Aadhaar Pay: The government will soon roll out Aadhaar Pay service that will enable people to make and receive payments using their Aadhaar number and biometrics, IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.   **P5**

'Aadhaar touches 111 crore landmark'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

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The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) achieved a landmark by generating 111 crore Aadhaar numbers in a population of 125 crore plus, IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said here today.

In a statement on the occasion of the 68th Republic Day, he said the total savings by the central and state exchequers by deploying it stood at Rs 36,144 crore in two years.

The chunk of the savings came from the government's Pahal scheme for cooking gas cylinders where money is deposited directly in the consumers' accounts which are linked with Aadhaar, he added. In 2014-15, the government saved Rs 14,672 crore, and in 2015-16, Rs 6,912 crore on account of Pahal scheme.

Stating that it was the world's largest and unique biometrics based identification programme with a real time online authentication infrastructure, Prasad said Aadhaar has been recognised in the recent UN Report on World Social Situation, 2016, as a developmental tool.

In his statement, Prasad it had "tremendous potential to foster inclusion by giving all people, including the poorest and most marginalised, an official identity" and is a wonderful "critical step in enabling fairer access of the people to government benefits and services", thereby enhancing social and economic distributive justice leaving no one behind.

The Aadhaar enrolment ecosystem with 135 registrars and 612 enrolment agencies working at 47,192 enrolment stations has been enrolling and updating seven to eight lakh requests per day.

"Now in its fourth phase, with demonetisation and Digital India drive towards less-cash economy, Aadhaar is all set to be the game changer with Aadhaar Pay ~ a non-traditional digital payment system without a need of card, pin, password or mobile with the consumer", the Minister's statement said.