



# **FIRE ARMS AND AMMUNITION ACT OF BHUTAN, 1990**

**Royal Government of Bhutan**

## **FIRE ARMS AND AMMUNITION ACT OF BHUTAN- 1990**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

It is considered necessary in the Security interest of the Kingdom of Bhutan and its citizens to review and revise the 1949 Fire Arms Act (Thrimshung JHA - 1 & 2), with effect from Month ...8..Date.1 Year ...1990 corresponding to the Bhutanese calendar. 10th ...day of 6th ..month of the Iron Horse Year and to promulgate this Act to control possession of the fire arms sale, purchase, use and import of all fire arms including licensing.

### **1. Definition.**

- (a) Fire Arms means guns of all description including muzzle loading guns.
- (b) Ammunitions means all types of materials used in discharging a fire arm or any weapon that throws projectiles. A cartridge of a gun of all sizes, whether metal or paper, containing an explosive percussion cap, also any material used for making cartridge, are to be treated as ammunition.
- (c) Authorized firearms and ammunition shall mean all arms and ammunition authorized by the Royal Government of Bhutan.

### **2. Scope and Extent.**

- (a) This Arms and Ammunition Act of 1990 shall supersede all previously issued regulations and extend throughout the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- (b) Licensing Authority means the authorized government office empowered to issue licences to control possession, use and import of all firearms and ammunition.
- (c) Authorized calibre for new licence :-
  - i) Pistol / revolver .22, .25, .32 calibres
  - ii) Shot gun ..... 12 and 16 Bore.
  - iii) Muzzle loading Arms.....
  - iv) Rifles ..... .22 Rifles

This provision will not apply to persons already possessing firearms with bores other than that specified above, provided such firearms are under valid licences.

- (d) Besides the above provisions, no licence for automatic rifles, and telescopic sights shall be issued.

### **3. Transfer of Arms & Ammunition.**

- (a) A licence holder may bring into and out of the Kingdom of Bhutan the authorized firearms and ammunition.
- (b) No licence holder without the consent of the authority is allowed to sell, give as gift, or entrust fire-arms and ammunition to a foreigner or to any third person.
- (c) Violation of (a) and (b) above shall be liable to confiscation of the firearms and ammunitions with imprisonment of one year to five years or a fine of Nu. 5,000/- to 10,000/- or both.
- (d) On the demise of a fire arm licence holder, an application with the old licence may be submitted to the licensing authority by the legitimate heir verified and endorsed by the local Thrimpon.

### **4. General Provision.**

- (a) Persons found in possession of a firearm / firearms and ammunition without a valid licence or specific authorizations shall be seized by the licensing Authority and they shall be sentenced to imprisonment ranging from one month to five years or fined from Nu. 1,000/- to 10,000/- or both.
- (b) A firearm and ammunition damaged or unfit for use are hazardous to life and shall be declared and surrendered to the licensing Authority.
- (c) The firearm/ammunition belonging to a person sentenced for any criminal act by a court of law shall be confiscated by the licensing Authority.

### **5. Dzongs, Geonkhangs & Lhakhangs.**

- (a) All firearms and ammunition belonging to a Dzong, Geonkhang and Lhakhang held by the Government or Community or Privately owned shall have an Inventory a copy of which shall be forwarded to the licence Issuing Authority and

acknowledged with its offence seal and signature. This shall be renewed by the Licence Issuing Authority as and when an item is added or deleted in the Inventory.

- (b) The Licence Issuing Authority shall physically verify the Arms and Ammunition from time to time.
- (c) No one may use firearms within a radius of one mile distance of a Dzong/town without specific authorization or except in self defence or for protecting life and property.
- (d) Prior permission of the local Dzongkhag shall be obtained for firing of firearms for performing special religious rites.
- (e) Violators of the above provisions (a) to (d) shall be liable to pay fine of Nu. 1,000/- or one month imprisonment or both.

#### **6. Conditions for Issuing Licence.**

- (a) A licence for the firearms and ammunition is issued primarily for the protection of the life and property of the licence holder.
- (b) A licence for firearms and ammunition shall not be issued to the following :-
  - i) A person below the age of 21.
  - ii) A person mentally unsound.
  - iii) A person having criminal record.
- (c) A licence is not transferable and shall be issued only for the authorized calibre of arms and ammunition. The firearms and ammunition should be presented for verifications when applying for a licence.
- (d) The application shall be submitted in the prescribed form 'B'.
- (e) A firearm and ammunition licence shall be issued only to one person and joint ownership of licence shall not be permitted.

**7. Renewal of Licence and Fees.**

- (a) All firearm licences shall be renewed within the prescribed time.
- (b) The prescribed licence fees are as under:-
  - i) Fees for each licence - Nu. 100.00
  - ii) Annual renewal fee - Nu. 100.00
  - iii) Licence transfer fee - Nu. 100.00
  - iv) Replacement of lost licence - Nu. 100.00
  - v) Cost of Licence Book - Nu. 50.00
- (c) A change in the postal address of the licence holder shall be promptly intimated to the Licensing Authority.
- (d) There shall be a late renewal fee of Nu. 0.50 cheltrum per day.

**8. Responsibilities of Licence Holder.**

- (a) The responsibility and safe keeping of the licenced firearms and ammunition including any misuse rests on the licence holder. The licenced arms and ammunition shall not be mortgaged or lent to any third person.
- (b) The loss of the licenced arms and ammunition or parts thereof shall immediately be reported to the Licensing Authority or to the nearest Royal Bhutan Police Station.
- (c) The licenced firearms shall not be used for purposes other than provision 6 (a) above and 15 of this Act.
- (d) Any person violating the above provision (a), (b) and (c) shall be liable to a fine of Nu. 1,000/- or imprisonment ranging from 3 months to one year, or both.

**9. Special Privileges.**

- (a) A member of the Royal Family may purchase or import firearms for personal use with prior clearance from the Licensing Authority. However, members of the Royal Family shall not be permitted to sell or gift such firearms to any other person. All fire arms held by the members of the Royal Family shall have valid licences.
- (b) No foreigners visiting or working in Bhutan shall be allowed to bring any firearms in to the country. However, in the case of persons enjoying diplomatic status, permission to bring their personal weapons may be considered by the Royal Government on application.

**10. Service Arms and Ammunition.**

No civilian shall be permitted to use, carry or possess any item of firearms being currently used in the Armed Services. Any person violating the rule shall be punished with imprisonment ranging from one year to five years or a fine of Nu. 5,000/- to Nu. 10,000/- or both.

This provision shall not apply to persons possessing valid firearm licences with bores currently being used by the armed services.

**11. Import of Arms and Ammunition.**

Besides the provisions of para-9 (a) and (b) above, import of firearms and ammunition is banned. However, the procurement of ammunition for the authorized firearms shall be arranged by the Licensing Authority and issued to individual licence holders against cash payment after verification or as and when such transactions are authorized by the Royal Government.

**12. Government Property.**

In times of an emergency, all firearms/ammunition within the country are considered as the properties of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

**13. Inspection of Arms & Ammunition.**

- (a) The Licensing Authority and Police are empowered to check firearms from time to time and hold gatherings for inspection of firearms.
- (b) Search : If a person is suspected of possessing arms without valid licence, his residence and belongings can be checked by the Licensing Authority and Police after obtaining court order or as per RBP Act 1980.

**14. Prohibited Areas.**

No person shall be allowed to carry firearms to any area declared by the Home Ministry as restricted.

**15. Hunting.**

Hunting shall be strictly governed by the Forest Act. No licence holder shall be allowed to do hunting without the valid licence from the Department of Forest.

**OWNERSHIP/ TRANSFER FORM**

SI No	Licence No	Type of Arms & Make	Registered No	No of Ammunitions	Remarks
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
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1. Type of Transaction - Sale/gift/inheritance  
 2. Relationship between the present licence holder and the person to whom the licence will be transferred to.

Detail of the present Licence holder	Detail of the person to whom the Licence will be transferred to
1. I/Card No 2. Name 3. Age 4. Village/Gewog 5. Dzongkhag  Signature.....	1. I/Card No 2. Name 3. Age 4. Village/Gewog 5. Dzongkhag  Signature.....

**FOR OFFICIAL USE**

Verified by:

- A : Thrimpon.....  
 B : Superintendent of Police .....

**APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED**

Signature of Licence Authority

**OWNERSHIP/ TRANSFER FORM**

SI No	Type of Arms & Make	Registered Number	No of Ammunitions	Remarks
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**PARTICULARS OF APPLICANT**

1. I/Card No.....
2. Name.....
3. Age .....
4. Village/Gewog.....
5. Dzongkhag.....



**OTHER PARTICULARS**

6. To import from ..... Company.....Country.....
7. If the applicant is already in possession of arms then the licence number and particulars of arms should be given.

No of licence

Type of arms

- |    |       |       |
|----|-------|-------|
| A. | ..... | ..... |
| B. | ..... | ..... |
| C. | ..... | ..... |

**8. UNDERTAKING**

I have obtained a copy of the arms and ammunition act of 1990 and fully agree to adhere to the regulation therein. The details cited above are correct and I hereby undertake to here full responsibility for any act incongruous to the rules and regulation of the revised Arms and Ammunition Act of 1990.

Signature.....  
Name .....

Date.....

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

**APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED**

Signature of Licensing Authority	:-	.....
Name	:-	.....
Designation	:-	.....