26. Lhaki Dolma (Punakha)	Yes
27. Tirtha Man Thapa (Samtse)	Yes
28. TshewangRinzin (Thimphu)	Yes
29. Lhatu (Trashigang)	Yes
30. Karma Gyeltshen(Trashiyangtse)	Yes
31. TashiSamdrup (Trongsa)	Yes
32. Dhan Kumar Sunwar(Tsirang)	Yes
33. PemaDakpa (Zhemgang)	Yes
34. LungtenNamgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Abstain
35. UgyenDorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Abstain
36. GyamboTshering (Bardo-Trong)	Abstain
37. AnandRai (Sarpang)	Abstain
38. Dr. LotayTshering (PrimeMinister)	No
39. Dr. TandinDorji (MoFA)	No
40. Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	No
41. YesheyPenjor (MoAF)	No
42. DechenWangmo (MoH)	No
43. Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	No

44. NamgayTshering (MoF)	No
45. UgyenDorji (MoHCA)	No
46. Jai BirRai (MoE)	No
47. DorjiTshering (MoWHS)	No
48. Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	No
49. TshenchoWangdi (Dy.Speaker)	No
50. TshewangLhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	No
51. JurmiWangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	No
52. Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	No
53. Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	No
54. Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	No
55. DorjeeWangmo(Sangbaykha)	No
56. KingaPenjor (Gangzur-Minje)	No
57. UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	No
58. Karma Dorji (MoLHR)	No
59. Ganesh Ghimiray(Phuentshorgpelri-Samtse)	No
60. Dil Maya Rai(Tashichhoeling)	No
61. Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	No
62. TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	No
63. Dr. PassangDorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	No
64. Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	No
65. GyemDorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	No
66. BimalThapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	No
67. Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	No

Voting on: Security and Independenace of adequate human resource

Date: 04/07/2022

Yes 20, Vote, Abstain 5, No 37, Total 62

1.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
2.	HemantGurung (Lhamoi Dzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
3.	UgyenWangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
4.	UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
5.	TsheringChoden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
6.	UgyenDorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
7.	TashiDorji (Thrizin)	Yes
8.	JigmeWangchuk (Dy.Chairperson)	Yes
9.	UgyenTshering (Eminent Member)	Yes
10.	KesangChukiDorji (EminentMember)	Yes
11.	PhuntshoRaptan (Eminent Member)	Yes
12.	Nima (Bumthang)	Yes
13.	SangayDorji (Chhukha)	Yes
14.	SurjamanThapa (Dagana)	Yes
15.	UgyenTshering (Paro)	Yes
16.	ChoiningDorji (Pema Gatshel)	Yes
17.	Lhaki Dolma (Punakha)	Yes
18.	AnandRai (Sarpang)	Yes
19.	Lhatu (Trashigang)	Yes
20.	PemaDakpa (Zhemgang)	Yes

21. Jurmi Wangchuk (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Abstain
22. Dorjee Wangmo (Sangbaykha)	Abstain
23. Ugyen Namgay (Haa)	Abstain
24. Tshewang Rinzin (Thimphu)	Abstain
25. Tashi Samdrup (Trongsa)	Abstain
26. Dr. Lotay Tshering (Prime Minister)	No
27. Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	No
28. Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	No
29. Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	No
30. Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	No
31. Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	No
32. Namgay Tshering (MoF)	No
33. Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	No
34. Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	No
35. Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	No
36. Tshencho Wangdi (Dy. Speaker)	No
37. Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk (Chumig-Ura)	No
38. Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	No
39. Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	No
40. Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	No
41. Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	No
42. Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	No
43. Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	No
44. karma Dorji (MoLHR)	No

45.	NorbuWangzom (Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	No
46.	Ganesh Ghimiray (Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	No
47.	Dil Maya Rai (Tashichhoeling)	No
48.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan(Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	No
49.	TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	No
50.	Dr. PassangDorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	No
51.	Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk(Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron	No
52.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	No
53.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	No
54.	Karma Gyeltshen(Khamdang-Ramjar)	No
55.	GyemDorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	No
56.	BimalThapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	No
57.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	No
58.	KinleyWangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	No
59.	GyamboTshering (Bardo-Trong)	No
60.	DorjiWangdi (OpositionLeader)	No
61.	Karma Gyeltshen (Trashiyangtse)	No
62.	Dhan Kumar Sunwar(Tsirang)	No

Voting on: As recommended by the Joint Committee on section 42(3) to 73.

Date: 04/07/2022

Yes 48, Vote, Abstain 3, No 13, Total present 64

1.	Dr. LotayTshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Namgay Tshering (MoF)	Yes
6.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
7.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
8.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
9.	Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
10.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
11.	Jurmi Wangchuk(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
12.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
13.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
14.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
15.	Dorjee Wangmo (Sangbaykha)	Yes
16.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
17.	Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
18.	Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
19.	Ugyen Tshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes

Annexure 20

20.	Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
21.	Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
22.	karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
23.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
24.	Norbu Wangzom (Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
25.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan (Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
26.	TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
27.	Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
28.	Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk (Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron)	Yes
29.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
30.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
31.	Karma Gyeltshen (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
32.	Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
33.	Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
34.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
35.	Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
36.	Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
37.	Dorji Wangdi (Opposition Leader)	Yes
38.	Kesang ChukiDorji (Eminent Member)	Yes
39.	Nima (Bumthang)	Yes
40.	Sangay Dorji (Chhukha)	Yes
41.	SurjamanThapa (Dagana)	Yes
42.	Dorji Khandu (Gasa)	Yes
43.	Ugyen Namgay (Haa)	Yes

44. Lhaki Dolma (Punakha)	Yes
45. Tirtha Man Thapa (Samtse)	Yes
46. Tashi Samdrup (Trongsa)	Yes
47. Dhan Kumar Sunwa (Tsirang)	Yes
48. Pema Dakpa (Zhemgang)	Yes
49. Tashi Dorji (Thrizin)	Abstain
50. Choining Dorji (PemaGatshel)	Abstain
51. Karma Gyeltshen (Trashiyangtse)	Abstain
52. Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	No
53. Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	No
54. Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	No
55. Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	No
56. Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	No
57. Ganesh Ghimiray (Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	No
58. Dil Maya Rai (Tashichhoeling)	No
59. Ugyen Tshering (EminentMember)	No
60. Phuntsho Raptan (EminentMember)	No
61. Sonam Pelzom (Monggar)	No
62. UgyenTshering (Paro)	No
63. AnandRai (Sarpang)	No
64. Tshewang Rinzin (Thimphu)	No

**Voting on: Joint Committees recommendation on Anti Corruption
(Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021.**

Date: 04/07/2022

Yes 44, Abstain 8, No 14, Total present 66

1.	Dr. LotayTshering (Prime Minister)	Yes
2.	Dr. Tandin Dorji (MoFA)	Yes
3.	Karma Lhamo (Monggar)	Yes
4.	Yeshey Penjor (MoAF)	Yes
5.	Dechen Wangmo (MoH)	Yes
6.	Loknath Sharma (MoEA)	Yes
7.	NamgayTshering (MoF)	Yes
8.	Ugyen Dorji (MoHCA)	Yes
9.	Jai Bir Rai (MoE)	Yes
10.	Dorji Tshering (MoWHS)	Yes
11.	Dawa (Chokhor Tang)	Yes
12.	Tshencho Wangdi (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
13.	Tshewang Lhamo (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
14.	Jurmi Wangchuk (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
15.	Hemant Gurung (LhamoiDzingkha-Tashiding)	Yes
16.	Yeshey Dem (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
17.	Tenzin (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
18.	Ugen Tenzin (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
19.	Dorjee Wangmo (Sangbaykha)	Yes

20.	Kinga Penjor (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
21.	Choki Gyeltshen (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
22.	Ugyen Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
23.	UgyenTshering (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
24.	Tshering Choden (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
25.	Lungten Namgyel (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
26.	karma Dorji (MoLHR)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Dorji (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
28.	Norbu Wangzom (Jomotshangkha-Martshala)	Yes
29.	Ganesh Ghimiray (Phuentshogpelri-Samtse)	Yes
30.	Dil Maya Rai (Tashichhoeling)	Yes
31.	Dinesh Kumar Pradhan (Ugyentse-Yoeseltse)	Yes
32.	TekBdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
33.	Dr. Passang Dorji (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
34.	Dr. Samdrup R. Wangchuk (Kanglung-Samkhar-Udzoron	Yes
35.	Karma Thinley (Wamrong)	Yes
36.	Dupthob (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
37.	Karma Gyeltshen (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
38.	Gyem Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
39.	Bimal Thapa (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
40.	Garja Man Rai (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
41.	Kinley Wangchuk (Athang-Thedtsho)	Yes
42.	Gyambo Tshering (Bardo-Trong)	Yes
43.	Dorji Wangdi (OpositionLeader)	Yes

Annexure 21

44. Sonam Pelzom (Monggar)	Yes
45. Drungtsho Karma Wangchuk (Chumig-Ura)	Abstain
46. Tashi Dorji (Thrizin)	Abstain
47. Ugyen Namgay (Haa)	Abstain
48. Anand Rai (Sarpang)	Abstain
49. Tshewang Rinzin (Thimphu)	Abstain
50. Lhatu (Trashigang)	Abstain
51. Tashi Samdrup (Trongsa)	Abstain
52. Dhan Kumar Sunwar (Tsirang)	Abstain
53. Jigme Wangchuk (Dy.Chairperson)	No
54. UgyenTshering (Eminent Member)	No
55. Kesang ChukiDorji (Eminent Member)	No
56. PhuntshoRaptan (Eminent Member)	No
57. Nima (Bumthang)	No
58. Sangay Dorji (Chhukha)	No
59. SurjamanThapa (Dagana)	No
60. Dorji Khandu (Gasa)	No
61. Ugyen Tshering (Paro)	No
62. Choining Dorji (PemaGatshel)	No
63. Lhaki Dolma (Punakha)	No
64. Tirtha Man Thapa (Samtse)	No
65. Karma Gyeltshen (Trashiyangtse)	No
66. Pema Dakpa (Zhemgang)	No

Address by Wangchuk Namgyel Speaker of National Assembly at the Closing Ceremony of the Seventh Session of the Third Parliament (July 5, 2022)

1. Graced by His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, the current Session of the Third Parliament of Bhutan concludes today. It is a great honour to welcome His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, on behalf of the Members of Parliament, and on my own behalf to the concluding ceremony. I would also like to express deep gratitude to His Majesty the King for gracing the concluding ceremony of the Seventh Session.
2. I would also like to welcome Her Majesty the Queen and the Members of the Royal Family (if it pleases Her Majesty the Queen to attend the ceremony). Similarly, I would like to welcome the senior government officials and foreign dignitaries to the concluding ceremony.
3. His Royal Highness the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck at a very tender age in His First Royal assignment as the Chief Guest graced and inaugurated the Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck Super FabLab at the TechPark and the FabLab network in Bhutan.

This extraordinary and historic occasion and the immense pride and joy felt by the Bhutanese people can be confirmed from the video of His Majesty the Gyalsey going viral on social media platforms shared with love and prayers.

We Bhutanese have been enjoying peace and prosperity under the dynamic rule of the Wangchuck Dynasty and under the wise leadership of His Majesty the King.

In a similar way, with the spectacular display of His Royal Highness the Prince, we are confident that we will continue to enjoy peace and prosperity.

Therefore, I, Speaker on behalf of the people of Bhutan and the Parliament, would like to offer our sincerest prayers for the good health and long life of His Royal Highness the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck.

4. His Majesty the King, concerned for the well being of the people, has been tirelessly touring the south and west even during the rainy season. During the tour, His Majesty granted audience to the DeSuup trainees and met with the DeSuups engaged with multiple De-suung initiatives providing them with golden words of advice. This has enabled the youths to build self-confidence and inspired them to serve the Nation and the society and lead an independent life. We express our deep gratitude to His Majesty for these selfless acts.
5. With His Majesty's Royal initiative to resolve people's land issue once and for all, land kidu has been granted to a total of 150,000 beneficiaries in all 205 Gewogs of 20 Dzongkhags in the country. Recently, almost

113,000 beneficiaries of Tsirang and Sarpang Dzongkhags were granted land kidu along with refunds and reprieve of fines, which will enable the people to lead a peaceful and independent life. Therefore, I on behalf of the Parliament, would like to offer our deepest gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

6. His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth King of Bhutan was conferred the 2022 Blue Planet Prize. We the people of Bhutan, and in particular, the Parliament of Bhutan would like to offer our congratulatory wishes with our sincere prayers for the long life of His Majesty the Fourth King of Bhutan.
7. Under the Royal Command of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty Gyalyum Tshering Yangdoen Wangchuck, His Holiness the Je Khenpo ordained the nuns and conferred the Gelongma vows. The Gelongma vow is being conferred for the first time for nuns although Nun Dratsangs have been existing for a long time. The ordination ceremony was attended by nuns from Bhutan and neighbouring countries. On behalf of the Parliament of Bhutan, we would like to offer our deepest gratitude to His Holiness the Je Khenpo.
8. I would like to report the deliberation of the National Assembly and the Joint Sitting during the current Session. The National Assembly deliberated on :

- The Rules of Procedure (Amendment) of the National Assembly of Bhutan 2022 and also adopted it;
 - The Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022;
 - The Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2022;
 - The Tourism Levy Bill of Bhutan 2022, three of them have been adopted as Money Bills and is being prepared for submission to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for Royal Assent;
 - The Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021;
 - The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol) has been deliberated in the National Assembly and is now transmitted to the National Council of Bhutan.
9. Even though the country's economy has been hampered by the global pandemic, the Government proposed the Budget Appropriation Bill for the Financial Year 2022-2023 amounting to Nu. 81,827.311 million and the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the Financial Year 2021-2022 amounting to the Supplementary appropriation of Nu.3,866.933 million, which has been granted Royal Assent and is ready for implementation.
10. The Joint Sitting of the Parliament deliberated the following:
- Royal Audit Authority's Annual Audit Report 2020-21;

- The Disputed Bills between the two Houses, the Civil Society Organizations (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021;
 - The Anti-Corruption (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021;
 - The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) (Amendment) has been adopted and is being prepared for submission for Royal Assent.
11. The Seventh Session comes to a successful conclusion under His Majesty's noble vision and guidance, the prayers of the monastic body, support and cooperation of all the Members of Parliament and good will of all the Bhutanese people. For this, I extend and express my deepest gratitude.
12. Lastly, let us offer our collective prayers for the continued sovereignty and security of the country, longevity and happiness of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, the Members of the Royal Family, and other religious figures and for the peace and happiness of the people. Let us all offer our Trashi Moenlam and Zhapton to His Majesty the King at the seat of the Golden Throne.

Thank you

List of Members present during the 7th Session of the Third Parliament

1. Hon'ble Speaker Wangchuk Namgyel, Nyishog- Saephu constituency
2. Hon'ble Prime Minister, Lotay Tshering, South Thimphu constituency
3. Hon'ble Minister for MoH, Lyonpo Dechen Wangmo, North Thimphu Constituency
4. Hon'ble Minister for MoFA Lyonpo Tandi Dorji, Lingmukha-Toedwang Constituency
5. Hon'ble Minister for MoAF, Lyonpo Yeshey Penjor, Nubi-Tangsibji constituency
6. Hon'ble Minister for MoEA, Lyonpo Loknath Sharma, Dophuchen-Tading Constituency
7. Hon'ble Minister for MoF, Lyonpo Namgay Tshering, Dokar- Sharpa Constituency
8. Hon'ble Minister for MoHCA, Lyonpo Ugyen Dorji, Thrimshing-Kangpar Constituency,
9. Hon'ble Minister for MoE, Lyonpo Jai Bir Rai, Phuentsholing Constituency
10. Hon'ble Minister for MoWHS, Lyonpo Dorji Tshering, Radhi- Saketeng Constituency
11. Hon'ble Minister for MoLHR, Lyonpo Karma Dorji, Nganglam Constituency
12. Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition Dorji Wangdi, Panbang constituency
13. Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Tshencho Wangdi, Kabisa-Talog Constituency
14. Hon'ble Member Dawa, Chokhor-Tang constituency

15. Hon'ble Member Karma Wangchuk, Chhumig-Ura constituency
16. Hon'ble Tshewang Lhamo, Bongo- Chhapcha, constituency
17. Hon'ble Member Jurmi Wangchuk, Drukjeygang-Tseza constituency
18. Hon'ble Member Hemant Gurung, Lhamoidzingkha-Tashiding constituency
19. Hon'ble Member Yeshey Dem, Khamaed-Lunana constituency
20. Hon'ble Member Tenzin, Khatoed-Laya constituency
21. Hon'ble Member Ugen Tenzin, Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu constituency
22. Hon'ble Member Dorjee Wangmo, Sombaykha constituency
23. Hon'ble Member Kinga Penjor, Gangzur-Minjey constituency
24. Hon'ble Member Choki Gyeltsehn, Maenbi-Tsenkhar constituency
25. Hon'ble Member Ugyen Wangdi, Dramedtse-Ngatshang constituency
26. Hon'ble Member Rinzin Jamtsho, Kengkhar-Weringla constituency
27. Hon'ble Member Karma Lhamo, Monggar constituency
28. Hon'ble Member Ugyen Tshering, Lamgong-Wangchang constituency
29. Hon'bl' Member Ugyen Dorji, Dewathang Gomdar constituency
30. Hon'ble Member Norbu Wangzom, Jomotshangkha-Martshala constituency
31. Hon'ble Member Ganesh Ghimiray, Phuentshopelri constituency
32. Hon'ble Member Dil Maya Rai, Tashichhoeling constituency
33. Hon'ble Member Dinesh Kumar Pradhan, Ugyentse-Yoeseltse constituency
34. Hon'ble Member Tek Bahadur Rai, Shompangkha constituency
35. Hon'ble Member Passang Dorji, Bartsham-Shongphu constituency

36. Hon'ble Member Samdrup R Wangchuk, Kanglung-Udzorong constituency
37. Hon'ble Member Tshering Chhoden, Khar-Yurung constituency
38. Hon'ble Member Lungten Namgyel, Nanong-Shumar constituency
39. Hon'ble Member Karma Thinley, Wamrong constituency
40. Hon'ble Member Dupthob, Boomdeling-Jamkhar constituency
41. Hon'ble Member Karma Gyeltshen, Khamdang-Ramjar constituency
42. Hon'ble Member Gyem Dorji, Dragteng-Longthil constituency
43. Hon'ble Member Bimal Thapa, Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang constituency
44. Hon'ble Member Garja Man Rai, Sergithang-Tsirang Toed constituency
45. Hon'ble Member Kinley Wangchuk, Athang-Thedtsho Constituency
46. Hon'ble Member Gyambo Tshering, Bardo-Trong constituency

Absent

1. Hon'ble Minister for MoIC, Lyonpo Karma Donnen Wangdi, Gelegphu Constituency