

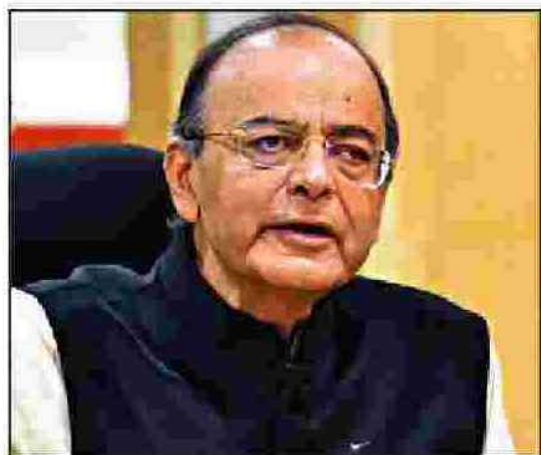
# FM: Savings through Aadhaar can fund 3 schemes of scale of Ayushman Bharat

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Finance minister Arun Jaitley on Sunday said the annual savings from Aadhaar can help fund three schemes of the size of Ayushman Bharat, the government's health insurance programme.

The World Bank had estimated that the government could save Rs 77,000 crore annually as leakage from various schemes are plugged through the use of Aadhaar. Over the past few years, the government estimated savings of around Rs 90,000 crore as several duplicate, fake and non-existent beneficiaries were weeded out.

"With the elimination of middlemen the benefits go directly to the bank accounts. The monies saved through Aadhaar is money fruitfully



Finance minister Arun Jaitley

employed for poor elsewhere," Jaitley wrote in a blog.

The minister slammed the UPA for its failure to wholeheartedly implement a scheme that was conceived during its tenure as "a senior minister", a reference to P Chidambaram, blocked it, while Manmohan Singh, the then PM, was "indecisive".

"Aadhaar is a game-changer. The UPA, because of its contradictions and indecision remained half-hearted about

Aadhaar. Instead of taking credit for it, Congress lawyers challenged it in court and appeared as the anti-technology, anti-Aadhaar faces. A decisive PM (Narendra Modi) made it possible," Jaitley wrote.

He also credited Infosys chairman Nandan Nilekani for conceiving the tool, and UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey for providing direction and expanding it apart from working on repelling the legal challenge.

Jaitley said the UPA legislation on UID number was inadequate and it was only after Modi came to power that he decided to go ahead with Aadhaar wholeheartedly. While the law enacted by UPA provided the methodology for issuing Aadhaar, it did not contain adequate safeguards on privacy or the purpose for which it would be used.