



## Central Equipment Identity Register

**Department of Telecommunications** (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications has initiated a Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) for mobile service providers.

- **The National Telecom Policy of 2012** calls for the establishment of a **National Mobile Property Registry** to address the issue of **security, theft**, and other concerns including **reprogramming** of mobile handsets.

### Central Equipment Identity Register

- It will be a **central depository** or database of all mobile phones connected to networks across India.
  - Every mobile network provider in India has an **Equipment Identity Register** (EIR), or a database of the phones connected to its network.
  - These EIRs will now share information with a single central database, i.e CEIR.
- CEIR will have information on the Device's :
  - International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number.
  - Model
  - Version

### International Mobile Equipment Identity

- Every phone or mobile broadband device has this unique **15 digit code** that precisely identifies the device.
- Mobile phone **manufacturers** assign IMEI numbers to each device based on ranges allotted to them by the Global System for Mobile Communications Association.
- **Dual SIM phones** will have **two** IMEI numbers.

### Objective of CEIR

- Such centralized databases are meant to **identify** and **block stolen or illegal mobile** phones across networks.
  - Presently, when a customer reports a mobile phone as missing or stolen, mobile service providers have the ability to blacklist the phone's IMEI in their EIRs and block it from accessing their network.
  - But if the SIM is changed to a new network, it can continue to be in use whereas in case of CEIR all network operators will be aware that the phone is blacklisted.
- The CEIR will also access the GSMA's database of IMEI numbers to check whether the phone is authentic.
  - There are cases of phones being in use with duplicate IMEI numbers, or with all zeros

instead of an authentic IMEI number.

- CEIR will be able to block services to subscribers unlike present system that allows only individual networks to block services in case of theft and or stolen mobiles.

## Concerns

- Major issue with CEIR is to identify the **authority** that should maintain such a high-value database (whether **service provider** or a **neutral third party**).
- Another major issue is **cloning** or **reprogramming stolen** or unauthorized mobile phones to attach existing genuine IMEI numbers.
  - As blocking cloned IMEI numbers could result in the authentic ones also being blocked.

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