



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**Clarification by the Spokesperson
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
on the National Internet Gateway Establishment**



The Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation have noted with disappointment the continued misinterpretations, especially in some foreign media about the purpose of establishing the national internet gateway in Cambodia despite the repeated explanation and clarification by the Cambodian competent authorities.

In order to shed additional lights on this misunderstanding, the Spokesperson wishes to set the record surrounding this issue straight as follows:

The Government, with an aim to facilitate and manage internet connections and strengthen national security and tax collection as well as to maintain social order and protect national culture, has set up in 2019 an Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Establishment of National Gateway to study and explore way for the establishment of this necessary mechanism.

The Committee, through the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication as the competent institution, has conducted an extensive study on infrastructure models from different countries around the world and found that most countries have internet gateways and respective regulations.

The sub-decree on national internet gateway that was approved on 16 February 2021 was prepared in a transparent manner and consultations were held with experts in the sector, private operators and relevant institutions on numerous occasions.



The establishment of national internet gateway, which prevails in almost all countries around the world, serves as an effective tool to enhance national revenue collection on the basis of transparent, equal and sincere competition between the state and telecoms operators. It, furthermore, contributes to thwarting cybercrimes, namely illegal use of cross-border network connections, illicit online gambling, internet scams, etc. This mechanism has no provisions allegedly authorizing the collection of consumers' data and restricting freedom of expression.

The government will separately prepare a bill on personal data protection as soon as the draft law on cybersecurity is concluded.

The allegation that the establishment of national internet gateway permits Cambodian authorities to monitor and conduct surveillance of internet activity, intercept and censor digital communications, and collect, retain, and share personal data of users, creating risks to the right to freedom of expression, including the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas, as well as the right to privacy are unfounded.

On the contrary, the government respects the individual's right to privacy and freedom of expression and protects personal data, all of which are enshrined in laws, the Constitution, ratified international human rights treaties, the Civil Code, the Criminal Code and the Law on Telecommunications. ១.

Phnom Penh, 15 February 2022

