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ELECTION COMMISSION OF BHUTAN

(Ensuring Free, Fair & Democratic Elections & Referendums)



ECB/NOTIF-01/2017/2571

Dated: 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2017

NOTIFICATION

**Local Government Election in the 60 Remaining Vacant *Demkhongs* and Bye-Election for the post of *Gewog Tshogde Tshogpa* in Dozotoen Chiwog of Soe *Gewog* under Thimphu Dzongkhag**

The Election Commission of Bhutan, in pursuance of Section 197 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008, hereby calls for Local Government elections under the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan for the remaining 60 vacant *Demkhongs* & Bye-Election for the post of *Gewog Tshogde Tshogpa* in Dozotoen *Chiwog* of Soe *Gewog* under Thimphu Dzongkhag. The vacant demkhongs are as follows:

Dzongkhag	Gewog	Sl. No.	<i>Demkhong</i>
<b>Gewog Tshogde Tshogpa</b>			
Bumthang	Ura	1	Ura-Dozhi
Chhukha	Getana	2	Darga_Tshebji
	Geling	3	Dilibkha_Lamjokha
Dagana	Tsangkha	4	Goongpa-Soomchu
	Karmaling	5	Labtsakha
	Lhamoi Dzingkha	6	Chongsamling
		7	Loongsilsa
Nichula	8	Dramze-Kesa	
	Gasa	Laya	9
10			Pazhi
Haa	Uesu	11	Pajekha_Sangkiri
Lhuentse	Jarey	12	Yumchhe
	Tsaenkhar	13	Dekaling_Tshochhen
Monggar	Tsakaling	14	Drongtoed_Tormazhong

Monggar	Silambi	15	Daag
	Gongdue	16	Daagsa_Kumadzong
	Saling	17	Seng-Gor
Paro	Wangchang	18	Dungkar_Namkar
	Tsento	19	Chhungjey_Zamsar
Pema Gatshel	Dechhenling	20	Doongchhilo_Kholomri
	Dungmaed	21	Woongborang
	Dechhenling	22	Namdagling
Punakha	Dzomi	23	Tanag_Uesa
		24	Bjimithang
	Lingmukha	25	Lingmukha
Samdrupjongkhar	Samrang	26	Damsagang Toed
		27	Tshoduen
	Lauri	28	Tshothang
		29	Betseling_Doongmanma
	Orong	30	Nabar_Philooma
	Dewathang	31	Rikhey
		32	Martang
Samtse	Tendruk	33	Dawathang_Kuengaling
	Phuentshogpelri	34	Nyoenpaling_Tingtingma
	Sang-Ngag-Chhoeling	35	Dephellingmaed_Khangzangling
	Samtse	36	Nyimaling_Chhirlogsa
	Tading	37	Thongsa_Tobchhenthang
	Norboogang	38	Dramzegang_Maedgang
Sarpang	Tareything	39	Woongchhilo
Thimphu	Lingzhi	40	Chhuzarkha
		41	Khangkiyuel
		42	Chakphu
		43	Gangyuel
	Darkarla	44	Wangdrog
		45	Doongdrog

Trashigang	Shongphoog	46	Gongtsephangma_Yobinang
Trongsa	Langthil	47	Yuedroongchhoeling
Tsirang	Gosarling	48	Dzaming Zor
		49	Pelrithang
Wangdue Phodrang	Kazhi	50	Lengbi
	Dangchu	51	Uesagang
<b>Dzongkhag Thromde Tshogpa</b>			
Chhukha	Phuentsholing Thromde	52	Pakerzhing
		53	Rinchending
		54	Phuentsholing Maed
Sarpang	Gelegphu Thromde	55	Namkhaling
Samdrup Jongkhar	Samdrup Jongkhar Thromde	56	Samdrup Jongkhar Toed
<b>Thromde Ngotshab</b>			
Gasa	Thromde	57	Thromde Ngotshab
Monggar	Thromde	58	Thromde Ngotshab
Pema Gatshel	Thromde	59	Thromde Ngotshab
Paro	Thromde	60	Thromde Ngotshab
<b>Bye-Election in Dozotoen Chiwog of Soe Gewog under Thimphu Dzongkhag.</b>			
Thimphu	Soe	61	Dozotoen

The Election Schedule and the details concerning *Demkhongs*, Selection Procedure for Nomination of Candidates, Electoral Rolls, EVMs, Polling Stations, Polling Officials, Polling Management, Security and other arrangements are hereby being notified as follows:

**(A) Election Schedule**

1. The Schedule shall be as follows:

Date and Time	Events
17 <sup>th</sup> of March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issuance of Notification.</li> <li>- Eligible Postal Voters to initiate application for Postal Ballot to concerned Returning Officer.</li> <li>- Commencement of 5% signature process by</li> </ul>

	eligible voters for the post of <i>Thromde Ngotshab, Gewog/Thromde Tshogpa.</i>
30 <sup>th</sup> of March 2017	- Last Date for filing of Nominations of Candidates.
31 <sup>st</sup> of March 2017	- Scrutiny of Nominations of Candidates.
2 <sup>nd</sup> of April 2017	- Last date for withdrawal of Candidature. - Last date for receipt of Application for Postal Ballots & RO to initiate sending Postal Ballot to registered Postal Voters. - Commencement of the Election Campaign.
16 <sup>th</sup> of April 2017 <b>(6.00 AM)</b>	- End of Election Campaign.
17 <sup>th</sup> of April 2017 <b>(5.00 PM)</b>	- Last Day/Time for receiving Postal Ballots
18 <sup>th</sup> of April 2017	<b>Poll Day and Counting of Results.</b>
19 <sup>th</sup> of April 2017	- Declaration of Results & Submission of the Results to the Druk Gyalpo. - Start of Election Petition Period. <i>(10 working Days)</i>
24 <sup>th</sup> of April 2017	- Issuance of the Certificate of Election
3 <sup>rd</sup> of May 2017	- End of Election Petition Period

**(B) Polling Hours**

2. The polling hours shall be from **9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**(C) Demkhong**

3. The name and boundary of the *Demkhong* to be used shall be as written in the Order No. **DC/CHAIR/2011/1520** of **27<sup>th</sup> of February 2011.**

**(D) Signature Process of Candidates**

4. A registered voter who fulfills the criteria laid down in Section 178 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008 is eligible to be nominated as a candidate for election.
5. A Registered Voter aspiring to contest for the *Gewog/Thromde Tshogde Tshogpa & Thromde Ngotshab* Election, shall produce signatures of at least 5 percent of the Registered Voters from the Chiwog supporting his/her nomination provided no voter has supported more than one nominee.
6. For the purpose of ascertaining the age eligibility of candidate which as per the Electoral Laws must be minimum of **25 years** and maximum of **65 years**, a candidate for this Election must be born **on or before 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1992** but **not before 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1952**.

**(E) Electoral Roll**

7. The Electoral Roll used for the **Second Local Government 2016** shall be used as the basis with further revision as per the qualifying Date. All those registered in the Final Electoral Roll shall be eligible to vote in the concerned *Demkhong*.
8. The qualifying date for the Electoral Roll shall be the of **1<sup>st</sup> of January 2017**. All those who are not younger than **eighteen years of age as on 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2017 or born on or before 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1999** shall be deemed to meet the minimum age requirement to be a voter.
9. Dzongkhag Election Office shall continue to distribute the Voter Photo Identity Cards to those who were unable to collect it earlier even up to the Poll Day.

10. The Final Electoral Roll for the Election shall be published and provided to the Returning Officer on **18<sup>th</sup> of March 2017** and to the Candidates on **1<sup>st</sup> of April 2017**

**(F) Election Campaign**

11. A Candidate shall have up to **15 days** for campaigning, which must stop 48 hours before the start of Poll.
12. No Minister, Member of Parliament, official or member of a political party or elected shall campaign directly or indirectly for any Candidate. No trips or official tours shall be undertaken by a Minister or Member of Parliament to a *Demkhong* during the Election Period except to cast their votes on the Poll Day should they wish not to use the Postal Ballot facility extended to them and their spouse under **Section 331 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008**.
13. The other elected Local Government leaders i.e. *Gup, Mangmi, Tshogpa, Thrompon, Thromde Tshogpa or Dzongkhag Thromde Ngotshab* shall not campaign directly or indirectly for any candidate and shall only participate as a voter on the Poll day.

**(G) Election Campaign Finance**

14. A Candidate cannot exceed his/her election campaign expense beyond the ceiling fixed in Section 59 of the Public Election Fund Act 2008 i.e. total of Nu. 50,000/-.

**(H) Election Campaign Returns**

15. A Candidate must submit accounts of campaign to the National Observers for his/her scrutiny and file Election Returns within **Thirty Days of declaration**

**of the Election Result** as per the prescribed procedures, failing which he/she will be barred from participation in future elections.

**(I) Common Forum for the Public Address by All Candidates**

16. The Returning Officer, in consultation with the respective Election Coordinator and Security Coordinator shall arrange a Common Forum in each *Chiwog* and further at Villages as may be necessary and found feasible to provide the candidates of the concerned *Demkhong* equal opportunity to address the electorate eliminating the necessity to call for public meetings by each Candidate separately and thereby avoiding inconvenience to voters of attending multiple sessions as per the Guidelines for the conduct of the Common Forum for Election Campaign, 2013.

**(J) Postal Ballots**

17. The Postal Voter List shall be based on Postal Voters Registration for the ***Second Local Government Election 2016***.

18. The schedule for the processing of Postal Ballots shall be as given below:

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Events</b>
17 <sup>th</sup> of March 2017	- Eligible Postal Voters to initiate application for Postal Ballot to the Returning Officer
2 <sup>nd</sup> of April 2017	- Last date of receipt of Application for Postal Ballots by Returning Officer - Returning Officer to commence sending Postal Ballot to registered Postal Voters
17 <sup>th</sup> of April 2017 <b>(5 PM)</b>	- Last day/ time for receiving Postal Ballots

**(K) Voter Photo Identity Card (VPIC)**

19. Voter Photo Identity Card (VPIC) issued by the Election Commission shall be the valid document for identification of voters at the Polling Stations.

20. However, all voters must also carry with them the Citizenship Identity Card issued by the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs. In the event of any dispute related to the VPIC, the Citizenship Identity Card will form the basis for taking decision by the Presiding Officer.

**(L) Electronic Voting Machines**

21. The Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) shall be used for polling in all the Polling Station.

**(M) Indelible Ink**

22. Quality indelible ink shall be used during the elections and care must be taken in applying the indelible ink on the **Right Thumb.**

**(N) Polling Stations**

23. The Polling Stations shall be as indicated in the Final Electoral Roll for the Local Government Elections.

**(O) Election Officials**

**Election Coordinators**

24. The respective *Dzongdag*, *Dzongrab/Dungpa*, and *Gewog* Administrative Officers shall be appointed as the Chief, Deputy Chief & Assistant Chief Election Coordinators in the respective Dzongkhag/Gewog. All Election Officials appointed hereof shall be responsible for carrying out the roles, responsibilities and duties as provided in the Electoral Laws, the



Appointment Order issued by the Election Commission on **17<sup>th</sup> of March 2017** and vested with authority, Roles and Responsibilities as per provisions in the Electoral Roll Laws, Rules, Regulations and Guidelines and respective Handbooks.

### **National Observer**

25. The Election Commission of Bhutan shall appoint a **National Observer** for observing the election and monitoring the campaign expenditure of the candidates.

### **Returning Officers**

26. The Election Commission shall appoint the **Dzongkhag Electoral Officer** of concerned Dzongkhag as the **Returning Officer** for the conduct of the elections.

### **Presiding and Polling Officers**

27. The appointment of Presiding and Polling Officers for the Elections shall be as per the Appointment Orders issued by the Returning Officer on or before two days before the day of Poll, unless otherwise authorised.

### **Counting Supervisors & Counting Assistants**

28. The Presiding Officers shall serve as the Counting Supervisors and a Polling Officer as the Counting Assistant, authorized as such in the Appointment Orders issued by the concerned Returning Officer.

### **Assignment of Duty Stations**

29. The Election Officials shall not be posted to the *Gewog* where his/her *Gung* or *Mitsi* is registered.

**(P) Law and Order & Deployment of Forces**

30. The *Dzongdag*, and the *Gewog* Administrative Officers in the *Gewogs* shall serve as the Focal Points for all administrative matters in the *Dzongkhag* and *Gewog* respectively for the election period.

31. The *Dzongdag* and the *Gewog* Administrative Officer shall be responsible to ensure that the jurisdictions under their control are conducive and congenial for the conduct of free and fair elections.

32. All Election Officials must remain in their station during the entire election period.

33. The Royal Bhutan Police shall be responsible for security as per the Election Security Rules and Regulations of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

34. The Election Security Focal Officers of the concerned *Dzongkhag* shall work in close coordination and cooperation with the election officers as a team towards conducting the elections smoothly.

**(Q) Election Control Rooms**

35. Control Rooms shall be established in the Office of the Returning Officer and at the Election Commission Headquarters to effectively supervise, direct, monitor and backstop the conduct of elections.

36. The Control Rooms shall be set up and function in the manner detailed in the *Manual for Control Rooms*.

**(R) Election Code of Conduct**

37. The Election Code of Conduct shall continue to be in force until the completion of the Election Period i.e. from **17<sup>th</sup> of March 2017 to 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2017.**

38. All Election Officers, Candidates and Voters must comply with the Election Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Electoral Laws, Rules and Regulations and Guidelines.

**(S) Poll Day**

39. **The Poll Day, Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2017,** shall be declared as a Public Holiday in the concerned *Demkhong/Chiwog*. All employers are required by law to grant required number of days as election leave for any registered voter from the *Demkhong* wishing to go to vote in person.

**(T) No or Only One Candidate**

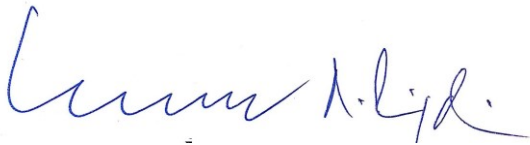
40. If there is no Candidate after the last date for filing of nomination of Candidates notified herein, the election will be postponed till further notice.

41. If there is only one Candidate after the last date of filing of nomination of Candidates announced herein, an uncontested election, in accordance with Sections 575 and 576 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008, will be conducted.

Now, thereof, from the day of issue of this Notification, the Election Commission of Bhutan notifies the general public on the Election Schedule of the Local Government Elections in the remaining 60 vacant *demkhongs* & Bye-Election for the post of

*Gewog Tshogde Tshogpa* in Dozotoen *Chiwog* of Soe Gewog under Thimphu Dzongkhag and all matters relating to it.

**Issued on the 20<sup>th</sup> Day of the First Month of the FIRE FEMALE BIRD YEAR corresponding to 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2017.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chogyal Dago Rigdzin'.

**(Chogyal Dago Rigdzin)**

**Chief Election Commissioner of Bhutan**