

# Govt moves to firewall Aadhaar with virtual ID, token, limited KYC norms

Temporary number, like an OTP, will be valid for a particular time period, unless revoked, replaced by holder

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INTRODUCING ONE of the most significant changes since its inception, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has added another layer of protection on the use of Aadhaar as proof of identity.

The UIDAI said Wednesday that it has introduced Virtual IDs (VID) that Aadhaar holders will be able to generate for a temporary period and can use in place of Aadhaar numbers to validate their identity. This temporary number, like an OTP, will be valid for a particular time period decided by UIDAI, unless revoked and replaced by the Aadhaar holder.

The parent body of the Aadhaar project has also brought in Limited KYC (Know Your Customer) and UID Tokens, in an attempt to assuage privacy and security concerns about Aadhaar numbers being used and stored by multiple public and private entities.

The new measures, which will be introduced by March 1,

**'DON'T PEOPLE WITH NO AADHAAR EXIST?'**

**UPSET OVER UP's** submission that homeless people would have to furnish ID proof like Aadhaar at night shelters, the Supreme Court asked if people without Aadhaar did not exist. It also objected to criticism that it was trying to run the government. **PAGE 11**

will provide upto two layers of firewalls between the Aadhaar-holder and authentication agencies. All authentication bodies must fully migrate to the new system by June 1.

The latest move comes at a time when the UIDAI is facing criticism for registering an FIR against a reporter of *The Tribune* for a report claiming that unknown agents had provided access to Aadhaar's demographic database for Rs 500. The UIDAI

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Outside an Aadhaar service centre in New Delhi on Wednesday. *Amit Mehra*

## HOW GOVT PLANS TO SECURE AADHAAR

**VIRTUAL ID (VID):** A 16-digit temporary number, similar to an OTP, can be used instead of Aadhaar number. This can be generated, retrieved, revoked or replaced through UIDAI's portal, mobile app, enrolment centres, etc.

**UID TOKEN:** For an authentication request by agencies, UIDAI will send a UID Token. The token for a specific Aadhaar number will remain the same for a specific agency but will be different for different entities.

**LIMITED KYC:** UIDAI will decide if an organisation needs to store Aadhaar numbers. Those allowed to do so will be called Global AUAs (authentication agencies). Others, known as Local AUAs, will use UID Tokens.

## Aadhaar

had denied that its "Aadhaar biometric database" had been breached.

In its latest circular, the UIDAI said that the VID will be a 16-digit number that can be used "to avoid the need of sharing of the Aadhaar number at the time of authentication". This, UIDAI said, will reduce the collection of Aadhaar numbers by various agencies.

The VID will be a temporary number "mapped with the Aadhaar number". The UIDAI said it will not be possible to derive the Aadhaar number using a VID. For any given Aadhaar number, there will only be one active VID at any given time; the Aadhaar-holder will be able to revoke or generate a new one after a validity period.

Since the VID will be temporary, the UIDAI said, it can't be de-duplicated, nor will authentication agencies be able to generate one on behalf of the Aadhaar number holder.

The options to generate, retrieve or replace VID's by the holder of an Aadhaar number will be available through UIDAI's portal, enrolment centers, Aadhaar's mobile app, etc.

Additionally, to "regulate" the number of agencies where Aadhaar is required and stored as a proof of identity to avail services, the UIDAI has introduced the concept of Limited KYC. It will divide the Authentication User Agencies (AUAs) into two categories: Global AUAs and Local AUAs. Only agencies whose services require them to store the Aadhaar

number as per law will be qualified as Global AUAs and allowed to do so. Local AUAs will only be allowed Limited KYC and will not be allowed to store the Aadhaar numbers.

The UIDAI will issue "agency specific UID Tokens" to Local AUAs, which will help them identify customers. UIDAI said it will "reserve the right to determine, in addition to UID Token, what demographic fields need to be shared with the Local AUAs depending upon its need".

A UID Token will be specific to the authentication agency and the Aadhaar number. To authenticate the identity of a beneficiary, the UID will provide a unique token for a particular Aadhaar number, which will remain the same for that number for one particular authenticating entity. For any other authentication body, the UID Token for the same Aadhaar number will be different.

The UID Token, the Aadhaar-issuing body said in the circular, "allows an agency to ensure uniqueness of its beneficiaries, customers etc. without having to store the Aadhaar number in their databases while not being able to merge databases across agencies thus enhancing privacy substantially".

Global AUAs can store Aadhaar numbers and will also be provided UID Tokens for each Aadhaar number in response to any e-KYC request, which they can use as per their need to authenticate.

All the authentication agencies have been asked by UIDAI to update their systems to allow for VID, UID Tokens and Limited or Full KYC services, depending on their categorisation.