

Czechs arrest Russian hacker sought by United States (Update)

October 19 2016, by Karel Janicek

Czech police have arrested a Russian hacker suspected of cyberattacks in the United States, officials said on Wednesday.

Police said an international warrant for the man, who was not named, was issued by Interpol and that officers cooperated with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation on the case.

Hours after the arrest was made public, the professional networking service LinkedIn suggested that the arrest was tied to a 2012 breach of member information. A spokesman for the U.S. Justice Department declined to confirm that or comment on a possible connection.

"Following the 2012 breach of LinkedIn member information, we have remained actively involved with the FBI's case to pursue those responsible," the company said in a statement Wednesday. "We are thankful for the hard work and dedication of the FBI in its efforts to locate and capture the parties believed to be responsible for this criminal activity."

In May, LinkedIn said that the 2012 breach resulted in more than 100 million of its users' passwords being compromised—vastly more than previously thought. The business social network said that it believes to be true a purported hacker's claim that 117 million user emails and passwords were stolen in the breach.

Police spokesman Jozef Bocan said the suspect was arrested in a Prague

hotel. After the arrest the suspect collapsed, received first aid treatment and was hospitalized, Bocan said.

Another police spokesman, David Schoen, told The Associated Press the arrest took place on Oct. 5 and that police delayed releasing information about it for "tactical" reasons.

Police video from the arrest, obtained by the AP, identified the man only as Yevgeniy N.

In a Wednesday statement, the FBI said the man was "suspected of conducting criminal activities targeting U.S. interests," but didn't give any more details. "As cybercrime can originate anywhere in the world, international cooperation is crucial to successfully defeat cyber adversaries," it said.

Prague's Municipal Court will now have to decide on his extradition to the United States, with Justice Minister Robert Pelikan having the final say. Russian officials, however, are demanding that the suspect be handed over to them.

Spokeswoman Marketa Puci said the court ruled on Oct. 12 that the man will remain in detention until the extradition hearing. No date has yet been set.

U.S. authorities have two months to deliver to their Czech counterparts all the documents necessary for the Czech authorities to decide on the extradition request.

Stepanka Zenklova, spokeswoman for Prague's state prosecution, said U.S. officials have not officially asked for the man's extradition.

Russia's TASS and RIA Novosti news agencies quoted Prague's Russian

Embassy spokesman Alexey Kolmakov as saying that it was insisting that the suspect be handed over to Russia.

"The embassy has been taking all necessary efforts to protect the interests of this Russian citizen. We are in contact with his attorney," the embassy statement said.

"Russia repudiates Washington's policy of imposing its extraterritorial jurisdiction on all countries. We insist that the detainee is handed over to Russia."

Justice Ministry Tereza Schejbalova said her ministry has not received any official request from Russia in this case.

The U.S. has accused Russia of coordinating the theft and disclosure of emails from the Democratic National Committee and other institutions and individuals in the U.S. to influence the outcome of the election. Russia has vigorously denied that.

There was no indication this case was connected to that accusation.

© 2016 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Czechs arrest Russian hacker sought by United States (Update) (2016, October 19) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-10-linkedin-hacker-tied-breach.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.