The Rakyat Post ™

Targeted attacks against MAS website difficult to combat, says analyst

The most frequent motives of hackers are fame and greed, according to a security analyst. Hackers often make some part of stolen information public to prove the seriousness of their threats and then try to sell other parts of information back to victims or competitors.

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 26, 2015:

While the threat by hackers against Malaysia Airlines (MAS) this morning was "real and serious", it wasn't right yet to speculate whether the issue posed a danger to the security of the passengers.

This was because it was not known yet what MAS was doing to address the situation, said InfoWatch international sales director Vadim Kuznetsov, when contacted by *The Rakyat Post*.

"Companies dealing with large volumes of customers, like retailers, telecom operators or airlines, need to pay significant attention to information security and apply different technical solutions to protect their customers' personal data," added Kuznetsov.
He said such target attacks were difficult to combat.

A set of technical solutions, organisational measures and specialised solutions were necessary to prevent such attacks at an early stage, he added.

When asked what MAS' next move should be in the current situation, Kuznetsov said the ariline needed to secure the leak through better defences and early detection as there was a leak of confidential data.
"The next and trickier part is if MAS chooses to retrieve the data through negotiations, or to take preventive measures when it comes to scheduling.

"There is also the need to inform customers that their data may have been compromised."

Commenting on the hackers, Kuznetsov said the most frequent motives of hackers were fame and greed.

"Hackers often make some part of stolen information public to prove the seriousness of their threats and then try to sell other parts of information back to victims or competitors.
"As we can see, the threat from these hackers was more than real.

"Hackers have already released some confidential data that they claim they got as a result of the targeted attack."

Kuznetsov added that such threats and targeted attacks on enterprises, resulting in data leaks, had been growing over the past few years.

It was hard to tell at this point what Malaysia needed to do in terms of cyber security preparedness.

MAS' website was hacked this morning by a group called Lizard Squad.

MAS issued a statement saying that user data was secure and only its Domain Name System (DNS) was compromised. However, the group claimed that the airline was lying. The group shared a link to a picture of what looked like an email account bearing MAS and Firefly bookings.

One of the bookings was named "Dato Sri Mustapa Mohamed, urgent", most likely referring to International Trade Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

There was also a screenshot of a booking made by a Ms Sze Kin bearing the person's email address, mobile number and entire booking.

[Source](#)