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## Quick Heal partner with BIRD, Lucknow to revolutionise cybersecurity in rural finance

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In a transformative move to strengthen cybersecurity within Rural Financial Institutions (RFIs) across India, Quick Heal Technologies Limited has announced a strategic partnership with the Bankers Institute of Rural Development (BIRD), Lucknow. The collaboration was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on January 13, 2025, by Vishal Salvi, Chief Executive Officer of Quick Heal, and Nirupam Mehrotra, Director of BIRD Lucknow. This partnership seeks to tackle the escalating cybersecurity risks within one of the most vulnerable financial sectors— rural finance— and create a robust digital ecosystem that promotes secure financial inclusion.

Drawing on Quick Heal’s three decades of cybersecurity expertise and its leadership in malware analysis through India’s largest facility, Seqrite Labs, the partnership will focus on key initiatives to secure RFIs. The collaboration will see the establishment of an advanced Cybersecurity Lab at BIRD Lucknow, specifically designed for hands-on training and skill development. Both organisations will conduct joint research to assess the adoption of cybersecurity measures, analyse the technological infrastructure of RFIs, and identify the skill gaps within these institutions. Together, they will develop specialised training modules and organise workshops aimed at promoting best practices in cyber hygiene and fraud prevention. Additionally, the partnership will facilitate policy advocacy, conduct cyber drills to assess RFI preparedness against emerging threats and create a knowledge exchange platform to connect experts and stakeholders within the cybersecurity and rural finance sectors.

**Vishal Salvi, CEO, Quick Heal** Technologies Limited, shared, “As digital transformation takes root in rural India, we must build a strong foundation of cybersecurity to safeguard financial institutions. Although the amounts involved may be relatively small, the impact of a breach is significant. Therefore, our partnership with BIRD represents a pivotal moment in securing rural finance. By combining Quick Heal’s decades of expertise in protecting organisations from cyber threats with BIRD’s deep-

rooted understanding of rural finance, we are setting the stage for a more resilient financial system. Through initiatives like research studies, cybersecurity labs, and training programs, we aim to equip RFIs with the necessary tools, strategies, and knowledge to thrive in the digital age, ensuring cybersecurity becomes a fundamental pillar of financial inclusion.”

**Nirupam Mehrotra, Director of BIRD** Lucknow, added, “Our collaboration with Quick Heal Technologies is a critical milestone in strengthening the digital infrastructure of Rural Financial Institutions. With Quick Heal’s unparalleled cybersecurity expertise, we will enhance the security frameworks of RFIs and integrate cutting-edge practices into our training and policy development. The Cybersecurity Lab, cyber drills, and specialised training programs are just a few of the key components of this partnership. Together, we are preparing RFIs to face the future confidently, safeguarding rural communities’ financial interests and contributing to the broader goal of rural development.”

The MoU, which will remain in effect for three years, outlines the shared commitment of both organisations to develop and implement programs that address the cybersecurity needs of RFIs. This partnership reinforces Quick Heal’s dedication to creating a secure digital environment for all, while supporting BIRD’s mission to strengthen the financial institutions that serve rural India.