

CAG report on UIDAI

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In news—The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has presented its performance audit of Aadhaar's regulator, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) recently.

Key highlights of the report-

- CAG has pulled up the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) for “deficient data management”.
- It has said that **data of Aadhaar card holders have not been matched with their Aadhaar number** even after 10 years in some cases.
- It has also criticized the **absence of a system to analyze the factors leading to authentication errors**, and said that even though **UIDAI** was maintaining one of the largest biometric databases in the world, it **did not have a data archiving policy, which is considered “a vital storage management best practice”**.
- It has noted that UIDAI has provided Authentication services to banks, mobile operators and other agencies free of charge till March 2019, contrary to the provisions of their own Regulations, depriving revenue to the Government.
- **The CAG has flagged that UIDAI has not ensured that the applications or devices used by agencies or companies for authentication** “were not capable of storing the personal information of the residents, which put the privacy of residents at risk”.
- It has noted that the **UIDAI has not prescribed any specific proof, document, or process to confirm whether a person who is applying for Aadhaar has resided in India for the period specified by the Rules**. Therefore, “there is no assurance that all the Aadhaar holders in the country are ‘Residents’ as defined in the Aadhaar Act”.

- The CAG has said that UIDAI generated Aadhaar numbers with incomplete information, which, along with the lack of proper documentation or poor quality biometrics, have resulted in **multiple or duplicate Aadhaar cards being issued to the same person.**
- The CAG has noted that the UIDAI does not have adequate arrangements with the postal department, due to which a large number of Aadhaar cards were returned to the government after they could not be delivered to their intended recipients.

About Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)-

- UIDAI is the statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 (“Aadhaar Act 2016”) on 12 July 2016, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- **UIDAI was created to issue Unique Identification numbers (UID), named as “Aadhaar”,** to all residents of India.
- The UID had to be (a) robust enough to eliminate duplicate and fake identities, and (b) verifiable and authenticable in an easy, cost-effective way.
- UIDAI is responsible for Aadhaar enrolment and authentication, including operation and management of all stages of Aadhaar life cycle, developing the policy, procedure, and system for issuing Aadhaar numbers to individuals and performing authentication and the security of identity information and authentication records of individuals.
- As of October 31, 2021, UIDAI had issued 131.68 crore Aadhaar numbers.