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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN



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[Translated Text]

PRESS RELEASE

RE: Sixth Session of the Third Parliament

The Sixth Session of the Third Parliament was held from November 24th to December 25th, 2021. During the month-long Session, several bills including a framework agreement were deliberated. Besides, 3 motions were moved and 48 oral questions raised during the question hours.

The House adopted the following four money bills and submitted for Royal Assent :

1. Fiscal Incentives Bill of Bhutan 2021;
2. Customs Duty (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021;
3. Tax Bill of Bhutan 2021;
4. Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021.

The House also adopted and forwarded the following bills and convention to the National Council:

1. Royal Bhutan Police (Amendment) Bill 2021;
2. Biodiversity Bill of Bhutan 2021;
3. The Civil Society Organizations (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021.
4. Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance.

The Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021 has been introduced and its third reading will be conducted in the summer session.

The House re-deliberated on the Anti-Corruption (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021, and the disputed clauses were submitted to the Druk Gyalpo seeking Royal Assent for Joint Sitting.

Three motions namely; enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and adequacy of agricultural marketing, lifting of the ban on the bar license in Bhutan, and the immediate commencement



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of South-East-West Highways; Nganglam to Dewathang to Gelephu to Panbang, Lhamoizingkha to Sarpang Highway construction were passed by the House and the concerned institutions and agencies were directed to implement it.

The Good Governance Committee presented a Review Report on the Annual Anti-Corruption Commission Report 2020-2021 and its recommendations. An implementation status on the recommendations passed by the House is to be submitted in the upcoming session by the concerned agencies.

The Joint Sitting of the Parliament deliberated and adopted the recommendations made by the Public Account Committee on :

1. Public Accounts Committee's Review Report on Annual Audit Report 2020, follow-up on Review Reports of AAR 2010-2019;
2. Performance Audit Reports and implementation status of the resolutions.

The Joint Sitting passed the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee on the Annual Audit Report 2020, which called for the:

1. Executive to enforce the judgments passed by the Court and institute a mechanism to hold the agency concerned accountable;
2. Strict implementation of the Royal Audit Authority's decision to treat the cases of excess payment not be limited to restituting the amount but also holding individuals accountable (officials and parties) for restoring the compromised structure/infrastructure to a desired level of quality even if it may require dismantling the entire structures; and,
3. The heads of agencies to be accountable for any audit irregularities/observations.

On the Review Report on Performance Audit Report on Implementation and Management of National Broadband Fiber Network and on Ex-Country Travels and Short-Term Training (STT), the House also passed the recommendations to:

1. Speed up the establishment of the third Internet gateway through Bangladesh;



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2. Put in place an adequate and state-of-the-art infrastructure to ensure e-resilience of the country;
3. BICMA to speed up its regulatory role and set up grievance redressal mechanism to be responsive to customer complaints;
4. Ministry of Information and Communication to frame a strategy to ensure the sustainability of fiber resources and systems to ensure monitoring controls, diligence, and oversight.
5. Agencies to ensure strict compliance with the rules and regulations related to Ex-Country Travels (STT); and
6. RCSC should conduct Human Resource (HR) auditing of agencies on an annual basis and rectify the deficiencies in the HR planning and system, and hold the officials concerned accountable.

The Royal Audit Authority's Annual Audit Report 2020-2021 and the Performance Audit Report on Operations of Natural Resources Development Corporation Limited were also tabled in this session and referred to the Public Accounts Committee for review and deliberation during the Summer Session.

The Question Hour witnessed a range of pertinent questions asked to the government covering a wide range of issues on social, policy and developmental activities. The government was questioned on construction of roads and airports, the state of the economy, future of hydro power projects, youth unemployment, quality of education, shortage of doctors, easing of COVID protocols, promotion of agriculture and support to farmers, connectivity to third internet gateway amongst others.

The Prime Minister presented the Annual Report on the State of the Nation to the Joint Sitting of the Parliament.

Both the summary and detailed resolutions will be available online soon.