

Subject: - **Cyber Security Advisory – Play Store Apps Spying on Android Users Using Face Stealer (Advisory No. 40)**

Context. Recently, more than 200 Android apps **masquerading as benign** apps have been observed distributing spyware called 'Facestealer' to gather user credentials and other valuable information.

2. **Categories.** Of the 200 apps; **42 are VPN services, 20x camera and photo editing applications** and **152** are apps masquerading as **fitness and puzzle apps/** others. Though, Google has removed these apps from Play Store; users who might have installed are advised to remove/ uninstall these apps (few examples at **Appendix-I**).

3. **Capabilities.** Capabilities of a face stealer app are as under:-

- a. **Face stealer app** changes its code frequently, thus spawning many variants.
- b. Gathers sensitive data such as **Facebook login credentials**.
- c. In addition to harvesting credentials, the apps are also designed to collect Facebook cookies and **personally identifiable information** associated with a victim's account.

4. **Recommendations.** To avoid falling victim to such scam apps, users are advised to always check **reviews, verify legitimacy of developers** and **avoid downloading** apps from **third-party app stores**.