

**PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 31ST SESSION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN HELD ON 29TH DAY OF THE 8TH MONTH OF
THE EARTH BIRD YEAR CORRESPONDING TO 1969**

1. **MATTER RELATING TO CGI SHEETS ROOFING FOR DZONG**

As Wangchuklo Dzong of Haa, Wangdiphodrang Dzong and Dagar Dzong were important dzongs of the country, it was decided that the government should provide CGI sheets for roofing these dzongs. After the timber for roofing is ready, the Dzongdas should inform the government.

2. **MATTER RELATING TO LAND IN THE SURROUNDING AREAS OF VILLAGES**

The people were permitted to use lands within a radius of 2 miles of a village for grazing etc. No taxes needed to be paid to the government for the same. As such, it was decided that landless people wanting to settle on such lands should apply to the government, which in turn would consider their applications before allotting them land. No objections from the villagers on this matter would be entertained.

3. **MATTER RELATING TO INSECTICIDE AND PESTICIDE FOR FARMERS**

Although hitherto the damage caused to paddy and other crops by diseases and insects was considerable, the government had prohibited the use of insecticides and pesticides in view of their potential harm to human and animals. However, in view of the urgent need to save the crops from destruction by pests etc, and on the basis of an assurance given to the Assembly that such chemicals would be used with the utmost caution, the Assembly decided that the Finance Minister should procure such chemicals from the Development Departments and distribute the same to the various Dzongdas who, after enquiring into each case, would distribute the chemicals for spraying. Insecticides and pesticides would not be distributed without compliance to the above procedure. If, however, a less dangerous chemical was subsequently made available, the remaining stock of the insecticide would be collected and stored by the concerned Dzongdas.

4. **MATTER RELATING TO PAYMENT OF TAX**

From January, 1970 every individual and household shall pay taxes in monthly instalments in such a manner that the collection and payment of taxes may be completed by the end of the 12th month of each year. People will be required to remit only such an amount every month

as can be easily paid by them. Each remittance shall be registered in the Master Book maintained by the village Headman and a receipt obtained from him. The village Headman in turn will be required to deposit the amount in the Government Treasury and show the book to the Dzongdas who will check and verify each entry once a year, persons not paying taxes in time will be penalized.

5. MATTER RELATING TO COMPENSATION FOR LAND REQUISITIONED FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION

The Officer-in-charge of road construction work, together with the concerned land-owners, will record all the relevant details of private plots of land, dry or cultivable, requisitioned for road construction. The same will be obtained by the village Headman and submitted to the Dzongda who, after the necessary verification, will in turn submit the records to the Home Minister. The Home Minister will assess the price of the land, after which the Finance Minister will arrange for compensation in accordance with the prevailing rates.

6. MATTER RELATING TO SELECTION OF SCHOOL STUDENTS

Henceforth, selection of children for admission into schools shall be made in accordance with the wishes of the parents. The Education Department, the Dzongkhag and the Village Headman shall not force parent into sending their children to school.

7. MATTER RELATING TO CGI SHEETS FOR TONGSA DZONG

The country had achieved uniformity in taxation and in the provisions of Chunidom. As such, in view of the equal importance of Tongsa Dzong to the people of Threlpa, Surpa, Dupa and Goenday, it was decided that they should equally share the responsibility of roofing Tongsa Dzong. However, as some of the monasteries were also to be renovated by the above people, timber was to be supplied as follows to overcome the present shortages:

1. Threpa - 2 nos timber from each household
2. Dasur, Goendey and those possessing Kasho - 1 nos timber from each household.

8. MATTER RELATING TO MAINTENANCE OF LHUNTSHI DZONG

Lhuntshi Dzong, which was one of the oldest and most important Dzongs in the country, had fallen into a state of disrepair. Therefore, it was decided that the chunidom to be provided during the Iron-Dog Year and the previous absentee labourers upto the 3rd month of the fourth Bird year from Kurteo would be engaged for the repair of Dzong. All the people (both male and female) under the jurisdiction of the Lhuntshi Dzong were also to be engaged for the same without any partiality. The work on the renovation was to be carried out under the supervision of a senior civil officer deputed by the Hon'ble Home Minister. The person so deputed was to satisfy himself that the repair works were executed satisfactorily. Over and above this, the Dzongda, two Ramjams, the Gups and the Chipons under the Dzongkhag were to ensure that the renovation of the Dzong was completed within a year.

9. MATTER RELATING TO ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF DZONGS

As in the past, the country's dzongs, big or small were to be maintained well and necessary repairs undertaken annually. However, it was noticed that in recent years the maintenance of Dzongs had suffered a set back with only the old people and children being sent for repair works. Therefore, it was decided that henceforth the Dzongdas should engage good carpenters and able persons in such work. Meanwhile, the Dzong officers should refrain from engaging the labourers so engaged in private works. In the event of other government work also coming up at the same time, separate labourers should be engaged for that purpose.

10. MATTER RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF ARMY QUARTERS IN THE BORDER AREAS

It was decided that the construction of Army Quarters in the northern border areas would be undertaken on a contract basis by the people of the respective areas and the adjoining areas, with the work being supervised by the concerned Dzongda.

11. MATTER RELATING TO CHUNIDOM LABOUR

In view of the difficulty in procuring labour for important Government works, it was decided not to abolish chunidom for a few years.

12. MATTER RELATING TO FIREWOOD FOR THE CENTRAL MONK BODY

The previous National Assembly Session had decided that the concerned public should supply the firewood required by the Central Monk Body during summer and Winter. However, the representative of the Central Monk Body reported that they suffered a shortage of firewood because of the irregular supply from the public. It was therefore resolved that henceforth the requirement of firewood in summer at Thimphu and in winter at Punakha would be finalized with the Home Minister, who would accordingly inform the concerned public. The specified quantity of firewood was to be supplied without fail under the supervision of Dzongdas, Chimis and Gups.

It was felt that once the proposed hydro-electric project at Chukha was established, electricity could replace firewood in the Central Monk Body.

13. MATTER RELATING TO RATIONS FOR SHEMGANG RABDEY

The Shemgang Rabdey having been strengthened by the admission of 14 additional monks, it was decided that the Finance Minister would provide their rations allowance from the government's budget.

14. MATTER RELATING TO GOVERNMENT INCOME TAX

Colours extracted from the earth in our country was not only being used by the Bhutanese, but also by the Non-Bhutanese. As such, it was decided to levy a tax for the use of coloured soil, as in the case of Kara, Ngangpa, Sana and Tsaa. Similarly, it was decided to levy an annual tax on the Gramophones. However, the tax on gramophones would be fixed by the Finance Minister.

15. MATTER RELATING TO RESTRICTION ON MOVEMENT IN BORDER AREAS

As in the past, Bhutanese people would travel in the northern border areas like Sibsoo, Changju, Yesheydinkha, Ha Damthang, places north of Paro Drugyel Dzong, Lingshi, Gasa, Tashigang, Yangtshi, Choiten Kora, Jangphu, Dugti, Sakten, Kurteo Takpang, Bumthang-Khagthang with the permission of the respective Dzongdas. However, non-Bhutanese people were prohibited to go or to cross these areas without the specific permission of the National Assembly. However, an exception would be made for non-nationals producing the Royal Kasho.

16. MATTER RELATING TO TRACTORS

The destruction of cattle by disease in the Kingdom had resulted in a shortage of cattle for ploughing requiring the use of an estimated 34 tractors. However, as only 8 tractors were available with the Department of Agriculture, it was decided to distribute these for sale to the Dzongkhags as follows

One for Wangdiphodrang districts

Three for Punakha

Four for Thimphu.

The Dzongdas and village Headman were to supervise the rotational use of the tractors, which would be sold at the concessional rate of Nu. 5,360/- (i.e. 1/3 of its actual price). The people using these tractors were to repay the cost within 3 years to the Department of Agriculture through their respective Dzongdas. The remaining tractors would be distributed for sale to the people by the Development Minister.

17. MATTER RELATING TO AUDIT DEPARTMENT

The Assembly decided to set up an Audit Department consisting of 4 members representing His Majesty, the Government, the Monk Body and the people respectively. They would audit the accounts of the Finance Ministry, the Development Ministry, the Home Ministry (including police), the Trade Ministry, the R.B.A., the R.B.G. and the National Militia. They would also be empowered to audit His Majesty's accounts.

18. MATTER RELATING TO EXEMPTION OF TAX ON ECCLESIASTICAL LANDS AND POSSESSIONS

In view of the traditional reverence with which the various monk bodies in the Kingdom were held, it was decided that henceforth all lands belonging to the Ecclesiastical bodies and other private lands, grasslands, cattle etc, belonging to the Monasteries would be exempted from tax.

19. MATTER RELATING TO OFFERING DURING THE RITUAL PERFORMANCE OF A DEAD BODY

The Assembly discussed the rates of payment for the rites in connection with a death, for which it received a letter containing the seal and signature of the Je Khenpo conveying the gratitude of the monk body to His Majesty the King and all the members of the Assembly for their deep concern for the nation's religious affairs. His Holiness affirmed that the rites in question being a sacred duty of the monk body towards the public, anything at all offered by the poor as payment even a nut would be acceptable, whereas the rich could continue to pay Nu.7/- as before. The Assembly ratified His Holiness's proposal.

20. MATTER RELATING TO THE AUDITORS

His Majesty commanded that, in accordance with Resolution No. 17 of the 31st National Assembly Session, votes be cast for the four newly created posts of auditors. Accordingly, the following four were appointed Auditors by majority vote.

- i. Dasho Katu as Representative of His Majesty.
- ii. Dasho Kezang, Speaker, as Representative of the Government.
- iii. Hap Sonam Rabgey as Public Representative.
- iv. Mr. Nado as Representative of Central Monk Body.

21. MATTER RELATING TO THE GRANT OF CONTRACT TO THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Earlier government officials were forbidden from bidding for contracts. However, as the Ministries of Trade and Industry, and Development had numerous works to be undertaken, it was decided that henceforth, along with the public, government officials too would be permitted to bid for contracts. It was further decided that the contracts for the construction of buildings and industrial units would be shared equally by all the national contractors. It was also decided that the contract works would not be given to non-national contractors except in the case of those works which could not be undertaken by the national contractors.

22. MATTER RELATING TO MASONS

During the construction of Tashichhodzong, 5 masons from each major block and 3 or 4 from minor blocks were appointed compulsorily from the people. However, this measure proved problematic in view of the fact that not all blocks could provide the required number of masons, and contribute cash and kind to them to make them go for the works. The Assembly

therefore resolved that as discussed with Zori Chichap, masons would no longer be recruited from the villages with effect from the 30th day of the 12th month of the Earth Bird Year.

23. MATTER RELATING TO THE SUBSIDY TO ASSEMBLY
MEMBERS

Some members were found to be in the habit of collecting goods from the public for the purpose of attending the Assembly. In order to put an end to this practice, the Assembly decided to entitle members to two Thenchas who were liable for Chunidom or three Thenchas whose ages did not fall within the required age limits for Chunidom. If Gups and Chipons happened to be Assembly members, they would not be entitled to additional entitlements over and above the ones they already enjoyed.