

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)

Press Statement

29th July 2018

New Delhi: Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) today strongly dismissed the claims made by certain elements on Twitter and a section of Media that they have fetched personal details of Shri Ram Sewak Sharma who is a public servant using his Aadhaar number. UIDAI condemns such malicious attempts by few individuals to malign the world's largest unique identity project - Aadhaar.

UIDAI said that Aadhaar has built the digital trust among people at large and these devious elements are trying to spread misinformation. Aadhaar database is totally safe and has proven its security robustness over last eight years.

UIDAI emphatically stated that any information published on Twitter about the said individual Shri RS Sharma was not fetched from Aadhaar database or UIDAI's servers. In fact, this so-called "hacked" information (about Sh. Sharma's personal details such as his address, date of birth, photo, mobile number, e-mail, etc.) was already available in the public domain as he being a public servant for decades and was easily available on Google and various other sites by a simple search without Aadhaar number.

UIDAI said in a statement that certain so-called hackers while responding to a challenge thrown by Shri Sharma to attempt to really 'harm him by using his Aadhaar number', have claimed to have found out his mobile number, PAN and other details such as alternate mobile number, DOB and email, photo, frequent flight details, etc., through Aadhaar. They boasted that they had got Shri Sharma's aforesaid personal details by hacking Aadhaar database. This so-called claim, UIDAI said, is a farce and people should not believe such fraudulent elements active on social and other media. Aadhaar database is fully safe and secure and no such information about Mr Sharma has been fetched from UIDAI's servers or Aadhaar database. This is merely cheap publicity by these unscrupulous elements who try to attract attention by creating such fake news.

UIDAI said that factually anyone can google or visit other sources and find out Sh. Sharma's personal details without Aadhaar. For example, Sh. Sharma's mobile number is available on NIC website as he was once Secretary IT, Government of India. His date of birth is available in the Civil List of IAS Officers which is kept in public domain and his address is on TRAI Website because he is TRAI Chairman. Similarly his email id may be available in public domain. They clubbed all these inputs and claimed that they have managed to breach Aadhaar database and got his personal details, which is completely false.

UIDAI cautioned people not to believe any such fake news about Aadhaar. In today's digital world through various search engines such as Google, personal data can be picked from different sources without Aadhaar and a profile can be made. It is reiterated that in this case of Sh. Sharma, no data has been fetched using his Aadhaar number from UIDAI's servers or Aadhaar database. One could have just googled his name (without Aadhaar number), visited a few other websites and got most of the details which are being shown on twitter.

UIDAI reiterated that people usually give PAN or mobile number at many places. Someone can pick other personal data from different websites as he gets to know his PAN/mobile number. Can anyone demand on this basis that PAN number is unsafe and should be abolished? Or, can say that it is the online world and online search which help gather information from different sources and create a profile and therefore, online search should be prohibited? Of course, this is not the answer. Therefore, it is strictly not the issue about Aadhaar or PAN or mobile number. It is a challenge of emerging digital world and personal data protection which have been sought to be addressed in the recommendations submitted by the Justice Srikrishna Committee.

#####