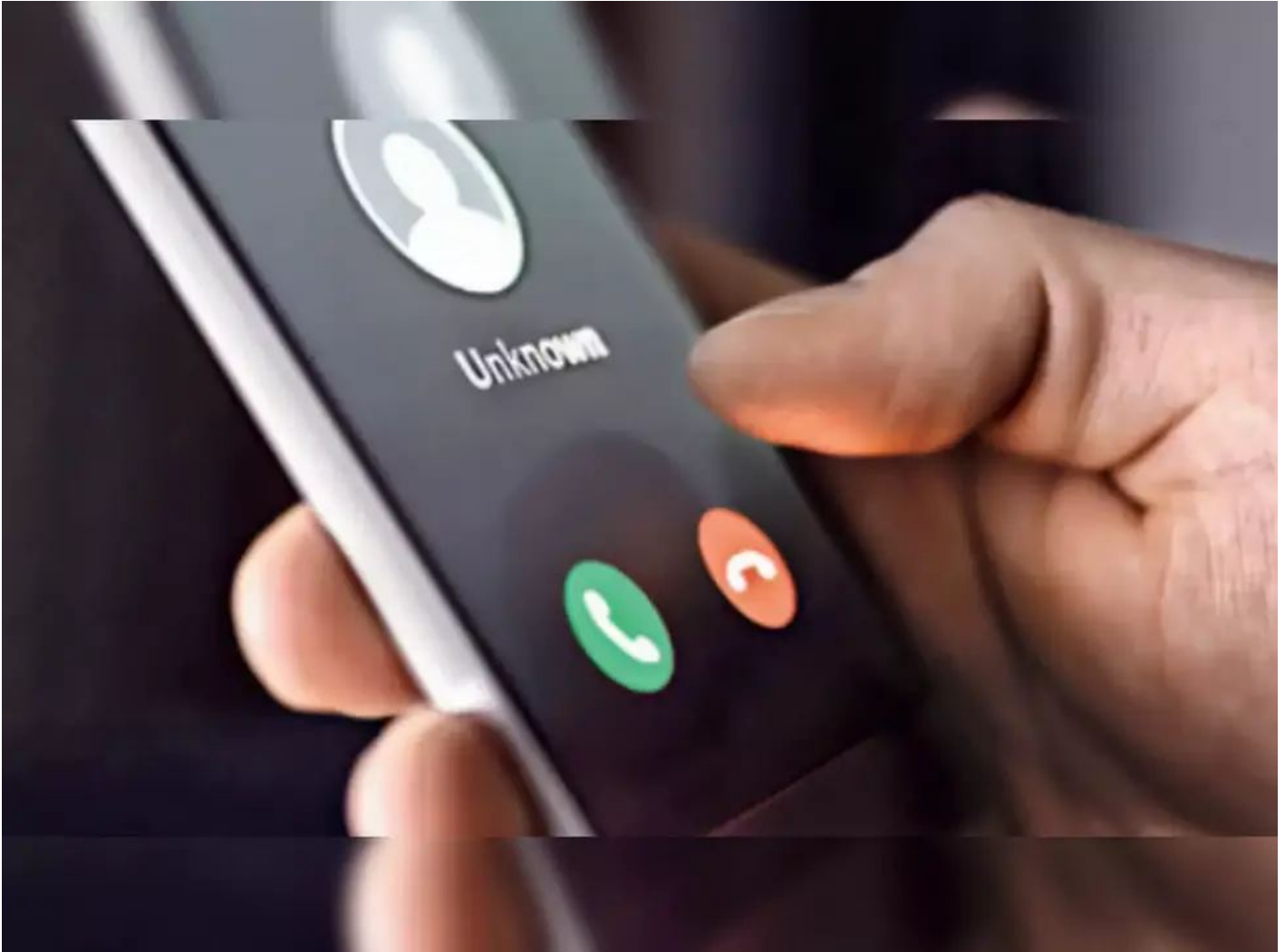


Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD)

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The DoT said that it has come to its notice that USSD based call forwarding facility, most commonly known *401# services for unconditional call forwarding services, is being misused for some unwarranted activities.

About Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD)

- It is a communications protocol used in Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) networks for sending short text messages.
- It is an instant messaging service and messages are not stored on the operator side or on the subscriber's device.
- USSD format: It generally exist as one of two types, depending on their origin:
 - A USSD Pull is an outgoing request from the user in the form of an MMI command.
 - A USSD Push is a message from the operator that is displayed on the user's screen.

- The user can send the operator a request in the form of a USSD command. Commands consist of the * and # characters and numeric codes.
 - The chain begins with * or # (which can occur more than once, separating commands from subcommands) and usually ends with #.
 - The maximum length of a USSD message is 182 characters, but in practice even the longest requests rarely exceed 20.
 - It is used to display balance deduction in mobile phones where a message pops-up on the device screen after a call or outgoing SMS. It is also used for checking IMEI numbers of mobiles.
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Q1) What is the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number?

The International Mobile Equipment Identity or IMEI is a unique number that is used to identify a device on a mobile network. It has 15 digits, and is like your phone's unique identity.

Source: DoT asks telcos to suspend USSD-based call forwarding, switch to alternate mode from Apr 15

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/unstructured-supplementary-service-data-ussd/>

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