

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 184  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.03.2020**

**TOUTING ACTIVITIES**

**\*184. SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:  
SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE:**

**Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Railway Protection Force (RPF) has recently busted a big gang involved in ticketing scams, money laundering and suspected terror funding;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the modus operandi adopted by the culprits;**
- (c) whether any arrest has been made in this regard till date and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) whether the Railways has launched 'operation thunder' against touting activities and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Railways to make its reservation sites foolproof and hacking free?**

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND COMMERCE & INDUSTRY  
(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)**

**(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.**

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 184 BY SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO AND SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 04.03.2020 REGARDING TOUTING ACTIVITIES**

**(a) to (c): Railway Protection Force (RPF) arrested one accused person named Ghulam Mustafa suspected of selling illegal Railway ticket booking software ANMS on 08.01.2020 in course of enquiry into criminal case vide Crime No.758/2019 dated 30.10.2019 under section 143 of "The Railways Act" registered at RPF post, Yeshwantpur, Bengaluru City. He was found to have used certain illegal softwares, advanced hacking applications, crypto currency accounts for carrying out this operation and further, during the course of enquiry, a list of 3000 bank branches were recovered from his laptop. On the basis of lead given by the arrested accused regarding operation of illegal software for e-Ticketing, several cases have been registered in RPF Posts across the Indian Railways, wherein a total of 82 accused persons have been arrested till 25.02.2020 and are under investigation. Further, in this matter, the following cases have also been registered by State Police/Delhi Police which are under investigation: -**

- (i) Karnataka Police (Rajgopal Nagar Police Station) has registered Crime No. 16/2020 dated 15.01.2020, under sections 419, 420, 34 IPC and 43, 65, 66, 66(c), 66(d), 70 of The "IT Act", which is under investigation.**
- (ii) UP Police has registered Crime No. 330/19 dated 02.12.2019 under sections 419, 420, 467, 468, 471 IPC & 43, 65, 66, 66C, 66D, 70 IT Act at Purani Basti Police Station.**
- (iii) UP Police has registered Crime No. 269/19 dated 08.12.2019 under sections 34, 419, 420 IPC & 43, 65, 66, 66C, 66D, 70 IT Act at Haraiya Police Station, Basti.**
- (iv) Delhi Police has registered Crime No. 0045/2020 dated 20.02.2020 under sections 420/120B/34 of IPC and 66 of IT Act at PS Special Cell (SB), Delhi Police.**

**The illegal software during its operation auto-fills the passenger details in form, auto reads the login, submits Captchas, bypasses bank OTP protection and pushes multiple numbers of fictitious IRCTC user IDs simultaneously, due to which it facilitates huge number of fictitious IRCTC user IDs to jump the queue when window of Tatkal/other booking starts and corner simultaneously several confirmed berths in trains. Due to pan India action by RPF, all these illegal softwares have been suspended and are not being used. In addition to cessation of functioning of the illegal softwares, various wings of railways like RPF, IRCTC and CRIS have worked together to upgrade the existing security features of the PRS system. This has also disrupted the functioning of any other softwares. Situation is kept under close watch so that any upgradation of illegal softwares, still in operation, if any, is responded to in real time and even such softwares are not able to indulge in such malpractices.**

**(d): Yes, Sir. RPF conducted a Pan India Drive titled as “Operation Thunder” across All Indian Railways on 13.06.2019 against illegal touting activities for Railway tickets. The drive was conducted in 462 cities across India with registration of 563 cases and 605 arrests. During this drive, 3554 fake personal User IDs of IRCTC being used to book tickets were deactivated.**

**(e): The following steps have been taken, inter-alia to make IRCTC reservation website, foolproof:**

- 1. Checks have been introduced to ensure that form filling by automatic software is comparable to those filled by human beings.**
- 2. Restrictions have been put on creation of IRCTC user ID and booking of tickets per user.**
- 3. Dynamic CAPTCHA has been introduced at registration, login and booking page.**
- 4. Multilayer security & regular audits by Standardization Testing and Quality Certification (STQC).**
- 5. Restriction on authorized agents of IRCTC for booking tickets during first fifteen minutes of opening of Advance Reservation Period (ARP) booking and Tatkal booking.**