

Megaupload's data massacred by Dutch

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND: Megaupload founder Kim Dotcom on Thursday (20 June) condemned a Dutch company's decision to delete millions of files belonging to users of his defunct website, calling it "the largest data massacre in the history of the Internet".



"Millions of personal #Megaupload files, petabytes of pictures, backups, personal and business property forever destroyed," the New Zealand-based Internet tycoon tweeted after revealing that Leaseweb had deleted files belonging to Megaupload customers in Europe from its servers.

The fate of Megaupload data has been uncertain since January last year, when US authorities shut down the file sharing site and asked New Zealand police to arrest Dotcom for alleged online piracy.

Dotcom maintains that most of the data stored on Megaupload was legitimate, non-copyright material such as personal photographs and business documents that should be returned to users.

However, it is stored on rented servers owned by hosting companies such as Haarlem-based Leaseweb, which said it could not hold the data indefinitely with no payment while the Megaupload court case drags on.

"After a year of nobody showing any interest in the servers and data we considered our options," it said in a statement.

"We did inform Megaupload about our decision to re-provision the servers," it said.

No warning over deletions

Dotcom said he was never warned the data would be wiped and repeatedly asked Leaseweb to retain it until his court case was settled.

He said other hosting companies had agreed to put Megaupload data in storage while the legal battle continues, giving users hope they might eventually get their material back.

"Let me be crystal clear. #Leaseweb has NEVER informed our legal team or anybody at #Megaupload about the deletion of servers until TODAY," he tweeted.

He said he was in tears over the situation and some of his own files needed for his defence had been deleted.

At its peak, the Megaupload empire had 50m daily visitors and accounted for four percent of all Internet traffic.

US authorities allege it netted more than US\$175m and cost copyright owners more than US\$500m by offering pirated copies of movies, TV shows and other content.

The US Justice Department and FBI hope to extradite Dotcom to face charges of racketeering, fraud, money laundering and copyright theft, which could see him jailed for up to 20 years if convicted.

The German national denies any wrongdoing and is free on bail in New Zealand ahead of his extradition hearing. He has started a new file-sharing venture called Mega.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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