

UIDAI on phone numbers

New Delhi: The Aadhaar-issuing authority UIDAI on Friday said it had not asked any phone maker or telecom service provider to include its toll-free number in mobile phones, attempting to assuage user concerns over invasion of privacy.

The clarification came following reports that many Android phones had included the Aadhaar helpline number 1800-300-1947 in the contact list of users without permission.

The Unique Identification Authority of India said the number was an “outdated and invalid” helpline number and that “vested interests are trying to create unwarranted confusion in the public”.

The UIDAI’s valid toll free number is 1947, which is functional for more than the last two years, it said.

Google on Friday night apologised for “inadvertently” loading “the then UIDAI helpline number and the 112 distress helpline number” into the “setup wizard” for Android phones in India in 2014. It has remained there since, the company said, adding it could be manually deleted. P11