

Issues concerning Aadhaar linkage with SIM 'will be clear by Dec 1'

It is in customers' interest to link the mobile number with the UID: DoT Secretary

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The government has said that by December 1, people will be clear on what options they have for linking their Aadhaar with mobile numbers, and even for senior citizens, there would be options to do re-verification at home.

"What we have told the TSPs (telecom service providers) is that within the next two weeks, that is, by November 15, they should actually come up with a mechanism in which all options should be available upfront on their portals," Aruna Sundararajan, Secretary, Ministry of Telecommunications, told *BusinessLine* in an interview.

Things like the mobile OTP (one-time password) plus Iris verification for those whose fingerprints don't match, and 'doorstep' verification for senior citizens — all will be provided for the ease of con-

sumers, she said. "The UIDAI and the DoT will sit together in the next two weeks, and check their processes, and we will give them another two-three weeks time to actually implement. So, we are hoping that by December 1, citizens will know what the options are and will be able to choose that option online," Sundararajan said.

She said many issues have become clear after the latest judgment of the Supreme Court, but for those consumers who are still confused, the TSPs will guide them how to link their SIM with Aadhaar.

Although, there are options whether to link a SIM with Aadhaar or not right now, it should be in customers' interest to link the mobile number with the UID because of reasons like the number cannot be misused by anyone.

"It is in your interest and my interest because of two-three



Aruna Sundararajan, Secretary, Department of Telecom

reasons: one is because of digital payment — a lot of people are using mobile banking. So, it is important that the right person is actually using the bank account attached to his/her name. Therefore, this will certainly enhance the security several fold," she said.

Second, she said the government is now offering many services through the mobile — public sector services, government services, and many other schemes.

"So, it is important that since the mobile is becoming a predominant mechanism of service delivery, it is in the consumer's interest to make sure that he links his Aadhaar with that," Sundararajan said.

Asked why one has to share his/her biometrics again, she clarified that it is for those consumers who have not linked their Aadhaar with mobile.

Others, who even have a second or third SIM or mobile phones, are not required to give their biometrics.

She said these people may link their mobile number with Aadhaar by just putting the OTP while requesting for the linkage.

"They don't need to go anywhere. It is only in those categories, where a consumer has not got a SIM through the new process (where SIM is provided based on Aadhaar verification) or have not linked with one of their mobiles. Only for that limited category, we are saying 'please do a re-verification'," she added.