

Punakha and Gasa Dzongkhags Market Inspection Report

(September 28 to October 8, 2023)

A. Background

The major markets in Punakha and Gasa Dzongkhags were inspected over 11 days starting September 28, 2023; with the support of the Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB) and the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) representatives in Gasa and Punakha.

The primary objective of the inspection ensure that business firms are compliant to market standards as per the Consumer Protection Act, (2012) and CPRR (2015) for the protection and benefit of all consumers (Box 1).

Box 1: Minimum regulatory requirements

*All products are adequately labeled and there is a clear and prominent display of price.
Issuance of money receipts/ purchase receipts by the business entity,
Display of precise weights/measure of the products,
All weighing balance and measuring devices are calibrated and accurate,*

B. Coverage

A total of 78 business entities in Punakha and 29 entities in Gasa were covered; (Tab.I)

Table I: Number of Business Entities Inspected by type

Business Type	Punakha (Lobesa, Khuruthang, Punakha Dzong area, Serigang)	Gasa (Gasa Town, Yemina, Bishong , Baychu and Damji)
Petroleum Retail Outlet (PRO)	3	1
Restaurant	19	12
Hotel	1	0
Garment	5	1
Grocery	30	12
Hardware	2	0
Salon/ Beauty Parlor	3	0
Bakery	2	2
Fruit & Vegetable (F&V) Vendor	7	0
Meat Shop	6	1
Total	78	29

C. Observations

- Dispensing pumps in all PROs had valid BSB calibration and were accurate. The density of Motor Spirit (MS) and High-Speed Diesel (HSD) was within the permissible range and water content in all PROs were within acceptable limits.
- Measuring devices at the PROs had valid calibration. All PROs complied to the prescribed safety standards.
- There were however two minor issues related to consumer safety boards that needed correction. The Damchen Petroleum Corporation Ltd. outlet at Lobesa did not display a consumer safety board, which is mandatory; while the consumer safety board display at Bhutan Oil Distributor outlet at Gasa was faded and not fully legible.
- On the average, more than 65 percent of all business firms have pre-printed cash memo/ purchase receipts that are provided upon consumers' request. The compliance rate are as follows:

Table II: % compliance to the requirement for issuance of cash memo/ purchase receipts.

Sl No	Business type	% compliance
1	PRO	100
2	Restaurant	58
3	Hotel	100
4	Garment shops	16.7
5	Grocery	78.6
6	Hardware shops	100
7	Bakery	100
8	F&V vendors	42.8

- From the total of 57 business firms that need to use weighing devices on a constant basis, 95 per cent were using devices that were calibrated.
- From a total of 42 groceries, weight discrepancy (difference between labelled weight and actual weight) was observed on only two locally re-packaged products in two groceries; and was attributed to the inaccuracy of the weight devices used.
- Stocking and sale of goods past their expiration date was observed in few groceries. Noodles and canned fish past their expiration date were found for sale in 5 firms in Gasa and in 5 in Punakha.

D. Actions taken

- All weighing devices and fuel dispensing nozzles that were functional but had passed their calibration validity dates were calibrated on the spot. In total 25 weighing balances and 8 dispensing nozzles were calibrated.
- 3 business firms were advised to replace their weighing devices immediately and inform either CCAA or BSB for calibration of their new devices. 2 firms using faulty weighing balance but had spare ones available were calibrated and made to use thereafter.
- 10 grocers selling expired products were fined a total of Nu. 11,732 and those products were confiscated by BFDA.
- Groceries selling products with discrepancy between labelled and actual weights were made to rectify after calibration of the weighing balances.

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