INDIA IS POISED TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN GLOBAL DIGITAL REVOLUTION: SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN AT WORLD SUMMIT OF INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS) 2022

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: International Treaties & Agreements, and other important organizations

Minister of State for Communications, Shri Devusinh Chauhan, attended the opening ceremony of World Summit of Information Society (WSIS) 2022, being organized by International Telecommunications Unions(ITU) at its headquarter in Geneva, Switzerland from 30th May to 3rd June, 2022. It's beginning of 4 days event where India will showcase its telecom prowess during multilateral & bilateral engagements.

Speaking about India's focus on inclusive development during the event, Shri Devusinh Chauhan said that the Digital inclusion is at the heart of financial inclusion and inclusive economic development. The government is putting conscious and consistent efforts to provide reliable ICT infrastructure in this endeavor. Over six hundred villages are being connected on Optical Fibre cable, with nearly 175,000 already connected. Villages left out of 4G connectivity are being covered through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

Shri Devusinh Chauhan, further added, "Given the difficulty in laying optical fibre networks in hilly and mountainous terrains, our focus is on the use of technologies that can accelerate development and bridge this divide, like using E band wireless carriers, LEO and MEO satellite connectivity among others." He said that we have issued the first service license for LEO/MEO connectivity and hope to harness the technology to enable digital inclusion in remote areas.

Elaborating the role of new technologies in bridging digital divide, the Minister said that affordable broadband accessibility is the essence of digital inclusion. Developing 5G test bed, indigenous 4G and 5G stack, development of Indian 5G standards and setting up of 6G innovation forum are the initiatives to reduce cost, facilitate faster 5G spread in rural area and eliminate dependency on specific vendor. He further said that India is a vast country with large rural and remote areas. The Telecom Standards Development Society of India – India's Standards Development Organisation, along with IITs have developed the Low mobility Large Coverage Standard (earlier called 5Gi) using a new waveform that enables 5G towers to cover wider areas in rural and remote areas. These standards were among the first 5G standards, which have been approved by the ITU and have also become part of Globally harmonized 3GPP Release 17 standards. These will be immensely helpful for countries with similar geographical spread. India is poised to play a leadership role in global digital revolution.



Shri Devusinh Chauhan held bilateral meeting with Secretary General of ITU, Mr Haolin Zhou. He apprised him with India's developmental achievements in the field of Telecom, 5G Technology, Atmanirbhar Bharat, customized 5G standards and the plan to take fibre and mobile communications to all 600,000 villages. The minister also thanked him for opening of ITU area office in India. Mr Haolin Zhou was very appreciative of ICT initiatives of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He termed them exemplary for entire world.

The participation comes with India contesting the re-election to the ITU Council, for the term 2023-2026. India has been a member of ITU, since 1869 and has been continuously participating, actively in the works, and activities of the Union.

The Communications sector under the leadership of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has grown leaps and bounds with multiple policies and schemes like Digital India, Bharatnet - taking optical fiber to Six Hundred Thousand villages, National Broadband Mission, to ensure high-speed internet. India is ensuring a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. The nation has made significant strides in domains of digital health, education, financial translation, e-governance, etc.

Recently in an event, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the 5G Test Bed for startups at the silver jubilee celebrations of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). Minister of Communications, Railways and Electronics & Information Technology Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw visited the 5G test bed at IIT Madras and successfully test tested a 5G call on an indigenously-developed network.

Shri Devusinh pointed out that earlier Indian companies had to go abroad for testing mobile

network use cases as there were no testing facilities in the country. But now, because of the indigenous technologies, they are able to develop the new technology faster and at a lower cost.

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