

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4302

ANSWERED ON:19.12.2012

CLONING OF MOBILE NUMBER IMEI

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

- (a) whether the import of unbranded mobile phones is posing security threat and some of them are without proper International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government to restrict and ban the import of such unbranded mobile sets, particularly from China;
- (c) whether cases have been reported where similar IMEIs have been used in many cell phones;
- (d) if so, the details of such cases reported during the last three years and the current year, year-wise;
- (e) whether there is any technology to find out the mobile phones with same IMEI number; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the action taken by the Government to restrict the use of such mobile sets?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) Import of mobile handsets is governed by Foreign Trade Policy 2009-2014. In this regard, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has issued Notification No.14/2009-2014 dated 14th October, 2009 vide which import of following mobile handsets have been prohibited:

- (i) Mobile Handsets (classified under ITC(HS) Code 8517) without International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) No. or with all zeroes IMEI;
- (ii) CDMA mobile phones classified under ITC (HS code 8517) without Electronic Serial Number (ESN) / Mobile Equipment Identification (MEID) or with all zeroes as ESN/MEID.

Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has also issued instructions vide letter dated 27.11.2009 directing all the telecom service providers that calls from mobile handsets with any IMEI number which is not available in the latest updated IMEI database of GSMA or without IMEI or all 'Zero' as IMEI should not be processed and must be rejected with effect from 30.11.2009.

There are instances where mobile phones without proper IMEI have been noticed. It is difficult for security agencies to legally trace a target with such phones when required.

(c) & (d) Yes, Madam. Many cases have been reported where the same IMEIs have been used in many cell phones. The number of cases reported where the same IMEIs have been used in more than 100 cell phones during last three years and the current year are given below:

Year No of cases reported wherein  
same IMEI have been used in  
more than 100 Cell phones.

2009 NIL

2010 145

2011 604

(e) & (f) So far no online solution is known which can be deployed in the network to completely eliminate the use of duplicate and non-genuine IMEI handsets. However, the issue of use of Non-genuine and duplicate IMEI in our mobile network has been acknowledged and a technical committee has been constituted to study and suggest the possible solutions to eliminate the use of Non-genuine and duplicate IMEI.