AADHAAR

UIDAI TAKES ON RUMOUR MONGERING

Helpline number cannot steal data, says UIDAI

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The UIDAI on Sunday said vested interests misused Google's "inadvertent" act around it old helpline number to create fear and tarnish the image of Aadhaar while emphasising that a number stored in contact list cannot steal data from a mobile phone.

The Unique Identity Authority of India (UIDAI) said rumour mongers attempted to tarnish the image of Aadhaar for a Google's inadvertent act that led to the appearance of its old helpline number 1800 300 1947 in the contact list of several mobile phone users.

Last week, a French security expert who goes under the pseudonym Elliot Alderson and describes himself as the "worst nightmare" of the UIDAI, in a tweet had raised the alarm on the presence of a UIDAI contact number in the contact list of mobile phone users without their consent. His tweet scared many mobile phone users on the appearance of the UIDAI's old helpline number in their contacts even though they did not add it.

Google on last Friday admitted that the number 18003001947 was added by it 'inadvertently' along with police and fire number 112 in 2014 and has since been continuing through sync mechanism.

The UIDAI said it has earlier clarified and emphasised that it has not asked any agency whatsoever to include its helpline number in mobile phones and also added that merely adding a phone number cannot steal data from the phone.

The UIDAI said rumours being spread on social media to delete helpline number are "totally false propaganda and is nothing but scaremongering against Aadhaar by vested interests trying to exploit Google's act to spread misinformation about Aadhaar by scaring people."

The Aadhaar custodian said that it expects Google, a large digital platform provider, will look into the matter which caused confusion in the minds of people.