



Department of Telecommunications Cautions Citizens about Consequences of IMEI Tampering and Telecom Identifier Misuse

Citizens are advised to use Sanchar Saathi Mobile App and portal to verify and secure their mobile connections and handsets

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With the rapid growth of mobile connectivity in India, misuse of telecommunication identifiers like the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number of devices has become a serious concern. To protect citizens and safeguard telecom networks, the Government of India has strengthened laws against tampering and misuse of these unique device identifiers.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) reminds all citizens of the strict legal provisions under the Telecommunications Act, 2023 that prohibit altering or using devices with tampered IMEI numbers.

Key Legal Provisions:

- The Telecommunications Act, 2023 imposes stringent penalties for tampering with telecommunication identifiers including IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number of mobile handsets and other devices.
- Section 42(3)(c) specifically prohibits tampering of telecommunication identifiers, while Section 42(3)(e) bars obtaining subscriber identity modules (SIM) or telecommunication identifiers through fraud, cheating, or impersonation.
- Section 42 (3) (f) states that willful possession of any radio equipment like mobile handset, modem, module, SIM Box etc., knowing that it uses unauthorised or tampered telecommunication identifiers, is also an offence.
- Penalties for violation include imprisonment for up to three years, fines up to Rs 50 lakh, or both. These offenses are cognizable and non-bailable under Section 42(7) of the Act. Section 42(6) provides identical punishment for those who abet or promote such offenses.
- Telecommunications (Telecom Cyber Security) Rules, 2024 prohibit any person to alter the IMEI or use/ produce/possess equipment in which IMEI can be configured or changed or altered.

What Citizens Should Avoid:

- Using mobile devices with tampered IMEI numbers
- Using, procuring or assembled devices like modems, modules, SIM Boxes etc. which have configurable or tampered IMEIs
- Procuring SIM cards through fake documents, fraud, or impersonation
- Transferring or handing over SIM cards procured in their name to others who may misuse them
- Using mobile applications or websites that modify Calling Line Identity (CLI) or other telecommunication identifiers

Citizens who procure SIM cards in their name and give them to others for misuse in cyber-fraud will also be held liable as offenders.

Citizens should be aware that using devices with tampered IMEI numbers, procuring SIM cards through fraudulent means, or transferring or giving their SIM cards to others who misuse them for cyber fraud can result in serious legal consequences. The original user may also be held liable as an offender in cases where SIM cards procured in their name are subsequently misused.

Reporting and Verification

Citizens can verify IMEI details using the Sanchar Saathi portal at <https://ceir.sancharsaathi.gov.in/Device/SancharSaathiKym.jsp> or Sanchar Saathi Mobile App which displays brand name, model name, and manufacturer information. The government has also implemented the Sanchar Saathi initiative, providing digital tools for citizens to verify and secure their mobile connections. The government has put in place strict checks to prevent misuse of telecom resources and ensure a secure telecommunications ecosystem for all citizens.



Adherence to the provisions of the Act and the Rules framed thereof helps protect citizens from telecom fraud and ensures a secure telecommunication environment for all Indians.

Citizens can visit Sanchar Saathi portal at **www.sancharsaathi.gov.in** or download Sanchar Saathi Mobile App to avail various services from:

For Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dot.app.sancharsaathi>

For iOS: <https://apps.apple.com/app/sancharsaathi/id6739700695>

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