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UIDAI advises people to refrain from posting Aadhaar number on social media

BY AMAN SHARMA, ET BUREAU | UPDATED: AUG 01, 2018, 06:55 AM IST

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Days after TRAI Chairman R.S. Sharma put out his Aadhaar number on Twitter and dared anyone to cause any harm to him, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on Tuesday advised people to refrain from publicly putting their Aadhaar numbers on internet and social media and posing challenges to others, terming such acts as "not in accordance with the law."

"This advisory has come from UIDAI with reference to some news items appearing on social media reporting few persons publicly posting their Aadhaar numbers on internet and social media and posing challenges to others. Such activities are uncalled for and should be refrained as these are not in accordance with the law," the UIDAI said in a statement, not referring to Sharma by name. On Sunday, a day after Sharma made the dare on Twitter, UIDAI had issued a statement defending Sharma and saying no hacker could obtain any personal details of Sharma from UIDAI or any other website using his Aadhaar number. UIDAI's statement on Wednesday however asked people to desist from making their Aadhaar public, while not speaking on Sharma's act.

"Aadhaar is a unique identity which can be authenticated to prove one's identity for various services, benefits and subsidies. UIDAI in its regular media campaigns have been consistently making people aware not to display or publish or share their Aadhaar number in public domain.

UIDAI emphasises that people should not display or publish their Aadhaar number in public. Aadhaar number is personally sensitive information like bank account number, passport number, PAN number, etc., which should be strictly shared only on a need basis for a legitimate use for establishing identity and for legitimate transactions. Also, as per the Aadhaar Act, 2016 and IT (Reasonable Security Practices and Procedures and sensitive Personal Data or Information) Rules, 2011 and Justice Srikrishna's proposed Data Protection Bill, personally sensitive information should not be published or shared publicly. Indiscriminate and unwanted publication of any personally sensitive information whether Aadhaar or any other, may render the concerned person vulnerable and, therefore, should be avoided," UIDAI said in a detailed statement on Wednesday.

UIDAI also said that doing Aadhaar authentication through somebody else's Aadhaar number or using someone else's Aadhaar number for any purpose may amount to impersonation and thereby a criminal offence under the Aadhaar Act and IPC. "Any person indulging in such acts or abetting or inciting others to do so makes themselves liable for prosecution and penal action under the law. Therefore people should refrain from such acts," UIDAI said in its statement.



UIDAI has also warned that any person indulging in such acts or abetting or inciting others to do so "makes themselves liable for prosecution and penal action under the law".

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