

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

(Subject to change without notice)

4 – 20 January 2012

Tuesday, 3 January

REGISTRATION OF HONORABLE MEMBERS

- a. Call on the Hon'ble Chairperson
- b. Distribution of documents to Hon'ble Members
 1. Agenda for the 8th Session
 2. Order of Business for the Joint Sitting
 3. Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences Bill 2011
 4. Consumer Protection Bill of Bhutan 2011
 5. National Flag Bill of Bhutan 2011
 6. Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill 2011
 7. Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

Wednesday, 4 January

**MORNING: OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 8TH SESSION OF
PARLIAMENT (JOINT SITTING)**

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

**AFTERNOON: OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 8TH SESSION OF
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BHUTAN**

- a. *Marchang*
- b. Inaugural address by the Hon'ble Chairperson

Thursday, 5 January

JOINT SITTING – 1

- a. Deliberation on and adoption of Child Adoption Bill of Bhutan 2011
- b. Deliberation on and adoption of Sales Tax, Customs & Excise (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2011

Friday, 6 January

JOINT SITTING - 2

- a. Deliberation on and adoption of Public Finance (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2011
- b. Deliberation on and adoption of Election (Amendment) Bill of Bhutan 2011

Monday, 9 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 1

- a. Introduction of Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences (BIMS) Bill 2011 by Honorable Minister for Health

- b. Introduction of the National Flag Bill (Private Member) of Bhutan 2011 by Honorable Rinzin Rinzin & Honorable Sonam Yangchen
- c. Other Legislative Motions

Tuesday, 10 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 2

- a. Introduction of Ramsar Convention on Wetlands by Honorable Minister for Agriculture & Forests
- b. Ratification of Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- c. Deliberation on the Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences (BIMS) Bill 2011

Wednesday, 11 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 3

- a. Continue deliberation on Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences (BIMS) Bill 2011

QUESTION TIME – 1

Thursday, 12 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 4

- a. Deliberation on National Flag Bill of Bhutan 2011

Friday, 13 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 5

- a. Adoption of Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences (BIMS) Bill 2011
- b. Deliberation on Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill 2011

QUESTION TIME - 2

Monday, 16 January

REVIEW OF POLICY ISSUES – 1

a. Legalising use of electric fencing

Human-wildlife conflict has been one of the major setbacks to agriculture development in Bhutan during the past one and a half decades. This has not only compromised the national goal of enhancing food self-sufficiency but also contributed to increase in rural-urban migration and acreage of fallow lands, and shortage of farm labour besides the increase in social disharmony. Recognising these multiple problems, the National Council of Bhutan submitted a set of recommendations to the Royal Government during its 2nd Session. One of the recommendations was to explore the use of electric fences around farmers' fields to ward off wild animals.

Ministry of Agriculture & Forests (MoAF) had accordingly conducted a number of adaptive researches and developed locally fabricated electric fencing materials. Results had indicated that the technology was highly effective in deterring major wild animals without inflicting injury to other animals or to human beings. The locally fabricated fencing materials were also found to be 60-70% cheaper than the imported ones.

However, the Bhutan Energy Authority (BEA) has banned the use of electric fences based on the Bhutan Electricity Act 2001.

A review of the Act revealed that there was no major problem with the Bhutan Electricity Act 2001. Therefore, the National Council of Bhutan calls upon the Government to reconsider its ban on the use of electric fencing in the farmers' fields for the following reasons:

- a) Depredation of crops by wildlife directly affects the socio-economic welfare of the people;
- b) Human-wildlife conflict compromises the national efforts to enhance environmental conservation.

b. Shortage of Foreign Currency

Bhutan's economy is coming under increasing pressure due to shortage of foreign exchange, especially the Indian Rupee. Most recently, the Government, as an interim measure, was compelled to sell USD 200 million to shore up the rupee reserves.

As India is Bhutan's largest trading partner and the single largest source for our imports, it will be vital to address the rupee shortage for our long term economic stability. If Bhutan does not find a sustainable solution to the rupee shortage, this will have major negative implications on our balance of trade, ability to repay our debts, deplete foreign currency reserves and also cause higher inflationary pressure.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to conduct an in-depth study on the rupee shortage, its causes and consequences, and come up with a set of recommendations to overcome the problem.

Tuesday, 17 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 6

- a. Adoption of Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill 2011
- b. Re-deliberation on the Consumer Protection Bill of Bhutan 2011

Wednesday, 18 January

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

QUESTION TIME - 3

Thursday, 19 January

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - 7

- a. Adoption of the National Flag Bill of Bhutan 2011
- b. Adoption of the Consumer Protection Bill of Bhutan 2011

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 8TH SESSION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BHUTAN

- a. Closing address by the Hon'ble Chairperson
- b. Tashi Moenlam

Friday, 20 January

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 8TH SESSION OF PARLIAMENT (JOINT SITTING)