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News / India / Panel finds cracks that help hackers target jobseekers

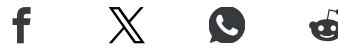
Panel finds cracks that help hackers target jobseekers

Recently, a meeting was held by the Home Ministry with the officials of the Telecom Ministry, Financial Intelligence Unit, RBI, MeITY, NIA, CBI and security experts of other agencies.

Written by [Mahender Singh Manral](#) Follow

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A source said Union Home Minister Amit Shah may meet all the officials in the coming days, and take an update on the Centre's action.

The Centre's high-level interministerial panel has identified loopholes in banking, immigration and telecom sectors that enable [cyber scams originating from Southeast Asian countries](#).

According to sources, three shortcomings in the system that have been identified include: Involvement of the senior bank managers of two nationalised banks to open mule accounts; around 30,000 unreturned passengers travelling on visitor visa to Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam from January 2022-May 2024, and misuse of bulk SIM cards.

A source said Union Home Minister [Amit Shah](#) may meet all the officials in the coming days, and take an update on the Centre's action. Recently, a meeting was held by the Home Ministry with the officials of the Telecom Ministry, Financial Intelligence Unit, RBI, MeITY, NIA, CBI and security experts of other agencies.

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In the first six months, around 4 lakh “mule” accounts (bank accounts used for laundering cybercrime funds by using KYC documents of others) have been frozen. A source said it was informed that after probing 4 lakh mule accounts, it was found that maximum accounts were allegedly opened with the connivance of senior managers/ staffers in several branches of State Bank of India and Punjab National Bank.

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“It was found that branches of these two nationalised banks were in [West Bengal](#), [Rajasthan](#), Jharkhand, Delhi, and Gurgaon. It has been decided by the central agencies to share the case details with the concerned state police, asking them to take action against all these bank employees,” the source said.

Also Read | How criminals based in southeast Asia are trapping through Indians online scams

Queries were sent to the SBI and PNB, but they did not respond.

As first reported by [The Indian Express](#) on March 28, over 5,000 Indians are suspected of being stuck in Cambodia and forced to carry out cyber fraud. According to government estimates, Indians have been duped of at least Rs 500 crore in the past six months.

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With the help of immigration bureau, a source said it came to fore that there are around 73,000 Indians, who went on visitor visas to Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia from January 2022 to May 2024, but around 30,000 people did not return. “Now, it has been decided to share their details with the states

concerned; Kerala, [Tamil Nadu](#), Punjab, [Andhra Pradesh](#), Delhi, Orissa, [Madhya Pradesh](#), [Mumbai](#), [Telangana](#) and [Uttar Pradesh](#), from where they belong, have been asked to trace their family members, so that they can get details about a source said.

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Analysis of data by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), a division of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), has observed an increase in the number of cybercrime incidents targeting India, and about 45% of them originate from the Southeast Asia region, mainly Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos PDR. Around 1 lakh cyber complaints have been registered with the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) since January 2023, and 800 complaints from January to June 1 this year.

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Mahender Singh Manral

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Mahender Singh Manral is an Assistant Editor with the national bureau of The Indian Express. He is known for his impactful and breaking stories. He covers the Minist [... Read More](#)

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