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AADHAAR AUTHENTICATION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Centre has notified the Aadhaar Authentication for Good Governance (Social Welfare, Innovation, Knowledge) Amendment Rules, 2025. The Ministry of Electronics and IT said that Aadhaar Authentication has been expanded to government and private entities for providing various services in the public interest, boosting innovation, knowledge, and public service enhancement. The amendments will enhance the scope for residents to avail themselves of many new services seamlessly, with regard to e-commerce, travel, tourism, hospitality, and health services. The amended rules will also promote the ease of living and livelihood.



AADHAAR RULES: KEY LIGHTS

Aadhaar Card Rule	Description
Aadhaar Number	A 12-digit unique identification number issued by UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) based on biometric and demographic data.
Eligibility for Aadhaar	All Indian residents, including citizens and foreigners residing in India for more than 182 days, are eligible to get an Aadhaar number.
Aadhaar Authentication	A process where the UID number and associated biometric/demographic data are verified against the Central Identities Data Repository (CIDR).
Types of Aadhaar Authentication	1. Demographic Authentication 2. OTP Authentication 3. Biometric Authentication 4. Multi-factor Authentication
Biometric Data	Includes fingerprints, iris scan, and facial recognition, used for verifying identity.
Aadhaar Linking Requirement	Aadhaar needs to be linked with various services like PAN, bank accounts, mobile numbers, and government schemes for easier verification.
Voluntary Use	Aadhaar authentication is voluntary for certain services, like registering for UPSC exams, but it is mandatory for others, like filing taxes and receiving subsidies.
Aadhaar e-KYC	Aadhaar can be used for Electronic Know Your Customer (e-KYC), a paperless and digital way to verify identity.
Privacy and Security	Aadhaar data is protected by strict privacy regulations. UIDAI provides security measures to safeguard data.
Aadhaar and Children	Children below 5 years are not required to provide biometric data, but they must be enrolled with demographic details.
Aadhaar-based Authentication in Exams	In exams like UPSC, Aadhaar can be used for fingerprint, facial recognition, and QR code scanning for identity verification.
Updating Aadhaar Details	Individuals can update personal details such as an address, phone number, or photograph through UIDAI's online portal or centres.
Aadhaar Card for Non-Residents	Non-residents can apply for Aadhaar if they meet the eligibility criteria of living in India for over 182 days.

BASIC ABOUT AADHAAR:

Category	Description
What is	A 12-digit unique identity number is issued to all Indian residents by the Unique

Category	Description
Aadhaar?	Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
How it Works	Aadhaar is based on biometrics (fingerprints, iris, face) and demographic information.
Voluntary Service	Aadhaar is a voluntary service available to anyone, regardless of age, gender, or documentation.
Uses of Aadhaar	Verifying identity for various services (bank accounts, passport applications, government benefits, etc.).
	Can be used both online and offline for identity verification.
Benefits of Aadhaar	Eliminates the need for multiple documents to access services.
	Simplifies mobility, as identity can be verified anywhere in the country.
	Helps reduce fraud and supports social inclusion and economic security.
How to Get Aadhaar	Enrol for an Aadhaar number for free by providing demographic and biometric information.
	For more information, you can contact UIDAI's toll-free number at 1947.

AADHAAR FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE:

- 1. Expansion of Aadhaar Authentication:** Enhances the scope of Aadhaar authentication to promote good governance, social welfare, and innovation. Aims to improve service delivery in sectors like e-commerce, travel, tourism, hospitality, and health.
- 2. Inclusion of Non-Government Entities:** Allows both government and non-government entities to use Aadhaar authentication for public interest services.
- 3. Focus on Ease of Living:** Aims to improve access to services and enhance ease of living for residents by facilitating seamless service delivery.
- 4. Trusted Transactions:** Ensures secure and reliable transactions by enabling trusted identity verification for both service providers and seekers.
- 5. Streamlined Approval Process:** Entities seeking Aadhaar authentication must apply with required details to the concerned ministry or department. Applications will be reviewed by UIDAI and approved by MeitY based on recommendations.
- 6. Encouragement for Innovation:** The amendment encourages the development of digital solutions leveraging Aadhaar authentication for various services.
- 7. Strengthening Partnerships:** Aims to foster stronger partnerships between government and private entities for enhanced governance solutions.
- 8. Improved Access to Aadhaar-Enabled Services:** Expected to provide individuals with better access to Aadhaar-enabled services, improving efficiency and service delivery.
- 9. Promoting Transparency and Inclusivity:** The amendment seeks to promote transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process, benefiting residents and service providers.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES WITH AADHAAR USE?

- 1. Data Theft:** Criminals can potentially steal biometric data (like fingerprints or iris scans) for fraudulent activities, compromising security.
- 2. Authentication Failures:** Aadhaar authentication can fail due to various reasons, which could delay the distribution of benefits and services.
- 3. Security Concerns:** There are concerns about security and privacy vulnerabilities associated with the Aadhaar system.
- 4. Violation of Rights:** Some argue that Aadhaar may violate people's right to privacy, especially regarding the collection and use of personal data.
- 5. Ambiguity in Biometric Information:** The Supreme Court struck down certain provisions of the Aadhaar Act, including allowing private corporations to use biometric data for authentication.
- 6. Inadequate Facilities:** There are concerns about inadequate facilities for Aadhaar registration, updating details, and retrieving lost Aadhaar numbers.
- 7. Errors in Aadhaar Information:** Errors may occur in Aadhaar applications, such as spelling mistakes, mismatched photos, or discrepancies between Aadhaar and other documents like PAN cards.

WAY FORWARD:

- 1. Strengthen Security:** Enhance security measures to protect biometric data from theft and breaches.
- 2. Improve Accessibility:** Expand Aadhaar centres and improve services for data updates and retrieval, especially in remote areas.
- 3. Address Privacy:** Ensure strict adherence to privacy regulations and clear consent for data use.
- 4. Reduce Errors:** Streamline registration to minimize data errors and improve quality control.
- 5. Enhance Authentication:** Improve authentication reliability to prevent failures that delay service delivery.
- 6. Promote Awareness:** Increase public knowledge of Aadhaar's voluntary/mandatory use and transparency in data handling.
- 7. Encourage Innovation:** Support digital services and solutions using Aadhaar to improve public service delivery.
- 8. Foster Public-Private Partnerships:** Strengthen collaborations between government and private entities for seamless, secure services.
- 9. Periodic Review:** Regularly update Aadhaar policies to address emerging tech, security, and public needs.

CONCLUSION:

The recent Aadhaar Authentication for Good Governance Amendment Rules, 2025, aim to expand Aadhaar's reach, promoting better service delivery across both government and private sectors. The amendments focus on improving residents' access to services, enhancing innovation, and supporting ease of living. While Aadhaar has significant benefits, such as reducing fraud, simplifying identity verification, and promoting social inclusion, it also faces challenges, such as privacy concerns, security risks, and the potential for errors.

PRELIMS QUESTIONS:

Q. With reference to the Aadhaar Authentication for Good Governance (Social Welfare, Innovation, Knowledge) Amendment Rules, 2025, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The amendments expand Aadhaar authentication to both government and private entities for the provision of services in the public interest.
2. The amendment allows the use of Aadhaar authentication for private corporations in all sectors, including healthcare.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

A. 1 only

- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A

MAINS QUESTIONS:

Q. Discuss both the potential benefits and challenges of expanding Aadhaar authentication for both government and private entities. How can these amendments improve service delivery and governance, and what are the major concerns that need to be addressed to ensure its effectiveness? (250 words, 15 marks)

Ritik singh



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