Defence & Security · GS - III

The rise of 'digital arrest' scams highlights the growing vulnerability of senior citizens in India's digital economy. Examine the role of community-based initiatives in preventing cyber fraud. Suggest a comprehensive strategy to strengthen cyber awareness and victim protection.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 23/11/2026	GS - III	Defence & Security

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Digital arrest scams, senior citizen vulnerability, social capital, community policing, cyber awareness, financial fraud, reporting mechanisms, institutional coordination

Model Answer

Introduction

Digital arrest scams involve criminals impersonating law-enforcement officials and using threats of fabricated criminal proceedings to extort money. Senior citizens are particularly vulnerable because of intimidation, limited digital awareness and social isolation. Community initiatives such as Community Shield demonstrate the preventive value of collective vigilance.

Role of Community-Based Initiatives

1. **Early warning systems:** Residents can promptly alert neighbours about suspicious calls, messages and fraudulent demands.

2. **Social support:** Trusted neighbours can help senior citizens verify suspicious communications before they take financial decisions.

3. **Digital awareness:** Community meetings can explain common fraud techniques, safe digital practices and official reporting channels.

4. **Reducing isolation:** Regular interaction with elderly residents creates support networks and reduces their vulnerability to intimidation.

5. **Community policing:** Resident welfare associations can coordinate with local police and cybercrime units to report emerging fraud patterns.

Comprehensive Strategy for Prevention

1. **Digital literacy:** Organise targeted awareness programmes for senior citizens on impersonation scams, OTP fraud and suspicious financial requests.

2. **Institutional response:** Strengthen coordination among banks, telecom operators, police and cybercrime authorities for rapid intervention.

3. **Financial safeguards:** Encourage transaction alerts, appropriate account limits and immediate reporting of suspicious transfers.

4. **Accessible reporting:** Promote the national cybercrime helpline 1930 and the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.

5. **Family participation:** Encourage regular communication between elderly people and trusted family members regarding suspicious calls and financial demands.

6. **Law enforcement:** Improve investigation, digital evidence collection and action against organised cybercrime networks.

Conclusion

Cybersecurity is not merely an individual responsibility; it is also a collective social responsibility. Community vigilance, digital literacy and responsive institutions can create a safer digital environment for senior citizens.

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