

Name: Alert ID: TMML2024032867295 | Bengaluru | The CID Cybercrime Division of the Bengaluru City Police Thursday arrested four persons from Rajasthan who allegedly impersonated public figures, government officers, police officials on social media to transfer funds from friends and followers. According to the police, the accused — identified as Ansar, Balvinder Singh, Saini, and Saddam — were arrested after the investigating team visited Bharatpur and other places in Rajasthan based on leads received during the probe. In the past few months, the Cybercrime Division had registered at least four cases based on several incidents. “Over 10 such cases were filed in different police stations across Karnataka after which a team including K R Nagaraj (DSP, Cyber Crimes Division, CID), and Nayaz Ahmed (Police Inspector, CCD, CID) was formed to investigate the matter,” an officer from the Bengaluru Cybercrime Division told indianexpress.com. Further, after collecting adequate evidence to record the arrests, the police explained the modus operandi saying that the accused were found to have collected photographs and other personal and professional information of genuine people to create fake social media profiles in their names. “In the guise of such profiles, they first send friend requests to people who are already there on the friends’ list. Upon acceptance of friend request, they induce the persons to transfer money to various e-wallets and payment bank accounts citing some urgent need, thereby cheating them,” the officer explained. The investigation also revealed that the accused worked as a team to apply for the activation of thousands of fake SIM cards using fake Aadhaar cards created by mixing up different photographs, addresses, and Aadhar numbers. The probe team said the accused Saini created fake Aadhar cards which were handed over to Ansar, who worked as a retailer and uploaded them for SIM card activation. Balvinder worked as a SIM distributor who activated the same bypassing standard processes of verification, while Saddam used to receive all the money sent to the accounts created. “In addition to impersonating people on Facebook, the accused persons used such fake SIM cards to open accounts on Twitter and Instagram as well to advertise on online re-selling platforms (OLX, Quikr), to open e-wallets/payment bank accounts like PayTM, Airtel Money, Google Pay, PhonePe, etc. in order to commit various cyber and online financial crimes across the country,” the team added. Another accused, identified as Shakeel, who created fake social media profiles is still absconding and the search for him is underway, the police added. Further, the supervising team advised the public not to fall prey to such frauds and to exercise caution while accepting any request from government officers, especially from those who are already there in the friends’ list. “Privacy controls provided by the social media sites may be used to avoid any misuse of information,” it said. For all the latest Bangalore News, download Indian Express App.