

**English Translation of the Speech to be delivered by Hon Speaker during the opening ceremony of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Second Parliament (16<sup>th</sup> May, 2014)**

1. As the providential stars and positive energy converge, the Second Parliament commences its Third Session on this auspicious day.
2. I on behalf of the Members of Parliament and on my own behalf would like to welcome His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, the Dharma King, holder of wheel of the dual system of Palden Drukpa to this opening ceremony and thank His Majesty for gracing the occasion.
3. Similarly, on behalf of the House, I would like to extend warm welcome to Members of the Royal Family, representatives of the religious organizations, senior government officials, defense officials and international dignitaries.
4. Similarly, the people of Bhutan and the Parliament would like to welcome Her Royal Highness Princess Benedikte of Denmark and her delegation to our parliament. We hope that Her Royal Highness will have a pleasant stay in our country and would like to wish Her a safe journey back to Denmark.
5. As reported during the concluding ceremony of the Second Session, the procedure for deliberating on the Bills have been improved providing adequate time for the Committees to review the Bills. Therefore, I have a strong conviction that the deliberation on the Bills would be substantive and fruitful.
6. The National Assembly in its Second Session deliberated on important legislations such as Right to Information Bill, National Assembly (Amendment) Bill, Local Government (Amendment) Bill and transmitted to the National Council. It is hoped that these Bills would be passed in this session.
7. In this session the National Assembly will be deliberating on the following Bills and hope that these legislations would be endorsed;
  - i. The Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill 2014 received from National Council
  - ii. The National Council (Amendment) Bill, 2014
  - iii. The Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 2014
  - iv. The Biosafety Bill of Bhutan, 2014
  - v. The Local Government Entitlement Bill of Bhutan, 2014
  - vi. The Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Substance Abuse (Amendment) Bill 2014
  - vii. Parliamentary Entitlement (Amendment) Bill.
8. Further, this session will also deliberate on the Annual Report by the Prime Minister on the State of the Nation, including legislative plans and annual plans and priorities of the Government, Annual Budget Report by the Finance Minister, the Annual Audit Report and the Annual Anti-Corruption Reports.

9. The government recognizing the civil service as the backbone of the public service delivery considered to raise the salary for the civil servants and mandated the Pay Commission to review the pay and allowances of the Civil Servants. Therefore, a report thereof was submitted to the Parliament through the Cabinet. It is hoped that this initiative would serve as the motivation for greater efficiency and dedication of the civil service. Similarly, as the Local Government leaders are the main service providers at the local level, it is hoped that their entitlements would be enhanced upon the deliberation of the Local Government Entitlement Bill.

10. His Majesty with vision to institute apolitical civil service appointed the Members of the Royal Civil Service Commission as per the provision of the Constitution. The former Commission in their five year term rendered their dedicated service in serving the interest of the civil servants. Therefore, the Parliament would like to express its appreciation to the Commission. Similarly, the House would like to congratulate the new Chairperson and Members of the Civil Service Commission. It is hoped that the new Commission would strive to enhance the professionalism of the civil servants in enhancing good governance and social equity.

11. I would also like to apprise that the House has developed a calendar of sitting to facilitate the collaboration between the Parliament and the relevant agencies and authorities in terms of submitting their agendas to the Parliament. This would not only help in providing a framework and guide to the Gewog Tshogde and Dzongkhag Tshogdu in submitting their points to the Parliament but also enhance better coordination between the Parliament and the Local Governments. As the calendar would come into vogue from the fourth session, all are requested to follow guidelines specified in the calendar.

12. The Parliament would like to express its gratitude to His Majesty for granting the Royal Assent on the Convention on Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) for its implementation as ratified during the second session.

13. The Parliament would also like to express its gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and Her Majesty the Gyalsuen, the embodiment of compassion in visiting the southern and eastern part of the country to look into the minute problems faced by the people.

14. His Majesty with his noble vision of serving the welfare of the people of six eastern Dzongkhags appointed HRH Jigme Dorji Wangchuck as His representative. His Royal Highness embracing the noble task endowed upon him officially established his office and began serving the people. Therefore, on behalf of the people of Bhutan in general and the people of six eastern Dzongkhags in particular and on my own behalf would like to express unfathomable gratitude to His Majesty and His Royal Highness.

15. The Parliament would also like to express deep gratitude to His Majesty for granting *Kidu* and personally looking into the welfare of the people affected by the various natural disasters and the victims of the boat that capsized in Yudiri river in Zhemgang.

16. We would also like to express our gratitude to His Holiness the Je khenpo and other religious personalities for conducting *Melamchenmo*, *Baza Guru* recitation and various religious activities to avert diseases, famine and conflicts for the peace and tranquility in the country.

17. The initiative of Prime Minister in signing the compact with various ministries and Dzongkhags to enhance the government performance is indeed a commendable strategy. Therefore, it is hoped that this initiative would result into fruitful outcomes.

18. Lastly, it is hoped that with the noble guidance of His Majesty, collective merit of Bhutanese people and the support and cooperation rendered by the Members of the Parliament, the Third Session of the Parliament would come to a successful conclusion.

Kadinche!

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