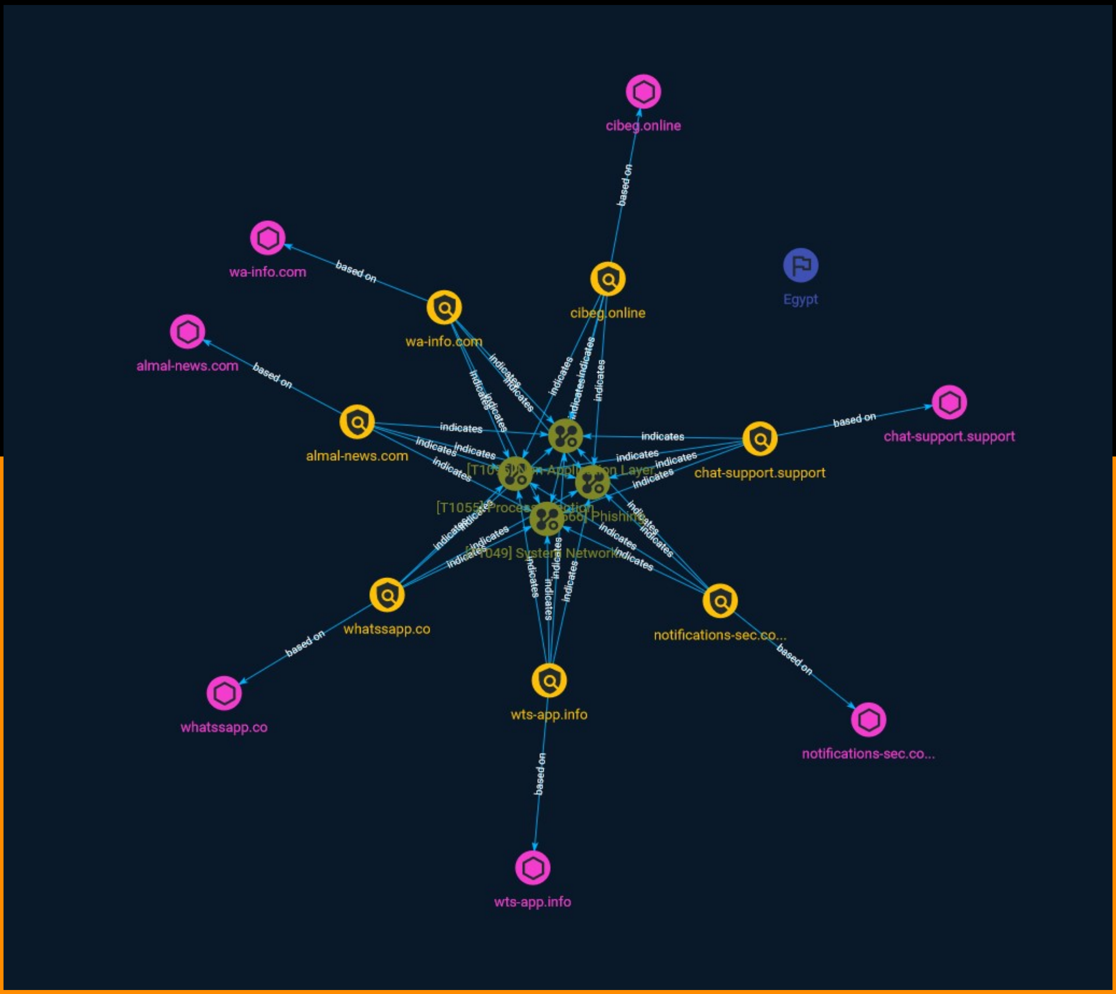
Sep 25 2023

NETMANAGEIT

Intelligence Report

PREDATOR IN THE WIRES: Ahmed Eltantawy Targeted with Predator Spyware After Announcing Presidential Ambitions



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Overview

Description

Between May and September 2023, former Egyptian MP Ahmed Eltantawy was targeted with Cytrox's Predator spyware via links sent on SMS and WhatsApp. The targeting took place after Eltantawy publicly stated his plans to run for President in the 2024 Egyptian elections.

Confidence

This value represents the confidence in the correctness of the data contained within this report.

15 / 100

Attack-Pattern

Name
Process Injection
ID
T1055
Description
Adversaries may inject code into processes in order to evade process-based defenses as well as possibly elevate privileges. Process injection is a method of executing arbitrary code in the address space of a separate live process. Running code in the context of another process may allow access to the process's memory, system/network resources, and possibly elevated privileges. Execution via process injection may also evade detection from security products since the execution is masked under a legitimate process. There are many different ways to inject code into a process, many of which abuse legitimate functionalities. These implementations exist for every major OS but are typically platform specific. More sophisticated samples may perform multiple process injections to segment modules and further evade detection, utilizing named pipes or other inter-process communication (IPC) mechanisms as a communication channel.
Name
Phishing
ID
T1566

Description

Adversaries may send phishing messages to gain access to victim systems. All forms of phishing are electronically delivered social engineering. Phishing can be targeted, known as spearphishing. In spearphishing, a specific individual, company, or industry will be targeted by the adversary. More generally, adversaries can conduct non-targeted phishing, such as in mass malware spam campaigns. Adversaries may send victims emails containing malicious attachments or links, typically to execute malicious code on victim systems. Phishing may also be conducted via third-party services, like social media platforms. Phishing may also involve social engineering techniques, such as posing as a trusted source, as well as evasive techniques such as removing or manipulating emails or metadata/headers from compromised accounts being abused to send messages (e.g., [Email Hiding Rules](https://attack.mitre.org/techniques/T1564/008)).(Citation: Microsoft OAuth Spam 2022)(Citation: Palo Alto Unit 42 VBA Infostealer 2014) Another way to accomplish this is by forging or spoofing(Citation: Proofpoint-spoof) the identity of the sender which can be used to fool both the human recipient as well as automated security tools.(Citation: cyberproof-double-bounce) Victims may also receive phishing messages that instruct them to call a phone number where they are directed to visit a malicious URL, download malware,(Citation: sygnia Luna Month)(Citation: CISA Remote Monitoring and Management Software) or install adversary-accessible remote management tools onto their computer (i.e., [User Execution](https://attack.mitre.org/techniques/T1204)).(Citation: Unit42 Luna Moth)

Name

Non-Application Layer Protocol

ID

T1095

Description

Adversaries may use an OSI non-application layer protocol for communication between host and C2 server or among infected hosts within a network. The list of possible protocols is extensive.(Citation: Wikipedia OSI) Specific examples include use of network layer protocols, such as the Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP), transport layer protocols, such as the User Datagram Protocol (UDP), session layer protocols, such as Socket Secure (SOCKS), as well as redirected/tunneled protocols, such as Serial over LAN (SOL). ICMP communication between hosts is one example.(Citation: Cisco Synful Knock Evolution)

Because ICMP is part of the Internet Protocol Suite, it is required to be implemented by all IP-compatible hosts.(Citation: Microsoft ICMP) However, it is not as commonly monitored as other Internet Protocols such as TCP or UDP and may be used by adversaries to hide communications.

Name

System Network Connections Discovery

ID

T1049

Description

Adversaries may attempt to get a listing of network connections to or from the compromised system they are currently accessing or from remote systems by querying for information over the network. An adversary who gains access to a system that is part of a cloud-based environment may map out Virtual Private Clouds or Virtual Networks in order to determine what systems and services are connected. The actions performed are likely the same types of discovery techniques depending on the operating system, but the resulting information may include details about the networked cloud environment relevant to the adversary's goals. Cloud providers may have different ways in which their virtual networks operate.(Citation: Amazon AWS VPC Guide)(Citation: Microsoft Azure Virtual Network Overview)(Citation: Google VPC Overview) Similarly, adversaries who gain access to network devices may also perform similar discovery activities to gather information about connected systems and services. Utilities and commands that acquire this information include [netstat](https://attack.mitre.org/software/S0104), "net use," and "net session" with [Net](https://attack.mitre.org/software/S0039). In Mac and Linux, [netstat](https://attack.mitre.org/software/S0104) and `lsof` can be used to list current connections. `who -a` and `w` can be used to show which users are currently logged in, similar to "net session". Additionally, built-in features native to network devices and [Network Device CLI](https://attack.mitre.org/techniques/T1059/008) may be used (e.g. `show ip sockets`, `show tcp brief`).(Citation: US-CERT-TA18-106A)

Indicator

Name
almal-news.com
Pattern Type
stix
Pattern
[domain-name:value = 'almal-news.com']
Name
chat-support.support
Pattern Type
stix
Pattern
[domain-name:value = 'chat-support.support']
Name
wts-app.info

Pattern Type
stix

Pattern
[domain-name:value = 'wts-app.info']

Name
wa-info.com

Pattern Type
stix

Pattern
[domain-name:value = 'wa-info.com']

Name
notifications-sec.com

Pattern Type
stix

Pattern
[domain-name:value = 'notifications-sec.com']

Name
whatssapp.co

Pattern Type

stix

Pattern

[domain-name:value = 'whatssapp.co']

Name

cibeg.online

Pattern Type

stix

Pattern

[domain-name:value = 'cibeg.online']

Country

Name
Egypt

Domain-Name

Value
wa-info.com
whatssapp.co
wts-app.info
cibeg.online
almal-news.com
chat-support.support
notifications-sec.com

External References

- https://otx.alienvault.com/pulse/6511d8fea8829327cfa77a75
- https://citizenlab.ca/2023/09/predator-in-the-wires-ahmed-eltantawy-targeted-with-predator-spyware-after-announcing-presidential-ambitions/