Workshop on "Combating Cyber Crimes: Information Security and Digital Forensics"

A one-day workshop was organized by Cyber Society of India in association with Div IV of Computer Society of India, IEEE Computer Society, Madras Chapter and ISACA Madras Chapter at University of Madras on 2nd Jul 2010 Shri. R. Ramamurthy , Chairman of CySI welcomed the participants. Highlighting the coverage areas in the workshop, he spoke about the activities of CySI in its objectives of increasing awareness about cyber crimes.

Dr. R. Thilagaraj, Head, Dept of Criminology, University of Madras inaugurating the workshop spoke on the present day scenario in criminology especially cyber criminology and lauded the efforts of NGO's like CySI touching upon the areas where academic institutions can play a greater role. He underlined the increasing interest shown by youngsters in the area of data security as seen by the increased response to courses like M.Sc. Cyber Forensics offered by Madras University.

Mr. H.R. Mohan, Chairman, CSI Div IV & IEEE CS in his brief address stressed the need for creating awareness on cyber crimes in the context of increased use of Internet and broadband services for various sensitive activities such as banking, online shopping etc.,

Shri R Vittal Raj, the noted Information Security consultant gave an excellent presentation on information security, the threats and vulnerabilities. Highlighting the challenges of today in the area of information security and the threats of botnets and zombies, he recommended a cautious approach for all the netizens especially in the light of dangers posed by professional hackers and cyber attackers organized as hackers' groups and other unorganized forums.

This session was followed by a panel discussion with Dr. M. Sudhakar, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Cyber Crime Cell, Chennai, Shri. A. Kandasamy, Asst Commissioner of Police, Bank Fraud Cell, Shri. R. Charuhasan, Advocate as panelists. Shri Ramamurthy moderated the panel. Dr. Sudhakar initiated the discussion citing instances from his vast experience in the areas of cyber crime investigation. Shri. Kandasamy quoted instances of credit card frauds, skimming frauds and the role of banks, highlighting the responsibilities of bank personnel in combating card related frauds. Shri. Charuhasan spoke about the need to strengthen the existing laws especially the provisions of IT Act to deal firmly with cyber offences. Questions fielded by participants were replied in an enthusiastic manner by Dr. Sudhakar. The session was very lively with active participation from everyone.

Shri. V. Rajendran, Secretary of CySI spoke on the relevance of IT Act and the evidentiary mechanism dealt with in it. He described the various provisions of IT Act as amended in 2008 especially in areas dealing with maintenance of e-records and provisions relating to submission of e-records as evidences.

In the post lunch session, Smt. Kalavathy of State Forensics Dept., spoke about the digital forensics, computer hard-disk, mobile phone etc narrating instances of how forensics evidences are dealt with. Shri.Venkatesan of Lab Systems India Pvt Ltd, the main sponsors of the event, gave an interesting and useful lecture on the importance of hard-disk evidence, techniques of capturing evidences. Drawing from his rich experience of dealing with different cyber crimes and computer related offences, he spoke about the significance of forensics tools and the evidentiary values from the tools. Shri. Yadav, also from Lab Systems, gave a vivid presentation of their forensic tool EnCase and its usefulness in the police departments throughout the country and abroad too.

Shri. S.N. Rvichandran from CySI, Coimbatore shared his experiences in investigating and assisting the police in the area of cyber crime, especially in bank fraud cases. He highlighted the practical problems faced by the investigators right from the stage of enquiry, FIR and until the stage of final conviction.

Participants enquired about the effectiveness of various tools like EnCase in the field of cyber crime investigations and evidences. At the end of the workshop, a technical demo was also arranged.

Report by Mr. V. Rajendran, Secy, CySI & Mr. H.R. Mohan, Chair, Div IV, CSI & IEEE CS