



## India & ITU Sign Host Country Agreement

Recently, the Union Minister of Communications and Secretary General of [International Telecommunication Union \(ITU\)](#) signed the **Host Country Agreement (HCA)** for the establishment of an **Area Office & Innovation Centre of ITU in New Delhi**.

- The **5Gi standards developed within India have now been recognised by ITU** as one of the three technologies for 5G.
- 5Gi is a **locally designed telecommunication network** that has been designed by IIT Hyderabad.

### What is the Agreement About?

- The Host Country Agreement provides the **legal and financial framework for establishment and operations** of the Area Office.
- The Area Office and Innovation Centre of ITU at New Delhi is **expected to serve South Asian countries** namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and India.
- The Area Office shall **also have an Innovation Centre**, which is expected to give impetus to research and development in **telecommunication technologies in South Asia**.

### What is ITU?

- It is the [United Nations](#) specialised agency for Information and Communication Technologies - ICTs.
- **Founded in 1865** to facilitate international connectivity in communications networks. It is **Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland**.
- It **allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develops the technical standards** that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strives to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.
- ITU currently has a membership of **193 countries and over 900 private-sector entities and academic institutions**.
  - Earlier, India got elected as a member of ITU Council for another 4-year term - from 2019 to 2022. **India has remained a regular member since 1952**.
- Important publication of the ITU is the [Global Cybersecurity Index \(GCI\)](#). India ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the 2020 index.

**Source: PIB**