

# US blocks online fraud schemes linked to India

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FTC Chairman Jon Leibowitz, pictured in 2010, said US officials shut down a series of so-called tech support scams, mostly operating from India, which duped consumers into paying to clean their computers of bogus virus infections.

US officials said Wednesday they shut down a series of so-called tech support scams, mostly operating from India, which duped consumers into paying to clean their computers of bogus virus infections.

The [Federal Trade Commission](#) said a US judge has ordered a halt to six "scareware" operations and has frozen their assets following an investigation in cooperation with Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

FTC Chairman Jon Leibowitz said the schemes involved calls to

consumers in English-speaking countries from call centers in India, informing consumers of bogus infections.

The groups also used online ads which informed computer users of the infections, and then sold "fixes" at prices ranging from \$49 to \$450.

"In these outrageous and disturbing cons you get a call from someone pretending to be from a major computer company who dupes you into thinking you have a virus on your computer," Leibowitz told a news conference, which also played an audio tape of one of the calls.

"At one level, it's like a bad Bollywood movie, but at another level it's a ripoff of consumers."

The FTC six firms with deceptive commercial practices and other violations and asked the court to permanently halt the scams and order restitution for consumers.

The FTC cases targeted 14 corporate defendants and 17 individuals in six separate legal filings. The companies included Pecon Software Ltd., Finmaestros LLC, Zeal IT Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Virtual PC Solutions, Lakshmi Infosoul Services Pvt. Ltd., and PCCare247, Inc.

Canada's top telecom regulatory official, Andrea Rosen of the Canadian Radio-Television and [Telecommunications Commission](#), said two related enforcement actions were filed in Canada.

Leibowitz said the FTC was sending a delegation to India to help work with authorities in such cases.

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