

South Korean police bust ring accused of using AI to steal 8.2 million pieces of data

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SEOUL, Oct. 26 (Yonhap) -- Police have busted a cybercrime ring that allegedly stole over 8 million pieces of personal information from dozens of businesses by using artificial intelligence (AI), officials said Monday.

Seven suspects allegedly stole 8.2 million pieces of personal data and other internal records from over 90 entities, including hospitals, private academies and businesses, until recently from September last year, according to the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency.

The group is suspected of using AI tools to hack 60 of the targets and attempting to extort some of them.

Of the targeted entities, 38 suffered losses, with the group demanding a combined 360 million won (US\$272,000) from them.

Police said the group's 32-year-old ring leader was referred to the prosecution on Friday while he was under physical detention. The other suspects are facing further questioning.

The ringleader, a self-taught hacker, learned about hacking skills by working at a security company, where the suspect was in charge of mock hacking attacks.

Authorities have recently been on alert over cybercrime suspected of employing AI tools, including a series of high-profile attacks targeting local financial institutions.

This photo, provided by the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency on Oct. 26, 2026, shows a suspect (R) accused of hacking into businesses and stealing personal information by using generative artificial intelligence. (PHOTO NOT FOR SALE) (Yonhap)

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