

Singaporeâ??s CIDeX 2026 cyber exercise tests an AI agent swarm attack for the first time

Description

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Singaporeâ??s yearly critical infrastructure cyber exercise has, for the first time, thrown a coordinated â??swarmâ?• of AI agents at its testbeds to mimic a large-scale AI-enabled attack. The Critical Infrastructure Defence Exercise (CIDeX) 2026 ran from 17 to 20 November at the Singapore Institute of Technology, co-organised by the Digital and Intelligence Service (DIS) and the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA).



DIS personnel demonstrate the fully agentic AI Blue Team against simulated cyber attacks. Photo: MINDEF

The swarm hit the testbeds at the same time and at speed, so that defenders could see how fast and how wide such an attack spreads. On the other side, the DIS trialled a fully agentic AI Blue Team meant

to respond at machine speed against the same threats. Its tools were built in-house by the Singapore Armed Forcesâ?? Cyber Defence Test and Experimentation Centre (CyTEC). Human participants were also handed AI-enabled defence tools to get used to them.

Who is defending what

CIDeX is in its fifth year and covers the 11 Critical Information Infrastructure sectors: government, infocomm, energy, aviation, maritime, land transport, healthcare, banking and finance, water, security and emergency, and media. The exercise targets both the IT networks and the operational technology that runs physical systems, such as industrial control systems, SCADA and programmable logic controllers.

More than 250 participants from the DIS, CSA and 44 other organisations took part this year. Blue Teams defend their own sectorâ??s digital infrastructure against live simulated attacks from a planning and control team drawn from CSA, DIS, DSTA, GovTech, IMDA and LTA. New aviation and healthcare testbeds were added this year, along with an expanded multi-cloud testbed, joining maritime, energy, telco, land and water.

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It was also the first year that Operationally Ready National Servicemen from the DIS Sectoral Cyber Defence Teams took part. They lead the Blue Teams, which is meant to tighten how the SAF works with each sector.



More than 250 participants from the DIS, CSA and 44 other organisations take part. Photo: MINDEF

Why an agentic Blue Team

Brigadier General Clarence Cai, Commander of the Defence Cyber Command and Defence Cyber Chief, said: â??At this yearâ??s CIDeX, we trialled a fully agentic Blue Team for the first time because we think that this is going to become the fundamental new reality of cybersecurity.â?•

CSAâ??s Deputy Chief Executive (National Cyber Resilience), Justiin Ang, said exercises like CIDeX are how the agency works with partners â??to stay ahead of the threat curveâ?•, by â??stress-testing our defences, building interoperability, and ensuring our defenders are prepared for the threats of today and tomorrow.â?•

Amazon Web Services, Check Point Software Technologies, Google Cloud, Splunk and Wiz helped prepare the exercise with tools and training. On the sidelines, the Defence Cyber Command signed memoranda of understanding with Check Point, SentinelOne and Singapore Polytechnic.

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SMS Tan Kiat How (third from right) and MOS Desmond Choo (fourth from right) are briefed on AI at CIDeX. Photo: MINDEF

Senior Minister of State for Digital Development and Information Tan Kiat How and Minister of State for Defence Desmond Choo visited on 19 November and watched a demonstration of the CyTEC tools.

Results from the agentic Blue Team trial have not been published.

Date Created
21/11/2026
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