**Meat retailers trained on fair pricing as CCAA looks at making the market competitive** Thimphu, September 2

Bhutan’s meat retail sector is undergoing a change as the Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (CCAA) takes aim at long-standing price-fixing practices.

For years, the Bhutan Meat Vendor’s Association (BMVA) set uniform prices for its members, leaving little room for competition. While the practice gave the impression of stability, it discouraged innovation, kept prices rigid and hurt consumers in the process.

Following a market study, the CCAA asked the BMVA to abandon its collective price-setting system. To help vendors transition to a freer market, the CCAA hosted a day-long training yesterday in Thimphu, focusing on how retailers can determine their own prices based on real costs.

Held at Hotel Mayto, the session drew 65 meat vendors from across the capital. Participants were not only taught technical methods of price calculation but also introduced to the broader benefits of competition—ranging from better customer service and product quality to greater business growth opportunities.

Some vendors said the training helped them rethink how they operate. “We always thought fixing one price was fair to everyone, but now I see it limited our own business potential,” said one retailer. “With this knowledge, I can set my own price based on my costs and compete by offering better service.”

“The aim is to create a more dynamic, consumer-friendly marketplace,” said a CCAA spokesperson. “We are optimistic that this change will lead to fairer prices, healthier business practices, and ultimately better choices for consumers.”

The CCAA has pledged to monitor the sector closely in the coming months to track results. Officials believe the reforms could mark a turning point for the meat retail industry, where competition—rather than coordination—will set the tone for the future.