

**Inaugural Address by Tshogpon Wangchuk Namgyel at the
Opening Ceremony of the First Session of Third Parliament of
Bhutan**

2 January, 2019

1. The First Session of the Third Parliament of Bhutan commences with effect from today on the most auspicious day graced by the kind presence of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

On behalf of the Parliament, it is my pleasure to welcome His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo with immense gratitude for gracing the opening ceremony of the First Session, leaving aside numerous royal engagements for the welfare of the people and the country.

2. I would also like to welcome Her Majesty the Gyaltshuen, Members of the Royal Family, Members of the Parliament, senior government officials, foreign dignitaries and the public who have come to witness the occasion. I would like to further welcome all people who are witnessing today's session through live broadcast and radio.
3. I would like to share that our successive monarch has granted full faith and trust to the people of Bhutan, and therefore granted the gift of democracy to the Bhutanese people. Accordingly, the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and Members of parliament of the Second Parliament had reported fruitful achievements of the 11th Five Year Plan. Furthermore, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan and the Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan had carried out successful proceedings in both the Houses and therefore, the Members of the Parliament of the Third

Parliament would like to thank and extend our deepest appreciation to them.

Similarly, we would also like to thank and extend appreciation to the Leader of Opposition and the members of opposition party for shouldering great responsibilities and accountability with utmost dedication in the past Parliament. Under the good leadership of the incumbent Opposition Leader and experienced members, I am hopeful that the members of opposition party will continue to render full support and guidance during the Third Parliament as well.

4. The Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) has carried out procedural reviews and advocacies for free and fair elections of Local Government and the Third Parliament Election in particular. The Parliament would like to thank and applaud the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) for their successful coordination.
5. The people of Bhutan entrusted Druk Nyamdrup Tshogpa (DNT) with the huge responsibility to form the government during the Third National Elections to Parliament of Bhutan in the era of our Democratic Constitutional Monarchical system.

It is, therefore, imperative for the Members of Parliament to serve with utmost dedication and loyalty to fulfill the hopes and needs of our people. It is also vital that Members of the Parliament serve genuinely and modestly, keeping in mind the present and future welfare of country, ensuring social development and fulfillment of planned objectives during the deliberation in the House.

6. In addition, it is also important to keep in mind - the foundation of the laws of the nation, profound philosophy of the Gross National Happiness, and the vision of the government to *Narrowing the Gap* at all times. Thus, it is of paramount importance for the Members of Parliament to ensure bringing in Bhutanese people together through eradication of rural poverty, minimizing youth unemployment, solving public debt, combating corruption, and development of strategic plans and measures to overcome the challenges.
7. During the 111th National Day held in Samtse Dzongkhag, His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo has resonated His most profound words of wisdom on the importance of uplifting national sovereignty and security of the nation, preservation and promotion of culture, conservation of the natural environment, maintaining mutual cooperation with other nations, and maintaining the sacred identity of the Bhutanese nation. We are hopeful that civil servants and public servants will forever keep these profound words of wisdom and serve with full dedication.

As commanded by His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, it is our utmost duty to realize greater concern on the country's resources while implementing great projects and activities during the commencement of the 12th Five Year Plan in the country. It is also hopeful that members would strive to serve with greater vigor and enthusiasm.

8. If I may report to the House, Lyonchhen Dr. Lotay Tshering and his entourage has made a maiden state visit to New Delhi, India. The visit further strengthened the already existing close ties of

friendship and cooperation between the two countries, and also strengthened bilateral ties and economic linkages. Therefore, the Parliament would like to thank Lyonchhen for his most successful visit.

9. During the 2018 national elections, the people of Nyishog-Saephu Constituency under Wangduephodrang Dzongkhag elected me as their representative to the National Assembly of Bhutan. Furthermore, Lyonchhen and Members of Parliament elected me to the post of the Speaker. More significantly, it is indeed a great honour for me to receive *Dakyen* from His Majesty as the Speaker of the Third Parliament. Therefore, I would like to deeply express my gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.
10. I also take this privilege to express that during my tenure as the Speaker, I will be fortunate enough to receive the words of wisdom and guidance from His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo. Additionally, I am anticipating that the Members of the Parliament would render their full support and cooperation to me. Hence, I as the Speaker would like to take this oath to serve the Tsa-Wa-Sum with the deepest of my faith and utmost dedication.
11. Under the glorious reign of the Wangchuck Dynasty with our successive monarchs, the people of Bhutan cannot be more prosperous and harmonious than today. Thus, it is crucial that people of Bhutan realize such fortunate era in all times.
12. Our benign His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo has been working tirelessly for the welfare of our people. His Majesty has personally met with the people of remote communities, and granted *kidu*

graciously to our people in needs. Therefore, the Parliament would like to express our utmost gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

13. During the 111th National Day Celebration, His Majesty has conferred the Highest Civilian Decoration in the country, the Order of The Druk Gyalpo (*Ngadag Pelgi Khorlo*) to His Holiness the 70th Je Khenpo. Therefore, the Parliament would like to express our utmost gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.
14. Under the patronage of His Holiness the Je Khenpo, Zhung Dratshangs, Rabdeys, Goendeys and religious institutions performed numerous initiatives for sustaining peace and harmony in the country. Moreover, His Holiness presided over the *Salang Tendrel* ceremony for the construction of a Buddhist temple at Rajgir, Bihar, India. His Holiness also presided over the World Peace Prayers (Moenlam Chenmo) at Bodh Gaya. Thus, the Parliament would like to express our gratitude to His Holiness the Je Khenpo.
15. The First Session of the Third Parliament of Bhutan will be deliberating the following agenda:
 - a. Formation of Committees and appointment of the Committee Members.
 - b. Adoption of Budget Appropriation Bill for the FY 2018-2019.
 - c. Adoption of the 12th Five Year Plan.
 - d. Deliberation on Two Protocols, petitions from Two Dzongkhags, Motions and Question Hour sessions.

- e. Deliberation of the Review Report on the Annual Audit Report 2017 by the Public Accounts Committee in the Joint Sitting of the Parliament.
16. I would like to report that apart from the two petitions, the additional agenda received from other Dzongkhags had been extensively deliberated during the Preliminary Meeting, and forwarded to relevant ministries and agencies for necessary action. It is imperative that the ministries and agencies take necessary actions at the earliest possible.
17. In conclusion, with the blessings of the Triple Gem, mighty grace of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and 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 Third Parliament. The Parliament also offer its deep prayers for the long lives of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Members of the Royal Family, all religious masters, continued flourishing of peace and harmony among the people and the country.

THANK YOU
