

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3348  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 9<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2023**

**ASTR**

**3348. DR. SHASHI THAROOR:**

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 and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is a fact that facial recognition software is being run on the images of SIM-card subscribers and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a notification was issued and circulated regarding the use of ASTR; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof including the details of the storage and security of data collected through ASTR?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (d) Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification (ASTR) is an indigenous facial recognition analysis solution which runs on the images of subscribers available in the Customer Acquisition Form (CAF) and can detect fraudulent subscribers. Using ASTR and other algorithms, more than 60 lakh fraudulent connections have been detected. Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) were directed to carry out re-verification of these subscribers. More than 50 lakh connections have been disconnected failing re-verification. More than 300 FIRs have been registered against more than 1700 Points of Sale (PoS). More than 50 thousand PoS have also been blacklisted. Due instructions have been issued to the concerned units of Department of Telecom and Telecom Service Providers. Appropriate security measures have been deployed for storage and security of ASTR.

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