

Aadhaar Authentications Hit Record High of 94 cr in July

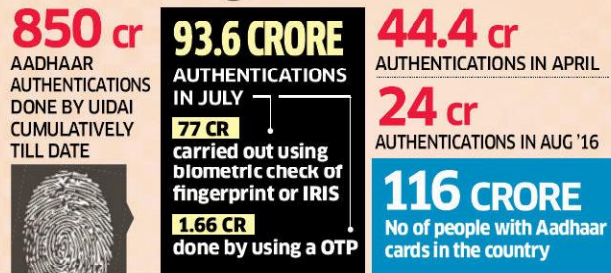
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New Delhi: Aadhaar authentications reached a record high of nearly 94 crore in July, a figure which has doubled from just three months back, in a growing reflection of people using the unique identity number to avail of a host of services.

Top government officials told ET that the high numbers show that while concerns over privacy and security of Aadhaar have been raised in some quarters, "the common man is freely using Aadhaar to avail of government services".

As per data from the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), 93.6 crore authentications have been conducted in July, compared with 44.4 crore in this April and just 24 crore last August, implying a four-

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fold jump in a year.

"We are now easily doing 3-3.5 crore authentications daily, and raising our capacity to do 10 crore authentications a day in the near future," UIDAI CEO, Ajay Bhushan Pandey, told ET.

Nearly 850 crore authentications have been done by UIDAI cumulatively till date.

The figure is huge, given that

116 crore people now have Aadhaar numbers in the country. What's giving UIDAI further confidence is that out of the 94 crore authentications in July, 77 crore were carried out using biometric check of either fingerprint or IRIS while another 1.66 crore were done by using a One Time Password (OTP), both seen as very secure modes of

authentication.

Only 37 crore people had opted for biometric authentication in April. E-KYC transactions using Aadhaar have also jumped to a record 41 crore in July, compared with 16 crore in April.

"A host of schemes, nearly 300 at last count, have been linked to Aadhaar in the past few months with citizens told to either furnish an Aadhaar or enrol for one to get the benefit. The plan is to link 500-plus schemes and authentications will further rise," said a top official.

There have been concerns over safety of Aadhaar with a recent case of UIDAI lodging an FIR in Bengaluru against a co-founder of a mobile payment startup for misuse of data and offering e-KYC services.

UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey told ET that people should be careful with whom they share their Aadhaar data with.