

Millions of Instagram users' data leaked, company probing

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Representative Image

New Delhi: After Facebook that is battling several data breaches, its photo-sharing service Instagram saw itself in trouble after personal data of millions of celebrities and influencers were allegedly exposed on its platform in a massive database that was traced to Mumbai-based social media marketing firm Chtrbox.

The database contained 49 million records of several high-profile influencers, including prominent food bloggers, celebrities and other social media influencers, TechCrunch reported it first late Monday.

"Each record contained public data, including bio, profile picture, number of followers they have, location and private contact information," the report claimed.

On Tuesday, an Instagram spokesperson said they were investigating whether a third party improperly stored Instagram data, in violation of its policies.

"It's also not clear whether the phone numbers and emails in Chtrbox's database came from Instagram," an Instagram Spokesperson told IANS.

"Regardless, the possibility of third parties mishandling user data is something we take seriously, which is why we're quickly working to understand what happened," said the company.

According to the report, "Chtrbox pulled the database offline".

Chtrbox is a web development company which pays to social media influencers to promote content.

It describes itself as a platform for brands to collaborate with influential social media characters in India.

Security researcher Anurag Sen had first discovered the database.

In 2017, a bug in Instagram led to the leak of personal details of more than 6 million celebrity users that included Taylor Swift and Kim Kardashian.

The stolen information was later dumped into a database and reportedly sold for \$10 per record via Bitcoins.

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