

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:103

ANSWERED ON:24.11.2014

BAN ON USE OF CHINESE MOBILE PHONES

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

- (a) whether certain Government agencies including Indian Air Force have asked their employees and their families not to use mobiles of Chinese companies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry about the threat by using the Chinese phones;
- (d) if so, the details along with the findings thereof; and
- (e) the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) Madam, based on some reported vulnerabilities, Indian Air Force has issued an advisory to the Air Force personnel and their family members to refrain from using smart phones and notebooks manufactured by Xiaomi, a Chinese company.

(c) to (e) As such no formal inquiry has been conducted about the threat from imported phones including Chinese phones. However, taking cognizance of the fact that there are some mobile phones in the network without proper International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) and difficulty expressed by security agencies in tracing a target with such phones when required, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has issued a notification No14/2009-2014 dated 14th Oct' 2009 that import of 'Mobile Handsets' classified under ITC (HS) code '8517' without International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) Number or with all zeroes IMEI is prohibited with immediate effect. In the same notification, import of CDMA mobile phones (classified under ITC (HS) '8517' without Electronic Serial Number (ESN) / Mobile Equipment Identifier (MEID) or with all zeroes as ESN /MEID is prohibited with immediate effect. Further, instructions have been issued by DoT 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.