Ministry of Communications

Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw launches Sanchar Saathi portal today

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Safety and security of the users is an integral part of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Digital India. Towards fulfilling this vision, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Communications, Railways and Electronics & IT, launched the Sanchar Saathi portal today.

While speaking at the launch, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the three reforms are being introduced today towards furthering PM's vision:

1. CEIR (Central Equipment Identity Register) – for blocking stolen/lost mobiles.
2. Know your mobile connections – to know mobile connections registered in your name.
3. ASTR (Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification) – to identify fraudulent subscribers.

The Minister said that various frauds such as identity theft, forged KYC, banking frauds can take place by misusing mobile phones. This portal has been developed to prevent such frauds. He said user safety is also an important part of the draft Telecom bill.

By using Sanchar Saathi portal, more than 40 Lakh fraudulent connections have been identified and more than 36 Lakh such connections have been disconnected so far.

Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw urged the users to visit the portal and avail the services. Link of the portal is (https://sancharsaathi.gov.in).

Brief on Sanchar Saathi portal is enclosed.

<u>Brief on Sanchar Saathi initiative</u>

With 117 crore subscribers, India has emerged as the second largest telecom ecosystem in the world. In addition to communication, mobile phones are being used for banking, entertainment, e-learning, healthcare, availing government services, etc.

It is therefore crucial that the users are protected from various frauds such as identity theft, forged KYC, theft of mobile devices, banking frauds, etc.

To protect users, Deptt of Telecom has developed a citizen centric portal named Sanchar Saathi. It allows citizens to:

- Check the connections registered on their names
- Report fraudulent or unrequired connections
- Block the mobile phones which are stolen/lost
- Check IMEI genuineness before buying a mobile phone

The entire system has been designed in-house by Deptt. of Telecom. It has following modules.

<u>Centralized Equipment Identity Register (CEIR):</u>

- In case any mobile device is stolen or lost, a user can submit the IMEI numbers on the portal.
- Information submitted by user along with a copy of police complaint is then verified.
- The system is integrated with the Telecom Service Providers and Law enforcement Agencies.
- Once the information is verified, the system blocks the stolen mobile phones from being used in Indian networks.
- In case anyone tries to use the stolen device, the system allows Law Enforcement Agencies to trace the device.
- When the stolen device is recovered, the user can unlock the device on the portal.
- The system prevents use of stolen/lost mobiles.
- It also prevents mobile devices with inaccurate or forged IMEIs being used in Indian networks.

<u>Know Your Mobile</u>

- It facilitates the citizens to check the genuineness of IMEI of their mobile device.

<u>Telecom Analytics for Fraud Management and Consumer Protection (TAFCOP)</u>

- It facilitates a user to check the number of mobile connections taken in her/him name using paper-based documents.
- User enters her mobile number on the portal and authenticates using OTP.
- The system shows the total connections taken in her name using paper-based documents (such as paper based Aadhar, passport, etc.)
- The system allows users to report fraudulent connections.
- It also allows users to ☒ the connections which are not required.

- Once reported by the users, the system triggers re-verification process, and the connections are terminated.

ASTR (Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification)

- Mobile connections obtained using fake/ forged documents are then used for cyber-frauds.
- To curb this menace, Deptt of Telecom has developed AI powered tool – ASTR to identify SIMs issued using fraudulent/forged documents.
- ASTR used various techniques of facial recognition and data analytics.
- In first phase, connections with paper based KYC were analysed.

Success using ASTR

- In first phase, analysis of more than 87 crore mobile connections was carried out.
- For such a large data processing, Param-Sidhhi Supercomputer was used.
- Multiple cases were detected where one photograph was used to obtain hundreds of connections.
- A total of 40.87 Lakh suspected mobile connections were detected.
- After due verification 36.61 Lakh connections have already been disconnected. Remaining are under process.
- 40,123 Point of Sales (PoS) involved in selling such mobile connections, have been blacklisted by the service providers and more than 150 FIRs have been lodged across India.
- The details of disconnected numbers have been shared with banks, payment wallets and social media platforms for disengaging these numbers with their accounts.

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Telephone Nos of PIB Officers of Hqrs

Public Grievance Officer

CPIOs Appellate Authority List

Citizen Charter

Allocation Budget

Liaison Officer

Web Information Manager

Delegation of financial powers

Portal for Public Grievance Submission

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