

U.S. military gathering location data of Muslims

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Washington, November 18 (RHC)-- The U.S. military is purchasing private data from app companies that provide popular services for Muslims. According to reports, the U.S. military is “buying the granular movement data of people around the world, harvested from innocuous-seeming apps.”

Joseph Cox of VICE’s Motherboard said that a Muslim prayer app with over 98 million downloads is one of the apps connected to a wide-ranging supply chain that sends ordinary people’s personal data to brokers, contractors, and the military.

The report revealed that the U.S. military purchased users’ data from popular apps such as Muslim prayer and Quran app which has been downloaded nearly 100 billion times.

Motherboard did not specify why the data of Muslim civilians was being collected from seemingly harmless apps; however, the US military has infamously used movement and location data of users for

aiming in and striking targets with assassination drones, targeting numerous civilians, including women and children, in Muslim countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Yemen.

Alarmingly, one of the buyers of the apps' data was the US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), which deals with counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism and various covert activity around the globe, media reported.

U.S. Navy Commander Tim Hawkins confirmed the report, noting that Americans' private data was safe and the information gathered by the US military was used for overseas operations.

“Our access to the software is used to support Special Operations Forces mission requirements overseas. We strictly adhere to established procedures and policies for protecting the privacy, civil liberties, constitutional and legal rights of American citizens,” he said.

U.S. Congresswoman Ilhan Omar acknowledged the close ties between the military and tech companies. "The military industrial complex and the surveillance state have always had a cozy relationship with tech. Buying bulk data in order to profile Muslims is par for the course for them," Omar noted.

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