

STERN MEASURE Jail term of up to 10 yrs likely for obtaining key info

Illegal Access to Aadhaar Data Can Land You in Jail

Aman.Sharma@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Anyone accessing Aadhaar data without having the authority to do so could land in jail for up to 10 years, as the Narendra Modi government fortifies the defence against privacy risks to the biometric information collected under the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) project. The government has also tasked the cabinet secretary with spearheading the framing of a strategy to bring maximum services under the ambit of Aadhaar.

To address the privacy concerns surrounding the UIDAI project, whose mandatory application for government services has been challenged in the Supreme Court, the Centre has passed an order on December 21 designating UIDAI's Central Identities Data Repository facilities as well as the "Information Assets, Logistics Infrastructure and Dependencies" installed at all UIDAI locations to be a "Protected System" under the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000. This means, as per the order seen by ET, anyone other than authorised personnel accessing the UIDAI systems, or even making an attempt, would face a jail term of up to 10 years and a fine.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is said to have further instructed his top bureaucrats to brainstorm on how to leverage Aadhaar's use for maximum government services. Devendra Chaudhary, secretary at the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), on Wednesday said the PM, in his PRAGATI meeting with

A Strong Firewall



UIDAI's Central Identities Data Repository facilities, information assets, logistics

infra and dependencies installed at UIDAI locations to be a Protected System under IT Act 2000



Any unauthorised staff securing access or

trying to access a protected system can face imprisonment of up to 10 years, & penalty



Who are authorised personnel

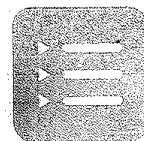
Designated UIDAI officers & support staff

UIDAI-authorised team members of contracted managed service provider

Third-party vendors & their partners

Business partners

HUGE POTENTIAL



Bureaucrats have asked to see how

Aadhaar can be used best for govt services

bureaucrats in November, reviewed the use of Aadhaar in government services. "In the coming times, we have to plan maximum government services through the Aadhaar platform ... that is the PM's vision. The cabinet secretary has approved that a group of officers will be meeting in the first week of January to strategise on how to take this issue forward," Chaudhary said at a DARPG conference at industry body Ficci.

"We are going to extend Aadhaar-based services on a voluntary basis... we want to cover 500 sectors by end of next year," Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said at the conference. Sources said the government plans to push a redrafted legislation on giving legal status to

UIDAI for the universal application of Aadhaar. In an interim order on October 15, the Supreme Court permitted voluntary use of the Aadhaar number for the rural employment guarantee scheme, Jan Dhan Yojana, payment of pensions by centre and states, Employees Provident Fund Scheme, public distribution system and the distribution of cooking gas and kerosene. This came after the court restricted Aadhaar's use in a number of services in an earlier order.

A clutch of petitions is pending before an SC Constitution Bench questioning the mandatory use of Aadhaar services by the government. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the government will plead before the court to allow a wider use of Aadhaar and also keep an option open to bring legislation.

At the conference at Ficci on Wednesday, UIDAI's former chief executive and the telecom regulator's current chief, Ram Sewak Sharma, said India is the only country to have given a "digital identity" to over 95 crore people through Aadhaar cards.