

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 233
TO BE ANSWERED ON 3RD FEBRUARY, 2023**

FACIAL RECOGNITION OF SIM-CARD SUBSCRIBERS

233 Smt. Rajani Ashokrao Patil:

Shri K.C. Venugopal:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there exists a technology by the name of “Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition Powered Solution for Telecom Sim Subscriber Verification –ASTR”
- (b) whether it is a fact that facial recognition software is being run on the images of SIM card subscribers;
- (c) whether a notification was issued and circulated regarding the use of ASTR, if so, details thereof; and
- (d) details of the storage and security of data collected through ASTR?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

- (a) Yes, a solution namely Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification (ASTR) exists.
- (b) Yes, ASTR is being run on the images of the subscribers available in Customer Acquisition Form (CAF).
- (c) Following Office Memorandum (OM) have been issued and circulated to concerned Departmental units and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA):
 - (i) OM No. 42-01/2021-DGTHQ/3 dated 03.10.2021 for Pilot Project/PoC on ASTR System by Haryana License Service Area (LSA).
 - (ii) OM No. 42-01/2021-DGTHQ/3 dated 11.03.2022 for using ASTR solution for Subscriber Database of Haryana LSA and hotspots identified by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
 - (iii) OM No. 19-182/2022-SA dated 31.08.2022 for using Facial Recognition Image Analysis.
- (d) Due security measures by maintaining data in secured server have been adopted.
