

# 'Virtual ID' to make Aadhaar secure

*Random 16-digit number can be given to agencies for verification*

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with agency inputs  
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The Unique Identification Authority of India on Wednesday introduced a new concept of "Virtual ID" that an Aadhaar card holder can generate from its website and present for various purposes, including SIM verification, instead of sharing the actual 12-digit biometric ID.

This will give users the option of not sharing their Aadhaar number at the

time of authentication. The Virtual ID, which would be a random 16-digit number, together with the user's biometrics, would give any authorised agency like a mobile service provider limited details like the name, address and photograph, which are enough for any verification.

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The UIDAI has also

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introduced the concept of "limited KYC" under which it will only provide need-based or limited details of a user to an authorised agency that is providing a particular service.

The Virtual ID will be a temporary and revocable 16-digit random number mapped to a person's Aadhaar number, and the Aadhaar-issuing body will start accepting it from March 1, 2018. From June 1, 2018 it will be compulsory for all agencies that undertake authentication to accept the Virtual ID from their users.

Agencies that don't migrate to the new system to offer this extra option to their users by the

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**SC: Why Aadhaar must for homeless?**

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday pulled up the Central government for not providing night shelters to the homeless across country who do not possess Aadhaar cards. The apex court asked whether the people, who do not have Aadhaar cards are non-existent for the Government of India.

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■ **Continued from Page 1** stipulated deadline will face financial disincentives. "Aadhaar number holders can use Virtual ID in lieu of the Aadhaar number whenever authentication or KYC services are performed. Authentication may be performed using the Virtual ID in a manner similar to using the Aadhaar number," a UIDAI circular said. The move aims to strengthen the privacy and security of Aadhaar data and comes amid heightened concerns over the collection and storage of personal and demographic data of individuals.

Users can go to the UIDAI website to generate their Virtual ID that will be valid for a defined period of time, or till the user decides to change it. They can give this Virtual ID to service agencies along with the fingerprint at the time of authentication. Since the system-generated Virtual ID will be mapped to an individual's Aadhaar number itself at the backend, it will do away with the need for users to share their Aadhaar number for authentication purposes. It will also reduce the collec-

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tion of Aadhaar numbers by various agencies.

UIDAI said that agencies that undertake authentication would not be allowed to generate the Virtual ID on behalf of an Aadhaar holder. The UIDAI is instructing all agencies using its authentication and eKYC services to ensure Aadhaar holders can provide the 16-digit Virtual ID instead of their Aadhaar number within their application.

As many as 119 crore biometric identifiers have been issued so far and Aadhaar is required as an identity proof of residents by various government and non-government entities.