

Dark Web and Its Ramifications

Shivani

LL. B, LL.M, Practising Advocate at Delhi Court

ABSTRACT

The dark web, a hidden arena of the internet accessible only through specialized software. This intellectual on growing crime is rising day by day. This paper will throw a light on the negative effects of the dark web on the Indian society in the fields of like digital transactions involving money, human trafficking, private forums, online examinations and other sensitive information make up the deep web. Despite existing laws and regulations governing cybercrime and online activities, law enforcements agencies in India encountering significant challenges in investigating and prosecuting crimes committed via dark web technologies.

KEYWORDS: Dark web. Deep net, Surface web

INTRODUCTION

The “Dark Web” refers to a part of the internet that is not indexed by search engines and is accessible only through special software, most commonly the Tor Browser (the onion router) and I2P (Invisible Internet Project). These networks are designed to dubious Ip address and garble communications, making difficult to trace activities back to specific individuals. The dark web is quite often can be misused in terrorism, online transactions and other matters but the most burning issue that cannot be ignored is its misuse in NET and NEET examinations papers leak. It is a hidden segment of the internet that dodge conventional search engines. The dark web presents a unique challenge for law enforcement agencies worldwide.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SURFACE WEB, DEEP WEB AND DARK WEB

Surface web comprises social media, news sites, public forum etc. It is an apparent web indexes web which is readily at one’s finger tips to the general public and searchable with standard web engines.

Deep web refers to the parts of the internet that you cannot reach through search engines. It includes pages that you register and sign in like bank websites, online database, health records etc. The deep web offers a level of seclusion and security that fend off its contents from being readily accessible to the public.

Dark web which is unsearchable, encrypted sites used to avoid tracking. It is signalled by anonymity and encryption.

CRIMES IN RELATION WITH DARK WEB

(A) Weapons, Drugs and Exotic animals

In the hazy corners of the dark web, cryptocurrency transactions fuel this underground economy, empower buyers and sellers to evade traditional law enforcement scrutiny. Dark web provides smoother path for the narcotics, firearms and endangered wildlife. This bulwark the user’s identities and transactions from praying eyes. Dark web facilitates a market place that appear akin to any other shopping site and come up

with a wide variety of illegal goods and services. It shields the unauthorised dealers by shadowing their original identity as it provides a tight secure and encrypted system.

(B)Murder

The assassination market is a website operating as a prediction market that allows individuals to place bets on the contemplate on the possibility of date of death of a specific person. If the actual demise, the better have conferred with a payment. This is a clearly criminal conspiracy commit a murder for the sake of monetary gains. By this website, murder which ia a social evil and opposed to public policy are being promoting. Murder is an offence which is punishable with death but with this website the accused may not be exposed. This website encourages for the actual conduct of murder. Such criminal activities facilitated by the facelessness and encoding of the dark web.

(C)Human Experimentation

The human experimentation website lay claim to bring into open the shocking incidents of medical exploitation, where vulnerable homeless individuals were ostensibly used as subjects for experimentation without their consent. This website ceased to be active after 2011 and put a question mark on the veracity of the websites. The registration of the persons remains unofficial and unregistered. No proper way to reach or survey the documents. The fate of those who were wallowing in these alleged experiments remain unspoken and no record of malignant repercussions.

(D)Theft of intellectual property

The advent of the internet accompanied with multiple blessings and curses. As every coin has two aspects, in the same way internet has its own pros and cons. As it has made a way to create new opportunities for innovation and collaboration, simultaneously it creates a threat to the security and rise to illegal acts. Because of its obliviousness and encrypted features, it encourages the committing of these illegal activities without ant fear and in addition to this, provides a high yielding ground for these activities. Cyber criminals engross in sale, purchase and distribution of shoplifted intellectual property. These cyber criminals make unwarranted use of trademark, patents, copyrights, trade secrets and many more, which are the indispensable assets for any business. Likewise, underground forums and market places offers a plethora of bootlegged software, movies, music or any other digital content, which led to an enormous loss of revenue and earnings to the original creators and producers as well as commit a breach of their rights. This practice not only dashing the real talent to show their skills but also infraction their fundamental right to do business as specified under article 19(1)g of the Indian Constitution. These stolen intellectual properties represent a significant ultimatum to original makers to lower down their prices and also affect their brand esteem. Theft of intellectual property scare off investment in research and development, and consequently hampering long term development and sustainability.

(E)Human trafficking and child pornography

Child pornography is a grievous offence punishable under section 67(b) of the Information Technology Act ,2000 as well as under sections 14 and 15 of the POCSO Act of 2012. One of the ramifications of dark web has been used for trafficking and child pornography. The investigation agencies hunt down the users of dark web child pornography websites. Many things happen in open space and a lot of happens on a cabined space and regarding these closed doors things nobody ready to take initiative in order to curb these evils, child pornography and human trafficking. In this 21st century which is familiar as the digital era, people are still unaware about the dark web. Another key part is that the dark web is getting more indulged with assuring that anyone can be trafficked and payment verification done through crypto currency which bring forth the complex calculations in supressing users Ip addresses. The majority of girls

are involved with trafficking and in exchange they are paying for that with their bodies. There are also different kinds of pimps that can persuade and deceive girls to stay with them. These pimps usually offer to provide shelters, travel and other fancy wishes. There is also a sex tourism, where people can go overseas and exploit children but as usual their identities remain dormant. Trafficking is not only restricted to the widely infamous sex trafficking but slave or labour and child trafficking also takes place. Human trafficking is still on the leap up and expanding and transposing more and more into the online sphere. There is a need to share knowledge with wide audience to raise awareness and education among people on how the technology works.

(F) Drug Smuggling

The darknet is a substantial heaven for drug dealers, who without an attempt at concealment and without any fear sell drugs on the darknet. Now a days, smugglers are paving their ways from street to web as these webs assist them to hide their trace and constitute a challenging task for the police. There is a switching from old way of drug marketing to more of a modern, technological and digital era of selling drugs. There are now around 50 online markets places for illegal drugs. Online drugs smuggling poses eccentric risks to public health and well-being and additionally they are not geographically limited and, in that sense, make within easy reach to those who cannot access to it. The forbidden drug trade on dark web takes place on crypto markets, silk road, established in February 2011, is comprehensively recognised as one of the earliest and most influential crypto market that led to the birth of several online markets dedicated to drug trafficking.

Role of the internet in drug trafficking and drug use is highlighted in the International Narcotics Control Board Annual Report (2023) as follows:

- finds that online drug trafficking has shoot up the availability of drugs on illicit market
- notifies that patient's safety is at risk from banned internet pharmacies selling drugs without a prescription directly to consumer
- highlights the daunting task facing law enforcements authorities to monitor and bring suit against the online drug dealers
- sees right set of circumstances to use internet and social media for drug use prevention campaigns and to improve access to drug treatment services and raising voices concerns about the persistent regional disparities in obtainability and consumption of licit drugs for treatment of pain and sufferings.

In the present framework, various online platforms and social media dispensing a global platform to advertise their products, which is without a hitch accessible to adolescents and children. Recently, enforcement directorate has arrested a resident of Uttarakhand for allegedly operating an international drug trafficking group and booked of Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

(G) Dark web and threat to examination papers

One cannot turn a deaf ear to the most roaring issue which is fronted by the NTA (National Testing Agency) during the conducting of the examinations of NEET and UGC-NET. It poses an intimidation to the future of students were preparing from a long time by renouncing their comfort, sleep and a lot and as a reward for what they get. This is a sensitive matter as this attack on the psychological aspect of an aspirant. The cancellation of examination was not a knee jerk reaction. This unfolding scandal call attention to deep rooted issues in the examination system and underscores the compelling need for reform and accountability.

(H) Terrorism

The origin of the dark web attracted these organisations due to the invisibility, lack of regulation, social

interaction and easy accessibility. These groups using dark web as a vehicle to influence people by over persuasion them and wash their brain. By the application of dark web, these organisations openly post that how to become a terrorist and hide their recognition. The cropping up of terrorism is a world-wide problem and dark net provides a support system to build up their circle and to join their groups, funding, training etc. In 2018, an individual named Ahmed Sarsur was charged for attempting to purchase explosives and hire snipers to assist Syrian terrorists, together with attempting to bestow them financial support all through dark web. With the advent of dark web, cyber terrorism is flourishing globally. The foremost task of the terrorist is to hide their identity which dark net easily facilitates end to end encryption and keep up their anonymity. Terrorists are now using dark web to communicate in safer ways. Transfer of virtual funds is trending and engendering alarming combinations of terrorism and dark web capabilities. These virtual currencies promoting to do lawless trade, extortion, fund raising, unlawful purchase of explosives and weapons etc.

From the above discussion, we can notice that dark web is involving in a requisite role in the spreading of terrorism worldwide which poses a serious threat to the internal and external security globally. At present, India still do not scrutinize it to be illegal but this does not mean anyone can act with their own whims and fancies.

WAY FORWARD

India is the country with second largest internet user base in the world. Therefore, the Government of India should heighten up this issue to set the seal on the security of digital credentials, money transactions etc. The Information Technology Act, 2000 is providing legal recognition to all work done digitally. It is suggested that India should adopt China model to block Tor traffic. The security process should be rearranged and updated. Dark web is a sophisticated anonymous internet network used by both criminals and individuals and is the need of the moment to regulate its usage. It is a constraint and duress to the national security and therefore it is of utmost importance to go to the root of the situations and deal them with iron hands.

CONCLUSION

The unaccredited use of dark net is somewhere related to infringement of right to privacy which is implicit under article 21 of The Constitution of India. To be speak this matter, it will necessitate enhancing and amendments of legal framework, firm cyber security, digital literacy and awareness among people. There should be a balancing between individual rights and freedoms with the preservation of public safety and security. The thing to remember is to always be cautious while visiting unverified sites and before downloading any files or data, should go through its veracity, source and authenticity.

Data security is very important in the digital age where every single information is available by only single click and it is the supreme responsibility of state to investigate properly, make deterrent laws and should take an effective step towards to curb this pressing matter.

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