

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:34

ANSWERED ON:18.07.2017

Espionage through Illegal Telephone Exchanges

Kirtikar Shri Gajanan Chandrakant;Mahato Shri Bidyut Baran

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of illegal telephone exchanges routing calls via a computer network and allegedly used by Pakistani intelligence agencies to access sensitive military information in some parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the modus operandi used by the offenders;
- (c) the number of persons arrested in this regard along with the equipment seized by the officials; and
- (d) the corrective measures taken/being taken by the Government to address the issue?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI HANSRAJ GANGARAM AHIR)

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

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STATEMENT IN REPLY TO THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *34 FOR 18.07.2017.

(a) to (b) : Some instances of VoIP Exchanges being operated illegally in various parts of the country have been noticed. However, it has come to notice that foreign Intelligence Operatives use spoofed / manipulated calling line identity (CLI) to access sensitive information. The modus operandi involves the use of software by offenders from foreign countries to ensure that the mobile phone of the target displays the incoming call to be originating from a "spoofed" Indian number.

(c): Arrests are made by the States police, therefore such details are not maintained at the central level.

(d): Establishing, maintaining or working illegal telephone exchanges is an illegal offence under Section 20 of Indian Telegraph Act 1885 and may invoke three year of punishment or fine or both. Furthermore, using unauthorized telegraph is also an illegal offence under Section 21 of IT Act 1885. Field units of DoT and Police regularly perform the vigilance functions for curbing illegal activities in telecom services. A toll free number 1800110420 has also been set up to seek public participation in receiving information about illegal international calls/telephone exchanges. Further, Telecom Enforcement Resource & Monitoring (TERM) Cells, (Field units of Department of Telecom) have been sensitized and instructed to create awareness among customers for toll free number 1800110420 in coordination with the Telecom Service Providers of their jurisdiction.
