

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 652  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2023**

**MISUSE OF HEADERS AND MESSAGES TEMPLATES**

**652. SHRI Y. DEVENDRAPPA:  
SHRI ARUN SAO:  
SHRI SUDHAKAR TUKARAM SHRANGARE:  
SHRI DEVJI M. PATEL:  
SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:  
SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA:  
SHRI RANJEETSINGH NAIK NIMBALKAR:  
SHRI DILIP SAIKIA:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that Headers and Messages templates of Public Entities (PEs) are being misused by certain telemarketers and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken any steps to stop misuse of Headers and Messages Templates and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the fresh steps taken by the Government to ensure that all the promotional messages are sent through Registered Telemarketers (RTMs) using approved headers and messages templates on Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLS) platforms?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS  
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) 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.

As per data submitted by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) more than 28000 cases of misuse of Headers and Content Templates have been reported. Mobile companies are mandated to take action against misuse by blacklisting Headers and Content Templates. In case of repeat incidences, Mobile companies blacklist the Principal Entity (PE) and/ or the Telemarketer (TM) involved. Since 2019, more than 20 Telemarketers, around 500 PEs, more than 3000 SMS Headers, and more than 40000 Content Templates have been blacklisted for sending phishing SMS/Unsolicited Commercial Communications (UCC).

(b) TRAI, through its direction dated 16.02.2023, directed all Mobile companies to re-verify all Headers and Content Templates on the DLT platform and block all unverified Headers and Content

Templates within 30 days and 60 days respectively. Mobile companies were also directed to develop a system to temporarily deactivate all Headers that remained unused in the last thirty days. Further, Mobile companies were directed to ensure that Principal Entities (PEs) shall classify every Header at the time of registration as a 'temporary' or 'permanent' Header, as the case may be, and that the 'temporary' Header shall be deactivated after the time duration for which such 'temporary' Header has been registered.

(c) The Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference Regulations (TCCCPR-2018) mandates that the Mobile companies must ensure that all commercial communications on their network only take place using registered Headers and Content templates registered by the senders on the DLT platform. Principal Entities (PEs) can send their commercial communications by engaging Registered Telemarketers (RTMs) or directly through the ecosystem developed and established by the Mobile companies.

Further, to prevent the transmission of promotional messages through unregistered telemarketers or telemarketers using 10-digit telephone numbers, TRAI issued a direction on 16.02.2023. In compliance with TRAI's direction, around 4 Lakh Headers and more than 11 Lakh Content Templates have been temporarily deactivated by the Mobile companies.

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