

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2261  
ANSWERED ON:18.12.2013  
FAKE ACCOUNTS ON VARIOUS WEBSITES  
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the cases of crime and fraud have been reported by various networking websites including matrimonial websites;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there are large number of fake accounts on various social networking sites which are being used for fraud/crime;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government against the concerned websites and individuals; and
- (e) the measures taken by the Government to prevent the fraud by social networkings sites and matrimonial sites?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. As per the Crime Data /information maintained by National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), 2464 cases of crime such as hacking and others, were registered during 2012. 1440 cases were related to loss /damage to computer resource/utility reported under hacking with computer systems (Section 66(1) of the Information Technology Act 2000) and 435 cases were related to hacking under Section 66(2) of the Information Technology Act 2000. 749 persons were arrested for committing such offences during 2012. There were 589 cases of obscene publications /transmission in electronic form under Section 67 of Information Technology Act, 2000 during the year 2012 wherein 497 persons were arrested. In addition, 259 cases of cheating through cyber forgery and 118 cases of cyber frauds were registered under Indian Penal Code (IPC) provisions. Further, as per the information provided by Reserve Bank of India 6034 frauds involving credit /ATM/ debit cards were reported in 2013.

Police and Public Order are State subjects under the Constitution and as such the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations are primarily responsible for prevention, detection, registration and investigation of crime including Cyber Crime and for prosecuting the criminals through Law Enforcement machinery within their jurisdictions.

(c) and (d): Any user with email address are allowed to register with social networking sites with any name including fake names. No background information check is performed by the social networking sites, which leads to creation of fake accounts by miscreants for committing crimes/frauds. Most of the networking sites are located abroad. The servers of these social networking sites are also located abroad.

A total no. of 3, 45, 37 and 36 cases of fake accounts/profiles on various social networking websites were reported to Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) in the year 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 (till November) by various Law Enforcement Agencies. CERT-In, further, contacted these social networking websites for disabling of fake accounts and for getting user access details of these fake accounts/profiles. In most of the cases, such fake accounts were successfully disabled in association with social networking sites, having offices in India. However, success rate is low in disabling accounts and getting information from social networking sites having offices abroad.

(e): Government has taken the following actions to prevent frauds by social networking sites and matrimonial sites :

i) Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011 under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act. These rules require that the Intermediaries, including national and international social networking sites and matrimonial sites, shall observe due diligence while discharging their duties and shall inform the users of Computer resources not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is harmful, objectionable, affect minors and unlawful in any way. The said rules also require the intermediaries to appoint Grievance Officers to address the grievances received from users and affected individuals / organizations as and when received by them.

ii) Government issued the an advisory on 17 August 2012 to all the intermediaries, including national and international social networking sites, advising them to take necessary action to disable inflammatory and hateful content hosted on their web sites on priority basis.

iii) Government also conducts awareness campaign on the issue to educate users.

iv) The Government is in regular dialog with the intermediaries including social networking sites for effective and efficient disablement of such content.