

GST, Aadhaar will transform Indian economy: UIDAI CEO

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Mumbai: Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey, in an interview with Sanjay Jog, said Aadhaar and GST have potential to transform Indian economy. Pandey, who is also the Chairman of Goods & Services Tax Network (GSTN), said government is taking due measures to provide relief to the people.

■ **People are facing a lot of issues since GST roll-out. What measures are being taken to address them?**

GST is a major reform. When you roll out any new system there are bound to be some teething problems. The process under GST is different than what it used to be. People will get used to it, and they will find it more convenient. We have addressed many issues that were raised, and are looking into the rest.

■ **What is your take on issues related to GST Network?**

In both GST and Aadhaar we are very sensitive to people's needs. We don't want the common people to be affected due to these reforms. We have been making required changes and adjustments. We will



Ajay Bhushan Pandey

attempt every possible solution to address them.

There is a question of transition or change management. We are actively working with states and various

stakeholders to ensure this change is smooth.

■ **What has been the journey of Aadhaar since its launch in 2010?**

We have issued Aadhaar to 118.7 crore people which is almost 89.7 per cent of the current population, which also constitutes 99 per cent of the adult population.

Aadhaar has ensured that needy and deserving people get the benefits. Cases of ghost duplication of fake beneficiaries were rampant before this.

In the last two-and-a-half year when Aadhaar was used for availing benefits, total savings estimated is around

Rs 57,000 crore. A World Bank study in 2016 said if Aadhaar is used in all government schemes it will lead to an annual benefit of Rs 70,000.

■ **What do you have to say on the debate that Aadhaar will breach privacy?**

We are very particular about privacy. When the Aadhaar Act was drafted, it was based on the premise that privacy is a fundamental right. In its recent judgment, the Supreme Court said privacy can be restricted in legitimate interest and it has to be proportionate and justified. According to us, Aadhaar complies with the SC order.