

**PROCEEDING AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 17TH SESSION HELD
ON THE 26TH DAY OF 3RD MONTH OF THE WATER TIGER YEAR**

1. MATTER RELATING TO INVESTIGATION OF COW CENSUS

In accordance with the earlier decision, taxes were being levied on cattle over 3 years old. However, it was pointed out by the Chimi of Sha (Wangdi) that cattle aged two years while conducting the cattle census were considered 3 years old during the investigation 6 months later. Therefore, the Assembly resolved that the investigation should be made within two months of completion of the cattle census, and the taxes thereto should be levied in uniformity.

2. MATTER RELATING TO CEILING OF AGES FOR DUDOM

The Assembly noted that the people below 17 and above 55 had to provide labour for other related works in their respective Dzongkhags, as those age groups were unable to provide labour for the above works. Therefore, the Assembly resolved that henceforth all road construction including the river protection works of Punakha should be made through Chunidom in summer and Dudom in winter. However, under no circumstances should the Dudom/Chunidom labourers absent themselves from road construction work for the sake of carrying loads or other internal works.

3. MATTER RELATING TO LEAVE FOR ARMY PERSONNEL

The army personnel going home on leave for two months after completion of their 10 months training at Tenchholing or after having been stationed at border posts during their leave period would be exempted from 'Dudom'. Such personnel should however produce leave permit for two months from the army authorities.

4. MATTER RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTARY RATIONS FOR ARMY

Due to the increased strength of army personnel in Tenchholing, there was a shortage of foodgrains for the army. As such, the store incharge reported that the existing supply should be supplemented. Three of the army representatives said that in the event of difficulty in procuring all the rations from within the country, arrangements should be made to procure half the supply in the form of wheat from outside the country while the other half should be

procured from within the country. The Assembly suggested that the public should, from their excess food grains, supply their respective Dzongkhags at the prevailing local rates. As there existed no procedure for collection and deposit of foodgrains, it was suggested that the concerned members should discuss the matter with the public and report the outcome in the next session of the National Assembly so as to enable it to take a final decision on the matter.

5. MATTER RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD LEADING TO BORDER POSTS

The representatives of army, Makshi Akhu, reported that the construction and renovation of army camps and construction of new camps and roads leading to border posts was to be undertaken on a priority basis at an early date. While supporting the views expressed by the Army representatives, the Assembly decided that the works were to be initiated from the first day of the 5th month of the Water Tiger Year, for which the labour would be provided by the public who were absent from the previous road construction works. It was also decided that those who were absent for two days would have to work for three days. Wages would be paid for the actual day of absence but not for the additional day.

The outstanding food commodities to be received in the form of tax were still not being fully deposited by the public till the Iron Rat Year. Considering the convenience of the people, His Majesty desired that the Assembly should decide on the recovery of the food commodities in the form of labour for border road construction. In compliance with His Majesty's command, it was decided that the outstanding foodgrains would be converted into working days at border road construction sites on the basis of the existing government rate of wages, and the people would be asked to provide labour accordingly.

6. MATTER RELATING TO USE OF PINE TREES AT BUMTHANG

In connection with an earlier decision to restrict use of pine trees for firewood, it was requested that, in the absence of other species of trees, the public be permitted to use pine tree for firewood.

7. MATTER RELATING TO (TSHOREY) FOR PUNAKHA DZONG

In connection with the supply of Tshorey (extra people from each village to serve as waiter) to Punakha Dzong by the public, the Assembly decided that henceforth it would not longer be required to supply Tshorey.

8. MATTER RELATING TO RE-CONSTRUCTION OF THIMPHU DZONG

Emphasizing the historical and religions significance of the Thimphu Dzong, His Majesty pointed out that, besides housing several important deities and serving as a residence of the Central Monk Body, it would now also be used as the offices of the central government. In earlier times the Dzong had been severely damaged in a fire accident, and 93 years had elapsed since it's renovation. However, the walls supporting the Dzong were not properly built at the time of renovation. As such, new renovation works needed to be undertaken right from the foundation level. The labour required for the renovation should be provided as per the existing labour rules in the country. In this connection, His Majesty let it be known that he himself would shoulder the responsibility of supervising the renovation works.

All the members supported the suggestions put forth by His Majesty the King except those from Lingshi, Soi and Dagar. As such, the Assembly resolved that the Dzong should be re-constructed with labour provided by the public under the supervision of His Majesty the King.

9. MATTER RELATING TO THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ROYAL BHUTAN ARMY

The Army Representatives, Makshi Akhu, Major Penjore and Lt. Dendup stated that since the number of soldiers at Tenchholing had been substantially increased to enhance the country's security, it was found essential that a Chairman be appointed for the Army. Though the present Army Officers had been working satisfactorily the soldiers required a Chairman to boost their morale. Therefore, in keeping with the wishes of the soldiers, and with a view to developing the Army further, His Majesty was requested to hold the post. The highest rank in the Army being that of Goonjey, who also was under the control of His Majesty the King was also requested to accept this post voluntarily, in the capacity of Chairman of the Army of Tenchholing.

His Majesty observed that, as he had been holding charge of both civil and military affairs in the country, the request was not really necessary. Nevertheless His Majesty consented to accept the Chairmanship of the Army provided the members of the Assembly had no objections. The public and government representatives had in fact earlier pointed out to similar tradition in other countries. As such, the Assembly resolved that the Chairmanship of the Royal Bhutan Army be accepted by His Majesty.

10. MATTER RELATING TO TAKE OVER OF MONASTRIES BY THE GOVERNMENT

The unmanageable important public and private Guenkhangs and Lhakhangs would be taken over by the Government at their request. However, prior to this, the significance of the concerned Guenkhangs/Lhakhangs would be investigated, and only those found to be important would be taken over by the government.

11. MATTER RELATING TO REDUCTION IN SUPPLY OF SALT TO PUNAKHA AND GASA DZONG

The public of Gyen, Laya, Shung Jasup supplied 130 bags of salt to Punakha Dzong and 51 bags to Gasa Dzong. This caused them great problems. Therefore, it was decided that they would be allowed to supply only half of the existing quantities.

12. MATTER RELATING TO TASHIGANG RABDEY

The existing strength of monks at Tashigang Rabdey being only 38, numerous problems were encountered in conducting the Tshechhu and other festivals. As such, the Assembly decided that the strength of monks in Tashigang Rabdey be increased to 50 hereafter.

13. MATTER RELATING TO TRANSMIGRATION OF CATTLE

The people of Buso and Sephu who are responsible for the transmigration of His Majesty's cattle from Tongsa to Longtay in Summer and for housing them in fresh cowsheds etc. had not yet been exempted from the other labour works (apart from Dudom) under Wangdiphodrang Dzongkhag.

Therefore, it was decided that the labour provided by the people of Buso and Sephu should be adjusted against the labour to be provided for other government works under the Dzongkhags, as in the case of other Dzongkhags.

14. MATTER RELATING TO WOOD TAX (SHINGTHREL) FOR PUNAKHA AND WANGDI DZONGS

The public residing in the lower altitude of Wangdi were to provide rice in lieu of 'Shingthrel' for the Punakha and Wangdi Dzongs, and the people residing in the high altitudes were to provide "Dey" and bamboo products in lieu of 'Shingthrel'. The previous system whereby the people of both the higher and lower altitudes supplied rice and other products stood abolished, and was to be henceforth replaced by the supply of timber, dey and bamboo products under Dudom. This amendment would also apply to the people of Punakha district.

15. MATTER RELATING TO ESTABLISHMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OFFICES AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Two high schools, one at Thimphu and the other at Mongar, were to be established. The labour force required for the construction of Thimphu High School was to be provided by the public of Shah, Wang and Paro. For construction of the High School in Mongar, the labour force was to be provided by the people of Tashigang and Mongar. Besides, the public of Bumthang, Mangdi, Khen and Kurto were also to work in the construction of the above two high schools when the necessity arose. In the event that several buildings were to be constructed for development offices in Thimphu, the labour force for such an eventuality was to be supplied by all the 18 Dzongkhags in the country.

16. MATTER RELATING TO ESTABLISHMENT OF STORES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES AT ROAD CONSTRUCTION SITES

Shop-keepers required for the establishment of stores of essential commodities at the road construction site would be arranged for by the Prime Minister.

17. MATTER RELATING TO ANIMAL TRANSPORTATION FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION

In order to carry loads to different parts where road construction work was being undertaken, it was decided to make the following arrangements for animal transportation:

1. The house owner of Tashigang would have to arrange for 600 horses for Samdrupjongkhar during the first two months, after which the people of Tashigang would have to arrange for 200 horses per month.
2. The people of Shemgang, Bhumthang and Tongsa would have to arrange for 600 horses for Hatisar for the 1st two months and 200 horses per month after two months.
3. The people of the Western region would have to arrange for 1200 horses for the Western region for the first two months and 200 horses per month after two months.

The porter charge would be paid at the rate of Nu. 5/- per day. If the load was not available and the horses were to return, each horse would be paid for at the rate of Nu. 2.50. Horses coming for carriage of loads for one trip would not be entitled to this payment. Only those which were being used repeatedly in the carriage of loads would be paid. The concerned CLO was to issue a letter for horses carrying loads more than 4 times. Those producing such letters would be paid an additional sum of Nu. 1/- from the public funds available with His Majesty in addition to the normal charges of Nu. 5/- per day. Those not producing such letters would not be entitled to this payment.

18. MATTER RELATING TO THEFT CASES ON THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION SITES

Instances of theft on the road construction sites was increasing alarming. Though such cases could be dealt with under the national law, they were considered to be of a quite different nature. As such, it was decided that the cases would be investigated jointly by the government officials and the public representatives and that the thieves, if apprehended, would be liable to receive twice as much punishment as prescribed in the national law.

19. MATTER RELATING TO THE SALE OF ESSENTIAL FOOD COMMODITIES

A rule existed restricting the sale of foodgrains by the public until the requirement of the respective Dzongs were fulfilled. Henceforth, it was decided that the public would have to sell the foodgrains within the country and would not be permitted to sell them outside. However, in case anyone was found selling foodgrains outside the country, they would be penalized to the tune of 10 times the quantity sold.

20. MATTER RELATING TO STOCKPILING OF FOODGRAINS BY PRIVATE PARTIES

It was found that the public in Punakha and Wangdi, without taking into consideration the urgent foodgrains needs of the country, were stockpiling foodgrains with a view to making greater profits in the future. At the same time His Majesty's private stock of foodgrains, which was being used for feeding those involved in the road construction works, was now near depletion, making the government think in terms of importing foodgrains to meet the requirements at the road construction sites. As such, if the surplus stock piled grains by the residents of Wangdi and Punakha could be sold without delay for use at the said construction sites, it would be of great help to the country. Those selling the grains in the national interest would be issued letters of appreciation from His Majesty.

21. MATTER RELATING TO BUTTER TAX OF WANGDI

Some of the chimis of Wangdi suggested that the butter tax be levied according to the 'Shingthrel'. Since the shingthrel had already been converted into Dudom, it was also requested that the butter tax should be converted into Dudom. However, some of the chimis of Shah did not agree. In view of this, it was decided that the matter would be discussed with the public, and the outcome submitted in the next Assembly.

22. MATTER RELATING TO THE THIMPHU DZONG SHINGTHREL

Some Chimis of Thimphu requested that shingthrel for the Thimphu Dzong be fixed as par with that of Wangdi. As the chimis of Gyen, Lingshi were not present, the Assembly directed them to report the matter in the next session of the National Assembly.

23. MATTER RELATING TO THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION BEHIND PELELA

The Army of Tenchholing had undertaken the construction of a road in and around Wangdi on a contract basis. The road construction at Hatisar would be carried out by the public of Bumthang, Mangdi, Khen and Kurteo.

24. MATTER RELATING TO THE INCOME OF GUPS

The Tshongchen Gups in contradiction to Gups in other Dzongkhags, had been receiving foodgrains (Kamthrel) from the public. Therefore, it was decided that the kamthrel received by the Tshongchen Gups be worked out and reported in the next Assembly.

25. MATTER RELATING TO DUDOM FOR GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

In view of the fact that government servants in different Dzongkhags shouldered great responsibilities of the Royal Government, their orderlies were henceforth exempted from Dudom. However, private orderlies engaged for commercial benefit would be required to provide 'Dudom'.

26. MATTER RELATING TO BUSINESSMAN

Businessman both from the government and the public would be exempted from providing Dudom. However, shop-keepers and those working in private companies would be required to provide 'Dudom'.

27. MATTER RELATING TO DUDOM FOR HERDSMEN

The herdsman and their assistants looking after flocks of government cattle would be exempted from 'Dudom' whereas herdsmen working for private parties would be required to provide 'Dudom'.

28. MATTER RELATING TO REGULARIZATION OF NEW TAXES FOR TIBETANS

While granting lands to Tibetans and landless people, taxes would be levied in the following manner.

1. Those allotted cultivable lands would be exempted from paying tax for one year.
2. Those allotted half-cultivable lands and half uncultivable lands would be exempted from paying tax for two years.
3. Those allotted uncultivable land would be exempted from paying tax for 3 years.

The new settlers would be exempted from the supply of Dudom, except in the case of road construction. They would also be exempted from carrying government loads.

However, it was pointed out that only those who had left their residence to resettle in other Dzongkhags would be exempted from Dudom, and not those who had been allotted land in their place of residence.

His Majesty would look into the cases of those unable to provide Dudom owing to urgent tasks at home such as land development work, house-construction or the construction of irrigation channels. Exemption would be granted to them at His Majesty's pleasure.

29. MATTER RELATING TO FEMALE LABOUR

In case there were fewer than three persons in a household and the woman in that family gave birth to a child, the mother would be exempted from providing "Dudom" for at least 6 months after delivery and four months before delivery. However, it was clarified that the request for exemption in other replacement would not be entertained.

30. MATTER RELATING TO EXEMPTION OF LABOUR FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION

It was decided that the public affected by poverty and having many children to feed may be exempted from the labour works by the C.L.O. after proper investigation.

31. MATTER RELATING TO THE WAGES OF SKILLED LABOURERS

Skilled labourers such as carpenters, masons and painters were not paid wages for the annual Dzong maintenance works. However, they were paid wages for other government works and their Dudom was also exempted. It was now clarified that henceforth only they themselves would be exempted from Dudom and not, as previously, their thencha.

32. MATTER RELATING TO SHOPS BELONGING TO MONK BODIES

It was pointed out that as the Gelong were not permitted free movement outside, they suffered for want of reading materials and essential commodities like vegetables, clothes etc.. As such the question of opening a shop in the Dzong for the welfare of monks was brought up.

While endorsing this it was decided that such shops would be established jointly by the officers of the Royal Government. However, in view of fire hazards, such shops would not be permitted to keep kerosene in excess of the quantity required for lamps.