

Facebook, Google unveil Asia-Pacific data cable plans

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Google says it will participate in the Echo undersea data cable linking North America and the Asia-Pacific, announced by Facebook

Google and Facebook have unveiled plans for two new undersea data

cables linking North America and the Asia-Pacific region, weeks after halting one destined for Hong Kong.

Facebook said on Sunday it would be investing with partners on the subsea cables known as Echo and Bifrost to connect Singapore, Indonesia and North America, which would increase overall transpacific capacity by 70 percent.

"Around the world, the Covid-19 pandemic has increased the need for reliable internet access," Facebook said on its engineering blog on Sunday.

"Echo and Bifrost will support further growth for hundreds of millions of people and millions of businesses."

Google indicated Monday it would participate in the Echo [cable](#) which would run from Eureka, California to Singapore, "with a stop-over in Guam" and a future connection to Indonesia.

"Echo will be the first-ever cable to directly connect the US to Singapore with direct fiber pairs over an express route," Google Cloud vice president Bikash Koley said.

Earlier this month, the two firms halted efforts on a planned undersea cable that would have connected California and Hong Kong, due to tensions between the United States and China.

Last year, the US Department of Justice recommended that the planned cable proposed by Google and Facebook bypass Hong Kong amid concerns it could expose communications traffic to China.

In the new cable projects, Facebook said it was working with partners such as Indonesian companies Telin and XL Axiata and Singapore-based

Keppel.

"While these projects are still subject to regulatory approvals, when completed, these cables will deliver much-needed internet capacity, redundancy, and reliability," Facebook said.

"Connecting Singapore, Indonesia and North America, these cable investments reflect our commitment to openness and our innovative partnership model."

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