

Trai chief's dare: UIDAI warns people not to share Aadhaar number

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NEW DELHI: Days after Trai chief's Aadhaar dare created a flutter, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on Tuesday asked people not to share their 12-digit identifier on internet and social media, or pose such challenges to others.

"Such activities are uncalled for and should be refrained as these are not in accordance with the law," UIDAI said in a statement.

An all-out war has been raging on Twitter since Saturday after Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) chief RS Sharma shared his Aadhaar number publicly, challenging anyone to show how mere knowledge of the number can be misused to harm him. While some said they managed to gain access to his bank account number and email, Sharma refuted the claims saying they were untrue.

UIDAI said people should "refrain from publicly putting their Aadhaar numbers on Internet and social media and posing challenges to others".

UIDAI also warned that doing Aadhaar authentication through somebody else's Aadhaar number or using someone else's Aadhaar number for any purpose may amount to impersonation and thereby a criminal offence under the Aadhaar Act and

Indian Penal Code. Any person indulging in such acts or abetting or inciting others to do so makes themselves liable for prosecution and penal action under the law. Therefore people should refrain from such acts, it added.

Aadhaar, it said, is a unique identity which can be authenticated to prove one's identity for various services, benefits and subsidies. "UIDAI in its regular media campaigns have been consistently making people aware not to display or publish or share their Aadhaar number in public domain," the statement said.

UIDAI said the 12-digit Aadhaar number "is personally sensitive information" just like bank account number, passport number, PAN number, which "should be strictly shared only on a need basis for a legitimate use for establishing identity and for legitimate transactions".

Also, as per the Aadhaar Act and other IT rules, personally sensitive information should not be published or shared publicly, it said.

"Indiscriminate and unwanted publication of any personally sensitive information whether Aadhaar or any other, may render the concerned person vulnerable and, therefore, should be avoided," it said.