

**REVISED AGENDA FOR THE NINTH SESSION OF
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BHUTAN**

(Subject to change without notice)

Friday, 22 June

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

- a. Adoption of Contract Bill of Bhutan 2011
- b. Adoption of Alternate Dispute Resolution Bill of Bhutan 2011
- c. Adoption of Education City Bill 2011
- d. Motion for leave to introduce other legislative issues, if any

QUESTION TIME-4

Monday, 25 June

RECESS

Tuesday, 26 June

RECESS

Wednesday, 27 June

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

- a. Move motion to introduce National Budget & Appropriation Bill 2012-2013
- b. Deliberation on National Budget & Appropriation Bill 2012-2013

QUESTION TIME-5

Thursday, 28 June

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

- a. Adoption of National Budget & Appropriation Bill 2012-2013

Friday, 29 June

PUBLIC HOLIDAY (BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF GURU RINPOCHE)

Monday, 2 July

REPORT PRESENTATION

- a. Presentation on Annual Anti-Corruption Report 2011
- b. Deliberation on Annual Anti-Corruption Report 2011

Tuesday, 3 July

REPORT PRESENTATION

- a. Presentation on Public Accounts Committee Report 2011
- b. Deliberation on Public Accounts Committee Report 2011

Wednesday, 4 July

POLICY RELATED ISSUES

- a. Calling attention of the Government to rationalise the policies on Income Taxes**

The Income Tax Act 2001 was implemented from 1st January 2002. The Act has not been amended for the last ten and a half years. During its 5th Session, the National Council of Bhutan had submitted a set of recommendations to the Government pertaining to Personal Income Tax (PIT) and educational expenses. As a follow-up, question was asked on the Government's actions during the 7th Session. However, the Government justified its inaction based on financial considerations.

The National Council of Bhutan, therefore, calls the attention of the Government to:

- 1. Revisit the Income Tax Act 2001 and propose the following amendments in the Act, at the earliest:

- (a) Increase the basic tax exemption of a net taxable amount of Nu. 100,001 per annum to about Nu. 200,001 per annum;
 - (b) Increase the highest taxable income slab of Nu. 1000,001 and above to about Nu. 2000,000 and above;
 - (c) Explore the possibility of increasing the current tax rate of 25% for the highest taxable income slab to about 30%; and
 - (d) Increase the basic tax exemptions on educational expenses from Nu. 50,000 per child per annum by about two folds.
2. Revisit the current practice of levying Business Income Taxes on a fixed annual incremental rate basis to businesses, small shops in particular who are unable to maintain stocks and sales records, and develop a more rational practice.

Develop policy interventions to provide some form of business tax waiver for those businesses that deal solely in locally produced arts and crafts and increase BIT on those businesses that import non-essential items.

b. Problems of the people related to land issues

The National Council had deliberated upon different land issues during the past sessions and recommendations had been submitted to the Royal Government for consideration. However, certain issues still persist and affect the lives of people in our country. As complex as they may be, it is pertinent that due attention is accorded and possible solutions considered. Thus, the Good Governance Committee of the National Council has identified and reviewed land issues for submission to the House for further deliberation during this session.

c. Review of policy and issues pertaining to the Rupee shortfall

Since March 2012, Bhutan's economy has been under considerable strain due to certain policy and administrative measures taken to address the shortfall of Indian Rupees. The measures taken to

control the outflow of Indian Rupees has affected all sectors of the economy and all segments of the population. As India is Bhutan's largest trading partner and the single largest source of our imports, it is vital to address the rupee shortfall for long term economic stability.

An analysis of the economic trends of the past two decades or so shows that issues related to the rupee shortfall are not entirely new. However, the magnitude of the shortfall has multiplied manifold in recent years to such an extent to give deep cause for concerns about our economic structure, consumption and import patterns. In the recent months, the Royal Government and various other agencies have launched numerous studies to identify causes and solutions to the problem.

As the causes of the rupee shortfall have been covered in the studies conducted recently, the Economic Affairs Committee of National Council has reviewed policies, role of institutions and administrative decisions that have caused the rupee shortfall to become one of the most critical economic challenges of recent years. For more effective macro-economic policy coordination, the committee proposes to submit its recommendations to the House for further deliberation/consideration.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

- a. Move motion to introduce Nogoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity

QUESTION TIME-6

Thursday, 5 July

- a. Ratification of Nogoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

- b. Move motion for leave to introduce Cape Town Convention and Aircraft Protocol
- c. Ratification of Cape Town Convention and Aircraft Protocol
- d. Any Other Business:
 - (i) Call attention of Government on Right-To-Information Bill
 - (ii) Submit recommendation to the Government on strategies to improve potato marketing in Bhutan

Friday, 6 July

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

- a. Re-deliberation on National Flag Bill of Bhutan 2011
- b. Re-deliberation on Parliamentary Entitlement (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2011

QUESTION TIME

Monday, 9 July

JOINT SITTING-1

- a. Hon'ble Prime Minister to present the annual report on the state of the Nation, including legislative plans and the annual plans and priorities of the government, to the Joint Sitting of Parliament.

Tuesday, 10 July

- a. Deliberation on Hon'ble Prime Minister's Annual Report on the State of the Nation including legislative plans, and the annual plans and priorities of the Government.

- b. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY**

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 9TH SESSION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BHUTAN

- a. Closing address by the Hon'ble Chairperson
- b. *Tashi Moenlam*

Wednesday, 11 July

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 9TH SESSION OF PARLIAMENT (JOINT SITTING)