



## Central Equipment Identity Register

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**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.

- 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

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- 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

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- 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.