



India Welcomes ITU Proposal for Joint Trials to Combat Cross-Border Telecom Fraud: Union Minister of State for Communications Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani

Over 82 Lakh Fraudulent Mobile Connections Disconnected Through ASTR; Sanchar Saathi App Records Around 25 Million Downloads

Financial Fraud Risk Indicator helps Prevent Suspected Losses of Over ₹5,000 Crore in 15 Months

Technology, Regulation and Global Cooperation Key to Combating Fraudulent Communications: Dr Pemmasani

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Union Minister of State for Communications and Rural Development, Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani today, delivered the keynote address at the ITU Roundtable on “Implementing ITU Standards to Combat Fraudulent Communications.” The Roundtable was held on the sidelines of the ongoing India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2026 which was formally inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 08 October 2026, at Yashobhoomi.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Pemmasani stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India has connected more than a billion people, and the next task is to ensure that connectivity comes with trust. Emphasising the need for international cooperation, he stated, “Fraud is a network problem. It needs a network answer. And because networks are global, the answer must also be global.”

Highlighting the growing threat of organised, cross-border fraud, including impersonation, digital arrest scams, AI-generated voice cloning and deepfakes, Dr Pemmasani noted that Indians lost over ₹22,800 crore to such fraud in 2024. He further added that the government had learnt what works and has now built its defences in layers.

Dr Pemmasani outlined India's five-layered approach to combating fraudulent communications, including real-time blocking of spoofed international calls, identification of fraudulent mobile connections through C-DOT's AI-based ASTR tool, citizen participation

through Sanchar Saathi, intelligence sharing through the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP), and measures addressing emerging fraud channels.

The Union MoS highlighted that ASTR has helped disconnect over 82 lakh fraudulent connections, while the Sanchar Saathi app has recorded around 25 million downloads. The Digital Intelligence Platform connects over 1,600 organisations, including telecom operators, banks and law-enforcement agencies. The Financial Fraud Risk Indicator has helped prevent suspected financial losses exceeding ₹5,000 crore in 15 months.

Acknowledging the limitations of national solutions in addressing cross-border fraud, Dr Pemmasani highlighted the importance of ITU standards for digital verification of caller identity across international networks. He welcomed the ITU's proposal for joint trials involving governments, regulators, operators and technology companies, and affirmed India's readiness to contribute.

The Union MoS suggested beginning trials between willing countries on selected international routes, ensuring participation of different network technologies and incorporating lessons into the continued improvement of ITU standards. He further emphasised that as 6G networks are developed, trust must be designed in from the beginning.

Concluding his address, Dr Pemmasani emphasised that technology, regulation and collaboration must work together to combat fraudulent communications. "At home, India has moved from reaction to prevention. Now, with ITU, let us move from national solutions to global trust," he stated.

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