

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1463
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.07.2024

FAKE E-COMMERCE WEBSITES

1463. SHRI VISHNU DATT SHARMA:

Will the Minister of **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION** उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is cognizant about the existence of many fake e-commerce websites which are duping the unassuming consumers without any restraints;
- (b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to ban and take down these websites to protect consumers; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण राज्य मंत्री
(श्री बी.एल. वर्मा)

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI B.L.VERMA)

(a) to (c) : 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. States/UTs are primarily responsible for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes including cyber frauds through their Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs). The Central Government supplements the initiatives of the States/UTs through advisories and financial assistance under various schemes for their capacity building.

To strengthen the mechanism to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, the Central Government has taken steps for spreading awareness about cyber crimes; issuance of alerts/advisories; capacity building/training of law enforcement personnel/ prosecutors/judicial officers; improving cyber forensic facilities, etc. The Government has established the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) as an attached office to provide a framework and eco-system for Law Enforcement Agencies to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The Government has launched the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (<https://cybercrime.gov.in>) to enable the public to report all types of cyber crimes. Cyber crime incidents reported on this portal are routed automatically to the respective State/UT law enforcement agency for further handling as per the provisions of law. The 'Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System' has been launched for immediate reporting of financial frauds and to stop siphoning off fund by the fraudsters. A toll-free Helpline number '1930' has been operationalized to provide assistance in lodging online cyber complaints.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has taken many steps to spread awareness on cyber crime that inter-alia include; issuance of alerts/advisories, dissemination of messages through SMS, I4C social media account i.e. Twitter handle (@Cyberdost), Facebook (CyberDostI4C), Instagram (cyberdosti4c), Telegram (cyberdosti4c), Radio campaign, engaged MyGov for publicity in multiple media, publishing of Handbook for Adolescents/Students, organizing of Cyber Safety and Security Awareness week, in association with police department in different States/UTs etc. The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued advisory to all the State/UT Governments to carry out publicity of National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (<https://cybercrime.gov.in>) and Toll-free helpline number '1930' to create mass awareness.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has notified the Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to safeguard consumers from unfair trade practices in e-commerce. These rules inter-alia outline the responsibilities of e-commerce entities and specify the liabilities of marketplace and inventory e-commerce entities including provisions for consumer grievance redressal.

The Central Consumer Protection Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 18 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, has issued "Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023" on 30th November, 2023 for prevention and regulation of dark patterns listing 13 specified dark patterns identified in e-Commerce sector.
