GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1715
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13TH DECEMBER, 2023

FRAUD IN THE NAME OF TRAI

1715. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:
DR. PRITAM GOPINATHRAO MUNDE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether cases of fraud in the name of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) have increased in the country in the recent past;

(b)   if so, the number of such cases came to the notice TRAI from various States including Odisha and Maharashtra;

(c)   whether TRAI has been able to find out the modus operandi of companies/agencies/individuals involved in such frauds in the country;

(d)   if so, the details in this regard; and

(e)   the details of the steps taken by the Government to check and stop various such activities in the country including Maharashtra?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)

(a) to (d)   Government is committed to safety & security of telecom users. Government has launched Sanchar Saathi portal (https://sancharsaathi.gov.in) which, inter-alia, empowers citizens:

(i)   to know the mobile connections issued in their name and report the mobile connections for disconnection which are either not required or not taken by them,
(ii)   to report the stolen / lost mobile handset for blocking and tracing,
(iii)   to check the genuineness of mobile handset while buying a new/old device,
(iv)   to report the incoming international calls received with Indian telephone number as calling line identification,

As on date, the outcome of Sanchar Saathi portal is as under:

1	Number of mobile connections disconnected taken on fake/forged documents	55.52 lakh
2	Number of requests resolved for 'Know Your Mobile Connections'	27 lakh
3	Number of suspected mobile connections reported by citizens and disconnected failing re-verification	13.42 lakh
4	Mobile handsets traced for 'Block Your Lost/Stolen Mobile'	5.30 lakh
5	Mobile handsets recovered by State Police and returned to citizens	59,585
6	Point of Sales (PoS) blacklisted	70,313
7	Number of FIRs registered	365
8	Number of PoS involved in FIRs	1,957
9	Mobile handsets blocked for involvement in cyber-crime /financial frauds	1.32 lakh

10	Number of mobile connections disconnected reported by law enforcement agencies on National Cyber Crime reporting portal reportedly involved in cyber-crime / financial frauds.	2.78 lakh
11	Accounts disengaged by WhatsApp which were linked to disconnected mobile connections taken on fake/forged documents	2.21 lakh
12	Number of accounts frozen by Banks & Payment wallets which were linked with disconnected mobile connections taken on fake/forged documents	9.83 lakh

Cases of impersonation or falsely claiming as TRAI officers to dupe citizens have been reported. TRAI has mandated Telecom Service Providers to take appropriate actions against the mobile numbers involved in sending unsolicited communications in terms of Telecom Commercial Communication Customer Preference Regulation (TCCCPR), 2018.

(e)   The steps taken by the Government to check and stop such activities in the country including Odisha and Maharashtra are as below:-

➢ TRAI issues various press releases & public information.
➢ Awareness Campaigns.
➢ The affected persons may take up the matter with the concerned Service Providers directly on their respective Customer Service Centre numbers or on National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal https://cybercrime.gov.in or call Cyber Crime Helpline Number 1930.
➢ To reach out to consumers all over the country, TRAI conducts Consumer Outreach Programs (COPs), Customer Awareness Programs (CAPs) through Customer Advocacy Groups (CAGs) and Customer Education Workshops (CEWs) through Service Providers across the country. In such programs TRAI, its nominated CAGs and Service Providers inter-alia creates awareness about the measures taken by TRAI and Service Providers to protect the consumers from unwanted/unsolicited commercial communications along with other measures taken by TRAI to protect the interest of consumers on the matters of Tariff, Value Added Service, Data services, Mobile Number Portability etc.
➢ TRAI imparts training in Capacity Building Workshops for consumer organizations registered with TRAI on various measures related to consumer protection including protection from Unsolicited Communications. These consumer organizations further decimate awareness to consumers.
➢ To create awareness about fraudulent SMSs in the name of upgrading 5G SIM, TRAI issued instructions to all TSPs to send SMSs in English, Hindi/ Regional languages.
➢ A Special drive has been taken by TRAI for creating awareness among consumers under the theme "Digital Frauds through Spams: Safety Lies in Awareness" wherein topic related to Digital Frauds using Telecom Resources and measures to protect them through awareness are explained in detail by the Cyber Experts.

Government is taking proactive steps to prevent the different modalities used for cyber-frauds including the misuse of Headers and message templates of Principle Entities (PEs). DoT conducted an AI/ML (Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning) based analysis of the entities sending SMS through Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) platforms with their headers and content templates and about 20,000 PEs, 30,000 SMS headers and 1.95 lakh SMS Content templates have been removed.

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