Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)

Press Statement
5th August 2018

New Delhi: In view of the attempts by few Aadhaar opponents to spread rumours and scare mongering against Aadhaar in the backdrop of appearance of an old Aadhaar helpline number in mobile phones, it may be noted that the Google has clarified that UIDAI's old contact number 18003001947 was added by it "inadvertently" along with police/fire number 112 in 2014 and has since been continuing through sync mechanism. It has also expressed its regret for the same. Google has also assured that it will fix this inadvertent error in their next release and stated that the users may, if they wish, can delete the number.

UIDAI had earlier clarified and emphasised that it had not asked any agency whatsoever to include its helpline number in the mobile phones. UIDAI expects that Google, a large digital platform provider, will look into this which caused confusion in the minds of people against India's credible identity system and will exercise due care so that such things are not repeated in future.

However, UIDAI condemns the vested interests who tried to misuse Google's "inadvertent" act as an opportunity to spread rumours and go around fear-mongering against Aadhaar. Rumours are being floated in some social media such as Twitter and WhatsApp that this number has "mysteriously popped up on mobile devices and will be harmful, Aadhaar data has been breached, etc., and therefore, the helpline number should be deleted immediately". This is totally false propaganda and is nothing but scare-mongering against Aadhaar by vested interests trying to exploit Google's act to spread misinformation about Aadhaar by scaring people. It must be clearly understood that by merely having a helpline number that, too, an outdated one, on a mobile/smartphone, no harm can be caused. Just by a helpline number in a mobile's contact list the data stored on the mobile phone cannot be stolen. Therefore, there should be no panic to delete the number as no harm will be caused. Rather people may, if they so wish, update it with UIDAI's new helpline number 1947.

Further, rumours about Aadhaar database being breached are completely false and baseless and are rejected with all condemnation that it deserves. UIDAI assures that Aadhaar data remains fully safe and secure. Therefore, people should stay away from such rumours and malicious campaign by vested interests. They should also not waste their time and time of their near and dear ones by forwarding or circulating such false and baseless rumours on their WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook , etc.

One must know that Aadhaar has caused tremendous benefits to our country and helped saved more Rs 90,000 Crore by preventing leakage and siphoning of benefits and subsidies meant for poor. It has empowered 121 Crore people of India with a credible and secure identity which can be freely used anywhere, anytime and online. People are able to get their rightful entitlement directly into their bank accounts without any middlemen. It has also helped curb tax evasion, money launderers, benami accounts and shell companies.

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