

United States Department of Justice

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Central District of California

Orange County Man Suspected of Hacking Computers Arrested on Federal Charges Related to Demands for Sexually Explicit Videos from Women and Teenage Girls

LOS ANGELES—A man who claims to be affiliated with an underground gang of hackers was arrested today on federal extortion charges that allege he hacked into dozens of computers, obtained personal data about people using the computers, and then demanded sexually explicit videos from female victims in exchange for keeping their personal information private.

Luis Mijangos, 31, of Santa Ana, California, was arrested without incident at his residence by special agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The arrest of Mijangos, which was pursuant to a criminal complaint filed last week in United States District Court, follows a six-month FBI investigation into his involvement in computer hacking, identity theft, and video voyeurism. FBI computer forensics experts have determined Mijangos infected more than 100 computers that were used by approximately 230 individuals, at least 44 of whom were juveniles.

The federal investigation into Mijangos resulted from a referral from the Glendale Police Department, which received a complaint from a victim and realized the matter involved a number of victims and may be the work of a sophisticated computer hacker.

“This case is another example of local police and FBI agents collaborating to solve a crime,” said FBI Assistant Director in Charge, Steven M. Martinez. “The investigation leading to the extensive network of victims in this case and culminating with today’s arrest of Mr. Mijangos would not have been possible without information provided by the Glendale Police Department, whose detectives worked this investigation jointly with FBI agents. Mr. Mijangos is alleged to have exploited new technology to exert control over young women whom he extorted, and many who were unwitting victims.”

The affidavit in support of the complaint outlines a series of schemes that all involve Mijangos using peer-to-peer networks to infect computers around the world with malicious computer code. Mijangos induced victims to download the malware onto their computers by making the files appear to be popular songs. After the victims downloaded the malware, Mijangos was able to control their computers, allowing him to send instant messages containing malware from those computers to other people in the victims’ address books. These later victims thought they were receiving messages from friends or family members.

Mijangos infected victim computers for a variety of purposes, according to the complaint, that outlines several lines of criminal conduct.