

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2141

ANSWERED ON:07.12.2011

STOLEN MOBILE PHONES

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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) had floated a consultation paper on blocking lost and stolen mobile handsets;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the TRAI has received the views of mobile companies and other stakeholders in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the steps taken to finalize the recommendations of TRAI in this regard and to implement them; and
- (f) the time by which the effective measures/guidelines in this regard are likely to be in place?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a)to(d) In order to discourage mobile handset theft and to protect the interest of consumers, TRAI had released a consultation paper on "Issues relating to blocking to IMEI for lost/stolen mobile handsets" on 2nd November, 2010. TRAI has received comments from various stakeholders including telecom service providers. The comments given by the stakeholders include: Central Equipment Identity Registry may be maintained at the national level. There are a number of handsets working with same IMEI (Cloned IMEI) in the existing networks. Therefore blocking of one IMEI will result in blocking of remaining handsets also. There is a need for bringing in a legislation on the lines of (United Kingdom) UK-Reprogramming Act to prevent unauthorized reprogramming of the IMEI number of a mobile handset. Technical limitation in blocking removable-SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) type (Code Division multiple Access) CDMA handsets. Blocking if IMEI (International mobile Equipment Identity may be increase the load significantly on the network. There should be a nominal charge for the facility of blocking of IMEI. There should be a facility to unlock an IMEI number also. All the comments received from the stakeholders are available on TRAI website [www.traai.gov.in](http://www.traai.gov.in).

(e)to(f) After receipt of the comments from the stakeholders, TRAI conducted an Open House Discussion at Delhi on 11th February, 2011. The key issues identified during consultation process include: Establishment and Maintenance of Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR), identifying genuine IMEIs and cleansing of the fake and cloned IMEI number in all Equipment Identity Registers (EIRs) or CEIR, up gradation of existing network to support new requirement, bringing a legislation to prevent reprogramming of mobile handset. TRAI held a series of discussion with Telecom Service Providers, equipment manufacturers, handset manufacturers etc. The inputs received from these deliberations are being analysed by TRAI. As the matter is technically complex, no time frame can be given for working out effective measures and guidelines on the subject.