

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 896
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22-12-2017

STEPS TO PROTECT UIDAI'S IRIS SCAN BASED SECURITY

896. SHRI ANIL DESAI:

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

(a) whether the police have arrested a few men for allegedly cloning fingerprints to subvert Aadhaar's vaunted biometric based security system, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps Government is taking to protect UIDAI's iris scan-based security and to secure it from fresh vulnerabilities?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI ALPHONS KANNANTHANAM)

(a): Two FIRs have been filed for allegedly attempting to breach the biometric authentication process of operators. In this regard, F.I.R No. 396 dated 2/6/17 was filed by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) in Police Station Padrona Kotwali, in the District of Kushinagar. Another F.I.R No. 0361 dated 2/6/17 was filed by UIDAI in Kotwali Police Station in the District of Deoria against the culprits. Accused persons were arrested for attempting the above crime.

(b): UIDAI has a well-designed, multi-layered robust security system in place and necessary technology and infrastructure has been deployed to ensure the security of iris scan data captured during enrolment or authentication processes. Further to enhance security, UIDAI has introduced the concept of Registered Biometric Devices wherein each device (which captures fingerprint and IRIS scan) is uniquely identifiable and traceable, and biometrics captured by these devices are encrypted at source.

The Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 (Aadhaar Act) provides for a detailed framework for protection of Identity information including iris scan data. In this regard, attention is invited to Section 28 of the Aadhaar Act, which provides that the Authority (UIDAI) to ensure that the information in possession or control of Authority, including the information stored in CIDR, is secured and protected against access, use or disclosure not permitted under the Act or regulations made thereunder, and against accidental or intentional destruction, loss or damage. Further, Section 29 (1) of the Act read together with Regulation 3(1) of the Aadhaar (Sharing of information) Regulations, 2016 categorically states that no core biometric information, collected or created under the Act, shall be shared with anyone for any reason whatsoever; or used for any purpose other than generation of Aadhaar numbers and authentication under the Act. Also, Regulation 4(1) of the Aadhaar

(Sharing of information) Regulations, 2016 provides that core biometric information collected or captured by a requesting entity from Aadhaar number holder at the time of authentication shall not be shared for any reason whatsoever. Further, Section 30 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016 applies the rigours of the IT Act, 2000 and the rules thereunder whereby Biometric Information is deemed to be Sensitive personal information.

Additionally, Chapter VII of the Act lays down monetary penalties and imprisonment for unauthorized sharing of residents' identity information including iris scan.
