

For SIM Verification, You Can Opt for Virtual ID from July 1

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Our Bureau

New Delhi: Come July 1, mobile phone users will have the option of providing virtual IDs, an authentication method proposed by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), instead of their Aadhaar numbers to get a new SIM card or to re-verify an existing connection.

Other options, besides rental agreements and bank passbooks, include a limited know-your-customer (KYC) concept, where only the information required for authentication is shared with an agency and not the full details or the Aadhaar number.

"All licensees shall implement the changes proposed by UIDAI regarding use of virtual ID as an alternative of Aadhaar number, UID tokens and limited KYC concept in their systems, networks subject to adherence of existing Aadhaar based e-KYC processes for issuing new mobile connection to subscribers and re-verification of existing mobile subscribers," the

ONE-TIME MEASURE



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telecom department said in a notice to telcos dated June 12.

To be sure, DoT had extended the deadline for re-verifying mobile numbers through Aadhaar in March, until the Supreme Court decides on the validity of Aadhaar and its enabling law. The government had clarified that Aadhaar was not mandatory for issuing new SIMs.

"After implementation of such changes in Aadhaar ecosystem, licensees shall give the option to the subscriber of feeding either Aadhaar number or virtual ID as per his/her choice," the DoT said. The

department asked telcos to replace the Aadhaar numbers of existing subscribers with UID tokens as a one-time measure.

The UIDAI had proposed introducing two features in January – virtual ID and limited KYC – to strengthen the privacy and security of Aadhaar number holders at the time of authentication.

The virtual ID is a 16-digit number that is "temporary and revocable at any time" and mapped to an individual's Aadhaar number for use as a means of authentication.

In addition to the virtual numbers, UIDAI will provide "unique tokens" to each agency against an Aadhaar number to establish the uniqueness of beneficiaries in their database availing of government subsidies under cooking gas or scholarships. Limited KYC restricts full access of a customer's demographic data to authentication agencies. UIDAI will validate only the information required by over 350 of its authentication agencies. For an agency needing only name and address, UIDAI will give out only those details.