

Protection of IT vital, says BARC chief

By Our Staff Reporter

KOLLAM, APRIL 12. The Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), B. Bhattacharjee, has said that many attempts were made in the past to hack the computer systems of BARC.

Inaugurating a workshop on information security and cryptography, 'Information Sciences attached to crypt 2003', organised by the Amrita Institute of Technology and Science (AITEC) at Amritapuri, near here, on Friday, he said that information technology (IT) is wealth and protecting it is vital for the nation. Dr. Bhattacharjee said that for the purpose of meeting competition and offering better services, commercial organisations, including banks, are dependent on IT. However, this dependence makes them vulnerable to cyber attacks aimed at stealing vital information, monetary benefit and even sensationalism.

However, through such tactics it is the genuine user of the IT systems who suffers. Hence regular viral detection packages and security audits have to be undertaken, thereby calling for serious information security technologies for protection. Since commercial documents are being maintained and stored in digital form, advancement in information security systems is vital for the safety of such documents.

Yet, attainment of 100 per cent security may not be possible. But since the value of such stored information diminishes over time, one way of ensuring information security is

by delaying the possibility of decoding encrypted information. Increasing the length of the encoding key would make it difficult for hackers to gain access. 'Infotech 2003' is being organised at the right time and BARC would only be too happy to promote such activities.

In his keynote address, the Divisional Chairman of Information Sciences attached to the Indian Institute of Science, N. Balakrishnan, said the world is moving from an era of physical security to an era of digital security. Computers and networks are the soldiers in any contemporary war and hence it is no more information security, but information war.

In the new world order, countries are being grouped as cyber and non-cyber nations. India is well placed to become one of the top cyber nations.

The vice-chairman of the Matha Amritanandamayi Math, Swami Amritaswarupananda, in his benedictory address, said that while the development of better information technology systems is most welcome, what is really important is to secure the minds of those responsible for ensuring the security of our information systems. Human minds can be best secured by practicing the age-old spiritual values, he said.

The chief operating officer of the Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Abhayamitra Chaitanya, welcomed the gathering. The AITEC principal, K. Shankaran, proposed a vote of thanks. The valedictory function would be inaugurated by the Union Minister of State for Defence, O. Rajagopal, tomorrow.