

# 'Internet crime rising but not alarming'

by **Tan Yi Liang**  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The incidence of internet-based crime in Malaysia is escalating but is no cause for alarm as such an increase is "natural", CyberSecurity Malaysia CEO Husin Jazri said.

"The scale is not big enough to affect the economy. It is increasing as it naturally should increase because the number of people using the internet is increasing," he said.

Husin, who spoke at a media briefing on Friday to announce the upcoming SecureAsia@Kuala Lumpur Conference & Exhibition, did not provide statistics but said the incidence was low considering the increase in the number of Malaysians using the net.

"We used to have three million internet users, now statistics show we have nine to 10 million users. But if you compare the increase in the number of users with that of the incidence of crime, it is not alarming as we have more net users," he said.

"You cannot deny its existence, but there are measures as the Malaysian government has taken many steps to ensure safety. Bank Negara (BNM) is always vigilant against cyber threats.

"We have an Internet Banking Task Force under BNM's leadership and they meet more than once a month to discuss potential threats to internet banking."

Husin said BNM's efforts were also among the reasons for a lower incidence of credit card cloning of late.

"The number of credit card thefts has gone down because Malaysia is one of the few countries to use the EMV smart chip and not the memory stripe. So with that as well as the measures put in place by BNM, there is a reduction in the data that can be intercepted and copied."



(From left) CyberSecurity Malaysia director (CEO's office) Noor Iskandar Hashim, Husin and business development head Mohamed Anwer Mohd Yusoff.

Asked about the main threats faced by Malaysian internet users, he said the main technical threat was identity theft.

"There are many 'main threats' faced by the Malaysian public online. There are technical threats, of which the most apparent is identity theft in the form of phishing, where people are trying to steal your identity online to get your money."

Husin said intrusions were also another key threat.

"This is one of our biggest concerns because two factors affect us. Ignorance as we are not aware of these threats, such as emails purporting to be from banks but are set up by fraudulent parties, and intrusions, which are a threat affecting both individuals and businesses.

"They go into computer systems to steal data and intellectual property. Sometimes it is discovered, and at others it continues without people knowing it is happening."

He cautioned that social networking sites such as Facebook could also be dangerous to users.

"There are also privacy and safety issues. For example on Facebook, we are trusting, so we like to share a lot of things by putting them up

on the website. The intention is to share our happiness, but this can be exploited by a stalker or potential kidnapper who uses it to analyse a (potential victim)."

Husin said rumour mongering was yet another threat.

"On top of these technical attacks, there are other issues faced by the public such as sedition, defamation and rumour mongering via emails," he said, pointing out that CyberSecurity should not be seen as Malaysia's "cybercops".

"We are not cybercops, we are just a help centre," he said.

Asked about attacks on the Malaysian internet infrastructure, Husin said the worst attacks happened in 2002 but declined to comment on any later incidents.

"The last major incidents in Malaysia were the Code Red and Nimda worms in 2002, where our ATMs and emails were down as our bandwidth was clogged. That was the absolute worst.

"There are other attacks but I don't want to talk about them. The more recent Conficker worm, while causing problems, was not as serious as the 2002 attacks.

"But over 50,000 computers are still active, and it is still affecting computers. The challenge now is how to clean it up."

Source : The Sun  
Date : 30 June 2009  
Page : 8