

### Watch Out For



**UIDAI officials to meet banking and telecom regulators in the coming weeks on extending the Mar 31 Aadhaar linking deadlines**

**In the case of PAN & bank a/cs, PMLA & IT ACT require Aadhaar No., so there is unlikely to be any impact**

**In the case of MFs, Insurance & mobile numbers, the respective regulators and departments need to take a call since these cos are mostly private**

**SC will hear arguments on Aadhaar issue on Jan 17**

# UIDAI to Discuss Aadhaar Deadline Issue with RBI, Trai

Aadhaar needs to be linked by Mar 31 but Virtual ID regime will be ready from June

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**New Delhi:** Top officials at the Unique Identification Authority of India will meet the country's banking and telecom regulators to discuss whether there is a need for fresh deadlines to link the Aadhaar number with essential services, as new security protocols are introduced to improve privacy and secure the

world's largest digital repository of personal information.

In the coming weeks, UIDAI officials will discuss with various government ministries, the Reserve Bank of India and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India to decide if there is need to extend the current deadline of March 31.

"In the case of Permanent Account Number and bank accounts, the law — Income Tax Act and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) — require the Aadhaar number, so there is unlikely to be any impact," a top government official told ET.

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# New Security Protocols

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The new security protocols, which allow users to transact with a virtual ID while expecting service providers to generate virtual tokens aimed at masking the unique number, comes into effect only from June.

"Any scheme for which money goes from the Consolidated Fund of India will require Aadhaar," the official said. "Our view is that people are more comfortable sharing (Aadhaar number) with government agencies as compared to private ones."

Last year, the government mandated linking of the 12-digit Aadhaar number with

**Activists have been demanding that linkage of Aadhaar numbers not be made mandatory, citing concerns of inadequate privacy and security**

PAN, bank accounts and mobile numbers. In addition, it was also required to be linked to various schemes including post office deposits, public provident fund (PPF), the National Savings Certificate scheme and Kisan Vikas Patra. Existing customers were given time till December 31, 2017 to provide the unique number. Subsequently, all deadlines were extended to March 31, 2018 in order to allow the Supreme Court to decide on a bunch of petitions against the mandatory linking of Aadhaar.

"The government will soon hold meetings with the telecom department officials to know



whether they think companies require Aadhaar numbers," the official said. He added that similarly, for insurance and mutual funds, the concerned department or regulator has to take a decision.

Privacy activists have been demanding that linkage of Aadhaar numbers not be made mandatory, citing concerns of inadequate privacy and security. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear fresh arguments on the issue on January 17.

Last week, in one of the most significant security upgrades by the eight-year old agency, the UIDAI announced creation of a "virtual ID" which can be used in lieu of the 12-digit Aadhaar number at the time of authentication for any service. It also limited the information accessed by the authentication agencies. The measures are expected to strengthen privacy and prevent profiling of people by combining dozens of databases linked to Aadhaar. These measures come into force from June.

The government will pay heed if people demand a deadline extension, the official said.