

PRESS RELEASE

DSCI and Microsoft roll out CyberShikshaa

A program to foster talent and build a pool of women cybersecurity professionals

New Delhi, Sep 24, 2018: Underlining the need to bolster the cybersecurity ecosystem in the country, Microsoft India and the Data Security Council of India (DSCI) have launched the CyberShikshaa, a 3-year program to create a robust pool of skilled women professionals in the country. Supported by the Ministry of Information Technology (MeitY)'s Information Security Education & Awareness (ISEA), CyberShikshaa recognizes the growing potential of cybersecurity as a sunrise segment and the need for a large base of diverse industry ready talent.

The program was launched in New Delhi today in the presence of **Shri Ajay Prakash Sawhney**, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & IT, **Ms. Rama Vedashree**, CEO, Data Security Council of India and **Mr. Anant Maheshwari**, President Microsoft India.

As part of CyberShikshaa, 1000 women from underserved communities will be trained in ten locations across the country and offered employment opportunities. CyberShikshaa is open to women science graduates between the age of 20-27 years. The first phase of the program will be rolled out across Noida, Patna, Hyderabad and Mohali starting today.

Inaugurating the program, **Shri Ajay Prakash Sawhney, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & IT**, said, *"Bridging the skill gap in the niche domain of Cybersecurity is a national imperative. There has been an increased participation from industry, government and academia to develop cybersecurity skills required for India. This program embarked upon by DSCI and Microsoft is aligned with Ministry's ISEA program and will not only provide impetus to bridging the skill gap but will also help draw more women into Cybersecurity domain."*

Speaking of the initiative, **Mr. Anant Maheshwari, President, Microsoft India**, said, *"As India leapfrogs into the next phase of growth, we see a multi-fold growth of digital assets. This increases the need for an enhanced cybersecurity infrastructure and advanced security solutions. India is also fast emerging as a prime destination for offshore cybersecurity R&D and security operations centers. This will lead to the next wave of jobs - one we must be ready for with a skilled workforce. CyberShikshaa is the first step towards this. We believe this is the beginning of a movement, one that we encourage all stakeholders to join in."*

"CyberShikshaa is significant in more ways than one. It will empower women technologists, ensure a growth driven livelihood for them and increase the participation of women in the industry," he added.

According to NASSCOM, the strength of the women workforce in the IT-ITeS industry currently stands at 34%. CyberShikshaa will develop a comprehensive ecosystem and evangelize women to harness the opportunities of cybersecurity as a career. In addition to establishing a strong training network with competent trainers and infrastructure, it will work to facilitate partnerships amongst government, industry and academia.

Speaking of the association **Ms. Rama Vedashree, CEO, Data Security Council of India** said, *Cybersecurity skills development and enabling growth opportunities to women talent in cybersecurity domain is a key imperative for government and industry. DSCI is pleased to partner with Microsoft in developing industry ready women cybersecurity professionals through the CyberShikshaa program."*

The CyberShikshaa curriculum will comprise an interactive, 4-month training course with a combination of theory, case studies and practical hands on projects managed by a group of training partners led by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). It will also include mentoring sessions and workshops with industry leaders; soft skills training and technical sessions by Microsoft employee volunteers. Campus interviews will be organized for students on successful completion of the course.

CyberShikshaa locations:
Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi
- NCR, Gujarat, Karnataka,
Maharashtra, Madhya
Pradesh, Meghalaya.
Rajasthan and
Telangana

CyberShikshaa is part of Microsoft's commitment to providing the underprivileged with the right skills for sustainable livelihood options in a technology driven world. The company's skill development efforts focus on:

- Education and skilling of undeserved youth, children, and women
- Coding and computer science skilling for employment
- Technology-enabled learning for inclusion of youth with disabilities

Till date, Microsoft has helped skill around 700,000 young people from rural, tribal and migrant communities of whom more than 400,000 have been placed in jobs.

About DSCI

Data Security Council of India (DSCI) is a premier industry body on data protection in India, setup by NASSCOM®, committed to making the cyberspace safe, secure and trusted by establishing best practices, standards and initiatives in cyber security and privacy. DSCI brings together governments and their agencies, industry sectors including IT-BPM, BFSI, Telecom, industry associations, data protection authorities and think tanks for public advocacy, thought leadership, capacity building and outreach initiatives.

www.dsci.in

About Microsoft India

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. Microsoft set up its India operations in 1990. Today, Microsoft entities in India have over 8,000 employees, engaged in sales and marketing, research and development and customer services and support, across 11 Indian cities - Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Pune. Microsoft offers its global cloud services from local data centers to accelerate digital transformation across Indian start-ups, businesses, and government agencies. In 2016, Microsoft opened one of its eight Cyber Security Engagement Centers in the country, to address security needs of both public and private sectors.

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