

Contents

I.	OPENING CEREMONY	1
II.	OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE DRUK GYALPO. 1	
III.	EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION.....	2
IV.	ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE SPEAKER	4
V.	ENDORSEMENT OF THE REVISED SALARY OF THE TSHOGPAS.....	6
VI.	REPORT BY THE POVERTY REDUCTION COMMITTEE (1P8/GR1)	7
VII.	MOTION	9
	7. 1 Motion on Election related disputes (1P8/M1)	9
VIII.	REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE 7TH SESSION.....	11
	8.1 Implementation status on control of alcohol consumption (1P8/GR2).....	11
	8.2. Report on the Implementation Status of Equitable Entitlement of Subsidized Timber (1P8/GR3)	12
	8.3. Report on Implementation status of Land (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2011 (1P8/GR4)	13
	8.4. Implementation Report on the National Budget Report for the Financial Year 2011-2012 (1P8/GR5)	14
IX.	RECTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION.....	14
X.	CONCLUDING CEREMONY OF THE 8th SESSION ..	14
XI.	DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED	17

Annexure 18

1. List of Members of the National Assembly who participated in the 8th Session of the First Parliament 18
2. Address by the Speaker of the Parliament during the Opening Ceremony of the 8th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan (January 4, 2012)..... 21
3. Speech delivered by Hon Speaker of the Parliament of Bhutan on the closing ceremony of the 8th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan (January 20, 2011)..... 28

**PROCEEDING AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE 8TH
SESSION OF THE 1ST PARLIAMENT**

I. OPENING CEREMONY

The 8th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan commenced on the 11th Day of the 11th Month of the Iron Female Rabbit Year corresponding to the January 4, 2011 at 10 am. His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo was received with elaborate *Chipdrel* and *Serdrang* ceremony to the National Assembly Hall, followed by the traditional *Zhugdrel Phuensum Tshogpai* ceremony.

II. OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE DRUK GYALPO

The Article 2 Section 5 of the Constitution of Bhutan provides that upon the ascension of the Druk Gyalpo to the Throne, the Members of the Parliament shall take an Oath of Allegiance to the Druk Gyalpo. Accordingly, the Members of the 1st Parliament of Bhutan and the Secretary Generals of the two Houses offered an Oath of Allegiance to the Druk Gyalpo after the *Zhugdrel Phuensum Tshogpai* ceremony. The Hon'ble Members of the Parliament stood before His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and repeated the Oath after the Ven. *Tsuglag Lupon* from the *Geduen Dratshang*. After the Oath

taking, the Ven. *Tsuglag Lopen* took *Tashi Khadhar* from the Hon Speaker and offered to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo. The Hon Prime Minister then signed the Oath followed by the Members of the Parliament and the Secretary Generals of the two Houses.

III. EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

The Hon Prime Minister on behalf of the Bhutanese People, Royal Government and the Parliament welcomed and expressed his appreciation to their Majesties the Druk Gyalpo and Her Majesty the Queen, Jetsun Pema Wangchuck for gracing the Parliament for the first time after the Royal Wedding. As the Monarchy is the collective gem and lifeline of Bhutan, the responsibility to uphold the monarchy falls upon Her Majesty the Queen.

The Prime Minister also reported that after the Royal Wedding, the Royal Couple visited India, Japan, Thailand and United Kingdom. The visits not only strengthened the relations between the countries but also increased our country's credibility. Moreover, His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo accepted the Honorary Doctorate in Economics from the University of Tokyo, Japan and while in United Kingdom he was ushered to

the Bar of England and Wales at the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple. Such offering of reverence to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo is indeed a reason for immeasurable pride for all Bhutanese people.

The high regard and consideration accorded to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo is primarily attributable to his knowledge, wisdom and leadership qualities which are comparable to world leaders. On behalf of the Bhutanese people, the Members of the Parliament expressed their deep appreciation to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

The Chairperson of the National Council expressed his deep appreciation to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for the Royal Wedding which was held in October 2011 as per the Royal Proclamation in the 7th Session. The Wedding which was carried out in line with our tradition and custom not only promoted the unique identity of our country across the world but has also made us proud to be born a Bhutanese under the Wangchuck Dynasty. It was also submitted that, the Members of the Parliament were grateful to be able to offer their Oath of Allegiance to the Druk Gyalpo on this auspicious day, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

The Leader of the Opposition also submitted that the union of their Majesties the King and the Queen has greatly benefitted in promoting the peace and strengthening the security and sovereignty of the country. Appreciation was also expressed to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for granting of land Kidu to the landless people in an effort to reduce poverty in the country. The Armed Force and the economy of the country are fundamental in strengthening the security and sovereignty of the country. His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo has not only strengthened the three Armed Forces but also instituted Desuung, which will go a long way in strengthening the security and sovereignty of the country.

IV. ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE SPEAKER

The Hon'ble Speaker in his address said that, on the historic commencement of the 8th Session of the Parliament, the Members of Parliament were very fortunate to be able to pledge an Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, in pursuant to the provision of the Constitution of Bhutan. This rare opportunity has been

occasioned due to the blessings of *Triple Gem*, merit of the people and fruition of our collective destiny.

The offering of Oath of Allegiance to Druk Gyalpo by the representatives of the people after 104 years marks the epoch making era in which the happiness, socio-economic development and the security and independence of the country has been further enhanced and strengthened.

Due to the merit and good fortune of the Bhutanese people, Her Majesty Jetsun Pema Wangchuck has been taken as the Queen of Bhutan. On behalf of the Members of the Parliament, he offered their heartiest Tashi Deleg and expressed their gratitude to Her Majesty the Queen for visiting the Parliament for the first time after the Royal Wedding. Within a short span of time, Her Majesty has given us unambiguous confidence to believe that her gracious actions would further enhance peace, happiness, solidarity and unity in our country.

He expressed his hopes that the four Bills which could not be passed last year will be endorsed after discussion in the Joint Sitting along with four new Bills in the current session. In conclusion, he expressed his sincere

appreciation to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Her Majesty the Queen, Jetsun Pema Wangchuck, Members of the Royal Family and the distinguished guests for kindly gracing the Opening Ceremony of the 8th Session. **(11th Day of the 11th Month of the Iron Female Rabbit Year corresponding to January 4, 2012)**

V. ENDORSEMENT OF THE REVISED SALARY OF THE TSHOGPAS.

The Finance Minister presented the Report on the Revised Salary of the Tshogpas. It was reported that the Salary for the Tshogpas was first approved in January 2007 at Nu. 1000 per month. Since then, it has been revised twice to Nu. 1,450 in September 2009 and further to Nu. 2000 in January 2011.

The salary of the Tshogpas has been further revised considering the important responsibility they shoulder in serving the Gewog Administration and the people. The Pay Commission had proposed that the Tshogpas be paid a monthly salary of Nu. 1500 on which the Government paid Nu. 2000. Based on this, despite financial problems, the Government submitted a report for endorsement proposing that the salary of the Local Government Tshogpas be increased to Nu. 5000 with

effect from January 2012, The House was informed that the increase of the salary of the Tshogpas would cost the government Nu. 65,100 million every year.

During the deliberation, the Hon Members endorsed the proposal submitted by the Finance Minister to revise the salary of the Local Government Tshogpas from Nu. 2000 to Nu.5000 with effect from January 2012. The Members also submitted that it was imperative to draft an Entitlements Bill for the Local Government Leaders.

The House endorsed the proposal to raise the salary of the Local Government Tshogpas. With regard to the salary of Local Government Leaders whose election disputes were dismissed by the Judiciary and the Election Commission of Bhutan, the House directed that their salary be paid from the day other Local Government Leaders started to receive their salary.

(16th Day of the 11th Month of Iron Female Rabbit Year corresponding to January 10 , 2012.)

VI. REPORT BY THE POVERTY REDUCTION COMMITTEE (1P8/GR1)

The Chairperson of Poverty Reduction Committee submitted a report on the establishment of the Committee, its responsibilities, income poverty, multi-

dimensional poverty, measures taken by the Government and Rural Economy Advancement Programs. It was reported that poverty was reduced from 31.70% in 2003 to 23.2 % in 2007. It was also reported that measures are being taken to alleviate poverty in the remote villages identified by the Gyalpoi Zimpon's office.

During the deliberation, the House commended the Committee for the report. Further, the Minister for Agriculture proposed four ways in alleviating poverty by promoting food nutrition, constructing standard farm roads, constructing new irrigation canals and provision of telecommunication services. He said that if these services are carefully researched and implemented poverty would be greatly alleviated. Some of the Members also pointed out that although material wealth reduces poverty there is the risk of losing one's inner happiness, therefore, such matters should also be taken into consideration.

The House commended the Chairperson for the report on poverty related issues. The government has formulated measures and policies to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty. The House also directed that extra efforts be made to address poverty through the

implementation of the four proposals submitted by the Agriculture Minister. Further, the political party's objectives and policies should also primarily aim at reducing poverty. The House directed that extra efforts should be made to ensure the eradication of poverty by the 11th Tenth Five Year Plan.

(16th Day of the 11th Month of the Iron Female Rabbit Year corresponding to January 10, 2012.)

VII. MOTION

7.1 Motion on Election related disputes (1P8/M1)

The Chairperson of the House committee moved the motion regarding the disputes resulting from the violation of election laws by some candidates during the Local Government election in 2011. He reported that the disputes were not only brought to the notice of election officials and the Dzongkhag Courts but also to the High Court. While hearing on some cases were taking place in the High Court, the Supreme Court issued directives stating that election disputes were within the domain of Election Commission and the Judiciary had no authority over it. Based on these directives, cases were dismissed without any proper verdict being passed. He pointed out that such practice may lead to corruption and other

unfair practices in election process in future. Therefore, it was submitted that it is imperative that the House pass a resolution in order to prevent such practices in future. The petition submitted by the people was also read out to the House.

During the deliberation, the Speaker informed that there were 28 election disputes, in 13 Dzongkhags. He said that out of 205 Gewogs 16 disputes pertains to Gups, two to Mangmis, one to Tshogpa and nine other to appealed cases. He also informed that as per the provisions of Chapter 20, Section 466 of the Election Act, the election related disputes were to be dealt by the Election Dispute Committee. However, the disputes were directly forwarded to the courts without being dealt by the committee. The time consuming settlement of election disputes caused undue problems to the people. He said that the Supreme Court on 19th July 2011 notified that a complaint or a case related to an election shall be dealt only by the Election Dispute Settlement Body and directed to dismiss the cases. However, the Dzongkhag and High Courts accepted the election dispute cases despite the notification on which the accountability needs to be fixed. He said that such disputes will not arise if the Dzongkhag election

officials oversee the election process properly and proper rules and procedures are put in place and disseminated properly by the Election Commission.

The deliberation concluded with the House resolving and directing to fix administrative accountability and responsibility on the Election Dispute Settlement Committee for not adhering to the set rules and also to hold the Courts accountable for accepting the election disputes cases without considering whether it is within the judicial purview or not.

VIII. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE 7TH SESSION

8.1 Implementation status on control of alcohol consumption (1P8/GR2)

As directed by the National Assembly the Minister for Economic Affairs reported that the sales tax, import tax and registration fee have been increased to control alcohol consumption. He also reported that awareness program on reducing the negative social impact of alcohol and environmental impacts caused by littering of empty alcohol bottles are being carried out in collaboration with the relevant agencies. Further, he

reported that alcohol control legislation is also being drafted.

When the Minister reported that there are currently nine entities that hold license to manufacture alcohol. The Hon'ble Speaker reminded that as decided in the past, new breweries should not be allowed especially with alcohol content above 8% vol. Further, if the Government faced problems while reviewing and carrying out its resolutions, it can be resubmitted to the House for consideration.

8.2. Report on the Implementation Status of Equitable Entitlement of Subsidized Timber (1P8/GR3)

As per resolution 10.2 of the 7th Session, the Agriculture Minister reported that the Ministry has reviewed the forest related policies and a rule thereof has been framed. He said that the Cabinet has approved the rule. He also expressed his hope that the rule would mitigate the problems faced in the equitable distribution of the rural timber and concluded the deliberation.

8.3. Report on Implementation status of Land (Amendment) Act of Bhutan 2011 (1P8/GR4)

It was resolved in the 7th Session of the 1st Parliament of Bhutan that the Ministry of Agriculture should review the Land Act of Bhutan 2007 and submit in the 8th Session. Accordingly the issue was discussed in the Preliminary Discussion of Agenda held on December 6, 2011. It was submitted that the Land (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2011 was not finalized and therefore could not be submitted in the National Assembly. However it was decided that a report would be made to the House on its status by the Agriculture Minister.

The Agriculture Minister explained that the Amendment Bill could not be submitted in the current session because the House had directed the Ministry to not only review the provisions relating to *Tsamdro* and *Sokshing* but the whole Act because of its importance to the community. However, the Ministry in close consultation with the Department, Agencies, Dzongkhags and Gewogs have researched and compiled the problems related to the Land Act. Further provisions that need to

be amended have also been identified and it will be submitted in the 9th Session.

8.4. Implementation Report on the National Budget Report for the Financial Year 2011-2012 (1P8/GR5)

Since a written report on the implementation of the resolutions pertaining to the National Budget Report for the Financial Year 2011-12 have been submitted, the Speaker directed that no further report was necessary.

(18th Day of the 11th Month of the Iron Female Rabbit Year corresponding to January 1, 2012)

IX. RECTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION

The Secretary General read out the resolutions of the 8th Session to the House on January 19, 2012. Although, there were no major corrections to the resolution, some Members suggested to elaborate in some part of the resolution, which however, the House resolved not to include and concluded the rectification of the resolution.

X. CONCLUDING CEREMONY OF THE 8th SESSION

The Hon'ble Speaker welcomed and expressed his appreciation to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Her

Majesty the Queen and other distinguished guests to the concluding ceremony of the 8th Session. He said that this day would be remembered by all Bhutanese for on this day the Members of the Parliament could offer their Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo as per the provision of the Article 2 Section 5 of the Constitution of Bhutan.

He said that the three Bill on which a consensus could not be reached in the past session have been passed in the Joint Sitting. As per the provisions of the Constitution and the decision of the Supreme Court, the Sales Tax, Customs and Excise (Amendment) Bill and the Public Finance (Amendment) Bill have also been passed.

The Tobacco Control Act was passed during the 5th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan in 2010. Due to the penalty clauses many individuals were penalized within one year of its implementation. Therefore, the government proposed to amend about nine sections of the Act and tabled it as an Urgent Bill. Although, the National Council did not agree to the amendments, the matter was resolved and adopted through the Joint Sitting of the Parliament on 19 January, 2012. He expressed his hopes that the Amendments will contain

the black market and reduce the number of tobacco consumers in our holy land.

The National Assembly had proposed to amend three Sections of the Election Act, 2008 in which the main amendment was with regard to state funding primarily to strengthen the political parties. Due to lack of support from the National Council the Election (Amendment) Act could not be passed. However, as this is an important issue, it may have to be discussed in future.

The House also extensively deliberated and passed five new Bills and one Convention. He expressed his appreciation for the successful conclusion of the 8th Session and offered *Tashi Moenlam* for the Long Life of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and peace and happiness for the country.

(27th Day of the 11th Month of the Iron Female Rabbit Year corresponding to January 20, 2011)

20th January, 2012

**(Jigme Tshultim)
SPEAKER**

XI. DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

1. Consumer Protection Bill of Bhutan, 2011
2. Druk Gyalpo Relief Fund Bill of Bhutan,2011
3. Education City Bill of Bhutan, 2011
4. Disaster Management Bill of Bhutan, 2011
5. Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences Bill of Bhutan,
2011
6. RAMSAR Convention on Wetland
7. Poverty Reduction Committee Report

Annexure

1. List of Members of the National Assembly who participated in the 8th Session of the First Parliament

1. Speaker, Jigme Tshultim, Radhi-Sakteng constituency, Trashigang Dzongkhag
2. Prime Minister, Jigme Yoezer Thinley, Nanong-Shumar constituency, Pemagatshel Dzongkhag
3. Lyonpo Yeshi Zimba, South Thimthrom constituency, Thimphu Dzongkhag
4. Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Lamgong-Wangchang constituency, Paro Dzongkhag
5. Lyonpo Wangdi Norbu, Bartsham-Shongphu constituency, Trashigang Dzongkhag
6. Lyonpo Zanglay Durkpa, Khar-Yurung constituency, Pemagatshel Dzongkhag
7. Lyonpo Minjur Dorji, Kanglung-Uzorong constituency, Trashigang Dzongkhag
8. Lyonpo Thakhur Singh Powdyel, Dorokha-Tading constituency, Samtse Dzongkhag
9. Lyonpo Dr.Pema Gyamtsho, Choekhor-Tang constituency, Bumthang Dzongkhag
10. Lyonpo Nandalal Rai, Shompangkha constituency, Sarpang Dzongkhag

11. Lyonpo Dorji Wangdi, Panbang constituency, Zhemgang Dzongkhag
12. Leader of Opposition, Tshering Tobgay, Sombeykha Constituency, Haa Dzongkhag
13. Deputy Speaker, Yangku Tshering Sherpa, Kilkhorhang-Mendrelgang constituency, Tsirang Dzongkhag
14. Karma Wangchuk, Chumey-Ura constituency, Bumthang Dzongkhag
15. Ugay Tshering, Bongo-Chapcha constituency, Chukha Dzongkhag
16. Chencho Dorji, Phuentsholing constituency, Chukha Dzongkhag
17. Sonam Jamtsho, Drujeygang-Tseza constituency, Dagana Dzongkhag
18. Hemant Gurung, Lhamoizingkha-Tashiding constituency, Dagana Dzongkhag
19. Kinley Dorji, Goenkhamay-Lunana constituency, Gasa Dzongkhag
20. Damchoe Dorji, Goenkhatoe-Laya constituency, Gasa Dzongkhag
21. Ugen Tenzin, Bji-Katsho-Uesu constituency, Haa Dzongkhag
22. Karma Rangdol, Minjay-Gangzur constituency, Lhuentse Dzongkhag
23. Tshering Tenzin, Menbi-Tsengkhar constituency, Lhuentse Dzongkhag
24. Ugyen Wangdi, Dremitse-Ngatshang constituency, Mongar Dzongkhag
25. Sonam Penjor, Kengkhar-Weringla constituency, Mongar Dzongkhag
26. Karma Lhamo, Mongar constituency, Mongar Dzongkhag
27. Chencho Dorji, Dogar-Shaba constituency, Paro Dzongkhag
28. Choida Jamtsho, Nganglam constituency, Pemagatshel Dzongkhag
29. Tshering Penjor, Kabji-Talo constituency, Punakha Dzongkhag

30. Namgay Wangchuk, Lingmu-Toewang constituency, Punakha Dzongkhag
31. Ugyen Dorji, Dewathang-Gomdar constituency, Samdrup Jongkhar Dzongkhag
32. Norbu Wangzom, Jomotshangkha-Martsala constituency, Samdrup Jongkhar Dzongkhag
33. Prahlad Gurung, Pugli-Samtse constituency, Samtse Dzongkhag
34. Durga Prasad Chhetri, Sipsu constituency, Samtse Dzongkhag
35. Lila Pradhan, Ugyentse-Yoeseltse constituency, Samtse Dzongkhag
36. Prem Kumar Gurung, Gelephu constituency, Sarpang Dzongkhag
37. Choeki Wangmo, Thrimshing constituency, Trashigang Dzongkhag
38. Lhatu, Wamrong constituency, Trashigang Dzongkhag
39. Dupthob, Bumdeling-Jamkhar constituency, Tashiyangtse Dzongkhag
40. Kesang Wangdi, Khamdang-Ramjar constituency, Tashiyangtse Dzongkhag
41. Rinchen Dorji, Drakteng-Langthel constituency, Trongsa Dzongkhag
42. Nidup Zangpo, Nubi-Tangsibji constituency, Trongsa Dzongkhag
43. Nar Bahadur Gurung, Patalay-Tsirangtoe constituency, Tsirang Dzongkhag
44. Pasang Thrinlee, Athang-Thedtsho constituency, Wangdue Phodrang Dzongkhag
45. Gyem Dorji, Nyisho-Sephu constituency, Wangdue Phodrang Dzongkhag
46. Tshering Dorji, Bardo-Trong constituency, Zhemgang Dzongkhag

List of Members absent during the 8th Session of the First Parliament

1. Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering, Kawang, Lingshi, Soe-Naro Constituency, Thimphu Dzongkhag (Medical Leave)

2. Address by the Speaker of the Parliament during the Opening Ceremony of the 8th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan (January 4, 2012)

1. As the historic 8th Session of the Parliament begins on this auspicious day, it is indeed an opportune moment for the Members of Parliament, to be able to pledge Oath of Allegiance to democratic constitutional monarch, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck in pursuant to the provision of the Constitution of Bhutan. This rare opportunity has been occasioned due to the blessings of *Triple Gem*, merit of the people and fruition of our collective destiny.
2. After the submissions made by the Hon Prime Minister and some of the Members, it is needless for me to add on it. However, on behalf of the rest of the Members and on my own behalf, I would like to reiterate that as Bhutan was going

through continuous period of internal strife, diseases and calamities without any peace and happiness, the Government, Dratshang, Regional Chieftains and the entire Bhutanese People unanimously enthroned Gongsu Ugyen Wangchuck as the first hereditary monarch of Bhutan on 17th December, 1907 to usher peace, stability and happiness in the country.

Similarly, this was resonated by His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo during His Coronation on 2nd June, 1974.

3. Today, the offering of Oath of Allegiance to democratic constitutional monarch by the representatives of the people after 104 years marks the epoch making era in which the happiness, socio-economic development and the security and independence of the country is enhanced and strengthened.
4. This has been possible due to the strong and unflinching dedication, trust and confidence of the Bhutanese people in the Wangchuk dynasty. We all know that Bhutan witnessed unprecedented progress under the wise guidance

and leadership of 1st Druk Gyalpo Gonga Ugyen Wangchuck, 2nd Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck, 3rd Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and particularly under the reign of 4th Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

5. His Majesty the 4th Druk Gyalpo, in view of the peace and happiness of the country and the people, successfully removed the grave security threat posed by the presence of militants in our country by personally leading the flush out operation in 2003 and strengthened the sovereignty and security of the country. His Majesty in his address during the 98th National Day celebration in Tashi Yangtse Dzongkhag on 17th December, 2005 proclaimed several significant reforms. With great sense of joy, I would like to reiterate that His Majesty proclaimed as “I would like our people to know that parliamentary democracy will be introduced in Bhutan by the year 2008. I have every confidence that our people will be able to choose the best political party that can provide good governance and serve the interest of the nation”.

6. He also said “I would also like our people to know that the Chhoetse Penlop will be enthroned as the Fifth Druk Gyalpo in 2008. It is my wish and prayer that during the reign of Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Palden Drukpa will remain strong and glorious, that our country will achieve greater prosperity with the sun of peace and happiness shining on our people”. Accordingly, not only democracy was introduced and the Fifth Druk Gyalpo was enthroned but also a political party was elected by the people. Within the period of three to four years we have witnessed greater peace and economic development which is primarily due to the prayers and wishes of Fourth Druk Gyalpo.
7. Due to the farsighted vision and wishes of the 4th Druk Gyalpo, we are able to enjoy continued peace and happiness.
8. Moreover, we have not only signed the Constitution of Bhutan on 18th July, 2008, but also enthroned our 5th Druk Gyalpo and celebrated 100 glorious years of Monarchy.

Bhutan also hosted 16th Summit of South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation and it has produced significant results in the country.

9. As the Royal Wedding has been conducted, we the Members of the Parliament are very fortunate to embrace this opportunity to pledge an Oath of Allegiance to Druk Gyalpo on this very auspicious occasion.

Therefore, we the Members would like to express our sincere appreciation to His Majesty and the Members of the Royal Family. As we offer the Oath of Allegiance, we pray for greater peace, happiness and economic development in the country under the Wangchuck dynasty.

10. Due to the merit and fortune of the Bhutanese people, Ashi Jetsun Pema Wangchuck has been taken as the Queen of Bhutan. To this, we the Members of the Parliament would like to offer our heartiest Tashi Deleg.

Her Majesty the Queen's first visit to the Parliament after the Royal Wedding is indeed very auspicious gesture for which we would like

to express our sincere thanks. Within the short span of time, Her Majesty has given us unambiguous confidence to believe that her gracious actions would further enhance peace, happiness, solidarity and unity in our country.

11. As democracy was introduced for the first time in Bhutan, the Bhutanese people gave Druk Phuensum Tshogpa the opportunity to serve and form the government. Since then, the Government under the leadership of Lyonchhen Jigme Yoezer Thinley with the support and co-operation of the Cabinet Ministers, Members of the Parliament, Bhutanese people, religious organizations, civil organizations and armed forces have been always striving to serve in fulfilling the interest of the country and people.

12. This 8th Session of the First Parliament will be held for 13 days. As provided by the Constitution, during this Joint Sitting of the Parliament, it is hoped that about four Bills which could not be passed last year would be endorsed as Acts.

13. In addition, it is hoped that the National Assembly will be able to pass the following Bills;
 1. Consumer Protection Bill of Bhutan 2011
 2. Disaster Management Bill of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2011
 3. Education City Bill of Bhutan 2011
 4. Druk Gyalpo's Relief Fund Bill of Bhutan, 2011
14. Some of the general public and media suggested amending the Tobacco Control Act 2010 to remedy the difficulties faced in implementing the Act. Therefore, Lhengye Zhungtshog submitted the Tobacco Control Act (Amendment) Bill to be treated as urgent Bill, which shall be recognized by both the Houses and accordingly amend the Act.
15. As the elected local leaders in the Local Government shoulder important responsibilities in serving the interest of the people, it is crucial to provide commensurate consideration and facilities to their responsibilities. Therefore, a report on the revised emoluments as endorsed by

the Lhengye Zhungtshog will be tabled in the House.

16. I would like to sincerely thank His Majesty Druk Gyalpo, Her Majesty the Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck, Members of the Royal Family, distinguished guests for kindly gracing the Opening Ceremony of the 8th Session.
17. Lastly, I hope and pray that with the blessings of the Triple Gem and collective merit of the Bhutanese people the 8th Session would be concluded successfully.

Tashi-Deleg!

3. Speech delivered by Hon Speaker of the Parliament of Bhutan on the closing ceremony of the 8th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan (January 20, 2011)

1. On behalf of the Members of the Parliament and on my own behalf, I would like to express our heartiest welcome to His Majesty Druk Gyalpo, Her Majesty the Queen, Members of the Royal Family and the distinguished guests to the concluding ceremony of the 8th Session of the First Parliament on this auspicious day.

2. In this session, we the Members of Parliament have been able to offer Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty as per the provision of the Article 2 Section 5 of the Constitution of Bhutan, during which Her Majesty the Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck also graced the occasion and all the Bhutanese people will remember the day forever.
3. This Session was held for 13 days, during which the following Bills which could not draw consensus during the past session were passed as Acts in this session through Joint Sitting;
 1. Child Adoption Bill
 2. Sales Tax, Customs and Excise (Amendment) Bill
 3. Public Finance (Amendment) Bill
4. As per the Provisions of the Constitution of Bhutan and the verdict of the Supreme Court, the Parliament thoroughly deliberated the Sales Tax, Customs and Excise (Amendment) Bill and it is hoped that the implementation of the Act pertaining to the Sales Tax, Customs and Excise would be pragmatic. I am confident that, the Public Finance (Amendment) Act, the Child

Adoption Act and Sales Tax, Customs and Excise (Amendment) Act would greatly benefit the country and the Bhutanese people.

Following the amendments of the Acts, if the concerned implementing agencies conduct proper awareness for the general public and implement the Acts properly, it would not give rise to problems and inconveniences.

5. The Tobacco Control Act was passed during the 5th Session of the First Parliament of Bhutan in 2010. Due to the penalty clauses many individuals were penalized within one year of its implementation. Therefore, the government proposed to amend about nine sections of the Act and tabled it as an Urgent Bill. Although, the National Council did not agree to the amendments, the matter was resolved and adopted through the Joint Sitting of the Parliament yesterday.

It is hoped that the amendment of the Act would benefit in containing the tobacco black market and reducing the number of tobacco consumers in the holy land of Bhutan.

6. The National Assembly proposed to amend the Election Act in three Sections mainly due to several problems faced during the Local Government Elections and to avoid such problems in future to strengthen the democratic system.

Since the strength of democratic system is based on political party, the proposals for state funding of political parties along with other amendments were proposed and adopted by the National Assembly. However, not only the National Council disagreed to the amendments, the Joint Committee also could not come to consensus and had no recommendations thereof and could not be decided. As the matter of this amendments are very crucial, it may have to be discussed in future.

7. During this Session, the National Assembly engaged in extensive deliberation and passed the following Bills and Convention;
 1. Consumer Protection Bill of Bhutan
 2. Druk Gyalpo Relief Fund Bill of Bhutan
 3. Education City Bill of Bhutan

4. Disaster Management Bill of Bhutan
5. University of Medical Sciences Bill
6. The RAMSAR Convention on Wet Lands
8. With the blessings of the Triple Gem and collective merit of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and the Bhutanese people and due to the unstinted support provided by the Prime Minister and the Members of the Parliament, the 8th Session of the National Assembly has successfully come to an end.
9. Lastly, let us all together offer Tashi Moenlam to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for his long life and fruitful endeavors and pray for peace and happiness in the country.

Kadinche!
