

## **Speech of the Hon. Speaker Jigme Zangpo at the Opening Ceremony of the Seventh Session of the Second Parliament of Bhutan**

1. Today, on behalf of the Members of Parliament and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome and express gratitude to Your Majesty for gracing the Opening Ceremony of the Seventh Session of the Second Parliament.  
I would also like to welcome Her Majesty the Gyaltshen, Members of the Royal Family, representatives from the monastic body, senior Government officials, Armed Force personnel, diplomats and the public to the ceremony.
2. As everyone is aware, this year is indeed an extraordinary and a historic one for Bhutan and the Bhutanese people. As the saying goes, “Heaven holds the trinity of the sun, moon and the stars while earth holds the trinity of the King, Ministers and the People.” Today in Bhutan, there is peace in the country with great unity among the people, government and the gracious presence of Their Majesties. Moreover, I would like to submit that it is truly unprecedented in the history of Bhutan to witness and serve under the dynamic leadership of His Majesty the King, His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo and the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck in a single period. The Bhutanese people cannot be more prosperous than today.
3. I would like to submit here that it is remarkable to witness Her Majesty the Grandmother Kezang Choedon Wangchuck, Her Majesty Queen Mothers Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, Tshering Pem Wangchuck, Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck and Sangay Choden Wangchuck, and Her Majesty the Gyaltshen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck for having carried out royal aspirations

of His Majesty under their patronage for the welfare of the Country and the people which remain an extraordinary symbols.

4. The people of Bhutan celebrated three very important joyous occasions:

Firstly, under the wise and visionary leadership of His Majesty the King, the people of Bhutan commemorated the 60<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of our Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

Secondly, it was also a year of the Birth Year of the Second Buddha Guru Rinpoche.

Thirdly, it was a year to mark the arrival of 400 years of the Spiritual Leader, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel in the country as prophesized by the great masters and divine beings.

5. On behalf of the Parliament, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to Your Majesties for blessing the country and the people with the Royal Heir-who is the symbol of perpetuity of the Wangchuck dynasty, everlasting peace and sovereignty, unity and prosperity of the country for all times.

6. His Holiness the Je Khenpo and the Five Lopens, the Government, Dzongkhags and the people of 205 Gewogs have conducted prayers for the safe birth of the Gyalsey. Moreover, several prayers were held throughout the length and breadth of the country. A grand naming celebration of Gyalsey at Punakha, special prayers at Kuensel Phodrang in Thimphu and Takila in Lhuentse were the hall mark of the celebrations offered for the long life of our Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck. The Parliament would like to extend appreciation and gratitude for carrying out these noble initiatives.

7. On the invitation of the world's renowned organization, Lyonchen Tshering Tobgay has participated in the World Leaders' TED Talk in Vancouver, Canada. He has not only demonstrated his intellect and charismatic leadership but he also shared his visions on Democracy, Governance, Sustainability, Economic Development, Culture, Environment and Climate Change. Lyonchen Tshering Tobgay has been recognized as one of the Top 50 Leaders of the World. We would like to congratulate him for projecting the image of Bhutan and making us proud.
  
8. The Prime Minister and his able team have completed the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP Mid-Term Review. It is happy to know that the progress achieved is remarkable because of efficient and effective support from the central ministries, agencies and Local Government. The Parliament would like to extend appreciation to all implementing agencies for their hard work.
  
9. The Hon. Prime Minister, Chairperson of the National Council, Cabinet Ministers, Opposition Leader and Members of Parliament have visited their constituencies to oversee the ground realities on the delivery of services and dissemination of information on plans and programmes. I have also visited twenty Dzongkhags, institutions and met more than 26,000 people in total. On behalf of the Parliament, I would like to thank the Local Government for making our visits possible and fruitful.
  
10. I have led three delegations, Speakers' SAARC Summit in Bangladesh, 134<sup>th</sup> IPU in Lusaka, Zambia, and a conference in Japan. Also, a total of thirty Members of Parliament have participated in the regional and international conferences. We got opportunities to interact and share

experiences with the eminent parliamentarians and could build good relationships.

11. I would like to submit the deepest gratitude to His Majesty for granting the Members of the Parliament the opportunity to attend two-weeklong leadership training at the Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS). I am confident that the Members of Parliament would make good use of the skills and experiences gained from the training.

12. The following agendas will be discussed in the Joint Sitting of the Parliament:

- 1) Jabmi (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014
- 2) Companies Bill of Bhutan 2015
- 3) European Investment Bank (EIB) Agreement
- 4) Performance Audit Report and deliberation on the Review of Dzongkhag Thromde delimitation for Paro.

13. The following Bills and Conventions will be discussed in the National Assembly:

- 1) Customs Bill of Bhutan 2015
- 2) Civil Aviation Bill of Bhutan 2015
- 3) Motor Vehicles Agreement for the Regulation of Passenger, Personal and Cargo Vehicular Traffic between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal
- 4) Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2016

14. The Prime Minister will present the Annual Report on the State of the Nation including Legislative Plans and Annual Plans and Priorities of the Government, and the House will also deliberate on Annual Budget Report for the Fiscal Year 2016-2017, Annual ACC Report and the Committee Reports.
  
15. The National Assembly has received several agendas from the Local Government and deliberated in the Preliminary Meeting. It was decided in the meeting to forward the issues to the relevant ministries and agencies for review and appropriate actions. I hope the concerned ministries and agencies would take appropriate actions without further delay.
  
16. Lastly, with the grace of Triple Gem and deities, due to benevolent leadership of His Majesty the King, prayers of the monastic body, collective merits of the people of Bhutan and support from the Members of Parliament, I am hopeful that the Seventh Session of the Second Parliament of Bhutan would be very successful.

**THANK YOU**