

Thailand arrests infamous hacker wanted by Switzerland

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This picture published by Moroccan newspapers on September 3, 2005 shows Farid Essebar

An infamous computer hacker has been arrested in Thailand at the request of Switzerland on suspicion of hacking into bank computer systems in Europe, an official said Tuesday.

Farid Essebar, who has dual Moroccan-Russian nationality, was detained in Bangkok last week, according to Police Colonel Songsak Raksaksakul of the Department of Special Investigation, Thailand's equivalent of the FBI.

"He is wanted under an international arrest warrant for deception and hacking the IT systems of [financial institutions](#)," Songsak told AFP.

A Thai court will now decide whether to extradite the 27-year-old suspect to Switzerland, which sought the international warrant.

Police are searching for two more Russian suspects from the same gang believed to be in Thailand.

In 2006 Essebar was sentenced by a court in Morocco to two years in prison following his arrest at the request of the FBI.

He was accused of having corrupted the computer systems of leading banks, technology companies and media organisations worldwide with the Zotob virus.

Zotob allowed its creators to control infected computers from afar and prevented the machines' owners from accessing anti-virus web sites.

The television channels CNN International and ABC News, the New York Times newspaper, computer giant Microsoft and San Francisco airport were among those affected.

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