



## **Enabling Connectivity and Industry Growth for 25 Years**

17 May 2016, marks 'World Telecommunication and Information Society Day'. Etisalat Sri Lanka (earlier known as Celltel) is the lead player in the industry with over 25 years of rich experience, utilizing its potential for constant innovation and expertise to spearhead growth in the country's communications sphere.

Celltel launched on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1989, has now evolved to greater heights than ever imagined 25 years ago. In the modern era, where connectivity is viewed as a simple task, bridging both the temporal and spatial gaps in a rapidly globalizing world, it is difficult to imagine that the mobile phone, is a very young technological advancement in the timescale of innovations – yet it is impossible to envision a period before this ever-essential telecommunications device.

Martin Cooper produced the first handheld mobile phone in 1973, and almost a decade later, Celltel introduced the same technology to Sri Lanka. By the 1990s, quite a few Sri Lankans were accustomed to using mobile phones or "Celltels" as they were known during the early years of the country's mobile telecommunications industry.

Less than quarter of a century later, Sri Lanka ranks No 1 in the world, with the lowest entry level fixed broadband charges, according to a recent report published by the International Telecommunication Union.

In 1991, Etisalat (Celltel) was the first mobile telecommunications provider to enable island-wide coverage, making the telephone available to the many, irrespective of caste or creed. Etisalat also became the first telecommunications provider to open a call-centre, to better serve its island-wide customer base. Later, in 1996, Etisalat was the first to offer prepaid services in Sri Lanka. This meant that customers were able to maintain customized packages suited to their individual needs, taking the concept of affordability into newer heights.

Etisalat has always had its antenna ready to identify the latest trends in the Telecommunications industry. Consequently they identified the opportune moment to introduce new technologies. High-speed 3G is one such example. Apart from increasing the speed of communication, various value added services like video calling, mobile internet access, IPTV, etc is readily available through this technology.



In line with its tradition of 'firsts', 2014 heralded the launch of HD Voice and more recently, the Hybrid Super SIM, which is Sri Lanka's first multi-SIM product.

"What has driven us is not the need to be first, but instead, it has been our ambition for the country: for every Sri Lankan to be equally connected" explains Chief Commercial Officer, Etisalat Lanka, Mr. Yasser Aboulamayem.

The Sri Lankan Mobile Telecommunications industry is continuously developing to embrace technological advancements, which Etisalat matches through its growing telecommunication infrastructure base, and constant connection with its customers, driving connectivity and transforming the way information is exchanged in the country. Every day Sri Lanka's can now leverage on the power of Mobile Internet, leading to an increase in overall ICT literacy, and smart connectivity.

This undoubtedly puts Etisalat in the forefront of telecommunications providers in Sri Lanka, staying ahead of competition with its ability to adapt and innovate according to prevalent market trends.

With Sri Lanka's steady progress into the future, thanks to the steadfast support of Etisalat for over 25 years, the people have been enabled to make that transition with confidence, transforming ambition into reality. Thus a vibrant and ever-growing industry can surely be anticipated, which would undoubtedly pave the way for present and future generations, to spur the nation's forward march.