

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2245

ANSWERED ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 09, 2024/AGRAHAYANA 18, 1946 (SAKA)

QR CODE FRAUDS

2245. DR. D. Ravi Kumar:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that QR code frauds have been increasing due to the growing reliance on digital payments in recent years;
- (b) the data on the rise in QR code fraud cases and the trend observed, particularly during the last three years;
- (c) whether the Government has launched any specific initiatives or awareness programmes to educate people in rural areas about the risks of QR code fraud;
- (d) whether any awareness campaigns have been conducted, if so, the number of such campaigns held both online and offline during the year 2023; and
- (e) whether the Government is considering any measures to further safeguard digital payments and prevent QR code frauds in rural and urban areas?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY)

(a) & (b) With increasing digital payment transactions in the country, incidences of digital financial frauds including QR codes frauds have also gone up in the last few years. The year-wise QR based frauds reported during the last three financial years and the current financial year is attached as Annexure-I.

(c) to (e) In order to prevent payment related frauds including QR based frauds, various initiatives have been taken by the Government, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) from time to time. These, inter alia, includes device binding between customer mobile number and the device, two factor authentication through PIN, daily transaction limit, limits and curbs on use cases etc.

RBI and banks have also been taking up awareness campaigns through short SMS, radio campaign, publicity on prevention of 'cyber-crime' etc. A total of 317 Electronic Banking Awareness and Training (e-BAAT) programmes were conducted by regional offices of RBI across the country during 2023. Additionally, in March 2023, a multi-media campaign was launched for promoting digital payments with theme of "Digital payment apnao, auron ko bhi sikhao" (Learn digital payments, teach others also) as part of the Digital Payments Awareness Week.

NPCI has also implemented awareness campaigns stating "QR code is scanned only to make payments and not to receive" and same has been communicated through various mediums like TV, Digital, Radio and Print media. Further, an offline training program was conducted in 48 villages of 6 States (West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Punjab, Haryana and Assam).

In order to facilitate the citizens to report any cyber incidents including financial frauds, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) launched a National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (www.cybercrime.gov.in) as well as a National Cybercrime Helpline Number "1930". Similarly, Department of Telecommunications launched Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) and 'Chakshu' which facilitates citizens to report suspected fraud communication received over call, SMS or WhatsApp.

Annexure I

| Financial Year | No. of incidences | Amount involved (In crores) |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| FY 2021-22 | 14,625 | 19.35 |
| FY 2022-23 | 30,340 | 41.73 |
| FY 2023-24 | 39,638 | 56.34 |
| FY 2024-25* | 18,167 | 22.22 |

**Till September, 2024*