

'Aadhaar cannot be used for crime investigations'

UIDAI clarifies stand on matter

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: A day after NCRB made a case for limited Aadhaar data access for the police to crack crimes, UIDAI on Friday asserted that use of Aadhaar biometric data for criminal investigation is not allowed under the Aadhaar Act.

It also informed that Aadhaar data has never been shared with any crime investigating agency.

The statement from Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) came after National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Director Ish Kumar on Thursday made a strong pitch for the police to be provided with limited access to Aadhaar data, to aid them in catching first-time offenders and for identification of unidentified bodies.

"...the use of or access to Aadhaar biometric data for criminal investigation is not permissible under Section 29 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016," UIDAI said in a statement.

The "very limited" exception to this, said UIDAI, is allowed under Section 33 of the Aadhaar Act, which permits the use of or access to Aadhaar biometric data in cases involving national security only after pre-authorisation by an oversight committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary.

"This is also the consistent stand taken by Union of India in the ongoing Aadhaar case in the Supreme Court," UIDAI said.

It further argued that under Aad-



haar Act, the biometric data collected by UIDAI "can be used only to generate Aadhaar and for authentication of the identity of the Aadhaar holders and cannot be used for any other purpose".

Based on this legal stance, UIDAI said, it has never shared any biometric data with any crime investigating agency.

"It may be underlined here that when Mumbai High Court gave orders to share biometric data with an investigating agency in a particular case, the matter was taken up to the Supreme Court which stayed that order," the Aadhaar-issuing body said.

The NCRB Director had on Friday stated that around 50 lakh cases were registered every year in the country and most of them committed by first-time offenders, who leave their fingerprints, which would not be available in police records.