

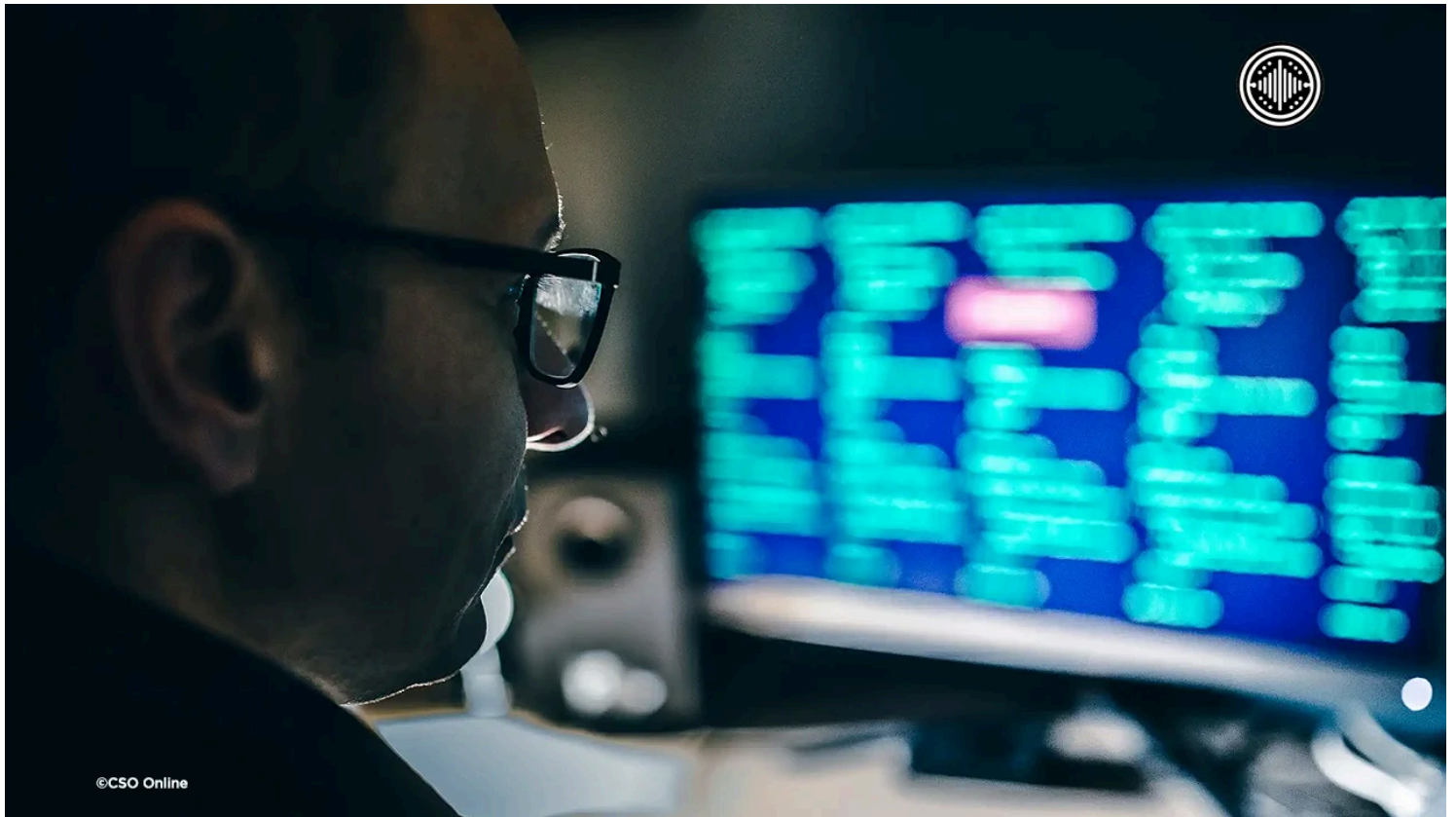
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LuBian Bitcoin Heist Becomes Largest in History

August 3, 2025

– Categories: *Crypto*



A cyberattack on Chinese mining pool LuBian has been confirmed as the largest Bitcoin (BTC) theft ever recorded, according to blockchain analytics firm Arkham Intelligence. The hack, which took place on December 28, 2020, resulted in the theft of 127,426 BTC, valued at roughly \$3.5 billion at the time. This massive breach went undisclosed until recently, making it a shocking revelation for the crypto industry.

At the time of the incident, LuBian was the sixth-largest Bitcoin mining pool in the world. Nearly 90% of its BTC reserves were drained before the company managed to secure the

remaining 11,886 BTC in recovery wallets. Neither LuBian nor the hacker disclosed the breach publicly, allowing the stolen funds to remain hidden in plain sight for nearly five years.

Arkham's forensic team traced the movement of the stolen funds through thousands of transactions. They discovered that LuBian had embedded 1,516 OP_RETURN messages, a method for attaching arbitrary data to blockchain transactions, to wallet addresses associated with the attacker. These messages, which cost LuBian around 1.4 BTC to send, were likely part of a failed attempt to communicate with or trace the hacker.

The likely cause of the breach, according to Arkham, was a vulnerability in LuBian's private key generation method. The algorithm used may have been susceptible to brute-force attacks, which involve attempting numerous combinations until the correct key is found. This would mean the hacker didn't need insider access, just advanced computing power and knowledge of flawed encryption techniques.

In today's market, the stolen Bitcoin is valued at approximately \$14.5 billion, further cementing this breach as the largest in crypto history. It surpasses the February 2025 ByBit exchange hack, where attackers stole \$1.5 billion by exploiting a developer's compromised Amazon Web Services (AWS) credentials. That attack, traced back to malware on a SafeWallet developer's machine, had previously been considered the biggest crypto theft.

The LuBian incident also comes on the heels of other significant breaches, including an April 2025 case in which an elderly individual lost \$330 million worth of Bitcoin to a social engineering scam. That money was funneled through more than 300 separate wallets, with only \$7 million recovered by authorities.

These events expose growing vulnerabilities within the cryptocurrency ecosystem, especially in platforms that fail to prioritize cybersecurity. As Bitcoin and other digital assets grow in value, the incentive for hackers continues to rise. The LuBian breach serves as a critical warning for the entire industry: weak encryption, poor key management, and lack of transparency create an ideal environment for cybercriminals to thrive.