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 - OuizTime:
 - Are you Ready!
- Read the Below Instructions Carefully:
 - Please Rate!
- Mains Questions:
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 - Relevance to the UPSC Prelims and Mains syllabus under the following topics:

• Prelims:

•

Mains:

Summary:

- Campaign Launch: The Government of India and Meta have launched the "Scam se Bacho" campaign to combat online scams and cyber frauds.
- **Objectives:** The campaign aims to educate citizens about digital threats, promote digital literacy, and leverage Meta's technology to protect users.
- Cybersecurity Challenges: India faces significant cybersecurity challenges, including phishing attacks, identity theft, and financial frauds.
- Government and Meta's Role: The initiative involves multiple ministries and Meta's efforts to remove fake accounts, provide security tools, and spread awareness.

What is the news?

• The digital world, with all its conveniences, has unfortunately become a breeding ground for online scams and cyber frauds. Recognizing the growing threat posed by cybercriminals, the Government of India has taken a decisive step to protect its citizens by collaborating with Meta (formerly Facebook) to launch the "Scam se Bacho" campaign.

• The initiative was inaugurated by Sh. Sanjay Jaju, Secretary of Information and Broadcasting, on October 18, 2024, in New Delhi, marking a significant milestone in India's fight against cybercrime.

Rising Need for Cybersecurity in India

• India's internet ecosystem has expanded rapidly under the Digital India initiative, connecting over 900 million users across the country. The surge in online activity, while promising in terms of economic growth and connectivity, has also increased the vulnerability of individuals to online scams.

Cybercrime on the Rise:

■ The rise of internet penetration has been paralleled by an alarming increase in cyber frauds. In 2023 alone, India reported over 1.1 million cases of cyber fraud, ranging from phishing attacks, financial frauds, identity theft, and fake social media accounts. Many of

these crimes have targeted vulnerable sections of society, often through seemingly innocent interactions online.

The "Scam se Bacho" Initiative: A Strategic Collaboration

The "Scam se Bacho" campaign is a joint effort between the Government of India and Meta, with support from various key ministries including:

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB)
- The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- The goal is to strengthen India's defenses against online scams by raising awareness and promoting a safer digital experience for all citizens.

Objectives of the "Scam Se Bacho" Campaign

Combat Cybercrime:

• The campaign's primary focus is to prevent online scams and cyber frauds by educating citizens about the different types of digital threats and how to identify them. The campaign aims to reach millions of internet users, making them more aware of how to protect their online presence.

Promote Digital Literacy:

• One of the most effective ways to fight cybercrime is by empowering citizens with knowledge. The initiative aims to spread awareness about digital safety, highlighting the importance of secure browsing, detecting fake websites, recognizing phishing attempts, and securing social media profiles.

Leverage Technology to Protect Users:

• Meta's advanced technology will be used to detect and remove fake accounts and phishing links on its platform. The campaign will also introduce tools and resources to help users protect themselves online.

Challenges of Cybersecurity in India

As India's digital landscape grows, so do the challenges:

• Phishing Attacks: Cybercriminals often lure users into giving up sensitive information through fake

websites or emails that look legitimate.

- Identity Theft: Scammers create fake profiles to impersonate individuals and commit fraud, particularly in social media spaces.
- Financial Frauds: People are often tricked into revealing bank account details or making online payments through fake schemes or false job offers.
- The campaign aims to address these risks head-on by educating users about the dangers lurking online and how to avoid them.

Government's Commitment to Digital Safety

• During the campaign launch, Sh. Sanjay Jaju highlighted the government's whole-of-government approach to fostering a culture of digital safety. The Prime Minister's call for enhanced digital literacy and stronger cybersecurity measures is echoed in this initiative, which promotes proactive vigilance among citizens.

Meta's Role in Enhancing Online Safety

-Meta, a global leader in social media and online platforms, has been at the forefront of cybersecurity efforts. Through this campaign, Meta will:

- Remove Fake Accounts: By identifying and removing fake accounts, Meta aims to protect users from identity theft and impersonation scams.
- Provide Tools for Security: Meta will introduce new tools that allow users to easily report suspicious activities and better secure their accounts.
- Spread Awareness: Meta will use its platform to run educational campaigns that inform users about common online scams and how to avoid falling victim to them.

The Importance of Digital Awareness

One of the critical pillars of this campaign is empowering individuals with knowledge. As cybercriminals develop more sophisticated methods, awareness becomes the most powerful tool to protect citizens. The campaign will focus on:

- Identifying Phishing Links: Users will be educated about how to detect malicious websites and links.
- Safe Social Media Practices: Tips on how to keep personal information secure and avoid oversharing on social media platforms will be shared widely.
- Recognizing Financial Fraud: The campaign will teach citizens to be cautious when sharing banking details or making payments online.

A Nationwide Movement for Cyber Safety

• The "Scam se Bacho" campaign aspires to be more than just a temporary awareness drive. It seeks to create a national movement where digital safety is embedded in the daily lives of Indian citizens. By instilling good digital habits, the initiative aims to reduce the risk of online frauds in the long term.

Call to Action: Stay Vigilant and Informed

- The campaign encourages all citizens to stay vigilant and informed in their online activities. Some practical tips that users should keep in mind include:
 - Always check the URL of websites before entering sensitive information.
 - Be cautious of unsolicited messages or emails that ask for personal information.
 - Use strong, unique passwords for online accounts and enable two-factor authentication.
 - Report suspicious activities to the relevant authorities or platforms.
- By adopting these practices, users can protect themselves from falling victim to scams and ensure their digital interactions remain safe.

Conclusion: A Safer Digital India

- The "Scam se Bacho" campaign is a powerful step towards creating a safer digital environment for all Indians. Through collaboration between the government and Meta, this initiative not only addresses immediate cybersecurity threats but also builds a long-term culture of digital literacy and vigilance.
- For UPSC aspirants, this initiative reflects key governance and public policy strategies in tackling modern-day challenges like cybercrime. It offers valuable insights into how government-private partnerships can work to promote public welfare in the digital age.

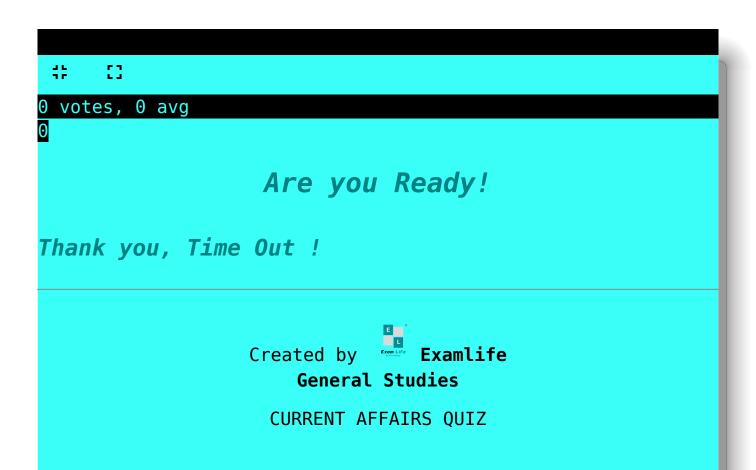
Key Takeaways for UPSC Aspirants

- Governance and Cybersecurity: Understanding how the government collaborates with the private sector to combat cybercrime.
- Digital India: Exploring how the Digital India initiative is evolving to ensure the safety and security of its citizens.
- Public Awareness Campaigns: The role of public awareness campaigns in influencing social behavior and enhancing national security.
- Technology and Governance: Insights into how modern technology is used to promote safety and protect citizens from evolving threats in cyberspace.
- The "Scam se Bacho" campaign is not just an effort

to stop scams—it's a movement towards a digitally secure future for India, making it an essential topic for aspirants to study for both Prelims and Mains in the UPSC examination.



QuizTime:



Read the Below Instructions Carefully:

- Click on Start Quiz
- Attempt all questions (You can attempt or leave)
- After Attempting Last Question.
- Enter Name & Email
- Click on Check Result
- Scroll down Check out Solutions too.Thank you.



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Category: General Studies

How does the "Scam se Bacho" campaign promote proactive cybersecurity measures among Indian citizens?

- By offering free cybersecurity software to all internet users
- Through awareness campaigns, digital literacy programs, and encouraging vigilance in online activities
- By creating a legal framework to ban unsafe online services
- By mandating two-factor authentication for all government websites

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Category: General Studies

In the context of the "Scam se Bacho" campaign, what role does digital literacy play in combating online fraud?

- Increasing revenue for social media platforms
- Empowering citizens to recognize and avoid online scams
- Establishing a global cybersecurity standard
- Reducing the cost of internet services in rural areas

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Category: General Studies

Which of the following ministries is NOT directly involved in the "Scam se Bacho" campaign?

- O Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
- O Ministry of Finance (MoF)
- O Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB)

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Category: General Studies

The "Scam se Bacho" campaign, launched by the Indian government and Meta, aims to address which of the following issues?

- Reducing unemployment through digital education
- Combating cyber fraud and online scams
- Enhancing digital governance for small businesses
- Promoting digital entrepreneurship and startups

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Category: General Studies
What is the primary role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in addressing cybersecurity challenges, as seen in initiatives like "Scam se Bacho"?
 Fostering economic growth by developing new technologies
 Leveraging technological expertise from private companies while ensuring government oversight
\circ Reducing digital divide by providing internet access to rural areas
 Promoting free online services to increase internet usage
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Mains Questions:



Question 1:

Examine the role of public-private partnerships in addressing cybersecurity challenges in India. Discuss with reference to recent initiatives. (250 Words)

Model Answer:

• Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have emerged as a crucial mechanism in addressing cybersecurity challenges, where the government collaborates with private entities to leverage technology, expertise, and resources. Given the rapid digitization of India's economy and the associated rise in cyber threats, the need for effective partnerships in cybersecurity has become imperative.

Rising Cybersecurity Challenges:

• India's digital landscape has grown exponentially, especially with over 900 million internet users. However, this growth has brought an increase in cybercrimes, including phishing, identity theft, and financial fraud.

In 2023, India reported over 1.1 million cyber fraud cases, showcasing the vulnerability of the nation's digital infrastructure.

Role of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

- Technological Expertise: Private companies like Meta, with their global technological expertise, play a critical role in safeguarding digital spaces. Their ability to develop advanced tools and technologies, such as scam detection algorithms, strengthens the country's cybersecurity defenses.
- Government Support: The government, through various ministries (MeitY, MHA, I4C), ensures regulatory backing and provides frameworks for these partnerships. Initiatives like Digital India foster a conducive environment for these collaborations to thrive.
- Awareness Campaigns: The recent "Scam se Bacho" initiative between Meta and the Government of India is a prime example of how partnerships can promote digital literacy and awareness among citizens, helping them protect themselves from online fraud.
- National Security: In critical areas like defense and national security, PPPs have led to the development of sophisticated cybersecurity solutions. The synergy between private innovation and government oversight ensures that India remains resilient in the face of evolving cyber

threats.

Case Study — "Scam se Bacho" Campaign:

- Launched in October 2024, this initiative targets online scams and frauds, leveraging Meta's expertise in managing online platforms and the government's regulatory reach.
- By focusing on citizen awareness, digital literacy, and proactive safety measures, the campaign showcases how PPPs can address largescale cybersecurity challenges, impacting millions of internet users.

Public-private partnerships are instrumental in addressing India's growing cybersecurity concerns. By pooling resources and expertise, both sectors can create a robust digital ecosystem where citizens are better protected. The "Scam se Bacho" campaign demonstrates the potential of such collaborations to safeguard national interests and promote digital safety.

Question 2:

Discuss the significance of digital literacy and awareness campaigns in tackling online frauds and scams. Highlight recent initiatives in India that focus on empowering citizens in the digital space. (250 Words)

Model Answer:

• Digital literacy and awareness are essential in today's world where the majority of services, including banking, education, and healthcare, have shifted online. As the number of cybercrimes increases, educating citizens on how to protect themselves from digital fraud has become a priority for governments globally, including India.

Importance of Digital Literacy:

- Identification of Threats: Digital literacy enables citizens to recognize and respond to online threats like phishing emails, fake websites, and financial fraud. Understanding cybersecurity basics can significantly reduce the risk of falling prey to scams.
- Safe Online Practices: Teaching citizens to implement safe browsing practices, such as using strong passwords, enabling two-factor authentication, and avoiding suspicious links, is critical for minimizing vulnerabilities.
- Empowerment: Awareness campaigns empower individuals to take control of their digital identities, making them less susceptible to online fraud.

The Growing Threat of Online Scams:

- Cybercriminals exploit the lack of awareness among internet users, especially in countries like India, where digital infrastructure is rapidly expanding. The rise in financial inclusion through platforms like UPI and digital banking has also increased the risk of cyber fraud.
- India reported over 1.1 million cyber fraud cases in 2023, highlighting the urgent need for large-

scale awareness and literacy campaigns.

Recent Initiatives in India:

"Scam se Bacho" Campaign:

- Launched in collaboration with Meta and the Indian government, this campaign focuses on educating citizens about online scams and frauds. It aims to raise awareness of digital safety through various mediums, including social media and public messaging, ensuring that people are better equipped to deal with cyber threats.
- The initiative also promotes the safe use of technology by teaching users how to recognize phishing attempts, secure their accounts, and report suspicious activities.

Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative:

• A government-led campaign, focusing on cybersecurity awareness and training for government officials and citizens. It emphasizes safe digital practices and teaches users how to protect their devices from malware and cyberattacks.

Challenges and Way Forward:

- Digital Divide: Despite these initiatives, a significant portion of India's population lacks access to digital literacy programs, particularly in rural areas. Addressing this divide is essential for comprehensive national security in the digital age.
- Public-Private Collaborations: Expanding partnerships between the government and technology companies, similar to the "Scam se Bacho" initiative, can enhance the reach and

effectiveness of such campaigns.

Digital literacy and awareness campaigns are critical tools in combating the growing menace of online scams and frauds. Initiatives like "Scam se Bacho" demonstrate how education, technology, and community engagement can collectively empower citizens to navigate the digital space safely. Going forward, sustained efforts in this direction will be crucial to ensuring a digitally secure future for all.

Remember: These are just sample answers. It's important to further research and refine your responses based on your own understanding and perspective. Read entire UPSC Current Affairs.

Relevance to the UPSC Prelims and Mains syllabus under the following topics:



Prelims:

• General Studies Paper I:General Studies Paper I (Current Events of National and International Importance):The "Scam se Bacho" campaign is a current event aimed at addressing cybercrime and online fraud, a pressing issue in today's

digital age. Questions in prelims can revolve around this initiative, its key objectives, and the role of government and private partnerships (e.g., Meta). General Studies Paper I (Indian Polity and Governance): Cybersecurity and Digital Governance: Awareness about government schemes and measures to protect digital infrastructure is relevant. The initiative involves ministries like Meity, MHA, and I4C, which ties into topics related to governance.

Mains:

• General Studies Paper II (Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International Relations): Governance and Cybersecurity: The campaign reflects government efforts to strengthen cybersecurity through awareness and protection of citizens in the digital space. It also highlights the role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in governance.

Government Policies and Interventions: The role of ministries like MeitY and I4C in implementing strategies to combat cybercrime is part of governance initiatives to ensure digital safety.

• General Studies Paper III (Technology, Economic Development, Bio-diversity, Environment, Security, and Disaster Management): Cybersecurity and Cyber Threats: This topic is directly relevant under the theme of Security, where issues related to online scams, cyber frauds, and the role of government initiatives to protect digital infrastructure can be discussed.

Role of Technology in Internal Security: The increasing reliance on digital platforms has made cybersecurity a significant aspect of internal security, and the campaign represents a step toward addressing this challenge.

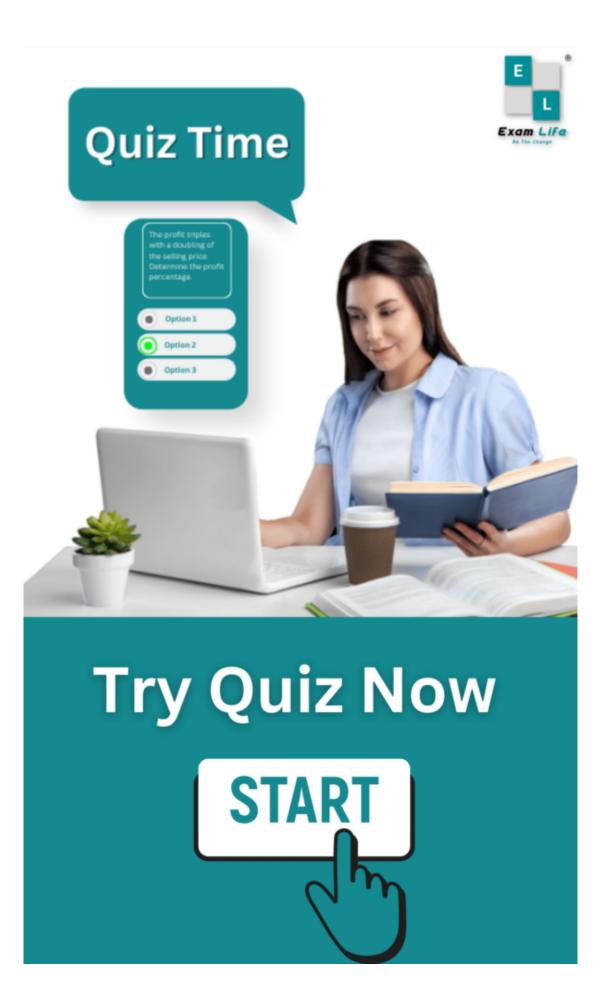
- Essay Paper: Themes on Cybersecurity: Topics around cybersecurity, digital literacy, the role of technology in governance, and public-private partnerships for digital safety could be asked in essays.
- Ethics, Integrity, and Aptitude (GS Paper IV): Ethics in Technology Usage: Issues like online fraud and scams can be tied to ethical concerns related to the misuse of technology, personal data security, and the responsibilities of both governments and corporations to protect citizens from such crimes.
- Relevance in Answer Writing:
- Case Study Usage: This campaign could be cited as an example of government efforts to increase awareness and foster collaboration between the state and private sector to tackle contemporary issues, particularly related to cybersecurity.



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