GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3449
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 16.12.2016

UNIQUE BIOMETRIC COMPETENCY CENTRE

3449. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UIDAI has set up a Unique Biometric Competency Centre (UBCC);

(b) if so, whether UBCC has been established to address the biometric challenges faced by UIDAI, if so, what are these challenges;

(c) whether it is a fact that in many instances, while using Aadhaar for identification, instead of biometrics, other safety measures like One-Time Password (OTP) is being used;

(d) if so, then what is the need of collecting biometric data under Aadhaar; and

(e) whether Government intends to make use of biometric compulsory despite security challenges?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY)

(a): No, Sir.

(b): Does not arise.

(c): Yes, Sir. One Time Password (OTP) is one of the three modes of Authentication services (Demographic, Biometric & OTP) being provided by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). One or more mode of Authentication may be used as per need.

(d): Biometrics are collected to establish unique identity of the resident for assigning Aadhaar number as well as for biometric authentication.

(e): Every resident shall be entitled to obtain an Aadhaar number and for the purposes of generation of Aadhaar number, an individual is required to submit his Biometrics during enrolment as per the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other

Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016. Biometric authentication is one of the modes of authentication using the Aadhaar platform and user agency (ies) may, for the purposes of establishing identity of an individual, require that such individual undergo authentication or furnish proof of possession of Aadhaar as per the provisions of the Aadhaar Act and the regulations framed thereunder.

Appropriate measures have been taken by the Government to ensure the security of identity information and authentication records of individuals. The Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016, provides that no core-biometric information (such as fingerprints, iris scan) shall be shared with anyone for any reason whatsoever (Sec 29) and that the biometric information shall not be used for any other purpose other than generation of Aadhaar and authentication.

Chapter VII of the Aadhaar Act provides for the penalties for contravention of any provisions of the Aadhaar Act. Section 38 under the said Chapter more specifically deals with the penalty for unauthorized access to the UIDAI's Central Identities Data Repository(CIDR) in the form of unauthorized accessing, downloading, introducing virus , damaging the data, disruption of access to the CIDR, denial of access to an authorized person, revealing, sharing, using or display of information, destroying, deleting or altering of information, stealing, concealing any computer course code used by the Authority which shall attract an imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to a fine which shall not be less than ` 10 lakhs.

Additionally, Section 39 provides that any unauthorised use or tampering with data in CIDR or in any removable storage medium with the intent of modifying information relating to Aadhaar number holder or discovering any information thereof, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 3 years and also liable to a fine which may extend to Rupees ten thousand.

Further, the Aadhaar (Authentication) Regulations 2016 have also been notified in September 2016. These Regulations inter alia provide for biometric authentication to be done only by Authentication Users Agency (AUA) authorized by UIDAI, transmission of biometric information in encrypted form, use of only certified device, etc. In case of biometric authentication, response of UIDAI is signed digitally, assuring its veracity and additionally user is alerted about the said transaction/authentication.

UIDAI's CIDR facilities, Information Assets, Logistics and Infrastructure and Dependencies installed at UIDAI have been classified as Protected System under section 70 (1) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 w.e.f. 11 December 2015. UIDAI in order to further strengthen its security protocols has received ISO 270001 certification which is globally accepted as the highest standard for IT security.

****