

**PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 24TH SESSION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN HELD ON THE 4TH DAY OF THE 4TH MONTH
OF FIRE HORSE YEAR CORRESPONDING TO 24.5.1966**

1. MATTER RELATING TO APPOINTMENT OF NEW SPEAKER

As the term of Gyeldon as Speaker was expiring, the Assembly nominated Yanglop Hap Nidup of Central Monk Body as the new Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan. His Majesty the King was also pleased to accept the nomination of Yanglop Hap Nidup as Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan for a term of 3 years.

2. MATTER RELATING TO A MOTORABLE ROAD IN SOUTHERN BHUTAN

With the welfare of the general public in mind, His Majesty the King was pleased to state that he had discussed with the Indian Foreign Minister the construction of a motorable road next year through the Indo-Bhutan border direct from East Amber Tala to Sombekha via Sibsoo. The public expressed its gratitude for His Majesty's benevolence in seeking the necessary assistance in this regard from India.

3. MATTER RELATING TO C.G.I. SHEETS FOR PUNAKHA DZONG

The House learnt that the public of Sherwang (Wangdi & Punakha) had contributed a sum of Nu. 2/- lakhs towards the purchase of C.G.I. sheets for Punakha Dzong in view of its importance to the country. As the money did not meet the cost of even half of the required C.G.I. sheets, the public requested the Ministry of Development's assistance in this regard. As such, it was decided that the public contribution of Nu. 2 lakhs be deposited with the Ministry of Development. It was also understood that the Ministry of Development would render the necessary financial aid in this regard.

4. MATTER RELATING TO BUTTER LAMPS FOR THE MONASTERIES

Some of the important monasteries which utilized their own livestock farms for the supply of butter for butter lamps possessed Kashos from his late Majesty and His Majesty the King exempting them from the payment of butter tax to the government. However, the uniformity in taxation introduced in the country during the Iron Bull Year resulted in the above monasteries being compelled to pay the butter tax.

It was decided that the exemption from butter tax as per the Royal Kasho would be treated as valid in those Dzongkhags where taxation was not levied in cash. However, the concerned Thrimpons would be required to investigate as to whether or not the exempted monasteries were properly fulfilling their responsibility in the matter of supplying butter for the butter lamps.

5. MATTER RELATING TO THE SUPPLY OF DRINKING WATER

Some members reported that certain villages in the country faced an acute shortage of drinking water. It was therefore, requested that the government extend the necessary assistance in this regard. As such, the Assembly decided to forward the matter to the Department of Agriculture for necessary action.

6. MATTER RELATING TO LHUNTSHI SUSPENSION BRIDGE

The House was informed that the public of Lhuntshi had requested two more chains for the Lhuntshi suspension bridge. The Royal Government agreed to their request for supply of the same in due course of time.

7. MATTER RELATING TO THE SETTLEMENT OF ORONGPA

The proposal of the Royal Government to amalgamate Orong with southern zone was brought to the notice of the house. As requested by the people of Orong, the Assembly resolved that they be allowed to remain under Mongar Dzongkhag.

8. MATTER RELATING TO THE EXEMPTION OF CHUNIDOM FOR EX-GUPS

Ex-gups, while in service as Gups, were entitled to the exemption of 6 persons, including himself, from chunidom. After retirement from service, the exemption of their chunidom would be considered on the basis of their service record. Only those who rendered meritorious service would be exempted from chunidom.

9. MATTER RELATING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF FOREST GUARDS

The house was informed that the forests of southern Bhutan were being looked after by the Ministry of Development, and those in Central Bhutan by the concerned Thrimpons. As there

were no separate forest guards for different areas, the Assembly resolved that the Thrimpons should appoint forest guards in their respective jurisdictions. The salaries of the guards would be paid by the Ministry of Development.

10. MATTER RELATING TO FIREWOOD

Some members requested that the public be permitted to fell pine trees for firewood as there were no other trees for the purpose. The Assembly complied with their request but resolved that the trees could be felled only by obtaining a permit to that effect from the concerned Thrimpon.

11. MATTER RELATING TO ROYALTY ON SALE OF TIMBER AND FIREWOOD

The house decided that the timber/firewood being used for domestic purposes with the permission of the concerned Thrimpon would be exempted royalty. However, the following royalty would be charged for the public felling of trees for commercial purposes:

1. For Timber/Firewood valued at Nu. 1/- 6 cheltrums
2. For Timber/Coal “ “ “ 1/- 6 “

12. MATTER RELATING TO NON-NATIONAL WORKERS/EMPLOYEES

His majesty the King observed that the people were under the impression that the country would lose its sovereignty and independence if it depended fully on an imported labour force. However, His Majesty explained that since Bhutan was in the initial stages of its development and lacked skilled manpower, the import of manpower was essential. It should be understood that this was not being done in the interests of the imported labourers but that it was designed to benefit the country and its people. In this context, His Majesty the King also said that if such people working in the country were found violating its laws and not benefiting the country, they would be expatriated immediately.

Elaborating on the issue, His Majesty further stated that the imported manpower would be retrenched after the Bhutanese acquired the necessary skills. However, His Majesty added that some experts might have to be retained if necessary.

His Majesty the King also emphasized the urgency of constructing the road from the confluence of the Thimphu-Paro road to Ha and that linking Gaylegphug and Bumthang. His Majesty informed the house that he had commanded the Chief Engineer of Dantak to postpone the construction of the road between Yangtshi and Baratang, Tashigang. All the above works could be undertaken in collaboration with imported manpower.

His Majesty the King commanded the public representatives to explain the matter clearly to the people on their return home.