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BHUTAN TELECOM LIMITED

PRESS RELEASE

SOFT LAUNCH OF 5G SERVICES BY BHUTAN TELECOM 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

As a company dedicated to providing the best services to its clients and in keeping with technological advancements in the field of ICT, Bhutan Telecom (BT) is pleased to share that a soft launch of 5G services will be held on September 30, 2021.

5G services is being introduced as a long-term initiative for clients and to meet the increasing demand for high-speed mobile data connectivity as well as to support digital transformation initiatives of the Royal Government.

Towards this end, the required infrastructure is being put in place for deployment of 5G services and after the soft launch, BT hopes to roll out 5G services by the end of the year. As 5G is a new technology, deployment will be carried out in phases. In the first phase, 5G services will be made available in select locations in core areas of Thimphu and Paro Dzongkhags.

While 5G technology is being implemented as part of BT's commitment to provide the best services by capitalizing on latest technological advancements, it may not be possible to fully harness the benefits of the technology owing to limited applications and compatible handsets in the beginning. In addition, mobile data connectivity with 5G technology will be multiple times faster than 4G and, therefore, result in equally faster data consumption as compared to 4G.

The availability of a live 5G network in the core areas of Thimphu and Paro will help BT understand the technology better and explore development of 5G applications relevant to Bhutan. BT also expects to be able to better understand the 5G supporting handset ecosystem through phase one of the project. At the moment, only a few models of handsets available in the local market support 5G technology that BT will deploy.

Going forward, BT will continue to enhance its 4G network coverage to meet the current data requirements in the country. Based on the uptake of 5G services in the select areas of Thimphu and Paro, and most importantly, guided by the long-term vision of the country as envisioned by His Majesty the King, BT plans to expand 5G network in the core areas of the rest of the country.

