

**Address by Tshogpon Jigme Zangpo at the Closing Ceremony of the  
Eleventh Session of Second Parliament  
29<sup>th</sup> June, 2018**

1. On behalf of the Parliament, it is my pleasure to humbly welcome His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo for gracing the opening and closing ceremony from First till the Eleventh Session, leaving aside numerous royal engagements. His Majesty has always guided the Parliament with wise counsel. Therefore, the Members of the Parliament and I would like to express our deepest gratitude and reverence to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.
2. I would also like to welcome Her Majesty the Gyaltshuen, Members of the Royal Family, representatives of the Central Monastic Body, armed forces, senior government officials and foreign dignitaries who had come to witness this occasion.
3. Our benign His Majesty has been working tirelessly for the welfare of our people, strengthening national sovereignty, security, economic development in the country. His Majesty visited all 20 Dzongkhags and 205 Gewogs, personally met with the people of remote communities, and granted land *kidu* graciously to our people in needs. His Majesty has also granted Chhoetse Penlop scholarships to many Bhutanese students for continuing their education as well as enrolled numerous students as *Gyalpoi Tozey*. His Majesty has been granting *kidu* to many needy victims affected by natural calamities across the country.
4. His Majesty, as the upholder of the Chhoe-sid, has always been supporting *Dratshangs*, and other religious bodies across the nation. In order to preserve our national monuments to its former glory, His Majesty has commanded the reconstruction of Wangdue Phodrang Dzong, Paro Drugyel Dzong, besides supporting various constructions of lhakhangs, goendeys, chortens, and also providing noble guidance for conservation of our sacred religious heritages in the country.

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

5. To ensure proper judicial proceedings in the country and timely delivery of justice services to the people, His Majesty has strengthened the judicial branch and constitutional offices in the country. The establishment of Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) has immensely benefited the Members of Parliament, civil and public servants, Armed Forces and private entities through flagship leadership trainings. The establishment of Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law (JSWSL) will also greatly benefit our country.
6. His Majesty, as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, has always visited and met with the armed forces and their families, granted *kidu* to armed forces personnel in need. His Majesty has introduced *Desnung* Program for the welfare of the community and security of the nation. With the aim to gain exposure and provide experience to our armed forces, His Majesty has sent many armed forces officers to the UN Peacekeeping missions. The Parliament offers its unwavering gratitude to His Majesty for such noble initiatives.
7. To enhance our national sovereignty, peace and security, His Majesty has paid official visits to foreign countries, and met with foreign leaders thereby deepening mutual cooperation and strengthening bilateral ties with other countries. His Majesty has paid official visit to Thailand, Japan, Singapore, India and Bangladesh.

His Majesty's Royal visits culminated to maiden state and official visits to Bhutan by the Princess of Thailand, Princess of Japan, Duke and Duchess of Cambridge (England), President and Prime Minister of People's Republic of India, and the President and Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Such fruitful achievements are all attributed to the wise and visionary leadership of His Majesty. Many leaders from foreign countries look forward to visit our country, mainly because of our His

Majesty's wise and exemplary leadership and our noble vision of Gross National Happiness (GNH) promulgated by His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Therefore, the Parliament would like to express utmost gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

8. Under the wise counsel of His Majesty, the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) and financial institutions have reduced lending rates and further improved financial services to our people in need of credits. Hence, the Parliament would like to express deepest gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.
9. Under the wise leadership and guidance of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) continue to initiate numerous activities. One such historic event was planting of 49,672 tree saplings at Kuenselphodrang on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2015 which entered in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Similarly, four Royal Flower Exhibitions were successfully organized which are truly historic due to the noble blessings from His Majesty. Thus, the Parliament would like to offer utmost gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.
10. His Holiness the Je Khenpo has presided over numerous *kurims*, prayers, and Annual *Moenlam Chenmo* in all 20 Dzongkhags for eternal peace, wellbeing of the Bhutanese people and for global peace and security. His Holiness has also granted seed money to raise funds for conducting numerous religious activities across the nation. His Holiness also granted several ambulances to the ministry of health. Therefore, the Parliament would like to offer our deepest gratitude to His Holiness the Je Khenpo.
11. Under the dynamic leadership of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, I had the opportunity to preside over 11 parliamentary sessions within these five years.
  - a. A total of 235 days of parliament sitting including 62 days of Joint Sitting have been held.

- b. 11th FYP with total outlay of Nu.221 billion approved by Parliament.
  - c. 26 bills have been deliberated, out of which, 23 bills have been passed during the Second Parliament.
  - d. 14 conventions were deliberated, out of which, 11 conventions were ratified.
  - e. A total of 11 motions, 483 questions and 174 local government petitions have been deliberated and referred to relevant government agencies.
12. Guided by noble advices of the His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, successive hereditary monarchs and constitutional provisions, Lyonchhen Dasho Tshering Tobgay has made official visits to various countries and international fora to reaffirm our political commitments and strengthen our diplomatic ties with other nations. The Prime Minister also spoke on various platforms on the topics such as Gross National Happiness, Bhutanese culture & social conditions, Bhutanese democracy, environment and business opportunities in Bhutan. Lyonchhen represented our country and uplifted the image of Bhutan in the international arena, such as through popular TED talk.

At home, Lyonchhen visited all 20 Dzongkhags at least five times and all 205 Gewogs to monitor development plans and to hold public review of 11 FYP with the people. Under the strategic direction of Lyonchhen, all Cabinet Ministers, Government Secretaries, Director Generals, Directors, Dzongdas, Gups, civil and public servants have worked vigorously through enhanced decentralization. Thus, the foundation of Good Governance has been strengthened and the results of the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan especially in the areas of economic development, agricultural produce, basic amenities, technology, health and education have seen notable achievements than expected.

The Government of India has always been supportive in providing huge developmental assistance to Bhutan. Similarly, Government of

Japan, European Union (EU) and other international agencies have also provided assistance during the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP, and assured continuous assistance in the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP. All these donor commitments attribute to His Majesty's wise leadership, continuous guidance and noble advices of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, and thus, the Parliament would like to express our deep gratitude to His Majesty for noble support and guidance.

13. The Constitutional Offices, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and media fraternity has carried out various initiatives to provide oversight for the welfare of country and the people. Similarly, the armed forces have served selflessly day and night to ensure security of our nation. Thus, the Parliament would like to extend appreciation and thanks to all armed forces personnel for their selfless duties.
  
14. As Members of the Second Parliament, we are immensely fortunate because:
  - a. Firstly, our term coincided with the Birth Year of Guru Rinpoche.
  - b. Secondly, our term also coincided with the 400 years of the arrival of our Spiritual Leader, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel to our country.
  - c. Thirdly, we got the rare opportunity to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck and pay our humble tribute and respect.
  - d. Fourthly, we could also celebrate 12 years of His Majesty's accession as the Chhoetse Penlop and Ten Years of glorious reign of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo on the Golden Throne.
  - e. Fifthly, the people celebrated the Royal Birth of His Royal Highness the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck.
  
15. The people of Mongar Constituency bestowed full trust and confidence on me, and elected me as their representative to the Second Parliament. Subsequently, with full support from Members of

the National Assembly, I was fortunate to have been elected as the Speaker. Above all, it was indeed an honour for being entrusted by His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and receiving *Dakye*n as the Speaker, which I shall cherish as the most unforgettable moment in my personal life.

16. I would like to state that I have served with my fullest dedication and due allegiance always keeping in mind His Majesty's words of wisdom and wise counsel. I upheld my responsibilities as dear as my own life, and kept aside all my personal affairs while presiding over the assembly and joint sessions. I also got the opportunity to lead our parliamentary delegations to Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians (ASSP), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), European Parliament (EP), AFPPD & related meetings, where we shared ideas and parliamentary best practices, and further strengthened friendship and collaboration with other parliaments, and thus, I am extremely proud with such fruitful achievements.

I take this opportunity to apologize all Members of the House, if ever I have not pleased some of the members during the time of discharging my duties. I seek your forgiveness.

17. I would like to state that it has been 45 long years of my service as a civil servant and as parliamentarian. However, for a simple civil servant like me, who is limited by the skills and capability for holding such responsibility of high public office, I am extremely pleased to say that the Government and His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo had entrusted me, and that I have been able to carry out all my duties successfully. Today, as my term comes to an end, I affirm my continued service to our society as a true citizen till the very end of my life.
18. Under the benevolent leadership of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, all Members of the Parliament have collectively served under the same

roof - supporting each other including the Ruling and Opposition Members, Committee Members and the Chairperson and the Members of the National Council of Bhutan. The Members have always been selfless to prioritize national interests before personal interests until today. All deliberations were held through proper check and balance, and thus achieved successful outcomes. Moreover, under the grace of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, prayers from the monastic bodies, and collective merits of the Bhutanese people, the 11<sup>th</sup> Session has concluded very successfully. I feel extremely proud and I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all Members of Parliament for their support and cooperation.

Some of our Members would be aspiring for the next election, while some members will be retiring after the second parliament. In this regard, I would like to convey my best wishes to all members for successful endeavors in the times to come.

19. The staff of the Department of National Properties (DNP) fully supported the National Assembly Secretariat in the conduct of Parliament sessions. Also, the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) security personnel have provided entire security cover throughout the sessions. The media was actively involved in broadcasting the sessions and bringing it to the people. Additionally, the staff of the National Assembly Secretariat always carried out smooth proceedings of assembly sessions thus far. Therefore, the entire Members of Parliament would like to thank all staff for their enormous coordination, support and dedication.
20. Today, 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 Druk Gyalpo, His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo and HRH the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck in a single period. The Bhutanese people cannot be more fortunate than today, which remain as an extraordinary symbol for the Bhutanese people.

On behalf of people of Bhutan, I would like to offer prayers for the good health and long life of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, His Royal Highness the Gyalsey, Members of the Royal Family, perpetuity of the Wangchuck dynasty, eternal peace & harmony of the Bhutanese people and everlasting sovereignty of our country.

**TASHI DELEK**

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