

**PROCEEDINGS & RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 45TH SESSION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN HELD ON 17.10.76 CORRESPONDING TO 24TH
DAY OF THE 9TH MONTH OF FIRE DRAGON YEAR**

1. MATTER RELATING TO LAND TRANSACTIONS

The issue of the purchase and sale of land by the public of Southern Bhutan came up for discussion in the 45th Assembly session. It was decided that no individual would be allowed to sell all his land possessions and thus become landless. Any person becoming landless in the above fashion would not be eligible for any land which the Government might in future distribute to the landless. A person could, however, sell a part of his land in case he considered it to be in excess. Those buying land were also to ensure that the land they were buying was in excess.

2. MATTER RELATING TO SUPPLY OF COPIES OF NATIONAL LAW BOOKS TO GUPS

In the past the National Law Book was kept only in the courts of law for reference. The Assembly decided to supply copies of the same to the Gups so as to enable them to explain its contents to the public for the latter's convenience.

3. MATTER RELATING TO SOKSHING HOLDINGS

The issue of rights over 'Sokshing' holdings was brought up in the Assembly. It was pointed out that the 43rd Assembly session had recognized that the owner could maintain the sokshing so registered in his/her name in the Government records. The 43rd session had also stipulated that it would be obligatory for the owner to obtain a permit from the Department of Forests in the event that he/she wanted to fell trees. In view of the problems thus created, the 45th National Assembly session decided that as sokshings were mainly preserved for their leaves for manure, felling of trees within the sokshing would henceforth be prohibited.

4. MATTER RELATING TO PASTURE LAND

It was pointed out that since the annual taxes and the cost of the pasture had been paid by the owners of pasture so registered in Government records, the Forest Department should exercise no control over such land apart from the trees. Some members further pointed out that at times the Forest Department failed to recognize the rights of the pasture owners on their pastoral lands. After discussing the issue, the Assembly decided that, in view of the

immense economic importance of the country's forest wealth, the government would carry out a detailed investigation on the matter and report its conclusion to the next session of the National Assembly.

5. MATTER RELATING TO INCREASED USAGE OF NATIONAL LANGUAGE IN OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Against the background of the frequent use of English in the official correspondence of departmental heads, the National Assembly decided, in order to encourage the use of the National Language, all government officials should henceforth become conversant with Dzongkha and use the same in all official correspondence within the country. Circulars, notification, rules and regulations framed from time to time should invariably be drafted in the official national language.

6. MATTER RELATING TO DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR GRANT OF ALIMONY AND COMPENSATION (GAO) TO WOMEN FOR ILLEGITIMATE PREGNANCIES

The Assembly discussed and approved the draft rule submitted jointly by the Royal Advisory Councillors and the High Court Judges for grant of alimony (Gao) to women for illegitimate pregnancies.

7. MATTER RELATING TO ISSUE OF OFFICIAL BHUTANESE CALENDAR

Various members pointed out to the confusion caused by the prevalence of different calendars in Bhutan. It was also stated that the official calendar prepared by the Central Monk Body was not easily available and often failed to reach the people in time.

The National Assembly accordingly resolved that henceforth the calendar prepared by the Central Monk Body would be officially recognized as the official calendar of the Royal Government of Bhutan, and that necessary steps would be taken to ensure its distribution well before the arrival of the new year.

8. MATTER RELATING TO INCREASE IN THE EMOLUMENTS OF MONDALS (GUPS)

Pointing out that the present emoluments of the Mondals were inadequate, several members made a plea that they be increased. However, in view of the limited revenue of the government, the Assembly resolved to keep the matter pending.

9. MATTER RELATING TO CREATING OF BUFFER STOCKS OF FOODGRAINS IN DZONG

The need for creating buffer stocks of foodgrains in different Dzongs to meet future emergencies was brought up in the Assembly. While agreeing that the idea was good in principle, the Assembly was of the view that owing to unavoidable circumstances, storage facilities could not be created in the Dzongs at present. It was, however, decided that anyone with surplus stock of foodgrains should report the matter to the local Dzongkhag Tshokchung, who in turn would make arrangements to deposit the same with the Food Corporation of Bhutan.

10. MATTER RELATING TO SHAPTOLAYME

While recognizing the hardship faced by the public in providing compulsory labour (Shaptolayme), the Assembly resolved that the system should be continued for the time being lest the progress of the nation be hampered.