GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4805
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 29.03.2023

THEFT CASES OF PERSONAL DATA

4805. SHRI SRIDHAR KOTAGIRI:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the various cases of personal data theft that have happened during the last two years;
(b) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken by the Government to protect the personal data of the citizens and punish the perpetrators indulging in data theft until such statute is enacted and implemented; and
(c) the estimated timeline by which the Government proposes to introduce the law on personal data protection?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a): Government is committed to ensure that Internet in India is Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable for its users. With emergence of new technology and rise in the usage of Internet, the growing risk to digital data in the cyberspace is a global phenomenon, and Government is fully cognizant of the same.

As per the information reported to and tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) a total of 31 and 40 data breach incidents, involving personal data were observed during the years 2021 and 2022 respectively.

(b): Government has taken following measures to enhance the cyber security posture, for protection of digital data:

(i)   The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) coordinates incident response measures with affected organisations, service providers, respective sector regulators and law enforcement agencies, and notifies the affected organisations regarding cyber incidents, along with remedial actions to be taken.
(ii)   CERT-In issues alerts and advisories on an ongoing basis regarding the latest cyber-threats/vulnerabilities and countermeasures to protect computers and networks.
(iii)   CERT-In regularly conducts training programmes for network and system administrators and chief information security officers of government and critical sector organisations, regarding securing the information technology infrastructure and mitigating cyber-attacks. A total of 42 training programmes were conducted, covering 11,486 participants, during the years 2021 and 2022.
(iv)   Government websites and applications are audited with respect to cybersecurity and compliance with the Government of India Guidelines for Websites, prior to hosting.
(v)   CERT-In has empanelled 150 security auditing organisations to support and audit implementation of Information Security Best Practices.
(vi)   CERT-In operates an automated cyber threat exchange platform for proactively collecting, analysing and sharing tailored alerts with organisations for proactive threat mitigation actions by them.
(vii) CERT-In operates the Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre) to detect malicious programs and free tools to remove the same, and to provide cybersecurity tips and best practices for citizens and organisations.

(viii) Cybersecurity mock drills are being conducted to enable assessment of cybersecurity posture and preparedness of organisations in the government and critical sectors. 74 such drills have so far been conducted by CERT-In, in which 990 organisations from various States and sectors participated.

(ix) Security tips are published for users to secure desktops and mobile phones and to prevent phishing attacks.

(x) CERT-In organised various events and activities for citizens during Safer Internet Day on 7 February 2023 and Cyber Security Awareness Month in October 2022 by posting security tips using posters and videos on social media platforms and websites. CERT-In, in association with the Centre of Development of Advanced Computing, conducted an online awareness campaign for citizens, covering topics such as general online safety, social media risks and safety, mobile related frauds and safety, secure digital payment practices, etc. through videos and quizzes on MyGov platform.

(c): The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has prepared a draft Bill, titled 'The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2023' covering digital personal data. Extensive consultation on the draft Bill has been undertaken to generate necessary feedback to formulate the provisions of the related legislative proposal.

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