

Ethical hackers descend on SMIT

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 07 Jan: More than 80 engineering students from different colleges from all over the country are participating in an 18-day training program on 'Network Management and Ethical Hacking' at Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology [SMIT] campus at Majitar Campus, Sikkim. The Certificate program, organized in collaboration with NETTECH, was formally inaugurated last month by Director, SMIT Brig. Dr. SN Mishra.

An SMIT press release informs that this is a first of its kind program by SMIT for its students as well as students from other institutions. Earlier in August-September last year, engineering students from SMIT had participated in a similar kind of training program in the campus at Majitar.

The 18 day training program which began last month is scheduled to end on 12 January, 2008. Some of the participating colleges were Jadavpur University Kolkata, National Institute of Technology [NIT] Durgapur, Bengal Engineering & Science College Shibpur, Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College Jalpaiguri.

MNNIT Allahabad, Manipal Institute of Technology Manipal, SRM University Noida, Rajiv Gandhi University Itanagar and Birla Institute of Technology Mesra as well as some private engineering colleges of West Bengal.

Explaining Network Management to the participants. Manager Nettech, Santu Purkait informed, "This training program is designed



to increase the base of technical knowledge on Linux and Linux-based solutions in the market today, giving enterprise customers the confidence they need to deploy Linux strategically. Linux is the fastest growing server operating environment and Nettech is making a significant commitment to driving Linux into the enterprise".

"For enterprises to adopt

Linux and Linux solutions, they need to know that there's a pool of expertise they can tap to install and manage those Linux environments, whether through their internal IT staff or through a trusted partner. The Network Management certifications, which focus on developing real hands-on capabilities, will give you the required confidence," he added.

Brig. Dr. SN Mishra, in his key note address to the students, explained the rationale behind the thrust on networking courses.

"Unlike in the software segment, the advantage of networking products is that they continue to co-exist in the marketplace while competing with each other. Besides, this is one segment that

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has not been over hyped during the last few years and yet has quietly established its importance and indispensability," he pointed out.

According to Dr. Mishra, the demand for Linux trained professionals would come from both IT companies who are already working on Linux platforms as well as non-IT companies making the transition from Windows or other OS to Linux.

The NETTECH@SMIT Certification requires a core understanding of Linux, which includes file, print, messaging, directory and management services on Linux, as well as installing, configuring, and troubleshooting those services.

Finally, candidates will need to pass the online as well as simulated LAB examination to test real competency and skills operating in Linux environments.

"We are happy to inform that, by the end of the training program students will be able to design a Computer Lab which will not have any windows machine. It will be all Linux," stated Program Co-ordinator Nettech, Sunayana Shetty.

Apprising the students on the skills to meet IT industry needs, Mr. Purkait highlighted, "Corporate houses want to be assured that staff, consultants and partners involved in their Linux adoption are competently trained and certified. Our certification is no 'paper certification'. Candidates must demonstrate that they can handle practical challenges on Linux by completing randomly selected scenarios requiring the resolution of a given problem or process, all within a specified time period. Our lab test enables us to challenge students to demonstrate that they have not only learned the concepts taught in our courses, but can practically apply the knowledge they have acquired in live environments".

In his inaugural address, Dr. Mishra emphasized that the programme supported SMIT's efforts to provide training that meets industry standards for engineering graduates, wherein the goal was to foster future success by teaching the students transferable, marketable skills in addition to reinforcing high academic achievement.

"By ensuring that our young people have marketable skills, we are also meeting the needs of our community for a knowledgeable workforce and the needs of our nation for a competitive edge in the global economy. Linux and open source are clearly the wave of the future in computing, and we want to ensure our students get the best training possible to ensure their marketability going forward. Nettech's strong history of certifications makes them an ideal partner for delivering our Linux offerings," he stated.

In regard to Ethical hacking aspect of the programme, the release states that computers around the world are systematically being victimized by rampant hacking.

"This hacking is not only widespread, but is being executed so flawlessly that the attackers compromise the information system, get/damage the target data and leave the same network without

any traces. What these hackers don't realize, is that behind these information systems there are real people, there are real data, and it affects all of us.

Hacking has become an effective tool for the Militant outfits, Political rivalry within as well as across the international border. Today's hacker is not only stealing question paper from their teachers computer, they are also targeting the National Power grid, so a Nation can go back to the Stone Age.

At Nettech, we understand the importance of the Nuisance called Hacking & has designed a course on Ethical Hacking. This course will allow students to work on a simulated Network within an internal setup, no real network is harmed. Students will prepare/design a network of their own & will test, scan, hack & secure their own network. Students will intrude as well as learn to secure the same system. The Goal of Ethical Hacker is to help the organization take preemptive measures against malicious attacks by attacking the system himself; all the while staying within legal limits.

With The proliferation of increasingly complex, sophisticated and global threats to information security, in combination with the compliance requirements of a flood of computer and privacy related regulation around the world, information security has become major issue for any organisation around the world.

Information warfare is a reality these days. Terrorists, criminal-of a foreign intelligence service agent can now operate on a global scale reaching through the internet

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and can attack a nation's infrastructure including telecommunications and information systems, electrical energy transportation and more.

While examining computer security requirements, the overall goal is to design appropriate security functionality for the system, process, or organisation in question, i.e., to find out whether the expenses for security are economically sound and spent at the right place. This problem is enhanced by the fact that several guidelines, protection manuals, and catalogues of safeguards provide comprehensive and extensive lists of possible security-related actions. IT security officers have to rely on their own experience to select appropriate safeguards because of the overwhelming size of those catalogues.

Today the demand for Information security system has changed, it's not only the security of a server room or a computer lab it's a security for the entire organisation. With the rapid development of the technology used in information system area, the time has come when we start planning for the total information assets in the organisation rather than few computers & servers. A current demand for the security system is the plan, which protects the information from not only from internal threat but also from external threat. The approach to IT security should be proactive planning for future growth, change & threat not an ad-hoc reaction for an unknown crisis.

The use of computers for sensitive tasks led to a growing need for computer security. This need increased continuously when computers became connected via net-

works, when these networks were opened to external partners, and finally when everybody was connected to the Internet, where potential communication and business partners cannot be known beforehand. In today's business the security of information systems is not only necessary to protect a company's assets from harm; but also to provide a certain kind of trust for business partners without which no business transaction would take place at all.

The Importance of Information Security can be stated with an example: 'Any prudent house holder whose house was built on the shores of a tidal river would, when facing the risk of floods, take urgent steps to improve the defences of the house against the water. IT would clearly be insufficient just to block up the front gate, because the water will get in everywhere and anywhere it can. In fact, the only prudent action is to block every single possible channel through which floodwaters might enter and then to try to build the walls even higher, in case the floods are even greater than expected''.

The Ethical Hacking topics covered by the programme are Introduction to Ethical Hacking, Cracking vs. Hacking, Foot Printing, Scanning, Trojans, Sniffers, Denial of Service, DNS Poisoning, ARP Poisoning, SQL Injection, Honeypots, Web server defacing, IDS, Session Hijacking, Phishing and more.

The programme also includes a field session on adventure sports, wherein the students were taken for river rafting on river Teesta and more than 11 kms from Melli Bazaar to 29th Mile was cov-

ered in one and half hour. The route is a 'non-swimmer zone'. The students were equipped with life jackets which can take more than 180 kgs and each raft had more than 3 nos. expert guides. The students also took part in a mock rescue operation in 29th Mile during which they were required to rescue one of the volunteer from the waters of Teesta.

Besides white river rafting, a session on mountaineering is also included in the programme, wherein instructors from the famed Himalayan Mountaineering Institute of Darjeeling [HMI] conducted a two-day workshop on 05 and 06 January on mountaineering.

"It aims to create attitude among the trainee so that they view mountaineering as an art and not merely a physical activity, stimulate in them a spirit of adventure and teach them to face new challenges and become better human being with much more confidence," informed Course Director HMI, Ngodup Bhutia.

All students participated in the activity, during which they climbed the 8-storied Boys Hostel with the help of a rope and from where they climbed on to the roof of another hostel building at the same height. Films on mountaineering were also screened.

A day-long visit to Nathula Pass Border was also conducted for the students to educate them proper on the Ancient Silk Route on the Indo-China border connecting the Indian state of Sikkim with South Tibet.

"The pass, located at an elevation of 4,310 m [14,200 feet] above mean sea level,

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forms part of an offshoot of the ancient Silk Route. After remaining closed for more than 40 years, the pass is now open for trade. The pass is useful for indo-china foreign trade promotion. On the Pass the Indian army and the Chinese border guards are within touching distance of each other. The pass is 56 kilometers east of the capital Gangtok. Although just 5 km north of the Jelep pass, the Nathula pass in winters receives heavy snowfall. Temperatures in Nathula regularly dip to -25 °C in winters. The pass is open only to Indian nationals on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. On other days it is in use for exclusive military use. A no man's land is absent, and the border consists of a barbed wire fence. Every Thursdays and Sunday post between the two nations are exchanged, a tradition dating back many decades".

"At Nettech, we encourage students to excel in the field of networking, with 24 hours lab and round the clock support staff. We expect students to be hard working and enjoy the subject as much as we do. To encourage students more on the field we have kept a very lucrative incentive-a joy ride on a helicopter over



Gangtok City as well as Rumtek Monastery. What one has to do - very simple out perform every one else in the batch, top 3 students will be selected for the Ride which

scheduled on 12 January 2008," the release informs. Expressing their views on the unique programme, Ravi Jaiswal of Manipal Institute of Technology stated, "the

Program is complete hands on with the 24 hours lab availability; this is one of the best program one can think of. I never thought Networking will be so fun and I am enjoying every bit of it".

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. I realized the very essence of the sentence after coming here. We woke up at 5 each morning and went to bed well after midnight, but never felt tired. Study, River rafting, trip to Nathula & now Mountaineering life has just changed. This is going to be some of the best days of my life," according to Rajiv Beriia of Jadavpur University

"This course mainly revolves around networking issues and security problems. No book, no theory-completely do it your self exercise. Teachers out here are thorough professionals. One will not believe that 31 De-

In the year 2007, a similar course was conducted by NETTECH in association with the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta,

Xavier Institute of Management Bhubaneshwar and Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology, Sikkim

For the summer of 2008, Nettech has planned similar program in collaboration with Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, Xavier Institute of Management Bhubaneshwar, Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology Sikkim, Goa Institute of Management Goa and Lakshmi Narayan Mittal Institute of Information Technology Jaipur.