

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY THE HON SPEAKER DURING THE 6TH SESSION OF THE FIRST PARLIAMENT

1. The 6th Session of the First Parliament commences on this auspicious 13th Day of the 10th Month of the Iron Male Tiger Year corresponding to the 19th November 2010.
2. On behalf of the Members of the Parliament and on my own behalf, I have the privilege and honour to extend our heartiest welcome to His Majesty Druk Gyalpo, the embodiment of our collective merit for gracing this opening ceremony.
3. We would also like to welcome Members of the Royal Family, Government Officials, International Dignitaries, media and all the general public who are witnessing the session through television and radio.
4. Some of the petitions pertaining to developmental activities submitted by the local governments have been forwarded to relevant ministries.

Therefore, it is imperative for the ministries to recognize their problems and provide timely support as in the past.

5. The legislature is the apex institution where necessary policies and legislations for the benefit and interest of the people are promulgated.

Therefore, various Bill submitted by the *Lhengye Zhungtshog* to the Parliament will be prioritized, deliberated and passed as Acts. In addition, it is important that the past Acts be amended as per the needs of the changing time and provisions of the Constitution for the present and future benefits of our people.

6. The Child Care and Protection Bill which was deliberated in the National Council in its 5th Session will also be tabled in this session.

7. The Child Adoption was forwarded to the National Council during the 5th Session.
8. The Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences Bill, and Consumer Protection Bill submitted by the government have been forwarded to the National Council.
9. The Water Bill, The Financial Services Bill and Income Tax Act (Amendment) Bill which were tabled in both houses during the 5th session will be re-deliberated and hopefully passed during the 6th Session.
10. Similarly, the National Council as per the amendment procedure, proposed the Penal Code of Bhutan, 2004 (Amendment) Bill, Anti Corruption (Amendment) Bill, Civil and Criminal Procedure Code of Bhutan, 2001 (Amendment) Bill.
11. The current session will also deliberate on the Public Finance Act (Amendment) Bill, Sales Tax, Excise Act (Amendment) Bill, Land Act (Amendment) Bill and Election (Amendment) Bill.
12. SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS) will also be ratified in this session.
13. In addition, this session will also deliberate on the pay revision of the civil servants, Zhabtog-Lemi and Constituency Development Grant.
14. The Consultative meeting between the Members of the National Assembly and the Local Governments in all Dzongkhags were held to foster better understanding and co-operation in a democratic set up of governance. It was for the first time that such a consultative meeting took place. It was primarily aimed to ensure implementation and completion of 10th Five Year Plan programs.

It is evident from the reports submitted by the Members that the local governments have made significant progress in the last two years of the Plan. However, the Local Governments also raised some challenges in implementing the plan activities. The current session will also discuss these challenges to explore possibilities of addressing them.

15. After the conclusion of 5th Session, I led parliamentary delegation to attend the 3rd World Speakers' Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. During the conference, I met with the Speakers of other countries which provided platform to know at personal level and share the parliamentary experiences.

16. On 26th October, Chamkhar town was struck by a devastating fire disaster resulting into loss of life and properties. On the very day of the disaster, His Majesty Fourth King proceeded to Bumthang to meet the victims of the disaster and gave *semso* and consoled the affected people. Therefore, the Parliament would like to express our gratitude to Fourth Druk Gyalpo for his gracious gesture of his love and care for the people.

His Majesty the King was deeply saddened by the news of the disaster that happened while he was away in New Delhi. Bearing the grief and sorrow of his people, His Majesty, immediately after arriving from New Delhi visited the site and personally supervised the restoration works to bring comfort and solace in the lives of the affected families. The Parliament would like to express our profound gratitude to His Majesty and government for always providing timely support to the people during the times of such disasters.

17. With the blessings of the Triple Gem, collective merit of the people, dynamic leadership and guidance of His Majesty coupled with strong co-operation and support of the Prime Minister and Member of the Parliament, it is hoped that the 6th session would be concluded very successfully.

Lastly, I on behalf of the Parliament thank His Majesty for his gracious presence and all those gathered here for being with us in the opening ceremony of the 6th session of the Parliament. ***(13th Day of the 10th Month of the Iron Male Tiger Year 19th November, 2010)***

Kadinche!

