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**ELECTION COMMISSION OF BHUTAN**

*(Ensuring Free, Fair & Democratic Elections & Referendums)*



ECB/CEC-PR/2015/1430

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2015

## Press Release

### Final Delimitation Order

The Delimitation Commission of Bhutan is pleased to announce the issuance of the Final Delimitation Order upon completion of the delimitation of the *Dzongkhag Thomde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs* of the 15 *Dzongkhag Thomdes* of Bumthang, Dagana, Gasa, Haa, Lhuentse, Monggar, Paro, Punakha, Samtse, Trashigang, Trashi Yangtse, Trongsa, Tsirang, Wangdue Phodrang and Zhemgang and 18 *Dzongkhag Yenlag Thomdes*.

This has become possible due to the support and cooperation of the Delimitation Commission Members and the respective *Dzongkhag Administrations* and *Municipality Offices*. In particular, the public of the 15 *Dzongkhag Thomdes* shared their valuable comments, views and recommendations during the public hearings held in all the 15 *Dzongkhag Thomdes* with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> of July to 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2015 with the Draft Delimitation Plan issued on 2<sup>nd</sup> of July, 2015.

### Allocation of Seats

The allocation and determination of the *Demkhong* boundaries was carried out in accordance with the provisions of the *Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008* and the *Delimitation of Demkhongs Rules and Regulations of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2012*.

Number of *Demkhongs* for a *Dzongkhag Thomde* is determined based on size of registered voter population as per the formula provided in the Rules that:

1. Less than 5,000 shall have the minimum six *Dzongkhag Thomde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs*;
2. Between 5,001 and 7,500 shall have seven *Dzongkhag Thomde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs*;
3. Between 7,501 and 10,000 shall have eight *Dzongkhag Thomde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs*; and

**Post Box No.: 2008, Olakha, Thimphu: Bhutan**

334851, 334852 (PABX), 334762 (EA to CEC), Fax: 334763

Website: [www.election-bhutan.org.bt](http://www.election-bhutan.org.bt) E-mail: [cec@election-bhutan.org.bt](mailto:cec@election-bhutan.org.bt), [kwangdi@druknet.bt](mailto:kwangdi@druknet.bt)

4. More than 10,000 shall have the maximum of nine *Dzongkhag Thomde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs*.

Accordingly, the minimum of 6 *Dzongkhag Thomdes Tshogpa Demkhongs* have been allocated in each of the 15 *Dzongkhag Thomde* as notified. Similarly the registered voter population for the 18 *Yelag Thomdes* is also being notified, AS REQUIRED UNDER THE LAWS, to the public.

It may be noted that a total number of 90 *Thromde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs* have been allocated in the 15 *Dzongkhag Thomdes* with a minimum of six *Thromde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs* in each *Dzongkhag*. Since the voter population in these 15 *Dzongkhag Thomdes* are less than 5000 as of today, only six *Demkhongs* were allocated for each.

The *Thromde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs* were also determined for each *Thromde* in accordance with the provisions of the *Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008* and particularly Section 7.1.6 of the *Delimitation Rules and Regulations 2012* which require that:

1. Voter population of constituencies are, as far as possible, equal in the number of registered voters;
2. Boundary of a constituency correspond, wherever possible, to the existing administrative units;
3. Accessibility within the constituency, with regard to the means of communication and travel, is given due consideration;
4. Geography related to contiguity, remoteness, geographical and landmark features such as mountains, rivers and main roads are duly considered; and
5. All *Thromdes* may have between six and nine *Thromde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs* as provided under the Constitution.

Efforts have been made to ensure that the voter population of *Demkhongs* in a *Thromde* is equal or similar in size so as to give equivalent weight to the votes cast by every voter. However, consideration had to be given not only to create clear geographical boundaries but also to the changes in the proposed *Demkhong* boundaries based on valid reasons put forward by the participants at the Public Hearing.

The views received from the fifteen *Dzongkhag Thomdes* and decisions thereof of the Delimitation Commission are presented here below:

1. There were no objections or suggestions for changes in Draft Delimitation Plan for *Dzongkhag Thomde* of Tsirang.
2. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Bumthang Thomde* proposed changes to the following names which were received and endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
  - *Jalikhhar* to *Gyal Lyon Khar* and
  - *Kurje* to *Chakhar\_Jampa Lhakhang*.

The participants also proposed to increase the size of the area of the *Chakhar\_Jampa-Lhakhang Demkhong* till *Rongrongchhu* for better distribution of the voter population and clear geographical land marks which was duly endorsed by the Delimitation Commission.

3. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Dagana Thomde* proposed the following changes to the names which were duly endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
  - *Loongsilgang* to *Changrina*;
  - *Sangazhing Wog* to *Sangazhing*; and
  - The swapping of the *Demkhong* names of *Karshing Tsawa* and *Aetogang Demkhongs*.
4. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Gasa Thomde* proposed for the change of *Demkhong* name from *Dungkharbeli* to *Doongkarleg* which was endorsed by the Delimitation Commission.
5. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Haa Thomde* raised their reservations on Wangtsa village coming under the *Thomde* and stated they had not been consulted. On this, as the Delimitation Commission does not have authority on the *Thomde Boundary*, the Draft Delimitation Plan for Haa was endorsed without change.
6. The participants at the Public Hearing at Paro decided not to have discussion on the Draft Delimitation Plan of *Demkhongs* as they were not happy on the declaration of

*Dzongkhag Thomde* Boundaries by Parliament of Bhutan. Therefore, the Draft Delimitation Plan was endorsed without change.

7. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Lhuentse Thomde* proposed the following changes to names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
  - *Phatala\_Tagzibar* to *Tagzibar*.
  - Phaling Maed and Phuyum *Demkhong* Boundaries were proposed to be increased, which the Delimitation Commission endorsed.
8. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Monggar Thomde* proposed the following changes to the names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
  - *Tarling* as *Trailing*;
  - *Thromde Toed* as *Norbuchhoeling*; and
  - *Thromde Maed* as *Jarung-Khashor*
9. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Punakha Thomde* proposed the following changes to the names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
  - *Draluna \_ Hongtsochen* to *Bjaluna\_Hongtshochen* and
  - *Gyelrigjab* to *Geyrijab*
10. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Samtse Thomde* proposed some changes to the names out of which the following was endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
  - *Lhamoithang* to *Lhamoiney*
11. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Trashigang Thomde* proposed the following changes to the names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission.
  - *Melphe*(མེལ་འཕེལ) to ***Melphe***(མེལ་འཕེལ)
  - *Mithidrang*(མི་བྱི་གྲང་) to ***Mithigdrang***(མི་བྱི་གྲང་)
  - *Chhenari* to ***Chhenari\_Pam Maed*** (ཚེན་རི་\_ཕམ་མེད།)
  - *Pam-Maed* to ***Pam Toed*** (ཕམ་མེད།)
  - *Pam Toed* to ***Pam Tabteng***(ཕམ་བཏབ་སྟེང།)

- The suggestion to change the boundary of Mithigdrang to the ridge starting from RBP colony could not be endorsed in view of the need to maintain balance in the number of registered voter population between the *Demkhongs*.
12. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Trashhi Yangtse Thromde* proposed the following changes to the names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission.
- *Doongkarchoeling* to *Khabaer* and
  - *Tongchen* to *Lhuendrup Gatshel*
- Delimitation Commission endorsed the proposal and approved further change in *Demkhong* name of *Lho Chhoekor* as *Lho Chhorten Kora* & *Jang Chhoekor* as *Jang Chhorten Kora*.
13. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Trongsa Thromde* proposed the following changes in the names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission:
- *Phuentshocholing* to *Chhoekhorling* and
  - *Poengar* to *Bagochen*
14. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Wangdue Phodrang Thromde* suggested the following change of names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission
- *Drupchhuthaensa* to *Drupchhu*,
  - *Jodagsoelsa* to *Bajo*,
  - *Nazhingka* to *Kushing Tsawa*, and
  - *Bjimaidzong* to *Shawa Dhama*.
15. The participants at the Public Hearing of *Zhemgang Thromde* proposed the changes in *Demkhongs* and names which were endorsed by the Delimitation Commission as follows:
- The participants proposed the two *Demokhongs* under Tingtibi to be named as *Dunglam* and *Taaglam*. Upon review of the justifications the Delimitation Commission decided to name the *Demkhongs* as *Tingtibi Maed* for *Dunglam* and *Tingtibi Toed* for *Taaglam* as these would be more relevant in view of Tingtibi being the commonly used name.

- *Demkhongs* of *Dzonglam Tag* and *Dzonglam Wog* to be merged together and kept as *Dzonglam* and one more *Demkhong* to be created in Tingtibi which was endorsed by the Commission.

The declaration of the *Dzongkhag Thomdes* and *Dzongkhag Yenlag Thomdes* has changed boundaries of 34 *Gewogs* and 56 *Chiwogs* while one *Chiwog*, *Chagzam\_Pam Chiwog*, under *Samkhar Gewog* in Trashigang, completely falls under the *Thromde*. The changed boundaries of the affected *Gewogs* and *Chiwogs* of *Samkhar Gewog* (Trashigang Dzongkhag) and the *Hoongrel* and *Wangchang Gewogs* (Paro Dzongkhag) are as presented in the **Annexure A**.

Accordingly, due to the declaration of certain areas of *Hoongrel* and *Wangchang Gewogs* under *Thromde*, significant numbers, in places over 90%, of Registered Voter Population will now be out of the Electoral Roll of these *Gewogs*. As there are still some remaining voters in the affected *Gewog Tshogde Demkhongs* of these two *Gewogs*, there shall be no change in the status of *Hoongrel* and *Wangchang* as two independent *Gewogs*. With the *Chagzam\_Pam Chiwog* of *Samkhar Gewog* falling under the *Dzongkhag Thromde*, there will only be five *Chiwogs* in the *Samkhar Gewog*.

However, as per the Electoral Laws, the incumbent elected office holders in *Gewog Tshogdes* and *Dzongkhag Tshogdus* shall serve till the end of the tenure or dissolution of the respective bodies.

The Election Commission of Bhutan shall, hereafter, but before the initiation of the next Local Government Elections, issue the revised maps of all 205 *Gewogs* and 1043 *Chiwogs* highlighting the effects on the boundaries by the declaration of the *Dzongkhag Thomdes* and consequent to this Final Delimitation Order.

Since Parliament of Bhutan has declared only one *Dzongkhag Yenlag Thromde* in each *Dzongkhag* the process of *Tshogpa* nominations in the *Chiwogs* will be followed for the *Dzongkhag Yenlag Thromde Thuemi* elections.

Meanwhile the Election Commission of Bhutan has communicated to the government requesting for clear directives on the *Dzongkhag Yenlag Thromde* Administration by *Dzongkhag* or *Gewogs*.

The Delimitation Commission, having completed the delimitation of *Thromde Tshogpa Demkhongs* through due process as required under the Constitution and the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008, has the honour to hereby release this day the **Final Delimitation Order** for the *Dzongkhag Thromde Tshogde Tshogpa Demkhongs* of the 15 Dzongkhag Thromdes of Bumthang, Dagana, Gasa, Haa, Lhuentse, Monggar, Paro, Punakha, Samtse, Trashigang, Trashi Yangtse, Trongsa, Tsirang, Wangdue Phodrang and Zhemgang.

(Kunzang Wangdi)

**Chairperson**

**Delimitation Commission of Bhutan**