

You Don't Need to Visit Telco Outlets for Aadhaar Recheck

UIDAI okays telcos' model for re-verification with options like OTP from Dec 1

Our Bureau

New Delhi: Come December 1, mobile phone subscribers will no longer need to visit stores of telecom operators for Aadhaar-based SIM re-verification.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has approved the model presented by telecom operators that includes alternatives such as a one-time password, or OTP, for re-verification of SIM cards issued on the basis of Aadhaar.

"Yes, we have approved it. We had a very detailed discussion with telecom operators and they have come out with a scheme which is secure and will also be convenient to people," UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey told ET.

"And this will help people verify their mobile number with Aadhaar without going to the telecom outlet, provided their mobile number is already added to the Aadhaar database," he said.

The Department of Telecom (DoT) had last month allowed telcos to re-verify mobile phone numbers through three systems — OTP through SMS, interactive voice response system and through the telcos' mobile apps — to ease the process of re-verification so that consumers don't have to queue up at retail stores or face inconvenience.



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AJAY BHUSHAN PANDEY

Chief Executive Officer, UIDAI

DoT also allowed re-verification through IRIS-based biometric devices and at the doorsteps of consumers who are unable to use OTP or fingerprint authentication, or who are incapacitated and cannot go to retail stores.

The operators, thereafter, were instructed to approach UIDAI with their blueprint to operationalise the new processes that were permitted, and implement the new system after the Aadhaar-issuing body gave clearance.

"The steps include one where subscribers can go to the mobile phone company's portal and give their mobile number and Aadhaar number and then the OTP will come on the registered mobile number. This can be done in the same way as PAN (permanent account number) and many of the banks are doing this. This is a very simple process," said Pandey.

The other option is that every operator will publicise an IVRS number and on that number people will have to key in their Aadhaar and their mobile number; and the OTP will come and they will have to enter to re-verify. "This option is best for people who can't handle internet, etc.," Pandey said.

The plans were considered and approved from the point of view of security, compliance with the Aadhaar Act and protection of privacy, he said. While the authentication of mobile phone number with Aadhaar, a process called re-verification, by visiting stores of telecom firms will continue, the government has ordered the companies to carry out the exercise at the doorsteps of the disabled, chronically ill and senior citizens.

Pandey said telcos have assured that they would implement the OTP-based verification of mobile numbers by the end of November.