**Syllabus subtopic:** Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security; money-laundering and its prevention

**News:** A UN committee has passed a Russian-led resolution on a global cybercrime treaty, despite reservations that it could be used to justify shutting down civil society in repressive countries.

**Prelims focus:** About Budapest Convention on Cybercrime

**Mains focus:** Reasons for India not signing the convention.

**Context:**

- The proposed treaty has been framed to serve as an alternative to the US-led Budapest Convention.
- The resolution was sponsored by China, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Syria, among others, and will set up an “Open Ended Working Group” to examine cybercrime.

**About Budapest convention**

- **Convention** means an agreement signed between countries of a particular matter. There are many conventions between many countries in the world out of which one is Budapest Convention.
- **The Convention on Cybercrime, also known as the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime or the Budapest Convention, is the first international treaty seeking to address Internet and computer crime** by harmonizing national laws, improving investigative techniques, and increasing cooperation among nations.
- It was drawn up by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, with the active participation of the Council of Europe’s observer states Canada, Japan, South Africa and the United States.
- It is open for ratification even to states that are not members of the Council of Europe.
- As of September 2019, 64 states have ratified the convention.

**Aim:**

- The Budapest Convention provides for the criminalisation of conduct, ranging from illegal access, data and systems interference to computer-related fraud and child pornography, procedural law tools to make investigation of cybercrime and securing of e-evidence in relation to any crime more effective, and international police and judicial cooperation on cybercrime and e-evidence.
India’s concerns over signing of this agreement:

- India did not participate in the negotiation of the Convention and thus is worried about it.
- The Convention — through its **Article 32b** — allows for transborder access to data and thus infringes on national sovereignty.
- The regime of the Convention is not effective, “the promise of cooperation not firm enough,” or that there are grounds for refusal to cooperate.

Why India should join?

- India maintained its status as a non member of the Europe led Budapest Convention, even as it voted in favour of Russian-led UN resolution to set up a separate convention.

- The challenges currently being addressed by the parties to the Convention through the Cybercrime Convention Committee are highly relevant also for India;
- The Convention offers a legal basis and practical framework for police-to-police and judicial cooperation on cybercrime and e-evidence with an increasing number of other parties. This framework is constantly under review to make it more effective
- As the Convention evolves, India would be able to contribute to shaping future solutions if it were a party;
- India would become a priority country for capacity-building.