

Nearly 67 cr bank accounts seeded with Aadhaar: Prasad

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AS MANY as 67 crore of the 110 crore bank accounts in the country are now linked with Aadhaar, the 12-digit unique identification number, Union information technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said on Tuesday.

"Of the 110 crore total bank accounts in the country, about 67 crore bank accounts are linked to Aadhaar," Prasad said, while inaugurating a workshop on Aadhaar services offered by the Common Services Centres or CSCs.

Lauding the contribution of village level entrepreneurs in providing various services, Prasad noted that 22 crore Aadhaar enrolments had been done by the CSCs.

He urged the entrepreneurs not to be deterred by competition from other enrolment agencies, and promised that the CSC business model will continue to evolve as more and more gov-

ernment departments look to take new services and schemes to villages through the network.

The minister said while 10 lakh individuals work at the CSCs at present, he expects this number to increase to one crore in coming 4-5 years, as new services and offerings enhance the appeal and utility of CSCs.

"CSCs are providing 300 services today, from GST training to training on digital payments," he noted.

Taking a dig at critics of the unique identification number, the minister said the linking of Jan Dhan accounts with Aadhaar and mobile number had enabled the direct transfer of subsidies into the beneficiary's bank account. This led to savings of Rs 50,000 crore, an amount that was earlier pocketed by the middlemen.

Digital India drive under Prime Minister Narendra Modi ensured that every Rs 100 subsidy to the poor fully reaches the bank account of beneficiary.