

Centre asks telcom companies to stop using Aadhaar eKYC for verifying users

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The government Friday ordered telecom companies to stop using Aadhaar for electronic verification of existing mobile phone customers as well as for issuing new connections to comply with a recent Supreme Court order.

The apex court had last month in a landmark verdict restricted the use of Aadhaar by private entities in the absence of a legal provision.

To comply with the order, the Department of Telecom (DoT) Friday issued detailed instructions to telecom companies on stopping the use of Aadhaar-based electronic-know your customer (e-KYC) and report compliance by November 5.

Aadhaar e-KYC cannot be used for verifying existing cus-



tomers as well as giving new SIM connections, the DoT said in a three-page circular.

Also, it permitted the use of physical Aadhaar card for giving new connections, provided the customer voluntarily offers it.

“In compliance to the judgement of the Supreme Court, all licencees are to discontinue the use of Aadhaar eKYC service of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) both for verification as well as for issuing new mobile connections,”

the Telecom Department said in the circular.

All telecom service providers shall ensure its implementation across the country in a time-bound manner and compliance in this regard is required to be submitted by November 5, 2018, it said.

The DoT noted that the industry had suggested an alternate digital process for KYC of mobile subscribers which entails Customer Acquisition Forms to be embedded with live photo

of the subscriber and scanned images of proof of identity and proof of address, thereby digitising the end-to-end process for onboarding of new mobile subscribers and making it paperless.

Accordingly, all telecom service providers have been asked by DoT to ensure readiness of their systems and offer the proof of concept of the proposed digital process by November 5 for approval.

“Consequently, instructions issued including...dated 16.08.2016 and subsequent follow up orders related to Aadhaar based eKYC process shall stand withdrawn. Meanwhile, this process can be implemented provisionally by all telecom service providers. Any modification which may be required in this process by the Government shall be carried out within a period of 30 days,” it said.