

## Embassy of India

### Thimphu

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#### Press Release : Wangduephodrang Dzong Reconstruction Project

The historic Wangduephodrang Dzong has served as the seat of the District Monk Body and the District Administration of Wangduephodrang Dzongkhag since 1638. One of the most important heritage sites in Bhutan, the Dzong was damaged in a fire incident in June 2012. To restore the Dzong to its former glory, the Reconstruction of Wangduephodrang Dzong was taken up as a bilateral Development Partnership Project between India and Bhutan in 2014. The aim of the Project is to 'build back better' with the incorporation of disaster resilient features for fire and earthquake safety, without losing the essence of traditional construction techniques and cultural heritage values. The Project is being implemented by the Department of Culture, Bhutan.

Key components of the Project include reconstruction of three storied *Kuenrey (lhakhang)*, Four storied *Utse* (central tower), *Shab-khor* (surrounding structure) in 1st and 2nd courtyard, *Du-Khang (lhakhang)* and the construction of a 50 meters long service tunnel in both courtyards. During the entire construction of the Project, special efforts have been made to maintain Bhutanese essence and architecture elements. A dedicated team of local artisans have handcrafted and designed intricate murals showcasing the culture and traditions of Bhutan.

The Government of India is privileged to be a part of this magnificent Project. India has provided a funding of Nu. 1,000 million to the Project, which is 94% complete and is expected to be completed by June 2022, one year before the original project completion date. The restoration of this majestic Dzong to its splendour is a testament to the unique ties between Bhutan and India characterised by mutual respect, trust and friendship.

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