

## Role of cyber security stressed

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KOCHI: The country is trying to connect all its knowledge institutions and has embarked on major plans on e-Governance across multiple ministries and departments. The flip side to this development is the security threat to the entire cyber infrastructure, said R Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India. Speaking at the inaugural function of the Indo-US workshop on Cyber Security organised by the Cyber Security Centre of the Amrita Vishwavidyapeetham and IUSSTF, he said that cyber security has to be achieved by design. There is a need for security policy, security architecture, access controls, authentication technologies and encryption, when one talks about designing a cyber security system.

When one talks about topics like cyber forensics and cyber crime, the question is who is smarter than whom? The attacker or the defender. The cyber forensic expert and the cyber security-provider have to be one step ahead – in prevention, detection and response of the cyber criminal.

He said that post-9/11 and 26/11, the US and a few other countries have raised a cyber command structure. Nations, exposed to such dependence on virtual space, must come together to work collectively to gain from each other's experience and knowledge to evolve a collective comprehensive response.

The Scientific Advisor said that the Union Government has also taken a slew of measures to engage this threat, including setting up centres for development and certification of critical IT hardware components. It has also come up with a management plan for meeting any crisis arising out of cyber attacks.

Calling on experts to take up the challenge as there is a lack of skilled manpower in specialised areas of Information security to address both the needs of R&D and IT security services, Chidambaram said that the Society for Electronic Transactions and Security (SETS) was designed to bridge the private-public sector gap and concentrate solely on R&D in Information security and cryptology. SETS has been instrumental in developing an Information Security police for the Bharathiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Private Ltd.

The office of the PSA has set up a major Advance Facility in Information Security and Cryptology (AFISC) at SETS on the land provided by the Tamil Nadu Government at Chennai and it would be operationalised by 2009.

Earlier, Arabinda Mitra, executive director of IUSSTF spoke on the various programmes of his organisation and of the opportunities available for collaborating with the US researchers. Among others who spoke included Venkat Rangan, Vice-Chancellor of Amrita Vishwavidyapeetham and Raghav Rao, of the New York State University.



R Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India (centre), talking to Shyamal Ghosh, Chairman, Data Security Council of India.

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