

Officials found guilty of J'khand Aadhaar leak face 3-year jail

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The UIDAI has asked the Jharkhand Government to identify those involved in the recent Aadhaar leak case involving pensioners, saying the guilty may face a jail term of up to three years for violating legal provisions.

"As far as displaying of Aadhaar information is concerned, the UIDAI has taken it very seriously. We have approached the Jharkhand Government and requested them to identify the officials or the staffers who are responsible for this act of omission or commission which led to this mistake," Unique Identity Authority of India (UIDAI) CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey told PTI.

His statement comes in the wake of another data breach that saw details of lakhs of pensioners finding their way to a Government website, displaying the names, addresses, Aadhaar numbers and bank accounts.

Earlier, cricketer M S Dhoni's personal Aadhaar details too were leaked. The UIDAI has filed an FIR on the matter and a police probe is on.

"If it is found that whatever they have done is an offence under the Aadhaar Act, then whosoever is found guilty, action will be taken against them and under the Aadhaar Act, there is provision of up to three years of imprisonment," Pandey warned.

The UIDAI immediately approached state Chief Secretary Raj Bala Verma when it came to know of the breach relating to pensioners.

"She was very prompt and took appropriate action. We have requested them (the State Government) to give this information as early as possible. Once we have this information report and details of their acts of omission and commission, we can take suitable action under the Aadhaar Act against

those officials," Pandey made it clear.

According to him, this particular instance has violated three different laws -- banking law, the IT Act and the Aadhaar Act.

"We believe that for violation of other two rules, the authorities concerned will take appropriate action," Pandey said.

The UIDAI chief called on all state, central departments as well as private agencies that are using Aadhaar for various purposes to keep the information very confidential so that they are not found on the wrong side of law.

"It is about Aadhaar number being displayed. We have to educate general users not to do this and also tell them that if they continue to do it, they will be on the wrong side of law.