

VISION PLAN

# Only 2 units to deal with 457% rise in cyber crime

■ Need to set up cyber crime police stations in other districts

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| DC  
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With the rise in cyber crime cases across the country, there is a need for establishing cyber crime police stations in all the districts of AP.

Currently, there are only two cyber crime police stations in the state at Vizag and Vijayawada. But, it may take much more time for establishing new stations in all the districts, as the AP police department is following a vision plan to set up advanced units.

The ministry of home affairs in its advisory dated January 13, 2018, mentioned: "Each state may set up a state cyber crime coordination cell, preferably headed by a senior officer of ADGP or IG rank, designated as state cyber crime coordinator. The Cell may be responsible for setting up of an institutional mechanism for handling cyber crime at district and police station level. The district cyber crime cells may also be set up as per need."

The study report that was released in January this year by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) said that India had witnessed a 457 per cent rise in cyber crime incidents under the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 from the year 2011 to 2016. Between 2012 and 2017, the number of Internet users grew at 44 per cent which had led India to be placed 3rd in terms of the number of Internet users in the world after USA and China. Symantec Corp ranked India among the top 5 countries to be affected by cyber crime, noted the study titled 'Digital Policing - Smart Policing for Public Safety', conducted by ASSOCHAM jointly with NEC.

However, the people in the districts of AP are facing a tough time as some police stations are not registering cases regarding the bank frauds etc, asking the victims to approach the banks in case of any unauthorised transactions. There is a need for the DGP to order all the police stations to take up cyber crime cases without rejecting them. Many of the cyber crime cases are being neglected by the police like this one.

"I ordered a mobile through online that was worth ₹17,000. When I did

## MONEY FRAUD

■ There are only two cyber crime police stations across the state. ■ Police department implementing a vision plan to fight cyber crimes.

■ ASSOCHAM reports say that there is a 457 per cent rise in cyber crimes in a span of five years.

■ Many police stations asking the victims to approach the bank regarding bank frauds.

■ There is a need to pass serious instructions to all police stations to register cyber crime cases.

■ Two Regional Analysis labs have been opened in Kurnool and Rajahmundry, while one more to come up in Tirupati.

## 30 bank accounts looted in Vizag

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What was shocking was that about 30 bank accounts were looted in a span of just two months in Vizag city alone. Though debit cards were with the account holders, they were frauded and money was withdrawn through ATMs in North India and surprisingly, amounts were also transferred to other bank accounts.

Vizag Cyber crime police has registered about 30 cases from March 12 to till now. As they have noticed that those were unauthorised transactions without the knowledge or without the help of the victim, cyber crime inspector V. Gopinath has issued request letters to the banks to pay the customer the lost amounts as per the RBI directions. When some banks first refused to do so, the inspector issued notices to them to which the banks responded and paid the amounts.

As the daily limit is just ₹20,000 for ATM withdrawal, the fraudsters had withdrawn ₹20,000 at around 11.55 pm and as

not receive the product within the time frame, I called the customer care number. They sent me a message asking me to forward the same to another number to register a complaint with them. But soon after doing that, ₹60,000 was deducted from my bank account. I immediately transferred the rest of the cash into another account. I approached the police of Udayagiri on Sunday who asked me to report this at the Vijayawada Cyber Crime station," said Pallapu Ramesh from Udayagiri of Nellore district.

Sources from the police department revealed that

the day changes after midnight, they withdrew another ₹20,000. They even transferred the rest of the amounts to other bank accounts that were maintained by them but actual KYCs were innocent.

The cyber crime police say that there is no evidence that the cards were cloned with the help of the skimmer. After verifying all the cases they are suspecting that there was a leak of bank account details and that is helping the fraudsters. The people who are aware that their money was withdrawn without their knowledge have approached the police and there might be many others who still don't know about the looting of their bank accounts.

When approached, Mr Gopinath said, "We suspect that the fraudsters have the bank data of a few people. We have registered cases and helped the people get their money back as banks are responsible for the money that was lost without the customers' help. We are trying to trace the case as early as possible."

The Vizag cyber crime police was receiving at least 50 phone calls every day from the other parts of the state. But, they were helpless, as they could not register the cases that were away from their jurisdiction.

AP police department is following a vision plan to establish the cyber crime police stations across all the districts along with strengthening the police stations with equipment that aids investigation of cyber crimes.

AP Director General of Police (DGP) R.P. Thakur is closely monitoring the implementation of the vision plan through IG (training) N. Sanjay As

part of the plan, the two cyber crime police stations in Vijayawada and Vizag are working from last year.

Two training labs were being established in Anantapur and Guntur Tech towers for training the police personnel to deal with cyber crimes. At present, they are being trained at local training centres. Apart from them, two regional analysis labs comprising cyber forensic experts were established at Rajahmundry and Kurnool, while another was about to be opened in Tirupati.

Meanwhile, for immediate purposes, the department has sent advanced field responder kits to all the districts and basic field responder kits for about 40 urban police stations across the state to help the investigation of cyber crime cases.

Speaking to DC, Inspector General N. Sanjay said, "There is a need to establish cyber crime stations in every district and we are heading to it with a proper vision plan. There will be no use of establishing a police station without the required equipment or proper analysis labs. So we are mobilising the equipment, training the staff and the labs have already been established in Rajahmundry and Kurnool apart from Vizag and Vijayawada. Soon another lab will be available in Tirupati too. Each lab has equipment worth ₹2 crore. The court needs admissible evidence and these labs will work towards it. We are sure that AP will be the first state to follow a vision plan."

As of now, AP police has given basic cyber forensic awareness training to 1,200 personnel, advanced cyber forensic training to 200, specialised cyber forensic tools training to 100 persons in the department. "We are aiming to train about 5,000 persons from the department in 2019-20 with the newly commissioned training labs," he added.