

**Address by Hon'ble Speaker on the Opening Ceremony of the Sixth Session of the Third Parliament on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, 2021.**

1. The Sixth Session of the Third Parliament commences on this auspicious day, in the August Hall at the seat of the sacred Golden Throne.
2. On behalf of all Members of Parliament and on my own behalf, I would like to humbly welcome and express my deepest gratitude to His Majesty the King for gracing the opening ceremony.
3. *(If it pleases Her Majesty the Gyaltshen and Members of the Royal Family to attend the Opening Ceremony)*

I would also like to welcome Her Majesty the Gyaltshen, Members of the Royal Family, senior government officials, and foreign diplomats and dignitaries to the opening ceremony

4. Ever since the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic, His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, leaving behind most precious Gyaltshens and family, has tirelessly travelled across the country sacrificing meals and rest, disregarding personal safety and health for the welfare and well-being of the people. His Majesty met with the members of the regional task forces, people, students and youth providing wise counsel and support. This has immensely benefited the people and the country.
5. Furthermore, His Majesty the King established the Desuung National Water Service to provide safe and reliable drinking and irrigation water for the people in the Dzongkhags and villages. His Majesty also started the De-suung Skilling Programme, providing opportunities for the youth of Bhutan to enhance their capabilities and empower them to participate more meaningfully in the process of nation building. This has firstly, helped in the alleviation of unemployment in the country and secondly, benefitted the Desuung themselves in learning new skills, gaining experience and confidence and finally, the

people in enhancing their capabilities. For this, the Parliament would like to offer our deepest gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

6. The most Compassionate Father of the Bhutanese people, His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, concerned for the well-being of each and every one of his subjects, graciously granted Land *Kidu* to 191 people of Lunana Gewog, to build their summer homes along with all necessary amenities such as access to safe drinking water, electricity and road connection.

Similarly, His Majesty granted the most precious gift of citizenship to 422 people, taking the total to 20,866, ensuring better livelihood and opportunities for them.

For such benevolence, the Bhutanese people are forever grateful and offer prayers for the long life of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

7. Recently, many parts of the country were hit by torrential rainfalls which destroyed hard-earned paddy crops, rendering all the sweat and tears farmers put into their fields to waste and bringing a lot of loss to those who are reliant on agriculture for their income. To this, His Majesty, the compassionate Dharma Leader, had commanded the Prime Minister to visit the affected places and to meet the people for consolation and to convey the granting of *Kidu* to help the affected farmers. For this, the Parliament would like to express their heartfelt gratitude that words can't express.

The affected people, as they are citizens of a Dharma country ruled by the Dharma King, considering the current state of the economy due to the pandemic, respectfully declined the *Kidu* and at the same time conveyed their deepest gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo. The Parliament would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the people for such a gesture.

8. To His Holiness the Je Khenpo, the spiritual leader of the land of the Palden Drukpa, the abbots and the teachers, learned masters of the Dharma, who head the various religious institutions, we would like to pay our respect and offer gratitude for continuously holding various rituals for the well-being of the King, country and people and strengthening faith in the Dharma.

9. To Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen, for shouldering the most onerous and yet extremely beautiful responsibility of motherhood in taking the best care of the jewels of the Bhutanese, Their Majesties the Gyalseys, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude.
10. Finally, we would also like to thank the Government, Corporations and the Private Sector for their timely collective assistance in combating the challenges presented due to the pandemic.
11. With regard to the business of the House, the Sixth Session of the Third Parliament will be deliberated upon the following:
  - i. Civil Society Organization (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - ii. Forest and Nature Conservation Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - iii. Fiscal Incentives Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - iv. Custom Duty (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - v. Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - vi. Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - vii. Royal Bhutan Police (Amendment) Bill 2021
  - Viii. The Third Reading of the Biodiversity Bill of Bhutan 2021
  - ix. Deliberation on the Anti-Corruption Commission Annual Report, 2020.
12. The House will also be deliberating on the following International Convention.
  - i. Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance Convention.
13. The Joint Sitting of the Parliament will be deliberating on:
  - i. Royal Audit Authority Annual Report, 2020

- ii. Two Performance Audit Reports (On in-country travels and implementation and management of National Broadband Fiber Network.)
  - iii. Follow up on the Implementation Status of the Resolution Public Account Committee
  - iv. Presentation of Annual Report on the State of the Nation, including legislative plans and annual plans and priorities of the Government by the Prime Minister of Bhutan.
14. Lastly, under the farsighted rule and guidance of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and the Royal Family, the prayers of the revered monastic body, the goodwill of the people and the support and cooperation of all the Members of Parliament, I pray for the fruitful and successful conclusion of the Sixth Session of Parliament.

**THANK YOU**