

TELECOM COMPANIES GIVEN 15-DAY DEADLINE

Telcos asked to submit plan to discontinue Aadhaar-based eKYC

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The UIDAI Monday asked telecom companies to submit within next 15 days a plan to stop using Aadhaar for customer authentication, days after the Supreme Court imposed curbs on the use of the 12-digit unique ID number.

A circular to this effect has been issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to telecom service providers (TSPs), including Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio, Vodafone Idea and others.

The UIDAI circular says: "...all TSPs are called upon to take actions to comply with the judgement dated 26.09.2018 immediately. In this regard, TSPs are now directed to submit by 15th October 2018, an action plan/exit plan to the authority for closure of use of Aadhaar based authentication systems..."

Significantly, the UIDAI has also asked all telecom operators to "take immediate cognisance" of the request for delinking Aadhaar with the mobile number as and when such applications are received from subscribers.

The authority noted that TSPs might take appropriate action to perform fresh KYC as per the Department of Telecom (DoT) approved list of proof of identity and proof of address within six months from the date of such request to avoid de-activation of the



Highlights

➔ A circular to this effect has already been issued to the telecom service providers, including Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio, Vodafone Idea and others

➔ The Supreme Court, last week, struck down Section 57 of the Aadhaar Act, which allowed private companies to use the 12-digit biometric ID-based eKYC

mobile number.

"All TSPs shall immediately notify their customers the facility of delinking their Aadhaar number and the UID token from their database and establish a system to accept and process such requests for delinking," UIDAI said adding that the "process of delinking" should form a part of the exit plan that has been sought.

The Supreme Court, last week, struck down Section 57 of the Aadhaar Act, which allowed private companies to use the 12-digit biometric ID-based

eKYC. Following this, private companies like telecom operators will not be able to use this instantaneous and inexpensive Aadhaar eKYC route.

This would mean that the industry will have to revert to alternates like legacy paper-based technique (collect physical paper forms with signature, photographs, ship to verification centre and call up the customer to cross-verify submitted details). The turn around times in this route is between 24-36 hours.

When contacted, UIDAI CEO

Ajay Bhushan Pandey said: "To ensure smooth discontinuation...there are certain requirements which are there under the Aadhaar regulations...so the companies are in the best position to know what exactly is needed and they can submit their plan by October 15. If any additional requirements are to be done from the UIDAI side, we will tell them after receipt of their plan."

TSPs may be liable for contempt of court for any non-compliance, the UIDAI said in its instruction to telecom companies.