

Anti-telefraud app aims to boost security

A new anti-telefraud app that can identify phone numbers used in frauds and filter out phishing websites is being shown at an internet security event in Shanghai that concludes on Sept 24.

The annual event, first held in 2014, is part of the country's effort to provide security in cyberspace.

The app was co-developed by the anti-telecom crime office of the State Council and e-commerce giant Alibaba.

The Central Leading Group for Cyberspace Affairs was established in 2014 and has enacted a cybersecurity law and regulations, tightened supervision and cracked down on online crime.

"Cybersecurity includes the security of the people as well as the nation," said Shen Yi, deputy director of the Cyberspace Governance Study Center at Fudan University. He said internet security cannot be evaluated solely by technical indicators but also had to bring public benefits.

China's web users are enjoying a cleaner internet environment since various governmental departments have acted to clean up cyberspace. In a recent campaign led by the National Office Against Pornographic and Illegal Publications, an investigative team seized 50 suspects, destroyed 118 websites and took down 913 online billboards that were considered pornographic or that traded in personal information.

The office closed 73 illegal livestreaming platforms in the first half of this year and imposed lifetime bans on 1,879 streamers who severely violated regulations.

In 2016 alone, Chinese law enforcement confiscated more than 16 million illegal publications and banned more than 14,000 websites deemed harmful.

Internet forums are also being targeted. The Cyberspace Administration of China published a list of rules in August, requiring real-name registration on bulletin boards. Many believe it will contain the spread of obscenity, violence, terrorism and false information. The regulations will take effect on Oct 1.

To standardize the way internet companies collect, store, use and transfer private information, several government departments have examined the privacy policies of 10 popular domestic internet products and services. The move aims to prevent criminals from illegally obtaining personal information from the internet. Internet companies are also playing an active role in the fight against cybercrimes.

In May, a piece of malicious software called WannaCry attacked computers

worldwide. Internet security companies, including Qihoo 360, Tencent and Kingsoft Security, have since increased their security services.

A total of 1,116 “internet police offices” have been set up by the Ministry of Public Security and internet companies including Baidu and Tencent in an attempt to investigate illegal information posted on their websites.

Twenty-one universities have cybersecurity colleges, and China plans to create up to six international-standard internet security institutes over the next decade.

But a gap remains in the education of cybersecurity professionals. As of last year, China had only 143 internet security majors across 126 universities – only 10 percent of the country’s technology universities.