

**Embassy of India
Thimphu**

India-Bhutan partnership on third international internet gateway for Bhutan

1. As part of the expanding India-Bhutan digital partnership, the Government of India is pleased to support the Royal Government of Bhutan for the establishment of the third international internet gateway for Bhutan. In this regard, the Government of India will be facilitating a concessional rate to bring down the cost of operations of the gateway. The gateway is expected to enhance redundancy, connect remote pockets of Bhutan, increase internet bandwidth, and reduce the cost of internet connectivity for users.

2. India is collaborating with the Royal Government of Bhutan on a number of technology initiatives. Under Bhutan's Flagship Program 'Digital Drukyul', an optical fibre backbone has been provided till the gewog (village) level across all 20 districts of Bhutan. Additionally, a peering arrangement has been established between India's National Knowledge Network (NKN) and Bhutan's Druk Research and Education Network (DrukREN), for the benefit of users in Bhutan in the fields of telemedicine services, research and education.

3. The Government of India is contributing Nu 1.98 billion (Rs. 198 crore) during the 12th Five-Year Plan (2018-2023) to support Bhutan's digital transformation through several people-centric projects in education, e-governance, trade, service delivery. The Government of India is committed to further strengthening its close ties of friendship and cooperation with Bhutan across all sectors, including in the technology domain, in keeping with the priorities of the people and the Royal Government of Bhutan.

Thimphu

31 January 2023