

TRAI Issues Advisory on Fraudulent Activities Misusing TRAI's Name

Digital Arrest, SIM Deactivation, Tower Installation and Fake Letters Among Common Scams

Posted On: 06 AUG 2025 5:39PM by PIB Delhi

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued an advisory cautioning the public about a rise in cyber frauds and financial scams involving misuse of TRAI's name. These include impersonation of TRAI officials through calls, messages, forged documents, and fraudulent letterheads to threaten or mislead individuals and coerce them into sharing personal information or transferring money. **Any such outreach allegedly in the name of TRAI is unauthorised and not associated with TRAI.**

Emerging Scams Misusing TRAI's Name

A prominent example is the so-called '**digital arrest**' scam, where callers impersonate TRAI or law enforcement officials and falsely accuse individuals of telecom or financial violations or criminal actions. Victims are manipulated through fake legal documents, forged identities, and threats of arrest or account freezing, and are coerced to transfer money under the pretext of bail, fines, or verification.

TRAI reiterates that it does not initiate communication with customers regarding mobile number disconnection through messages or otherwise. TRAI has also not authorized any third-party agency to contact customers for such purposes. No regulatory body conducts investigations or collects payments through phone calls, messaging apps, or video platforms.

Other frauds misusing TRAI's identity include:

- **SIM Deactivation Threats:** Calls or messages falsely claiming that a mobile number will be disconnected due to KYC issues unless immediate action is taken.
- **Mobile Tower Installation Offers:** Fraudulent proposals offering high rental income in exchange for upfront registration fees, often supported by forged TRAI approvals.
- **Forged Letters or Emails:** Circulation of fake documents or emails using TRAI's logo to legitimise demands for money, investment offers, or compliance actions.

TRAI Clarification

TRAI is an independent statutory authority established under the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. It regulates telecom and broadcasting services, recommends policy measures to the Government, and monitors service quality.

TRAI does not:

- Conduct investigations against individual consumers
- Request Aadhaar, bank account, OTP, or other personal details
- Issue arrest threats or warnings via digital platforms

Public Advisory

Citizens are advised to:

- **Disconnect immediately** if they receive threatening or suspicious calls
- **Avoid sharing** personal, banking, or identification details on calls or video chats

- **Never transfer money** in response to unsolicited demands
- **Verify independently** through official websites or government helplines
- **Report frauds** to the National Cybercrime Helpline (1930) or www.cybercrime.gov.in
- **Flag suspicious numbers** via the Chakshu facility on Sanchar Saathi or the TRAI DND app

TRAI urges all citizens—especially senior citizens and digitally less-experienced users - to stay vigilant and share this information widely. Early awareness and timely reporting are critical in preventing such frauds.

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(Release ID: 2153153)