Telegram CEO issues warning about WhatsApp security

Description

USA: The mobile messenger service is a surveillance tool and will never be safe for users, Pavel Durov claimed

The latest vulnerabilities discovered in the WhatsApp messenger are a reminder that the Meta-owned product is first and foremost a surveillance tool, the man behind the competing Telegram app has warned.

Pavel Durov blasted WhatsApp in a post on Thursday. It came in response to a developer's report about two new flaws discovered in its programming.

Both vulnerabilities allow an interested party to plant malware on a device running WhatsApp. A user needs to answer a video call or play a specially crafted video file to be exposed, potentially giving hackers full access to his or her phone.

According to Durov, the new discoveries fit a long pattern of WhatsApp posing a critical security risk to users. He explained that *"it's almost certain that a new security flaw already exists there"* because such vulnerabilities are *"planted backdoors."*

"If one backdoor is discovered and has to be removed, another one is added," he claimed, urging people to read his own 2019 article about what he believes to be the inherently dangerous nature of the messaging service.

Durov noted at the time that WhatsApp was designed for surveillance purposes and was tailored to the needs of US government agencies like the FBI. He said claims that developers put user privacy at the forefront was false advertising.

In addition to recurring vulnerabilities, he cited the heavily-encouraged feature, which allows users to store conversations in the cloud. The archives are not properly encrypted, and the government can get access to them via subpoenas, Durov noted.

In his post, the Telegram developer warned that not even wealthy individuals like Jeff Bezos are safe. He was referring to the reported hack on the phone of the Amazon founder in 2018 allegedly via a message sent from a number used by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

"If you have WhatsApp installed on your phone, all your data from every app on your device is accessible," Durov claimed.

He urged people to delete the app and switch to any messenger that takes their safety seriously. He did so years ago, the tech executive added.

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1. Main
2. Science-Tech-AI-Medical & Gen. Research

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