Hacktivists Breach Iranian Surveillance System

Emma Woollacott Senior Contributor ⓘ

Follow

💬 0

Aug 29, 2023, 05:57am EDT

TEHRAN, IRAN - APRIL 13: People walk on street as cameras are placed in public areas to detect women ... [+] ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES

Hacking group GhostSec says it's successfully taken down Iran's privacy-invading software Fanap Behnama, revealing details about its surveillance capabilities.

The group has exposed 20GB of data, including source code, relating to face recognition and motion detection systems from Iranian software company Fanap.

While Fanap was initially established as a native Iranian banking system, it has been apparently expanded into a comprehensive surveillance system used by the Iranian government to monitor its citizens.

GhostSec says it plans to make the data public, and has set up a dedicated Telegram channel called Iran Exposed to share further information. It says it plans to publish segments of the Behnama code, including various components such as configuration files and API data, and says it will provide in-depth explanations once all the data has been uploaded.

"This is not about technology and software, it's about the privacy of the people, civil liberties and a balance of power," says GhostSec.

"Also publishing the source code for the public presenting this Fanap's lovely AI face recognition and various other privacy invading features and tools. We're simply making the fight a bit more equal."

The group says it's uncovered tools for facial recognition-based video surveillance, used in the Pasargad Bank Car GPS and tracking system, along with a car numberplate recognition system—which could have implications for hijab alerts—and a facial recognition system used for ID card printing.

MORE FROM FORBES ADVISOR

Best Travel Insurance Companies

By **Amy Danise** Editor

Best Covid-19 Travel Insurance Plans

By **Amy Danise** Editor

It is also claiming that the Fanap system is linked to the Single Sign-On (SSO) platform employed by the regime for online user authentication.

"This integration compiles intricate aspects of citizens' lives, not only to determine access privileges for services but also to construct a virtual profile for facial recognition," says cybersecurity firm Cyberint.

Forbes Daily: Get our best stories, exclusive reporting and essential analysis of the day's news in your inbox every weekday.

Email address	Sign Up

By signing up, you accept and agree to our Terms of Service (including the class action waiver and arbitration provisions), and you acknowledge our Privacy Statement.

"The group maintains that this evaluation is rooted in the software code, substantiating indisputable evidence of the software's capabilities and deployment."

GhostSec initially claimed responsibility for shutting down the fanap-infra.com website, but later revealed that another website associated with the Fanap software company was only accessible within Iran; meanwhile, the main GitHub repository of the company was made private, presumably in response to the GhostSec attack.
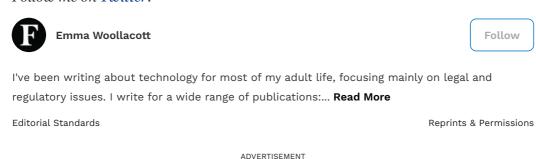
"That mean[s], they are scared. That mean[s] it's time to hit harder," says GhostSec.

Earlier this year, Iran introduced a new "hijab law," monitoring women through surveillance cameras to enforce the wearing of the hijab in public places and in vehicles.

In a statement, the police force said it would "not tolerate any kind of individual or collective behavior and action in violation of the law."

However, women have been repeatedly defying the rules, which have also been criticized by legal experts both within and outside the country.

Follow me on Twitter.

F   **Emma Woollacott**   [Follow]

I've been writing about technology for most of my adult life, focusing mainly on legal and regulatory issues. I write for a wide range of publications:... **Read More**

Editorial Standards   Reprints & Permissions

Join Our Conversation

One Community. Many Voices. Create a free account to share your thoughts. Read our community guidelines here

Commenting as **Guest**   🔔   Log in

Be the first to comment...

No one seems to have shared their thoughts on this topic yet

Leave a comment so your voice will be heard first.

Powered by 🌀 OpenWeb   Terms | Privacy | Feedback