Face recognition feature to be rolled out Sept. 15: UIDAI

New Delhi: Aadhaar-issuing body UIDAI has finally announced a phased rollout of face recognition feature as an additional mode of authentication, starting with telecom service providers from September 15.

The Authority had earlier planned to roll out face recognition feature from July 1, a target that was later pushed to August 1. It has also proposed a monetary disincentive for telcos found slipping on the prescribed targets from mid next month.

For authentication agencies other than telecom service providers (TSPs), UIDAI said specific instructions will be issued on implementation of face authentication feature, but did not give a fresh deadline.

Significantly, the Unique Identification Authority of India has further said 'live face photo' capture and its verification with

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the photo obtained in eKYC will be essential in those cases where Aadhaar is used for issuance of mobile SIMs.

UIDAI says the move is aimed at curbing the possibility of fingerprint spoofing or cloning, and seeks to tighten the audit process and security around issuance and activation of mobile SIMs.

It may be recalled that in June this year, a Hyderabad-based mobile SIM card distributor had forged Aadhaar details for activating thousands of SIMs.

"This instruction (for matching live face photo with eKYC photo) will apply only where Aadhaar is used for issuance of SIMs. As per telecom department's instructions, if SIM is issued through other means without Aadhaar, then these instructions will not apply," said UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey.

UIDAI has proposed a two-factor authentication for use of face recognition by telcos. Where an individual provides Aadhaar number, the authentication will be done using fingerprint or iris and face. For individuals providing Virtual ID, the authentication can be on basis of fingerprint or iris.

Unique Identification Authority of India said in case where an individual is unable to authenticate fingerprint or iris, face authentication can be used as an additional mode.

"TSPs are hereby directed that with effect from September 15, 2018, said a UIDAI circular. — *PTI*