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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-59922

Title: The Race Against Zero-Day Exploits: How Continuous Monitoring Can Shrink the Attack Window for the Kingdom's Critical Energy Infrastructure.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Id: JPR-421

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

The manuscript presents a relevant and timely review of how continuous monitoring can reduce the exposure of critical energy infrastructure to zero-day exploits, with particular reference to Saudi Arabia. It provides a systematic integrative review of thirty journal articles and examines the national cybersecurity controls applicable to critical infrastructure and operational technology. The proposed five-layer framework integrates asset-aware network detection, event correlation, threat intelligence, exploit-likelihood prioritisation and replica testing to support early detection and containment without depending solely on vendor patches. The discussion is logically organised, and the distinction between supportive, mixed and limited evidence adds value to the analysis. The illustrative attack-window timeline also helps explain the practical application of the proposed framework. However, minor revision is required to improve the transparency and reproducibility of the literature search and selection process, clarify the basis for assessing evidence strength, and further distinguish the proposed framework's applicability from its actual validation in Saudi energy facilities. Overall, the manuscript addresses an important cybersecurity concern and offers a useful conceptual contribution to the protection of critical energy infrastructure.