Fake nude celebrities links crash New Zealand internet

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND: It is believed a handful of computer users clicked on links last week believing they would take them to the illicit images of nude celebrities, but instead they inadvertently installed malware triggering a crippling internet attack.

Nude pictures, supposedly of Jennifer Lawrence, set of a huge malware attack that shut down Spark's internet service in New Zealand. Image: Pictures and Quotes

It took telecommunications company Spark, the rebranded Telecom Corp., until Sunday (7 September) to fully repair what it termed a "dynamic" cyber-attack that overloaded its system providing services to more than 600,000 customers.

The intimate celebrity photos, which included actress Jennifer Lawrence and singers Avril Lavigne and Rihanna, were stolen from a cloud storage system.

Spark tweeted it was aware that when people clicked on some links they inadvertently installed malware generating a high amount of traffic to overseas sites.

Computer security specialists Trend Micro issued an alert shortly before the attack began warning users not to open the links related to the nude celebrities.

Video converter is actually malware

"For obvious reasons, clicking on links to 'naked celebrity' photos, or opening email attachments would be a very bad idea right now. Expect criminals to ride this bandwagon immediately," it said.

"Our scanning brought to our attention some freshly-concocted schemes targeting those looking for the photos from the leak.

"The first threat we found hails from Twitter, in the form of a tweet being posted with hashtags that contain the name of one of the leak's victims, Jennifer Lawrence," Trend Micro warned

The comapny said users who clicked the link offering to show a video of the actress were directed to download a "video converter" that was actually malicious software.

New Zealand authorities said they did not know who was behind the attack, which was launched from outside the country, and the malware was generating denial-of-service attacks towards Europe.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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