8 May 2021

Media Release

HCI AND CSIT ORGANISE THIRD CYBERSECURITY COMPETITION FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES/ CENTRALISED INSTITUTE

1. Hwa Chong Institution (HCI) and Centre for Strategic Infocomm Technologies (CSIT) organised the third edition of **Cyberthon,** a **cybersecurity competition** for students studying in Junior Colleges and Centralised Institute. The competition, conducted in an online format this year, was held on **8 May 2021.**

2. The competition provided opportunities for the students to pit their cybersecurity skills against the best in their age group.

3. **Ms Gan Siow Huang, Minister of State, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Manpower** was the Guest-of-Honour at the Closing Ceremony of Cyberthon 2021. The Ceremony was held online on **8 May, 5pm**. MOS Gan delivered a keynote address at the Ceremony.

4. A total of **288 students** from **17 schools** formed **72 teams** to participate in this online cybersecurity competition organised exclusively for Junior Colleges/Centralised Institute.

5. This year's edition included a new segment, Teachers' Fun Teams, for teachers to participate in the challenges. The main purpose of this initiative is to give educators a glimpse into the different aspects of cybersecurity.

6. Cyberthon is part of the Singapore Government's ongoing efforts to nurture young talents in cybersecurity and provide students with a glimpse of the important roles of a cybersecurity professional.

7. Cyberthon consists of two components: training sessions and a competition. This year, due to the evolving COVID-19 situation, both training sessions were held online, similar to the format in 2020.

8. The training sessions, conducted by the Centre for Strategic Infocomm Technologies (CSIT), were held on **3** and **10 April 2021**. The participants were introduced to basic cybersecurity and data science concepts through online lectures and tutorials. After the training, the students were given an additional one-month online training where they worked on more cybersecurity and data science exercises to further hone their skills before the competition. Additional masterclasses conducted by CSIT engineers also gave students

already familiar with cybersecurity and data science skills the chance to further expand their skill sets.

9. Cyberthon 2021 adopted a Jeopardy-style 'Capture the Flag' competition format. This competition format enables the cumulative testing of skills, ranging from cryptography, reverse engineering, penetration testing, web exploitation and data science. In particular, Data Science was added last year to hone participants' skills in data analytics.

10. Participating teams were presented with a series of challenges that they had to solve to gain points. These challenges distilled major disciplines of professional security tasks into bite-sized exercises that contestants can solve with good reasoning skills and techniques gained through the pre-competition training organised by CSIT.

11. Aside from the top ten team prizes, prizes were also given out for the winners of the Data Science Challenge and CSIT Challenge:
    a. The Data Science Challenge involved challenges related to effective data processing and analysis involving topics such as natural language processing and machine learning.
    b. The CSIT Challenge involved complex challenges that span across different topics and may require a combination of cybersecurity and data science knowledge. Students had to look beneath the surface and understand the problem to solve these challenges.

12. More information is available through the Cyberthon website (http://www.cyberthon.hci.edu.sg) and on Instagram @CyberthonSG.

13. **Mr Pang Choon How, Principal of Hwa Chong Institution** said, *"At Hwa Chong, we are privileged to draw upon the support of industry relationships, teaching expertise, and alumni contacts to organise this competition. Amid the nation's ongoing efforts to build a Smart Nation, this competition aims to nurture young talents in cybersecurity. We are also heartened that despite the current Covid-19 situation, we are able to press on and leverage technology and online platforms to continue engaging young ICT talents and bring like-minded youths together through this yearly challenge."*

14. **Mr Goh Wei Boon, Chief Executive/CSIT** said, "*CSIT is happy to partner HCI to organise Cyberthon. Cyberthon is a useful avenue for us to share our knowledge with like-minded young talent in digital technologies such as cybersecurity and data analytics. We hope the participants will develop a deep interest to pursue a career in digital technology and become Singapore's next generation of cybersecurity and data science experts."*

About HCI

Hwa Chong Institution (HCI) is Singapore's premier independent school, with a rich history of 100 years. The Institution is the culmination of the watershed merger in 2005 between the former Chinese High School (founded 1919) and Hwa Chong Junior College (founded 1974).

For achieving world-class standards of excellence in education, HCI is the first GCE A-Level Integrated Programme School to be conferred the Singapore Quality Award (SQA) in 2010 and the SQA with Special Commendation in 2016. The Institution was featured as one of the world's most innovative schools in 2009 by the South China Morning Post — Hong Kong's premier English daily. Nature, the world's most-cited scientific journal, also showcased HCI as having one of the "most innovative science-education programmes" globally on 16 July 2015.

Drawing from the best of the East and West, Hwa Chong provides a broad-based six-year Integrated Programme (IP) that caters to the needs of the top 5% of students from Singapore and the region.

As a trailblazer in education, Hwa Chong is the first and only independent school to set up a Beijing Satellite Campus and pioneer the FutureSchools@Singapore initiative.

Playing a pivotal role in nurturing the pipeline of ICT talents, the school recently introduced its school-based Computing Talent Programme from Sec 3 to JC2, to provide enriched curriculum and research opportunities in ICT and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, internet of things, etc. The programme is currently exploring attachment opportunities with technological agencies and companies.

About Centre for Strategic Infocomm Technologies

The Centre for Strategic Infocomm Technologies (CSIT) was established in 2003. A member of Defence Technology Community (DTC) and an agency under MINDEF, CSIT is the leading agency that conducts applied research and builds products which harness cutting-edge digital technologies to meet Singapore's national security needs.

CSIT supports defence and public agencies in a wide variety of missions, such as cybersecurity and counter-terrorism through its deep technical expertise in Cybersecurity, Software Engineering, Data Analytics, and Cloud Infrastructure and Services.