



JULY 2024

A GNLU CENTRE FOR LAW AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

Monthly Newsletter - TechTalk



Gujarat National Law University



Welcome to the GNLU Centre for Law and Technology Newsletter!
Serving as the conduit to the dynamic intersection of science, technology, and the law, our mission is to provide updates on the latest developments, promote academic excellence, and empower legal professionals to navigate this ever-evolving landscape. Join us in bridging the gap between these crucial fields and shaping the future of legal practice in our interconnected world.

↓ Enclosed in this newsletter are the following highlights:

Updates on law and technology, showcasing the latest developments in this ever-evolving field. Our curated content might just spark your next research topic idea. Stay informed and stay inspired and keep reading!

DATE OF RELEASE: 23.08.2024

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Greece's Supreme Court has dropped an investigation into the country's intelligence service (EYP) over alleged use of illegal spyware, citing lack of evidence, the Athens News Agency reported Tuesday. The case arose from claims made in 2022 by an opposition leader and a journalist that they had been subjected to state surveillance through phone malware. Journalist Thanasis Koukakis, who court documents confirm was monitored by EYP, alleged his phone was infected with Predator spyware, developed by Cytrox, a company within the Greece-based Intellexa group.

An independent telecom privacy authority, ADAE, subsequently detected Predator traces on dozens of devices belonging to politicians, journalists, and business figures.

However, the prosecutor's statement, as reported by the Athens News Agency, concluded: "There was absolutely no involvement of any state agency, including the National Intelligence Service (EYP) ... or any government official with the spyware Predator or any other similar software."

The allegations, emerging amid growing EU concerns over spyware use, raised questions about privacy protections in Greece and led to the resignations of then-EYP chief Panagiotis Kontoleon and the prime minister's general secretary. Kontoleon, who headed EYP from 2019 to 2022, denied in May that the agency had employed such malware, according to court documents reviewed by Reuters.

The prosecutor recommended further investigation into accusations against private companies involved with Predator. Intellexa founder Tal Dilian, who testified in July, has denied any wrongdoing or involvement in the case. This development marks a significant turn in a controversy that has gripped Greek politics for nearly two years, potentially shifting focus from state agencies to private sector actors in the ongoing spyware debate.

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ABA ISSUES FIRST ETHICS GUIDELINES ON GENERATIVE AI USE IN LEGAL PRACTICE

The American Bar Association (ABA) has released its first formal ethics opinion on the use of generative artificial intelligence in legal practice, urging lawyers to exercise caution and maintain ethical standards when employing these tools.

Released Monday, the opinion from the ABA's ethics and professional responsibility committee emphasizes that while AI can enhance efficiency, it also poses risks such as generating inaccurate information. The committee stressed that lawyers must "fully consider" their ethical obligations to clients, including duties related to competence, confidentiality, communication, and fees.

As law firms and legal professionals increasingly adopt AI for tasks like legal research, document drafting, and case analysis, the legal tech sector has seen significant investment growth. However, this technological shift has not been without controversy. The ABA's guidance comes in response to several incidents where AI use led to ethical lapses. These include lawyers citing non-existent cases or presenting inaccurate analyses to courts. In one recent case, a federal judge in Virginia demanded explanations from lawyers who submitted filings containing "fictitious cases" and fabricated quotations from real opinions.

While the ABA's opinions are not legally binding, they serve as influential guidelines for interpreting professional conduct rules across the United States. The committee's advice includes reviewing all AI-generated output for accuracy and considering whether to disclose AI use to clients. This guidance follows similar initiatives by several state bar associations. However, there's no uniform approach yet; the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals recently declined to adopt a proposed rule regulating generative AI use by lawyers.

Acknowledging the rapidly evolving nature of AI technology, the ABA indicated that this guidance is likely to be updated over time. As the legal profession grapples with the implications of AI, balancing its benefits with ethical considerations remains a key challenge for practitioners and regulators alike.

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03

U.S. COURT UPHOLDS FCC APPROVAL OF SPACEX STARLINK SATELLITE PLAN

A federal appeals court on Friday affirmed the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) decision to approve SpaceX's plan for deploying thousands of Starlink satellites, aimed at providing global broadband internet service.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia rejected challenges from DISH Network and an environmental group representing amateur astronomers and dark-sky advocates. DISH had contested the FCC's assessment of potential signal interference, while the astronomers argued the commission had not adhered to environmental regulations in its approval process.

This ruling follows a 2022 court decision that dismissed a separate challenge to SpaceX's plans for lower-orbit satellite deployment. In late 2022, the FCC greenlit SpaceX's request to launch up to 7,500 satellites, building on its 2018 approval for 4,425 first-generation satellites. SpaceX is now seeking authorization for a network of 29,988 satellites, dubbed the "second-generation" or Gen2 Starlink constellation.

The three-judge panel stated that the FCC's decision to license SpaceX's Gen2 Starlink satellites was "lawful and reasonable." DISH Network has not yet commented on the ruling. This development comes amid ongoing discussions about rural broadband access. In 2022, the FCC denied applications from SpaceX and LTD Broadband for Rural Digital Opportunity Fund allocations, a decision that SpaceX CEO Elon Musk's company has contested. FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel defended this decision at a recent U.S. House hearing, citing Starlink's failure to meet basic program requirements and demonstrate its ability to deliver promised services.

As SpaceX continues to expand its satellite network, the company faces both regulatory hurdles and increasing scrutiny over its role in providing global internet access. This court decision marks a significant victory for SpaceX in its ongoing efforts to revolutionize space-based internet services.

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ISRAELI PI FACES U.S. EXTRADITION HEARING IN LONDON OVER ALLEGED HACKING SCHEME

Amit Forlit, an Israeli private investigator wanted by U.S. authorities for alleged involvement in a "hacking for hire" operation, appeared in a London court on Friday as he prepares to fight extradition to the United States.

Forlit, 56, faces charges including wire fraud, conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and computer hacking. He was initially arrested at London's Heathrow Airport in April while attempting to board a flight to Israel. Although an initial extradition attempt was dismissed on a technicality, Forlit was subsequently rearrested on the same charges and released on bail after surrendering his passport and posting a £200,000 security.

During Friday's hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court, the full extradition challenge was scheduled for January. Adam Payter, representing U.S. authorities, outlined allegations that Forlit participated in a "hacking for hire scheme" between 2012 and 2019, targeting numerous individuals and organizations to access confidential business and personal information for substantial sums.

Payter also alleged that Forlit worked for an unnamed oil and gas company seeking to discredit individuals involved in climate change litigation. Forlit and his legal team declined to comment following the hearing, though in a 2022 deposition, Forlit denied ever commissioning or paying for hacking services.

Previous court proceedings revealed additional allegations, including claims that a Washington-based PR and lobbying firm paid one of Forlit's companies £16 million to gather intelligence related to the Argentinian debt crisis. Reuters reported in May that Forlit had previously informed colleagues of being questioned by FBI agents regarding his work for the Washington public affairs firm DCI Group.

This case highlights growing concerns over the use of private investigators and hacking services in corporate and political conflicts, raising questions about cybersecurity and the ethics of information gathering in the digital age.

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DELTA AIR LINES REPORTEDLY SEEKING COMPENSATION FROM MICROSOFT, CROWDSTRIKE OVER CYBER OUTAGE

Delta Air Lines is reportedly taking legal action against Microsoft and CrowdStrike following a global cyber outage that caused widespread flight disruptions earlier this month, according to CNBC.

The Atlanta-based carrier, which has been slower to recover compared to other major U.S. airlines, has reportedly hired law firm Boies Schiller Flexner to pursue compensation for the tech failure that resulted in over 2,200 flight cancellations on July 19.

The impact on Delta has been substantial, with more than 6,000 flights canceled to date, affecting hundreds of thousands of travelers. Industry analysts estimate the financial repercussions could reach into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

When contacted, a CrowdStrike spokesperson acknowledged the reports but stated they had no knowledge of a lawsuit and declined further comment. The cybersecurity firm's shares dipped approximately 2% in after-hours trading following the news.

Microsoft and Delta Air Lines have not yet responded to requests for comment on the matter. This development comes as the U.S. Transportation Department announced last week it would launch an investigation into Delta's handling of the outage and subsequent flight cancellations.

The situation highlights the increasing vulnerability of the aviation industry to cyber incidents and the potential for significant operational and financial impacts. It also underscores the complex relationships between airlines and their technology providers in an increasingly digital landscape.

As this story continues to unfold, it may have broader implications for how airlines manage their cybersecurity risks and their relationships with tech vendors in the future.

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SPOTLIGHTING RESEARCH TOPICS: EMPOWERING RESEARCH PAPER ASPIRATIONS

We understand that embarking on a journey to create impactful research papers can be both exciting and daunting. As you navigate through your academic pursuits, we're here to help illuminate your path and fuel your scholarly ambitions. This section presents a curated selection of broad research paper topics designed to spark your intellectual curiosity and inspire your next paper based on the latest developments of this month. Each topic represents an opportunity for exploration, discovery, and the potential to contribute to the ever-evolving landscape of law and technology. We believe that a well-chosen research topic is the cornerstone of a successful publication, and our aim is to empower you to make informed choices.

- *Use of malware and cyberespionage*
- *Impact of AI on the legal profession*
- *FCC regulatory authority and challenges*
- *Cybersecurity insurance and risk management*
- *Challenges of balancing national security with individual privacy rights*

MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

The news articles discussed or included in this newsletter represent the views of the respective news websites. We do not endorse or assume responsibility for the content or opinions expressed in these articles. Our purpose is to bring recent developments to your knowledge, providing a diverse range of information for your consideration. Your input matters to us, and we'd love to hear your thoughts. If you have any suggestions, ideas, or feedback on how we can improve the newsletter or if there's something specific you'd like to see in future editions, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your insights help us grow and ensure we're delivering the content you want.

Stay curious, stay informed!



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