

Hub71 and UAE–India CEPA Council Forge Strategic Partnership to Strengthen Cross-Border Startup Expansion Between Abu Dhabi and India

- Strategic partnership to facilitate two-way soft-landing and scale-up support, investment access and market entry routes for startups
- Five startups from UAE–India CEPA Council’s flagship Start-Up Series to join Hub71’s Immersion programme in 2026
- One selected Indian startup to be onboarded to Hub71’s Access programme and Abu Dhabi’s fast-growing ecosystem

Abu Dhabi, UAE / New Delhi, India, November 21, 2025: On the sidelines of Abu Dhabi Investment Forum (ADIF) Mumbai, Hub71, Abu Dhabi’s global tech ecosystem, has signed a strategic partnership with the UAE–India CEPA Council, a bilateral platform established under the UAE–India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to accelerate trade, investment and innovation. The partnership operationalises the innovation agenda of the UAE–India CEPA by creating an end-to-end pathway for high-potential Indian startups to enter, validate and scale in Abu Dhabi.

Through this initiative, Hub71 will support the UAE–India CEPA Council’s flagship Start-Up Series by providing structured market-entry support into the emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Hub71 will onboard the five winning startups selected through the Series, which will hold its finale in New Delhi on 25 November, into the Hub71 Immersion Programme. The newly launched programme is designed to fast-track market entry for startups by combining a virtual onboarding to build market readiness with in-person sessions in Abu Dhabi. As part of its role, Hub71 will deliver curated knowledge sessions, provide mentorship and connect the startups with the Abu Dhabi tech ecosystem.

In addition, from the five winning startups, Hub71 will select one startup to be onboarded into the Access programme. By joining Access, the selected startup will also gain structured entry into Abu Dhabi’s tech ecosystem, including tailored soft-landing that enables the company’s founders to explore market opportunities, engage with key stakeholders and identify viable pathways for long-term growth across the region.

H.E. Abdulnasser Alshaali, PhD, Ambassador of the UAE to the Republic of India said: “The CEPA has opened a new chapter in the UAE-India partnership, and innovation lies at the heart of this transformation. The Start-Up Series showcases the depth of talent emerging from India and the

UAE's commitment to providing world-class platforms for founders to scale globally. This partnership with Hub71 strengthens the UAE's and India's shared ambition to build a dynamic, interconnected startup corridor that drives investment, technology exchange and sustainable economic growth across both nations."

Ahmad Ali Alwan, Chief Executive Officer, Hub71 said: "Through our partnership with the UAE-India CEPA Council, we are creating a guided pathway for Indian founders into Abu Dhabi's global tech ecosystem, shortening the distance between market readiness and regional scale. Abu Dhabi's ecosystem is designed to be a bridge between dynamic innovation hubs and high-growth markets, and this partnership reinforces our commitment to supporting ambitious founders as they expand across borders."

Ahmed Aljneibi, Director, UAE-India CEPA Council said: "Partnering with Hub71 advances the CEPA's objective to catalyse cross-border entrepreneurship and provides a tangible outlet for talented Indian founders to benefit from the India-UAE Start-Up Bridge. By connecting Indian startups to Abu Dhabi's rapidly growing technology ecosystem, we are enabling a two-way exchange of innovation, growth opportunities and job creation that will benefit both economies. The Start-Up Series is an important platform for translating the CEPA's policy framework into real opportunities for founders."

Since its launch in June 2025, the UAE-India Startup Series has attracted over 10,000 applications from across India, signalling strong demand for UAE expansion. With a significant number of applicants aligning with Hub71's priority sectors, including FinTech, HealthTech, AgriTech, mobility and advanced technologies, demonstrating the strategic fit between India's innovation strengths and Abu Dhabi's sector-focused technology agenda. By aligning CEPA's policy framework with Hub71's founder-centred ecosystem, the partnership streamlines market entry, accelerates go-to-market pathways, and unlocks new investment flows between two complementary innovation economies.

The agreement also establishes a practical framework for cross-referring high-impact startups between UICC and Hub71, enabling soft landings in both Abu Dhabi and India. Referred founders will receive support across company setup, regulatory facilitation, mentorship, market access and introductions to investors and partners. Eligible startups may also be considered for grants, incentive programmes and partnership-led scaling opportunities, further strengthening the UAE-India innovation corridor.

This partnership is the latest in a series of cross-border initiatives led by Hub71 to position Abu Dhabi as a launchpad for international growth. By enabling two-way access routes for founders and expanding collaboration under CEPA, Hub71 continues advancing its mission to connect ambitious

startups with global markets and convert bilateral cooperation into measurable technology and economic outcomes.

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About Hub71:

Hub71 is Abu Dhabi's global tech ecosystem that enables founders to build globally enduring homegrown tech companies in any sector by providing access to global markets, a capital ecosystem, a global network of partners, and a vibrant community filled with highly skilled talent, governed by forward-thinking regulation.

Backed by the Government of Abu Dhabi and Mubadala Investment Company, Hub71 is growing its vibrant community of tech startups, investors, government, and corporate partners to ensure the availability of investment, commercial activities, and incentives from the public and private sectors. Through Hub71's entrepreneurial infrastructure, value-add programmes, enabling services and support packages, founders can build and scale widely adopted technologies with purpose and impact. Hub71 is on a mission to introduce new minds and technologies to Abu Dhabi, finding new ways to build globally enduring technology companies and sustain the nation's continuous economic development.

About the UAE-India CEPA Council

The UAE-India CEPA Council (UICC) is a dedicated bilateral platform established to advance trade, investment, and innovation under the UAE-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. It facilitates strategic collaborations between businesses, governments, and institutions across both countries to unlock shared economic opportunities.

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