



Pakistan Telecom Authority Headquarters, Islamabad

PTA Cyber Security Advisory No. 192

27-06-2023

**Name:** Adware Apps Posing as Cracked Versions of Popular Apps Target Android Devices

**Threat Classification:** Mobile Security / Malvertising

**Affected Software / Services:**

- Android devices

**Summary:**

More than 60,000 adware apps targeting Android devices have been discovered masquerading as cracked versions of popular applications. The campaign, active since October 2022, aims to aggressively push adware to generate revenue. However, threat actors involved in the campaign can easily switch tactics to distribute other types of malware such as banking Trojans or ransomware.

<b>Severity</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Attack Vector</b>	<b>Network, Adware</b>

The adware apps, once installed, remain hidden and display a message claiming unavailability in the user's region, while secretly activating malicious activities in the background.

**Recommendations:**

- Users should only download apps from official and trusted sources such as the Google Play Store. It is essential to exercise caution while searching for and downloading apps, especially cracked or modded versions, as they often contain malware.
- In case of any incident, please report to this office, through PTA CERT Portal and email.