

Cybercrime flourishes in new areas

By ZHANG YAN in Beijing and XU JINGXI in Jieyang, Guangdong

China has experienced a sharp rise in cybercrime and is seeing a new breed of Internet criminals as illegal sales of weapons and porn flourish online, a senior security official has said.

Gu Jianguo, director of network protection for the Ministry of Public Security, said cases of cybercrime have increased by an average of 30 percent each year since 2008.

Gu said authorities are seeing a new kind of criminal behavior in cyberspace, with an increase

in the online sale of firearms and ammunition, wiretapping devices and fake professional certificates. Online gambling and pornography distribution are also on the rise.

"Traditional online crime, such as hackers stealing personal data, has gradually become less common," Gu said.

He said loopholes in supervision, low risks, big gains and hidden transaction channels were to blame for the increase in serious cybercrime.

"Crooks tend to consider the Internet as a safe and convenient haven where they can target victims," Gu said.

"Online crime, ranging from

hackers invading government websites to the sale of illegal weapons, threatens social stability and information security," he said.

In May, authorities launched a campaign specifically targeting cybercrime.

The ministry said by the end of June police nationwide had uncovered 600 online criminal gangs, destroyed 500 illegal firearms factories that were selling their wares over the Internet and detained 10,000 suspects.

Police focusing on cybercrime removed 3.2 million pieces of illegal and harmful information from the Internet.

Between March and June,

police investigated 5,600 cybercrime cases and cut 5,000 channels of communication such as e-mails and instant messenger accounts, being used by suspected criminals.

Police also investigated 2,600 public order violations, and issued administrative punishments to 3,000 people.

In the past two months, police across China uncovered 62 forums where firearms, explosives or pornography were being advertised for sale, including some run by popular websites such as chinanews.com and tianya.cn. Sites were either closed or ordered to make improvements within three months.

Gu said the cybercrime unit has worked together with other police units including criminal investigation, drug enforcement, economic crime and public security management units, to form a unified force.

Wang Xiaoyang, a senior police officer in network security and protection, said his team focuses on shutting down the illegal operators that provide criminals with their Internet connection.

"To fight cybercrime, authorities focused on illegal Internet service operators, which are believed to be the force behind many illegal websites," Wang said.

Gu conceded that authorities face challenges in tackling China's rampant cybercrime, "Some telecom operators simply don't check the legal qualifications of websites they host," Gu said.

According to the ministry, 83.5 percent of the illegal websites discovered were unregistered or falsely registered.

Gu said police will continue to crack down on online crime, and intensify the efforts to uncover illegal service units.

Contact the writers at zhangyan1@chinadaily.com.cn and xujingxi@chinadaily.com.cn

Arrests destroy criminal gang in market

By ZHENG CAIXIONG in Shenzhen, Guangdong zhenxcaixiong@chinadaily.com.cn

Police in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, on Wednesday announced the arrest of a gang that used violence to monopolize markets in the bustling Luohu district.

Eighteen suspects, including the gang's alleged leader, a 38-year-old identified as Li, have been detained, while two more remain at large, said Pei Chundong, director of criminal investigation for Luohu's public security bureau.

"The gang has been active in Taibai Road, Luohu, for many years," Pei said at a news conference.

Police detained Li and nine other suspects in an operation in March, and detained eight more in May, Pei said. "Many knives, steel pipes and other weapons were seized when police arrested the gang," he said.



Residents, particularly business representatives, cheered after news of the police action."

PEI CHUNDONG
DIRECTOR OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION FOR THE PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU IN LUOHU, SHENZHEN

Major hacking syndicate cracked, police say

By XU JINGXI in Jieyang, Guangdong, and ZHANG YAN in Beijing

Police in South China have detained a gang of hackers they believe are responsible for attacks on 185 government websites.

Police in Jieyang, Guangdong province, said the case is the biggest of its kind in recent years.

Suspects are accused of invading sites managed by authorities in 30 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions to help them to make and sell fake professional certificates.

"The gang tampered with official databases or added links to external databases so that if anyone checked up on the fake certificates, the client's name would appear," Chen Xiaoping, head of Jieyang police's cybercrime unit, said at a news conference.

"This caused great damage to the image of the government. Cracking the case has helped restore their reputation," said Xie Yaoqi, director of the public security bureau in Jieyang.

The city's office of personnel and examinations reported an attack on its website on Dec 8, after finding a link had been illegally added.

This led police to seven suspects selling fake certificates in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, and in Guangdong's Heyuan. This in turn led to the discovery of a network of connected hackers, certificate forgers, advertisers and personal data collectors scattered across at least 12 provinces.

As of July 12, police had arrested 165 people, confiscated more than 7,100 fake certificates and at least 10,000 fake seals, and are still hunting for more members of the gang.

The fake certificates were sold at between 4,000 and 10,000 yuan (\$626 and \$1,565), police said. The profits generated surpassed 300 million yuan.

Chen said 14 principal suspects were under the age of 30.

"They have a strong idea on how not to get caught," he said. "They used overseas servers

and bank accounts of strangers, whose details were bought online."

One of the suspects, Luo Pangjie, who has admitted being a part of the gang, said he had been earning 3,000 to 5,000 yuan a month for transferring personal data to hackers since mid-2010 but he claimed he had no idea it was being used to sell fake professional certificates.

"It was easy money," the 24-year-old from the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region said during an interview with reporters at a detention house.

Xu Haibin from the Ningxia Hui autonomous region, who at 18 is the youngest suspect, admitted hacking government websites for 300 to 1,200 yuan a time, according to police.

Chen said hackers in the past attacked government websites to show off their skills but now do it to make money.

Cracking down cybercrime calls for efforts from not only the police, according to Xu Jianzhuo in the Ministry of Public Security's network security bureau.

"We need stricter supervision," he said. "We need laws

and regulations to strengthen the obligations of Internet service providers to verify users' information.

"It's difficult to collect evidence for cybercrimes," Xu said real-name registration has not been genuinely put into practice. A user can still get registered with a fake name and someone else's ID number. The online service provider will not verify the name and the number.

While websites in Europe and the United States are required to maintain records of visits for 12 months, websites in China

are only required to maintain records for 60 days, Xu said.

The large-scale hacking of government websites has also exposed the huge market for fake certificates in China. Jieyang police claimed that more than 30,000 people bought fake qualifications made by the gang, which specialized in certificates including medical care, financial services and architecture.

Contact the writers at xujingxi@chinadaily.com.cn and zhangyan1@chinadaily.com.cn



ZOU ZHONGPIN / CHINA DAILY

Luo Pangjie, who played a part in an online hacking gang, is interviewed by reporters at a detention house in Jieyang city, Guangdong province, on Friday.

Slain intern's parents seek compensation

By WANG QINGYUN in Beijing and ZHOU HUIYING in Harbin

The parents of Wang Hao, an intern at the No 1 Affiliated Hospital of Harbin Medical University who was killed by a patient in March, are asking for 864,400 yuan (\$135,000) in compensation from the defendant.

On Wednesday morning, the Harbin Intermediate People's Court in Heilongjiang province heard the case of an 18-year-old suspected of stabbing Wang to death and injuring three doctors at the hospital on March 23.

The local procuratorate, or prosecuting office, accused Li Mengnan of intentional homicide.

The court did not reach a verdict on Wednesday.

Li traveled from his home in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region to the hospital for treatment for his inflammation in his vertebrae on March 23. His grandfather accompanied him during the trip.

The doctor in the rheumatol-

ogy department of the hospital told Li that Remicade, the medicine to treat the inflammation, would worsen his tuberculosis, and said Li should be treated for tuberculosis before taking the medication.

Li went back to the hospital that afternoon with a knife, and attacked Wang and his three colleagues, according to authorities.

The 28-year-old intern died after being stabbed in the neck. The forensic examination showed that Wang's jugular vein was severed and he bled to death.

The prosecutors have said Li should be punished lightly because he was under 18 when he did the attack.

Under Criminal Law, people older than 14 and under 18 should receive lighter punishments if they are convicted of a crime.

Li Fangping, a lawyer from a Beijing law firm, who defended Li Mengnan for free, said he hopes the court would consider

the reason for his client's action.

According to a written statement provided by Li Fangping, Li Mengnan had been to the hospital several times to treat his inflammation and had once received Remicade injections, but these were stopped because of his tuberculosis.

"The hospital didn't tell Li that Remicade would have serious side effects when they gave him the injections, and thus worsened his tuberculosis," said Li Fangping. "On March 23, Li went to the hospital for the sixth time. The behavior of doctors caused him to become irritated, and that is why he killed and injured people."

Chen Zhihua, lawyer for Wang's parents, disputed Li's argument.

"This case is not about medical disputes. The hospital did nothing wrong," said Chen. "The defendant hasn't provided any valid evidence to prove the hospital's liability. What's more, whether the hospital did anything wrong should not be a fac-



WANG JIANWEI / XINHUA

Li Mengnan (center), who is suspected of killing an intern and injuring three doctors at the No 1 Affiliated Hospital of Harbin Medical University, appears at his hearing at Harbin Intermediate People's Court in Heilongjiang province on Wednesday.

tor in the criminal trial."

Chen said two other doctors wounded in the attack, Wang Yu and Zheng Yining, also sued Li.

Li stabbed Wang Yu through the right eye socket, causing serious injury. Zheng Yining's face, right ear and right arm were injured.

The total compensation claims reached more than 1.31

million yuan, according to dbw.cn, a Heilongjiang-based news portal.

Li Fangping said he was very sorry for Wang's parents and other victims, but Li Mengnan's family is financially challenged. "His father is serving a prison sentence, his mother left the family when he was 10 months old. He was raised by his grandfather. They don't

have any savings and owe nearly 70,000 yuan in medical bills for his grandfather's cancer."

Chen said the court is expected to reach a verdict in two weeks.

Contact the writers at wangqingyun@chinadaily.com.cn and zhouhuiying@chinadaily.com.cn

"Residents, particularly business representatives, cheered after news of the police action, as it led to great improvement in social order."

A resident who did not want to be named said he used to frequently see gang members fighting with business owners in restaurants and entertainment venues at night.

"Now I have not seen any fighting for a month," he said.

A sauna owner who gave his name only as Chen said businesses had previously been affected by the poor social order in Taibai Road.

Gangsters frequently visited his sauna house to threaten his staff and drive away clients, he said.

"Some of my masseuses had to resign and left after they were frightened by the gangsters who made trouble every week."

Pei said the gang was investigated in relation to 12 criminal matters, including forcing victims to trade, intentional injuries, illegally running casinos and intimidation.

"By using violence to monopolize the beer market alone, the gang was found to have illegally earned more than 160,000 yuan (\$25,000)," he said.

"The gang forced barbecue restaurants, stores and bars to purchase beer only from designated shops operated by the gang, and the price of a bottle of beer was several yuan higher than the market price."

Meanwhile, police have also detained Fang Mouchun, deputy director of Buxin Housing Management Center in Luohu.

He is accused of acting as a protective umbrella for the gang and was taken into custody on Friday.