

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:336

ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015

CHEATING BY NETWORKING MATRIMONIAL SITES

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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether cases of crime and fraud have been reported as per information maintained by National Crime Record Bureau in respect of various networking websites including matrimonial websites and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether there are a large number of fake email accounts on various social networking websites which are being used for fraud/crime;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by Government against the concerned websites and individuals; and
- (d) the actions taken by the Government to prevent fraud by social networking websites and matrimonial websites?

Answer

MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a): As per the cyber crime data maintained by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 1791, 2876 and 4356 Cyber Crime cases were registered under Information Technology Act, 2000 during the year 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively. A total of 422, 601 and 1337 cases were registered under Cyber Crime related Sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) during the years 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively. These include, 4 and 6 cases of 'false electronic evidence', 259 and 747 cases of 'forgery' and 282 and 518 cases of 'criminal breach of trust/fraud' registered under the Cyber Crime related Sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) during the year 2012 and 2013 respectively.

(b) and (c): Any user on the internet may create an email account with any name including fake names on the web portal of free email service providers like Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo etc. and further may register on a networking/matrimonial websites with fake credentials. No background information check is usually performed by the free email service providers or social networking sites, which leads to creation of fake accounts by miscreants for committing crimes/frauds. Most of the free email service providers and social networking sites are located abroad. The servers of these social networking sites are also located abroad.

A total no. of 45, 37, 37 and 57 cases of fake accounts/ profiles on various social networking websites were reported to Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) by various Law Enforcement Agencies in the year 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively. 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.

(d): 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 email service providers, 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 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.