Defence Sector ICT Conclave organised

Indian ICT industry is providing solutions to the world: Ms. Madhu Arora, Member (T), Digital Communications Commission

Telecom equipment designed and manufactured in India being exported to more than 100 nations: Member (T), Digital Communications Commission

Government is working actively to enhance cooperation in the ICT sector with Africa: Joint Secy. (ED & MER), MEA

Ambassadors, Defence Attachés, Head of Commerce wings from more than 14 African nations participated

NEW DELHI: Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) organised the Defence Sector ICT Conclave in collaboration with the Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Govt. of India and Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India in New Delhi on 29th July, 2024. A total of 18 companies showcased their products in the Defence Sector ICT Conclave.

While addressing the inaugural session of the Conclave, Ms. Madhu Arora, Member (Technology), Digital Communications Commission, Department of Telecom, Govt. of India said: "The role of ICT in modern warfare is pivotal, as it facilitates real-time communication and coordination and enables advanced data analysis and decision-making. ICT forms the backbone of defence operations, and India's vibrant ICT sector, marked by innovation and integrity, has established a significant presence over the past decades. Indian ICT industry is providing solutions to the world, showcasing India's leadership in this domain."

She mentioned that Indian-designed and manufactured products are now being exported to over 100 countries. India is now competing with the best manufacturers worldwide.

Last year, we exported telecom equipment and services worth more than USD 18.2 billion. Many of our homegrown telecom companies have made their mark in Western nations, including the U.S., despite fierce global competition. The Indian Army has recently integrated its first indigenous chip-based 4G mobile base station, developed by our own R&D firms, she added.

Ms. Arora said, "Trust in technology is paramount, and as you appreciate, Indian culture embodies the philosophy of Vasudev Kutumbakam — "the world is one family." The values of trust and transparency inherent in our way of life are reflected in the technology that we develop."

Regarding satellite communication and other modes to support defence forces, India's robust space programme and recent policy changes offer significant benefits. Satellite-based telecom services can enhance real-time connectivity for remote military operations and naval vessels, improving situational awareness, faster decision-making, and seamless coordination across defence units, she added further.

Shri Abhishek Singh, Joint Secretary (ED & MER), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in his address, said that the MEA is actively working to enhance cooperation with Africa in the ICT sector. Our efforts include facilitating knowledge sharing, and technology transfer, and supporting capacity building, skill development, and innovation. By focusing on emerging technologies like AI and blockchain, we aim to address specific challenges faced by African countries.

According to Shri Abhishek, India's relationship with Africa is built on mutual respect, growth, and strategic partnership. India has emerged as one of the top five investors in Africa, with cumulative investments of around USD 75 billion. The ICT sector plays a crucial role in this investment landscape. Several Indian companies have been instrumental in driving digital transformation across the continent. Their contributions to high-speed internet connectivity and secure data hosting services have significantly empowered millions of Africans, he added.

He further mentioned that Africa presents significant opportunities for growth in the ICT sector. The ongoing efforts of African governments to expand ICT infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, align with potential collaborations for Indian companies in developing and delivering ICT services across various sectors.

In his address, Shri Sandeep Aggarwal, Immediate Past Chairman, Telecom Equipment & Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) said, "In today's world, technology is essential for a nation's defence and security. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is critical for maintaining sovereignty and integrity of India. India, with its longstanding cooperation and respect for African sovereignty, is a reliable partner in this field.

"Indian ICT products are known for their durability, security, and cost-effectiveness, making them ideal for enhancing defence capabilities without compromising on quality," said Mr. Aggarwal.

He further reiterated that our expertise in data analytics and artificial intelligence empowers our defence forces with predictive insights and actionable intelligence, enhancing decision-making and operational effectiveness in the front.

Dr. Pankaj K. Dalela, Director (Board Member), C-DOT Centre for Development of Telematics made a presentation on 'Overview of Indian Telecom Network and ICT Products' while as R. Shakya, Senior Deputy Director General, Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Govt. of India presented his views on 'Potential Collaboration in Various Countries under the Umbrella of ITU'.

Ambassadors, Deputy Chief of Missions, Defence Attachés, Head of Commerce wings from more than 14 African countries participated in the event.

Shri Arun Gupta, Director General, Telecom Equipment & Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) presented the Vote of Thanks on the occasion.

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About TEPC: Under the ambit of the Foreign Trade Policy, TEPC was established by the Government of India, during the year 2009, to promote and develop the export of telecom equipment and services.

The council's scope encompasses the entire telecom ecosystem including ICT hardware and software, Infrastructure products, service provision, system Integration & consultancy services. TEPC effectively caters to the diverse stakeholders within the telecom domain, including equipment manufacturers, system integrators, service providers and other relevant entities.