



འཇུག་གི་བཅག་འཇུ་ལྷན་ཚོགས།

ELECTION COMMISSION OF BHUTAN

(Ensuring Free, Fair & Democratic Elections & Referendums)



ECB/NOTIF-01/2013/3403

Dated: 29th of April 2013

NOTIFICATION

Second Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly

Under the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan

The Election Commission of Bhutan, in obedience to the Royal Decree of His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo Issued on **28th of April 2013** Calling the elections to the National Assembly of the Second Parliament, hereby, in accordance with the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008, notifies the Election Schedule of the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly* and the details concerning *Demkhongs*, Letter of Intent, Nomination of Candidates, Electoral Rolls, EVMs, Polling Stations, Polling Officials, Polling Management, Security and other arrangements as follows:

(A) Elections

1. There shall be a Primary Round of Elections in which the registered Political Parties whose Letter of Intent (LoI) is found to be in order in all respects and accordingly accepted by the Election Commission of Bhutan shall contest in all the 20 Dzongkhags.
2. The two Parties securing the First Highest and Second Highest total number of votes polled in the 20 Dzongkhags shall be invited by the Election Commission to nominate one Candidate each to contest the General Elections in each of the 47 *National Assembly Demkhongs*.

(B) Election Schedule

3. The Schedule of Dates and time for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly* shall be as follows:

Sl. No.	Event	Date
1	Issue of Royal Decree Calling the National Assembly Elections and setting the process in motion	28th of April 2013
2	ECB Notification on the National Assembly Election Schedule	29th of April 2013
3	Registered Political Parties to commence submission of Letter of Intent to contest Primary Round	
4	Eligible Postal Voters to start submitting application for Postal Ballot to respective Returning Officer	
5	Last date for submission of the Letter of Intent by registered Political Parties	5th of May 2013
6	Scrutiny of Letter of Intent by the Election Commission	6th of May 2013
7	Start of Application for Election Campaign Fund by Political Parties	
8	Commencement of the Election Campaign	
9	Release of the Election Campaign Fund	7th of May 2013
10	Last date for withdrawal from the Elections	5 p.m. 8th of May 2013
11	Returning Officer to start sending/ mailing Postal Ballot	
12	Last date/ time for receipt of Application for Postal Ballots by Returning Officer	
13	First Public Debate for the Primary Round: Ideology	10th of May 2013
14	Second Public Debate for the Primary Round: Issue-based	
15	Start of the Common Forum in all 47 <i>Demkhongs</i>	11th of May 2013
16	End of Election Campaign	9 a.m. 29th of May 2013
17	Last day/ time for receiving Postal Ballots	5 p.m. 30th of May 2013
18	Primary Round Poll Day	31st of May 2013
19	Counting of Results	
20	Declaration of Results & Submission of the Results to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo	1st of June 2013
21	Start Filing of Nominations by Candidates of the 2 Parties securing highest and second highest total votes in the Primary Round	

22	Last Date for Filing of Nominations by Candidates of the 2 Parties securing highest and second highest total votes in the Primary Round	11th of June 2013
23	Scrutiny of Nominations of Candidates	12th of June 2013
24	Candidates start submitting Application for Election Campaign Fund	
25	Commencement of the Election Campaign	
26	Release of the Election Campaign Fund by ECB	13th of June 2013
27	Last date for withdrawal of Candidature	14th of June 2013
28	Returning Officer to start sending Postal Ballot to Postal Voters	
29	Last date of receipt of Application for Postal Ballots by Returning Officer (in case of change in postal address from the Application submitted for the Primary Round)	
30	End of Election Campaign	9 a.m. 11th of July 2013
31	Last day/ time for receiving Postal Ballots	5 p.m. 12th of July 2013
32	General Elections Poll Day	13th of July 2013
33	Counting of Results	
34	Declaration of Results & Submission of the Results to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo	14th of July 2013
35	Start of Election Petition Period	
36	Issuance of the Certificate of Election	19th of July 2013
37	Completion of Election Petition Period	26th of July 2013

(C) Letter of Intent for the Primary Round

4. A registered Political Party intending to contest National Assembly Elections shall submit the LoI to the Election Commission of Bhutan as per the prescribed format given in the Booklet “*Forms for Filing Letter of Intent*” which can be viewed at the Election Commission office and downloadable from its website at www.election-bhutan.org.bt/LetterofIntentForms
5. The Letter of Intent shall invariably include a Tentative List of Candidates, who meet the academic qualification for each of the 47 *National Assembly Demkhongs*.

(D) Scrutiny of Letter of Intent

6. The Election Commission shall undertake the scrutiny of the Letter of Intent filed by the Political Parties on **6th of May 2013**.
7. The Letter of Acceptance/Rejection of the Letter of Intent shall be issued at the end of the day on **6th of May 2013**.

(E) Last Date for Withdrawal

8. The last date for withdrawal from the Elections by a Political Party shall be **5 p.m. of the 8th of May 2013** as per Section 225 of the *Election Act 2008*.

(F) Nomination of Candidates for the General Elections

9. The two Political Parties which receive the First Highest and the Second Highest number of Total Votes in the Primary Round shall be invited by the Election Commission to formally nominate one Candidate each to contest the General Elections in the *47 National Assembly Demkhongs* from the accepted Tentative List submitted in the Letter of Intent.
10. The nomination of Candidates for elections to National Assembly must be by Secret Ballot as prescribed in Section 157 of the *Election Act 2008 of the Kingdom of Bhutan*.

(G) Filing of Nomination Papers by Candidates

11. The Nomination Papers shall be submitted by a Candidate nominated to contest the General Elections starting from **1st of June 2013** with the last date for filing nominations on **11th of June 2013**.
12. The Nomination Papers must be complete, signed and countersigned as required and include the following prescribed Forms:
 - 12.1. **Returning Officer Form No. 5A:** Nomination Paper for Candidate Contesting National Assembly Election with the necessary attachments;
 - 12.2. **Returning Officer Form No. 6:** Notice of Endorsement of Nomination of the Candidate *General Elections to National Assembly*;
 - 12.3. **Returning Officer Form No. 7 - General (G10) Affidavit of Candidate (Election):** Affidavit from a Royal Court of Justice

including Non-Criminal Conviction Record-Cum-Clearance from the respective Court of Law that he/she has not been accused of felony in a pending case, taken cognisance by a Court of Law and charges framed;

- 12.4. Asset Declaration Form No. 3;
 - 12.5. Tax Clearance Certificate;
 - 12.6. Audit Clearance Certificate;
 - 12.7. Security Clearance (for Elections);
 - 12.8. Marriage Certificate, if married;
 - 12.9. Letter of Attestation from the Royal University of Bhutan, endorsing the Formal University Degree Certificate; and
 - 12.10. Relieving order issued by Head of the Ministry/ Department/Agency (if relevant).
13. The Drangpon of the Dzongkhag Court of Justice, signing the Affidavit, shall also be responsible to check from the Court records that the aspiring Candidate has not been convicted and received a sentence of imprisonment or does not have a pending criminal case registered against him/her in any Court of Law as required under the Electoral Laws.

(H) Scrutiny of Nominations

14. The respective Returning Officers shall undertake the scrutiny of the Nomination Papers filed by the Candidates under intimation to the Election Commission.
15. The cross-checking of Asset Declarations shall be in line with the *Strategy for Evaluation of the Asset Declaration of the Candidates Contesting Elections, 2012* and the *Guidelines for Implementation of Sections 163-174 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008 relating to Office of Profit, 2012* issued by the Election Commission.
16. The screenshot (webpage) displaying the approved status of the Security Clearance, specified for election purposes, can be printed out and filed to a Returning Officer at the time of submission of Nomination Papers.

17. Audit Clearance may be obtained as per the system put in place by the Royal Audit Authority and the print-out copy submitted at the time of submission of Nomination Papers.
18. The attestation of the Formal University Degree shall be as per the *Guidelines for Interpretation and Implementation of Sections 176 (d), 177 (d) and 178 (d) of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008 regarding the Academic Qualification Requirement for a Candidate contesting Elections to National Assembly, National Council or the Post of Thrompon, 2012.*

However, Candidates whose Nominations had been duly accepted by a Returning Officer for the First Parliamentary Elections need not produce it unless specifically instructed by an election authority.

(I) Last Date for Withdrawal of Candidature

19. The last date for withdrawal of candidature shall be **5 p.m. of 14th of June 2013** as per Section 225 of the *Election Act 2008*.

(J) Demkhong

20. The *National Assembly Demkhongs*, for which separate Returning Officers shall be appointed, are as follows:

Sl. No.	Dzongkhag	National Assembly Demkhong		Gewogs/Thromde	Email address of the Returning Officer
1	Bumthang	1	Chhoekhor_Tang	Chhoekhor	ro.chhoekhor@yahoo.com
				Tang	
				Dzongkhag Thromde	
		2	Chhumig_Ura	Chhumig	ro.urachhumig@yahoo.com
			Ura		
2	Chhukha	3	Bongo_Chapchha	Bjagchhog	re.chapchha@yahoo.com
				Bongo	
				Chapchha	
				Darla	
				Getana	
		4	Phuentshogling	Doongna	ro.phuentsholing@yahoo.com
				Geling	
				Loggchina	
				Maedtabkha	
				Phuentshogling	
			Samphelling		

				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>			
3	Dagana	5	Drukjeygang_Tseza	Drukjeygang	ro.drukjeygang@yahoo.com		
				Gozhi			
				Karna			
				Khebisa			
				Largyab			
				Tseza			
				Tsangkha			
						<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>	
		6	Lhamoi Dzingkha_ Tashiding			Karmaling	ro.tashiding@yahoo.com
						Dorona	
						Gesarling	
						Lhamoi Dzingkha	
Nichula							
Tashiding							
Tsenda-Gang							
4	Gasa	7	Khamaed_ Lunana	Khamaed	ro.khamaed@yahoo.com		
				Lunana			
		8	Khatoed_Laya			Khatoed	ro.laya@yahoo.com
						Laya	
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>			
5	Haa	9	Bji_Kar- Tshog_Uesu	Bji	ro.bjikartshog@yahoo.com		
				Kar-tshog			
				Uesu			
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>			
		10	Sombaykha			Gakiling	ro.sombaykha@yahoo.com
						Samar	
				Sangbay			
6	Lhuentse	11	Gangzur_ Minjey	Gangzur	ro.gangzur@yahoo.com		
				Khoma			
				Kurtoed			
				Minjey			
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>			
		12	Maenbi_ Tsaenkhar			Jarey	ro.tsaenkhar@yahoo.com
						Maenbi	
						Maedtsho	
						Tsaenkhar	

7	Monggar	13	Dramedtse_Ngatshang	Balam	ro.dramedtse@yahoo.com		
				Chagsakhar			
				Dramedtse			
				Na-Rang			
				Ngatshang			
				Shermuhoong			
		Thang-Rong					
		14	Kengkhar_Weringla	Gongdue	ro.kengkhar@yahoo.com		
				Jurmed			
				Kengkhar			
				Saling			
		15	Monggar	Silambi	ro.monggar@yahoo.com		
				Chhaling			
				Drepoong			
				Monggar			
Tsakaling							
Tsamang <i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>							
8	Paro	16	Dokar_Sharpa	Dokar	ro.dokar@yahoo.com		
				Loong-nyi			
				Nagya			
				Sharpa			
		17	Lamgong_Wangchang	Dopshar-ri	ro.lamgong@yahoo.com		
				Doteng			
				Hoongrel			
				Lamgong			
				Tsento			
				Wangchang <i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>			
		9	Pema Gatshel	18	Khar_Yurung	Chhimoong	ro.khar@yahoo.com
						Chongshing	
Dungmaed							
Khar							
Yurung							
19	Nanong_Shumar			Nanong	ro.shumar@yahoo.com		
				Shumar			
				Zobel <i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>			
20	Nganglam			Chhoekhorling	ro.nganglam@yahoo.com		
				Dechhenling			

				Norboogang	
10	Punakha	21	Kabisa_Talog	Barp	ro.talog@yahoo.com
				Guma	
				Goenshari	
				Kabisa	
				Talog	
				Toepaisa	
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>	
		22	Lingmukha_ Toedwang	Chhubu	ro.lingmukha@yahoo.com
				Dzomi	
				Lingmukha	
				Shelnga-Bjemi	
				Toedwang	
11	Samdrup Jongkhar	23	Dewathang_ Gomdar	Dewathang	ro.gomdar@yahoo.com
				Gomdar	
				Orong	
				Phuentshogthang	
				Wangphu	
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>	
		24	Jomotshangkha_ Martshala	Langchenphu	ro.jomotshangkha@yahoo.com
				Lauri	
				Martshala	
				Pemathang	
				Samrang	
				Serthig	
12	Samtse	25	Dophuchen_ Tading	Duenchhukha	ro.dophuchen@yahoo.com
				Dophuchen	
				Doomtoed	
				Tading	
		26	Phuentshogpelri_ Samtse	Norboogang	ro.samtse@yahoo.com
				Phuentshogpelri	
				Samtse	
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>	
		27	Tashichhoeling	Norgaygang	ro.tashichhoeling@yahoo.com
				Pemaling	
				Tashichhoeling	
				Tendruk	
28	Ugyentse_ Yoeseltse	Sang-Ngag- Chhoeling	ro.yoeseltse@yahoo.com		
		Namgyalchhoeling			
		Ugyentse			

				Yoeseltse	
13	Sarpang	29	Gelegphu	Samtenling	ro.gelegphu@yahoo.com
				Chhuzanggang	
				Gelegphu	
				Jigme Chhoeling	
				Serzhong	
				Tareythang	
				Umling	
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>	
		30	Shompangkha	Dekiling	ro.shompangkha@yahoo.com
				Chhudzom	
				Gakiling	
				Senggey	
				Shompangkha	
		14	Thimphu	31	North Thimphu Thromde_ Kawang_ Lingzhi_Naro_ Soe
Kawang					
Lingzhi					
Naro					
Soe					
32	South Thimphu Thromde_ Chang_ Darkarla_ Ge-nyen_ Maedwang			<i>South Thimphu Thromde</i>	ro.changdarkarla@yahoo.com
				Chang	
				Darkarla	
				Ge-nyen	
				Maedwang	
15	Trashigang	33	Bartsham_ Shongphu	Bartsham	ro.bartsham@yahoo.com
				Bidoong	
				Yangnyer	
				Shongphu	
		34	Kanglung_ Samkhar_ Udzorong	Kanglung	ro.kanglung@yahoo.com
				Samkhar	
				Udzorong	
				<i>Dzongkhag Thromde</i>	
		35	Radhi_Sagteng	Merag	ro.radhi@yahoo.com
				Phongmed	
				Radhi	
				Sagteng	
		36	Thrimshing	Kangpar	ro.thrimshing@yahoo.com
				Thrimshing	
		37	Wamrong	Khaling	ro.wamrong@yahoo.com
				Lumang	

16	Trashi Yangtse	38	Boomdeling_Jamkhar	Boomdeling	ro.boomdeling@yahoo.com
				Jamkhar	
				Tongmajangsa	
				Yangtse	
		39	Khamdang_Ramjar	Dzongkhag Thromde	
				Ramjar	
Khamdang					
Toedtsho					
Yalang					
17	Trongsa	40	Draagteng_Langthil	Draagteng	ro.draagteng@yahoo.com
				Korphu	
				Langthil	
		41	Nubi_Tangsibji	Nubi	ro.tangsibji@yahoo.com
				Tangsibji	
				Dzongkhag Thromde	
18	Tsirang	42	Kilkhorthang_Mendrelgang	Barshong	ro.kilkhorthang@yahoo.com
				Patshaling	
				Kilkhorthang	
				Mendrelgang	
				Rangthangling	
				Tsholingkhar	
		43	Sergithang_Tsirang Toed	Dzongkhag Thromde	ro.tsirang@yahoo.com
				Doonglagang	
				Gosarling	
				Sergithang	
19	Wangdue Phodrang	44	Athang_Thedtsho	Pungtenchhu	ro.athang@yahoo.com
				Semjong	
				Tsirang Toed	
				Athang	
				Bjednag	
				Darkar	
				Gase Tshogongm	
				Gase Tshowogm	
		Nahi			
		45	Nyishog_Saephu	Thedtsho	
Ruebisa					
45	Nyishog_Saephu	Dzongkhag Thromde	ro.nyishogsaephu@yahoo.com		
		Dangchhu			
		Gangteng			
				Kazhi	

				Nyishog			
				Phangyuel			
				Phobji			
				Saephu			
20	Zhemgang	46	Bardo_Trong	Bardo	ro.trongbardo@yahoo.com		
				Nangkor			
				Shingkar			
				Trong			
				47	Panbang	Dzongkhag Thromde	ro.panbang@yahoo.com
			Bjoka				
			Goshing				
			Ngangla				
				Phangkhar			

(K) Electoral Roll

21. The Qualifying Date shall, in relation to the Electoral Roll for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly*, be the **1st of April 2013**. Therefore, all those who are not younger than eighteen years of age as on **1st of April 2013** shall be deemed to meet the minimum age requirement to be a voter.
22. Those born on or before **11th of June 1988** and on or after **12th of June 1948** shall be deemed to meet the legal age requirement for Candidates.
23. Similarly, those voters whose *Mitsi* had been registered in a *Demkhong* on or before **31st of March 2012** shall be deemed to meet the durational requirement to be a voter or Candidate from that *Demkhong*.
24. The draft Electoral Roll for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013* was already issued on **8th of April 2013** for public inspection and to invite the public to file Claims and Objections by **18th of April 2013**.
25. No changes shall be made to the Electoral Roll for the National Assembly Elections after **30th of April 2013**, thirty days before the date of Poll. However, the respective Dzongkhag Election Office shall continue to distribute the Voter Photo Identity Cards (VPIC) to those who were unable to collect it earlier even up to the Poll Day.
26. The Final Electoral Rolls for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly* shall be published and provided to the Returning Officers by **7th of**

May 2013 and the Party/Candidates will be given their copies on **14th of May 2013**.

(L) Election Campaign

27. A Political Party/Candidate may proceed with the Election Campaign upon the receipt of the acceptance of the Letter of Intent/his/her candidature by the concerned Returning Officer.
28. The campaign for the Primary Round shall be Party-based, focussing on the Party Manifesto, Vision and Mission.
29. The campaign in the Primary Round shall be led by the central Party leadership and the respective Candidate-designate in the accepted List of Candidates in the Letter of Intent may be appointed and authorised by the Party in each of the *Demkhongs* as its Representative for Election Campaign.
30. A Political Party/Candidate shall conduct the campaign as per the Election Campaign Schedule approved by the concerned Returning Officer and copy endorsed to the concerned Observer.
31. A Political Party/Candidate shall be liable for all acts of commission and omission of their election representatives and held responsible for the conduct of their Party workers or supporters.

Common Forum for Public Address by All Candidates

32. The Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer, in consultation with the respective Election Coordinator and Security Coordinator shall arrange a Common Forum in each *Gewog/Dzongkhag Thromde*, for both the Primary Round and the General Elections, to provide the contesting Political Parties/Candidates equal opportunity to address the electorate while reducing the necessity to call for public meetings in the *Gewog* or *Dzongkhag Thromde* by each Candidate separately thereby avoiding inconvenience to voters of attending multiple sessions.
33. The Common Forum for Primary Round shall be covered by the BBS as per the BBS Common Forum Coverage Schedule approved by the Election Commission for 47 *Gewogs*, one in each of the 47 *Demkhongs*.

34. The Common Forum shall be organised as per the *Guidelines for the Conduct of the Common Forum for Election Campaign, 2013*.

Any other public meetings, door-to-door campaigns or rallies

35. Any additional public meetings, door-to-door campaigns or rallies shall be subject to the provisions of the law, Code of Conduct and as per the campaign schedule and use of vehicles as approved by the Returning Officer.
36. A door-to-door campaign may be conducted only **after 7 a.m. and before 8 p.m.**

Abnormal Financial Transaction

37. All Banks or financial institutions shall be responsible to report to the Election Commission any abnormal transaction of money, including in the account of a Political Party or Candidate contesting the Elections.

Conduct of Representatives or Supporters

38. The Party and Candidate shall be held responsible and answerable for the conduct of their representatives or supporters also including those of the nature of interference to lawful electoral works and cause to undermine law and order in a place of elections.

No Freebies

39. A Political Party/Candidate contesting the National Assembly Elections and all concerned shall neither serve meals or refreshments, nor pay, gift or reward the general public or voters for attendance of election campaigns or produce, wear and distribute T-shirts and caps.

Past Attributes or Past Achievements

40. A Political Party, Candidate, Government or Non-Governmental authority, Organisation or any individual shall not screen any audiovisual products or documentary clips or display/distribute any written or pictorial materials which attributes or depicts the past achievements of a particular aspiring Candidate whilst in Government or public service or otherwise, including the portrayal of a Candidate in any audiovisual product.

No Travels or Official Tours by A Member of Parliament

41. No travels or official tours shall be undertaken by a Member of Parliament to any *Demkhong* other than the place of ordinary residence during the National Assembly Election Period except to cast votes on the Poll Days if he/she decides not to avail the Postal Ballot facility. If such travel to a *Demkhong* becomes unavoidable, he/she shall first report to the concerned Returning Officer.

No Usage of Title, Sign, Insignia or Symbol

42. No Candidate shall use the title, designation, rank, *kabney*, *pata*, or any other sign, insignia or symbol of an office held earlier, on person, car or any personal effects as may be used during the campaign period by the Candidate, representatives or supporters.
43. The Office of the Returning Officer and venue of the election events shall be, as far as possible, at locations that do not require the wearing of the *kabney* and *pata*.

Prohibition on Election Campaign 48 hours Before Poll

44. Election Campaign must stop 48 hours before the hour fixed for commencement of Poll.

Election Campaign Finance

45. Each Political Party contesting the Primary Round shall be eligible to receive Election Campaign Fund at the rate of Nu.130,000/- per *Demkhong* as per the revision of the Election Campaign Fund by the Election Commission, notified to the public vide Notification No. EB/PEFD/08/2012/394 dated 20th of September 2012.
46. A Political Party contesting the Primary Round cannot exceed the election campaign expenditure ceiling of Nu. 260,000/-, in each of the 47 *Demkhongs*, fixed by the Election Commission and notified to the public i.e. Nu.130,000/- provided as public campaign funds by the State and up to Nu.130,000/- from the Party's own Funds as raised through the permitted sources of income.
47. A Candidate contesting the General Elections shall be eligible to receive Election Campaign Fund at the rate of Nu.130,000/- as per the revision of the

Election Campaign Fund by the Election Commission, notified to the public vide Notification No. EB/PEFD/08/2012/394 dated 20th of September 2012.

48. A Candidate contesting the General Elections cannot exceed the election campaign expenditure ceiling of Nu. 260,000/-, fixed by the Election Commission and notified to the public i.e. Nu.130,000/- provided as public campaign funds by the State and up to Nu.130,000/- from the Party's Funds as raised through the permitted sources of income.
49. The Parties and Candidates shall ensure that funds are neither received, directly or indirectly, from sources other than the permitted ones within the approved ceilings nor used, directly or indirectly, for electoral purposes.

Election Campaign Returns

50. A Political Party Representative in each *Demkhong* during the Primary Round and a Candidate in the General Elections must submit weekly accounts of the campaign expenses to the National Observer for his/her scrutiny and file Election Returns within thirty days of declaration of the Election Result as per the prescribed procedures, regardless of being elected or not, failing which the name of a Political Party may be removed from the Register of Political Parties or a person may be disqualified as a Member holding elective office or Candidate in future elections.

Public Debate

51. Two rounds of Public Debate between the contesting Political Parties in the Primary Round shall be conducted with Round One on *Party Ideology* and Round Two focussing on *Issues*.
52. The Primary Round Public Debates shall be arranged in the Capital by the ECB Secretariat and the BBSCL.
53. A Public Debate shall be conducted in each *Demkhong* between the Candidates contesting the General Elections in the respective Dzongkhags.
54. The General Elections Public Debate between the Candidates shall be arranged by the concerned Dzongkhag Election Offices and the BBSCL for the Candidates contesting National Assembly Elections.

55. The debates shall be conducted as per the *Guidelines for Conduct of Public Debates during Parliamentary Elections, 2012*.

(M) Remaining Above Politics and Apolitical

Religious Events

56. No religious events involving public gathering as notified earlier by the Election Commission, vide its Notification No. ECB/CEC-Notif/2012/425 dated 1st of October 2012 shall be organised or conducted during the Election Period.
57. Religious events such as the wrathful practices and rituals such as *tordog*, *torphang* etc. will be prohibited in particular by the Political Parties or Candidates and/or their representatives and supporters.
58. Religious Personalities shall neither vote in the elections nor participate, directly or indirectly, or give grounds to reasonably construe support, opposition or dislike of any Candidate contesting the elections.

Religious Organisations & Civil Society Organisations

59. Religious Organisations and Civil Society Organisations shall not participate, directly or indirectly, or give grounds to reasonably construe support, opposition or dislike of any Candidate contesting the elections.

Civil Servants

60. Civil servants shall cast their votes either in person at the designated Polling Stations or by Postal Ballot but shall not participate or attend any campaign events or meetings except for those civil servants on election duty required to observe or monitor such events unless provided otherwise in the Civil Service Laws.

Midhey Gothrips

61. The *Midhey Gothrips* shall not participate, directly or indirectly, or give grounds to reasonably construe support, opposition or dislike of any Party and/or Candidate contesting the elections.

(N) Postal Ballots

62. The Schedule for the Postal Ballot process shall be as given in the Election Schedule above and also detailed in the *Strategy for Conduct of the Second Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly*.
63. A Registered Postal Voter wishing to vote by post in the National Assembly Elections must apply for Postal Ballot to the Returning Officer with full details.
64. The Application may be hand delivered, sent by post or scanned and emailed to the Returning Officers but faxed copies shall not be entertained.

The email addresses of the Returning Officers are as provided in the Table under (J) *Demkhongs* above.
65. The Application submitted by a registered Postal Voter for Postal Ballot for the Primary Round shall be valid for the General Elections unless there is change in the postal address of the Voter as submitted for the Primary Round in which case the current address should be notified to the concerned Returning Officer.
66. A person who applied for Postal Ballot cannot vote in person as his/her name will be included in the Postal Voters' List and struck off from the Voters' List sent to the Polling Station by the Returning Officer.

(O) Voter Photo Identity Card (VPIC)

67. Voter Photo Identity Card (VPIC) issued by the Election Commission shall be the valid document for identification of voters at the polling stations during the Elections.
68. All voters must also carry with them the Citizenship Identity Card (CID) issued by the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs.
69. The CID shall form the basis for taking decision by the Presiding Officer in the event of any dispute related to the VPIC.
70. Voter Identity Verification in 30 pilot and larger Polling Stations in the 20 Dzongkhags shall be aided through the use of the biometrics to reduce waiting time in the queue.

(P) Polling Hours

71. The Polling Hours shall be from **9 a.m. to 5 p.m.** However, those voters already in the queue at 5 p.m. shall be allowed to vote with the last voter present at that time in the queue being given token No. 1.

(Q) Electronic Voting Machines

72. The Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) shall be used for polling in all *Demkhongs*.

(R) Indelible Ink

73. Quality indelible ink shall be used during the elections and care must be taken in applying the indelible ink as a line running from **Top** of the nail to the **Bottom** of the first joint of the **Right Forefinger** in case of the Primary Round and the **Left Thumb** in case of the General Elections.

(S) Polling Stations

74. The Polls for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly* shall be conducted in a total of **850** Polling Stations, the details of which are indicated in the Final Electoral Roll for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly*.

(T) Poll Day

75. The Poll Days, **31st of May 2013** for Primary Round and **13th of July 2013** for General Elections, shall be declared National Holidays in the 20 Dzongkhags.
76. All employers are required by law to grant required number of days as election leave for any voter wishing to go to vote in person.
77. No one shall carry any sort of audio/photo/video recording device in and around a Polling Station on Poll Day except those authorised to do so.
78. No one shall carry any arms or weapons which can be used to cause bodily harm on Poll Day except by those who are authorised under the Electoral Laws for security duty.
79. A permitted media agency or journalist shall be allowed into a Polling Station but not have access to the voting compartment when a voter is inside it and be escorted out of the Polling Station after a few minutes.

(U) Election Result Counting, Consolidation and Declaration

80. After the close of Polls, the Polling Stations shall become the Counting Centres where the EVM Results shall be counted immediately, as per the set procedure, and relayed to the Returning Officers and the National Counting Centre as per the *SMS-Based Relaying System Rules of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2013* developed specifically for this purpose.
81. The arrangements set out in the *SMS-Based Voter Turn-Out and Election Result Relay Rules and Regulations, 2013*, based on the experience of the recent National Council Elections shall be modified for the National Assembly Elections as follows:
 - 81.1. The Voter Turn-Out Report, to be submitted by the Presiding Officers to the concerned Returning Officer and from the Returning Officer to the National Results Centre shall be at Mid-Day for the voter turn-out from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the Poll-End Voter Turn-Out Report for the cumulative total voter turn-out from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the prescribed Forms;
 - 81.2. The Voter Turn-Out and the Election Results Reports from the Presiding Officer to the Returning Officer and from the Returning Officer to the National Results Centre shall be sent through fax and/or phone (and not by SMS); and
 - 81.3. The National Results Centre shall input the SMS information in the SMS System to generate the necessary Voter Turn-Out and Election Result Reports.
82. The Postal Ballots shall be counted by the Returning Officers who shall consolidate it with the EVM results received from the Counting Centres and after verification submit it to the National Results Centre in the required Forms.
83. Candidates or their representatives can witness and observe all stages of the polling and counting procedures but shall not make public statements on estimates and guesses before the official declaration of the results.

(V) **Election Officials**

Chief Election Coordinators

84. The *Dzongdags* shall be appointed as the Chief Election Coordinators; *Dzonggrabs/ Dungpas/ Executive Secretaries* of the *Dzongkhag Thromdes* as the Deputy Chief Election Coordinators; and the *Gewog Administrative Officers* as the Assistant Chief Election Coordinators in the respective *Dzongkhag, Dungkhags* and *Gewogs* for the purpose of the conduct of the National Assembly Elections, continuing on from the National Council Elections.
85. The Election Coordinators shall be responsible for carrying out the roles, responsibilities and duties as provided in the Electoral Laws and in accordance with the Appointment Order issued by the Election Commission on **29th of April 2013**.
86. The Chief Election Coordinator of a *Dzongkhag* shall be responsible to submit a comprehensive Report on the Elections, as provided in the *Handbook for Election Coordinators 2013*, in the concerned *Dzongkhag* within ten days of the declaration of the Results i.e. by **26th of July 2013**.

National Observers

87. The Election Commission shall appoint Forty-Seven National Observers in each of the 47 National Assembly *Demkhongs*.
88. An Observer is vested with the authority, roles and responsibilities as per the provisions in the Electoral Laws, Rules, Regulations and Handbook for Observers, to observe the Elections.
89. An Observer shall, besides submission of required reports, report any infraction requiring immediate action to the Election Commission instantly through SMS and other social media platforms.

Follow-up on Observer Reports

90. The Policy and Planning Division of the Election Commission shall consolidate the Reports submitted by the Observers for review and decision by the Commission on a weekly basis and as and when an immediate decision is required.

Returning Officers

91. The Election Commission shall appoint, for the National Assembly Elections, Forty-Seven Returning Officers in each of the 47 *National Assembly Demkhongs* and a total of Six Assistant Returning Officers, one each in *Sombeykha Demkhong* (Haa Dzongkhag), *Kengkhar_Weringla* (Monggar), *Lhamoi Dzingkha_Tashiding* (Dagana), *Jomotshangkha_Martshala* (Samdrup Jongkhar), in the Permanent Mission of Bhutan, New York and in ECB Head Office to handle the postal ballots of the overseas Postal Voters other than the United States of America and remote areas in the country.
92. A Returning Officer is vested with full authority, roles and responsibilities as per the provisions in the Electoral Laws, Rules, Regulations and Handbook for Returning Officers.

Presiding Officers

93. The appointment of Presiding Officers for the Elections shall be as per the Appointment Orders issued by the concerned Returning Officer on or after **27th of May 2013** in case of the Primary Round and **9th of July 2013** in case of the General Elections i.e. three days before the days of Poll, unless otherwise authorised.
94. Presiding Officers are vested with the authority, roles and responsibilities as per the provisions in the Electoral laws, Rules, Regulations and Handbook for Presiding Officers.

Polling Officers

95. The appointment of Polling Officers for the Elections shall be as per the Appointment Orders issued by the concerned Returning Officer on or after **27th of May 2013** in case of the Primary Round and **9th of July 2013** in case of the General Elections i.e. three days before the days of Poll.
96. Polling Officers are vested with the authority, roles and responsibilities as per the provisions in the Electoral Laws, Rules, Regulations and Handbook for Polling Officers.

Counting Supervisors & Counting Assistants

97. 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.
98. Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants are vested with the authority, roles and responsibilities as per the provisions in the Electoral Laws, Rules, Regulations and Handbook for Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants.

Media Arbitrator

99. The Media Arbitrator appointed for the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly* shall be vested with the authority and be responsible for fulfilling the roles and responsibilities as provided in the Electoral Laws, Rules, Regulations and the Appointment Order.
100. The Election Commission shall appoint Social Media Monitor(s) as part of the Media Arbitrator's Team.

Legal Officers

101. The Election Commission shall appoint, on deputation, three Legal Officers to assist the Central Dispute Settlement Body, one Legal Officer attached to the Office of the Media Arbitrator and the Dzongkhag Legal Officers to assist the respective Dzongkhag Dispute Settlement Body for the Elections.

Accounts Officers

102. Each Dzongkhag Administration shall identify and appoint Accounts Officer(s) to be responsible for managing and keeping the accounts for all expenditures related to the National Assembly Elections 2013 in that Dzongkhag, except for the Public Election Campaign Fund which shall be handled directly by the Public Election Fund Division of the Election Commission.
103. The finance and expenditure records and accounts shall be maintained in line with the *Guidelines for the Maintenance of Financial Records and Accounts for an Election in the Kingdom of Bhutan 2013*.

Assignment of Duty Stations

104. The Observers, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, Presiding Officers, Polling Officers and Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants shall not be posted to the Gewog where his/her *Gung* or *Mitsi* is registered.

Authorisation to Record Election Related Events

105. The general public are hereby notified that the Officials appointed on election duty are being officially authorized to photograph, videograph and/or record any election-related event or activity which may be used as evidence in the election dispute settlement system.

(W) Election Control Rooms

106. Control Rooms shall be established in the Office of the Returning Officers and at the Election Commission Headquarters to effectively supervise, direct, monitor and backstop the conduct of elections.
107. The Control Rooms shall be set up and function in the manner detailed in the *Manual for Control Rooms*.
108. All concerned officials shall be provided with a copy of the *National Assembly Election Directory 2013* to facilitate effective communications during the elections.

(X) Election Code of Conduct

109. The Election Code of Conduct shall continue to be in force from **28th of April 2013** until the completion of the Election Period i.e. till the declaration of the General Election Results on **14th of July 2013**.
110. 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.
111. All electoral stakeholders may use the social media for election or campaign purposes but shall ensure to abide generally by the Electoral Laws, Election Code of Conduct and specifically adhere to the requirements under the *Social Media Rules of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2012*.

(Y) Replacement Candidate

112. In a *Demkhong* where candidature has been cancelled or a Candidate dies, the replacement Candidate may be nominated or polls in that *Demkhong* postponed in accordance with Sections 233 to 237 of the Election Act, 2008.

(Z) Law and Order & Deployment of Forces

113. The *Dzongdags* of all twenty *Dzongkhags*, Executive Secretaries of *Dzongkhag Thromdes* and the Gewog Administrative Officers in the *Gewogs* shall serve as the Focal Points for all administrative matters in the *Dzongkhags, Thromdes* and *Gewogs* respectively for the election period.
114. The *Dzongdags* and the Gewog Administrative Officers shall be responsible in ensuring that their respective jurisdictions are conducive and congenial for the conduct of free and fair *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly*.
115. The Royal Bhutan Police and the Royal Bhutan Army shall deploy security as per the *Election Security Rules and Regulations of the Kingdom of Bhutan*.
116. The Royal Bhutan Police and the Royal Bhutan Army shall ensure appropriate coverage and deploy adequate number of men and officers so that there is no possibility of any security threat and incidences affecting the electoral process in their respective jurisdictions.
117. 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.
118. Election Security personnel shall be fully empowered and authorized, under Section 38 of the Election Act, to detain any individual or group on sufficient grounds to suspect that he/she/group is a threat to peace and harmony and free and fair elections are likely to be undermined.

(AA) Election Dispute Settlement System

119. The quasi-judicial role of the Election Commission during the Election Period shall be fulfilled through the election dispute settlement system which includes three levels of decision-making and appeal:

119.1. *Dzongkhag* Dispute Settlement Body;

- 119.2. Central Dispute Settlement Body; and
- 119.3. Full Election Commission.
120. Election Disputes may be filed with a Returning Officer, Observer, Chief Election Coordinator or the Chief Election Commissioner but must contain all details as in *Election Complaint Form I*.
121. The adjudication of Election Disputes shall be guided generally by the principles and provisions of the Laws of the land and in particular by the Electoral Laws, Election Dispute Settlement Rules and Regulations and the Election Dispute Settlement Manual.
122. All concerned are reminded that, as notified to the public vide Notification No. ECB/NOTIF-1/2011/825 dated 16th of December 2011, a complaint related to an election shall be dealt only by an Election Dispute Settlement Body or the Election Commission.

Appeal

123. An appeal against a decision of the Election Commission or an issue related to the Poll Day or EVM may be lodged to the High Court of the Kingdom of Bhutan on or before the last date for filing of an Election Petition.

(BB) International Observers & Media Relations

124. The Policy and Planning Division of the Election Commission shall coordinate and liaison all matters that concern the International Observers, National and International Media permitted to observe the Elections as provided in the *National and International Observers Guidelines, Media Coverage of Elections Rules and Regulations* and the *Social Media Rules*.

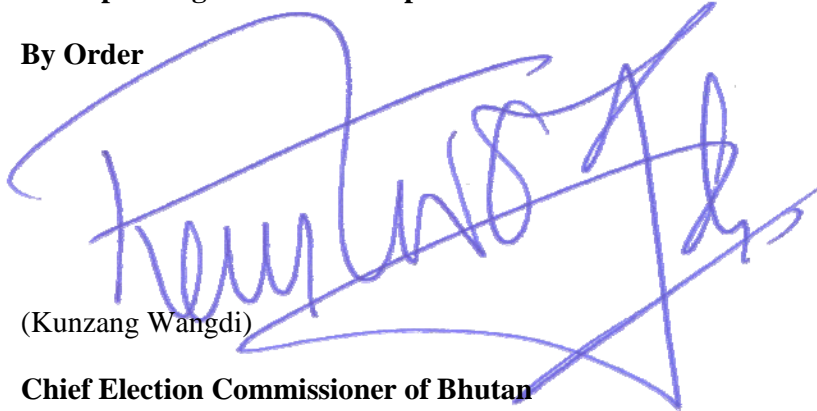
(CC) Other Reference

125. Election Officials shall, besides the Electoral Laws, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Handbooks, Orders and Notifications, also refer to the *Strategy for the Conduct of the Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly* for additional information and guidance in the conduct of the Elections.

Now, thereof, from the day of issue of this Notification, the Election Commission of Bhutan notifies the general public on all matters relating to the *Parliamentary Elections 2013: National Assembly*.

Issued on the Nineteenth Day of the Third Month of the Water Female Snake Year corresponding to the 29th of April 2013.

By Order

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, written over a large, irregular blue scribble. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Kunzang Wangdi'.

(Kunzang Wangdi)

Chief Election Commissioner of Bhutan

C.c:

1. His Excellency the Chief Advisor, Interim Government, Thimphu
2. Hon'ble Secretary to His Majesty the King of Bhutan, His Majesty's Secretariat, Tashichhodzong, Thimphu
3. Hon'ble Secretary to His Majesty, Secretariat of Druk Gyal Zhipa, Thimphu
4. Hon'ble Chief Justice of Bhutan
5. Hon'ble Chief Operation Officer, Royal Bhutan Army, Thimphu
6. Hon'ble Commandant, Royal Body Guards, Dechencholing, Thimphu, Bhutan
7. Hon'ble Chief of Police, Royal Bhutan Police, Thimphu
8. Hon'ble Chairperson, Anti-Corruption Commission, Thimphu, Bhutan
9. Hon'ble Chairperson, Royal Civil Service Commission, Thimphu
10. Hon'ble Auditor General, Royal Audit Authority, Thimphu, Bhutan
11. Hon'ble Cabinet Secretariat, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu
12. All Hon'ble Secretaries to the Royal Government of Bhutan
13. Election Security Coordinator, Royal Bhutan Police, Thimphu
14. Director, Bureau for Law and Order, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Thimphu, Bhutan
15. Focal Person, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
16. All Returning Officers
17. All Dzongkhag Electoral Officers