

# Sri Lanka is keen to introduce an Aadhaar-like initiative

Colombo also wishes to launch an app like UMANG

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Sri Lanka will explore launching an application similar to the Unified Mobile Application for New age Governance (UMANG) in India, and it is in talks with New Delhi at the highest levels, said Minister of Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure Harin Fernando. "We can save \$2 million a day if we digitise all our operations," Mr. Fernando told Colombo-based foreign correspondents on Wednesday.

Sri Lanka is also keen on adopting a mass digital initiative like the Aadhaar in

India, he said. Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad will undertake a two-day visit to the island next month for discussions on bilateral cooperation and possible Indian investment in the sector, he said.

## **Investment possibilities**

"Indians see a lot of potential in Sri Lanka, especially in the IT sector. The environment here is very conducive for investment," Mr. Fernando said, adding that the government would soon form a new digital secretariat.

In a separate initiative, the government has also been pushing for digitising the national identity cards of Sri Lankans with biometrics, a move that has made privacy advocates in the country concerned.

Mr. Fernando said the Ministry aims to give Sri Lankans a unique identification number each, linked to their biometrics, to enable easier access to government schemes and services. He said such initiatives would not only help citizens access schemes and funds meant for them, but also help keep a check on corruption.