

TOP NEWS

US hacked sensitive China telecom networks

By CUI JIA
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The United States National Security Agency gained access to China's telecommunications networks and made inquiries about a number of people with sensitive backgrounds, leading to some of their information being leaked, according to an investigation report on a cyberattack at a prominent Chinese public research university.

On June 22, Northwestern Polytechnical University, in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, which is known for its education and research programs in aeronautics, astronautics and marine technology engineering, announced that overseas hackers had been caught sending phishing emails with Trojan horse programs to teachers and students at the university in an attempt to steal their data and personal information.

The report, released on Tuesday, said that while retracing the technical features, attack weapons and paths used in the NSA cyberattack on Northwestern Polytechnical University, analysts discovered that the NSA's Office of Tailored Access Operation had infiltrated the networks of at least two telecommunication operators in China and built a "legitimate" channel for remote access to the core data.

The office then made inquiries about a number of people with sensitive backgrounds. Some of their information was sent back to the NSA headquarters via multiple jump servers, according to the report released by China's National Computer Virus Emergency

Response Center and internet security company 360.

With support from partners in European and Southeast Asian countries, analysts discovered that the office has also infiltrated the telecommunications networks of at least 80 countries using the same cyberattack weapons.

The report detailed the process of the office's infiltration of the university's internal network. First, it used "FoxAcid", an intermediate attack platform, to hack into the university's internal host computer and servers, and then gained control over several key servers with remote control weapons. It controlled some important network node equipment, including the university's internal routers and switches, and stole authentication data.

Hiding in the university's operations and maintenance servers, the office stole several configuration files of network equipment that it used to "validly" monitor network equipment and internet users, according to the report.

Of the 41 types of tools used in the particular attack, 16 are identical to the office's weapons that have been exposed by the hacker group "Shadow Brokers", and 23 have a 97 percent structural similarity with those deployed by the office. Also, the remaining two types have to be used in conjunction with other cyberattack weapons from the office, it said.

The identities of 13 hackers who carried out the attack have been discovered. Their working hours, language used and behavior habits have also exposed their links with the office, the report added.

Recovery: Nation has plenty of room to step up policy support, expert says

From page 1

Equipment manufacturing enterprises' profits fell 2 percent on a yearly basis in the first eight months, narrowing from a 5.7 percent decline in the first seven months, while profits at auto manufacturing enterprises increased 1.02 times in August, according to data released by the NBS on Tuesday.

In August, China's value-added industrial output grew 4.2 percent from a year earlier, while factory-gate inflation eased in August to an 18-month low.

Wu Chaoming, deputy director of the Chasing International Economic Institute, estimated that industrial profits fell 9.2 percent in August year-on-year amid pressures from high costs, narrowing by 4.2 percentage points over the previous month.

Zheng Houcheng, director of the Yingda Securities Research Institute, said that industrial companies' earnings growth will continue to face pressures from slowing factory-gate inflation and a high base last year.

For the January-August period, industrial companies' profits fell 2.1 percent year-on-year, the NBS said.

Considering the government's strong stimulus policy support, Zheng said he expects to see a slight gain in China's value-added industrial output in September.

Citing better-than-expected economic indicators in August such as consumption and investment, Yang Jinghao, chief economist at Condat Data Technology (Hangzhou) Co Ltd, said China is still at a critical juncture in terms of economic recovery.

The World Bank said in a recent report that China's economy is projected to expand by 2.8 percent in 2022 after the 8.1 percent rebound in 2021, while growth in the East Asia-Pacific region is projected to slow from 7.2 percent in 2021 to 3.2 percent in 2022.

Despite downward pressures and challenges ahead, experts said China has the capabilities and conditions to keep economic performance within a reasonable range this year, and the economy will improve in the following months aided by more macro policy support.

Yue Xiangyu, a researcher at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, said the nation still has ample policy tools in hand and plenty of room to step up macroeconomic policy support.

Charlie Zheng, chief economist at Samoyed Cloud Technology Group Holdings Ltd, estimated that China's GDP will grow by around 4 percent in the third quarter, as the government has rolled out a series of policies to bolster this expansion.

Cultural tradition



Han Fengqi, an inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, demonstrates her dough sculpture artwork featuring the ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius on Monday at 2022 China International Confucius Cultural Festival in Qufu, Shandong province. LI ZHENG / XINHUA



Serving tourists, ecology

Tourists board a ship embarking on its first voyage at Erhai Lake in Dali, Yunnan province, on Monday. Unlike traditional oil-burning ships, the new vessel is electrically powered, which will greatly reduce pollution in and help protect the ecology of Erhai Lake.

CHEN XINBO / XINHUA

Beijing OKs tax breaks, defers govt-levied charges

New policy support 'will deliver sizable benefits', Premier Li says at meeting

By WANG KEJU
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China will offer tax concessions for private pension plans that enjoy policy support and are run commercially to meet people's diverse needs, the State Council decided at an executive meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang on Monday.

It was noted at the meeting that the development of policy-supported and commercially operated private pensions will provide a useful complement to the basic old-age insurance program and can better meet people's diverse needs and enhance social security safeguards.

Personal income tax concessions, it was decided, will be made available for those participating in policy-supported and commercially operated private pensions: participants will be entitled to a contribution deduction of up to 12,000 yuan (\$1,670) per year from their annual taxable income.

No tax will be levied on investment yields for the time being. The actual tax burden for receiving pension benefits will be lowered from the previous 7.5 percent to 3 percent. This policy will be applied retroactively to Jan 1 this year.

"The policy support we introduce this time will deliver sizable benefits. In the process of implementation, we need to gradually fine-tune the policies and sum up experience before applying such policies more broadly," Li said.

A decision was also made at the meeting to temporarily defer payments of certain government-levied charges and deposits to further ease the burden on market entities and help them overcome difficulties.

"Market entities, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, self-employed households and manufacturing firms, now face considerable difficulties. Postponing the collection of government-levied charges and deposits is an important step to support market players. All policies must be delivered on the ground without delay," Li said.

An additional set of fee deferral policies were rolled out for the fourth quarter. Payments of 14 government-levied charges, including farmland reclamation fees and sewage and household waste disposal fees, totaling over 53 billion yuan, will be deferred without overdue fines.

Localities will be encouraged to postpone the collection of subna-

tional, government-levied charges on enterprises, and arbitrary charges will be strictly prohibited.

Payments of deposits that guarantee the quality of projects of various kinds, amounting to about 63 billion yuan, will be deferred. Due responsibilities must be fulfilled and promises delivered with concrete actions to ensure that market entities truly benefit from the policies.

"Relevant institutions and mechanisms of levying charges should be refined to foster a world-class and market-oriented business environment governed by a sound legal framework," Li said.

It was also decided to adopt measures to make more government services interprovincially accessible to further unlock market vitality and bring greater convenience to the people.

On top of the 187 government services already interprovincially accessible, an additional 22 high-demand items affecting a wide range of sectors will be added to the list to address the pressing concerns of households and businesses.

Interagency information sharing will be enhanced and operational standards aligned to make more interprovincial services available online and processed on a one-stop basis. The needs of senior citizens for in-person services will also be well met.

Ministry decries double standards of West

By MO JINGXI
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A Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized a handful of Western countries on Tuesday for practicing double standards and political maneuvers on human rights issues, saying it is crystal clear to the international community that these countries attempt to use human rights issues to interfere in China's domestic affairs.

"Whatever stunt these few Western countries pull, they will never stop the Chinese people's solid steps toward development and progress," ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said at a regular news briefing in Beijing.

The remarks came after nearly 70 countries expressed opposition to interference in China's internal affairs under the pretext of human rights and underscored their respect for the right of the people of each state to independently choose their own path for development.

Pakistan expressed in a joint statement on behalf of 68 countries on Monday at the 51st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council that issues related to Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet are China's internal affairs and there should be no politicization of human rights and double standards.

In addition to that statement, Wang said, representatives from more than 20 countries also spoke out separately to support China.

It was not the first time that countries have spoken out for justice on such an occasion. In recent years, nearly 100 countries, including Muslim countries, have expressed understanding and support in various ways for China's legitimate positions at the UN Human Rights Council and at other public occasions.

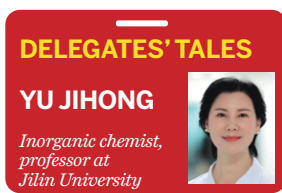
"The attempt by a few Western countries to use human rights as a pretext to smear and attack China has been thwarted, and this clearly shows the attitude of the international community," Wang said.

The spokesman also noted the serious human rights problems existing in the United States and a few other Western countries, ranging from the violation of the right to life caused by gun violence to the persistent systemic racial discrimination that infringes on the human rights of minority groups.

According to the statistical website Gun Violence Archive, since the beginning of this year, nearly 21,000 people have died in the US due to gun violence and 279 mass shootings have taken place in the country, in each of which four or more people were killed or injured.

"We urge these countries to stop acting as 'condescending lecturers' and manage well their own business," Wang said.

Diligence pays off for devoted chemist



Editor's Note: A total of 2,296 delegates have been elected to attend the upcoming 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The delegates, covering a broad spectrum, are all outstanding CPC members and have made remarkable achievements in their work. China Daily invited some delegates to share their stories with our readers.

By ZHANG ZHIHAO
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The motto of Yu Jihong, a renowned inorganic chemist and a professor at Jilin University, is "heaven blesses the diligent". For years, Yu, 55, has drilled this philosophy into her students by setting an example, from working overtime in the lab on New Year's Eve to helping them revise their papers many times before publishing.

Her rigorous work ethic has paid off. Since becoming a full professor in 1999, one of the youngest professors in Jilin University at that time, Yu has instructed around 70 doctoral students, 40 of whom have become associate or full professors.

In 2019, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of Education granted Yu the honorary title of National Model Teacher. Three years later, she received the National May 1 Labor Medal for her role in nurturing qual-

ity talent and making original breakthroughs in scientific research.

Since entering Jilin University as an undergraduate student in 1985, Yu has blossomed into a globally recognized expert in the field of zeolitic nanoporous materials, which are important solid catalysts in the chemical industry.

She has also been elected as a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the World Academy of Sciences, and as a foreign member of the Academia Europaea and the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

In addition, Yu has won the National Prize for Natural Science, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry's 2017 Distinguished Women in Chemistry/Chemical Engineering Award, and the Ho Leung Ho Lee Science and Technology Progress Award.

Given all her accomplishments, Yu was elected as a delegate to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which is proposed to be convened in Beijing on Oct 16.

"Being a member of the Party, I will fulfill my duties, infuse my scientific aspirations with the Chinese dream and contribute more to science, education and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," she said.

"Achieving high quality self-sufficiency and self-strengthening in science and technology is a historical mission for every science and technology worker in this new era," she said. "We have the confidence and the will to make more original breakthroughs in basic sciences and core technologies."

When commenting on how she became the scientist she is now, Yu said it was largely thanks to her

mentor Xu Ruren, who was one of the key scientists who founded the chemistry department at Jilin University.

"Mr Xu told us that we should strive to be better people before pursuing knowledge, and he always taught by example. This has had a huge impact on my life," she said, adding that her mentor was also very rigorous, humble, friendly and industrious, even during difficult times.

"When I was his graduate student, I discovered a new microporous crystalline structure that challenged our traditional understanding of zeolites. But in order to validate the result's accuracy, Xu asked me to repeat the experiment for a whole year," Yu said.

In 2015, Yu's team was on the verge of a new discovery, so she asked her students to repeat the experiment for more than a year to thoroughly validate the work. The result was later published by the journal Science.

Yu said she always believed every student is a "diamond in the rough", and their potential can be unlocked with the right care and polish. This is why despite her grueling work schedule, Yu has always dedicated time to talking with and guiding her students personally.

In 2019, Yu and her team established a new curriculum system that incorporates frontier research into undergraduate teaching, essentially using cutting-edge research to educate students.

"I hope our younger generations can seize the day, live it to the fullest, and unleash their full potential when bravely forging their path forward," she said.