

FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF BHUTAN

FIRST SESSION



Resolution No. 1

PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN

June 12 - July 06, 2024

Speaker: Lungten Dorji

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Proceedings and Resolutions of the First Session of

the Fourth Parliament

1. Opening Ceremony

The Opening ceremony of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament was held on 12 June, 2024, corresponding to the 6th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year. The ceremony commenced with the reception of His Majesty the King, with the traditional Chipdrel and Serdrang ceremony, followed by the Zhugdrel-Phuensum-Tshogpai ceremony in the Grand Hall of the Parliament.

2. Opening Address by the Speaker

The Speaker expressed his gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for gracing the Opening Ceremony of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament, despite His Majesty's other important responsibilities. He also acknowledged and thanked the other esteemed dignitaries and officials who attended the ceremony.

The Speaker submitted that under the guidance and protection of His Majesty the King, Bhutan had not lost a single life to the pandemic. The Speaker expressed heartfelt gratitude to His Majesty for ensuring the safety of the people and for making it possible for the people to gather today.

The Speaker highlighted His Majesty's visionary Gyalsung Programme, which aimed to provide comprehensive education and skills development

for Bhutanese youth and strengthen diplomatic relations with neighboring countries through high level visits. He also expressed deep gratitude for the initiatives such as the Gelephu Mindfulness City, which is crucial for Bhutan's economic future. The Parliament pledged unwavering support for these transformative initiatives.

The Parliament also extended its heartfelt appreciation to His Holiness the Je Khenpo and other religious masters who conducted numerous prayers and religious ceremonies for the well-being of the King, country, and people.

The Speaker said Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay's recent official visit to India had strengthened the existing bilateral relations between the two countries. This visit had led to substantial assistance for Bhutan's 13th Five Year Plan and collaboration in various fields.

He added that the awarding of the Order of the Druk Gyalpo (Ngadag Pelgi Khorlo) to His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi by His Majesty the King had further solidified the ties between the two countries. Furthermore, the Parliament expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Prime Minister, the Government, and the People of India for providing reassuring development assistance to Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan

The Speaker, on behalf of the Parliament of Bhutan, extended heartfelt congratulations to the National Democratic Alliance on their victory in

the recent national elections of India. The Parliament also acknowledged the people of Bhutan for electing the People's Democratic Party as the ruling party and the Bhutan ssxs Party as the opposition party. The Speaker then outlined the detailed agenda to be discussed in the First Session of the Fourth Parliament. Additionally, he expressed heartfelt gratitude to the people of Panbang constituency for electing him as their representative, to the members of the National Assembly for electing him as the Speaker, and to His Majesty for conferring the Dakyen upon him.

In conclusion, the Speaker offered prayers for the successful conclusion of the first session of the Fourth Parliament, invoking the blessings of the Triple Gem and the prayers of Their Majesties and the people of Bhutan. **The Speaker address is attached in Annexure I**

3. Adoption of the Standing Committees and the Committee Members

The Chairperson of the House Committee, the Deputy Speaker, reported that, in accordance with Article 10, Section 11 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Section 293 of the National Assembly Act 2008, and Section 298 of the National Assembly's Rules of Procedure 2022, nine standing Committees have been formed to effectively carry out the functions of the Parliament.

The Chairperson informed that each Committee has nine members, with every member required to be a member of at least two Committees,

while some are engaged in three. He said that given the demanding roles and responsibilities, it might become necessary to reduce the number of Committee members as circumstances dictated and should this need arise, the House Committee would seek approval of the House to review the committee memberships.

The Chairperson further introduced the Chairpersons, Deputy Chairpersons and members of the nine standing Committees. The House endorsed the Chairpersons, Deputy Chairpersons and the committee members through show of hands. The House also directed the House Committee to review the Committee membership as and when required. (On the 12th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon year corresponding to 13 June 2024) The List of Committees and the members are attached in Annexure II

4. Report on the 13th Five-Year Plan

4.1. Background

The Finance Minister informed the House that the formulation of the 13th Five Year Plan was led by the Cabinet Secretariat. Consultations on the draft plan were carried out with central agencies, local governments, political parties, parliamentarians, private sector, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and other relevant entities. Additionally, expert group consultation and technical working committees were also formed to review, discuss and exchange ideas.

4.2. Long-term Plan

The 13th Five-Year Plan was formulated with the long-term goals of fulfilling the three fundamental pillars of Gross National Happiness; socio-economic development, strengthening security, and achieving long-term happiness, peace, and prosperity for the country.

4.3 Thirteenth Five-Year Plan

The Thirteenth Five-Year Plan focuses on the strategic goals of economic and social development and the enhancement of security and stability of governance. Important services are identified under each goal, and specific programs are established to achieve these objectives.

4.4 Economic Development Goals

The 13th Plan aims to enhance national productivity, maintaining an average growth of 8% of GDP while keeping inflation below 5%. This approach will help reduce the national trade deficit and increase the share of non-hydro related exports. The National Program on Economic Development focuses on three main objectives: adapting to modern needs and providing 21st-century skills training, promoting biodiversity and resilience, and boosting domestic productivity in sectors such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, mining, quarrying, electricity, and energy. Additionally, there is a goal to increase the overall growth rate of interest.

4.5 Social Development Objectives

A budget of Nu.19,000 million is allocated for Healthy Drukyl Program which aims to ensure good health and well-being of the Bhutanese population through three key strategies to achieve universal health coverage, promote healthier lifestyles, and improve healthcare accessibility and quality. He informed that, to keep pace with the 21st century economy, there is a huge opportunity for transformation of education system in the 13th FYP.

Further, he informed that, during the 13th FYP, around 70,000 young people are expected to enter the job market. To support their skills development and for them to contribute to economic growth, the plan prioritizes provision of quality education and skills training. The Ministry of Education and Skills Development is allocated Nu.30,000 million to provide the necessary facilities, enhance the quality of education and for skills development.

4.6. Objectives of Improving Security

The 13th FYP aims to enhance border management and address border-related issues, strengthen internal security through legislation, and bolster cybersecurity. It also focuses on managing disasters and emergencies at institutional and community levels, aiming to mitigate risks. This approach includes providing necessary facilities, building capacity, and fostering understanding and cooperation.

Additionally, the 13th FYP seeks to reinforce Bhutan's identity and values by promoting patriotism and ownership among its people, enhancing Bhutan's reputation as a significant member of the global community. It also prioritizes the development and preservation of traditional heritage and the program will be carried out jointly by the Cabinet Secretariat, Ministry of Home Affairs, Royal Bhutan Police, Dratsang Lhengtshog, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Local Government and relevant agencies. A total sum of Nu.9,181.634 million has been allocated for implementing the program.

4.7 Strengthening Governance

The strategic objectives of the 13th FYP aims to achieve a transformed and trusted governance ecosystem that drives accelerated economic growth and improves lives. This objective will be pursued through two outcomes encompassing public sector transformation and enhanced ability of state institutions for efficient and effective governance.

4.8 Summary of Resources Allocation to central Government agencies:

The Economic Transformation Program has allocated resources totaling Nu. 80,000 million, while Nu.30,000 million has been allocated for the Education Transformation Program. Additionally, Nu.10,000 million and Nu.20,000 million has been allocated for the 21st Century Skilling Program and the Healthy Drukylul Programme, respectively. The Digital Transformation program and Sociocultural Resilience and Community Vitality Programme have been allocated Nu.10,000 and Nu.12,000

million each respectively. The Transformational Governance Programme has been allocated Nu.267,283 million. The Ecological Diversity and Resilience Programme has been allocated Nu.14,000 million and Nu.20,000 million has been allocated for the Priority Development Fund.

In addition, seven areas of services to be provided by the Local Governments have also been identified and the resources allocated for these services were also presented along with a detailed report on the allocation of grants.

4.9 13 FYP Fiscal Outlook and Resource Allocation

The table below presents the Fiscal Framework for the 13th Five Year Plan:

Details	Total Budget (Nu.in million)
Total Resources	456,345
Internal Resources	331,345
Grants from GoI	85,000
Grants from other sources	40,000
Total Outlay	512,283
Current Expenditure	267,283
Capital Expenditure	245,000
Fiscal deficit	(55,938)
Fiscal deficit as a percentage of GDP	2.97%

4.10 Conclusion

The brief report of the 13th Five-Year Plan was presented to the House as per the decision of the Plenary. The implementation of the 13th FYP is set to commence from July 2024 as approved by the Cabinet. The presentation on the 13 FYP report concluded with prayers for its successful implementation under the guidance of His Majesty the King and the blessings of the guardian deities and the support of the people.

The House directed the Economic and Finance Committee to review the 13th Five Year Plan and submit its findings to the House on 18 June 2024. **(The 7th Day of 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 13 June, 2024)**

5. Review Report of the 13th Five Year Plan

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee (EFC), the Member from Bartsam-Shongphu constituency, presented the review report on the 13th Five Year Plan. He reported that the development objectives of the Five Year Plans have been successfully achieved and implemented so far. He reported that, in response to the evolving needs and opportunities of the 21st century, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB) is adopting a longer-term strategic framework covering 2024 to 2034, within which the 13th Five Year Plan (July 2024 - June 2029) will be implemented. This plan, guided by the principles of Gross National Happiness (GNH), aims to become a high income GNH economy by 2034.

The implementation of the 13th FYP is set to commence from July 2024 and be completed by the end of June 2029. He reported that eight national programmes have been identified to achieve the objectives of the 13th FYP which will be implemented through the collaborative efforts of Central Agencies, Local Governments (LGs), and relevant partners.

Stakeholder consultation

The Chairperson reported that the Committee held a series of consultations with the concerned Ministry, Agency and the Cabinet Secretariat to understand the fundamentals and rationale behind resource allocation. During the consultation, the members of the committee also consulted on the road infrastructure strategy for the 13 FYP, the hydropower sector and its framework, its resource potential and hydropower and the issues and challenges faced .

Moreover, he reported that the Committee also met with the Ministry of Finance to understand the macroeconomic situation, fiscal framework, public debt situation, revenue and tax reform initiatives. He submitted the 10 recommendations of the Committee for the House endorsement of the House after deliberation. (The details are available in the EFC Report)

Committee Recommendations:

1. To apply the criteria used for Gewogs uniformly to Dzongkhags, Thromdes, and Gewogs. Additionally, the weightage of the GNH Index (Inverse) to be reduced, and the same weightage to be

applied as that for Gewogs. Finally, the application of standard deviation should be eliminated.

2. To use the average of the resident population and the registered population instead of just the resident population to allocate resources.
3. To allocate separate resources for Dzongkhag Thromde and Yenlag Thromde in accordance with the approved local area plans.
4. To develop sector-wise resource outlay similar to the allocation framework reflected in the National Budget document of the Financial Year 2024-2025 to enable the decision makers and implementers to comprehend the resource allocation trends and guide in projecting the future resource requirement.
5. To allocate PTA and SDP resources for LGs through a resource allocation formula similar to the one used for block grant allocation.
6. The need for indicative resource outlay to ensure transparency, predictability, and consistency of the plan and its implementation in major projects.
7. To make a mandatory policy to allocate 1% of GDP for Research and Development to carry out Basic Research, Applied Research, and Experimental Development.

8. To develop a detailed Human Development Master Plan with dedicated resources allocated for the 13th FYP and to enhance resources allocation of 0.81% from Nu.2 billion to 2% from Nu.4.9 billion for HRD.
9. To allocate dedicated resources to develop sports facilities for school dropouts and unemployed youth.
10. The need for inclusion of the Economic Stimulus Plan in the main fiscal framework of the 13th FYP for transparency, responsibility and accountability as mandated by Article 14, Section 2 of the Constitution.

The House during the deliberation on the ten recommendations, endorsed 8 recommendations while recommendations 1 and 5 were not passed. Further, the House endorsed the 13 FYP with 38 Yes, 3 No and 1 Abstain out of 42 members present and voting.

Since there were no dissenting opinions, the Speaker declared that the House had thoroughly deliberated on the 13th FYP. The Speaker also reminded the Government to consider the issues raised by the Members and to share copies of the reviews and changes made with the Members accordingly. **(On the 13th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 19 June 2024). The Voting records are attached in Annexure III**

6. Report on the Annual Budget 2024-2025

6.1 Introduction

As per Article 14 Section 8 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and the provisions of the Public Finance (Amendment) Act 2012, the Finance Minister presented the Annual Budget Report for the FY 2024-2025 to the House.

The Finance Minister presented the Annual Budget for the FY 2024-2025 (budget for the first year of the 13 FYP), the Budget Appropriation Bill for 2024-2025 and the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 for endorsement by the House. He said that as in the past the Annual Budget for the FY 2024-2025 has been prepared under the wise guidance of His Majesty the Kings and based on the aspirations of the people, 20 Dzongkhags and 205 Gewogs.

6.2 Macroeconomic Situation and Outlook

According to the International Monetary Fund's Global Economic Outlook for 2024, the global economic growth is forecasted to remain steady at 3.2% for both 2024 and 2025 a slight increase from the previous projections.

In 2023, the country's economy was projected to grow at 4.5%; however, this represented a decline of 0.7% compared to 2022. This decline was attributed to challenges faced by the hydro-power sector due to climate

change and a reduction in government expenditure in the construction industry. Nevertheless, the economy is projected to grow at 6.3% in 2024 and 8.9% in 2025 with the anticipated commissioning of the Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project and an increase in the number of tourists as targeted by the government.

In 2023, GDP per capita increased from USD 4,036 to USD 4,512 in 2024. Further, the Gross National Income per capita is estimated to increase from USD 3,828 to USD 4,302 in 2024.

6.3 Inflation

It was reported that on an average the inflation rates in the country are projected to remain in between 4-5%. The current account deficit in FY 2022-2023 stood at 32.1% of the GDP. For FY 2023-2024, the current account deficit is expected to contract to 19.1% of the GDP. For FY 2024-2-25, the current account balance is expected to see an incremental improvement of 18.9 %.

6.4 Public Debt

As of 31 March 2024, the total public debt stood at Nu.293.09 billion of which external debt is Nu.261.12 billion and domestic debt is Nu.31.97 billion. The hydropower debt stood at Nu.167.50 billion whereas non-hydropower debt stood at Nu.125.59 billion.

6.5 13th Five Year and Economic Stimulus Plan

To pursue an overarching goal for Developed Bhutan by 2034, the 13th Five-Year Plan has been approved with an outlay of Nu.512.283 billion,

with Nu.245 billion allocated as capital budget and Nu.267.283 billion as current budget. The country forecasts domestic revenue amounting to Nu.456.345 billion, while projecting a fiscal deficit of Nu.55.938 billion. During the 13th Five-Year Plan, the fiscal deficit is targeted to average at 3% of the country's GDP.

6.6 Fiscal outlook and Policy Targets

For the FY 2024-2025, domestic revenue amounts to Nu.73,182.049 million, while expenditures forecasted to be Nu.89,154.218 million. According to the forecast, the fiscal deficit is projected to be Nu.15,972.169 million. A supplementary budget of Nu. 3,224.924 million for the Financial Year 2023-2024 has been recommended for endorsement.

6.7 National Budget for Financial Year 2024-2025

The fiscal policy objective in the 13th Five-Year Plan is to ensure robust and inclusive economic growth. The budget has been allocated in consultation with various stakeholders. Of the total budget allocated, Nu.50,809.905 million is recurrent expenditure, Nu.38,344.313 million as capital expenditure, Nu.6,182.040 million for principal repayment, and Nu.2,318.571 million for on-lending purposes.

For the FY 2024-2025 the internal revenue is forecasted to Nu.73,182.049 million in which Nu.56,660.426 million is internal revenue and the Nu.16,521.623 million is external grants.

Of the total internal revenue of Nu.73,182.049 million the total expenditure forecasted is Nu.89,154.218 million, of which fiscal deficit is Nu.15,972.169 million, that is 5.2% of GDP.

Of the fiscal deficit of Nu.15,972.169 million, Nu.5,793.578 million will be debt service from the low interest rate lending and Nu.3,320 million will be from the project grants and remaining amount Nu.6,858.591 will be from the internal borrowings.

The net external borrowing which stood at Nu.6,182.040 million has improved in the current financial year amounting to Nu.1,861.301 million, while the internal debt stood at Nu.11,179.330 million.

6.8 Budget Appropriation and Financial Position of the Public Sectors

The Ministry of Health is allocated Nu.11,057.460 million, while the Ministry of Education and Skills Development receives Nu.21,695.566 million. Similarly, Nu.10,228.186 million is allocated to the RNR sector and Nu.1,959.758 million to the Mining and Manufacturing sector. The Tourism and Transport sectors receive allocations of Nu.79.102 million and Nu.5,846.216 million respectively. The Housing and Community sector receive Nu.3,871.845 million, while the GovTech agency is allocated Nu.561.859 million. Additionally, Nu.1,742.876 million is allocated to the Renewable Energy sector and Nu.2,226.106 million to the Religion and Cultural Services.

Likewise, Law and Order service is allocated with Nu.4,095.063 million and General Public Service with Nu.16,721.932 million. Similarly, the Capital Budget of Nu.110.418 million is allocated to the Bhutan Olympic Committee and Nu.29,714.149 million is allocated to Local Governments. For the National Assembly of Bhutan, a sum of current budget of Nu.150.570 million and the capital budget of Nu.3.507 is allocated.

Similarly, the National Council of Bhutan receives the current budget of Nu. 98.911 million and the capital budget of Nu.2.384 million. The Anti-corruption Commission is allocated with the current budget of Nu.125.184 million and the capital budget of Nu.27.419 million.

The Election Commission of Bhutan is allocated with total outlay of Nu.48.328 million, out of which Nu.41.941 million is the current budget and Nu.6.387 million is capital budget and additionally, Nu.5.000 million is allocated to collaborate with GovTech Agency to carry out the election process using the technology. Nu.20 million is kept to carry out the by-election in the country.

Likewise, the Royal Audit Authority is provided Nu.206.147 million as current budget and Nu.8.486 million as capital budget. The Royal Civil Service Commission receives Nu.80.523 million as current budget and Nu.701.751 million as capital budget. Additionally, Gyalsung Program is allocated with the current budget of Nu.2,262.973 million and capital budget of Nu.2,707.633 million.

6.9 Conclusion

The Finance Minister stated that if the budget is not optimally utilized, there is a risk that limited resources will be wasted. He also expressed hope that the House would carefully consider and support the proposed budget.

After the presentation of the Budget by the Finance Minister, the House as per the Rules of Procedure referred the Budget Appropriation Bill for Financial Year 2024-2025 and Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for Financial Year 2023-2024 to the Economic and Finance Committee for its review. **(On the 6th Day of 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 12 June 2024)**

7. Review Report on the Annual Budget for the FY 2024-2025 by the Economic and Finance Committee

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee, Member from Bartsham-Shongphu constituency, presented the review report on the Annual Budget for FY 2024-2025.

The Chairperson reported that, while reviewing the Annual Budget, the Committee considered the global and regional economic situations and the potential consequences for Bhutan's economy, especially given looming uncertainties. To gain a clear understanding of the Annual Budget, the Committee conducted a series of consultation meetings with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Office of Cabinet Affairs

Resolution of the 1st Session of the Fourth Parliament and Strategic Coordination (OCASC). The Chairperson then presented the Committee's 16 recommendations for deliberation and adoption by the House. **(The details can be accessed from the EFC Review Report on the National Budget for FY 2024-2025)**

Committee Recommendations

1. The proposed supplementary appropriations of Nu.3,224.924 million for FY 2023-2024 has been agreed by the Committee and recommended for adoption by the House.
2. The Government needs to allocate a budget of Nu.140.61 million to enhance the capacity of the National Food Testing Laboratory and to improve the certification services for facilitating export and import of food products.
3. The Government is required to carry out technical feasibility and business viability of crops under commercial production. If found feasible, the Government must draw a clear production, processing, logistic and marketing plans with proper delineation of responsibilities and accountabilities to all stakeholders. For Chirub Farm, the Government has to provide equity injection directly to Farm Machinery Corporation Limited (FMCL) to fix accountability and accord ownership of the Chirub commercial venture rather than providing as budgetary support from MoAL.

4. The Government has to identify Dzongkhags based on their importance and estimated risk of human-wildlife conflict for the allocation of Nu.45 million budget for chain-link fencing.
5. The Government has to streamline installation of solar photovoltaic PVs in the country to reap benefits of economies of scale, quality assurance and most importantly the sustainability of such initiatives and accordingly allocate the budget to the rightful agency, that is to the Department of Energy for effective implementation, ownership and maintenance.
6. The Government has to offload Nu.77.055 million from the National Budget and transfer the debt liability to DHI with proper accounting treatment as on-lending from the government as Kofuku International is a DHI owned company.
7. Resource allocation for the road sector has to be prioritized for Dzongkhags and regions that have relatively lesser access to good quality roads with double lanes and other roadside amenities. Nu.867.380 million allotted for development of Dzongkhag Roads has to be specified with location and detailed activities to be carried out in the year.
8. The allocation of Nu.25.990 million for Green Bhutan Corporation as equity injection from the Government has to be dropped from the National Budget in keeping with Section 5 of the Bhutan Public Accounts Act, 2007.

9. The Government has to formulate an appropriate guideline to allocate project-tied grants and share with the EFC for review and accordingly to report to the House. Additionally, the Government has to institute an institutional mechanism to vet all major activities to enhance the quality and investment and accordingly reap optimum benefits.
10. The Government has to run less fiscal deficit in the first year (possibly less than 3% of GDP) and accordingly smoothen the same in the subsequent years.
11. The Government has to institute proper mechanisms to ensure optimal utilization of the capital budget or reduce capital budget based on the implementation capacity of the budgetary agencies.
12. The Government has to allocate a proportionate budget for research and development in the fiscal year 2024-2025 for implementation by relevant agencies.
13. The Government has to institute appropriate measures to mitigate inflation risk in the country as inflation impacts the poorer section of the society the most.
14. The Government, in collaboration with the Royal Monetary Authority, has to explore new ways to manage excess liquidity to avoid negative impact to the economy.

15. The Government has to emphasize more on export promotion and import substitution. The Government also needs to focus on enhancing the supply and value chain within the country.
16. Realizing the fact that inflation decreases the purchasing power and that the purchasing power of the ngultrum decreased by 4.8% as of April 2024, the Government has to adjust inflation in the recurrent budget for all budgetary agencies to carry out their responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

The House, after deliberation on each of the 16 Recommendations, endorsed all recommendations. However, the Committee was directed to further review Recommendation 2 and submit the review report before the adoption of the Annual Budget. **(On the 18th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 24 June 2024)**

8. ADOPTION OF BUDGET APPROPRIATION BILL FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-2025

As instructed by the House the Chairperson for the Economic and Finance Committee reported that the Committee further consulted with Bhutan Food and Drugs Authority regarding Recommendation 2 and submitted that the recommendation be retained without any change. The House endorsed the recommendation as submitted by the Committee.

Further, a few members led by the Deputy Speaker, proposed that the budget projected for the solar photovoltaic (PVs) in schools

(Recommendation 5) should be retained with the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. Recommendation 11 to be reformulated as it might affect the budget allocation for the Local Governments, if they are not able to fully utilize the capital budget.

During the deliberation, the House endorsed the proposal to retain the budget for solar photovoltaic PVs in schools with the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. Regarding Resolution 11, the government was instructed to formulate strategies to efficiently and fully utilize the capital budget. The recommendation was reformulated to read: “The Government to institute proper mechanisms to ensure the optimal utilization of the capital budget.”

The Member in-Charge of the Bill, the Finance Minister moved the motion for adoption of the Budget Appropriation Bill for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 in the House.

Following the motion for adoption, the House passed the Budget with 44 YES and one NO votes, out of a total of 45 members present and voting.

As per the Rules of Procedures of the House, the Speaker opened the floor for dissenting opinions. The Member from Gangzur-Minje submitted that despite the House having deliberated in detail and after having submitted many recommendations, the government did not submit or

make any changes to the Budget outlay. He, therefore, expressed that he did not support the adoption of the Budget. **(19th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 25 June 2024)** . The Voting records are attached in Annexure IV

9. ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET APPROPRIATION BILL FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-2024

The Member In-charge of the Bill, the Finance Minister moved the motion to adopt the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2023-2024 following the presentation in the House and thorough review and report by the Economic and Finance Committee.

The House unanimously adopted the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2023-2024 with all 46 members present and voting in favour of the Bill.

The House declared the Annual Budget Appropriation Bill 2024-2025 as Money Bill and the Budget Bill 2024-2025 with the total budget of Nu. 97,628.839 million, which includes the current budget of Nu. 50,809.905 million, capital budget of Nu. 46,818.934 million. The Budget also includes repayment of Nu. 6,182.040 million and on Lending of Nu. 2,318.581 million will be transmitted to the National Council for further consideration.

The House also declared the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill 2023-2024 of Nu. 3, 224.924 million as Money Bill and transmitted to

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the National Council. **(On the 19th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 25 June 2024).** The Voting records are attached in Annexure V

10. RE-DELIBERATION ON BUDGET REPORT 2024-2025

Re-deliberation on the Recommendations received from the National Council on the Annual Budget 2024-2025

The Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee, Member from Bartsham- Shongphu constituency, presented the recommendations submitted by the National Council on the Budget Appropriation Bill 2024-2025 to the House.

Recommendations from the National Council

1. The National Council recommends the Royal Government to deploy an adequate number of personnel at all levels, establish effective mechanisms to ensure optimal utilization of the capital budget or consider adjusting it based on the implementation capacity of budgetary bodies.
2. Considering the importance of supporting Members of Parliament to discharge their duties and the associated vulnerabilities of exposing our national legislative and policy formulation to undue external influence, the National Council proposes to enhance recurrent budget allocation to the two Houses of the Parliament.

3. The National Council recommends the Royal Government to develop specific plans to address potential macroeconomic shocks by implementing strong fiscal management practices. This includes building fiscal buffers in economic upswings, adjusting debt management strategies to reduce foreign exchange risks arising from depreciation of the Ngultrum, and creating mechanisms for swift responses to economic shocks with targeted economic policies.

The Chairperson noted that the first and third recommendations were identical to those of the National Assembly, making discussion of the second proposal unnecessary. However, with regard to the Second recommendation, it was proposed that the Finance Ministry look into the matter during the midterm Budget Review and make necessary arrangements. The House endorsed the recommendations as proposed by the Chairperson of Economic and Finance Committee through a show of hands. The House directed the Finance Minister to review and prioritize the budget requirements for the Parliament during the midterm Budget Review.

The Finance Minister further presented the revised budget for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 of Nu. 97,628.839 million which includes a capital budget of Nu. 46,818.934 million and a current budget of Nu. 50,809.905 million after the withdrawal of the budget of Nu. 25.990 million for the Green Bhutan Corporation for endorsement by the House.

The House adopted the Annual Budget for the 2024-2025 with 42 Yes and 3 Abstain out of a total of 45 Members present and voting. **(On the 29th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year, corresponding to 24 June 2024). Voting records are annexed in Annexure VI**

The two Bills, Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2024-2025 and the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2023-2024 will be further submitted to the His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for Royal Assent as per Legislative Rules of Procedure.

11. INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF THE BILLS AND AGREEMENT

11.1 First and Second Reading of Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait 2024

The Member In-charge of the Agreement (‘instrument’), the Minister of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, introduced the Air Services Agreement signed between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait 2024.

Subsequently, the Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade provided a brief background explaining why the Government signed the Agreement in January 2024, and seconded for ratification of the Agreement by the Parliament as required under Article 10 (25) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Article 10 (25) states,

‘Except for existing International Conventions, Covenants, Treaties, Protocols and Agreements entered into by Bhutan, which shall continue in force subject to section 10 of Article 1, all International Conventions, Covenants, Treaties, Protocols and Agreements duly acceded to by the Government hereafter, shall be deemed to be the law of the Kingdom only upon ratification by Parliament unless it is inconsistent with this Constitution.’

Further, the Foreign Affairs and External Trade Minister outlined several benefits of the instrument which included among others the sustainable operation and profitability of Bhutanese airlines, namely, Druk Air and Bhutan Airline which will generate revenue for the country. The Minister stated that Bhutan had previously signed eight air service agreements with other countries, which are being implemented and had significant positive impacts on the nation.

With the consensus of all Members, through a show of hands, the House agreed to proceed with the instrument to the second reading.

During the Second Reading of the instrument, the Member In-charge of the instrument presented the principles, objectives and background of the instrument and reiterated the numerous benefits of establishing air services with Kuwait. These benefits include:

1. Enhancing tourism development between the two nations;
2. Strengthening existing bilateral relationships; and

3. Facilitating direct travel connections for the thousands of young Bhutanese living in Kuwait and neighboring Gulf countries, which will do away with the need for indirect travel routes.

The Member In-charge emphasized that after negotiations between the Aviation Authorities of Bhutan and Kuwait, the Agreement was officially signed on January 9, 2024, in Kuwait. The Member In-charge stated that there are no adverse consequences in ratifying this instrument and, therefore, requested to support the ratification of the instrument to realize its benefits.

The House referred the instrument to the Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committee for its review. The Committee was directed to present its review report to the House for Third Reading scheduled on 20 June 2024. **(On the 8th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 14 June 2024)**

Third Reading of the Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and The Government of the State of Kuwait (20/06/2024).

The Chairperson of the Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committee stated that the Committee was given the task of reviewing the Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait. The Chairperson informed that the Committee had consulted concerned agencies, namely, Bhutan Civil

Aviation Authority and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, represented by relevant officials. The Chairperson submitted that the Committee sought clarifications of doubts on the instrument. The Chairperson also informed on how the Government approved the instrument and that additional document, namely, the Preliminary National Interest Analysis report submitted by the Government was also reviewed which comprised the political advice and clearance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, legal opinion provided by the Office of the Attorney General, and formal approval of the Government.

The Chairperson pointed out that the Committee found that it does not need to present anything further as per the House's procedures, as the Agreement had already been signed and the same instrument had already been ratified by the Parliament of Kuwait. If the House approves the instrument, Bhutan will have nine Air Services Agreements in force. The Chairperson further submitted that the Committee found no changes in the meaning of the Agreement during its comparative study of the past Air Services Agreements entered into, except in the wording, as it was based on the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) framework. The Committee's analysis identified the benefits and responsibilities and found no issues for the House to proceed with ratification proceedings.

The Member from Thrimshing-Kangpara constituency highlighted that Bhutan is a signatory to the 1989 Chicago Convention and adheres to

the (ICAO) Standards. The member stated that the language and the provision of today's instrument align with these standards. Additionally, the member mentioned that the Committee had conducted several consultative meetings, and emphasized that this commercial Agreement will have a significant impact on Bhutan and the purpose of the Agreement is to support the Gelephu Mindfulness City initiative.

Firstly, the Deputy Speaker of the House, a member from Tashichhoeling constituency proposed a thorough scrutiny of the Agreement's text, considering the constitutional intention or the Rule of Procedures, as it becomes law upon ratification by the Parliament. The Deputy Speaker raised his concerns about the absence of a section outlining the authoritative text either at the end of the Agreement or in the table of contents of the Agreement. He also pointed out that the legislative rules of procedure mandated clauses of definitions, scope, authoritative texts, etc. to be incorporated. However, this does not apply in the current scenario since it is an Agreement. Nonetheless, the Member highlighted that since the Agreement has both English and Dzongkha texts there is a need to consider looking into the authoritative text of the Agreement.

Secondly, definition (h) includes information about Article 17, which spans about three pages with several clauses. It was recommended to defer the deliberation of the clauses under each Article until a decision was made on the wording related to Article 17. Article 17 (2) states that consultations should be approved according to constitutional

procedures, but the basis for adopting these procedures was questioned.

Additionally, it was recommended to remind the House about Article 17 (3) regarding who should be responsible for amending the route schedule. In response, the Member from Thrimshing-Kangpara constituency stated that the Rules of Procedure for Treaty Making (revised) 2016 provides the constitutional procedure as per Article 10 (25) of the Constitution. Additionally, the committee concluded that any amendments should be handled by the relevant agencies, such as the Civil Aviation Authority and experts from the respective states, rather than by the House as it requires flexibility and the competent authority possess the required expertise. Furthermore, the Member from Radi-Sakteng constituency supplemented that the route schedule left traffic rights open and suggested that if amendments were needed that it would be beneficial for aeronautical authorities to have the right to make those changes.

With reference to Article 14, the Member from Gangzur-Minjei constituency questioned the government's preparedness to maintain and support the two airlines operating in Bhutan, despite the benefits from the Agreement. In response, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport expressed concern about the potential impact on the two airlines, if Kuwait flights begin operating in Bhutan. However, after several consultations with relevant agencies, the Minister stated that the Agreement between the two airlines would ensure fair competition

and that the principle of reciprocity would be upheld which means both countries are mutually benefited.

Additionally, the Member from Nubi-Tangsibji constituency highlighted the environmental and political implications, noting that political clearance for the state's consent has been achieved. This will greatly benefit Gelephu Mindfulness City and the country as a whole in the future. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade emphasized the difficulties that incoming flights from other countries face due to the geographical conditions of Paro International Airport. However, the Gelephu Mindfulness City will greatly benefit from this Agreement once it is ratified by the parliament.

The Member from Radhi-Sakteng constituency questioned the benefits and consistency of this Agreement with the previous Agreements that Bhutan had previously signed. In response to this question, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport said that although some of the wording of this Agreement may have been altered, the content/intentions remain the same. Furthermore, he stated that this Agreement has an additional 5th Freedom Rights clause which was not there in the previous Agreements which will prove to be very beneficial to the country. The Minister of Industry, Commerce, and Employment also said that the Agreement is beneficial and consistent in nature. The member noted that presenting the Agreement in both English and Dzongkha facilitates a clear understanding.

The Deputy Speaker also highlighted some weaknesses in Article 18, which states that the arbitral tribunal of the treaty makes its decisions by a majority vote, rather than using the traditional method of dispute settlement. Section 5 of Article 18 states that the arbitral tribunal's decision is final, and Section 6 specifies that if there is any conflict of interest, the decision is to be suspended by the other party. This section does not allow for appeals or raising objections. Therefore, the Deputy Speaker asked for clarifications from the concerned ministry or committee which would be beneficial for supporting the Agreement. He also recommended that these considerations should be kept in mind for any future Agreements.

The House approved the Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait, deciding to endorse the Agreement on June 21, 2024, in accordance with the House procedure.**(On the 13th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 20 June 2024)**

Adoption of Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and The Government of the State of Kuwait

The Speaker directed the Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committee to submit the clarifications on Articles 17 and 18 before voting for the adoption of the Air Services Agreement between the Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait by the House.

The Member of the Committee, Member from Thrimshing-Kangpara constituency, reiterated that the Rules of Procedure for Treaty Making (revised) 2016 specify the constitutional procedures for purposes of implementing Article 10 (25) of the Constitution, confirming that the earlier clarification was accurate. The term ‘constitutional procedures’ mentioned in the Article are to be understood to be constitutional provisions under the Rules of Procedures for Treaty Making (revised) 2016 as per Article 10 (25) of the Constitution. With regard to Article 17 (3) which grants the Aeronautical Authorities of both Parties the right to change the route schedule when needed, following international procedures. The reason for giving this authority to the Aeronautical Authorities, rather than keeping with the House, is to avoid the lengthy and inconvenient process that the Route Schedules are found to require flexibility to be changed from time to time. The Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Parties is to facilitate such consultations and it will benefit in market access. The member further clarified that any amendments should be handled by the relevant agencies, such as the Civil Aviation Authority and experts from the respective countries, and assured that this was not a cause for concern.

Article 18 of the Agreement on Dispute Settlement states that each party shall bear the cost of its own member. It was noted that having an arbitrator from each party shall bear the cost of its own member. It was noted that having an arbitrator from each respective party to

settle disputes follows international procedures and is beneficial for both parties. Disputes between the parties occur frequently, and the Aeronautical Authorities of both parties need to handle these disputes amicably. Bhutan is not solely responsible for settling the disputes, and thereby the ICAO, memorandum, and Agreements will be considered as well.

Following the clarification, the Member In-charge of the Agreement, the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, moved the motion for the Adoption of the Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the State of Kuwait, 2024 soliciting the support for the adoption of the instrument by the House.

The House unanimously adopted the Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the State of Kuwait, 2024 with all members present and voting in favour. **(On the 14th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 21 June 2024)** The voting records are annexed in Annexure VII

11.2 Motion to withdraw the Impeachment Procedure Bill of Bhutan 2024

The Member In-charge of the Bill, the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, Member from Nyishog-Saephu constituency, submitted that the Committee reviewed the Report on the Harmonization and Consolidation of Laws submitted by the National Law Review Taskforce

in June 2018 and that the Committee decided among the number of laws recommended as important to be enacted, the need for an Impeachment Procedural Bill for the constitutional post holders was prioritized. The Chairperson of the Committee provided the following reasons:

- 1) Mandate of the Legislative Committee; and
- 2) Finding the constitutional requirement: According to Article 32 (1) of the Constitution, constitutional office holders can be impeached only with the approval of Parliament, necessitating clear procedural.

The committee had proposed to table the Bill having identified this as an important issue by the Committee, reported on the need for an Impeachment Procedure Bill to the Plenary. The Plenary agreed that Committee ground works may proceed.

Following the decision, the Committee reviewed the draft Impeachment Procedure Bill initiated by the National Council in 2020 and carried out consultations with various relevant agencies including representatives of all Constitutions offices, the Office of the Attorney General, and other Justice Sector agencies, such as the Bhutan National Legal Institute, Bar Council, Royal Bhutan Police, and JSW School of Law. The Chairperson shared that the Committee received comments from a few agencies towards the end nearing the session when it had requested the agencies to submit any additional views and comments to the Committee in writing.

Upon receiving comments, the Committee found it requires further consultations but due to the lack of adequate time, they could not do so. As the Committee finds, it requires more time, consequently, the Chairperson therefore, moved the motion to withdraw the Bill from this session agenda to avail more time for detailed review of the Bill.

The House through a show of hands endorsed the motion to withdraw the Bill from the agenda of the current session. **(On the 8th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 14 June 2024)**

11.3 First and the Second Reading of the Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024

The Member In-charge of the Bill, the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, Member from Nyishog-Saephu constituency, moved the motion for the First Reading of the Bill. The Deputy Chairperson of the Committee, Member from Thirmshing-Kangpara constituency seconded the motion. With the consensus of all members, the House, through a show of hands, voted to deliberate on the Bill.

Moving the motion for the Second Reading of the Bill, the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, submitted that only one clause of the Marriage Act of Bhutan 1980 is being submitted for amendment, mainly Section B (1) -14. He submitted that the Marriage Act of Bhutan 1980 originally set the marriageable legal age at 18 for males and 16 for females. This was later amended in 1996, but the specific Section was

not amended in the legal text in the law. In 2002, the High Court issued an order, leading to the uniform implementation of the marriage age of 18 equally for both men and women as a judicial order. It was observed that the Royal Courts of Justice had implemented the order since 1996 in the issuance of Marriage Certificates.

He submitted that the proposal for this amendment is based on the need for clarity and consistency, complementing across various legislations adopted and international conventions adopted and ratified by the Parliament. The legal age of marriage for both males and females implemented at 18 years is substantiated as provided for under the penal offenses in the Penal Code of Bhutan, 2004, the Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan, 2011, the Contract Act of Bhutan, 2013, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The implementation is also required as a post-treaty obligation in translating the treaty obligations into the domestic laws. It is to harmonize this provision, as referred to by the National Commission for Women and Children Committee.

The House referred the Bill to the Legislative Committee for further review and submission for Third Reading. **(On the 8th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 14 June 2024)**

Third Reading of the Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024

The Member In-charge, the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, stated that historically, the marriageable age in Bhutan was set at 18 for men and 16 for women. The Marriage Act of Bhutan, 1980 initially set these ages, but from 1980 to 1996, the courts consistently upheld the age of 18 for both genders based on the 74th resolution of the House. In 2002, the High Court with the issuance of a High Court order, notified all courts of the uniform implementation of 18 years as the legally marriageable age for both men and women, even though this change was not explicitly stated in the Act by reference to a directive of the Royal Government.

Furthermore, to prevent any misunderstandings about the marriage age being 18 for both men and women and following the request of the National Commission for Women and Children under the Ministry of Education and Skill Development, the Legislative Committee decided it was necessary to introduce an amendment to the Act in the House to clarify the age of marriage.

The House through a show of hands unanimously supported the amendment of the Act.

The Dy. Speaker, Member from Tashichhoeling constituency, suggested that the Marriage (Amendment) Act of Bhutan, 2024, should be translated into Dzongkha in the same way as it is in English draft. He stated that

not doing so could result in a change of meaning, which would make the House's Rules of Procedure, Section 197 inapplicable. Additionally, the Member inquired whether Section Kha 1-2 of the Thrimzhung 1957 should be referenced.

The Member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency said that only the age for the issuance of the marriage certificate was included as 18, and not the age of marriage. The Member also suggested three detailed provisions as follows:

- ‘(a) The marriageable age for both men and women shall be eighteen years of age for the issuance of Marriage Certificates;
- (b) The marriage of minor shall be prohibited; and
- (c) The marriage of minors shall be punishable by law.’

The House directed the Legislative Committee to take note of the recommendations and deliberate further and report at the time of adopting the Bill. **(On the 13th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 20 June 2024)**

Adoption of the Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024

The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee reported that the Committee incorporated some minor changes in the Bill as recommended by the House during the Third Reading.

He reported the Committee's deliberations and submitted a revised translation on the text initially proposed, which makes improvement to

the language moving away from the earlier text to the Marriage Act of 1980. However, the Chairperson explained why the Committee could not support additional incorporations of provisions proposed by the Member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency as the intent is already captured by the proposed amendment. As this specific issue being addressed is a significant amendment, the Committee finds the probability of its success to be adopted by both Houses may be unnecessarily derailed if additional provisions were to be incorporated when the legal marriage age is being stated as 18 years, and is therefore, clear of the intent of the Bill. The Committee finds that a separate section suggested to be inserted on its illegality of marriages of minors is not required, when the penal code clearly provides for such offenses.

The revised proposed text was adopted through a show of hands by all members present.

The House voted to adopt the Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan, 2024. All members present voted in favor of the Bill, thereby adopting the Marriage Amendment Bill of Bhutan 2024. **(On the 14th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 21 June 2024).** The Voting Records are annexed in Annexure VIII

11.4 First and Second reading of the National assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024

The Member In-charge of the Bill, Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, Member from Nyishog-Saephu constituency, after putting

forward the motion on the discussion and first reading of the National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024, the House adopted the motion of introduction of the Bill.

The Member In-charge then proposed the second reading of the National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024 and stated that with the introduction of democracy on a good foundation, the Members of Parliament and the Secretary General of the National Assembly, who serve in it, must perform their duties in a responsible and effective manner in accordance with the principle of check and balance. Thus, the Legislative Committee proposed to table the National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024 in the House for deliberation.

The House directed the Legislative Committee to thoroughly review the Bill and submit its review report for the third reading, thus concluding the first and second reading of the Bill on 14 June 2024.

Third Reading of the National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan, 2024

The Member In-charge of the Bill, the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, and the member from Nyishog-Saephu Constituency on behalf of the Committee presented the review report stating that the National Assembly Act was amended once in 2014 after it was adopted in 2008. The Act now needs to be amended to meet the needs of the changing time. The Bill proposed for final adoption contained

29 amendments, including 16 new sections and 12 sections amending the existing sections, one section being proposed to be repealed. Few provisions were removed from the amendment of the Bill, after the Committee considered the deliberations in the first and second readings. (Attached in the Annexure).

The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee requested the House to consider and approve the amendments that are mainly related to the duties of the members, the protocol, the Secretary General and the secretariat office.

The House deliberated on each section of the Bill for two days and adopted the amendments and additions as provided in the Annexure, concluding the third reading of the National assembly (Amendment) Bill, 2024 on 28 June 2024. **(On the 22nd Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 28 June 2024)**

Adoption of the National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan, 2024

The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee and the Member from Nyishog-Saephu constituency submitted that during the third reading, the House had instructed the Committee to review and revise certain points in the Bill and report back to the House. After the Committee completed its review and revisions, the House thoroughly discussed the recommendations and agreed through show of hands. The Amendment

Bill was put to vote in entirety. Out of 46 members present and voting, 33 voted “Yes”, 1 voted “No” while 12 members abstained. Thus, the House passed the National Assembly Amendment Bill of Bhutan 2024 with a majority vote.

The Finance Minister in his dissenting opinion submitted that that the new Section on ‘Non-Compliance’ under Section 264 of the Bill should be either repealed or rephrased. Or this should be cleared defined under the definitions. He also submitted that Section 265 which hold government to account for failure to comply with the resolutions adopted by the House by imposing penalties contravene with Articles 10 and 20 (2) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. **(On the 25th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 1 July 2024).** Voting records are available in Annexure IX

12. MOTION

12.1. Motion to Draft and Table Education Bill

The Member from South Thimphu Constituency highlighted the crucial role of education in Bhutan. He said that since the 1960s, education policies, quality, and teacher standards have been strictly enforced over the years. However, with the establishment of democracy in 2008, education sector has politicized.

During the first government, primary and community schools were set up across the country. In the second government’s term, Central Schools

were introduced to consolidate and strengthen the education system.

The government also provided school uniforms, bedding, and toiletries, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, plates, and mugs. This policy shift marked a significant change in the education landscape.

Furthermore, the third government introduced reforms to the education system by consolidating class VII and VIII students into higher secondary schools and eliminating middle secondary schools. Additionally, the government removed the cut-off point for class ten students. These changes indicate that education has become a political tool.

He submitted that even the current government, convinced of the merits of the reforms introduced by the second government, has pledged re-establishing Central Schools. Additionally, the government has decided to establish early childcare centers and ensure that class three students can attend schools closer to their parents by setting up one school in each chiwog.

This trend shows that each new government lacks confidence in the reforms or actions of its predecessors. This lack of continuity of programs and policies, leads to wasted infrastructure and resources and ultimately results in a decline in the quality of education.

His Majesty the King, concerned about the declining quality of education, issued a Kasho in 2020 to reform the education sector. Four

years after this decree, an Education Policy has been developed. Amidst concerns about the sustainability and benefits of this policy, the Member submitted a motion to table the Education Bill, aiming to ensure quality education for future generations.

During the deliberation on the motion, members expressed their support for the Education Bill. They expressed that an Education Bill would strengthen and ensure a consistent education policy, ensuring that youth have access to quality education. Additionally, they emphasized that if education becomes politicized, its quality will suffer, underscoring the need for an Education Bill.

However, some members argued that while there is a need for an Education Bill, it is not urgently required given the current economic situation and ongoing reforms. They suggested that it could be considered in the near future when the economic situation of the country improves.

In response, the cabinet ministers, including the Minister of Education and Skills Development and the Prime Minister, stated that the National Education Policy 2024 has been drafted with the aim of transforming the education system. This policy will soon be submitted to the cabinet for adoption. Therefore, they recommended that, instead of drafting and tabling a new Education Bill, it would be more beneficial to implement the National Education Policy once it is adopted by the government.

The Minister for Education and Skills Development further emphasized that introducing an Education Bill at this time could create complications due to potential conflicts with existing Acts. She stressed the need for careful consideration and suggested that the most effective approach would be to adopt and implement the education policy. The Finance Minister added that implementing the new education policy would be beneficial considering that Nu.21 billion has been allocated to the Ministry of Education and Skills Development in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Further, the formulation of a new Education Bill does not guarantee that education will remain free from politicization. The past government, under His Majesty's guidance, worked closely with international experts to draft a new education reform policy, which will be adopted and implemented soon. Therefore, it was suggested that the drafting of the Education Bill should be considered only after evaluating the implementation of this policy and assessing the need for further legislation.

After extensive deliberation, the House directed the Minister of Education and Skills Development to circulate the draft education policy with the Members for their reading. Members were then asked to go through the draft policy to understand if their concerns would be addressed and to assess whether there is a need to draft or table an Education Bill. Following the review of the draft education policy, the motion to draft

and table an education bill will be put to vote at a later date. **(On the 11th**

Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 17 June 2024)

Continuation of Deliberation on the Motion to Draft and Table an Education Bill

On June 20, 2024, during the continuation of deliberation on the motion to draft and table an Education Bill, the Member from the South-Thimphu constituency reported that the need for such a Bill had been raised since 1994. The Member explained that the motion was proposed in alignment with the education plan (blueprint) and the Education Policy of 2020. However, following the House's instructions, the draft National Education Policy of 2024 was shared with the members, and after reviewing the policy it is felt that a revised motion on the Education Bill was required. He proposed a revised reformulation of the motion that to implement all sections of the Education Policy 2024, to establish a strong foundation, ensuring that future educational policies remain free from political influence, the government draft and table an education bill before the commencement of the 5th national elections to parliament.

The Minister for Education and Skill Development also reported that the National Education Policy of 2024 was formulated in consultation with civil servants and teachers. The Minister assured that if any issues arise during the implementation of the policy and if the need arises the Ministry will look into drafting an Education Bill in the future.

Other members also pointed out that frequent changes in education policies have led to challenges such as school closures and age limits for enrollment. Additionally, in 2020, His Majesty the King issued a Kasho calling for establishment of a Time Bound Education Council, which the Ministry has not yet reported on. The House reminded the Ministry to fulfill its responsibilities while keeping His Majesty the King's Kasho on education reforms in mind.

The House voted on the revised motion submitted by the Member from South-Thimphu constituency. The House unanimously passed the motion with all 45 members present and voting in favor of the motion. Further the Speaker directed the Ministry of Education and Skills Development to bear in mind the Kasho on the Education Reform, the submissions made by the Members and the provisions of the National Education Policy 2024 while carrying out their mandate. **(On the 22nd Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 28th June 2024).** The Voting Details are annexed in Annexure X

12.2.Motion on Government to Establish and Implement Compensation Trust Fund for Agriculture and Livestock

The Member from Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang constituency submitted that over 60% of the country's population live in rural areas and rely on agriculture for their livelihood. However, 79 % of the rural population is currently experiencing significant crop losses due to global warming and climate change, making it difficult for them to engage in agricultural activities.

Moreover, agriculture accounts for 14.5 % of the country's GDP and employs 43.56 % of the population. Given its significance, it is crucial to provide support and compensation for losses due to rain, hailstones, cyclones, and floods. However, the absence of policies and procedures for crop compensation makes it difficult for farmers to maintain their livelihoods through agriculture. Therefore, a motion was moved, emphasizing the need for establishing a compensation trust fund for agriculture and livestock.

Deliberating on the issue, the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock stated that substantial investments have been made in the agriculture sector in the 13th Five-Year Plan. Efforts are being made to support those affected by wildlife and climate change impacts so far. Additionally, the government plans to introduce insurance programs, rather than compensation, for those affected by wildlife conflicts, global warming, and climate change based on feasibility, under the 13th FYP

The Ministry plans to pilot insurance for crops like rice, potato, orange, and maize, as well as for domestic animals such as cows, poultry, and pigs. The Ministry also intends to fund these insurance programs with a 50-50 split between government and public funds. While this motion is of great importance and warrants support, it is essential to allow the ministry and government some time to develop it, considering the country's current economic situation.

Additionally, some Members emphasized the importance of establishing trust funds and insurance schemes to compensate people facing issues related to food insecurity, self-sufficiency, and climate change. They suggested that a trust fund would be more effective than a government-wide insurance scheme and recommended including all food and beverages, rather than separating livestock and crops.

On this, some Members suggested including crop and livestock insurance in the annual budget, similar to a life insurance policy. They proposed that launching the program in the fiscal year 2024-2025 would greatly benefit the public. For premiums, it was recommended that the government contribute more than the public, rather than a 50/50 split. This approach would encourage farmers to engage in agriculture and help reduce migration from rural to urban areas.

The Minister for Energy and Natural Resources noted that the issue of human-wildlife conflict arose due to prohibition on hunting and killing of wild animals which led to the destruction of crops and expressed his support for the Motion. However, the Finance Minister noted that the 13th FY Plan already includes the provision of chain link fences and recommended a thorough discussion on establishing a trust fund. He also suggested waiting until the country's economy improves to avoid any disruption to government activities.

The House voted and passed the Motion with 34 YES, 8 NO and 1 ABSTAIN out of a total of 43 members present and voting.

The Speaker further instructed the Secretariat to follow up with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock for a follow-up report on the Motion in the following Session. (**On the 11th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 17 June, 2024**).
The Voting records are annexed in Annexure XI

12.3.Motion on Inconvenience Caused by Electric Wire and the Pole falling in farmland.

The Chairperson of the Social and Cultural Committee, Member from Khatoed-Laya highlighted the issue of inconvenience caused by electric wires and poles falling in farmland. The Chairperson acknowledged that with the establishment of the Bhutan Power Corporation, electricity has been successfully extended to all parts of the country. This achievement has significantly contributed to socio-economic development, improved livelihoods, and environmental benefits.

However, the installation of electric poles and the routing of power lines across farmland not only hinder farming activities but also pose risks to the safety of people and livestock. Although the issue was brought to the National Assembly following its deliberation and resolution by the Dzongkhag Tshogdu, no action has been taken to date.

To address this issue, the Member presented two recommendations made by the Committee to mitigate the impact of electric poles and wires falling in farmland.

1. Relocation of the high tension electricity towers erected in densely populated areas to safe places.
2. Government to allocate funds for relocation and compensation or replacement of land for the private land mass where relocation is not provided.

During the discussion of the motion, Members acknowledged that power lines and electricity infrastructure issues are common challenges across all 20 Dzongkhags. They noted that fencing off transformers reduces the optimal utilization of farmland and limits the number of farm workers. Additionally, the installation of electric poles in wetlands poses significant hazards to people and animals, underscoring the urgent need to relocate these poles

The current compensation system for relocating electricity poles has been found to be inconsistent and unreliable. While some affected individuals have received land substitutes or compensation, others have received neither. Many who approached the Bhutan Power Corporation (BPC) for compensation were redirected to the district office and then to the National Land Commission, but no compensation or land substitution was provided. Members therefore proposed that, as one of the country's most profitable companies, the Bhutan Power Corporation should be able to adequately compensate or provide land replacement for affected individuals.

The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources acknowledged the inconveniences caused by electricity poles and power lines in farmland. He stated that addressing this issue falls under the responsibility of the Bhutan Power Corporation (BPC). To ensure accountability, the Ministry will task BPC with assessing and identifying the related problems over the next year. The Minister requested a one-year timeframe to complete this process.

The House endorsed the two recommendations submitted by the Social and Cultural Committee with 33 Yes, 3 No and 6 Abstain out of a total of 42 members present and voting.

As per the procedure, the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Member from Bji-Katsho-Uesu expressed their dissenting opinion. While supporting the motion and recommendations submitted by the Social and Cultural Committee, they argued that the motion should not have been passed immediately. Instead, they suggested that the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources be given a year to conduct research and investigation, with further deliberations to follow based on the Ministry's report.

The Speaker acknowledged the genuine issues caused by electric poles and power lines and directed the concerned Ministry to conduct a thorough assessment. The Ministry was instructed to submit a report on its findings and implementation plan during the Second (Winter) Session. **(On the 19th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 25 June, 2024) . The voting records are Annexed in Annexure XII**

12.4. Motion on the Review of Managing for Excellence (MaX) in the**Civil Service**

The Chairperson of the Good Governance Committee, Member from Sergithang-Tsirang Toed constituency submitted the Motion to review the Managing for Excellence (Max) in the civil service. He reported that morale and motivation among civil servants are at an all-time low. There is a sense of insecurity, mental stress, and tension are high across all levels impacting the goal of Gross National Happiness. Moreover, it is reported that the employees are overburdened with work and less remuneration, poor leadership, poor working circumstances and moreover the MAX moderation system has led to the resignation of many civil servants.

In total, 8,149 civil servants had resigned in the past two years. Similarly, 3,597 personnel from the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD) resigned from 2021 to April 2024, out of a total staff of 10,134, resulting in a 35.49% attrition rate. According to the Center for Bhutan Studies (CBS) research findings, the majority of those resigning were mid-career professionals with 11 to 15 years of service.

As per the research reports of the Committee, 89% of the reason for resignation is attributed to the MAX moderation system. Therefore, in order to motivate the existing civil servants and to build their confidence in the system, the Partially Meet Expectation (PME) system should be removed.

Recommendations

1. There is urgency to embark on a bold and concrete measure to retain and motivate our existing human resource, before it is too late. One of the immediate recommendations of the GGC based on the findings of questionnaire survey and consultation meeting with civil servants is to do away with the last category of Forced Ranking i.e. Partially Meets Expectation (PME) under Managing for Excellence.
2. Currently the agencies are mandated to categorize 5% and 3% of their employees under Partially Meets Expectation category. This has ruined the working culture and morale of employees. It has done more harm than good. There is a lack of trust and empowerment in the system, undermining the role of immediate supervisors who are in a better position to judge their employees. This has created disharmony in an organization between the leader and subordinates, misunderstanding among the employees in a closely knitted society like ours.
3. Above all, the majority of those classified under Meeting Expectation and Good category (80% and 70% respectively) refuse to partake in extra initiatives on the premise that those in Exceeding Expectation and Very Good category will do it. Such negative attitudes being developed by the majority of employees in an organization is unhealthy for the system. Therefore, Forced

Ranking category of PME to be removed for common good, as incentivization based on differentiation is nonexistent.

During the deliberation on the motion, members emphasized that civil services are essential to the country's development efforts. Therefore, it is crucial to maintain high morale among civil servants. However, the current system of MAX moderation has been found to weaken their morale. Additionally, the MAX moderation system, which is an outdated method used by other countries , urgently needs to be revised.

Further, some Members, led by the Minister of Education and Skill Development, highlighted that the biggest problem and inconvenience in the civil service arises from the PME system. They argued that it is crucial to remove this practice and system. To successfully achieve the objectives of the 13th Five-Year Plan, the country needs experienced and skilled civil servants. Therefore, it is imperative to thoroughly investigate the reasons for civil servant attrition, consult with relevant institutions and departments, and consider abolishing a system that is not utilized by other countries.

Furthermore, there is no evidence of the MAX moderation system having provided promotion to those excelling and training and guidance to those who have been included in the need improvement category.

The Health Minister raised that since the Royal Civil Service Commission is a Constitutional body, it would be more appropriate to refer the issue to the Commission for further review instead of passing the motion and

recommendations by the House. He mentioned that if the problem and inconveniences persist, the House has full authority to amend the Royal Civil Services Act.

Committee members noted that under the “Managing for Excellence” (Max) framework, the percentage distribution for Partially Meeting Expectation is usually set at 3-5 % during the evaluation process. This is divided into two categories: the first category includes executives (such as secretaries, directors, and officers), and the second category includes specialists, ES, and P2, which accounts for 3%. A total of 862 people per year must be compulsorily included in the “needs improvement” category. As a result, many civil servants leave their jobs. This clearly shows that the framework has caused more harm than benefit, and therefore, it needs to be changed immediately.

The House passed the motion with a majority vote of 41 YES and 1 ABSTAIN out of a total of 42 members present and voting.

The Speaker acknowledging the independence of the Royal Civil Service Commission directed the House to forward its recommendations to the Cabinet, which after consultation with the Royal Civil Service Commission, should look into doing away with the Bell-Curve method used to evaluate performance of the Max System and present a report to the House in the next session. **(On the 20th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 26 June 2024).** The voting records are annexed in Annexure XIII

12.5 Motion On Need to Improve Healthcare Services.

The Member of the Good Governance Committee from Bongo-Chapcha constituency moved the motion on the need to improve the healthcare services in the country. He submitted that the main challenges faced by healthcare are the lack of timely planning, shortage of doctors, insufficient medicines, lack of timely medical care to patients. He added that the frequency of visits made by the Out Reach Clinics (ORCs) to provide medical services in rural areas has decreased from monthly to once in three months. Moreover these clinics have to visit nine to ten areas which is a challenge.

Therefore, the Committee submitted Four recommendations to address the problems faced by the people availing the services as follows.

Recommendations

1. Healthcare professionals, especially doctors, should be exempt from administrative activities such as meetings, tours, and external engagement which is not related to clinical work.
2. Administrative responsibilities should be assigned to any other official who are outside the Health Clinical Professions.
3. MSD and Procurement ‘Human Resources Development’ needed to improve for better and timely medical supply to all the health centers.
4. Allocate separate funds for ORC and Emergency medical purposes in the FYP plan.

During the deliberation, the Health Minister informed that as per the provisions of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, the vision of His Majesty the King and the Fourth King free and timely healthcare services is being provided to all Bhutanese citizens. However, he said, the current challenges faced could be due to the recent reforms initiated within the Ministry and reported that the Ministry has started reviewing the matter.

He added that the health care services are not only suffering from the lack of doctors but also from lack of support staff. However, with the implementation of the reform where the CMOs have taken over the management of the hospitals in the regions have improved the management of regional hospitals, human resources and health care medicines and equipment.

He explained that Dzongkhag health officers, being under the jurisdiction of the districts, were responsible for disease prevention and the dissemination of sanitation education in primary hospitals. Previously, they were accountable for 30% of health services and 70% of public healthcare education. However, there is now concern about the effectiveness of the Health Workers after they have been delinked from the Dzongkhags.

He said that in the past the Dzongkhag Health Officers were directly under the Dzongkhag, however now they have to report to the Department of Health Services. Since there are inconveniences arising

from this arrangement, consultations with local government leaders are being planned to resolve this issue. Additionally it is also imperative to provide enough support staff .

Despite this, as it has only been a year since the reform was implemented, it would be premature to completely overhaul the system. Instead, it is suggested that the Ministry examine the issues and work towards resolving them. Furthermore, he recommended that the House approve the recommendations and refer them to the Health Ministry. This would facilitate the Ministry's efforts to address the matter effectively.

Members raised a concern that, according to the framework, doctors are required to spend 30% of their time on patient treatment and 70% in carrying out their administrative mandates. As a result, there is not only a shortage of doctors but also lack of timely access to health services for the public.

Additionally, the Member from Nyishog-Saephu constituency submitted that the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Center should be equipped with enough CT scan and MRI machines to provide uninterrupted services. He also said that there was a need to provide additional beds and rooms for the patients in the emergency department of the JDWNRH.

Similarly, the Member from the Monggar constituency suggested discontinuing the Department of Health Services and revert back to the

past system of providing services at the Dzongkhag in consultation with the Dzongkhag Administration.

The Health Minister reported that, out of 400 doctors in the country, only 22 are involved in administrative work. He emphasized that these doctors, being more familiar with hospital issues, are well-equipped to manage administrative works effectively. He acknowledged the congestion of patients in the emergency hospital which is due to limited space. However, he informed that with the opening of the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital the issue of space will be addressed.

The House endorsed the Four recommendations submitted by the Committee by show of hands and passed the recommendation with majority support. The House also passed the two additional recommendations made by two Members.

The motion recommendations on Healthcare Service Improvement were reformulated as: The Ministry of Health to:

- 1) Revert to the organizational structure of the Ministry of Health with the National Medical Service removed and clear linkages with Local Governments established for ensuring effective healthcare service delivery and ensure adequate and timely delivery of medical supplies to all healthcare centers;
- 2) ensure separate funds for ORC services and emergency medical services in all healthcare centers;

-
- 3) Hospital to ensure uninterrupted diagnostic services by providing adequate equipment.

The House adopted the reformulated motion with 33 Yes , 2 No and 4 Abstain, out of a total of 39 members present and voting.

Expressing their dissenting opinions, the members who did not support the recommendations disagreed with the notion that doctors should avoid administrative work. They also noted that the reform efforts are still in their early stages and that making changes at this point seems premature. Furthermore, they argued that the four recommendations made by the committee are insufficient to address the health issues. Instead, they suggested that the Health Ministry be given a specific time frame to implement the recommendations, believing this approach would be more beneficial for the people. **(On the 20th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year, corresponding to 26 June 2024).** The voting records are annexed in Annexure XIV

12.6.Motion on Fund for Constituency Development Grant

The Member of the House Committee from the Lingmukha-Toedwang constituency introduced a motion regarding the need for allocation of funds for the Constituency Development Grant.

He said that the Constituency Development Grant, a component of the National Budget, is intended to fund emergency and urgent projects that benefit the people in the constituencies. . This type of grant is commonly

implemented in developed countries and has also been reported to be utilized in developing countries.

Similarly, in the country, the Constituency Development Grant was allocated Nu. 2 million to each constituency during the first government. However, during the second government, the Constituency Development Grant was replaced by the Gewog Grant, which provided budget allocations directly to Gewogs.

The absence of a dedicated Constituency Development Grant Fund has hindered progress in remote Gewogs and communities and development activities in the Local Governments. To ensure that Local governments and communities can implement planned activities on time, it is essential for the government to reconsider and allocate the Constituency Development Grant Fund.

Re-establishing the Constituency Development Grant Fund would address the issue of insufficient resources and benefit the public. The Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) has observed that the benefits from the use of the Constituency Development Grant are at 92.19 percent. Historical data shows that the Constituency Development Grant has positively impacted communities. Therefore, it is proposed that the grant be renamed and reinstated as Priority Development Fund, and following three recommendations were submitted :

1. The Government to allocate an adequate amount of Priority Development Fund (PDF) from the next fiscal year.

2. The Government to formulate guidelines for fund allocation, utilization, monitoring and evaluation of activities, and reporting of the implementation progress of activities and table it to the plenary.
3. The Government to clearly define the areas where the Priority Development Fund should be put to use to maximize the benefit and table it to the plenary.

During the deliberation on the motion, Members emphasized the importance of allocating funds for the Priority Development Fund given the current situation. They argued that it is crucial for the benefit of the people, as it would support both large-scale and unplanned projects. The fund would also provide direct assistance to villagers in the event of natural disasters.

The Members supported the motion, highlighting that if funds are available for priority development, they should be allocated based on the number of Gewogs and their development needs. Some MPs suggested that the Priority Development Fund should be considered separately from the main budget allocation. If additional funds cannot be provided, it would hinder the planned activities and potentially affect the country's limited financial resources. Therefore, requests for additional consideration were submitted and discussed thoroughly.

The House unanimously supported the Four recommendations made by the Committee through a show of hands.

Additionally, the House voted on the four recommendations made by the Committee, as well as two additional recommendations proposed by two members. Out of the 45 members present and voting, 33 voted in favor and 12 abstained. The government was directed to submit a report in the next plenary meeting to be held for the setting of agenda for the next session. **(On the 25th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 1 July 2024).** The voting records are annexed in Annexure XV

12.7.Motion to Amend of Pay structure Reform Act 2022

The Chairperson of the House Committee, the Deputy Speaker, reported that the Committee had proposed a motion to amend the Pay Structure Reform Act of 2022. However, he moved the motion for the withdrawal of the motion from the agenda in accordance with Section 106 of the National Assembly Act, 2008, since the government is currently working on the issue.

The House unanimously endorsed the motion to withdraw the motion through a show of hands. **(On the 25th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 1 July 2024)**

**13. PUBLIC ACCOUNT COMMITTEE’S ANNUAL AUDIT REVIEW
REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-2024 AND ANNUAL
AUDIT REVIEW REPORT FROM 2010-2022**

13.1. Royal Kasho on Joint Sitting

The Royal Assent is hereby granted to convene the Joint Sitting of the Parliament on 2nd and 3rd of July, 2024 to present the review report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Synthesis of Annual Audit Report 2022 -2023, Follow up on the Review Reports of Annual Audit Reports (AAR) 2010 to 2023 and follow up on the past resolutions. Granted on the 13th Day of 5th Month of Wood Male Dragon Year.

By Warrant Under His Hand

Druk Gyalpo

Upon reading the Royal Kasho by the Secretary General, the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee, Hon. Phuntsho Rabten, Eminent Member, National Council, presented the committee’s report. This presentation was in accordance with Article 25 of Chapter 6 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and was summarized into three chapters.

Chapter I: Synthesis of AAR 2022 – 2023;

Chapter 2: Follow up on Review Reports of AAR 2010 – 2022; and

Chapter 3: Follow up on the past resolutions

Chapter 1 Annual Audit Report 2022-2023 Summary Report

There are seven sections in the report, namely, the financial statements; Secondly, the category of accounts. Thirdly, the classification of disputes that have been settled and those that have not been settled. Fourth, the accounts of the companies that have been settled and those that have not been settled. Fifth, the committee's observations; Sixth, the committee's recommendations. Seventh, the National Audit Authority's recommendations were submitted.

Committee's Recommendations

Based on the above observations and from the stakeholder consultation meetings, PAC would like to emphasize and strongly recommend the following.

- 1 Irregularities such as excess payment, expenditure booked without execution of work, inadmissible payment, unadjusted public work advances, non-levy of liquidated damages, acceptance of defective works, payment made for works not executed, etc. recurred mainly from the lack of due diligence and robust internal control mechanism. Therefore, it is imperative for the RGoB to develop a strategy to address such syndrome in the public expenditure.
- 2 The Committee is cognizant that 5,202 civil servants separated from the service in 2023 compared to 2,646 in 2022. Another 524 civil servants separated in the first three months of 2024.[1] This has greatly impacted efficient delivery of services, as well as, implementing or completing development works on time. In

view of the significant human resource constraints faced across all sectors in the civil service and substantial increase of capital budget (Nu. 245 billion) in the 13th FYP, the RGoB in consultation with RCSC is recommended to review the existing HR gaps across sectors by different professional groups and ensure timely replacement.

3. The Committee notes that the PHPA-I power house is nearing its completion. However, even after the completion it cannot be put to use for another few years due to issues relating to the dam. This might result in significant cost escalation because of preservation and maintenance of the power house. Further, expiry of the defect liability period of Electro-Mechanical Component of the powerhouse might also incur additional expenses.

Therefore, the Committee recommends the RGoB to expedite the policy decision over dam or barrage option at the earliest with the relevant counterpart and ensure that the underground power house and the erected electro-mechanical equipment do not pose challenges during the testing and commissioning time.

RAA's Recommendations

Need to expedite the enforcement of court verdicts on audit irregularities prosecuted by the respective agencies in the court of law.

Need to reinforce controls in regulating traveling and daily subsistence allowance

Need for an enhanced collaboration and coordination between Forestry Sector and executing agencies for collection of royalties on extraction and utilization of boulders in the construction of roads

Need to review the practices of assigning deposit works to line agencies and identifying spillover activities during budget preparation.

Need for improved governance in the project management specifically through a robust monitoring and evaluation system

Need to consolidate all CD accounts operated by budgetary agencies

Need for consistent and strict enforcement of entitlement of designated vehicles as per Pay Revision Act 2023.

Chapter II: Annual Audit Report Review Report 2010 to 2022 Follow-up.

This follow-up report includes the Annual Audit Report for the period 2010-2022 as of March 31, 2023. The Committee's observations and recommendations on unsettled and settled disputes. There are three parts to the request.

Committee's Recommendation

In view of the significant (86 cases) pending judgements requiring enforcement, the Committee recommends RGoB to strengthen the HR capacity of the Office of Attorney General (OAG) to ensure timely and effective enforcement of judgements. Further, the Committee recommends RGoB (in collaboration with OAG) to expedite the pending enforcement of judgement for 86 cases (annexure 2) and share status to PAC by end of March 2025.

The Committee observed three cases pending judgement enforcement amounting to Nu. 0.73 million on account of missing defendants from AAR 2010-2014 (table 10). The Committee recommends the RAA to invoke Section 105 of the Evidence Act of Bhutan 2005 which states that “Where a person was proved to have been not heard of for nine years or more by those, who would naturally have heard, if the person had been alive, the Court may presume that the person is dead” and write off the same to provide logical conclusion to such cases.

Chapter 3: Report on the implementation of past resolutions.

The report contains 12 reports on the adoption of resolutions of the 9th Session of the 3rd Parliament and their status. They submitted their requests in detail. Details can be found in the committee's report.

The Speaker summarized the Public Accounts Committee's review report, dividing it into three chapters. This summary included all recommendations from the Committee, as well as observations and

recommendations from the Royal Audit Authority. For clarity, the recommendations will be discussed in stages. A request for approval and a discussion of the recommendations have commenced.

The MPs urged the government to enhance the well-being and morale of civil servants by developing strategies and adjusting travel and daily allowances based on inflation. They highlighted the heavy workload faced by engineers and suggested that the government consider hiring outsourcing services or managing work by load.

The finance minister committed to the proper management of public funds and addressing illegal activities. Some MPs proposed creating a procurement policy to help reduce the cost of living. The committee was advised to consult with the Royal Civil Service Commission to accept its recommendations and to establish a committee to monitor civil servant records.

Subsequently, the House adopted the first recommendation of the Committee's first chapter, with the majority raising their hands in agreement.

The second and third recommendations of the first chapter were discussed. Several MPs, including a National Assembly Member, raised concerns about the Punatsangchu Hydropower Project, noting that over Rs. 5 billion has been lost. They urged the government to take immediate action. The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources assured that

construction of the dam will commence soon. Following the discussion, the House adopted the second and third recommendations of the first chapter.

During the discussion on the recommendations of the Royal Audit Authority, members reviewed the proposal and agreed to implement the first recommendation of both the Authority and the Committee in Chapter 2. They suggested that the wording of the Act be revised with new, appropriate wording. With increased support from House members, a resolution was passed, and it was decided that the relevant report should be submitted to Parliament during the winter session.

During the discussion on the second recommendation of the Royal Audit Authority, members addressed the issue of civil servants' travel. They requested that the fees and daily allowances be maintained and reversed the initial recommendation. The House did not include the responsibilities and duties of the Leader and ordered a supplementary resolution to hold companies and individuals accountable.

In discussing the seventh recommendation of the National Audit Authority, the Deputy Speaker stated that the entitlement to a certified vehicle, as provided by the Pay Structure Reform Act of Bhutan 2022, should be strictly complied with. This Act allows for a special vehicle exemption. The House approved an amendment to ensure uniformity and strict adherence to the rules. After accepting the Royal Audit

Authority's recommendations in the first chapter, the House approved seven recommendations, supported by a majority of MPs.

When discussing the second recommendation of the Committee in Chapter 2, members argued that the proposal was invalid and contrary to the law. They feared that approving it would lead to an increase in criminal activity and harm the country's economy. The proposal lacked support as it was seen as a threat to public peace and order. After a lengthy discussion, the Deputy Speaker modified the recommendation to include an annual audit report.

There were complaints that enforcement was difficult due to the absence of the accused. The Royal Audit Authority appointed relevant agencies, such as the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), the Royal Bhutan Police, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to resolve the issue. A policy should be formulated in consultation with the parents as soon as possible. The motion was approved by the House with majority support.

Finally, the House spent two days discussing the review report of the Public Accounts Committee. Five recommendations were submitted by the Committee and the National Audit Authority, and seven recommendations were approved by the National Assembly. Out of 66 members, 65 voted in favor and 1 abstained, resulting in unanimous approval of the recommendations.

After that, Speaker declared the report on the Performance Audit Report on State Mining Corporation Limited as a public document. Subsequently, the PAC was directed to review it and submit its report for deliberation during the next session of the Parliament. **(27th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood male Dragon Year corresponding to the 3 July 2024).** Voting records are in Annexure XV

14. Annual State of the Nation Report

The Prime Minister presented the State of the Nation Report to the Joint Sitting of Parliament in keeping with the provision of the Constitution. The comprehensive report consisted of five chapters, detailing the state of the nation, challenges facing the country, strategies to address the challenge, government plans and priorities for the year 2024-2025, and the Government's Legislative plans for 2024-2025.

Chapter one- State of the Nation

The Prime Minister reported that, the well-being of a nation hinges on Gross National Happiness (GNH), which necessitates advancements in socio-economic, religious, and cultural domains, environmental stewardship, and effective governance.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated at 227 billion, with the economy experiencing steady and sustainable growth at a rate of 4.5% since 2023. However, there are still many inconveniences.

His Majesty the King has provided free education and healthcare to the nation, resulting in an increase in the literacy rate of Bhutanese citizens to 70.6 percent and a rise in life expectancy to 70 years. Culturally, under the guidance of religious leaders led by His Holiness the Je Khenpo, Buddhist teachings have flourished. This has contributed to the preservation and global recognition of the country's culture and natural environment.

Regarding good governance, a strong foundation has been established for civil society organizations, and media institutions have been strengthened. As a result, the level of Gross National Happiness (GNH) has improved, and the country is progressing in its development.

Chapter Two: Challenges facing the Country

One of the primary challenges facing the country is the emigration of Bhutanese citizens. To date, more than 64,000 Bhutanese have moved abroad, including many who possess high skills and talents. This increase in emigration has had notable impacts on the country's economy and service delivery.

Chapter Three- Addressing the Challenges

Strengthening the country's economic situation is crucial for addressing its issues. His Majesty's vision of establishing an independent economic hub in Gelephu is a significant mechanism to improve economic development. An independent economic zone in Gelephu will serve as

a gateway to various opportunities, including economic development, private sector growth, youth employment, and agribusiness. Additionally, it will encourage Bhutanese overseas to return home and provide a substantial capital base for future generations. Therefore, it is everyone's responsibility to contribute to this endeavor.

To rejuvenate the country's economy, the priority is to promptly address the economic impacts of the pandemic and secure sufficient funding. The Government extends its gratitude to the Government of India, especially Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, for establishing a \$15 billion fund to support this effort.

The funds will also be allocated to provide low-interest loans through banks to merchants, startups, young farmers, and home builders, benefiting a diverse range of individuals and aligning with the primary goal of the 13th Five-Year Plan to expand and strengthen the economy.

The total budget for the 13th Plan is 512 billion, with 267 billion allocated for the current budget and 265 billion for the capital budget. The Government of India has contributed 85 billion, and we appreciate the contributions from numerous other countries.

In the 13th FYP budget, allocations include 67 billion for infrastructure, 10 billion for information technology, 72 billion for local government, 60 billion for human resource development, 527 billion for expanding

5,500 MW of power over the next five years, 500 billion for economic expansion, and special plans and initiatives for tourism development.

Chapter Four: Government Plans and Priorities

In the first year of the 13th Plan, His Majesty is guiding all policies and initiatives of the Gelephu Autonomous Region project, which originated from his vision.

Reform and development of the economy.

The government plans to enhance private sector development and remove loan restrictions through economic assistance. It also intends to provide low-interest loans to new businesses and establish supportive policies, rules, and regulations to broaden market access.

To enhance the country's infrastructure, 11 national highways will be expanded, and 7 new roads will be constructed. Additionally, there are plans to improve tourism policies and regulations, advance information technology, and establish a new internet service provider offering services at lower prices.

To expand foreign investment, new business opportunities will be identified. Additionally, the Punatsangchhu Hydropower Project II will begin generating electricity, while the Punatsangchhu Hydropower Project I will resume construction.

Extension of Livestock and Agriculture

The government plans to support farmers economically through low-interest loans and improve transportation by paving and blacktopping roads in 20 gewog centers. Additionally, approximately 200 Chiwog roads will undergo maintenance. A total of 56 irrigation projects are scheduled to launch, with 47 new projects nationwide. Iron chain link fencing will be installed in about 200 Chiwogs and prioritize grains, fruits, and livestock products. New policies will be developed to manage prices, and the government will take responsibility for them. Moreover, insurance and compensation policies for livestock and agriculture will be developed.

Human Resource Development

With the launch of the historic Gyelsung project by His Majesty on September 5th this year, the government will actively support its objectives. Furthermore, the government is developing policies to strengthen the education system and enhance healthcare services, including plans to inaugurate the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck Mother and Child Hospital in Thimphu and Mongar.

Moreover, the government intends to expand the health insurance fund, improve vocational training institutions for youths, create a policy and strategy for interest-free loans to support youths studying abroad and establish a specialized school for young drug users to combat drug abuse effectively.

Religion and Culture

The construction of Sarpang Dzong will continue, with concurrent expansions and renovations of five sacred temples. Additionally, there are plans to establish the Dechen Phodrang Monastic School, emphasizing the provision of information technology to promote Dzongkha and to expand the Royal Academy of Performing Arts into a training center.

Foreign Policy and Relations

Plans to participate in the United Nations General Assembly this year and create opportunities and programs that will benefit the country.

Preparations for the 13th Plan and enhancements in public service delivery.

The government will continue its Civil Service Reform efforts in collaboration with the Royal Civil Service Commission, focusing on creating policies and regulations to ensure efficient and high-quality public service delivery through integrated service centers. It also aims to offer diverse training opportunities for local government members and introduce a strategy to support homeownership through a low-interest loan policy. Moreover, the plans and policies will be framed regarding the increase of Rural Life Insurance and allowances for women giving birth to their children.

Chapter five: Government's Legislative Plans and Priorities

In the first session of the Fourth Parliament, the government submitted only a financial and monetary bill and an air service agreement and requested to submit the tax bill in the winter session.

Conclusion

The Prime Minister expressed his gratitude to His Majesty the King for supporting and guiding civil and public servants. He also acknowledged His Majesty's allocation of Nu. 8 billion for a pay raise from the income of a specific project, and for his tireless dedication to the country and its people.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister congratulated His Majesty the King on receiving prestigious honorary degrees from seven countries in the past. He also expressed gratitude to the Government of Thailand for the simultaneous awarding of honorary degrees to His Majesty by seven Thai universities on June 19, 2024.

He expressed his gratitude to His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyelpo for fortifying the country's independence, to the Gyelsay for his devoted service to the nation, and to Her Majesty the Queen for nurturing the princes and princesses for the country's future and overseeing key institutions.

He also thanked the Speaker, Chairperson of the National Council and Member of Parliament for the successful completion of the First session of the Fourth Parliament.

Lastly, he offered prayers for peace and happiness under the benevolent rule of the Wangchuck Dynasty. **(On the 29th Day of 5th Month of Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 4 July 2024)**

15. Concluding Ceremony

The First Session of the Fourth Parliament concluded on the 6th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year, corresponding to 6 July 2024 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. **(On the 1st Day of the 6th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 6 July 2024)**



A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, flowing characters.

(Lungten Dorji)

SPEAKER

QUESTION HOUR SESSION

I. Question Hour: Questions relevant to the Ministries in Group A

During the Question Hour for Group A Ministries, a total of seven oral questions and one written question were tabled. The allocated time for each question was three minutes, with seven minutes provided for responses. Supplementary questions were permitted subject to availability of time.

A. Oral Questions

1. 4P1S/OQ1 Issue Regarding Mines and Minerals

The Member of Radhi-Sakteng constituency highlighted that Bhutan is abundantly endowed with industrial minerals such as dolomite, limestone, marble, quartzite, gypsum, and construction materials (stones and aggregates), which are projected to last for several hundred years. This vast reserve of minerals implies a significant potential to generate substantial income for the country. In view of these opportunities, the Member inquired about the plans, priorities, and strategies of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources to increase the export of minerals and mineral products in order to significantly boost the national budget.

The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources informed the House that the government is revising the Mining Act of 1995 to permit the export of coal and minerals. Bhutan boasts a diverse range of mining projects, including coal, limestone, sandstone, dolomite, marble, quartzite, and gypsum, involving both governmental and private sectors. These resources are commercially traded in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

Currently, the dolomite business, managed by State Mining Corporation Limited (SMCL), has significantly benefited the country. Moving forward, he said that other corporations will also be given opportunities and it was worth noting that Bhutan is the largest exporter of dolomite among SAARC countries. He also informed that the government will be submitting the Mines and Minerals Management Act 1995 for amendment next year.

2. 4P1S/OQ2 Issues related to Yenlag Thromdes

The Member from the Nubi-Tangsibji constituency submitted that the First Session of the Second Parliament, held in 2015, endorsed the boundaries and establishment of the Dzongkhag and Yenlag Thromde. Subsequently, in 2016, 16 Dzongkhag Thromdes and 20 Yenlag Thromdes were established following consultations with relevant agencies. Currently, certain areas in the Samtse and Trongsa districts do not have access to urban infrastructure and amenities, yet residents still have to pay taxes, which is unfair. He therefore submitted that the government should either provide the necessary services and amenities in these areas or consider reducing taxes. He inquired about the government's plans to address this issue.

In response, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport said that in 2016, the parliament approved 16 Dzongkhag Thromdes and 20 Yenlag Thromdes but with the exception of the four Thromdes established in 2010, the Yenlag Thromdes were under the Dzongkhag Administration..

He said that it is imperative to increase the value of towns for the purpose of socio- economic development. Therefore, the Dzongkhag administration has implemented the development of the Dzongkhag and Yenglag Thromde. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport has already supported the expansion of 11 Yenlag Throms and has included Samtse and other locations in the 13th Five Year Plan for the development according to feasibility.

3. 4P1S/OQ3 Issues concerning Electricity Shortage

The Member from Bongo- Chapcha constituency asked about plans to address the challenges faced by Bongo and Getana gewogs, regarding the upgradation of the single-phase transformers, electric poles, and a shortage of linemen.

In response, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources explained that during the initial electrification of the country, there was a lack of essential components, leading to the widespread distribution of single-phase electricity. With the country's development, the Bhutan Power Corporation now plans to install three-phase electricity. However, due to insufficient funds, this upgrade cannot be implemented nationwide all at once but can be addressed in phases.

4. 4P1S/OQ4 Tax exemption for traditional buildings

The Member of Chhoekhor-Tang constituency noted that traditional buildings are eligible for a building tax exemption of up to 50%. He

requested that this tax exemption be extended to include buildings in Bumthang town and its surrounding areas.

In response, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport explained that buildings subject to property tax are classified into three categories. Owner-occupied buildings that fall into the traditional category will receive a 50% tax credit. While the implementation of the historical tax system in the Property Tax System (PTS) was completed quickly and efficiently, updating the building information has taken a considerable amount of time. He added that if building owners wish to update their building information, they will be supported in accordance with the district administration's procedures.

5. 4P1S/OQ5 Issues related to Kholongchu Hydro Power Project

The Member of the Bumdeling-Jamkhar constituency inquired about the progress and timeline for the construction of the Kholongchu Hydropower Project, which is being developed in collaboration with the Government of India and the TATA Corporation.

In response, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources stated that although the hydroelectric power plant had to be shut down midway through its initial operation, the Prime Minister has been in discussions with the Government of India and the TATA Corporation since taking office. He urged the people of Trashi Yangtse district not to be discouraged, assuring them that the signing of the contract for the

Khorlochu Hydropower Project is imminent and that everything will be resolved once the project commences.

6. 4P1S/OQ6 Issues related to road networks

The Member of the Drametse-Ngatshang constituency questioned the possibility of incorporating the improvement and repair of the road network into the 13th Five-Year Plan. Specifically, the construction of the road link from Gayzamchu to Autsho and between Kurigongri and Sherichu would reduce travel time within the country, boost the economy of the Eastern District, and support the upcoming electricity and logistics project.

In response, The Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation stated that the DPR review of the section between Gongrizomsa and Sherichu had been completed. However, it was not included in the plan due to the high construction costs and minimal benefits outlined in the DPR review report. The road from Gayzamchu to Autsho was included in the 13th plan, but it must meet the criteria specified in the DPR review report. If it does not align with the DPR, the government will not be able to support it.

7. 4P1S/OQ7 Questions regarding the non-permitted collection of non-wood forest products

The members of the Bji Katso Uesu Constituency raised the issue regarding the non-permitted collection of non-wood forest products.

According to Schedule 2 of the Forests and Nature Conservation Act 2023, non-wood forest products, such as Nardostachys (Pangpoi), can be collected legally by paying a tax. However, the department has also declared that items listed in Schedule 2 are illegal to collect. This contradiction between the Act and the Declaration creates a legal inconsistency. It is crucial to conduct a thorough analysis and make a prompt decision to resolve this issue in the public interest.

In response, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources referred to the Forestry Act of 2017, advocating for a system that regulates the use of non-forestry products rather than unrestricted consumption. According to the ministry, excessive use of forest resources threatens the extinction of the world's most valuable species and risks depleting and destroying these resources due to financial greed. Therefore, a regulated system of consumption for non-forestry products is essential to prevent these adverse outcomes.

Note: The detail of Questions and Answers can be found in the verbatim of the Question Hour Session. **(On the 8th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 14 June, 2024)**

II. Question Hour: Questions relevant to the Ministries in Group B

During the Question Hour for Group B Ministries, a total of seven oral questions were tabled.

A. Oral Question

1. 4P1S/OQ8 Issues concerning teacher shortage

The Member from Dophuchen-Tading constituency highlighted that the shortage of science teachers and inadequate laboratory facilities in many schools are serious issues. He asked the Ministry about their plans to address these problems.

In response, the Minister of Education and Skill Development informed that to address the shortage of science teachers, 118 teachers from foreign countries will be recruited starting July this year. Additionally, the lack of science equipment at Tashithang Middle School in Tading Gewog, which couldn't be provided due to insufficient funds at the time of the school's establishment, has been addressed in the budget for 2024 and 2025.

2. 4P1S/OQ9 Issues regarding strategies for retention and motivating teachers

The Member from Khamdang-Ramjar constituency noted that since 2022, teachers constituted the largest group of retiring civil servants, with 1,884 academic staff retiring in the past year. These retirees are primarily university graduates and individuals with 11 to 15 years of

service, leading to a shortage of teachers and a decline in the quality of education. He inquired about the strategies and plans in place to motivate and retain teachers.

In response, the Minister of Education and Skills Development stated that to address the teacher shortage, the government is recruiting retired teachers and contract teachers. Beginning July 2024, 221 teachers are expected to be recruited. The Ministry has also increased the number of PGD and B.Ed courses by 30% compared to the previous year. PGD and B.Ed graduates will be hired as contract teachers and will receive an additional 30% of their salary, which is expected to help alleviate the shortage of teachers.

To encourage teachers, 166 schools have been exempted from partially meeting expectations in the performance evaluation system in collaboration with the Royal Civil Service Commission. Additionally, teachers are provided with orientation and professional development programs, along with adequate compensation.

3. 4P1S/OQ10 Issues related to irrigation water

The Member from the Lingmukha-Toedwang constituency highlighted that Bhutan heavily depends on agriculture for livelihood, making it crucial to address irrigation water issues for those who rely on paddy cultivation and rice. In light of this, the Member inquired about the government's Water Flagship Program specifically aimed at addressing these irrigation water issues.

The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock responded by stating that in the latest irrigation budget, more than 600 kilometers of irrigation channels were built and maintained. This initiative has benefited around 8,000 households and covered over 17,000 acres of land.

In the 13th Plan, the Ministry has targeted the establishment of 24 irrigation projects to provide around 140 kilometers of irrigation water, benefiting over 2,700 households. Furthermore, the plan includes the implementation of modern machinery for water-saving smart irrigation techniques, utilizing methods like sprinklers and drip kits to improve efficiency.

4. 4P1S/OQ11 Issues regarding recruitment of foreign health care workers

The Member from the Shomphangkha constituency mentioned that, to ensure free healthcare for the Bhutanese people, the government has opted to recruit doctors and other healthcare workers from abroad to address the labor shortage caused by the retirement of many healthcare workers. He inquired about the government's strategies and plans to manage the high costs associated with hiring foreign doctors and health workers, which are impacting local healthcare professionals.

In response, the Health Minister stated that the country currently faces a shortage of 172 doctors and 824 nurses. By 2020, 21 doctors from Bangladesh had been recruited, with plans to add three more. The Minister emphasized the need to consider the cost disparity between

foreign and domestic health workers. To address the healthcare worker shortage, the government has expanded medical training programs abroad and general medical training courses in Bhutan. Collaborating closely with the Royal Civil Service Commission, the Ministry aims to introduce professional development programs for healthcare workers.

5. 4P1S/OQ12 Issues related to the Health System Reform

The Member from the Khar-Yurung constituency acknowledged that the health reforms have had positive effects on the health sector but also some negative impacts. He questioned whether the newly established National Health Service (NHS) under these reforms should be reviewed or if a comprehensive review of the entire health reform is necessary. Additionally, he inquired about the plans to review the overall health system and to reinstate the Department of Traditional Medicine Services, which had been downgraded to a division.

The Minister of Health responded by stating that the government has begun assessing the effects of previous health reforms, aiming to evaluate both positive and negative outcomes. Regarding the Department of Traditional Medicine Services, which is considered a national identity, there is regret over its downgrade from a department to a division during the transition. The Minister highlighted that the Ministry is currently investigating this issue and will implement necessary adjustments based on the findings.

6. 4P1S/OQ13 Issues regarding the facilities in Central Schools

The Member from Khamed-Lunana pointed out that Bjishong School in Lunana, although categorized as a central school, has not yet received the associated facilities. He asked when the school would be provided with these central school amenities.

In response, the Minister of Education and Skills Development noted that Bhutan has 492 government schools and 63 central schools. According to a survey, there were once two million students with adequate space and facilities, but the number of students has now dropped to less than 153,000. Bjishong School has been recognized as both a central school and a Bhutan Baccalaureate school. Consequently, the school is equipped with various technologies and amenities, including computers, laptops, projectors, washing machines, libraries, science labs, teacher and staff quarters, internet, electricity, and safe drinking water facilities.

7. 4P1S/OQ14 Issue regarding the Fund to increase the GDP of Agriculture and Livestock

In the 13th Budget, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock aims to increase the GDP from 27 billion to 50 billion. To reach this target, the focus will shift from subsistence farming to commercial farming, with an emphasis on high-value crops and fruits. However, only 21 percent of the budget is allocated for these commercial and high-value activities. The Member questioned how the government plans to achieve this GDP target with such limited funding.

In response, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock highlighted that the 13th Five Year Plan aims to boost GDP from 27 to 50 billion as part of the effort to become the happiest country. To achieve this goal, the plan outlines several strategies, including promoting commercial farming, increasing the focus on agricultural products, and providing financial support to stimulate agricultural activities. A crucial component of this plan is to support public corporations related to agriculture and livestock, such as the Farm Machinery Corporation Limited and the Bhutan Livestock Development Corporation Limited to reach the target.

Note: The detail of Questions and Answers can be found in the verbatim of the Question Hour Session. (12th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 18 June, 2024)

III. Questions hours session for questions relevant to Ministries in Group C

During the Question Hour for Group C Ministries, a total of eight oral questions question were tabled. Supplementary questions were permitted subject to availability of time.

A. Oral question

1. 4P1S/OQ15 Issues related to Integrated Check Posts (ICPs)

The Member from the Nganglam constituency raised concerns about the need to establish entry and exit points for tourists in Nganglam, Panbang, Samtse, and other key border areas, given the tourism sector's significant revenue contribution. He asked about the current status of

Integrated Check Post (ICP) establishments and the policies and plans for evenly distributing tourists across different regions.

In response, the Prime Minister stated that the primary tourist entry point is at Jomotshangkha, Samrang Samdrup Jongkhar, where Indian tourists can enter without fees for 24 hours. He mentioned that while the government is ready to open a new gate for international tourists, the Indian government is not fully prepared. However, the gateway to the Samdrup Jongkhar region is almost complete and will be launched soon.

To promote equal regional tourism, the government plans to focus on road improvements and the purchase of helicopters to expand airline services in the 13th Five-Year Plan. Additionally, the government is evaluating locations for new airports in the East, Central, and South regions. A separate project funded by the Global Environment Fund will develop eco-tourism in the Eastern District. There are also plans to initiate a specific project for the southern regions.

2. 4P1S/OQ16 Issues regarding Financial Institutions

The Member from the Nanong-Shumar constituency inquired about the strategies in place for financial institutions to effectively contribute to the economy.

In response, the Finance Minister stated that with the increase in interest rates in the past bank rates are now between 14 to 15%. The

introduction of a single low-interest loan system during the second government in 2016, aimed at easing loan interest rates, significantly contributed to economic growth. The Ministry, in collaboration with the RMA, is currently formulating a monetary policy to stabilize the country's economy, improve supervision, and control loan interest rates.

3. 4P1S/OQ17 Issues regarding Bhutan Film Association

The Member from Sergithang-Tsirang Toed inquired about the government's support for establishing theaters and forming partnerships with international film producers to provide training for capacity building.

In response, the Minister of Home Affairs emphasized the importance of the film association and announced that, in coordination with the Bhutan Information Communication and Media Authority under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Employment, new theaters will be built in Wangduephodrang and Samdrup Jongkhar. Additionally, there are plans to establish a Film City or Film Studio to provide better facilities for the film association's work, support non-commercial and official films, and support six films annually. The government also plans to set up screening halls in gewogs and dzongkhags.

4. 4P1S/OQ18 Regarding addressing issues related to Human Resource

The Member from Nyishog-Saephu mentioned that the 13th Five Year Plan (FYP) has been strategically planned with a budget allocation of

512 billion, placing the responsibility for economic revival fully on the current government. However, experienced civil servants and public servants continue to resign and move overseas, which could significantly impact the timely execution of the Plan. He inquired about the measures in place to address these human resource issues.

In response, the Prime Minister emphasized the importance of human resources, noting that 13.33% of civil servants left the system in 2023. Despite this, there are a total of 29,400 civil servants. While it appears that there are sufficient civil servants, if the need arises, additional personnel will be recruited on a contract basis depending on the projects. Once the economic situation improves, there is a plan to increase salaries for both civil servants and public servants.

5. 4P1S/OQ19 Issues related to Life Insurance

The Member from Kengkhar-Weringla constituency pointed out that both parties had pledged to raise the life insurance premium from Nu 30,000 to Nu 150,000 during their election campaigns. However, the budget for the fiscal year 2023-25 does not appear to include provisions for this increase. The mMember inquired about the government's plans to raise the life insurance premium and the timeline for its implementation.

In response, the Finance Minister stated that the government's top priority is to improve the country's economy. Research is currently being conducted to determine the feasibility of increasing the life insurance

premium. The estimated budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 exceeds Nu 67 million, and for 2024-25, it is over Nu 69 million. Life insurance covers Bhutanese citizens above the age of 8, and approximately Nu 600 million is needed annually to support this. The premium can only be increased once the economy has improved.

6. 4P1S/OQ20 Issues regarding the 27 business license holders who have not received government compensation.

The Member from Lamgong-Wangcha pointed out that the Taktshang base camp area is designated as a national heritage site, imposing restrictions on business operations there. Despite the government taking their goods with a promise of compensation, the affected business operators have not received any compensation. Therefore, the Member inquired about the government's strategy to resolve this issue and when the compensation will be provided.

The Minister of Home Affairs explained that the restriction on selling goods at the premises is due to its classification as a National Heritage Site, aimed at preserving it from potential damage or destruction. The government has previously engaged the public on three specific issues: first, goods must be purchased at government-set prices; second, trading from home is permitted; and third, trading is allowed in the Kaja Throm at Paro. Regarding compensation, which was delayed during the previous government due to economic challenges, the current administration has proposed swift plans for its disbursement.

7. 4P1S/OQ21 Issues Regarding export of Areca Nuts (Beetle Nuts)

The Member from the Shompangkha constituency mentioned that although Bhutanese can export up to 17,000 metric tons of betel nut, Phuntsholing is currently the only export route, which affects those who export betel nut. Therefore, it is important to open additional export routes. He inquired if there are any other measures in place for this.

In response, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade explained that although the Indian government banned the import of betel nut from other countries, they permitted Bhutan to export up to 17,000 metric tons of betel nut to India. Before the pandemic, there were no issues with exporting betel nut; however, since the pandemic, Phuntsholing has been the only open route for export. The Bhutanese government has been in discussions with the Indian government, requesting permission to trade through four additional locations: Samdrup Jongkhar, Nganglam, Lhamoidzingkha, and Gelephu. The Indian Government has agreed to this request, which will hopefully address the issue soon.

8. 4P1S/OQ22 Government Support for sending students to study overseas

The member from the Wamrong constituency inquired about the government's plans and measures to fulfill its commitment to send one youth per family abroad for studies with assistance through low-interest loans. This inquiry followed a recent government press conference announcing the establishment of an office under the Prime Minister's

Office to support Bhutanese individuals abroad wishing to return to Bhutan, which seems to contrast with the earlier promises.

In response, the Prime Minister stated that the government has allocated one billion in the economic incentive program to send young people to study abroad. He clarified that the program prioritizes households where no youth has gone abroad, those facing poverty, and those with good educational outcomes who will not have to pay interest. Policies and regulations are being developed to provide this support at low-interest rates. He also mentioned that a special office has been set up to support Bhutanese abroad who wish to return to Bhutan.

Note:The detail of Questions and Answers can be found in the verbatim of the Question Hour Session. (14th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 21 June, 2024)

IV Question Hour session for the questions relevant to the ministries in group A

During the Question Hour for Group A Ministries, a total of 4 oral questions and one written question were tabled.

A. Oral Question

1. 4P1S/OQ23 Issues regarding Toursim

The member from the Sergithang-Tsirang Toed constituency highlighted that, despite the tourism industry being one of the country's most profitable sectors, there is currently a shortage of guides, staff, and

vehicles. He inquired about the actions being taken by the Ministry and the Department of Tourism to address these issues and asked if there are any plans to identify tourist attractions in the Tsirang district.

In response, the Minister of Industry, Commerce, and Employment explained that tourism in Bhutan began in 1974, when a group of 14 tourists visited the country during the reign of His Majesty the Fourth King. The government is now taking the tourism sector seriously and has allocated approximately 1.5 billion from the economic stimulus fund. The Minister acknowledged the current manpower shortage and outlined plans to provide financial assistance and promote tourism through cultural initiatives in the Tsirang Dzongkhag.

2. 4P1S/OQ24 Regarding Carbon Trading

The member from the Mongar constituency inquired about the income generated from carbon trading by the Dagachu and Punatsangchu hydropower projects. He also asked about plans to register new projects under Article 6.4 of the Paris Agreement, as well as the total revenue generated from these registered projects and upcoming energy projects.

In response, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources explained that carbon trading has brought significant benefits under the Kyoto and Paris Agreements. The Dagachu project has reduced air pollution by 781,653 metric tons, generating approximately \$7.77 million in revenue between 2015 and 2023. However, the Punatsangchu projects

(one and two) have not yet provided any benefits as they are still under construction.

3. P1S/OQ25 Construction of the Two-lane Highway between Haa and Samtse Dzongkhag

The member from the Dophuchen-Tading constituency inquired about the timeline for completing the expansion of the road linking Samtse and Haa into a two-lane highway. This expansion aims to enhance trade between the southern and western districts and improve the livelihoods of farmers along these routes.

In response, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport noted that the highway is crucial for Samtse due to its high population and the relocation of industries to the dzongkhag. Additionally, if the highway between Thimphu and Phuentsholing is disrupted, the highway between Haa and Samtse can serve as an alternative route. The ongoing work on both highways is expected to be completed between 2026 and 2027.

4. 4P1S/OQ26 Issues Regarding Farm Road

The Member from the Khatoed-Laya constituency acknowledged that while the farm road has benefited the public, it has also negatively impacted some landowners. He raised concerns about compensating or replacing the land of farmers affected by the road construction and urged the government to review current regulations on the required distance for house construction along the road, suggesting a reduction from 50 feet to 30 feet.

In response, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport explained that the country has 40,000 acres of farm roads, and compensating farmers at a rate of Nu 3,000 per acre would amount to over 100 billion. Given this substantial cost, the government cannot afford to compensate all affected farmers. However, the government plans to address farm roads on government land in the future, in consultation with the public and engineers.

Note: The detail of Questions and Answers can be found in the verbatim of the Question Hour Session. (19th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year or 25th June, 2024).

V. Question Hour Session for Questions relevant to Ministries in Group B

During the Question Hour for Group A Ministries, a total of six oral questions were tabled. The Speaker also reminded the House of the importance of keeping time in mind during deliberation

A. Oral Questions

1. 4P1S/OQ27 Regarding the issue of not fetching a good price for potato exports.

The Member from the Nyishog-Sephu constituency noted that while potato exports have been ongoing for over two decades, the decline in potato prices starting last year has severely impacted farmers. He suggested that to address this issue, it would be beneficial to first establish an auction center in the region or within the compound. Secondly,

actively inviting buyers and competitors from various countries and regions would foster a more competitive market, helping to maximize profits for farmers. He inquired about the ministry's plans and strategies to implement these suggestions.

In response, the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock reported that in 2023, approximately 22,000 metric tons of potatoes were exported, generating around Nu. 311 million. Due to some issues, information about the potato auction could not be communicated in a timely manner. Additionally, when the potato market performs well, there is a tendency for everyone to export their produce simultaneously. However, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Bhutan Food Corporation, is developing strategies to address these challenges.

2. 4P1S/OQ28 raised questions about whether to provide machinery to increase production.

The Member from the Langong-Wangchan constituency highlighted that the districts of Paro, Punakha, and Wangdue are among the most productive rice-growing areas. However, rice production in these districts declined in 2021 compared to 2020, and there was an 11% decrease in the number of people working in the fields during this period. He inquired about the ministry's plans to procure combined paddy harvesters to support farmers and boost rice yields.

In response, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock stated that despite the overall decrease in the number of workplaces and rice production in

the country, data from 2021 and 2022 shows a slight increase in the number of workplaces in Punakha, Paro, and Wangdue. Punakha saw an increase in cultivated land from 3,529 acres to 3,585 acres in 2022. As a result, rice production capacity rose from 6,510 metric tons in 2021 to 8,559 metric tons in 2022.

In 2020, Paro had 1,944 acres of arable land, which increased to 2,281 acres in 2022, all dedicated to rice cultivation. To boost productivity, sufficient water availability is essential for rice cultivation. One of the objectives of the 13th Plan is to prioritize providing adequate water to farmers. The government has implemented this plan across all 20 districts, including water programs and six other projects under the 13th Plan.

3. 4P1S/OQ29 Future PPlans for class 12 graduates of Arts and Commerce

The Member from Dewathang-Gomdar constituency expressed concern that in recent years, there has been an emphasis on STEM subjects, leading to a gradual phase-out of arts and commerce disciplines in most tertiary institutions. He inquired about the ministry's plans for the 12 graduates with backgrounds in arts and commerce.

The Minister of Education and Skill Development responded that as of now, there have been no discussions between the Ministry and the Royal University of Bhutan regarding this matter. The decision to

discontinue the arts and commerce streams is attributed to the Royal University of Bhutan's assessment that these fields offer fewer job prospects for graduates. However, arts and commerce subjects are still offered in grades 11 and 12 at all schools, ensuring students have equal opportunities to pursue careers, including entry into civil service roles.

4. 4P1S/OQ30 Distribution of interest free power tillers to address irrigation water issues.

The Member from Sergithang-Tsirang Toed highlighted that Tsirang Dzongkhag has an abundance of land suitable for paddy cultivation. However, paddy cultivation has been hindered due to a lack of irrigation water for over 20 years. He inquired about the measures the agricultural ministry is taking to address water scarcity in Tsirang and how the ministry plans to distribute power tillers to farmers through interest-free loans.

In response, the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock noted that all 20 Dzongkhags have faced similar irrigation water issues, with no more than 29% of cultivable land receiving adequate irrigation. In the 12th Five-Year Plan, irrigation water was extracted in Tsirang Semjong through the Dessung project. The ministry is also on the verge of implementing six different projects in the 13th Five-Year Plan to address these challenges.

5. 4P1S/OQ31 Plans to Boost Commercial Agriculture in the 13th FYP

The Member of the Bongo-Chapcha stated that Chhukha Dzongkhag, an important gateway for international trade, attracts exporters from nine other Dzongkhags dealing with agricultural products such as potatoes, oranges, and cardamom. However, exporters face challenges such as price fluctuations, congested auction yards, and limited international market opportunities. In light of these issues, he asked what measures are being taken in the 13th Plan to facilitate the trade of agricultural products.

In response, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock stated that, due to the absence of a fixed trading area in Phuentsholing, the Ministry is collaborating with relevant ministries and agencies to establish one. The Minister expressed that the 3000 metric tonne cold storage warehouse in Pasakha would be beneficial. Additionally, there are plans to utilize Artificial Intelligence for trading and providing basic information. The Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, in collaboration with GovTech, will ensure timely provision of trade information using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

6. 4P1S/OQ32 Establishment of Food Corporation of Bhutan Limited at Lunana

The Member from Khamed- Lunana constituency highlighted that Lunana is situated in a location where people must walk 11 days to reach

from Gasa and faces challenges in obtaining essential items like rice and other basic necessities from Gasa. Despite the presence of FCBL in Lunana from 2013 to 2018, which is now inactive, he inquired whether the government plans to establish a Food Corporation of Bhutan Limited in Lunana, and if so, when such plans might be implemented.

The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock responded that farmers had previously benefited from FCBL, but due to rapid development, its necessity diminished. Initially, there were around 100 FCBL establishments, which has now decreased to 19. Nevertheless, the government has plans and procedures in place to reintroduce FCBL services in areas where they are needed, and is currently gathering information from local governments for this purpose.

Note: The detail of Questions and Answers can be found in the verbatim of the Question Hour Session. (22nd Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 28 June, 2024)

VI. Question hour session for questions relevant to ministries in group C

During the Question Hour for Group A Ministries, a total of eight oral questions were tabled. The allocated time for each question was three minutes, with seven minutes provided for responses. Supplementary questions were permitted subject to availability of time.

A- Oral Questions**1. 4P1S/OQ33 Inconsistencies in Public Service Delivery Policies .**

The Member of Radhi-Sakteng constituency questioned whether the government intends to continue the Community Service centers to assist the public who are illiterate and who do not know how to use mobile phones, and do not have 4G/5G broadband services. He also inquired about the government's strategies and initiatives to address these gaps in management and improve service delivery.

In response, the Prime Minister stated that the government established the Community Service Centre in 2011 to deliver services to rural populations, including online and offline support, as well as printing, photocopying, and faxing services. Bhutan Post initially managed and administered these centers, but this responsibility has now been handed back to the Bhutan Development Bank.

He stated that to resolve uncertainties in the management and administration of public service centers, all 203 centers will be transferred to the district administration. The Prime Minister's Office will take the initiative to repair approximately 80 centers and is currently in discussions with the Royal Civil Service Commission regarding the 191 employees working at the community service centers.

2. 4P1S/OQ34 Provision of affordable Housing and Vehicle Loan

The Member from Nanong-Shumar constituency highlighted that the government had pledged to increase the loan-to-value (LTV) mortgage

ratio for home and apartment purchases, as well as house construction to 95 percent, with a reduced interest rate of 4 percent. Additionally, the LTV for vehicle purchases would be raised to 80%. He inquired about the timeline for implementation of these changes.

In response, the Finance Minister stated that ensuring home ownership is one of the pledges made by the People's Democratic Party. He mentioned that financial institutions will offer home loans covering up to 90 percent of a home's or apartment's value. The government will establish guidelines to provide affordable credit for home loans at a 4 percent interest rate, with a long-term tenure of 30 years.

He added that for vehicle loans, especially for heavy vehicles and public transport, the government will implement special schemes through the Economic Stimulus Plan, as pledged. The current LTV ratios for vehicle loans are 50 percent for heavy trucks and 70 percent for electric vehicles and public buses. The government is consulting with the Royal Monetary Authority on this matter.

3. 4P1S/OQ35 Issues related to Taxation and Land Compensation

The Member raised concerns that the government is not adhering to the provisions of the Bhutan Property Tax Act 2022, resulting in unfair taxation for the people. Additionally, the clearing of farm roads has affected private land, but land replacement and compensation have not yet been provided, which is unjust to farmers. He inquired about the government's plans to resolve these issues.

In response, the Finance Minister explained that a fiscal incentive program offers a 90 percent tax exemption for irrigated land and a 50 percent exemption for dry land. Traditional houses in rural areas also receive a 50 percent tax exemption. To address buffer zone issues in rural areas caused by the PAVA rate, adjustments will be made to resolve tax-related problems. If issues persist, the Act will be reviewed and amended as necessary. The Minister also noted that land classification in rural areas is important, as property prices depend on proximity to towns and the PAVA rate. Regarding farm road clearance taxes, the government is currently in discussions with the National Land Commission.

4. 4P1S/OQ36 Questions concerning the facilitation of new loans.

The Member from Lamgo-Wangcha constituency raised concerns that, following the pandemic, businesses have struggled with timely loan repayments and accessing new loans. He asked what plans the government has to facilitate access to new loans for businesses.

In response, the Finance Minister explained that the Royal Monetary Authority has been addressing non-performing loans. Prior to the pandemic, non-performing loans totaled 16.5 billion, which slightly decreased to 15.9 billion afterwards. However, this amount has risen to 19.3 billion as of the end of April this year. The government is working with the Royal Monetary Authority to identify and implement measures to manage this increase, including allocating approximately 2 billion dollars from the economic stimulus fund.

5. P1S/OQ37 Plans and Policies to reduce crime in the Country

The Member from Thrimshing-Kangpara asked what plans the Ministry has for implementing timely preventive measures, policies, and guidelines to reduce incidents of rape and murder in society. He also inquired about specific improvements in crime prevention and raised the question of whether there is a need to amend or simplify the penalty system in the Marriage Act of Bhutan.

In response, the Home Minister stated that amending laws to combat violent crime is essential, particularly in a religious country like Bhutan, where preventing crime through religious programs, teacher and parental counseling, and government-led awareness initiatives is crucial. Additionally, the Ministry of Home Affairs and police departments are collaborating to implement a budget of 95 million for installing CCTV services to enhance crime prevention across districts.

6. 4P1S/OQ38 Upgradation of service facilities at Checkposts

The plan and design for Checkpost at the Gelephu International Border are already in place, but a facility that caters to both business and tourism has not yet been established. The member inquired about the government's plans to implement this facility.

In response, the Home Minister explained that while plans and designs for tourism have been prepared, implementation has been put on hold as Gelephu is set to become a Special Administrative Region. Tourists visit Tsachu, Sershong Lhakhang, and travel to Sarpang daily, and there

have been requests for similar facilities along other parts of the border as well. According to the Immigration Act, daily tourists are only permitted to visit designated areas.

7. 4P1S/OQ39 Issues Regarding Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)

The Member from Bomdeling-Jamkhar constituency noted that non-performing loans (NPLs) in Bhutan have surged to Nu. 19.349 billion, making it difficult for people to obtain loans. He inquired about the government's policies and plans to tackle this issue.

In response, the Finance Minister stated that it is the responsibility of the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) and the government to strengthen the banks. The RMA has various plans and policies to reduce the amount of non-performing loans. These include splitting the loans in half and implementing a Fixed Equated Installment Facility during the deferral period.

The banks have implemented a one-year deferral on loans and have reduced the cooling period, with plans to abolish it entirely in some banks based on specific circumstances. To further address these challenges, the government has allocated a Nu. 2 billion economic support fund. This fund aims to provide financial relief and support to individuals and businesses affected by the rising non-performing loans.

8. 4P1S/OQ40 Data charges and Internet Fees

The Member from Khengkhar-Weringla Constituency highlighted that internet fees in Bhutan are the highest in the region, coupled with poor

connectivity. The government has pledged to halve data charges to address these issues and potentially align them with rates in India. When will this plan be implemented, and how does the government plan to manage the revenue loss resulting from reduced charges? Additionally, when can we expect improvements in stable and fast internet connectivity in Gewogs and Chiwogs?

In response, the Prime Minister stated that the internet fee in Bhutan is among the highest globally, and the existing companies are earning substantial profits. Given the country's small population and limited number of service providers, achieving pricing parity with India may not be feasible. Nevertheless, the government intends to engage in discussions with these two companies to potentially reduce data charges and internet fees by 50%. If these negotiations do not yield favorable outcomes, the government will explore the possibility of introducing a new service provider.

Recognizing the importance of computer services for the public, the government plans to establish a service provider called Star-Link Agency. If this is not feasible, the government will ensure affordable internet services are provided across all 20 Dzongkhags and Gewogs.

Note:The detail of Questions and Answers can be found in the verbatim of the Question Hour Session. (30th Day of the 5th Month of the Wood Male Dragon Year corresponding to 5 July 2024)

Opening Address by the Speaker during the First Session of the Fourth Parliament

1. The historic First Session of the Fourth Parliament of Bhutan commences on this auspicious day under the grace of His Majesty the King. With great reverence, on behalf of all Members of Parliament and on my behalf, I humbly welcome and express my deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King for gracing the Opening Ceremony.
2. The Parliament extends a warm welcome to Her Majesty the Queen and esteemed Members of the Royal Family. In addition, we welcome senior government officials, foreign diplomats and dignitaries, and students representing various schools who have joined us for the opening ceremony. We also acknowledge all people who are witnessing today's session through live broadcast and radio.
3. Also, we welcome the Hon'ble Prime Minister and all the Members of the Parliament.
4. Over the past three years, amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic that has posed threats to lives and economies worldwide, His Majesty has shown unparalleled leadership, traversing the nation, and offering guidance in our collective battle against COVID-19 despite personal risks. We express our deepest gratitude to His Majesty for his benevolent initiatives, including loan deferment and other Kidu schemes, which

had greatly contributed to the well-being of our people during these challenging times. It is through His Majesty's selfless actions that we gather here today, akin to celestial beings of one mandala, united under the golden throne in the sanctum of the National Assembly. Therefore, the Parliament extends its heartfelt gratitude to our His Majesty for His noble and compassionate deeds that have safeguarded our nation and its people.

5. We are profoundly thankful to His Majesty's visionary initiative in conceiving the Gyelsung program, a monumental endeavor that promises to provide wholesome education and skills development to our youth, fostering a generation capable of standing firmly on their own feet which is set to commence this year. The Parliament pledges our unwavering support and commitment to ensuring the success of this transformative program, actively engaging in its development and implementation.
6. Amidst the myriad responsibilities encompassing the endeavors dedicated to the prosperity and well-being of our nation and its people, His Majesty, attuned to the imperative of fostering robust international relations, visited our neighboring states of Bangladesh and India, meeting esteemed senior government officials, distinguished economic experts and business leaders. Therefore, we extend our deepest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to His Majesty for forging pathways to enduring partnerships and collaborations on the global stage.

7. To build a strong national foundation and to improve the country's economic conditions, the Gelephu Mindfulness City project was initiated under the direct planning and guidance of His Majesty, which serves as an exemplary model for the world. In acknowledgment of His Majesty the King's selfless dedication to the nation's development and its people, the Legislative Branch of the Government wholeheartedly pledges unwavering support to His Majesty in realizing this visionary mission for the betterment of our country and its citizens.
8. The Parliament extends its heartfelt appreciation to His Holiness the Je Khenpo for his profound compassion towards the people and citing the treasured teachings of Tertoen Sangay Lingpa at Autsho Central School in Lhuentse. Additionally, the Parliament also expresses gratitude to other religious masters who have diligently conducted numerous prayers and religious ceremonies for the well-being of the country.
9. During the official visit of the Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay to India on 15 March, following the assumption of office, both nations pledged to jointly pursue the objectives outlined in Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan. This endeavor is aimed at fostering and enhancing amicable relations within the region. The Parliament wishes to extend its gratitude to the Prime Minister for this commitment.

10. On 21 March, Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi visited Bhutan despite his busy election schedule, highlighting the strong Indo-Bhutan relationship. His Majesty The King awarded him the Order of the Druk Gyalpo (Ngadag Pelgi Khorlo), which was awarded on the National Day of 2021, further solidifying the ties between the two countries. Additionally, Prime Minister Modi pledged Rupees 85 billion support to Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan and 15 billion for the Economic Stimulus Plan. A conceptual memorandum was signed in the presence of both the Prime Ministers of Bhutan and India, by the two Foreign Secretaries outlining plans for a railway and cooperation in various sectors including youth sports, agriculture, and livestock. India's financial assistance for the Gyalsung project will significantly contribute to Bhutan's development. The Parliament extends its gratitude to India, its Prime Minister, the Government, and the people of India for these generous grants, which will make the implementation of the 13th Five-Year plan easier.
11. I want to convey that our successive monarchs had bestowed complete faith and trust in the people of Bhutan, thereby granting the gift of democracy to our nation. The exemplified and unique democracy had been established in the country by the throne, the great Fourth and His Majesty the King. In line with this, the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) had conducted procedural reviews and advocacies to ensure free

and fair elections, particularly during the Fourth Parliamentary Elections. The Parliament expresses its gratitude and admiration to the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) and the people for their full support and for electing the People Democratic Party (PDP) as the ruling party and the Bhutan Tendrel Party (BTP) as the Opposition Party.

12. The pledges made by the People Democratic Party during the campaign will be fulfilled under the competent and efficient leadership of Lyonchen Dasho Tshering Tobgay. Additionally, the cabinet ministers of the ministries are well-disposed and capable. At this critical moment for our country, the party's pledges will be delivered to the people, focusing on stabilizing the economy, addressing unemployment, strengthening good governance, and improving the quality and scope of education. Furthermore, to achieve the goals of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and by preserving our rich culture and traditions, we hope to see significant positive outcomes in the years ahead.
13. Likewise, I am hopeful that the Opposition Party will take an active role in monitoring and evaluating the government's performance while also providing crucial support to the Ruling Party. This collaborative endeavor instills confidence that both parties will work diligently to fulfill the needs of the people.
14. The Fourth Parliamentary elections for the National Assembly this year was characterized by the enthusiastic engagement of other parties,

underscoring their commitment to staying competitive and presenting voters with a broad spectrum of options.

15. The outcome of this year's Fourth Parliamentary elections has seen the election of only two women representatives which calls for deep reflection, particularly among women and girls.
16. I want to emphasize the mandate of parliamentarians, which include the passing and amendment of laws, oversight of government activities, and representation of the people's voices in parliament. It is imperative for us to prioritize personal growth and maintain a positive mindset while working in the best interests of our people. By avoiding selfish motives and focusing on the needs of the people, we can contribute to the promotion of peace and harmony within our communities through the implementation of relevant and effective laws and policies.
17. The First Session of the Fourth Parliament of Bhutan will be deliberating the following agenda:
 - a. Endorsement of Standing Committees and its Members;
 - b. Presentation and deliberations of the 13th Five Year Plan;
 - c. Annual Budget Appropriation Bill for FY 2024-25; and Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for FY 2023-2024 Bills
 - a. Air Service Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait 2024;

- b. The Impeachment Procedures Bill of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2024;
- c. The National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024;
- d. The Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024;

Joint Sitting

- a. Public Accounts Committee's Review Report on the Annual Audit Report of 2022-2023
 - b. Review Report of Annual Audit Report 2010-2022
 - c. Prime Minister's Annual Report on the State of Nation, including legislative plans and annual plans and the priorities of the government.
18. The petitions received from Local governments have been extensively discussed in the preliminary meeting. Following the meeting, some issues have been decided to be submitted as motion and question in the current session. Petitions relevant to the Ministries and agencies were forwarded to the concerned ministries and agencies for review and for reporting back to the House. It is imperative that the ministries and agencies take necessary actions at the earliest.
19. Before I conclude, I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the people of Panbang constituency for electing me as their representative, to the members of the National Assembly for electing me as the Speaker,

and to His Majesty for the conferment of Dakyen. Today, I pledge to serve wholeheartedly in the service of the Tsa-Wa-Sum with sincerity and unwavering dedication as the Speaker of Parliament.

20. In conclusion, with the blessings of the Triple Gem, the mighty grace of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, the Members of the Royal Family, collective merits of the people of Bhutan, I would like to offer prayers for the successful conclusion of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament. The Parliament also offers its deep prayers for the long lives of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Members of the Royal Family, and for the continued peace and harmony among the people and the country.

Endorsement of Committee and Committee Members

A. House Committee		
Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Sangay Khandu (Tashi Choeling)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Namgay Dorji (Khamdang Ramjar)	Dep. Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Kuenga (Ngyisho-Saephu)	Member
4	Hon'ble Member Namgay Dorji (Drakteng Langthel)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Namgay Wangchuk (Ling-mukha Toedwang)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Tshewang Rinzin (South Thimphu)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Member
8	Hon'ble Member Naiten Wangchuk (Mon-gar)	Member
9	Hon'ble Member Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham Shongphu)	Member

B. Legislative Committee		
Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Kuenga (Ngyisho-Saephu)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Kuenzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Member

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4	Hon'ble Member Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang Mendrelgang)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Tempa Dorji (Maenbi- Tsaenkhar)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Tshering Penjor (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Member
8	Hon'ble Member Lamdra Wangdi (Nganglam)	Member
9	Hon'ble Member Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha Toedwang)	Member

C. Public Accounts Committee

Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Chairperson Phuentsho Rabten	Chairperson (National Council)
2	Hon'ble Member Loday Tsheten (Gangzur- Minjey)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Jamyang Namgyel (Pemagatshel)	Member (National Council)
4	Hon'ble Member Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	Member

ANNEXURE II

E. Good Governance Committee (GGC)		
Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Namgal Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Lhendrup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Member
4	Hon'ble Member Pempa(Bongo-Chapcha)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Kamal Bdr.Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Member
8	Hon'ble Member Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Member
9	Hon'ble Member Kinzang Wangchuk(Drametse-Ngatshang)	Member

F. Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committee		
Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Member

ANNEXURE II

4	Hon'ble Member Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Pema Drukpa (Khamed-Lunana)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Damchoe Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Member
8	Hon'ble Member Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Member
9	Hon'ble Member Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Member

G. Environment and Climate Change Committee Members

Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Pema Drukpa (Khamoed-Lunana)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Tashi Tenzin (Radhi-Sagteng)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Member
4	Hon'ble Member Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Naiten Wangchuk (Mongar)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Member

ANNEXURE II

H. Women Children and Youth Committee		
Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Dr. Tek Bdr. Rai (Shompangkha)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Member
4	Hon'ble Member Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha Toedwang)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Pempa (Bongo-Chapcha)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Member
8	Hon'ble Member Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Member
9	Hon'ble Member Wangdi (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Member

ANNEXURE II

I. Economic and Finance Committee Members		
Sl.No	Name and Constituency	Remarks
1	Hon'ble Member Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Member Kuenzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Deputy Chairperson
3	Hon'ble Member Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kartsho Useu)	Member
4	Hon'ble Member Tshewang Rinzin (South Thimphu)	Member
5	Hon'ble Member Harka Singh Tamang (Gelephu)	Member
6	Hon'ble Member Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthel)	Member
7	Hon'ble Member Tashi Tenzin (Radhi-Sagteng)	Member
8	Hon'ble Member Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minji)	Member
9	Hon'ble Member Naiten Wangchuk (Mongar)	Member

Adoption of 13th Five Year Plan**Yes-38, Abstain-1, No-3, Total-42**

1. Kuenzang Thinley(Chokhor-Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen(Chumig-Ura)	No
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Sonam Dorji(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa(Khamed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi(Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Abstain
9. Tempa Dorji(Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangchuk(Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangcguk (Monger)	Yes
13. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	No
14. Sangay Thinley(Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
16. Tshering Penjor(Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17. Harka Singh Tamang(Gelegphu)	Yes
18. Wangdi(Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
19. Namgay Dorji(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
20. Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
21. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
22. Namgay Dorji(Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes

ANNEXURE III

23.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang(Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Yes
24.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
25.	Ugyen Lama(Dophuchen Tading)	Yes
26.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
27.	Lamdra Wangdi(Nganglam)	Yes
28.	Damchoe Tenzin(Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
29.	Kuenga(Ngyisho-Saephu)	Yes
30.	Tashi Dorji(Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
31.	Tashi Tenzin(Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
32.	Tshewang Rinzin(South Thimphu)	Yes
33.	Dasho Pema Chewang(Opposition Leader)	No
34.	Chandra Bdr Gurung(MoIT)	Yes
35.	Dinanath Dhungyel(MoFAET)	Yes
36.	Lekey Dorji(MoF)	Yes
37.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Yes
38.	Tshering (MoHA)	Yes
39.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
40.	Sangay Khandu (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
41.	Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
42.	Namgay Dorji(MoICE)	Yes

Adoption of the Budget Appropriation Bill for FY 2024-2025**Yes 45 Abstain 0, No 1, Total Presents 46**

1.	Kunzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Yes
2.	Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3.	Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4.	Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5.	Pema Drukpa (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
6.	Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7.	Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8.	Loday Theten (Gangzur-Minje)	No
9.	Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10.	Kinzang Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11.	Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12.	Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
13.	Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
14.	Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15.	Yeshey Jamtsho	Yes
16.	Tshering Penjor (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17.	Harka Sign Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
18.	Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19.	Wangdi (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
20.	Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
21.	Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes

ANNEXURE IV

22.	Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
23.	Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
24.	Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Menfrelgang)	Yes
25.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
26.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
28.	Namgay Wangchuk (LingmuKha-Toedwang)	Yes
29.	Lamda Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
30.	Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
31.	Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
32.	Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
33.	Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakyeng)	Yes
34.	Tshewng Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
35.	Dasho Tshering Tobgay (Prime Minister)	Yes
36.	Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Yes
37.	Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Yes
38.	Dinanath Dhungyal (MoFAET)	Yes
39.	Lekey Dorji (MoF)	Yes
40.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Yes
41.	Tshering (NoHA)	Yes
42.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
43.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
44.	Sangay Khandu (Dy. Speaker)	Yes
45.	Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
46.	Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Yes

Adoption of the Supplementary Budget Appropriation Bill for FY 2023-2024

Yes-46,Abstain-0,No-0,Total-46

1. Kuenzang Thinley(Chokhor- Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Sonam Dorji(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa(Khamed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi(Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
9. Tempa Dorji(Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangchuk(Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangcguk (Monger)	Yes
13. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	Yes
14. Sangay Thinley(Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
16. Tshering Penjor(Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17. Harka Singh Tamang(Gelegphu)	Yes
18. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19. Wangdi(Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
20. Namgay Dorji(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
21. Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes

ANNEXURE V

22.	Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
23.	Namgay Dorji(Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
24.	Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang Mendrelgang)	Yes
25.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang(Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Yes
26.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Lama(Dophuchen Tading)	Yes
28.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
29.	Lamdra Wangdi(Nganglam)	Yes
30.	Damchoe Tenzin(Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
31.	Kuenga(Ngyisho-Saephu)	Yes
32.	Tashi Dorji(Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
33.	Tashi Tenzin(Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
34.	Tshewang Rinzin(South Thimphu)	Yes
35.	Dasho Tshering Tobagay (Prime Minister)	Yes
36.	Dasho Pema Chewang(Opposition Leader)	Yes
37.	Chandra Bdr Gurung(MoIT)	Yes
38.	Dinanath Dhungyel(MoFAET)	Yes
39.	Lekey Dorji(MoF)	Yes
40.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Yes
41.	Tshering (MoHA)	Yes
42.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
43.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
44.	Sangay Khandu (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
45.	Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
46.	Namgyal Dorji(MoICE)	Yes

The Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of the State of Kuwait, 2024.

Yes-45, Abstain-0, No-0, Total-45

1.	Kuenzang Thinley(Chokhor- Tang)	Yes
2.	Sonam Rinchen(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3.	Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4.	Sonam Dorji(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5.	Pema Drukpa(Khamed-Lunana)	Yes
6.	Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7.	Lhendup Wangdi(Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8.	Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
9.	Tempa Dorji(Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10.	Kinzang Wangchuk(Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11.	Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12.	Naiten Wangcguk (Monger)	Yes
13.	Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	Yes
14.	Sangay Thinley(Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15.	Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
16.	Tshering Penjor(Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17.	Harka Singh Tamang(Gelegphu)	Yes
18.	Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19.	Wangdi(Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
20.	Namgay Dorji(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
21.	Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes

ANNEXURE VI

22.	Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
23.	Namgay Dorji(Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
24.	Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang Mendrelgang)	Yes
25.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang(Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Yes
26.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Lama(Dophuchen Tading)	Yes
28.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
29.	Lamdra Wangdi(Nganglam)	Yes
30.	Damchoe Tenzin(Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
31.	Kuenga(Ngyishi-Saephu)	Yes
32.	Tashi Dorji(Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
33.	Tashi Tenzin(Radhi-Sagteng)	Yes
34.	Tshewang Rinzin(South Thimphu)	Yes
35.	Dasho Tshering Tobagay (Prime Minister)	Yes
36.	Dasho Pema Chewang(Opposition Leader)	Yes
37.	Chandra Bdr Gurung(MoIT)	Yes
38.	Dinanath Dhungyel(MoFAET)	Yes
39.	Leki Dorji(MoF)	Yes
40.	Tshering(MoHA)	Yes
41.	Yezang D Thapa(MoESD)	Yes
42.	Younten Phuntsho(MoAL)	Yes
43.	Sangay Khandu(Dy.Speaker)	Yes
44.	Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
45.	Namgay Dorji(MoICE)	Yes

Adoption on the Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024**Yes-45, Abstain-0, No-0, Total-45**

1. Kuenzang Thinley(Chokhor- Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Sonam Dorji(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa(Khamed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi(Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
9. Tempa Dorji(Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangchuk(Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangcguk (Monger)	Yes
13. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	Yes
14. Sangay Thinley(Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
16. Tshering Penjor(Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17. Harka Singh Tamang(Gelegphu)	Yes
18. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19. Wangdi(Bomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
20. Namgay Dorji(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
21. Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes

ANNEXURE VII

22. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
23. Namgay Dorji(Dragteng-Langthil)	Yes
24. Kamal Bdr Gurung	Yes
25. Lhakpa Tshering Tamang(Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Yes
26. Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
27. Ugyen Lama(Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
28. Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
29. Lamdra Wangdi(Nganglam)	Yes
30. Damchoe Tenzin(Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
31. Kuenga(Nyisho-Saephu)	Yes
32.Tashi Dorji(Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
33. Tashi Tenzin(Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
34. Tshewang Rinzin(South Thimphu)	Yes
35. Dasho Tshering Tobagay (Prime Minister)	Yes
36. Dasho Pema Chewang(Opposition Leader)	Yes
37. Chandra Bdr Gurung(MoIT)	Yes
38. Dinanath Dhungyel(MoFAET)	Yes
39. Lekey Dorji(MoF)	Yes
40.Tshering (MoHA)	Yes
41. Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
42. Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
43. Sangay Khandu (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
44. Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
45. Namgyal Dorji(MoICE)	Yes

Adoption of the National Assembly(Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2024**Yes 33, Abstain 12, No 1, Total 46**

1. Kuenzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Abstain
3. Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
4. Pema Drukpa (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
5. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed- Laya)	Abstain
6. Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tsgog-Uesu)	Yes
7. Lod ay Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
8. Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
9. Kinzang Wangchu (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
10. Dorji Wangmo (Khengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
11. Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
12. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Abstain
13. Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
14. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
15. Tshering Penjore (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
16. Harka Singh Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
17. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
18. Wangdi (Bomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
19. Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
20. Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
21. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes

ANNEXURE VIII

22. Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
23. Kama Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
24. Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
25. Rinzin Dorji (Phuentsholing)	Abstain
26. Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
27. Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Abstain
28. Lamdra Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
29. Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
30. Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
31. Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
32. Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
33. Tshewang Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
34. Dasho Tshering Tobgay (Prime Minister)	Yes
35. Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Yes
36. Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Abstain
37. Dinanath Dhubgyel (MoFAET)	Abstain
38. Lekey Dorji (MoF)	No
39. Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Abstain
40. Tshering (MoHA)	Abstain
41. Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Abstain
42. Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
43. Sangay Khandu (Dy. Speaker)	Yes
44. Gem Tshering (MoNER)	Abstain
45. Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Abstain
46. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes

Motion on the Government to Table Education Bill**Yes-45,Abstain-0,No-0,Total-45**

1. Kuenzang Thinley(Chokhor- Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Sonam Dorji(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa(Khamed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi(Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
9. Tempa Dorji(Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangchuk(Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangcguk (Monger)	Yes
13. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	Yes
14. Sangay Thinley(Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
16. Tshering Penjor(Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17. Harka Singh Tamang(Gelegphu)	Yes
18. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19. Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
20. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
21. Namgay Dorji(Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes

ANNEXURE IX

22.	Kamal Bdr Gurung	Yes
23.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang(Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Yes
24.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
25.	Ugyen Lama(Dophuchen Tading)	Yes
26.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
27.	Lamdra Wangdi(Nganglam)	Yes
28.	Damchoe Tenzin(Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
29.	Kuenga(Ngyisho-Saephu)	Yes
30.	Tashi Dorji(Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
31.	Tashi Tenzin(Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
32.	Tshewang Rinzin(South Thimphu)	Yes
33.	Dasho Tshering Tobagay (Prime Minister)	Yes
34.	Dasho Pema Chewang(Opposition Leader)	Yes
35.	Chandra Bdr Gurung(MoIT)	Yes
36.	Dinanath Dhungyel(MoFAET)	Yes
37.	Lekey Dorji(MoF)	Yes
38.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Yes
39.	Tshering (MoHA)	Yes
40.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
41.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
42.	Sangay Khandu (Dy.Speaker)	Yes
43.	Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
44.	Namgyal Dorji(MoICE)	Yes
45.	Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes

Motion(4PIS/M2) on establishing and implementing crop and livestock compensation trust fund by the Government

Yes-34, Abstain-1, No-8 Total-43

1. Kuenzang Thinley(Chokhor- Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen(Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Abstain
4. Sonam Dorji(Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa(Khamed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi(Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
9. Tempa Dorji(Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangchuk(Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangcguk (Monger)	Yes
13. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong Wangchang)	No
14. Sangay Thinley(Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
16. Tshering Penjor(Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17. Harka Singh Tamang(Gelegphu)	Yes
18. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19. Wangdi(Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
20. Namgay Dorji(Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
21. Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes

ANNEXURE X

22.	Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
23.	Namgay Dorji(Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
24.	Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
25.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang(Sergithang-Tsirang Toed)	Yes
26.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Lama(Dophuchen Tading)	Yes
28.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
29.	Lamdra Wangdi(Nganglam)	Yes
30.	Damchoe Tenzin(Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
31.	Kuenga(Ngyisho-Saephu)	Yes
32.	Tashi Dorji(Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
33.	Tashi Tenzin(Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
34.	Tshewang Rinzin(South Thimphu)	Yes
35.	Dasho Tshering Tobgay(Prime Minister)	No
36.	Dasho Pema Chewang(Opposition Leader)	Yes
37.	Dinanath Dhungyel(MoFAET)	No
38.	Lekey Dorji(MoF)	No
39.	Namgay Dorji(MoICE)	No
40.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	No
41.	Yeezang D Thapa(MoESD)	No
42.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	No
43.	Sangay Khandu (Dy.Speaker)	Yes

Motion (4P1S/M3) on Inconvenience caused by electric wire and the pole falling in farmland

Yes 33, Abstain 6 , No 3, Total 42

1. Kunzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Pema Drukpa (Khamaed-Lunana)	No
5. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
6. Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
7. Loday Theten (Gangzur-Minje)	No
8. Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Abstain
9. Kinzang Wangchuk (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
10. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkagar-Weringla)	Yes
11. Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
12. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
13. Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
14. Yeshey Jamtsho	Yes
15. Tshering Penjor (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
16. Harka Sign Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
17. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
18. Wangdi (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
19. Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes

ANNEXURE XI

20. Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
21. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
22. Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
23. Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Menfrelgang)	Yes
24. Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
25. Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Abstain
26. Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
27. Namgay Wangchuk (LingmuKha-Toedwang)	Yes
28. Lamda Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
29. Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
30. Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
31. Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
32. Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
33. Tshewng Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
34. Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	No
35. Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Abstain
36. Lekey Dorji (MoF)	Abstain
37. Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Abstain
38. Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
39. Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Abstain
40. Sangay Khandu (Dy. Speaker)	Yes
41. Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
42. Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Yes

Motion (4P1S/M4) on review of Managing for Excellence (MaX) in civil Service

Yes 40, Abstain 1, No 0, Total Present 41

1. Kunzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Theten (Gangzur-Minje)	No
9. Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkagar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
13. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
14. Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
15. Yeshey Jamtsho	Yes
16. Tshering Penjor (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
17. Harka Sign Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
18. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
19. Wangdi (Bomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes

ANNEXURE XII

20.	Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
21.	Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
22.	Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
23.	Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
24.	Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
25.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
26.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Yes
27.	Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
28.	Namgay Wangchuk (LingmuKha-Toedwang)	Abstain
29.	Lamda Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
30.	Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
31.	Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
32.	Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
33.	Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
34.	Tshewng Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
35.	Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Yes
36.	Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Yes
37.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Yes
38.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
39.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
40.	Sangay Khandu (Dy. Speaker)	Yes
41.	Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Yes

Motion (4P1S/M3) on Healthcare Services Improvement**Yes 33, Abstain 4, No 2, Total Present 39**

1. Kunzang Thinley (Chokhor-Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen (Chumig-Ura)	Yes
3. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes
4. Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang-Tseza)	Yes
5. Pema Drukpa (Khamaed-Lunana)	Yes
6. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed-Laya)	Yes
7. Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tshog-Uesu)	Yes
8. Loday Theten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
9. Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
10. Kinzang Wangdi (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
11. Dorji Wangmo (Kengkgar-Weringla)	Yes
12. Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
13. Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
14. Yeshey Jamtsho	Yes
15. Tshering Penjor (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
16. Harka Sign Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
17. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
18. Wangdi (Bomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
19. Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
20. Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
21. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes

ANNEXURE XIII

22.	Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes
23.	Kamal Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
24.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
25.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuntsholing)	Abstain
26.	Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
27.	Namgay Wangchuk (LingmuKha-Toedwang)	Abstain
28.	Lamda Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
29.	Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
30.	Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
31.	Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
32.	Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakyeng)	Yes
33.	Tshewng Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
34.	Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Yes
35.	Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	No
36.	Lekey Dorji (MoF)	Abstain
37.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Abstain
38.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
39.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	No

Motion (4PIS/M7) on the need for Constituency Development Grant**Yes 33, Abstain 12, No 0, Total 45**

1. Kuenzang Thinley (Chokhor - Tang)	Yes
2. Sonam Rinchen (Chumig - Ura)	Yes
3. Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang- Tseza)	Yes
4. Pema Drukpa (Khamaed- Lunana)	Yes
5. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed- Laya)	Abstain
6. Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tsgog-Uesu)	Yes
7. Lod ay Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Abstain
8. Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
9. Kinzang Wangchu (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
10. Dorji Wangmo (Khengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
11. Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
12. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Abstain
13. Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
14. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
15. Tshering Penjore (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
16. Harka Singh Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
17. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
18. Wangdi (Bomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
19. Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
20. Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
21. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes

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22. Namgay Dorji (Dragteng-Langthil)	Yes
23. Kama Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
24. Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
25. Rinzin Dorji (Phuentsholing)	Abstain
26. Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
27. Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
28. Lamdra Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
29. Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
30. Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
31. Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
32. Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
33. Tshewang Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
34. Dasho Tshering Tobgay (Prime Minister)	Abstain
35. Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Yes
36. Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Abstain
37. Dinanath Dhubgyel (MoFAET)	Yes
38. Lekey Dorji (MoF)	Yes
39. Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Abstain
40. Tshering (MoHA)	Abstain
41. Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Abstain
42. Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Abstain
43. Gem Tshering (MoNER)	Abstain
44. Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Abstain
45. Pemba (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes

Deliberation on the Public Accounts Committee's Review Report**Yes 65, Abstain 0, No 1, Total 66**

1. Kesang Chuki Dorjee (Eminent Member)	Yes
2. Phuntsho Rapten (Eminent Member)	Yes
3. Ugyen Tshering (Eminent Member)	Yes
4. Ugyen Tshering (Paro)	Yes
5. Tashi Chhozom (Eminent Member)	Yes
6. Pema Tashi (Sarpang)	Yes
7. Jamyang Namgyal (Pema Gatshel)	Yes
8. Tshering (Gasa)	Yes
9. Sonam Tenzin (Trashiyangtse)	Yes
10. Kencho Tshering (Bumthang)	Yes
11. Tshering Tshomo (Zhemgang)	Yes
12. Sangay Dorji (Thrizin)	Yes
13. Phub Dorji (Wangdue Phodrang)	Yes
14. Tshering Wangchen (Monggar)	Yes
15. Dago TsheringLa (Dy. Chairperson)	Yes
16. Birendra Chimoria (Dagana)	Yes
17. Kelzang Lhundup (Lhuentse)	Yes
18. Tashi Dhendup (Samtse)	Yes
19. Tshewang Rinzin (Samdrup Jongkhar)	Yes
20. Rinzin Namgyal (Trongsa)	Yes
21. Sonam Tobgyal (Trashigang)	Yes
22. Kuenzang Thinley (Chokhor - Tang)	Yes

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23. Sonam Rinchen (Chumig - Ura)	Yes
24. Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang- Tseza)	Yes
25. Pema Drukpa (Khamaed- Lunana)	Yes
26. Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed- Laya)	Yes
27. Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tsgog-Uesu)	Yes
28. Lod ay Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
29. Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
30. Kinzang Wangchu (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
31. Dorji Wangmo (Khengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
32. Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
33. Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
34. Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
35. Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
36. Tshering Penjore (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
37. Harka Singh Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
38. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Yes
39. Wangdi (Bomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
40. Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
41. Rinchen Wangdi (Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
42. Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
43. Namgay Dorji (Dragteng-Langthil)	No
44. Kama Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
45. Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
46. Rinzin Dorji (Phuentsholing)	Yes
47. Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes

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48.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
49.	Lamdra Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
50.	Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
51.	Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
52.	Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
53.	Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
54.	Tshewang Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
55.	Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Yes
56.	Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Yes
57.	Dinanath Dhubgyel (MoFAET)	Yes
58.	Lekey Dorji (MoF)	Yes
59.	Tandin Wangchuk (MoH)	Yes
60.	Tshering (MoHA)Abstain	Yes
61.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
62.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
63.	Sangay Khandu (Dy. Speaker)	Yes
64.	Gem Tshering (MoENR)	Yes
65.	Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Yes
66.	Pempa (Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes

Adoption of National Council recommendation on budget**Yes 42, Abstain 3 No 0, Total 45**

1.	Kuenzang Thinley (Chokhor - Tang)	Yes
2.	Sonam Rinchen (Chumig - Ura)	Yes
3.	Sonam Dorji (Drujeygang- Tseza)	Yes
4.	Pema Drukpa (Khamaed- Lunana)	Abstain
5.	Lhaba Lhaba (Khatoed- Laya)	Yes
6.	Lhendup Wangdi (Bji-Kar-Tsgog-Uesu)	Yes
7.	Lod ay Tsheten (Gangzur-Minje)	Yes
8.	Tempa Dorji (Maenbi-Tsaenkhar)	Yes
9.	Kinzang Wangchu (Dramedtse-Ngatshang)	Yes
10.	Dorji Wangmo (Khengkhar-Weringla)	Yes
11.	Naiten Wangchuk (Monggar)	Yes
12.	Sonam Tashi (Lamgong-Wangchang)	Yes
13.	Sangay Thinley (Khar-Yurung)	Yes
14.	Yeshey Jamtsho (Nanong-Shumar)	Yes
15.	Tshering Penjore (Dewathang-Gomdar)	Yes
16.	Harka Singh Tamang (Gelegphu)	Yes
17.	Dr. Tek Bdr Rai (Shompangkha)	Abstain
18.	Wangdi (Boomdeling-Jamkhar)	Yes
19.	Namgay Dorji (Khamdang-Ramjar)	Yes
20.	Rinchen Wangdi(Bartsham-Shongphu)	Yes
21.	Lam Dorji (Wamrong)	Yes
22.	Namgay Dorji (Draagteng-Langthil)	Yes

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23.	Kama Bdr Gurung (Kilkhorthang-Mendrelgang)	Yes
24.	Lhakpa Tshering Tamang (Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed)	Yes
25.	Rinzin Dorji (Phuentsholing)	Yes
26.	Ugyen Lama (Dophuchen-Tading)	Yes
27.	Namgay Wangchuk (Lingmukha-Toedwang)	Yes
28.	Lamdra Wangdi (Nganglam)	Yes
29.	Damche Tenzin (Thrimshing-Kangpara)	Yes
30.	Kuenga (Nyishog-Saephu)	Yes
31.	Tashi Dorji (Nubi-Tangsibji)	Yes
32.	Tashi Tenzin (Radi-Sakteng)	Yes
33.	Tshewang Rinzin (South-Thimphu)	Yes
34.	Dasho Pema Chewang (Opposition Leader)	Abstain
35.	Chandra Bdr Gurung (MoIT)	Yes
36.	Dinanath Dhubgyel (MoFAET)	Yes
37.	Lekey Dorji (MoF)	Yes
38.	Tandin Wangchuk(MoH)	Yes
39.	Tshering (MoHA)	Yes
40.	Yeezang D Thapa (MoESD)	Yes
41.	Younten Phuntsho (MoAL)	Yes
42.	Sangay Khandu (Dy. Speaker)	Yes
43.	Gem Tshering (MoNER)	Yes
44.	Namgyal Dorji (MoICE)	Yes
45.	Pemba(Bongo-Chapcha)	Yes

Speech by Speaker Lungten Dorji on the Concluding Ceremony of First Session of the Fourth Parliament of Bhutan

1. The first session of the Fourth Parliament of Bhutan concludes today with auspicious prayers for the well-being of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.
2. With profound respect, on behalf of Parliament and myself, I extend a heartfelt welcome and express our deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King, the embodiment of our Supreme Protector and Precious Jewel, for graciously honoring the Closing Ceremony with His Majesty's kind presence.
3. We also extend our welcome to senior government officials, foreign diplomats, dignitaries, and civil servants, who have joined us for this significant occasion. We also acknowledge the presence of all people who are witnessing today's session through live broadcast and radio.
4. The Parliament would like to express deep appreciation to His Majesty the King for always gracing the Parliament session, which is testament of support to further strengthening the unique and strong democratic institution established by their Majesties the King and Fourth Druk Gyalpo.
5. Our country has undergone profound development under the wisdom and benevolent guidance of His Majesty the King, serving as a reminder

to us all. His Majesty's vision and leadership have always inspired and guided us.

6. In recognition of His Majesty's noble vision and farsighted leadership, prestigious universities in friendly countries such as India, Japan, Canada, and Thailand have conferred Honorary Doctorate Degrees in various fields. This honor acknowledges His Majesty's exceptional leadership and unwavering dedication to promoting sovereignty and service to the nation.
7. On June 19th of this year, in an elaborate ceremony at Pangbisa in Dungkar Dzong, a delegation of university presidents and executive members from seven esteemed universities in Thailand visited Bhutan to pay tribute to His Majesty the King. They recognized his profound contributions to the country's reform, innovation, and development. Notably, during this event, His Majesty was honored with seven Honorary Doctorate Degrees in seven significant fields.
8. We would like to emphasize that the presentation of seven honorary doctorate degrees by seven of the most esteemed universities in Thailand on a single day reflects our cultural tradition of presenting petitions to His Majesty the King, symbolizing honor through the sevenfold gestures. These honorary degrees represent the seven precious Royal Emblems, underscoring the profound respect and admiration for His Majesty.

The seven precious Royal Emblems are:

1. Precious Wheel signifying Mindfulness;
2. Precious Elephant signifying Wisdom;
3. Precious Horse signifying Energy;
4. Precious Jewel signifying Joy;
5. Precious Queen signifying Tranquility;
6. Precious Minister signifying Concentration; and
7. Precious General signifying equanimity.

The bestowal of the seven significant honorary doctorates, symbolizing the seven precious Royal Emblems, holds profound significance in our culture and tradition. In light of this, the Parliament extends its heartfelt prayers for His Majesty's good health and enduring success as the people's King.

9. Your Majesty, this prestigious recognition is a testament to your extraordinary leadership, unwavering commitment to the well-being of the Bhutanese people, and profound contributions to the global community. It reflects the respect and admiration you have garnered not only within our country but also on the international stage.

For this we offer our Tashi Delek to His Majesty the King. This accomplishment will strengthen the friendly relations between our two Buddhist countries and deepen the rich connections between the Royal Families of Thailand and Bhutan.

10. The Parliament of Bhutan expresses profound gratitude to the esteemed Presidents and executive members of seven distinguished universities in Thailand for acknowledging the righteous actions and conferring an honorary doctorate degree upon the precious Dharma King of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
11. Coinciding with the auspicious First Day of the Male Wood Dragon Year, His Royal Highness Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck received the Royal Charter from the sacred Machen Lhakhang in Punakha Dzong in a special ceremony for the establishment of Gelephu Mindfulness City. The ceremony showcased His Royal Highness's natural inborn qualities as a destined prince, as he performed prayers and offering of Marchhang with remarkable ease and confidence.

Such remarkable qualities of HRH are a very positive indication of the success of His Majesty's precious Gelephu Mindfulness City project and augur good fortune for the people of Bhutan under His Royal Highness's reign in the future.

12. The Parliament expresses its gratitude to His Majesty The King and the Royal Government for the historic appointment of Bhutan's first ambassador to Mongolia. This significant step plays a crucial role in strengthening bilateral relations and promoting cultural exchange between the two countries.

13. Lyonchhen Dasho Tshering Tobgay, along with a high level delegation, made an official visit to Kingdom of Thailand from June 25 to June 28, 2024, on the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Srettha Thavasin, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Thailand, provided an opportunity to further strengthen the close relationship and partnership between the two countries after 11 years.

We are pleased to learn that among the important discussions, the meetings focussed on matters of mutual interests, including development of tourism, trade enhancement, sports cooperation, and ongoing Free Trade Negotiations between the two nations. The meeting also discussed opportunities for significant investments for Gelephu Mindfulness City. The Parliament wishes to congratulate Lyonchhen and the delegation for a fruitful visit.

14. I would like to submit a brief report on the deliberation of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament as follows :
- A. Our goal is to enhance community service delivery and elevate Bhutan to achieve high-income country status by 2034, with a steadfast focus on Gross National Happiness. The budget allocated for the 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP) is one of the highest compared to previous plans, totaling Nu. 512 billion. Following extensive discussions, Parliament has endorsed this budget.

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- B. To ensure the timely achievement of our plans, it is crucial to allocate the budget accordingly. For the financial year 2024-2025, a capital budget of 46,818.934Nu. million and a current budget of Nu.50,809.905 million have been approved, totaling Nu.97, 628.839 million.
- C. Similarly, the House approved a supplementary budget of Nu.3,224.924 million, adding to the initial budget of Nu.85,522.537 million for the fiscal year 2023-24 approved in the session. This brings the revised total to Nu.88,747.460 million, as approved in the appropriation bill. Therefore, it is important that the concerned ministries, departments, agencies and local governments utilize the budget efficiently and effectively for community development activities in the best interest of the country and its people.
- D. The following Bills and the Agreement were deliberated, endorsed and submitted to the National Council as per the rules of procedure:
1. The Marriage (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan, 2024
 2. The National Assembly (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan, 2024
 3. The Air Services Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the State of Kuwait.
- E. Six Motions have been moved and resolutions thereto have been endorsed which will be submitted to the concerned agencies for implementations for which follow-up reports have to be submitted in the next session.

F. According to the rules of procedure, a total of forty nine (49) questions were admitted, comprising 40 oral questions and 9 written questions. The Parliament urges the government and agencies to give thoughtful consideration to the concerns raised by the Members.

G. During the joint session of the Parliament, there were extensive deliberations on the Public Accounts Committee's review of the Annual Audit Reports for 2022-2023 and the Public Accounts Committee's review of the Annual Audit Reports from FY 2010-2022 and the recommendations put forth by the Royal Audit Authority (RAA) and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

The joint sessions endorsement of the recommendations will be submitted to the Government for follow-up actions, which will be reported in the next session of Parliament.

H. As per Article 10 (10) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay presented the First Annual Report on the State of the Nation, including legislative plans, annual plans, and government priorities, to the Joint Sitting of Parliament yesterday. The report was structured into five chapters, covering:

1. The current state of the country,
2. Challenges faced by the state,
3. Strategies to address these challenges,

4. Government plans and priorities for 2024-2025, and
 5. Government legislative plans for 2024-2025.
-
15. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all the Members of Parliament for their diligent and cooperative efforts. In particular, I wish to convey my special thanks to the Chairpersons of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament and the eight Committees of the National Assembly for their comprehensive review report, compiled after several committee meetings. Their efforts greatly facilitated the smooth deliberation in the grand hall.
 16. With the unwavering support of the Bhutanese people and the trust placed in Parliament, we will diligently strive to fulfill the needs and aspirations of all, drawing on our collective strength and under the wise guidance of His Majesty the King.
 17. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Deputy Speaker, Secretary General, officers, and staff of the National Assembly Secretariat, as well as to the Department of Procurement and Properties, the Royal Bhutan Police, and other security personnel and the media for their invaluable support and cooperation throughout this session.
 18. The first session of the Fourth Parliament concluded successfully with the blessing of the Triple Gem and the wise guidance of His Majesty

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the King, the prayers of the monastic bodies, led by His Holiness the Je Khenpo, and collective merits of the people of Bhutan. I would like to express my gratitude to all the members of Parliament for their unwavering support and cooperation throughout the session.

19. Lastly, let us offer our collective prayers for the continued sovereignty and security of the Country, longevity and happiness of His Majesty the King, His Majesty the Fourth King, the Members of the Royal Family, His Holiness the Je Khenpo 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.

Tashi Delek!

List of Members for the 1st Session of the Fourth Parliament

1. The Speaker, H.E. Lungten Dorji from Panbang Constituency
2. The Prime Minister, H.E. Dasho Tshering Tobgay from Sombaykha Constituency
3. The Minister for Energy and Natural Resources, H.E. Gem Tshering from Dogar-Sharpa Constituency
4. The Minister for Health, H.E. Tandin Wangchuk from Athang-Thedtsho Constituency
5. The Minister for Home Affairs, H.E. Dinanath Dhungyel from Phuntshogpelri –Samtse Constituency
6. The Minister for Finance, H.E. Lekey Dorji from Bardo-Trong Constituency
7. The Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, H.E. Chandra Bdr. Gurung from Lhamoi Dzingkha-Tashidhing Constituency
8. The Minister for Agriculture and Livestock, H.E. Younten Phuntsho from Jomotsangkha –Martshala Constituency
9. The Minister for Education and Skills Development, H.E. Yeezang D Thapa from Ugyentse-Yoeseltse Constituency
10. The Minister for Home Affairs, H.E. Tshering from North-Thimphu Constituency
11. The Minister for Industry, Commerce and Employment, H.E. Namgyal Dorji from Kabisa-Talog Constituency

12. The Leader of the Opposition, H.E. Dasho Pema Chewang, from Kanglung-Samkhar – Udzorong Constituency
13. The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Sangay Khandu from Tashichhoeling Constituency
14. Hon. Kuenzang Thinley from Choekhor-Tang Constituency
15. Hon. Sonam Rinchen from Chhumig-Ura Constituency
16. Hon. Pempa from Bongo-Chapcha Constituency
17. Hon. Rinzin Dorji from Phuentsholing Constituency
18. Hon. Sonam Dorji from Drugeygang-Tseza Constituency
19. Hon. Pema Drukpa from Khamaed-Lunana Constituency
20. Hon. Lhaba Lhaba from Khatoed Laya Constituency
21. Hon. Lhendup Wangdi from Bji - Kartshog- Uesu Constituency
22. Hon. Loday Tsheten from Gangzur -Minjei Constituency
23. Hon. Tempa Dorji from Menbi -Tsenkhar Constituency
24. Hon. Kinzang Wangchuk from Dramedtse-Ngatshang Constituency
25. Hon. Dorji Wangmo from Kengkhar-Weringla Constituency
26. Hon. Naiten Wangchuk from Monggar Constituency
27. Hon. Sonam Tashi from Lamgong -Wangchang Constituency
28. Hon. Sangay Thinley from Khar-Yurung Constituency
29. Hon. Yeshey Jamtsho from Nanong-Shumar Constituency
30. Hon. Lamdra Wangdi from Nganglam Constituency
31. Hon. Namgay Wanchuk from Lingmukha -Toedwang Constituency
32. Hon. Tshering Penjor from Dewathang-Gomdar Constituency

33. Hon. Ugyen Lama from Dophuchen -Tading Constituency
34. Hon. Harka Singh Tamang from Gelephu Constituency
35. Hon. Dr. Tek Bdr Rai from Shompangkha Constituency
36. Hon. Wangdi from Bomdelling-Jamkhar Constituency
37. Hon. Namgay Dorji from Khamdhang -Ramjar Constituency
38. Hon. Tshewang Rinzin from South-Thimphu Constituency
39. Hon. Rinchen Wangdi from Bartsham-Shongphu Constituency
40. Hon. Tashi Tenzin from Radi-Sakteng Constituency
41. Hon. Damche Tenzin from Thrimshing-Kangpara Constituency
42. Hon. Lam Dorji from Khaling-Wamrong Constituency
43. Hon. Namgay Dorji from Dragteng-Langthel Constituency
44. Hon. Tashi Dorji from Nubi-Tangsibji Constituency
45. Hon. Kamal Bdr Gurung from Kikhorthang -Mendrelgang Constituency
46. Hon. Lhakpa Tshering Tamang from Sergithang-Tsirang-Toed
Constituency
47. Hon. Kuenga from Nyishog-Saephu Constituency