#  <br> JUDICIARY OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN 



"Equal Justice Under Law

ANNUAL REPORT
2018


## Royal Address on the 111th National Day

Today, we are all gathered here with the people of Samtse to celebrate the most auspicious occasion of our 111th National Day.
The presence of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo makes today even more special. This year, His Holiness the Je Khenpo is also among us, so this is a truly auspicious celebration-illustrative of the harmony and kinship that exists among our people.
On this special occasion, I extend my Tashi Delek to all Bhutanese celebrating in the twenty Dzongkhags, and those who are studying and working abroad. Our National Day celebrations are special because they provide an occasion for all Bhutanese people to recall and reflect on the immense sacrifices made by our forefathers in building this precious nation of ours and to rededicate ourselves to the service of the Tsa-Wa-Sum.
This year has been a momentous election year with the successful conduct of elections to both the National Council and the National Assembly. This success is attributed to the guidance provided by the Election Commission of Bhutan, and the support of the civil service, media, armed forces, and volunteers, and underpinned by the unwavering support and active participation of the people in exercising their franchise. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all.
There were four Political Parties which contested in the National Assembly elections, with 188 candidates in the Primary Round. Irrespective of whether they won or lost the elections, their participation has been a commendable service to the nation for which I extend my admiration and appreciation.
As you all know, the Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa was elected to form the government and the Druk Phuensum Tshogpa as the opposition. I would like to take the opportunity, on this special occasion of the National Day celebrations, to extend my Tashi Delek to our new Prime Minister, Dr. Lotay Tshering and the Opposition Leader, Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, and to all the other Members of Parliament.

As the foundations of our democracy grow stronger by the year, accompanied by the continuous strengthening of the electoral process, we have gained invaluable experience which will help us overcome challenges. Furthermore, with the blessings of the Triple Gem and the protection of our Guardian Deities, the prayers of the Clergy, and the unstinted support of our people, we have been successful in achieving all our important national goals.

The system of democracy in Bhutan is founded on the noble vision of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo who has worked selflessly and tirelessly throughout His Reign to bring such extraordinary circumstances to our country today.

Therefore, I consider all of us - the King, the government, civil service, elected representatives, and the people of Bhutan - extremely fortunate to be granted this singular opportunity to serve our country.
In the run up to the recent parliamentary elections, I listened to the campaign pledges and made sure not to miss a single debate on television. I was heartened to note that all the political parties were firm and committed, and the candidates were astute and competent.

The political parties identified various ways to safeguard our future and achieve our national goals. Some chose to focus on reducing the growing economic inequality in our country and in narrowing the gap between the haves and have-nots. Others focused on the importance of self-reliance for the individual and the nation. Some felt that it was important to empower our people through the decentralisation process and others directed their attention to eradicating corruption by promoting good governance.
Notwithstanding the different approaches, all the political parties pledged to work for the wellbeing of our people through their resolutions: helping farmers address issues related to human-wildlife conflict; addressing problems caused by water scarcity; repairing existing roads and building new roads; improving
mobile and digital connectivity; helping farmers market their farm produce and earn better returns for their hard work; the underlying objective being to increase the income of our people.
The political parties also identified various important areas: enhancing access to and improving the quality of healthcare in the country; providing higher quality education for our children; ensuring the wellbeing of our youth; and creating greater employment opportunities. In addition, the political parties pledged to help improve infrastructure, bolster our hydropower sector and strengthen the private sector.
There was a deep emphasis placed on improving good governance, with pledges to: strengthen the rule of law, establish better mechanisms for checks and balances, enhance transparency, and improve efficiency in the delivery of public services. The parties also expressed their concerns about the increasing national debt, growing corruption, and a number of other issues of importance to the country.
In essence, I was deeply heartened to note that all the political parties were committed to strengthening our sovereignty, peace and unity; achieving equitable socio-economic development; and ensuring the long-term welfare of the people and country, in line with our national objective of building a Just and Harmonious Society guided by the noble principles of Gross National Happiness.
The vision of their pledges clearly reflected our aspirations as a nation, and I commend all the parties and candidates who participated in the elections.
During the National Day celebration in 2013, I spoke at length about the important roles and responsibilities of the civil service. Five years later, I feel that it is an appropriate time to, once again, reflect on the important services provided to the nation by civil servants as a new government takes office and prepares to implement plans of national importance.

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In 2006, when I became King, the budget for the 9th Five Year Plan was Nu 87 billion. In the 10th Plan the budget increased to Nu 148 billion, and in the 11th Plan to Nu 223 billion. Now, as we embark on the 12th Five Year Plan, the budgetary outlay is expected to exceed Nu 300 billion.

In addition to the above plan outlays, there are a number of major ongoing hydro power projects including the Punatsangchu I, Punatsangchu II, Mangdechu and Nikachu Projects. We have also begun discussions to construct the Sankosh Hydro Power Project which would be one of the largest hydropower projects in the country.
In my view, there will be an immense increase in both the magnitude and scope of the national development plans considering the goals of the 12th Plan and the anticipated activities in the hydropower sector. As the budget expands and the quantum of work increases, the associated risks are also magnified. Thus, it is critical for our civil servants to be more alert, concerned, prepared, and mindful than ever before.

In a democracy, elected governments serve a fixed term and, irrespective of how well meaning the government is and how well they perform, their fate rests in the hands of the electorate and we will inevitably see periodic changes in government. Therefore, our civil service has the responsibility to ensure continuity in pursuit of our timeless national goals and objectives.
Our most important long-term national goals include: enhancing our security and sovereignty; promoting our unique traditions and cultural heritage; conserving our environment; promoting peaceful and harmonious coexistence with other nations, and enhancing the reputation and national identity of our glorious nation of Palden Drukpa.
Our greatest wealth in human resources is epitomised by our civil servants who serve in every Dzongkhag, Gewog, and village, and should know intimately the most pressing issues, and the concerns and aspirations of the people. At
the same time, they are well travelled around the world, so we expect them to be well informed and aware of the outside world. They should be up-to-date with advancements in technology and new practices, and able to use this knowledge for the benefit of our country.
Thus, it is important that the civil servants, equipped with immense knowledge, skills, and experience, render their unstinted support to the government's endeavour aimed at improving the welfare of the people. As a developing country, we have limited resources. We must manage our available resources wisely, minimize waste, and ensure that all our resources are directed at improving the well being of the people, and in fulfilling our national vision. The civil service is tasked with the oversight, management, administration, and disbursement of funds for governance. So the responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of our civil servants to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in utilizing our scarce resources.
We have more than 29,000 civil servants working in the various ministries and agencies of the government. There are around 13,000 personnel in the armed forces, more than 7,700 people work for the various companies under the Druk Holding and Investments, and another 3,300 work for other State Owned Enterprises under the Ministry of Finance. We have around 1,500 elected representatives. This brings the total number of public servants in Bhutan, whose salaries and benefits are granted by the state, to around 54,000 . On one hand, this is good news for us - it means that there is one public servant for every 13 Bhutanese citizens.
However, with such large numbers, there is a risk that our public servants can become an impediment to national development and progress. The greatest danger will come from their complacency and indifference.
Our public servants will fail in their duty if they do not learn from past mistakes and correct them, if they are unreceptive to feedback, if they lack
accountability, if they are unresponsive to new ideas and solutions, if they have poor communication and coordination, or if organizations expand and multiply without direction or coherent vision. In this case, even our best intentions will bear no results. Instead, all we will have are missed opportunities and a debilitating waste of time and resources.

If, in the next 10 to 15 years, we achieve all our national objectives, the credit will go to our public servants. However, if we fail, it will mean that the public servants have failed.

We are a small country - a country like no other. Therefore, we are in a position to be more efficient and more effective than others. What others can do in a decade, we can and should accomplish in a few years. What others manage in years, we can and should achieve in months.

It must always be our constant endeavour to perform better, carry out our tasks with greater efficiency, effectiveness and grace, and become exceptional in the world.

As I have said many times before- if we are firm in our resolve, we will succeed and overcome the constraints posed by limited resources.

Looking ahead, we have a new five-year Plan, and a great number of responsibilities of national importance before us. We must work together in order to build an extraordinary, strong, secure, and peaceful future for Bhutan.

My National Day prayers for our precious country remains the same. May the sun of peace continue to shine forever upon Palden Drukpa - Guru Rinpoche's Baeyul, blessed by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel and His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. May each year always be better than the last, and may the people of Bhutan enjoy happiness and prosperity for all time to come.


## FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE

The inter-dependence of justice, peace and development is well recognized and undeniable. Justice is the most important and imperative objective of the State. It is the basis of orderly human co-existence - equilibrium of harmony between individual interests, societal interests and national interests. In the words of Lord Bryce, "There is no better test of the excellence of a government than the efficiency of its judicial system, for nothing more clearly touches the welfare and security of the average citizen than the feeling that he can rely on the certain and prompt administration of justice."Being one of the primary drivers of stability, security and development, it is essential for the Justice System and its key players to be efficient, effective and progressive. An effective Justice System is not only an indication of economic progress and development, but also the maturity of the society.

Bhutan in the last decade has witnessed immense, rapid and fundamental change in the legal and political domain. We must be conscious and grateful that our Monarchs have tirelessly worked towards achieving our common aspiration of creating a free, fair and just society to ensure the continued well-being, security, and happiness of our people. His Majesty has commanded, " $A$ sound legal system is the basis of the nation's independence, security, GNH and protector of the people's rights and freedoms, which must ensure the creation of a fair and just society...We have to strive for strength and greatness, avoiding the average trap - our greatest obstacle. Every step of the way, each and every single year, we have to evolve, adapt and upgrade". Consequently, on our path to nation building, development and progress, the Judiciary has an important mandate to evolve and upgrade to uphold this noble vision, and contribute towards strengthening our justice system to enhance public trust and confidence. It can and must be achieved through unity of purpose and aspiration - a collective commitment to the principles of constitutionalism, due process and the rule of law.

The democratic culture in our country, rapid economic development and technological advances create special challenges for the entire legal system. Technological advances, often far outpace established law and legal doctrine. Globalization and the age of social media, has increased the demand for the effective delivery of public services and invariably, influenced changes in the administration of justice. The increasing complexity and sophistication of human affairs continue to lead to growth in legislation, administrative regulations and onslaught of litigation. Increasing awareness amongst the population has made our citizens more conscious of their rights, which is translated into greater and rising expectations.

Across the world, justice systems demonstrate reaction to rapid change, by constantly finding ways and means to evolve justice service perception, manner of providing services and look for

innovative means to bringing the Justice System closer to people it is meant to serve. In light of the rapidly changing, and increasingly complex nature of today's socio-economic, political and legal regime, Judiciary needs to constantly evolve, to suit the changing times - to ensure continued relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. The pursuit of Justice calls for vision, humanism and unity of thought and constant vigilance. His Majesty has constantly reminded us that, "There is a need to continue to improve the legal system through timely and appropriate reforms and proactive initiatives. Any system developed must be compared with other systems, but the essence must remain traditional and Bhutanese. "

Judicial training and development will remain important in ensuring that our Judges are able to discharge their judicial functions effectively. A properly resourced and independent judiciary must perform many vital functions and administer justice to citizens without fear or favour. Besides, a judiciary that is adequately resourced, must also be treated with the respect it deserves, it must be kept free from undue pressures and influence, and staffed with competent judges, well trained and imbued with qualities of independence, integrity, wisdom, competence, and right attitude - it is crucial for the sustenance of the rule of law and democratic values. Accordingly, the Judiciary has remained vigilant to the critical need of safeguarding judicial independence and to meet expectations of better, faster, and cost effective services- the fundamental basis for inspiring public trust and confidence. The fact that certain matters are out of Judiciary's control such as: adequate finance and infra-structure; control and oversight of the BAR and advocates; mind, attitude and philosophy of Judges; human resource needs and institution of cases should not become an excuse. Although, the Judiciary has made considerable progress, it must continue to be mindful and ardently strive to meet the needs of our people, in every manner possible.

Access to justice does not simply mean "access to courts". Cornerstones, for access to justice must include: all state and non-state actors involved in the administration of justice; just, effective and efficient justice delivery systems and processes; transparency, affordability, use of alternative dispute resolution (court annexed mediation), legal aid; effective dissemination of laws and humanizing the face of justice. Meaningful engagements and close cooperation amongst the relevant institutions and agencies is crucial to strengthen the justice system. Collectively, the justice sector institutions must champion professionalism, ethics and integrity, ensure compliance with due process and work towards providing efficient services to our people.

Memories are precious, but progress and change is inevitable. The cherished memories, traditions, and accumulated wisdom of the past must become our strength, to deal with the challenges of the present. We cannot divine perfection, but we must all continue to aspire to
achieve perfection in whatever we do. The Judiciary must continue to adopt and implement credible and comprehensive reforms to create a justice system that is responsive, progressive and conducive to the development of our democratic society. Reforms in the pipeline includeestablishment of Research and Reform Division, Court annexed mediation, establishment of an Administrative Bench in the High Court, establishment of a museum dedicated to the Constitution and the Judiciary in the Supreme Court Complex. The Judiciary has an unwavering vision and a steadfast commitment to all aspects of administration of justice, for the development and progress of our nation. The Judiciary values working collaboratively with other institutions to achieve multifaceted, comprehensive and holistic reforms in the Justice Sector which is directed towards fulfilling the vision and commitment of our Monarch's to promote our national objectives, safeguard the well being of our people, ensure a free, fair and just society, and strengthen the foundations for a progressive, functional and intelligent democracy.

When two people have problems they say "I will see you in court." It is because of the belief that they will get justice from the Courts. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every Judge to ensure that this trust and confidence in the justice system remains intact. It has indeed been an honor to work with the Judges and the Staff of the Judiciary, in the service of the Tsa-Wa-Sum. I remain forever grateful to each one of them for performing a difficult and stressful work with professionalism, integrity and in accordance with the rule of law. Nothing worthwhile comes easy in life- there will always be challenges and difficulties. It is important to transform challenges into opportunities and render faster, better and cost effective services to the people.

I am hopeful, that this annual report will afford insight into the functioning of the Judiciary and the efforts undertaken to uphold the rule of law and make access to justice a reality - a prerequisite of a free, fair and just society envisioned by our benevolent Monarch.

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## 1. Introduction

Article 21(1) of the Constitution of Bhutan requires the Judiciary to "safeguard, uphold, and administer justice fairly and independently without fear, favour, or undue delay in accordance with the Rule of Law to inspire trust and confidence and to enhance access to justice."Similarly, Article 21(2) of the Constitution of Bhutan states "The judicial authority of Bhutan shall be vested in the Royal Courts of Justice comprising the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Dzongkhag Court, the Dungkhag Court and such other Courts and Tribunals as may be established from time to time by the Druk Gyalpo on the recommendation of the National Judicial Commission."

The Judiciary of Bhutan plays a crucial role as one of the three indispensable organs of the government. An old adage states, 'As the King is to His subjects; the subjects aspire for peace and the basis for peace is the Rule of law'. In pursuit of peace and tranquility, the Judiciary ensures justice in the interest of maintaining peace and tranquility. It is the custodian of the Rule of Law and is responsible for the conduct of the just society. The Judiciary is the common platform where the aggrieved parties take recourse to seek their remedies. It is, thus, the mandate of the Judiciary to deliver justice in a fair, impartial, and independent manner.

This Annual Report of 2018 provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the Judiciary during the past one year. Besides the key events, the Annual Report also provides an overview of the service delivery of the Judiciary in the form of case statistics for 2018.
2. Case Report - 2018
2.1 Case Statistics - 2018

| Statistics on the Institution, Disposal and Pendency of Cases in the Courts of the Kingdom of Bhutan as on 31 st December 2018 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Dungkhag Courts |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SI. <br> No. | Court | Bench | Miscellaneous Cases | Opening <br> Balance | Registered | Decided | Pending | Appeal to <br> Dzongkhag | Appeal to High Court | Appeal <br> to <br> Larger <br> Bench | Appeal to <br> Supreme Court | Cases <br> Pending <br> Beyond <br> 12 <br> Months |
| 1 | Dorokha |  | 234 | 42 | 80 | 91 | 31 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2 | Gelephu |  | 1039 | 68 | 372 | 364 | 76 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 3 | Jomotshangkha |  | 315 | 9 | 51 | 53 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | Lhamoyzingkha |  | 172 | 12 | 38 | 47 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | Lingzhi |  | 47 | 4 | 11 | 11 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Nganglam |  | 405 | 5 | 136 | 135 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | Panbang |  | 131 | 19 | 57 | 59 | 17 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 8 | Phuentsholing | Bench I | 2045 | 95 | 293 | 335 | 53 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
|  |  | Bench II |  | 85 | 335 | 345 | 75 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| 9 | Sakteng |  | 55 | 6 | 19 | 24 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | Samdrupcholing |  | 204 | 3 | 95 | 85 | 13 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | Tashichhoeling (Sibsoo) |  | 467 | 17 | 121 | 113 | 25 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | Sombaykha |  | 164 | 2 | 50 | 51 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 13 | Thrimshing |  | 115 | 3 | 48 | 50 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | Wamrong |  | 160 | 6 | 92 | 92 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | Weringla |  | 57 | 1 | 19 | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total |  |  | 5610 | 377 | 1817 | 1871 | 323 | 139 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 |


| Dzongkhag Courts |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { Sl. } \\ \text { No. } \end{gathered}$ | Court | Bench | Miscellaneous Cases | Opening <br> Balance | Registered | Decided | Pending | Appeal To <br> Dzongkhag | Appeal <br> To <br> High <br> Court | Appeal <br> to <br> Larger <br> Bench | Appeal <br> To <br> Supreme <br> Court | Cases <br> Pending <br> Beyond <br> 12 <br> Months |
| 16 | Bumthang |  | 550 | 53 | 238 | 233 | 58 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 17 | Chukha |  | 509 | 55 | 216 | 251 | 20 | 0 | 70 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | Dagana |  | 801 | 35 | 189 | 196 | 28 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Gasa |  | 44 | 3 | 31 | 33 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 20 | Наа |  | 405 | 9 | 108 | 109 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 | Lhuentse |  | 528 | 14 | 127 | 118 | 23 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 | Mongar |  | 583 | 85 | 279 | 298 | 66 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | Paro | Bench I | 2726 | 156 | 244 | 226 | 174 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 39 |
|  |  | Bench II |  | 107 | 310 | 250 | 167 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| 24 | Pemagatshel |  | 265 | 31 | 113 | 127 | 17 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | Punakha |  | 1396 | 108 | 376 | 417 | 67 | 0 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 26 | Samdrup Jongkhar |  | 675 | 12 | 242 | 231 | 23 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 27 | Samtse |  | 826 | 51 | 245 | 260 | 36 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 28 | Sarpang |  | 401 | 43 | 163 | 163 | 43 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 29 | Thimphu | Criminal Bench I | 5986 | 131 | 256 | 297 | 90 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
|  |  | Family and Child Bench |  | 87 | 443 | 462 | 68 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  | Commercial Bench |  | 215 | 521 | 559 | 177 | 0 | 43 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
|  |  | Criminal Bench II |  | 148 | 256 | 328 | 76 | 0 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
|  |  | Civil Bench |  | 233 | 510 | 481 | 262 | 0 | 72 | 0 | 0 | 33 |
| 30 | Trashigang |  | 602 | 14 | 264 | 250 | 28 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |


| $\begin{gathered} \text { Sl. } \\ \text { No. } \end{gathered}$ | Court | Bench | Miscellaneous Cases | Opening <br> Balance | Registered | Decided | Pending | Appeal To <br> Dzongkhag | Appeal <br> To <br> High <br> Court | Appeal <br> to <br> Larger <br> Bench | Appeal <br> To <br> Supreme <br> Court | Cases <br> Pending <br> Beyond <br> 12 <br> Months |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 31 | Trashiyangtse |  | 242 | 9 | 84 | 76 | 17 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 32 | Trongsa |  | 542 | 43 | 132 | 148 | 27 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| 33 | Tsirang |  | 546 | 44 | 155 | 179 | 20 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 34 | Wangdue <br> Phodrang | Bench I | 1861 | 74 | 314 | 312 | 76 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
|  |  | Bench II |  | 8 | 272 | 195 | 85 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 35 | Zhemgang |  | 289 | 24 | 72 | 71 | 25 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Total |  |  | 19777 | 1792 | 6160 | 6270 | 1682 | 0 | 475 | 0 | 0 | 163 |
| High Court |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { Sl. } \\ \text { No. } \end{gathered}$ | Court | Bench | Miscellaneous Cases | Opening <br> Balance | Registered | Decided | Pending | Appeal To <br> Dzongkhag | Appeal <br> To <br> High <br> Court | Appeal <br> to <br> Larger <br> Bench | Appeal <br> To <br> Supreme <br> Court | Cases <br> Pending <br> Beyond <br> 12 <br> Months |
| 36 |  | Bench I | 1170 | 50 | 166 | 123 | 93 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 9 | 2 |
|  |  | Bench II |  | 50 | 164 | 118 | 96 | 0 | 0 | 48 | 5 | 9 |
|  |  | Bench III |  | 71 | 143 | 91 | 123 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 5 | 16 |
|  |  | Larger Bench |  | 3 | 108 | 47 | 64 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 0 |
|  |  | Total | 1170 | 174 | 581 | 379 | 376 | 0 | 0 | 102 | 38 | 27 |


| Supreme Court |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { Sl. } \\ \text { No. } \end{gathered}$ | Court | Bench | Miscellaneous Cases | Opening <br> Balance | Registered | Decided | Pending | Appeal To <br> Dzongkhag | Appeal <br> To <br> High <br> Court | Appeal <br> to <br> Larger <br> Bench | Appeal <br> To <br> Supreme <br> Court | Cases <br> Pending <br> Beyond <br> 12 <br> Months |
| 37 | Supreme <br> Court | Khading | 11 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  | Langchen | 11 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  | Maja | 11 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  | Tachog | 10 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total |  |  | 43 | 24 | 19 | 23 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Grand Total |  |  | 26600 | 2367 | 8577 | 8542 | 2402 | 139 | 475 | 102 | 38 | 202 |

2.2 Overall 2018 Case Statistics

| Miscellaneous <br> Hearing | Opening <br> Balance | Registered | Decided | Pending | Appeal to <br> Dzongkhag | Appeal to <br> High <br> Court | Appeal to <br> Larger <br> Bench | Appeal to <br> Supreme <br> Court | Cases Pending <br> Beyond 12months |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 26600 | 2367 | 8577 | 8542 | 2402 | 139 | 475 | 102 | 38 | 202 |


2.3 Case Statistics Summary 2015 to 2017

| Details | $\mathbf{2 0 1 6}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 1 7}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 1 8}$ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Case Registered | 7910 | 7669 | 8577 |
| Case Decided | 7783 | 6917 | 8542 |
| Total Case Pending | 1622 | 2361 | 2402 |
| Cases Pending Beyond 12 months | 83 | 216 | 202 |

## Case Statistics Summary



### 2.4 Case Count by Case Type

| Case Type | Count |
| :--- | :--- |
| Civil | 7310 |
| Criminal | 1232 |

## Case Count by Case Type



### 2.5 Case Analysis

## a) Overview

In 2018, 2367 cases were carried forward from 2017 and 8,577 new cases were registered. Thimphu and Phuentsholing Courts had the highest number of registered cases among the Dzongkhag and Dungkhag Courts respectively. The total case pending for 2018 stood at 2402 cases of which 202 cases are pending for more than 1 year. In total, 8542 cases were decided.

The reason for some courts having higher numbers of registered cases is attributed to higher population and concentration of economic and social activities. It must be highlighted that a high disposal rate of cases among all the courts can be attributed to the in-house rule of disposing the cases within one year. The cases pending for more than a year is due to circumstances such as waiting for the forensic report, signature or thumb impression verification from experts outside the country, complexities of cases, absconding respondents, and inability to trace witnesses.

## b) Category of Cases

In 2018, a total of 7,310 civil cases were registered out of which monetary cases top the list with 3218 cases. Compared to 2017, there is an increase of 8 percent in monetary cases. However, the total civil cases had marginally increased by 5 percent as compared to 2017.
On the other hand, 1232 criminal cases were registered in 2018. This, however, is a drop of 14 percent as compared to 2017. Amongst the criminal cases, Assault and Battery top the list with 366 cases.
c) Case Statistics of High Court:


## d) Case Statistics of Supreme Court


2.6 Statistics of Marriage Certificates and Other Notary Services - 2018

| SI. <br> No. | Court | MC | Name <br> Change | MC Affirmation | Lost Documents | Marital Status | Child Travel Documents | Documents Attestation | Child Adoption | Organ Transplant | Closing and Transfer of shares/ accounts | Attest Agreements, Wills, | Candidature Affidavit |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | Bumthang | 119 |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Chukha | 71 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 7 |  | 12 |
| 3 | Dagana | 140 |  |  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |
| 4 | Gasa | 18 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 8 |
| 5 | Haa | 135 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 5 |  |
| 6 | Lhuentse | 181 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 5 |  | 11 |
| 7 | Mongar | 82 |  | 1 |  | 4 |  |  |  |  | 5 |  | 22 |
| 8 | Paro | 221 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Pemagatshel | 50 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 4 |  | 11 |
| 10 | Punakha | 181 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Samdrupjongkhar | 100 |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  | 16 |  | 10 |
| 12 | Samtse | 271 |  |  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  | 6 |  |  |
| 13 | Sarpang | 79 |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Thimphu (Public Notary) | 1094 | 3 | 974 | 13 | 8 | 19 | 4298 | 10 | 4 | 13 | 4 |  |
| 15 | Trashigang | 121 |  | 3 |  | 5 |  | 2 | 1 |  | 17 |  | 19 |
| 16 | Trashiyangtse | 68 | 3 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 5 |  |  |
| 17 | Trongsa | 110 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 9 |  |  |
| 18 | Tsirang | 119 | 1 | 1 |  | 8 |  |  |  |  | 7 |  |  |
| 19 | Wangdue Phodrang | 473 |  |  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | Zhemgang | 62 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 4 |  | 9 |
| 21 | Dorokha | 84 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | Gelephu | 158 |  |  | 1 | 9 |  |  |  |  | 13 |  |  |
| 23 | Jomotshangkha | 54 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 5 |  |  |
| 24 | Lhamoyzingkha | 56 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |


| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Sl. } \\ & \text { No. } \end{aligned}$ | Court | MC | Name Change | $\begin{gathered} \text { MC } \\ \text { Affirmation } \end{gathered}$ | Lost Documents | Marital Status | Child Travel Documents | Documents Attestation | Child Adoption | Organ Transplant | Closing and Transfer of shares/ accounts | Attest Agreements, Wills, | Candidature Affidavit |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 25 | Lingzhi | 5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | Nganglam | 5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27 | Panbang | 23 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 6 |  | 2 |
| 28 | Phuentsholing | 443 | 13 | 2 |  | 11 |  |  |  |  | 22 | 1 |  |
| 29 | Sakteng | 9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |
| 30 | Samdrupcholing | 60 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| 31 | Tashichhoeling (Sibsoo) | 232 | 2 |  | 2 | 7 |  |  |  |  | 5 |  | 5 |
| 32 | Sombaykha | 66 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 33 | Thrimshing | 13 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| 34 | Wamrong | 21 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 35 | Weringla | 9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tota |  | 4933 | 25 | 991 | 17 | 72 | 19 | 4300 | 12 | 4 | 154 | 11 | 109 |

### 2.7 Revenue Generated by the Judiciary in 2018

The following table provides an overview of the revenue generated by the Courts through court fees, thrimthue, fines and penalties:

| Sl. No. | Courts | Revenue (Nu.) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1. | Supreme Court | 1,979,258 |
| 2. | High Court | 872,300 |
| 3. | Thimphu | 18,578,083 |
| 4. | Paro | 1,905,820 |
| 5. | Tsirang | 531,669 |
| 6. | Sarpang | 540,000 |
| 7. | Наа | 431,815 |
| 8. | Chukha | 2,509,601 |
| 9. | Gasa | 72,650 |
| 10. | Dagana | 250,475 |
| 11. | Lhuentse | 761,868 |
| 12. | Mongar | 291,975 |
| 13. | Samtse | 994,605 |
| 14. | Samdrup Jongkhar | 342,280 |
| 15. | Trashigang | 506,100 |
| 16. | Wangdue Phodrang | 669,225 |
| 17. | Panbang | 36,075 |
| 18. | Lhamoyzingkha | 135,110 |
| 19. | Gelephu | 617,650 |
| 20. | Phuentsholing | 3,014,668.52 |
| 21. | Dorokha | 672,900 |
| 22. | Jomotsangkha | 26,600 |
| 23. | Nganglam | 364,114.59 |
| 24. | Thrimshing | 15,925 |
| 25. | Wamrong | 118,600 |
| 26. | Tashichhoeling (Sibsoo) | 81,225 |


| 27. | Sakteng | 4,150 |
| :---: | :--- | :--- |
| 28. | Trashiyangtse | 47,150 |
| 29. | Punakha | $1,535,032$ |
| 30. | Samdrupcholing | 102,975 |
| 31. | Weringla | 10,300 |
| 32. | Bumthang | 635,215 |
| 33. | Trongsa | 645,050 |
| 34. | Pemagatshel | 10,600 |
| 35. | Zhemgang | 406,250 |
|  |  | $\mathbf{3 8 , 1 8 2 , 2 8 2}$ |

## 3. Inauguration Ceremonies

### 3.1 Inauguration of second Bench at Wangdue Phodrang Dzongkhag Court

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan inaugurated Bench II of Wangdue Phodrang Dzongkhag Court on 20th March 2018. The Bench II was established to address the increasing number of cases filed by the people of Wangdue, employees of the two hydro-electric projects, Dzong reconstruction project and armed force personnel. Drangpon Rabjam Gyelpo of the High Court has been appointed as the officiating Drangpon of Bench II.

### 3.2 Inauguration of Sarpang Dzongkhag Court

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan inaugurated Sarpang Dzongkhag Court on 15th June 2018. The court was constructed with the funding from the Royal Government of Bhutan with an amount of Nu .20 million. The inauguration ceremony was attended by officials, staff
 and public of Sarpang Dzongkhag.

## 4. Appointments and Transfers

### 4.1 Appointment of Drangpon Rabjams



Mr. Gyelpo, Senior Court Registrar of the High Court; Mr. Tenzin Dorji, Senior Court Registrar of Paro Dzongkhag Court and Ms. Richa Gurung, Senior Court Registrar of the Supreme Court and the Personal Secretary to the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan were appointed as Drangpon Rabjams on 31st January 2018.

Drangpon Rabjam Gyelpo has been appointed as the officiating Drangpon of Bench II of Wangdue Phodrang
Dzongkhag Court, Drangpon Rabjam Tenzin Dorji has been appointed as the officiating Drangpon of Bench II of Paro Dzongkhag Court and Drangpon Rabjam Richa Gurung continues to serve as the Personal Secretary to the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan.

### 4.2 Appointment of Court Registrars

Four Post Graduate Diploma in National Law (PGDNL) graduates from the Royal Institute of Management (RIM) joined the Judiciary as Court Registrars with effect from 1st January 2018. Mr. Jigme Gyaltshen is placed at the Criminal Bench I, Ms. Tshering Yangdon at the Commercial Bench, and Ms. Dechen Tshomo Dorji at the Civil Bench, Thimphu Dzongkhag Court. Ms. Tshering Yangzom is placed at Chukha Dzongkhag Court.


Jigme Gyaltshen
NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad, India


Dechen Tshomo Dorji
Indraprastha University, Delhi, India


Tshering Yangdon
Diwan Law College, CCS University, Meerut, India


Tshering Yangzom
Kalinga School of Law, Kalinga Institute for Industrial Technology, Bhubaneswar, India

### 4.3 Transfers

a) Drangpon Pelden Wangmo of Paro Dzongkhag Court was transferred to Sarpang Dzongkhag Court with effect from 1st January 2018.
b) Two Court Registrars of Thimphu Dzongkhag Court, Mr. Garab Yeshi of the Civil Bench and Mr. Dawa Gyeltshen of the Commercial Bench have been transferred to the Supreme Court with effect from 1st March 2018. Garab and Dawa have been placed at the Langchen and the Maaja Benches respectively.

c) Mr. Dorji Dukpa, Senior Finance Officer of the Supreme Court, has been transferred as Personal Secretary to Gyalyum Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck with effect from 24th December 2018.
After joining the service in 2006, he served in the High Court since 10th April 2008 and has been working at the Supreme Court since 1st July 2010.
Dorji Dukpa

### 4.4 Superannuation

Drangpon Karma Tshephel of the Supreme Court superannuated on 27th December 2018 after thirty-eight years of dedicated service. He was born in 1959 in Ganglapong village under Tsamang Gewog in Mongar Dzongkhag.

He joined the service in 1st December 1980 as a junior clerk in the Home Ministry. In 1981, he served as a senior clerk in the Commission for Religious Organizations. He joined the Judiciary in 1990 as a Bench Clerk in the High Court. The following timeline shows Dasho Karma Tshephel's workplaces
 and positions in the Judiciary:
i. Bench Clerk at High Court (1990-1991)
ii. Drangpon Rabjam at Haa Dzongkhag Court (1992-1993).
iii. Drangpon Rabjam at Punakha Dzongkhag Court (1993-1997).
iv. Court Registrar at Thimphu Dzongkhag Court (1997-1999)
v. Drangpon Rabjam at Wamrong Dungkhag Court (1999-2001)
vi. Drangpon at Bumthang Dzongkhag Court (2001-2005)
vii. Court Registrar at High Court (2005-2006)
viii. Drangpon at Gasa Dzongkhag Court (2007-2010)
ix. High Court (2010)
x. Supreme Court (2010-2018)

## 5. Conferences/Workshops

### 5.1 Workshop on Election Dispute Settlement

A two-day workshop on Election Dispute Settlement was held at the Supreme Court from 22nd to 23rd January 2017. It was organized by the Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) in collaboration with the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB).


Drangpons of the Supreme Court, High Court, Dzongkhag Courts and Dungkhag Courts attended the workshop. Mandates, Policy and Practice of the ECB; Constitution of Bhutan on Election; Election Dispute Settlement System (EDSS); Comparative Analysis of EDSS and Judicial Process; Criteria of Candidates and issues related to affidavits; Election offences, penalties and appeal; and Aspects of Third Parliamentary Elections 2018 were discussed. The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan briefed the participants on Judicial policies on matters related to election disputes.

### 5.2 Workshop on Environmental Adjudication for the Judiciary of Bhutan



The Supreme Court of Bhutan in collaboration with Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Asian Network of Judges conducted a three-day workshop on "Environmental Adjudication for the Judiciary of Bhutan" from 18th to 20th July 2018 at Le Meridien Hotel in Thimphu. Drangpons of the twenty Dzongkhag Courts, three Dungkhag Courts and Court Registrars attended the workshop.

Over the period of three days, participants were able to learn about developments in environment and climate change law and litigation, climate change adjudication, managing environmental cases and environmental courts and tribunals best practices and development of special rules and evidences in environmental cases.

### 5.3 Workshop on Current Trends and Best Practices in Management of Environmental Litigations



The Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) with support from White \& Case LLP organized a two-day workshop on "Current Trends and Best Practices in Management of Environmental Litigations" for Court Registrars from 24th to 25th July 2018.

The Workshop was also attended by legal officers from various government agencies. During the two-day workshop, participants discussed on common themes and issues in environmental law, common issues encountered in the courts and regional developments in environmental litigation.

## 6. Trainings and Orientation

### 6.1 Training on Legislative Drafting

A three-day training on Legislative Drafting was organized by BNLI at the Supreme Court from 10th to 12th January 2018. It was facilitated by two resource speakers, Mr. Matthew Secomb and Mr. Aditya Singh from White and Case in Singapore.


Court Registrars of the Judiciary and legal officers from various agencies participated in the training. Theories of legislative process, planning legislation, importance of comparative study, drafting process and legislative interpretation were discussed.

### 6.2 Sumtaag refresher course for Judges, Court Registrars and Bench Clerks

The BNLI organized an eight-day Refresher Course in Advanced Dzongkha Grammar (Sumta Legshed Nangwa Dhampa) for the Drangpons, Court Registrars and Bench Clerks from 24th January to 2nd February 2018.

The course was facilitated by Khenpo Karma, the Vice Principal of Tango Buddhist University. The course was conducted with an objective to enhance the capacity of the judicial personnel to read, understand, write and communicate better in Dzongkha. A total of thirty-nine participants took part in the program.

### 6.3 Orientation for the newly appointed Drangpon Rabjams, Court Registrars and Bench Clerks

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan graced the opening ceremony of the threeday judicial induction and orientation program for the newly appointed Drangpon Rabjams, Court Registrars and Bench Clerks which was held from 7th to 9th February 2018 at the Supreme Court.

The program was organized by the BNLI in collaboration with the Supreme Court. The participants were briefed on several aspects including judicial processes of registration, hearings and adjudication of cases; electronic case management system; FIRAC (Facts, Issues, Rules, Analysis and Conclusion) model of judgment drafting; judicial code of conduct; judicial roles and responsibilities; and judicial leadership, protocol, etiquette, teamwork and collaboration. The Department of Culture trained the participants on both theoretical and practical aspects of Driglam Namzha.

## 7. Talks By Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan

### 7.1 Lecture to DeSuung by the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan delivered a talk to the 28th Batch De-Suung candidates on 29th January 2018 at Tencholing in Wangdue Phodrang. There were 124 teacher candidates. The training is uniquely designed to impart basic knowledge and skills in various fields such as disaster rescue and relief operations, environment and development, survival skills, leadership and personal development.
a) The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan also addressed the 29th Batch De-Suung candidates on 3rd April 2018. The candidates were 121 local government leaders from twenty Dzongkhags.
b) The Hon. Chief Justice delivered a talk on 'Constitutionalism and Rule of Law' to the 30th Batch DeSuugs on 13th June 2018 at Tencholing, Wangdue Phodrang. The 30th Batch De-Suugs comprised of 125 volunteers including fresh graduates and civil servants.

### 7.2 Constitutionalism and Rule of Law



The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan gave a talk on 'Constitutionalism and Rule of Law' to the participants of the 3rd Foundational Leadership Program at the Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies in Phuentsholing on 3rd June 2018. There were thirty participants from various
organizations including the civil service, corporate sector, civil society organizations and the armed forces.

### 7.3 Thematic Session with the National Council

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan gave an extensive talk on 'Constitutionalism, Rule of Law and Democracy' and 'Role of Parliamentarians and Challenges to Constitutionalism' during the thematic session for the Honorable Members of the National Council on 5th June 2018. The Hon. Chief Justice explained the fundamental principles of the Constitution which are embedded with core values of sovereignty and security; supporting values of liberty \& equality and structural values in the form of democracy and rule of law.
Relevant provisions of the Constitution which are beneficial to the members while carrying out their legislative and review mandate were also highlighted. The Hon. Chief Justice urged the members of the National Council to play an important role in resolving issues and inconsistencies in the existing laws and policies.

### 7.4 Legacies of the Monarchy Lecture Series 2018

The Judiciary celebrated 50 years of establishment of the High Court and 10 years of the adoption of the Constitution of Bhutan. In order to commemorate the two historical events, the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan delivered the inaugural lecture of the 'Legacies of the Monarchy Lecture Series 2018' at the Royal Thimphu College on the topic 'The Constitution, Democracy and the Rule of Law in Bhutan' on 6th June 2018.

The Lecture was a continuation of the lecture series initiated by the Her Royal Highness Ashi Sonam Dechan Wangchuck in 2014 coinciding with the 60th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. The aim of the lecture series is to highlight the legacies of our monarchs, particularly of the Fourth Druk Gyalpo for gifting the people of Bhutan our Constitution. The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan delivered the second lecture on the same topic at Gedu College of Business Studies on 29th June 2018.


The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan delivered the third lecture on the Legacies of the Monarchy Lecture series on Constitution, Democracy and the Rule of Law in Bhutan to the Drangpons of the Supreme Court, High Court, Dzongkhag Courts and Dungkhag Courts, and Court Registrars on 23rd July 2018.

## 8. Visits by the Hon. Chief Justice and Justices

### 8.1 International Visits

## a) 15th United Nations Day of Vesak.

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan visited Bangkok, Thailand to attend the 15th United Nations Day of Vesak from 24th to 29th May 2018.
The International Day of Vesak recognized by the United Nations became a reality on 15th December 1999. Vesak falls on a full moon day of May, and is the most important Buddhist holiday, which celebrates the three important events - the birth, full awakening and the passing away of the Lord Buddha.
b) The 4th BIMSTEC Summit


The Hon. Chief Justice Tshering Wangchuk, as the Chief Advisor of the Interim Government, led the Bhutanese delegation to the 4th BIMSTEC Summit held from 30-31 August 2018 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Heads of the Government of all the seven BIMSTEC Member States attended the Summit.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was established in June 1997 as a sub-regional organization through the Bangkok Declaration. Bhutan joined the organization in 2004. It constitutes seven Member States: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. Bhutan joined the organization in 2004.

The Summit is the highest policy making and decision-making body in the BIMSTEC process which is comprised of Head of Government of member states. At the closing ceremony, the BIMSTEC Member States adopted the Agenda and Declaration of the Summit. The ceremony also saw the Signing Ceremony of the BIMSTEC MoU.

## c) 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly



The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan, as the Chief Advisor to the Interim Government of Bhutan, addressed the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 27th September 2018. He led the Bhutanese delegation comprising the Foreign Secretary and other senior government officials to the 73rd UN General Assembly in New York, the USA.

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan, as the Chief Advisor to the Interim Government of Bhutan, addressed the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 27th September 2018. He led the Bhutanese delegation comprising the Foreign Secretary and other senior government officials to the 73rd UN General Assembly in New York, the USA.
The Chief Advisor, amongst others, reaffirmed Bhutan's support to the United Nations Secretary General's agenda to reform the UN development system. Besides, he also shared about Bhutan's commitment towards achieving the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and tackling climate change.

## d) Round Table Meeting of the Heads of Judiciary of the BIMSTEC

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan attended the First Round Table Conference of the Heads of Judiciary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Corporation
 (BIMSTEC) at the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi on 25th November 2018. Technology and Access to Justice and Adjudication of Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking/Human Trafficking. Drangpon Tashi Chhozom of the Supreme Court was a member of the delegation. On 26th November 2018, the Hon. Chief Justice and delegation attended the celebration of the Constitution Day of India.

## e) Asia Pacific Judicial Conference on Environmental and Climate Change Adjudication



Drangpon Kuenlay Tshering and Drangpon Rabjam Jigme Lodey attended the Asia Pacific Judicial Conference on Environmental and ClimateChange Adjudication in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar from 29-30th October 2018. The Conference was aimed at updating the participants with knowledge about pressing environmental and climate change issues that require their urgent attention and solutions that they can readily adopt.

### 8.2 Trainings Attended by Judiciary Personnel

| $\begin{gathered} \text { SI. } \\ \text { No. } \end{gathered}$ | Name | Conferences/workshops/ Seminars/Trainings | Place | Date |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1. | Drangpon Kuenlay Tshering | $8^{\text {th }}$ World Water Forum | Brasilia, Brazil | $18^{\text {th }}-23^{\text {rd }}$ <br> March 2018. |
| 2. | Drangpon Sangay Khandu, Drangpon Pema Wangchuk and Drangpon Tharchean | Implementing Child Protection and Domestic Violence Act - Strengthening Bhutan's First Family Court | Queensland University of Technology, Australia | $\begin{aligned} & 23^{\text {rd }} \text { March-6 } 6^{\text {th }} \\ & \text { April } 2018 \end{aligned}$ |
| 3. | Drangpon Kinley Namgay | UNODC | Vienna, Austria | $5-8^{\text {th }}$ <br> September $2018$ |
| 4. | Pema Namgyal | Training on Procurement Management | International Academy for Continuous Education, Quezon City, Philippines | $8^{\text {th }}-23^{\text {rd }}$ <br> September |
| 5. | Dorji Wangmo (Registrar) | International Bar Association Annual Conference | Rome, Italy | $\begin{aligned} & 7-12^{\text {th }} \text { October } \\ & 2018 \end{aligned}$ |
| 6. | Drangpon Tshering Dorji, <br> Drangpon Rabjam Richa Gurung, <br> Tshering Wangdi, <br> Dorji Dukpa, <br> Sonam Tobgay, <br> Tingting Dema, <br> Yoezer Dema, <br> Jhulen Chhetri, <br> Tempa Gyeltshen | Training on Project Management | Malaysia | $17-27^{\text {th }}$ <br> October 2018 |


| 7. | Drangpon Passang Wangmo, Pema Tashi Pelden (Registrar) | Juvenile and Family Court Study Tour | Bangkok, <br> Thailand | $\begin{aligned} & 28^{\text {th }} \text { October- } \\ & 4^{\text {th }} \text { November } \\ & 2018 \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 8. | Drangpon Rinchen Penjor | Multi-Sectorial Approach <br> to Palliative Care | Thailand | 30th October$13^{\text {th }}$ November 2018 |
| 9. | Drangpon Karma Dorji | WIPO - IP for Judges | Geneva, Switzerland | $7-9^{\text {th }}$ <br> November $2018$ |
| 10. | Drangpon Chador Phuntsho | Regional Workshop on International Cooperation on Corruption and Financial Investigation \& Money laundering | New Delhi, India | $12-14^{\text {th }}$ <br> November $2018$ |
| 11. | Drangpon Duba Dukpa | Conference of the Chief Justices | Lucknow, India | $14-20^{\text {th }}$ <br> November $2018$ |
| 12. | Chimi Dorji (Registrar) | UN Regional Course in International Law -2018 | Bangkok, <br> Thailand | $19^{\text {th }}$ <br> November- <br> $14^{\text {th }}$ December <br> 2018 |
| 13. | Drangpon Tshering Namgyel, Drangpon Phurba Dorji, Drangpon Tashi Yangzom, Drangpon Singye Wangdi, Garab Yeshi (Registrar) | Strengthening the capacity for Environmental Law and Climate Change | Kathmandu, Nepal | $23^{\text {rd }}-26^{\text {th }}$ <br> November $2018$ |
| 14. | Tempa Gyeltshen (Planning Officer) | Workshop on Performance <br> Management and <br> Monitoring and Evaluation for APT Focal Person | Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Kerala, India. | $10-14^{\text {th }}$ <br> December $2018 .$ |

### 8.3 In-country Visits

## Visit to Dzongkhag and Dungkhag Courts by the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan.

In continuation of the visit to the Dzongkhag and Dungkhag Courts which began in 2017 the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan completed his visit to all twenty Dzongkhag Courts and fifteen Dungkhag Courts on 12th January,2018 with the visit to Zhemgang Dzongkhag Court. The Hon. Chief Justice delivered lectures on uniform application of laws and disseminating awareness about reforms in the judiciary to all twenty Dzongkhag Courts and fifteen Dungkhag Courts.
His Excellency visited the following courts on respective dates:

1. Samdrup Jongkhar Dzongkhag Court, Jomotsangkha and Samdrupcholing Dungkhag Courts on 8th January 2018.
2. Thrimshing Dungkhag and, Wamrong Dungkhag Courts on 9th January 2018.

3 Pemagatshel Dzongkhag Court on10th January 2018.
4. Nganglam Dungkhag Court on 11th Ja nuary 2018.
5. Zhemgang Dzongkhag Court on 12th January 2018.

### 8.4 Studies

a) Mr. Tshoejab Mepham Denlen, Court Registrar completed his Masters in Business and Finance from George Washington Law School, Washington DC.
Ms. Tshering Pelden, Court Registrar and Mr. Langa Tenzin, Court Registrar completed their Masters in International Legal Studies from University of Vienna, Austria. The scholarship was funded by the Austrian Development Co-operation (ADB). All three are currently working at the Supreme Court.
b) Ms. Pema Yechang, Court Registrar is currently pursuing her Masters in International Law in George Washington Law School, Washington DC. She will be completing the course in July 2019.

## 9. Other Events

### 9.1 Distribution of Drilbus to Drangpons



The Yoenten Lopen of the Zhung Dratshang handed over the Drilbus (bell) to the Drangpons on 27th January 2018. Courtrooms in the country will use Drilbu to signify the beginning, ending, recess or an adjournment of the court proceedings. Drilbu will also be used to restore order when litigants commit a breach of courtroom rules. The sound emanating from the Drilbu symbolizes harmonious dharma which is deemed to please Buddha and enlightened beings of the ten directions. It is said to awaken all sentient beings from the deep slumber of ignorance and lead them to the perfect comprehension of reality and truth.
A Drilbu held in the left hand shall be used to:

1. Denote a symbol of authority and right to act officially in the capacity of a presiding officer.
2. Attract attention and call the Court proceeding to order, or to mark the commencement and ending of court proceedings -Three rings of the Drilbu.
3. Maintain order and restore it when breached by litigants in the course of the proceedings. (Sharp or vigorous rings of the Drilbu)
4. Indicate pronouncement of decisions and orders by the Court -Three rings of the Drilbu.
5.The $D$ rilbu must be rung inwards for beginning of Court session and outward for the ending.
5. In the Benches with more than one Drangpon, the Bench Clerk shall place the Drilbu on the Thri of the senior/presiding Drangpon.
6. Symbolize handing taking over of Office or to be handed over to officiating officers as a symbol of authority (ceremonials).
7. The holding end of the Drilbu with Tashi Khadhar must be offered by the official handing over the Drilbu to his successor or officiating officer-signifying an orderly succession.
Inscription on the Drilbu: "Equal justice under the law" and a sacred verse (Zhung Tsig) was composed by His Holiness the 70th Je Khenpo, Truelku Jigme Chhoedra, which translates as "May the sound of the bell of wisdom, dispel emptiness. Having awakened from the slumber of immoral delusion, let the realization of righteousness arise in our minds, so that all may attain the state of perfect peace."

### 9.2 Recitation of Kanjur at the Supreme Court



Kanjur was recited for five days at the Supreme Court from 25th February to 1st March 2018 by forty-three monks of Gogona Gomdhey and seventeen court staff. The opening was graced by the Venerable Tsugla Lopen of the Zhung Dratshang, Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan and Drangpons of the Supreme Court. The final day was graced by the Venerable Tsugla Lopen of the Zhung Dratshang which was ended with the offering of Gyempoi Tshokhor. The Kanjur recitation, which is an annual event was initiated for the wellbeing of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, Members of the Royal Family, judicial staff and all sentient beings.
The Kanjur recitation was done by the employees of the Juiciary for first three years and now the monks from Gogona Gomdhey continues to recite it annually.

### 9.3 Administration of Oath of Office and Secrecy for the National Council members

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan and Venerable Tshoki Lopen from the Zhung Dratshang administered the Oath of Office to twenty National Council members on 10th May 2018. The ceremony commenced with the recitation of Tashi-tsegpa prayer followed by the members taking the Oath of Office and Secrecy. The members also signed the pledge for
 non-affiliation to political parties.
The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan administered the Oath of Secrecy to the Chairperson Tashi Dorji and Deputy Chairperson Jigme Wangchuk of the National Council on 14th May 2018.

### 9.4 Golden Jubilee of the High Court



The High Court celebrated its Golden Jubilee on 2nd June 2018. The new High Court building at the Supreme Court Complex (Lhadrong) in Hejo was inaugurated by Her Royal Highness Ashi Sonam Dechan Wangchuck. The event was of great significance in the history of Judiciary of Bhutan for it coincided with the coronation anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Her Royal Highness also launched a book "Lhoyi Ngyingjid", History of the Judiciary authored by Sonam Penjor, a Supreme Court bench clerk. The event was graced by the former Chief Justices and Drangpons of the High Court.
The High Court was established at Tashichhodzong on 3rd November 1967. It was later shifted and started functioning from where the present-day agriculture minister's office is in the vicinity of the Tashichhodzong. The former High Court building constructed at a cost of $\mathrm{Nu} 6,80,000$ was inaugurated by the then home minister Tamji Jagar.

Initially, the High Court functioned from Tashichhodzong with Dasho Dodo, Dasho Tsang Tsang, Dasho Nidup Namgyal, Dasho Kelzang and Dasho Serdo as the first five Drangpons. To date, forty Drangpons including three Chief Justices and more than hundred staff have served at the High Court. Dasho Paljor Jigme Dorji was the first Chief Justice (1974-85), followed by late Lyonpo Sangay Penjor (1987-1989) and Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye (1991-2009).

### 9.5 Judicial Wellness and Stress Management Retreat



The Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) organized Judicial Wellness Retreat program at Phobjikha, Gangtey from 7th to 10th June 2018. The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan and Drangpons of the Supreme Court and High Court attended the program. During the three-day program, the participants were involved in various practical sessions by experts on subject matters like Universal Human Values, self-care, self-discovery, self-transformation, creative visualization, mindfulness, anger management, meditation, prayers, yoga, games and treks. The program was initiated to give a break to the participants from their mundane, monotonous and stressful daily judicial lives.

### 9.6 His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo appoints the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan as the Chief Advisor of the Interim Government

His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo issued a Royal Decree appointing the members of the Interim Government on 9th August 2018 in accordance with Article 19, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo appointed the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan as the Chief Advisor of Interim Government. His Majesty also appointed Dasho Karma Ura, President of Centre for Bhutan Studies; Dasho


Penjore, Governor of Royal Monetary Authority; Dasho Ugen Chewang, Chairman of Druk Holding and Investments Ltd.; Dasho Chhewang Rinzin, Managing Director of Druk Green Power Corporation Ltd.; Dasho Karma Tshiteem, Chairperson of Royal Civil Service Commission; Aum Kinley Yangzom, Chairperson of the Anti-Corruption Commission; Mr. Nidup Dorji, Vice Chancellor of Royal University of Bhutan; and Mr. Bachu Phub Dorji, Managing Director of Kuensel Corporation as the Advisors of the Interim Government. The Chief Advisor and Advisors of the Interim Government received the Royal Audience in Tashichho Dzong. The Royal Decree directed the Interim Government to ensure uninterrupted continuance of the routine functions of the government until the new Prime Minister enters office after the new National Assembly has been constituted.

### 9.7 Hon. Chief Justice completes his term as the Chief Advisor of the Interim Government



His Majesty the King granted audience to the Chief Advisor and Advisors of the Interim Government on 29th October 2018 on the completion of its term. In accordance with Article 19, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Interim Government completed its term within ninety day after the dissolution of the National Assembly. Following the Royal Audience, members of the Interim Government led by the Chief Advisor met the Cabinet Secretary, Government Secretaries and staff of the Cabinet Secretariat at the Gyalyong Tshogkhang. The Chief Advisor commended the civil servants for their service to the nation and expressed confidence that they will serve the incoming government with dedication. The Chief Advisor also met with the media representatives at a press conference in the afternoon and briefed them on major activities undertaken by the Interim Government. The Hon. Chief Justice resumed office at the Supreme Court after the press conference.

### 9.8 Oath of Office to the National Assembly members



The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhu$\tan$ administered the Oath of Office to the National Assembly members on 31st October 2018 coinciding the Descending Day of Lord Buddha in accordance with the Third Schedule of the

Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. The first sitting of the National Assembly began with the ushering of Ku-Sung-Thugten into the Assembly Hall as a symbolic representation of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo. After the reading out of the Kasho from His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, the Members put on Patang/Gyentag and changed their scarfs.

### 9.9 Launch of the Justice Sector Strategic Plan

Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck graced the launching ceremony of the Justice Sector Strategic Plan on 16th November 2018 in Thimphu.

His Excellency the Prime Minister of Bhutan and the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan attended the launching ceremony.
The plan is aimed at improving the quality of
 justice system services with special focus on meeting the needs of the people through quality, speedy, and effective services.

### 9.10 Leadership Program for Judiciary (LPJ)

The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan graced the opening ceremony of the Leadership Program for Judiciary (LPJ) as the chief guest on 18th November 2018 at the Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) in Phuentsholing. The judiciary personnel were divided into two groups: LPJ-1 and LPJ-2. Twenty-one participants including Drangpons and Court Registrars attended the ten-day LPJ-1 from 18th to 28th November 2018.

LPJ-2 commenced on 5th December 2018 at the RIGSS in Phuentsholing. Twenty-seven participants comprising of Drangpons and Court Registrars attended the program. The participants of both the groups were briefed on leadership skills, presentation and communication skills, coaching skills, mindfulness and emotional intelligence, Bhutan's foreign policy, border management, economic issues and role of state economic institutions in nation building by eminent international and national speakers. The Leadership Program for Judiciary is the ninth leadership course launched by the RIGSS.

## 10 Awards

10.1 Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Alumni Achievement Award

Drangpon Kuenlay Tshering of the Supreme Court received DKI APCSS Alumni Achievement Award in Honolulu, Hawaii.


### 10.2 Civil Service Awards - 2018

Sixty-six personnel of the Judiciary were recognized with Civil Service Awards for their varying durations of service. Those who have been in service for more than thirty years were awarded Gold Medal, while those who completed more than twenty years received Silver Medal. Bronze Medals were awarded to the personnel who have been in service for more than ten years.

| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Sl. } \\ & \text { No. } \end{aligned}$ | Name of Award Recipients | Designation | Type of Award | Court |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1. | Karma Tshephel | Drangpon | Lifetime Service Award | Supreme Court |
| 2. | Lungten | Bench Clerk | Lifetime Service Award | Bumthang |
| 3. | Nima Sherab Gyeltshen | Bench Clerk | Lifetime Service Award | Supreme Court |
| 4. | Pema Wangchuk | Bench Clerk | Lifetime Service Award | Wamrong |
| 5. | Tashi Dhendup | Bench Clerk | Lifetime Service Award | Bumthang |
| 6. | Tenzin Dhendup | Bench Clerk | Lifetime Service Award | Nganglam |
| 7. | Balang Dema | Bench Clerk | Gold | Wangdi <br> Phodrang |
| 8. | Damcho Lhendup | Drangpon | Gold | Sibsoo |
| 9. | Duptho Dorji | Dispatcher | Gold | Gelephu |
| 10. | Dasho Tshering <br> Wangchuk | Chief Justice of Bhutan | Gold | Supreme Court |
| 11. | Norbu Wangdi | Bench Clerk | Gold | Supreme Court |
| 12. | Dechen Dema | Bench Clerk | Silver | Trongsa |
| 13. | Deo Kumari Chhetri | Bench Clerk | Silver | Tsirang |
| 14. | Dorji | Messenger | Silver | Dagana |
| 15. | Jangchuk Pelzang | Messenger | Silver | Samdrupcholing |
| 16. | Nera Devi Rai | Messenger | Silver | Sarpang |
| 17. | Pema Tshering | Accounts <br> Assistant | Silver | Thimphu |
| 18. | Purushottam Ghimirey | Drangpon | Silver | Dorokha |
| 19. | Yan Kumar Subba | Accounts Asst. | Silver | Samtse |
| 20. | Cheki Wangmo | Sr. Dispatcher | Bronze | Pemagatshel |


| 21. | Chencho Dema | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Наа |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 22. | Cheten Lhamo | Dispatcher | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 23. | Cheten Zangmo | Gardener | Bronze | Phuentsholing |
| 24. | Kezang Choden | Drangpon | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 25. | Dechen Wangmo | Asst. Engineer IV | Bronze | Supreme Court |
| 26. | Deki | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Paro |
| 27. | Doley | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Chukha |
| 28. | Hukumi Ghalley | Asst. Engineer IV | Bronze | Supreme Court |
| 29. | Jamtsho | Night Guard | Bronze | Samdrup Jongkhar |
| 30. | Jit Bahadur Ghalley | Sweeper | Bronze | Chukha |
| 31. | Karma | Sweeper | Bronze | Wamrong |
| 32. | Karma Jamtsho | Messenger | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 33. | Kencho Lhamo | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Jomotshangkha |
| 34. | Khemo | Sweeper | Bronze | Trashigang |
| 35. | Kuenzang Deki | Dispatcher | Bronze | Zhemgang |
| 36. | Leki Dema Bal Tamang | Sweeper | Bronze | Dagana |
| 37. | Lungten Wangdi | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Наa |
| 38. | Lungten Wangdi | Night Guard | Bronze | Wamrong |
| 39. | Ngachey | Night Guard | Bronze | Phuentsholing |
| 40. | Norbu Zangpo | Dispatcher | Bronze | Samdrup <br> Jongkhar |
| 41. | Passang Wangdi | Gardener | Bronze | Chukha |
| 42. | Pema Choden | Accounts Asst. | Bronze | Paro |
| 43. | Pema Choden | Drangpon | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 44. | Pema Dechen | Drangpon | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 45. | Pema Drakpa | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Dagana |


| 46. | Phub Tshering | Driver | Bronze | Phuentsholing |
| ---: | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 47. | Phurpa Gyeltshen | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Paro |
| 48. | Rinchen Tshering | Driver | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 49. | Rinchen Tshewang | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Zhemgang |
| 50. | Rinzin Penjor | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Mongar |
| 51. | Rinzin Wangmo | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Bumthang |
| 52. | Sangay Dorji | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Trongsa |
| 53. | Sonam Choden | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Paro |
| 54. | Sonam Choden | Messenger | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 55. | Sonam Lhadon | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 56. | Sonam Peldon | Attendant | Bronze | Lingzhi |
| 57. | Sonam Zangmo | Messenger | Bronze | Trashigang |
| 58. | Tashi | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Chukteng |
| 59. | Tshering Peldon | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 60. | Tshering Yeshi | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Samdrupcholing |
| 61. | Tshewang | Bench Clerk | Bronze | Thimphu |
| 62. | Ugyen Dhendup | Driver | Bronze | Paro |
| 63. | Yeshi Zangmo | Bench Clerk | Bronze |  |

## 10. Challenges

Judiciary as one of the branches of the government is mandated to uphold the Constitution, rights and liberties guaranteed under it, and the policies and principles embodied under it. Being a dispute resolution forum, the Judiciary's mission is to ensure that the people have access to the highest standard of justice attainable. It has to ensure equitable and expeditious resolution of all cases and controversies brought before the courts.

In order to deliver the highest standard of justice, it is imperative for the office to be well equipped both in terms of financial and human resource capacities. However, these form the following core challenges:

### 10.1 Human Resource Development Challenges

The organizational structure of the Judiciary is unique from other Constitutional Offices. Drangpons and Drangpon Rabjams are governed by the Judicial Service Act 2007 whereas the AFD personnel, Court Registrars and Bench Clerks are under the Bhutan Civil Service Act 2012. The existence of these two Acts in one institute poses the greatest challenge to human resource development and management. Further, with limited authority of the Judiciary over the human resource management, creating conducive environment for enhanced performance through improved and structured organizational incentives for the judicial personnel remains a challenge. Although the Judicial Service Act of 2007 defines the Royal Judicial Service Council as the body to formulate policies related to human resource management within the Judiciary in terms of defining staffing pattern, strength, classification and gradation of services, performance evaluation and appraisal including reward and incentives for judicial personnel, the inclusion of the support judicial personnel under the Civil Service Act of 2012 has limited the Council in exercising its mandates. Consequently, the Judiciary experiences rising attrition of senior and experienced judicial personnel, including Drangpons from the service of the Judiciary to better financial and professional opportunities in corporate sector and private law firms.

With change in time, expansion in the Judiciary calls for additional human resources for specific trainings and skills to shoulder the increasing caseload in the courts. The Judiciary must strive to resolve these policy inconsistencies to ensure growth in Judiciary's organizational capacity for an autonomous human resource management and development strategy.

### 10.2 Financial Constraints

The Judiciary has no financial and budgetary independence. This still continues to be a major challenge in the independent functioning of the office. Judiciary is one of the branches of the government whose mandates spread across 20 Dzongkhags and 15 Dungkhags. Despite it, the share of budget it receives from the government to undertake its mandates continue to remain less than a Ministry.

For the 11th Five Year Plan, the overall budget ceiling allocated to Judiciary was Nu. 623 Million. This was way below our proposal. The Judiciary received a meager increment of $20 \%$ in the 12th Five Year Plan despite the need for more budgets. Given such constraints, the Judiciary is not able to build adequate infrastructure across the country and develop its human resource capacity through provision of timely training and skill development opportunities.

## 11. Annexure

Notifications from the Office of the Chief Justice of Bhutan - 2018
The Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan has issued a number of Notifications and Orders to the courts with the main aim of clarifying and streamlining anomalies in the application of laws. The issuance of such orders also ensures uniformity of court procedures. Continuing with the trend in the past years, the Hon. Chief Justice of Bhutan issued the following Notifications and Orders in 2018:







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*-.Your Honour, Subject Apprising Time Extension for the Jabmi Practicing Licenses.
As Your Honour is aware the Bar Council is in the process of preparing to conduct Bar Exams and. realistically, it is likely to take few more months to complete the preparatory works to conduct Bar Exams for the potential Lawyers
The thus far issued Jabmi Practicing License by the Bar Council, as per Section 21 of the Jabmi Act. are all scheduled to expire on the $31^{\text {n }}$ of August 2018 and for the convenience of the Practicing Jabmis in providing their representational services to their clients. it has become necessary to extend the license expiry date by at least six months to enable the Council to complete the first Bar Exams and issue Jabmi Licenses
Therefore kindly consider directing all the Courts to except the presently issued Jabmi Practicing License till $28^{\text {sh }}$ of Febraury 2019, including ParaLegals issued with the same Jabmi Licenses to represent their clients before respective Courts-*

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