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BEWARE KOOBFACE

New virus targets Facebook users

L. N. Revathy

Coimbatore, Jan. 4

How would you react if you get a message through Facebook saying your friend has reported you for being offensive, or if it says 'check out this video of you dancing; it's comical; we're enjoying it'.

Would you not instinctively click on the link to view the contents?

Be cautioned; you may have been exposed to the 'Koobface' virus.

This worm spreads via e-mail, operating with a tree-kind of structure. It takes commands from a multitude of vendors and attacks even before security vendors respond to it.

Once you click the URL, Koobface would prompt you to update your Flash player to view the video and if you go ahead with the update, the worm would transform your machine into zombie computers to form botnets. (Zombie computers are those that have been taken over by a hacker without the knowledge of the user.)

'A clear eye for fraud would help you avoid this mess. This virus is doing the rounds at present. A number of users in India have fallen victim to this worm, though not as many as in the US for

Facebook is more prevalent in the US. India is an Orkut-loving country," Mr Govind Ramamurthy, CEO and Managing Director, eScan said.

While cautioning users, Mr Ramamurthy said 'unsuspecting people are victims of such attacks. A majority are not even aware that they act as 'money mules' and are part of this entire illegal operation. There is an urgent need for the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to block these IPs. The ISPs have to take drastic steps to shut down and warn the bad IPs, insist on the use of legitimate software and ensure a good security system,' he said.

McAfee Labs, meanwhile, has in its Threat Prediction Report for 2010 said that cybercriminals would target social networking sites and third party applications, use complex trojans and botnets to build and execute attacks and take advantage of HTML 5 to create emerging threats.

Web evolution will give cyber criminals new opportunities to write malware, the report said.

The Lab is expecting Adobe product exploitation to surpass Microsoft Office applications in 2010.