

Govt: Aadhaar won't compromise citizens' privacy

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New Delhi: The government on Friday said linkage of Aadhaar with various services, such as bank accounts and mobile numbers, did not transgress the privacy of citizens but would ensure secured digital transactions while having the potential to save the exchequer up to \$10 billion annually.

At a session 'Digital Identity For All' at the Global Conference on Cyber Security (GCCS), top government representatives said the Aadhaar programme had made digital transactions transparent.

"The use of Aadhaar has been highly beneficial for the country, and we have realised a number of benefits in just a few years of its rollout. For example, weeding out of 'ghost identities' has resulted in saving us nearly \$10 billion over the last two-and-a-half years," said Ajay Bhushan Pandey, CEO of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Pandey said linking Aadhaar to various services would ensure authentic transactions and bring transparency in delivery of social sector benefits.

R S Sharma, chairman of telecom regulator Trai, who was earlier involved with the Aadhaar process, said steps had been taken to ensure that privacy of citizens was not invaded through the unique ID programme. "This is a platform which is just for digital identification. The benefit will be through the applications," he said.