

Novaya Gazeta Europe Says Journalists' Phones May Have Been Hacked With Pegasus Spyware

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Pegasus spyware may have been used to hack the cellphones of journalists from the independent Novaya Gazeta Europe news website, the outlet [reported](#) Thursday.

The disclosure comes one day after Meduza, another leading independent Russian news website, said the spyware had been detected on the phone of its CEO Galina Timchenko in the first known case of Pegasus being used to hack a Russian journalist's phone.

Novaya Gazeta Europe CEO Maria Epifanova and Novaya Gazeta Baltics journalist Yevgeny Pavlov said they both received alerts from Apple that their phones had been hacked by "state-sponsored actors."

Epifanova said she received the alert from Apple that her phone had been hacked on Aug. 29. She complied with the company's instructions to protect her phone, but did not pursue the

matter further.

Related article: [Pegasus Spyware Found on Meduza CEO's Phone](#)

Pavlov, a Latvian citizen, told Novaya Gazeta Europe he received a similar email from Apple on the same day. He did not consider the alert to be important at the time but contacted the digital rights group Access Now after reading about Timchenko's case.

While Pavlov's phone did not behave unusually, Epifanova said that on Sept. 3 she received a Telegram alert saying that someone had logged into her account from Cairo. She has since changed her password.

Separately, Yevgeny Erlich, the former editor-in-chief of the Baltiya program on the Current Time broadcaster, said his phone may also have been hacked, [reporting](#) that his phone randomly heats up and creates group chats with his friends on messaging apps.

Pegasus spyware, designed by the Israeli firm NSO Group, can access messages and record calls and videos from a cellphone without its owner knowing. It can infect devices remotely without any action from the targeted individual.

Novaya Gazeta Europe said it could not confirm whether Pegasus was used to gain access to Epifanova's phone, but that it had contacted Access Now for clarification.

Novaya Gazeta Europe and Meduza, which are based in European Union and NATO member Latvia, have both been outlawed in Russia as "undesirable" organizations.

The suspected hackings underscore the continued threats to Russian journalists who fled abroad amid their country's crackdown on independent voices.

All of the recent victims live in Latvia and use Latvian SIM cards.

Meduza suggested that the Baltic country, along with Estonia and Germany, could have been behind the hackings. According to Citizen Lab, all three countries are clients of Pegasus.

Latvia's State Security Service told Meduza that it "[does not] have information about a possible attack on Galina Timchenko's smartphone."

Meduza also suggested that Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, which are also Pegasus clients, could have hacked Timchenko's phone on Moscow's request.

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