

Founding an IT future

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The construction of Bhutan's first IT Park, scheduled to open on June 2 next year, began with the salang (groundbreaking) ceremony yesterday at the site identified for the Thimphu tech-park (TTP) in Wangchutaba.

COVER STORY

The park is being designed, built and operated by a joint venture, comprising Druk Holding and Investments and Assetz Property group.

At the ceremony, the CEO of the joint venture partner Assetz

Property Group, Mike Holland, said that the park will be designed to match the leadership in energy environmental design (LEED) standard, and aim for platinum, the highest level of certification.

LEED is an internationally recognised certification system, developed by the US green building council (USGBC), and offers 100 possible base points, plus an additional six points for innovation in design and four points for regional priority. Platinum certification requires a minimum of 80 points.

Subrata Dutta of DG associates, an engineering firm carrying out the construction, said that

the building will focus on two of the most important aspects - energy and water conservation. "We'll have solar panels to make maximum use of sunlight, auto lighting system and other material and equipment that minimise power consumption," he said. "We'll have rainwater harvesting technologies, as well as sewage treatment plant to reuse water."

In the first phase, the construction of a main building for IT and IT enabled services (ITES), with over 50,000 square feet of office space and utility services like ATM, travel desk, shared services and cafeteria will be completed by November. **Pg. 2**

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The second phase of the project, which will begin after June next year includes construction of business process outsourcing (BPO) and government business centres, data centre, convention centre, food court, hotel, and a services centre.

TTP aims to correspond with GNH values, promoting equitable and sustainable socio economic development, by generating jobs locally and

drawing inward investments to Bhutan, preserving and promoting cultural values, by having an architectural design that blends with the cultural and ethnic sensibilities of Bhutan, conserving environment through its sustainable design, and establishing good governance by focusing on strong work ethic and corporate social responsibility.

The information and communications minister, Lyonpo Nandalal Rai, said that this project would pave the way for Bhutan to be perceived by the global

community as an IT destination. "Bhutan has the advantages of a clean and green surroundings, a cool climate, and political stability, which should attract leading IT companies to invest here," he said.

Mike Holland described the TTP as a "key development in the South Asian region, which has potential to contribute to the growth of Bhutan's economy and the IT sector."

Prime Minister Lyonchhoen Jigmi Y Thinley, laid the sachu bunter (ceremonial vase).