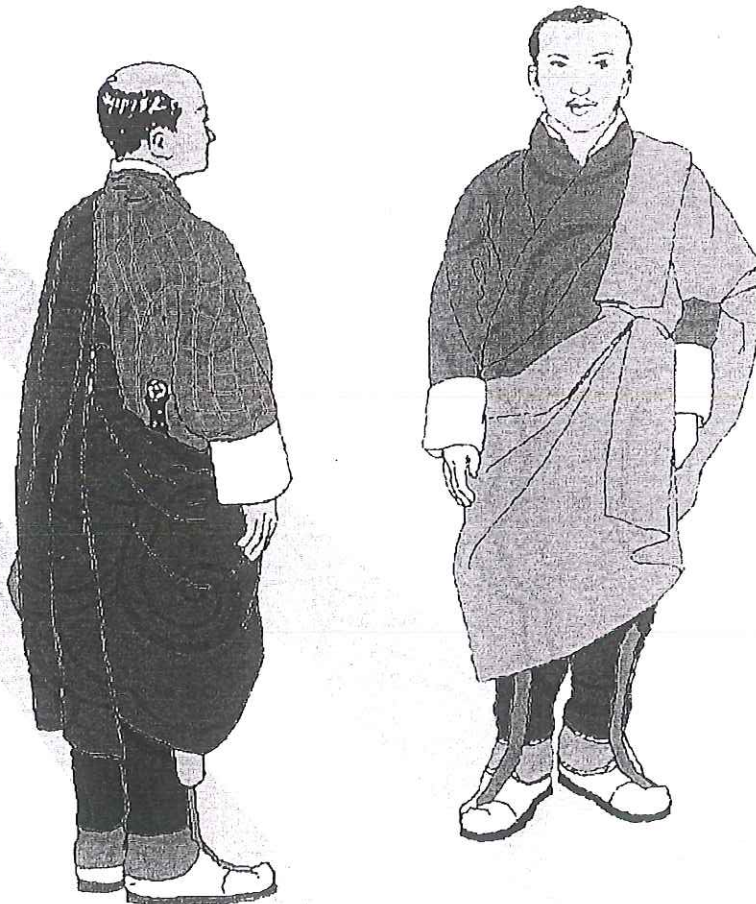


**Know Your**

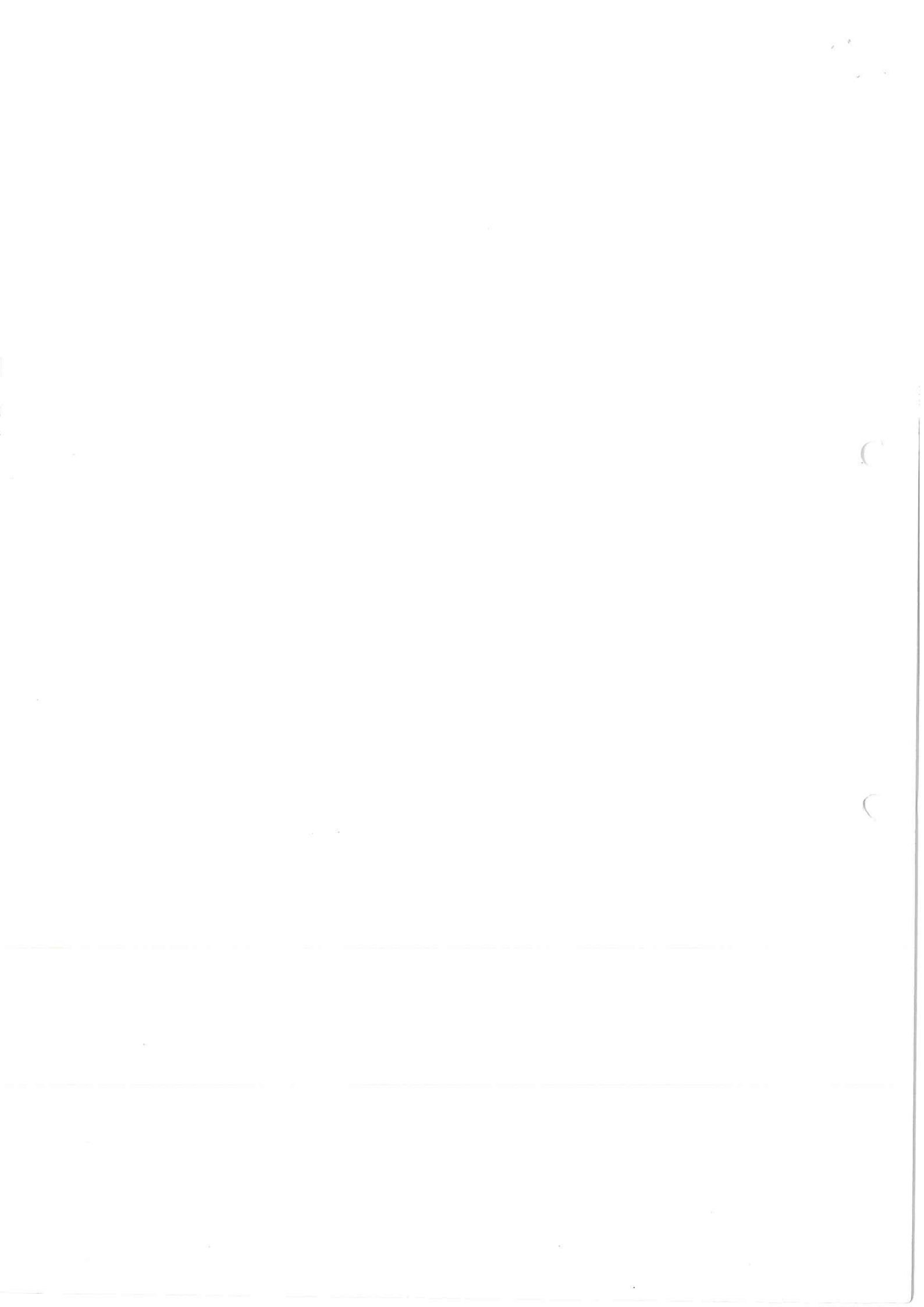
**PARLIAMENT**

**ROLE-PLAY**



**STUDENTS**

**GUIDE**



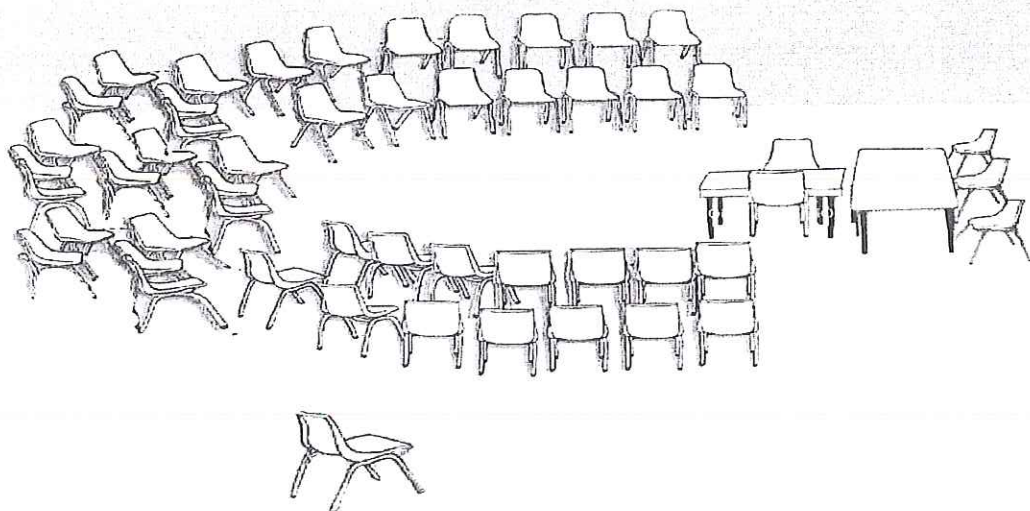


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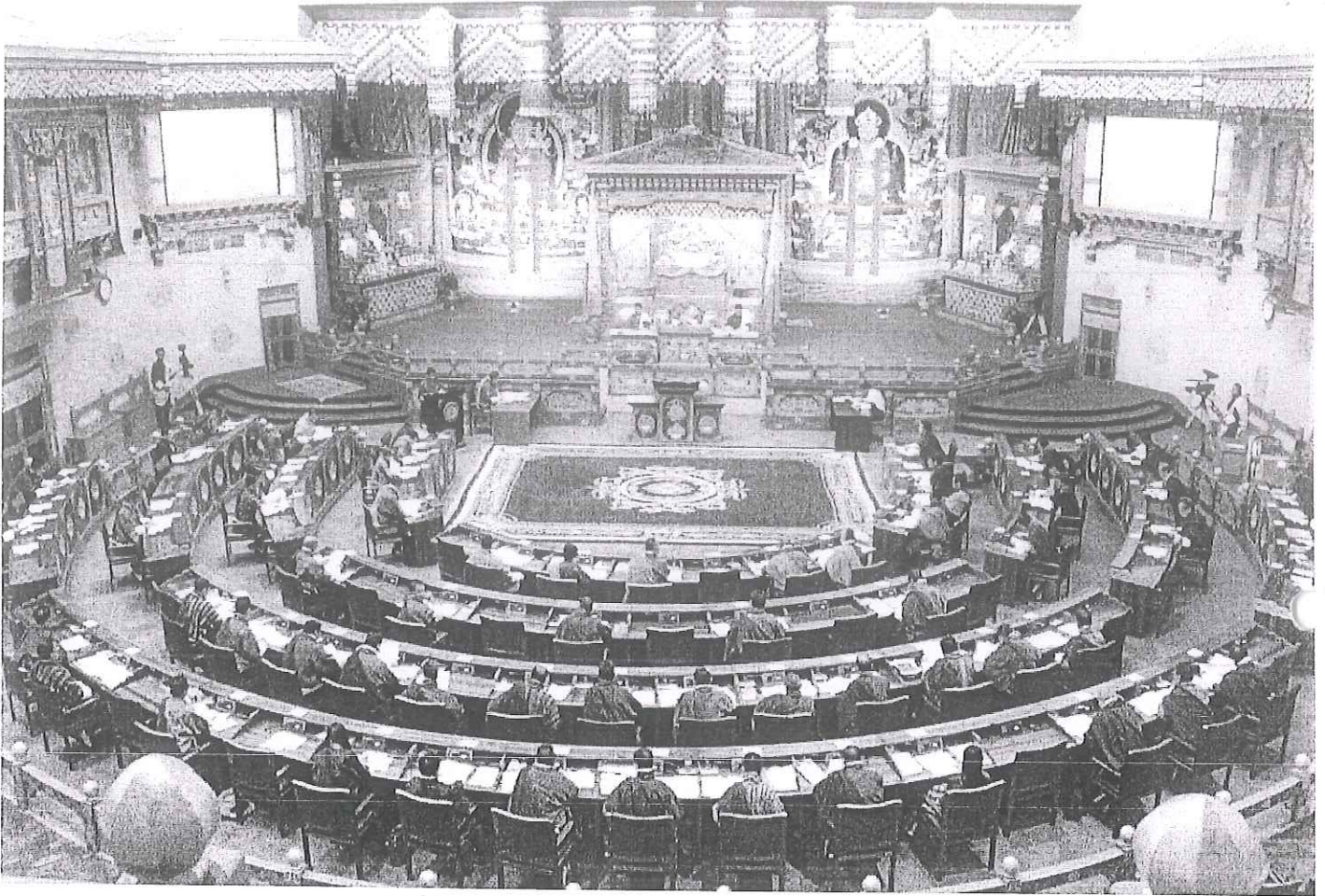
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## *Overview of the Parliament*

As per Article 10 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Parliament of Bhutan shall consist of His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo, the National Council and the National Assembly.

All the legislative powers under the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan are vested with the Parliament.

Parliament shall ensure that the Government safeguards the interests of the nation and fulfils the aspirations of the people through public review of policies and issues, Bills and other legislations, and scrutiny of state functions.

The Druk Gyalpo summons the first sitting of Parliament after each general election. At the commencement of each session of Parliament, the Druk Gyalpo is received in a joint sitting of Parliament with Chibdreel ceremony. Each session opens with a Zhugdrel-Phunsum tshog-pai tendrel and concludes with the Tashi mon lam.

The Druk Gyalpo may address or sit in the proceedings of either House or a joint sitting of Parliament as and when expedient.



## **ABOUT THIS GUIDE**

*This guide is designed to help law-making role-play. It aims to engage and teach young learners about the Parliament. It presents a simplified version of the processes of Parliament and does not aim to represent these processes in their entirety.*

Law-making is one of the main activities of Parliament. Laws are made through a process of debate and decision-making. During parliamentary debate, ideas are tested, challenged and refined, and ultimately accepted or rejected.

The law-making role-play helps students understand how proposals for laws—bills—are considered by the Parliament. Using the classroom as a parliamentary chamber, the students assume the role of members of parliament and parliamentary officers.

The law-making role-play is suitable for students of all ages and has many applications in the classroom. It will familiarize students with the role of the Parliament.

### **This guide includes:**

A step-by-step guide for teachers that explains how to run:

#### **Pg. 3**

A Law-making Process in the Parliament of Bhutan

#### **Pg. 16**

A Glossary explaining parliamentary terms and procedures.

#### **Pg. 18**

Activities which help familiarize students with the role of the Parliament

## *Tips for the speeches*

- Keep the speeches short – one or two points – to give more students the opportunity to raise different ideas.
- Remind students that party loyalty is highly valued. For example, when the government introduces a bill, usually its members agree to support it; therefore, government members will make speeches in favour of the bill.
- The opposition often supports the bill; however, it may enhance the drama of the class role-play if the opposition either speaks against the bill or suggests amendments (changes) to the bill.

Note: Use the break to help students to come up with their own speeches:

For example:

- brainstorm ideas with the class (or)
- the Government and Opposition could hold party meetings to plan speeches (for few minutes).

# LAW-MAKING PROCESS

This role-play can run for around 40 minutes to an hour, depending on the number and length of speeches students make and the amount of preparation beforehand.

## SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE ROLE-PLAY

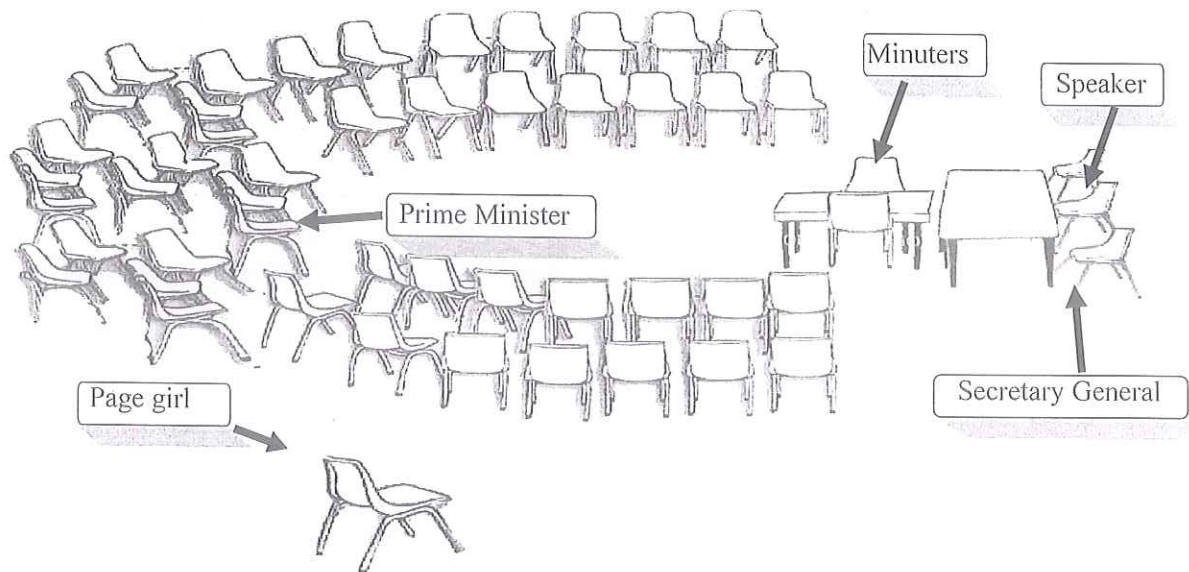
Before the role-play begins, we can set the scene by doing some short activities with the students. For example:

- encourage students to get into role as members of parliament (this will help the students understand that as members of parliament they may be working as part of a team, and will also represent the views of their constituencies)
- Powerpoint presentation to the students about the role and responsibility of NA
- Show documentary of National Assembly to Students

### Equipment you will need

tables  
Chairs  
Scripts\*





## PREPARATION

You can create a more authentic atmosphere by rearranging your classroom to look like a Parliamentary House and by using a script.

This will also help students get into role.

**Choose the bill topic using one of the following options:**

- brainstorming ideas with the class*
- selecting a topic to meet the requirements of a curriculum / subject area*
- identifying a local issue or one facing the Parliament*

### Set-up

Transform the classroom into a chamber by arranging chairs and tables in a shape as indicated by the illustration above.

## GET INTO ROLE

- Divide the class into government and opposition. Use these numbers to gain approximate proportions for your parliament.
- Select a Speaker
- Elect party leaders – the government elects the Prime Minister and the opposition elects the Leader of the Opposition.
- Select a relevant minister to introduce the bill.
- Select a Secretary General – he is official of the Secretariat office, who do not debate or vote.
- Select two secretariat officials - to write minutes of the proceedings.

You are now ready to begin the role-play



# STARTING THE ROLE-PLAY

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## SEQUENCE

- The bell-man (Choedril Simi) rings the bell instructing the members to enter the Assembly Hall
- Members stand to show their respect to the Speaker.

## Notes:

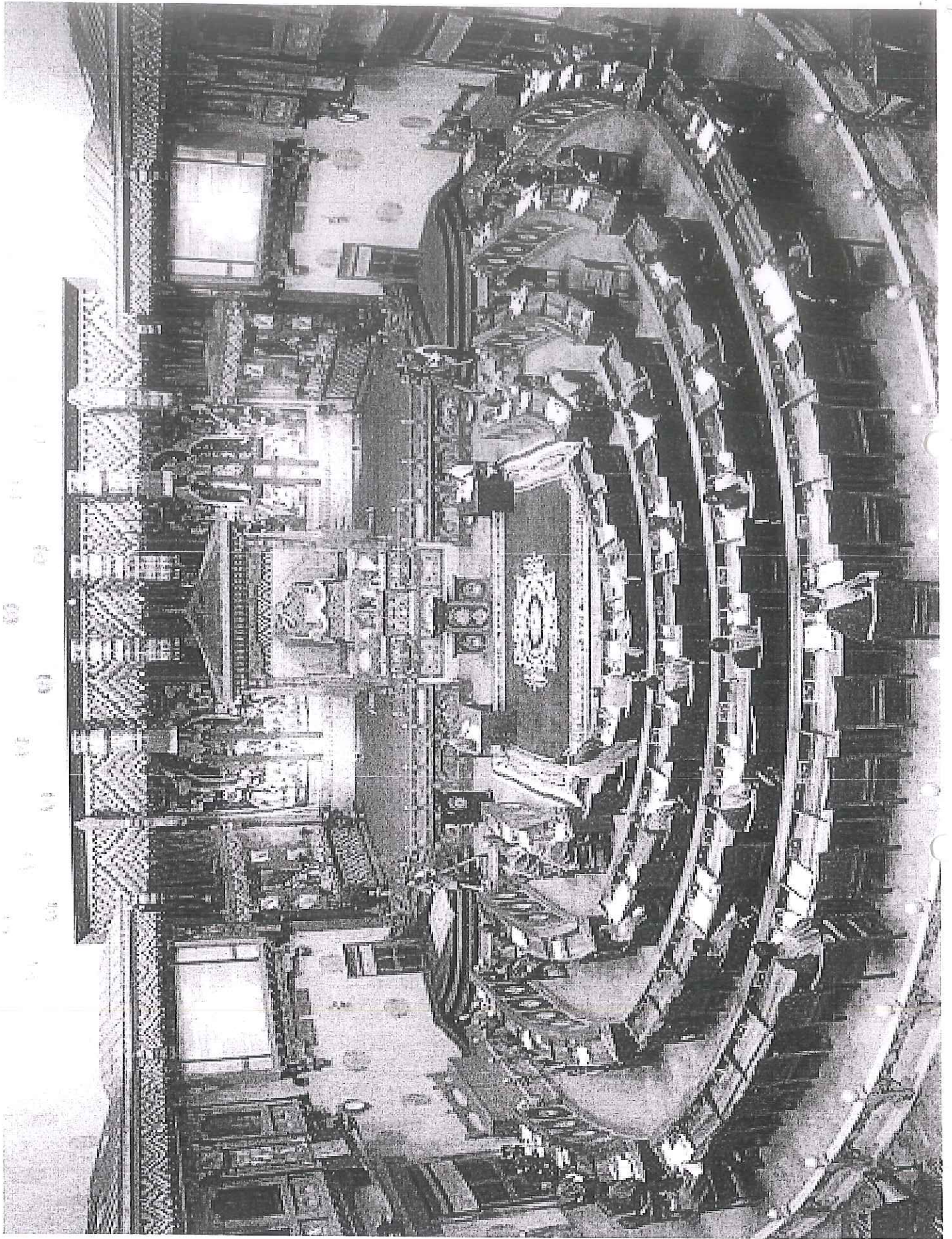
As per Article 12 (3) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, at the first sitting after any general election or when necessary to fill a vacancy the National Assembly shall elect a Speaker from amongst its members.

The Druk Gyalpo by warrant under his Hand and Seal confer dakyen to the Speaker.

He shall preside over the National Assembly and Joint Sitting of the Parliament and enforce its rules for the orderly conduct of the proceedings.

The Speaker shall remain non-partisan in the fulfillment of his or her role.







# THE FIRST READING

- The bill is introduced

## SEQUENCE

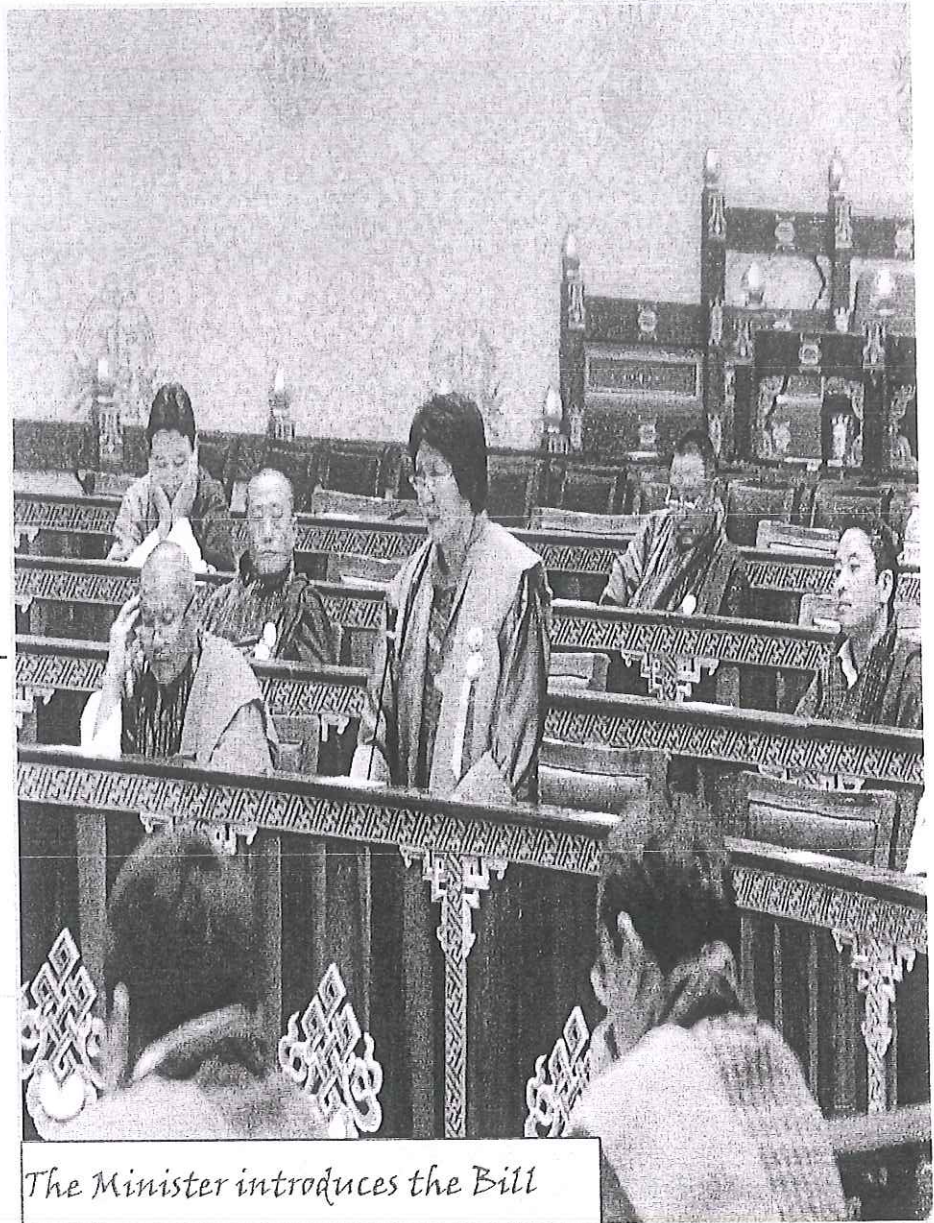
Speaker: I call the Minister for .....to move the motion for first reading of the Bill (to introduce the bill).

Member In-Charge of the Bill: The Hon Minister moves the motion for first reading of the Bill.

Speaker: Asks the members present to raise their hands if leave may be granted to introduce the Bill.

Members: *Raise their hands or choose not to*

Minister: Introduces the Bill if leave is granted



*The Minister introduces the Bill*

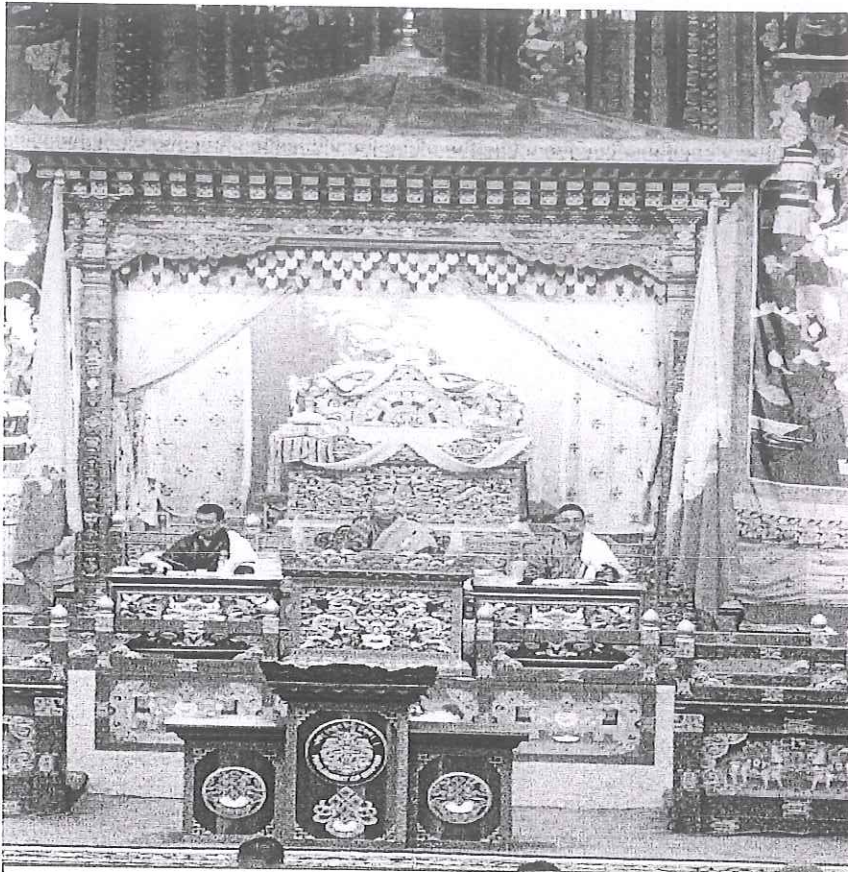
## Notes:

- A Bill is a proposal for a new or amended law.
- Most bills are introduced by the government; however, other Members of Parliament can introduce bills known as Private Members' Bills.
- Bills may be introduced either in National Assembly or National Council



# THE SECOND READING

-The General principles of the Bill is discussed



*Hon'ble Speaker calls the Member In-Charge of the Bill to introduce the 2nd reading of the Bill*

## COMMITTEE STAGE

- A Committee shall be established to perform the functions of National Assembly in more effective manner.
- The Committee shall deliberate, enquire, investigate, review, recommend, legislate and draw attention to any important matter of national importance to the Speaker and the House.
- Committee consist of Members from both the parties

### SEQUENCE

Speaker: Asks the Member In-Charge to move the motion for second reading of the Bill

Member In- Charge: Moves the motion to introduce the Second Reading of the Bill.

**Note:** Second Reading confines to the discussion on general principles of the Bill. The general principle of the Bill is the object or the purpose of the Bill. If the bill passes the second reading vote, it means that the House has agreed to the bill 'in principle'.

The Speaker calls members to speak about the Bill by giving opportunity to all.

*Selected members to speak about the Bill*

Speaker: After the deliberation, Speaker refers the Bill to a Committee



# THE THIRD READING

## SEQUENCE

Speaker: Calls the Chairperson of the Committee to report on the Bill.

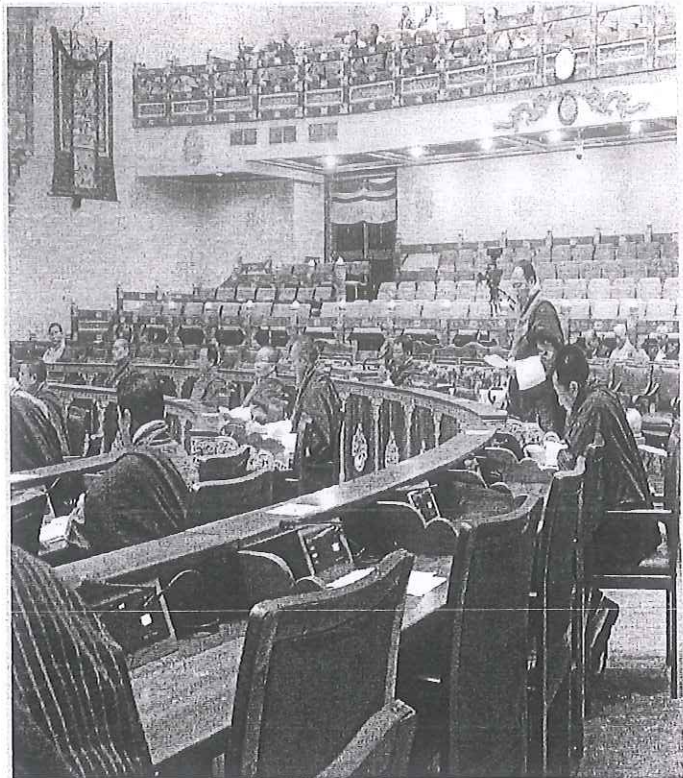
Chairperson of the Committee:  
Reports on the findings of the Committee

Speaker: Discusses the Bill clause by clause

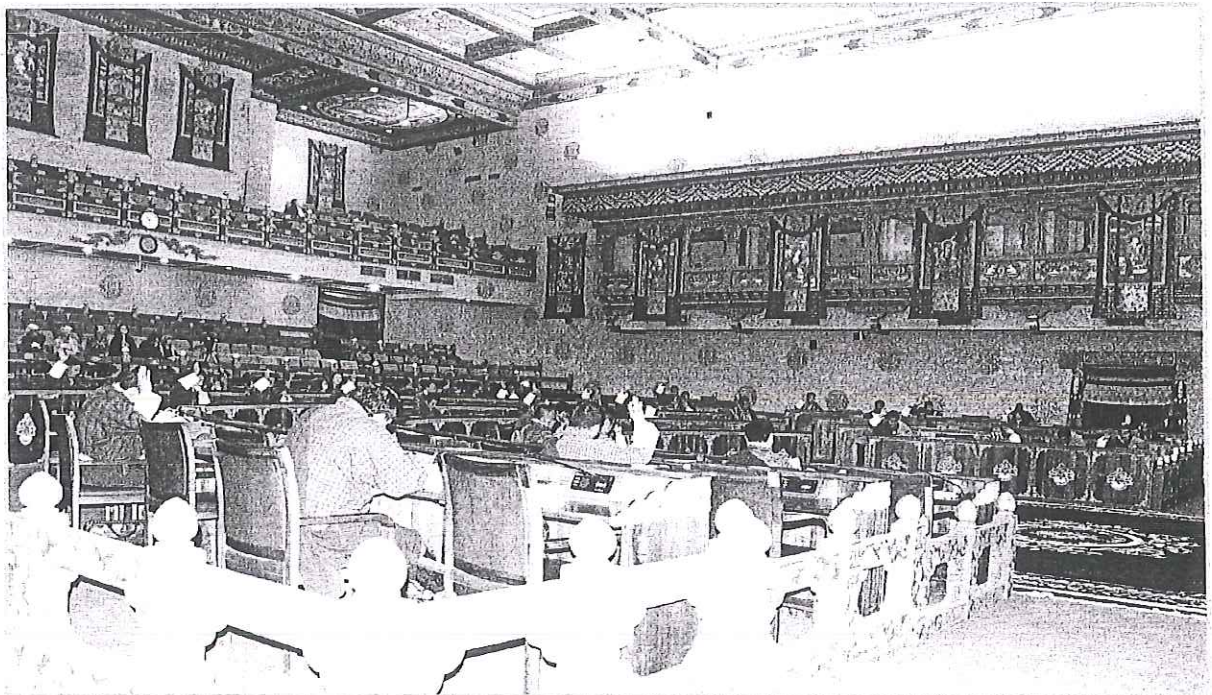
**Note:** Members may raise hands if they desire to amend any provisions contained in the Bill

*Selected Member: Hon Speaker I would like to propose to .....*

**Note:** When there are no further speeches, the Speaker concludes the debate.



*Committee reports to the House*





# ADOPTION AND VOTING ON THE BILL

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**Note:** Once the debate has concluded and the amendments to the Bill has been incorporated, the Member In-Charge may move a motion that the Bill be passed. However, the motion shall not be moved on the same day on which the debate on the Bill is concluded.

## SEQUENCE

Speaker: Calls the Member In- Charge to move the Motion

Member In- Charge: Moves the motion

Speaker: A vote on the Bill will now be taken. Those in favour of the Bill vote YES. Those against the Bill vote NO. Members can also ABSTAIN their votes.

Members: YES/NO (members responds by voting YES, NO or ABSTAIN)

**Note:** Speaker will count the vote and declare whether the Bill is passed or not.

## Notes:

- The division is the formal vote on the bill. The chamber divides in two and all votes are counted either for or against the bill.
- Division votes are recorded.



# DISSENTING OPINION

---

Any Member who does not concur with a decision shall have the right to enter his or her dissenting opinion in the minutes. However, no further debate on such an opinion shall be permitted.

## SEQUENCE

Speaker: Calls out the Member who raised his or her hand to Speak.

Selected Member: Hon'ble Speaker, I voted no for the Bill because.....

After the conclusion, Speaker adjourns the session.

Speaker: Today's session concludes. The House is now adjourned.

All members shall stand.

## Notes:

Once a bill is passed by the National Assembly, it is sent to the National Council.

To become a law, a bill must be agreed to by the National Assembly and the National Council, and signed by His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo (Royal Assent).

## Notes:

Once the Bill is passed by National Assembly, it is transmitted to the National Council.

If a Bill passed by National Assembly and transmitted to the National Council is neither passed nor returned to the National Assembly by the end of next session, the Bill is deemed to have been passed by the National Council which is then presented to the Druk Gyalpo for Assent within 15 days.

When a Bill passed by the National Assembly and transmitted to the National Council is returned with Amendments, the Bill is re-deliberated in the National Assembly. Upon consideration of the Amendment the House may agree or disagree to the proposals made by the National Council.

If the Bill is then passed, it shall be presented to the Druk Gyalpo for Assent with 15 days from the date of passing of such Bill.

Where the House refuses to incorporate the Amendment proposed, it shall submit the Bill to the Druk Gyalpo who shall then command the Houses to deliberate and vote of the Bill in a joint sitting.

After receiving the royal command, a joint committee of Parliament shall be established to review and resolve the dispute between the two Houses on any Bill.

The joint Committee shall make recommendations to Parliament related to a Bill that has been referred to it by way of separate report.

The Bill shall be put to vote by the Speaker. It shall be passed if endorsed by not less than two thirds of the total number of members of both the Houses present and voting.

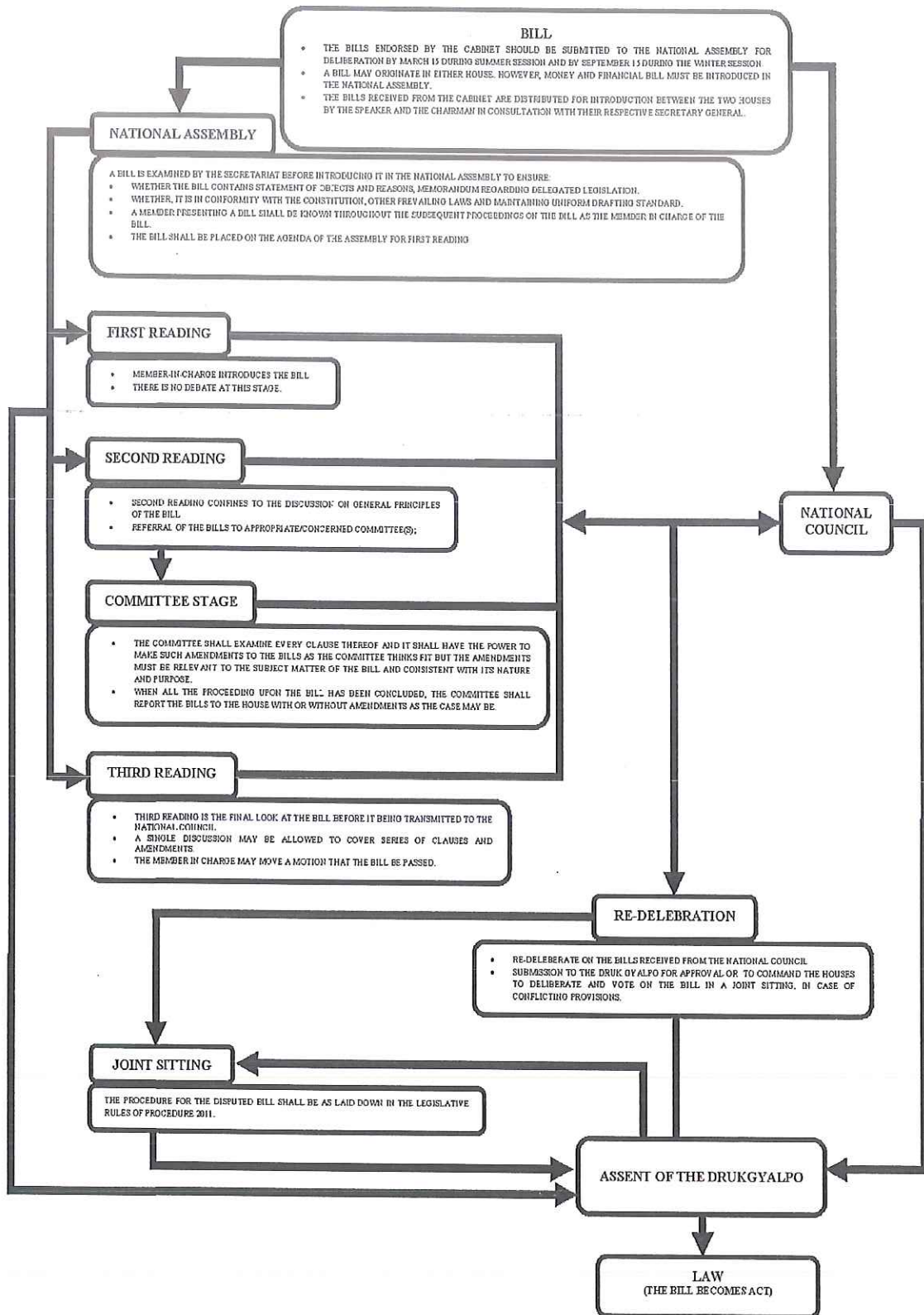


## GLOSSARY

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- a) "Amendment" means a formal revision or addition proposed to be made to a Statute;
- b) "Bill" means a legislative proposal offered for debate to the Parliament, when passed by both the Houses of Parliament and Assented to by the Druk Gyalpo, becomes an Act;
- c) "Chairperson" means the Chairperson of a committee;
- d) "Committee" means a Committee established by the House;
- e) "Constitution" means the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan;
- f) "Council" means the National Council;
- g) "House" means the National Assembly;
- h) "Member" means a Member of Parliament;
- i) "Member in charge of the Bill" means the member who has introduced the Bill ;
- j) "Minister" means a member of the Council of Ministers;
- k) "Motion" means a proposal for the consideration of House and relating to any matter which may be discussed by House;
- l) "Unparliamentary expression" expression means acts and languages that are profane, offensive and vulgar;
- m) "Petition" means submissions from the Local Government and various agencies to be deliberated in the House;
- n) "Private Member Bill" means a Bill introduced by a member other than a minister or those committees who are directed by the House to review Bills;
- o) "Conflict of Interest" means a conflict arising from any direct or pecuniary interest, which interferes with a member's ability to perform his functions;
- p) "Agenda" means a list of item of Business to be dealt during a sitting of the House;
- q) "Notice" means the process by which the House is notified of the intentions of the members to introduce Bills, ask questions or move motions etc;
- r) "Government Bill" means a Bill introduced by a minister;
- s) "Secretariat" means the National Assembly Secretariat;
- t) "Secret Ballot" means a method of voting wherein all votes are cast in secret to ensure that no other person knows who the voter voted for;
- u) "working days" means week days excluding Saturdays, Sunday and government holidays.

# THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS





# ACTIVITIES



How do you become a member of the National Assembly?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



Who represents you in the National Assembly and what is the name of your MP?

.....  
.....



What do members of parliament do in the National Assembly?

.....  
.....



Write the correct numbers in the boxes.

Members of Parliament in the House

Cabinet Ministers

Opposition members



What does the Speaker do in the National Assembly?

.....  
.....

Now that you have completed a role-play in your class, let's look at some of the details, and where the bill goes to from here.



What bill did you debate?

.....  
.....



The result of the vote was:

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain \_\_\_\_\_



Was the bill passed?

.....



Many bills are introduced in Parliament but not all become law. What could stop a bill from becoming law (Act of Parliament)?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



What is an amendment? Why might a member want to amend a bill?

.....  
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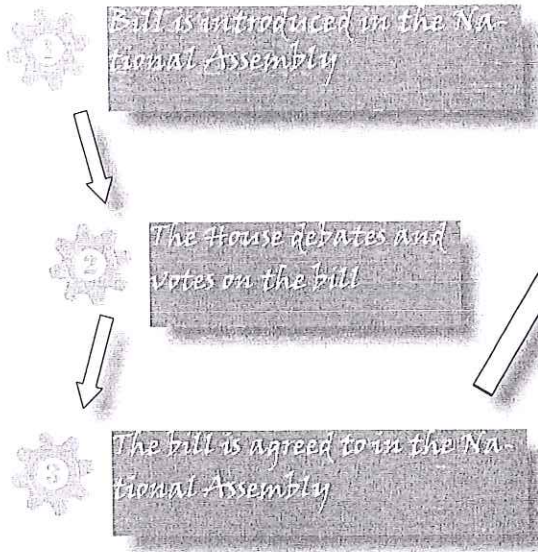


What might happen if the opposition stopped scrutinising (closely examining) the work of the government?

Ans:.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....



Complete these basic steps to show what happens to a bill after it passes the House of National Assembly using the diagram below.



.....  
 .....



.....  
 .....



.....  
 .....



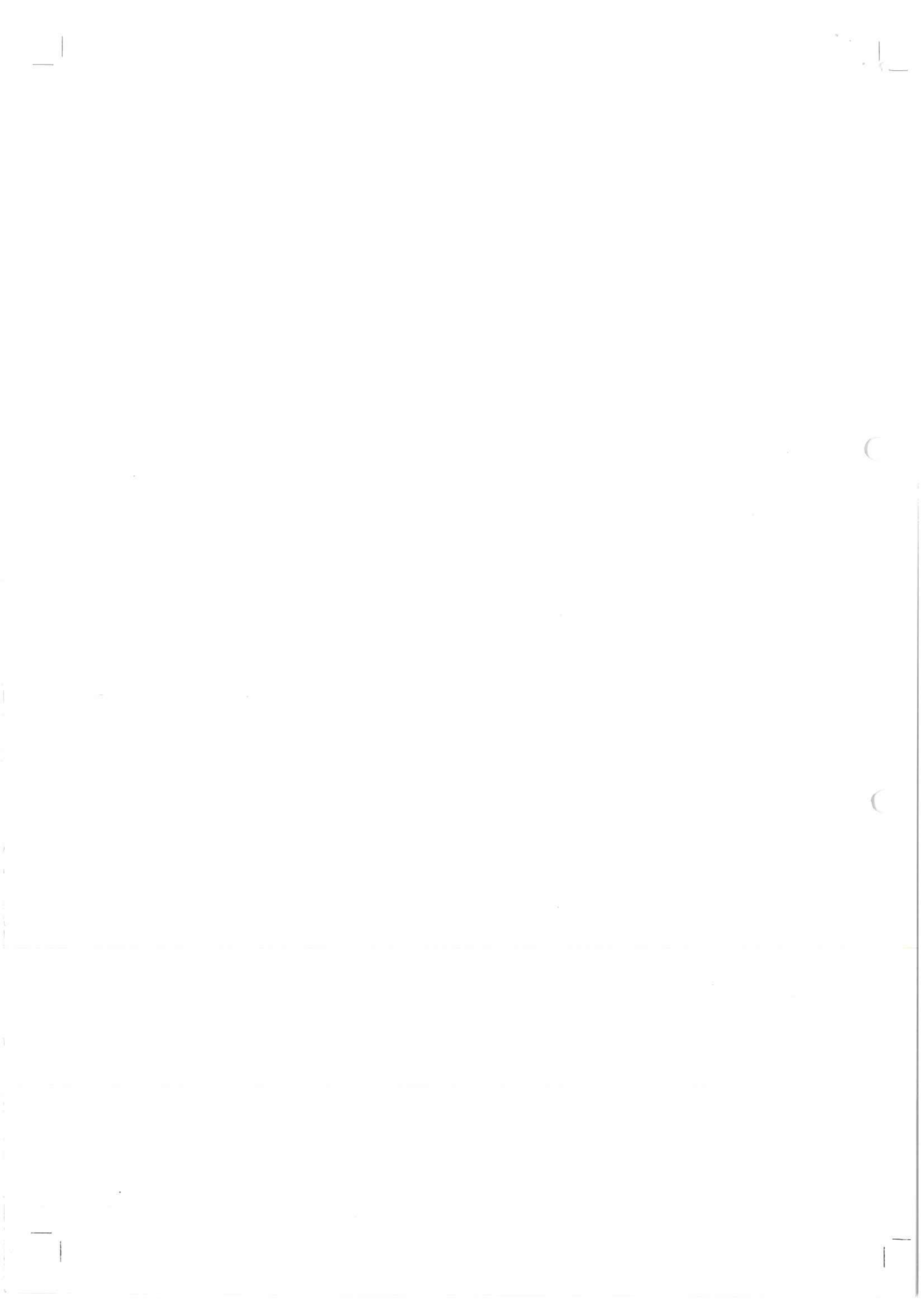
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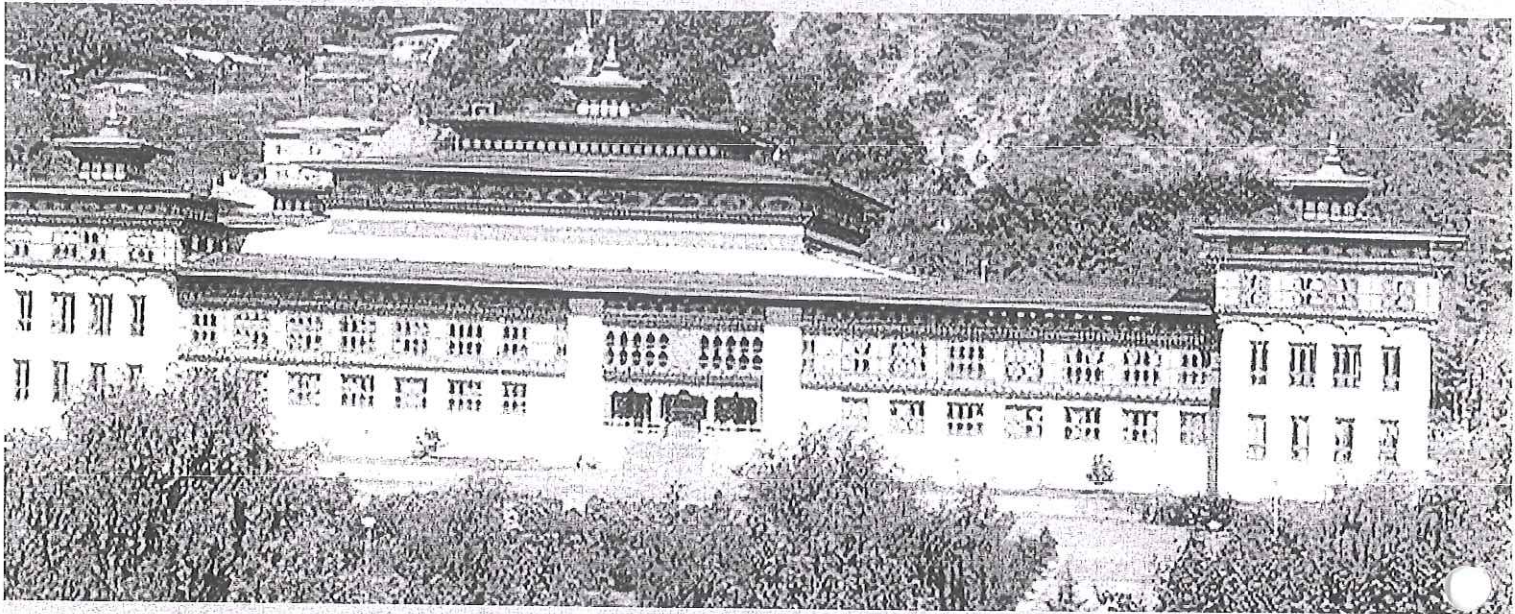


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**The National Assembly of Bhutan**  
[www.nab.gov.bt](http://www.nab.gov.bt)