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Moscow Denies It's Behind Freezer Attacks at European Supermarkets

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European supermarkets hit by new fridge cyberattack, in Linkebeek near Brussels. **REUTERS / Stephanie Lecocq**

The Kremlin on Thursday dismissed growing speculation that Russia may have been behind recent cyberattacks on European supermarket refrigeration units that spoiled millions of euros worth of frozen goods.

In a series of attacks targeting retailers across Europe over the past three weeks, unknown hackers gained remote access to cooling systems in nearly 100 stores across at least 11 countries, including Belgium, Sweden, Germany and the U.K., turning up freezer temperatures as high as 55 degrees Celsius (131 degrees Fahrenheit).

EU officials called the freezer hacks a deliberate attempt to disrupt the continent's food supply network but did not blame any country or group.

The BBC reported that online posts by pro-Russia hacker groups Noname057(16) and Z-Pentest Alliance claiming credit for the cyberattacks have only fueled speculation about

Moscow's possible role in the costly disruptions, though some analysts questioned their involvement.

Cyber threat researchers told the Financial Times that a Russian-linked group was "very likely" associated with the latest attacks given earlier hacks of freezers at several U.S. military bases in August. The U.S. Justice Department also accused a pro-Russian hacking group of disabling a Californian meat processing plant's refrigeration systems in 2024.

"These are absurd claims," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters during a daily briefing when asked about Danish and Swedish media reports alleging the involvement of at least two pro-Russian groups in the latest freezer hacks.

"As always, they're backed up by absolutely no reasoning, no evidence whatsoever, and yet here we have such baseless accusations against our country, implicating it in everything," he said.

The freezer hacks also come as European airlines face a growing number of hoax bomb threats that have forced some passenger planes to make unplanned or escorted landings. Some analysts have speculated that the seemingly separate incidents may be part of a wider operation by groups linked to either Russia or Iran to disrupt life across the continent.

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