



Hacker 'Guccifer' pleads guilty



Getty

By Jesse Byrnes - 05/25/16 11:57 AM EDT

The Romanian hacker who claimed to have broken into **Hillary Clinton's** personal email server on Wednesday pleaded guilty to charges of hacking and aggravated identity theft involving dozens of Americans' email and social media accounts.

Marcel Lehal Lazar, known by his online alias "Guccifer," admitted in a statement as part of his plea deal that he intentionally gained access to about 100 Americans' accounts between 2012 and 2014 without their consent.

Victims included a family member of two former presidents, a former Cabinet member, former Joint Chiefs of Staff member and a former presidential advisor, according to prosecutors.

Lazar was widely expected to plead guilty to the federal criminal charges.

This month, Lazar claimed to have also broken into Clinton's "completely unsecured" server, which he compared to "an open orchid on the internet."

Clinton's campaign has dismissed the claim, and the State Department has said it has no reason to believe the hacker.

Department of Justice officials said Lazar "admitted that in many instances, he publically released his victims' private email correspondence, medical and financial information and personal photographs."

Lazar entered his guilty plea before U.S. District Judge James C. Cacheris in the Eastern District of Virginia. The judge set his sentencing for Sept. 1.

Assistant Attorney General Leslie Caldwell said in a statement that Lazar "sought fame" by hacking into the private accounts to publicly release the personal information.

"Instead, he has been convicted in United States federal court," Caldwell said.

Several federal agencies including the FBI and Secret Service had investigated the case with assistance from the Romanian government.

The hacker's access to Clinton ally Sidney Blumenthal had exposed Clinton's use of a private email account during her time as secretary of State, which has been a major issue in her presidential bid.

--This report was updated at 12:05 p.m.

TAGS: Hillary Clinton, Guccifer