

**AGENDA FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BHUTAN**

(Subject to change without notice)

(21st January – 18th February)

Tuesday, 21 January

REGISTRATION OF HONOURABLE MEMBERS

- a. Briefing by the Chairperson and Secretary General of National Council

Wednesday, 22 January

**MORNING: OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SECOND SESSION OF PARLIAMENT
(JOINT SITTING)**

- a. Opening Ceremony
- b. Address by His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo (If it pleases His Majesty to address the Parliament)
- c. Move motion of gratitude to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo
- d. Inaugural Address by the Hon'ble Speaker

AFTERNOON: OPENING CEREMONY OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

- a. *Marchang* ceremony
- b. Inaugural address by the Chairperson

Thursday, 23 January

JOINT SITTING

- a. Public Accounts Committee Report

Friday, 24 January

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS ON 1ST SESSION RESOLUTION

- a. Follow-up report by House Committee on resolutions of the 1st session of National Council

QUESTION TIME - 1

Monday, 27 January

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS ON 1ST SESSION RESOLUTION

- a. Follow-up report by House Committee on resolutions of the 1st session of National Council

Tuesday, 28 January

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS ON 1ST SESSION RESOLUTION

- a. Status updates by the National Council Committees on resolution of the 1st session

Wednesday, 29 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 1

- a. Introduction of the National Council Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014
- b. Introduction of Tobacco Control Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014

QUESTION TIME - 2

Thursday, 30 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 2

- a. Deliberation on the National Council Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014

Friday, 31 January

PUBLIC HOLIDAY ON THE OCCASSION OF THE TRADITIONAL DAY OF OFFERING (LOSAR)

Monday, 3 February

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 3

- a. Continue deliberation on the National Council Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014
- b. Deliberation on the Tobacco Control Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014

Tuesday, 4 February

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 4

- a. Continue deliberation on the Tobacco Control Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014

Wednesday, 5 February

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 5

- a. Introduction of Convention on Establishing the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)

- b. Introduction of Double Tax Avoidance Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and Government of the Republic of India

QUESTION TIME – 3

Thursday, 6 February

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 6

- a. Ratification of Convention on Establishing the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
- b. Ratification of Double Tax Avoidance Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and Government of the Republic of India

Friday, 7 February

POLICY REVIEW ISSUES – 1

- a. Presentation of Performance Audit Report on Leasing of Government Land, GRF Land and Mines by Good Governance Committee
- b. Deliberation on Performance Audit Report on Leasing of Government Land, GRF Land and Mines

QUESTION TIME – 4

Monday, 10 February

POLICY REVIEW ISSUES – 2

a. Increasing Cost of Construction

It is being reported that a number of new houses constructed in Thimphu, and possibly other urban areas, are being left vacant due to lack of tenants. While it may be too early to conclude that this is the result of a housing boom, it appears quite clear that the houses are remaining unoccupied because of the mismatch between the housing rents charged and the capacity of the tenants to pay. Income levels have remained largely stagnant compared to the rise in the costs of construction. Due to the very steep increase in construction costs, house builders are forced to borrow larger amounts from the banks and therefore, have to charge higher house rents to make up the monthly installments due to the banks. Thus far, banks have not reported very high or alarming levels of Non-Performing Loans (NPL) but with housing loans constituting 26.5% of the total credit, continuation of this scenario for a few more years will lead to pressures on the banking system due to high rate of defaults which will be catastrophic for an economy already suffering from a liquidity and rupee shortages.

Likewise, the government's capital expenditure for the fiscal year 2013-14 is close to Nu. 17 billion, the bulk of which is for construction activities and this does not include hydro-power projects. The slightest increase in construction costs, therefore, has huge implications on the government budget.

Therefore, the issue is raised in the National Council to highlight this particular issue and encourage strategies and recommendations to control such rising costs.

Tuesday, 11 February

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS ON 1ST SESSION RESOLUTION

- a. Adoption of recommendations (if any) from deliberations on follow-up of 1st session resolutions

Wednesday, 12 February

POLICY REVIEW ISSUES – 3

- a. Adoption of recommendations (if any) from deliberations on Performance Audit Report on Leasing of Government Land, GRF Land and Mines

QUESTION TIME – 5

Thursday, 13 February

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – 7

- a. Adoption of the National Council Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014
- b. Adoption of Tobacco Control Act (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2014

Friday, 14 February

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

QUESTION TIME – 6

Monday, 17 February

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RATIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Tuesday, 18 February

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 2ND SESSION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

- a. Closing address by Chairperson
- b. *Tashi Moenlam*

Wednesday, 19 February

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE SECOND SESSION OF PARLIAMENT (JOINT SITTING)