

## **Income tax department alerts taxpayers to fake mobile apps**

After alerting taxpayers to fraudulent emails promising fake refunds and other services, the income tax (I-T) department has now alerted the public to fake mobile applications that compromise confidential financial information.

The department has warned taxpayers that illegal mobile applications that offer to facilitate filing of income tax returns “may not be according to the department’s data structure” and parameters.

“Filers (people who file tax returns) using them are doing this at their own risk,” the department said in its recent advisory issued to taxpayers.

The fake mobile apps, according to sources, use the name of the income tax department to conceal their fraud identity and require taxpayers to share personal details.

The I-T department, over the last few years, has constantly alerted taxpayers that the department never asks for detailed personal information of any person through emails or any other mode of communication on the Internet.

“The income tax department does not request detailed personal information through email. The I-T department does not send email requesting your PIN numbers, passwords or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts,” the department had earlier issued the disclaimer.

“It is important to inform and alert taxpayers in this age of Internet-based communications. With a spurt been seen in possession of smartphones, such fake applications and solicitations should be guarded against by taxpayers,” a senior I-T department official said.

The department’s technology engineers are also in coordination with the national agency of computer and cyber security sleuths and anti-hacking agencies to weed out these issues, they said.

(Live Mint)