



TSHOGDU

A Newsletter of the National Assembly Secretariat

News

SECOND ISSUE

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FELICITATION TO HIS MAJESTY THE DRUK GYALPO

On the auspicious occasion of the Coronation Day on 2 June 2005, the National Assembly of Bhutan presents its heartiest felicitations and unfathomed gratitude to our beloved King for 31 years of Glorious reign.

We pray for the long life of His Majesty the King and everlasting peace and prosperity under his noble and dynamic leadership.

Message from the Speaker



To commemorate the 31st Coronation Anniversary of His Majesty the King, the National Assembly of Bhutan has launched its official web-site on June 2, 2005.

The National Assembly of Bhutan website is designed to facilitate access by members of National Assembly, ministries, departments, organisation and the general public to information on legislations, publications, activities and about the Secretariat. While resolutions from the 76th to the 82nd sessions are included in the web-site, it is envisaged to make all the resolutions available on the web in the second phase.

This website offers a small but important piece of information on National Assembly of Bhutan's unique history, and important source documents on the National Assembly. It is hoped that the web site will help

people, not only in the country but also overseas, to know more about our National Assembly.

The National Assembly has made a great contribution to the achievements of the on-going reform process and it is trying its best to strengthen the efficiency of its activities for the course of a vibrant legislature.

The establishment of the website is evidence that we are supporting the integration and ready to contribute our best part to the development of a better world. It is a new experience for us to share information with the world in this way. Bhutan has begun a new era of liberal democratic progress and pluralism, through an open parliamentary process. We hope the web-site begin to show how this dream is becoming a reality.

The office of the National Assembly is the receiver of all recommendations, the comments on the functioning of the National Assembly in general and the development of this website in particular. Comments and recommendations would be highly appreciated.

The 83rd Session of the National Assembly commences on June 3, 2005

The 83rd Session of the National Assembly will commence on Friday 3rd June, 2005 corresponding to the 27th day of 4th month of the Bhutanese calendar year. Unlike in the past, for effective and efficient conduct of the National Assembly, sessions will be conducted in the afternoons as well.

As resolved during the 82nd Session, the National Assembly will meet twice a year starting from the 83rd Session. While one session will meet in June, the other session will meet in November each year.

Crown Prince is Chhoetse Penlop



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Dashi Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck, officially assumed the revered position of Chhoetse Penlop on October 21, 2004 corresponding to the eighth day of the ninth month of the Bhutanese calendar.

The Crown Prince received the Dhar and Seal of the Chhoetse Penlop from His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo in the Throne Room of Trashichhodzong. The investiture ceremony of the Chhoetse Penlop assured the continuity of the Monarchy which is the strength and the unifying force of the Bhutanese people.

The National Assembly offer our prayers for His Royal Highness the Chhoetse Penlop's long and happy life.

THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW

TSHOGDU Newsletter launched

The first Newsletter produced by the National Assembly Secretariat was released by the Hon'ble Speaker Dashi Ugen Dorje on 2nd June, 2004. It was launched as a commemorative issue on the joyous occasion of the 30th Coronation Anniversary of His Majesty the King.



82nd Session of the National Assembly

The 82nd Session of the National Assembly was held from June 28, 2004 to August 17, 2004.



In his inaugural speech, the Speaker welcomed His Majesty the King, the Prime Minister and the members of the Lhengye Zhungtshog, representatives of the Dratshang, the Government, and the people and other distinguished guests to the inaugural ceremony of the 82nd Session of the National Assembly on 28th June, 2004.

The honourable Speaker extended warm and hearty Tashi Delek to the four newly elected representatives of the Zhung Dratshang and Rabdeys, eight new government representatives, and 18 new Chimis as well as re-elected Chimis to the National Assembly who face challenging responsibilities.

Since the National Assembly is the highest legislative institution in the country, he urged the honourable

members to engage in sincere, objective, and substantive deliberations on all issues, keeping in mind the present and future well being of the country and the people.

He also reminded the house that since all the honourable members of the National Assembly are elected with the trust and confidence of the Monastic Body, the Government, and the people, we must endeavour to live up to their expectations and hoped that we will be able to charter important resolutions and, thereby, ensure the success of the 82nd Session of the National Assembly.

As a part of the programme of the 82nd Session of the National Assembly, the members of the National Assembly led by the honourable Speaker visited the Talo Sanga Choeling Dzong, Punakha and Druk Wangyal Khangzang Chhortens at Dochula on 17th July, 2004.



Councillor's elected.....

Six Royal Advisory Councilors were elected on June 28, 2004.



(From L to R)

Yeshey Dorji from Sarpang Dzongkhag, D.B.Sinchuri from Tsirang Dzongkhag, Sangay Wangdi from Mongar Dzongkhag, Sigyel Dorji from Wangdue Phodrang Dzongkhag, Zeko Dorji from Gasa Dzongkhag, and Jangchub Dorji from Trashigang Dzongkhag.

Deputy Speaker elected.....

The Assembly enacted the Speakers Act of the National Assembly of Bhutan, 2004 on August 6, 2004.

According to the Act, a Deputy Speaker was required to be elected. There were nine candidates contesting for

the post of the Deputy Speaker from among the elected members of the National Assembly. The representative of the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zhamling Dorji was elected as the Deputy Speaker.



Zhamling Dorji formally joined the office on September 3, 2004 in a simple ceremony.

Election of the Legislative Committee Members



Legislative Committee Members with honourable Speaker and Dy. Speaker

The National Assembly passed the National Assembly Committee Act of Bhutan 2004, on July 30, 2004.

According to the Act, five new committee members were to be elected from amongst the elected members of the Assembly. Namgay Phuntsho, Punakha Chimi, Jampel, Bumthang Chimi, Pema Dorji, Mongar Chimi, Yoenten Thinley, Samdrupjongkhar Chimi and Lobzang Tshering, Trashy Yangtse Chimi were elected as Legislative Committee members.

Election of the Public Accounts Committee Members



The PAC members with honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker

The National Assembly passed the National Assembly Committee Act of Bhutan, 2004 on July 30, 2004. According to the Act, five Public Accounts Committee members were to be elected from amongst the elected members of the Assembly. During the election, Dorji Wangchuk, Bumthang Chimi, Nawang Jamyang Dorji, Monger Chimi, Wangdi, Paro Chimi, Sangay Khandu, Samtse Chimi and Sigyal, Wangdue Chimi were elected as the members of the Public Accounts Committee for a term of one year.

Visitors (July 2004 to May 2005)

- Visit by the Senate Standing Committee on Public Health from Thailand on June 14, 2004
- Visit by the Danish Good Governance Review Team on September 2, 2004.
- Visit by Mr. Hovmand Svend Erik, Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee and Member of the Transport Committee of the Danish Parliament on Tuesday 28th September, 2004



- Visit by Shri G.C. Malhotra, Secretary General of Lok Sabha, India on 27th December, 2004.
- Visit by Philip Rawkins, External Consultant to Danida Good Governance on 2nd February, 2005.
- Visit by the delegation from the International Development Research Centre, Canada on November 8, 2004.
- Visit by H.E. Mr. Khalaf Abass Khalaf Al-Foudari, Ambassador-designate of Kuwait to Bhutan on April 5, 2005.
- Visit by H.E. Dominique Dreyer, Ambassador-designate of Switzerland to Bhutan on April 6, 2005.

Honourable Speaker attends AAPP Conference in Islamabad, Pakistan



The Hon'ble Speaker, Dasho Ugen Dorje led a five member Bhutanese delegation to attend the 5th General Assembly of the Association of Asian Parliamentarians for Peace (AAPP) held from November 29 to December 3, 2004 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Since inception of the Association, Bhutan has attended the 1st General Assembly held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2nd General Assembly held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 3rd General Assembly held in Chongqing, People's Republic of China, 4th General Assembly held in Manila, Republic of the Philippines and 5th General Assembly held in Islamabad, Pakistan

The theme of the Conference was "Vision for Asia: Peace and Development through Inter-Parliamentary Dialogue and Cooperation".

Currently 40 countries are represented as permanent members of the AAPP while there are 15 non-member countries. The next Conference will be held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2005.

On the side-line of the visit to Pakistan to attend the 5th General Assembly of AAPP, Dasho Ugen Dorje, Speaker of the National Assembly also accepted the invitation of the Government of India to visit New Delhi from 5th to 8th December 2004.



The Honourable Speaker with the Vice-President of India

Besides the Call On to the Speaker, the Vice President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha and the election Commissioner of India and exchange of ideas and experiences with them, the Honourable Speaker and the delegates also met other senior officials of the Government of India during their stay.



The Honourable Speaker with the Speaker of Lok Sabha

The delegation observed the winter session of the Lok Sabha. The delegates also met with the senior officials of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha and discussed with them areas of cooperation.

Workshop attended by the members of the National Assembly

Mr. Ngawang Jamyang Dorji, Member of the National Assembly attended a Training Workshop on Understanding WTO Instruments: Business Implications for SAARC in cooperation with Aus AID from 8-11 February, 2005 organized by the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Pearl Continental Hotel, Bhurban, Republic of Pakistan.



Mr. Sangay Khandu, Member of the National Assembly attended the 2nd Regional Workshop on "Understanding WTO Instruments Business Implication for SAARC" from 29th -31st March, 2005 held in New Delhi, India.

Workshop conducted by the National Assembly

A one day workshop was conducted by the Secretariat to discuss on the Rules of procedure for the Public Accounts Committee. The Workshop was inaugurated by the Honourable Speaker Dasho Ugen Dorje and was attended by the members of the Legislative Committee, members of the Public Accounts Committee, representatives from the Royal Audit Authority, Ministry of Finance, Department of Budget and Accounts, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Royal Court of Justice, Office of legal Affairs and the Royal Advisory Council.



A two day workshop on standardization of structure of bills was organized by the National Assembly Secretariat from 21-22 February, 2005. About fifty participants from various agencies participated in the workshop chaired by the honourable Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. Recommendations of the workshop have been circulated to all the agencies.

Talk on Canadian Parliament

Mr. Stephen Smith, Special Assistant, Office of the Minister, Department of Justice and Attorney General,

New Brunswick, Canada gave a talk to the officials of the National Assembly Secretariat on various aspects of the Canadian Parliamentary system with special focus on the New Brunswick legislature on March 1, 2005.

Trainings attended

Sonam Lhamu, Documentation Officer of the Secretariat undertook the Japanese Exchange Programme from September 24 to October 5, 2004 at the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan.

The delegates from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bhutan, Maldives and the host country participated in the programme for “Promoting exchange between Japan and South Asia”. The forum included students, journalists, public officers, academicians, researchers, research assistants, volunteers, engineers, artists and performers.

Yangka Wangmo, P.A. to Secretary and **Ugyen Thinley**, Office Assistant attended a training course on Web Application Development & Internet Security and Advance Networking Technologies held in NIIT, New Delhi, India from October 24, 2004 to December 17, 2004. Apart from the training, the participants were also



Gyelyong Tshokhang Security

The internal security of the Gyelyong Tshokhang received a major face-lift with the installation of three metal gate detectors and 6 hand held metal detectors imported from Germany under the RGoB funding. The equipment was formally handed over to the Royal Bhutan Police by the Secretary of the National Assembly on June 17, 2004.

taken on study tour to Jaipur and Agra to get an insight into the Indian culture, history and society. There were altogether 85 participants from 48 countries undertaking different courses under the Indian Government Scholarships.

Rinchen Penjor, Legislative Officer attended the second International Legislative Development Conference on Strengthening Legislatures in Response to Globalization and International Security Issues held in Manila, Republic of the Philippines from December 2–3, 2004. There were 110 participants including Parliamentarians, Committee Members, Senior Secretarial Staff and UNDP personnel representing 21 countries.



The objectives of the two day conference was to create Legislative awareness of the scope and implications of

WTO rules and international security issues; To increase legislative awareness and enhance legislative support services for understanding WTO and international security issues; To identify the strengths and weaknesses of legislative committees, legislative oversight and budgetary allocations in meeting the challenges brought by globalization and the threats to international security; and to formulate an action plan that will look into a new agenda for legislative strengthening.

Leki Tenzin, Office Secretary attended a two weeks course on Computing in Dzongkha using Dzongkha Unicode Tools organized by the Dzongkha Development Authority from 17th January to 28th January, 2005.

Tshering Dorji, Finance Officer of the Secretariat is undergoing MBA in International Business at the School of Management, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand since August 2004 for a period of two years.

Jigme Zangpo, Secretary of the National Assembly Secretariat undertook US Visitors Programme from 28th September to 21st October 2004.

Friends who joined us

Sonam Wangchuck joined us on appointment by the Royal Civil Service Commission from 1st June, 2004. We wish him fruitful career in the Secretariat.



Procedures for election of the members of the National Assembly

In view of the inconsistency in the election procedures between the Amended Chathrim for the Election of National Assembly Members, 1995 and the GYT Chathrim 2002 and the inconveniences being faced thereof, henceforth all the registered residents of a geog/village, who are 21 years and above as prescribed under Article 5 of the GYT Chathrim of 2002 shall be eligible to vote in the election of the members of the National Assembly until the Election Act is passed by the National Assembly of Bhutan. Further, the election of the representative from the Municipality in the National Assembly shall be carried out as prescribed in the DYT Chathrim 2002.

However, except clause 5.6 (c) of the Amended Chathrim for the Election of National Assembly Members, 1995, all other provisions of the Amended Chathrim shall remain in force till further notice.

INTOSAI - International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions delegates visit the National Assembly



The Secretary and the senior officials of the National Assembly Secretariat welcomed the 52 member INTOSAI delegates to the National Assembly on April 28, 2005. This was the biggest group that visited the National Assembly so far. Besides organizing an orientation programme for the delegates to create awareness on the functions, roles and responsibilities of the National Assembly, the Tshogdu documentary film was also screened. Before their departure, the delegates visited the National Assembly Hall.



Mission to assess possible support to the National Assembly

Mr. Frank Rothaus Jensen, Consultant, NIRAS Consulting Engineers and Planners A/S was attached with the National Assembly Secretariat from April 25 to May 9, 2005 to assess possible support to the National Assembly and its Secretariat under the Good Governance/PART II, whereby the project will be a sub-component under the same programme. This was based on a comprehensive proposal submitted by the National Assembly to the Department of Aid and Debt Management (DADM).



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