

# DoT asks telecom companies to collect 'Aadhaar' number for issuing new SIMs

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NEW DELHI: Department of Telecom (DoT) has asked all mobile operators to collect 'Aadhaar' number along with customer application form for issuing new connections and store the unique identification number in their database.

The DoT has also asked the operators to amend their database in two months for adding the 'Aadhaar' number.

"It has been decided to collect Aadhaar number along with customer application form (CAF) of mobile telephone applications and store the same in the database along with other data," DoT sources said.

Sources added that the directive will be applicable in all cases irrespective of the fact that mobile connection is issued by taking 'Aadhaar' card or any other document as proof of identity and proof of address.

The government is also working with all stakeholders in resolving the issue regarding use of 'Aadhaar' card as a proof of address for procuring new SIM cards in its proposed online verification system.

"The issue regarding use of Aadhaar card as proof of address for procuring new SIM cards in its proposed online verification will be in place in next two months," Department of Electronics and IT (DeitY) Secretary R S Sharma said last week.

The Home Ministry had raised multiple concerns over using UIDAI number as an address proof in the DoT's proposed online verification system, citing possible issues in the supporting Aadhaar data.

The Home Ministry had raised concerns over supporting documents submitted by people as proof of identity and proof of address for getting a 'Aadhaar' number, sources had said.

The DoT is working on a concept to use 'Aadhaar' number for online verification of people seeking mobile connections along with existing process of customer verification.

'Aadhaar' card can be also issued to foreign nationals staying in the country. This had also been questioned by the Home Ministry fearing nationals of neighbouring country could attempt to use it to procure Indian identity documents for infiltration.

The Home Ministry had said that unlike 'Aadhaar', other acceptable proof of address documents such as passport, driving licence do not have the status of universality and therefore "even higher levels of error in these documents may not translate into comparable volume of security concerns".

The Home Ministry had also raised concern over involvement of foreign vendors by UIDAI for storing data and has suggested audit of data security.



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