

# **GUARDIANS OF THE WEB: BUILDING INDIA'S CYBER-TECH LAW ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY**

*Cyber-Tech Courts and Digital Cops: The Web's Unseen Guardian Angels*



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*Cyber-Tech Courts and Digital Cops: The Web's Unseen Guardian Angels*

*By*  
***Dr. S. Jenifer Stella***

**Intellect Jurists Publishers**  
Publishers & Distributors  
(India)

## **SPA Publication Group**

Legal Luminaries Publishers | SPA Publication | Intellect Jurists  
Publication House

### **Guardians of the Web: Building India's Cyber-Tech Law Enforcement Strategy**

*Dr. S. Jenifer Stella*

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First Published: July 2025

ISBN: 978-81-990146-5-7

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MRP - 600/-

*Exclusively Distributed by:*

**SPA Publication Group**

(Publishers & Distributors)

146001, Hoshiarpur, Punjab

Phone : +916284607500

E-mail : [spapublication@gmail.com](mailto:spapublication@gmail.com)

Website: [www.spapublicationgroup.in](http://www.spapublicationgroup.in)

## ***Foreword***

It gives me immense pleasure to write this foreword for the book “*Guardians of the Web: Building India’s Cyber-Tech Law Enforcement Strategy*”, authored by my doctoral student, Dr. S. Jenifer Stella. This book is the outcome of her doctoral research work under my supervision at the *School of Law, Vels Institute of Science Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS)*. The research, originally submitted as a Ph.D. thesis, has now been carefully revised, updated, and transformed into this book, making it accessible to a wider audience of scholars, practitioners, and readers interested in the field of Cyber Law.

The book focuses on one of the most urgent and evolving challenges of the time: cybercrime and the complex role of law enforcement in addressing it. The work presented in this book stands as a testament to Dr. S. Jenifer Stella’s academic rigor, dedication, and scholarly commitment. It demonstrates not only a deep understanding of the subject but also a capacity to critically analyze, interpret, and contribute new insights to the discipline. The book offers a significant contribution to ongoing academic debates. It will undoubtedly serve as a valuable resource for students, researchers, and professionals interested in the field of cyberlaw and its enforcement strategies.

As a guide and mentor, I had the privilege of closely observing the growth of Dr. S. Jenifer Stella as a researcher. This book reflects the maturity of thought, clarity of expression, and methodological soundness that one expects from high-quality academic work. By publishing this research in book form, Dr. S. Jenifer Stella has ensured that the findings are not confined to the walls of a library but can reach and inspire a much larger community. This book is the first of its kind on this subject, and hence it will be beneficial to the teaching community and students.

I congratulate Dr. S. Jenifer Stella on this achievement and commend this book to readers. I am confident that it will spark further inquiry and provide valuable perspectives in the field of Cyber Crime -Law and Governance.

**Dr.S.Ambika Kumari**  
Professor & Dean  
School of Law  
VISTAS

## *Preface*

The journey of this book began with a simple yet vital question: How can India truly safeguard its digital frontiers in a rapidly evolving cyber landscape? As an academician and former legal practitioner, I had the privilege to view India's digital legal ecosystem from both the courtroom and the classroom. While the nation strides confidently towards a digitally empowered future, the dark underbelly of cyberspace—cybercrime—continues to evolve rapidly, exposing critical gaps in our legal and enforcement frameworks. The law often struggles to keep pace with innovation and enforcement mechanisms find themselves racing against invisibility. It is in this context that the book, *Guardians of the Web: Building India's Cyber-Tech Law Enforcement Strategy*, emerged from my Book but has grown into something more personal, a mission to understand how we, as a nation, can build a stronger, smarter and more secure legal framework to protect our digital citizens.

Drawing on the analysis, statutory interpretation, case laws, and comparative legal perspectives from jurisdictions such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Singapore and BRICS nations, this work highlights the systemic gaps that hinder effective enforcement. It examines the triad of cyber governance—legislature, law enforcement and the judiciary—and interrogates their preparedness to meet the complex demands of the digital age.

This book is not merely an academic contribution; it is an attempt to bring the often-overlooked operational challenges of law enforcement to the forefront of policy discourse. Through detailed case studies, practical insights and actionable recommendations, I hope to provide a roadmap for strengthening India's cyberlaw enforcement strategy while also advocating for greater international cooperation and harmonization of legal standards.

I wish to convey my deep appreciation to the law enforcement officials, legal professionals, academicians and Authors whose insights and experiences have shaped this work. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to my Supervisor, Dr. S. Ambika Kumari, Professor and Dean, School of Law, VISTAS, for her constant support, guidance and encouragement and to my mentors, colleagues, students, family and friends who have supported me through every stage of this journey.

My genuine gratitude and heartfelt thanks to Dr. S. Sriman Narayanan, Former Vice Chancellor of VISTAS and Prof. (Dr.) B. Venugopal, Dean, School of Law, Vel Tech

University and Former Chairperson of the School of Political & International Studies and Professor & Head of the Department of Legal Studies at the University of Madras, Chennai, for their unwavering support, guidance and encouragement throughout this journey. Their valuable insights and constant motivation have been instrumental in the successful completion of this work. This book would not have been possible without their continued inspiration and mentorship.

It is my sincere hope that this book will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, legal practitioners, law enforcement personnel and scholars committed to safeguarding cyberspace. The task ahead is challenging, but with informed strategies and collaborative will, we can build resilient systems that uphold the rule of law in the digital realm.

**Dr. S. Jenifer Stella**  
**Assistant Professor & Head (i/c)**  
**School of Law, VISTAS, Chennai**

## *About the Author*



### *Dr. S. Jenifer Stella*

Dr. S. Jenifer Stella is an accomplished legal academic and practitioner, currently serving as Assistant Professor and Head (i/c) of the B.Com. LL.B (Hons.) program at the School of Law, Vels Institute of Science Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS), Chennai with several years of experience in teaching and legal practice, Dr. S. Jenifer Stella brings a unique blend of scholarly insight and courtroom expertise to the field of legal education.

Her academic journey is marked by a specialization in Criminal Law and she holds a Ph.D. in Law from VISTAS, where her Book critically examined the challenges in enforcing cybercrime laws in India. Dr. S. Jenifer Stella has made significant contributions to the legal discourse through numerous national and international publications on cyber law, environmental law and human rights.

Recipient of multiple Faculty Excellence Awards, Dr. S. Jenifer Stella is recognized for her outstanding role in teaching, Book and academic administration. This book, adapted from her doctoral thesis, reflects her deep engagement with contemporary legal challenges and her drive to strengthen the intersection of law, governance and digital society.

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## *Chapter Description*

### **Chapter -1 Introduction**

An introduction chapter, which establishes cybercrimes as a serious threat to the society and emphasizes the need to strengthen not only policy making but also other tenets such as investigation and judicial proceedings, to collectively fight against menace of cybercrimes in India. It contains scope and objectives of the study, Book problem and Book questions that will be addressed and hypothesis formulated for the purpose. Book methodology adopted to conduct the Book work is also elucidated. Further, it includes the review of literature that provides a clear idea of the Book conducted along with the references in the field of cyber space and cybercrimes. Finally, the scheme of the study will guide through the outline of various chapters in a nutshell.

### **Chapter – 2 – Laws Relating to Cyber Crime in India – An Analysis**

This chapter deals with the descriptive analysis on the evolution of technology as a prelude to cyber crime in the world, particularly featuring its adventing India with the rapid increase in the number of cybercrimes which demands the need for an appropriate regulatory framework, the Author conducts an analysis of the existing legislative provisions and policies relating to cybercrimes in India. The crux of the chapter revolves around analyzing India's central cyberspace legislation, the Information Technology Act of 2000 and its amendment in 2008.

### **Chapter – 3 - Challenges Faced By the Law Enforcement Authorities With Regard To Cyber Crimes in India**

In this chapter, the Author examines the role and functions of the law enforcement authorities and highlights the issues and challenges faced by the police, in examining and inspecting the cases related to cybercrimes by tracing the investigation process in its logical sequence and identifying the practical impediments at each node of the investigation, the Author has examined the challenges, keeping in mind the unique nature of cybercrimes. For instance, the anonymity or lack of primary identity in cyber space is a huge advantage for criminals. This is one such major challenge faced by the investigating authorities which interrupts the investigation right from the beginning. In line with this, the Author expands the understanding through the Book and analysis to bring about plausible solutions.

## **Chapter – 4 - Judicial Trending Combating Cybercrimes – An Indian Perspective**

In this chapter the Author highlights the role of judiciary in dealing with cybercrimes. The interpretations made by the courts on the definition of cybercrimes are necessary to differentiate between various cybercrimes which shall further guide the investigating officers and prosecution to carry out their respective task. The Author has analyzed the decisions of courts and has explained how the decisions are helpful to bring the necessary amendments in the existing laws and also to bring new legislation. Judicial responses in dealing with different forms of cybercrimes are analyzed elaborately.

## **Chapter – 5 - A Comparative Analysis of the Laws with Select Countries**

This chapter focuses on a comparative analysis of the laws and key provisions from developed and developing countries that have proven effective in combating the threat of cybercrime. The Author compares the legal frameworks for cyber crimes in the United States and the United Kingdom by looking at their legislative approach. It is a logical start to this particular piece of the study, as these are two nations where almost all technological innovations began, decades ago. The above framework of comparison is further applied to the neighboring country Singapore whose proactive approach to cybercrimes, combining robust legal frameworks, international cooperation and awareness campaigns, has made it a leader in the Asia-Pacific region and a key player in global efforts to combat cyber threats. Additionally, the Author has made a comparative analysis with two of the BRICS countries, Brazil and South Africa, to bring out the picture of how these two countries which are placed on equal footing to India, socio-economically, are dealing with cyber menace in order to level up with the developing nations. These countries are India's contemporaries on the global stage, with shared milestones. Overall, the Author is of the opinion that this comparative study will act as a guide to the enactment of appropriate legislation that will counter the menace of cybercrimes, as it would give insight into the best practices followed in this regard by other nations.

## **Chapter – 6 - International Initiative to Combat Cyber Crimes**

This chapter discusses on the international and regional treaties as well as the Convention on Cybercrime together that aim to strengthen international collaboration, harmonize national legislations and enhance the methods adopted to investigate cybercrimes. Furthermore, it provides guidance to signatories on the measures that must be taken at the national level to combat cybercrimes, including amendments and

additions to both substantive law by establishing new criminal offences to address cybercrimes and criminal procedural law by establishing the procedures for criminal investigations and prosecutions. Moreover, it provides a platform for mutual legal assistance that encourages collaboration in the investigation and prosecution of all the offenses listed by both parties under the national law. This chapter focuses on the key aspects of these transnational arrangements and emphasizes on international initiatives in battling cybercrimes.

## **Chapter – 7 - Conclusion and Suggestion**

The Author has carefully designed the chapters in a way that they are mutually exclusive but collectively exhaustive, thus coming together to give a bigger picture of the phenomenon of cybercrimes. In line with this, an effort is made to shed light on the problems and difficulties that India's existing cyber laws encounter in their fight against cybercrimes and to offer solutions for these problems. All the Book questions have been carefully analyzed. The inferences established and the recommendations put out as a result of this study will significantly impact the key tenets of this field. Based on the detailed study and analysis, the Author would go on to propose concrete suggestions, which can be insightful to not only the policymakers of the country but all key stakeholders involved.

### *Table of Cases*

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Cases Referred</b>	<b>Citation</b>
<b>1</b>	<i>Yahoo Inc. v. Akash Arora &amp;Anr,</i>	<i>1999 IIAD Delhi 229, 78 (1999) DLT285</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>Manish Kathuria v. RituKohli,</i>	<i>C.C. No. 14616/2014</i>
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<b>6</b>	<i>The State of Tamil Nadu v. Suhas Katti</i>	<i>CC No.4680 of2004</i>
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<b>10</b>	<i>Shafi Mohammed v.Stateof Himachal Pradesh,</i>	<i>SLP (Crl.) No. 2302/2017 : (2018) 5 SCC 311</i>
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<b>17.</b>	<i>P.V. Anwarv. P.K. Basheer &amp; others,</i>	<i>2014) 10 SCC 473</i>
<b>18.</b>	<i>Jagjit Singh v. State of Haryana,</i>	<i>Writ Petition (Civil) 287 of2004 (SC)</i>
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<b>21.</b>	<i>Dr.Prakash v. State of Tamil Nadu &amp;Ors,</i>	<i>Writ Petition (crl.) 66of 2002</i>

22.	<i>Arif Azim v. Central Bureau of Investigation,</i>	(2008) 105 DRJ 721: (2008) 150 DLT 769
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26.	<i>Tukaram S.Dighole v. Manikrao Shivaji Kokate</i>	20104 SCC 329: 2010 (2) SCC (Cri) 826:2010 (1) 502
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29.	<i>Mukul v.State of Punjab,</i>	CRR No.570 of 2016 (O&M)
30.	<i>Manik Taneja v. State of Karnataka,</i>	(2015) 7 SCC 423
31.	<i>Raju Thappa v. State of Uttarakhand</i>	CrI. App. 286 of 2011
32.	<i>State v. Yogisha</i>	C.C. NO. 3700686/PS/2009
33.	<i>Ashok Kumar v. Sub-inspector of Police</i>	Bail Application No. 8806 of 2014, Crime No.656/2014 of Vellikulngara Police Station
34.	<i>Shajeeb Khan v. State of Kerala,</i>	B.A. 8074/2015 (Ker HC)
35.	<i>Vyakti Vikash Kendra, India Public Charitable Trust Trustee Mahesh Gupta &amp;ors. V. Jitendra Bagga &amp; Anr.</i>	<i>AIR 201 2Del 180</i>
36.	<i>State v. Nara Singh Bhujang Rao Gude</i>	C.C. No.2029/PW/2016
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39.	<i>Swami Ram Dev &amp;ors. v. Facebook Inc. &amp;ors,</i>	263 (2019) DLT 689
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47.	<i>Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union</i>	521 U.S. 844 (1998)
48.	<i>Miller v. California</i>	413 U.S. 15 (1973)
49.	<i>Zeran v. AmericaOnline,</i>	129 F.3d 327 (4 <sup>th</sup> Cir. 1997)
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52.	<i>Robbins v. Lower Merion School District,</i>	No.2:2010 cv 00665- Document 81 (E.D. Pa. 2010)
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55.	<i>R. v. Gold,</i>	(1988) 1 AC 1063 (HL)
56.	<i>Harrods Ltd v.UK Network Services Ltd,</i>	(1997) 4 EIPRD 106. (1997) EIPRD-106
57.	<i>Public Prosecutor v. Muhammad Nuzaihaan Bin Kamalluddin,</i>	[2000] 1 SLR 34, 3 SLR (653)
58.	<i>Tan Chye Guan Charles v. Public Prosecutor,</i>	2009 SG HC 128, 4 SLR (R) 5
59.	<i>Public Prosecutor v. Lim Yi Jie</i>	2019 SGDC 128, SGDC 128
60.	<i>Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India,</i>	(2017)10 SCC 1
61.	<i>Madhukara v. State of Karnataka,</i>	ILR 2019 Kar 1086: 2018 SCC OnLine Kant 3813
62.	<i>Shankar v. State,</i>	CrI .O.P No. 6628 of 2010

### *List of Abbreviations*

<b>Sr. No</b>	<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Full Form</b>
1.	AI	Artificial Intelligence
2.	ARPANET	Advanced Book Projects Agency Network
3.	ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
4.	ASLOM	Asian Senior Law Officials Meeting
5.	BIOS	Basic Input/ Output System
6.	BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
7.	CA	Certifying Authority
8.	CAF	Common Application Form
9.	CAN-SPAM	Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing
10.	CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
11.	CCA	Controller of Certifying Authorities
12.	CDA	Communication Decency Act
13.	CERT-IN	Indian-Computer Emergency Response Team
14.	CFAA	Computer Fraud and Abuse Act
15.	CRPC	The Code of Criminal Procedure
16.	CSA	Computer Security Act
17.	DEC	Digital Evidence Collection
18.	DOS	Denial of Service
19.	DPDPA	Digital Personal Data Protection Act
20.	DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police
21.	ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
22.	ECT	Electronic Communications and Transactions Act
23.	EC3	European Cybercrime Centre
24.	ESN	Electronic Service Number
25.	FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation

26.	<b>FSL</b>	Forensic Science Laboratory
27.	<b>GCI</b>	Global Cyber Security Index
28.	<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation
29.	<b>GOI</b>	Government of India
30.	<b>IAMAI</b>	Internet and Mobile Association of India
31.	<b>IANA</b>	Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
32.	<b>ICANN</b>	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
33.	<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
34.	<b>IEA</b>	Indian Evidence Act
35.	<b>IMEI</b>	International Mobile Equipment Identity
36.	<b>INTERPOL</b>	International Criminal Police Organization
37.	<b>IO</b>	Investigation Officer
38.	<b>IP</b>	Internet Protocol
39.	<b>IPC</b>	Indian Penal Code
40.	<b>ISP</b>	Internet Service Provider
41.	<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
42.	<b>ITAA</b>	Information Technology (Amendment) Act
43.	<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunication Union
44.	<b>NCRB</b>	National Crime Records Bureau
45.	<b>NCTT</b>	National Cybercrime Training Centre
46.	<b>NSA</b>	National Security Agency
47.	<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
48.	<b>PCA</b>	Prevention of Corruption Act
49.	<b>PHA</b>	Protection from Harassment Act (UK)
50.	<b>POCSO</b>	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
51.	<b>POHA</b>	Protection from Harassment Act (Singapore)
52.	<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
53.	<b>SAARC</b>	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
54.	<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
55.	<b>SCO</b>	Shanghai Cooperation Organization

<b>56.</b>	<b>SCO-RATS</b>	Shanghai Cooperation Organization- Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure
<b>57.</b>	<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>58.</b>	<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>59.</b>	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>60.</b>	<b>UNCITRAL</b>	United Nations Commission On International Trade Law
<b>61.</b>	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>62.</b>	<b>UNGA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>63.</b>	<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>64.</b>	<b>UNTOC</b>	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
<b>65.</b>	<b>US</b>	United States
<b>66.</b>	<b>VPN</b>	Virtual Private Network

**To my beloved parents**  
**Mr.T.Sebasteen, Dy SP (Rtd.) &Mrs.Gladys**  
**D' D'Souza**



# COMMENCEMENT