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JD.com investors spooked by 'key man risk' after CEO accused of rape

WHONG KONG/SHANGHAI (Reuters) - A U.S. police investigation into an allegation of rape against JD.com Inc CEO Richard Liu has hammered the e-commerce giant's shares, with the case laying bare risks posed by his iron grip on management and the lack of other leaders to challenge him.

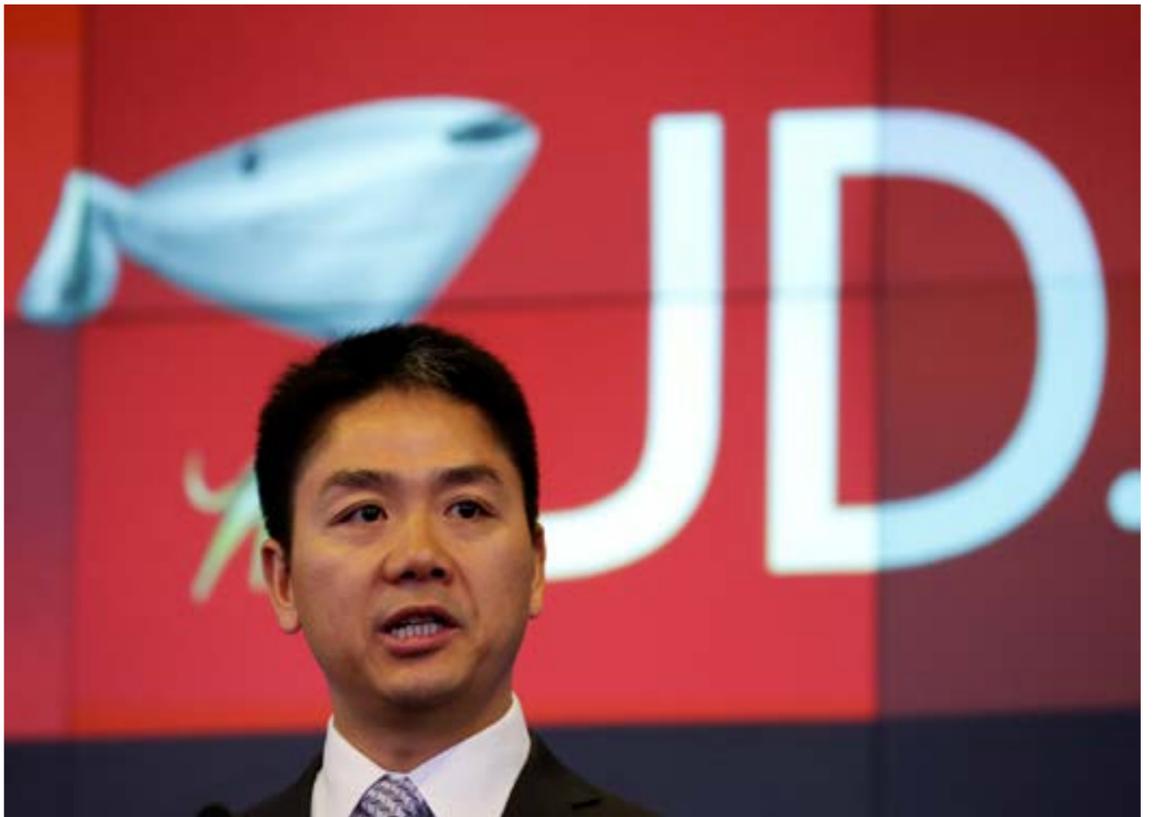
Liu was arrested and then released without charge in the U.S. city of Minneapolis last week. Through his lawyers, he has denied any wrongdoing.

While the tech industry is known for the outsized control that founders like Liu have over their businesses, China's tech leaders tend to be all-powerful, exacerbating governance risks.

Liu's control of JD.com in particular has raised eyebrows given company rules that make it virtually impossible for the board to make decisions without him present.

"There is so much more hierarchy and less willingness to challenge the boss and less collective leadership around Chinese iconic leaders," said James Robinson, managing director in Shanghai for public relations firm APCO Worldwide. Robinson added this had compounded the sense of crisis and confusion when the news first broke. JD.com's communications team had stated police had "quickly determined" there was no substance to the claim against Liu even though the investigation was still ongoing, and took almost two days to acknowledge he had been held by police overnight.

"If your top person is in a jail in Minnesota, then it could be a question of a lack of decision-making authority," he said. Liu was arrested late last Friday in Minneapolis and held by police for a little over 16 hours before being released. No bail was set. Police are still investigating. His lawyers have said they do not expect charges to be laid.



FILE PHOTO: Liu, CEO and founder of JD.com, speaks before ringing the opening bell at the NASDAQ Market Site building in New York



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Editor's Choice



Film memorabilia goes on display before being auctioned in London, Britain



U.S. Supreme Court Nominee Judge Kavanaugh looks at Fred Guttenberg during his Senate confirmation hearing in Washington



GQ Men of the Year Awards at the Tate Modern in London



Britain's Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Prince Harry and his wife Meghan, attend a gala concert in support of charities for military veterans who face mental health challenges, in London



Trump meets Kuwait ruler at the White House in Washington



People wait for the news of their missing relative on the banks of the Brahmaputra river after a boat carrying 36 passengers capsized, according to local media, in Kamrup district, in the north-eastern state of Assam



Israeli artist Sigalit Landau looks up at her artwork, a ballerina's tutu covered in salt crystal formations as it is removed from the hyper-saline waters of the southern Dead Sea, Israel



Iraqi protesters run from a teargas during a protest near the building of the government office in Basra

America's intelligence chiefs have warned banks of a major hacking threat to cash machines worldwide in the next few days.

Banks were warned that they could fall victim to an 'unlimited operation' in which millions of dollars could be withdrawn from cash machines.

Smaller banks with less sophisticated security systems are thought to be most vulnerable to an attack using the 'jackpotting' technique, the Daily Telegraph reports.

The FBI sent out a confidential alert on Friday to warn that cyber criminals are planning a global 'cash-out scheme' using malware to take over ATMs and steal millions of dollars.

The warning said: 'The FBI has obtained unspecified reporting indicating cyber criminals are planning to conduct a global Automated Teller Machine (ATM) cash-out scheme in the coming days, likely associated with an unknown card issuer breach.'

The website **Krebs On Security** reported that criminals could create 'fraudulent copies' of bank cards by installing their data on reusable magnetic strip cards.

The FBI warned that 'at a pre-determined time, the co-conspirators withdraw account funds from ATMs using these cards.'

'Historic compromises have included small-to-medium size financial institutions, likely due to less robust implementation of cyber security controls, budgets, or third-party vendor vulnerabilities,' the alert said.



Attacks could affect banks all over the world with British banks with large overseas interests including Barclays and HSBC thought to have been made aware of the danger from the 'jackpotting' technique.

Earlier this year it was revealed that a co-ordinated group of hackers had stolen more than \$1million by hijacking cash

A 'Jackpotting' Scheme Would See Hackers Use Malware To Take Control Of ATMs – Smaller Banks More Vulnerable Hackers Could Steal MILLIONS From Cash Machines 'Within Days': FBI Warns Of Imminent Mass Attack On World's ATMs

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



The FBI sent out a confidential alert on Friday to warn that cyber criminals are planning a global 'cash-out scheme' using malware to take over ATMs and steal millions of dollars. (Photo/Getty Images)

machines in the U.S.

The spate of attacks represented the first widespread jackpotting activity in the United States, officials said in January.

The heists, which involved hacking ATMs to rapidly shoot out torrents of cash, were across the United States spanning from the Gulf Coast to New England.

British banks with large overseas interests including Barclays and HSBC are thought to have been made aware of the danger from the 'jackpotting' technique

An alert at the time from an ATM maker said the method included gaining physical access, replacing the hard drive and using an industrial endoscope to depress an internal button required to reset the device.

A U.S. Secret Service alert sent to banks in January said machines running Windows XP were more vulnerable and encouraged

ATM operators to update to Windows 7 to protect against the attack.

Hackers have moved from stealing payment card numbers and online banking credentials to more lucrative hacks on bank networks, giving them access not only to ATM machines, but also to electronic payment networks.

In 2016 it was reported that cyber criminals had remotely attacked cash machines in more than a dozen countries across Europe. (Courtesy <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/>)

Related

Hackers bring ATM 'jackpotting' to the U.S.

The Secret Service is warning banks about a hacking scheme called "jackpotting" that lets someone steal money from ATMs. It's

the first time this type of scheme has made its way to the United States.

To execute the cyberattack, a thief needs physical access to an ATM and will use malware, physical hacking tools, or both, to take control of the machine and force it to dispense cash quickly. If it works, cash pours out of the ATM like the hacker won a jackpot.



"Criminals have been able to find vulnerabilities in financial institutions that operate ATMs, primarily ATMs that are stand-alone," the Secret Service said in a release

shared with CNN Tech. "The targeted stand-alone ATMs are routinely located in pharmacies, big box retailers, and drive thru ATMs."

At least six attacks have taken place within the last week. They ranged in location from the Pacific Northwest to the Gulf region to New England. Thieves have stolen over \$1 million in attacks so far.

The Secret Service said criminals associated with jackpotting can be individuals or organized crime groups.

These 9 questions will match your lifestyle to a retirement destination

Have you thought about how you'd like to live in retirement or where you'd like to end up?

ATM makers Diebold Nixdorf and NCR Corporation confirmed they have alerted clients to the potential jackpotting attacks. A spokesperson for Diebold Nixdorf said older Diebold units are being targeted.

Similar jackpotting attacks spread through Latin America last year.

Jackpotting has also been reported in Europe and Asia. Independent security journalist Brian Krebs first reported the U.S. jackpotting threats.



In recent months, activity around ATM hacking and jackpotting has spiked on the dark web, according to Paulo Shakarian, CEO at threat intelligence firm CYR-3CON. The dark web refers to networks of websites that require specific software to access. Some dark web sites are known for criminal activity.

Shakarian said his firm tracked an uptick in conversations around malware used for jackpotting and also noticed people talking on these forums about new ATM hacking hardware targeting specific machines. Shakarian also spotted a jackpotting guide available for sale on one dark web forum. (Courtesy <https://money.cnn.com>)

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(CNN) They've been described as "sonic attacks" -- bizarre, unexplained head injuries that spurred the United States to bring home diplomatic staff from China and Cuba. Now scientists are saying the ailments could have been caused by microwave weapons.

Though a March report based on the examinations of 21 diplomats who served in Cuba didn't link the attacks to microwaves, the study's lead author, Douglas Smith, director of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Brain Injury and Repair, told The New York Times that the diplomats likely suffered brain injuries and that microwaves are considered the culprit.

"Everybody was relatively skeptical at first," he told the newspaper, "and everyone now agrees there's something there."

In a Sunday interview with CNN, Smith said microwaves are "a main suspect" in causing the diplomats' injuries, but ultrasound and infrasound were being studied as potential causes as well.

"It's almost like a concussion, but without a concussion -- meaning that they look like individuals who have persistent concussion symptoms but have no history of head impact," Smith said, describing the injuries and explaining that learning the cause is vital to determining the best means of preventing it.



"Just like we have ways to prevent people from having a concussion, you could think of maybe protecting your brain from these energy sources," he said.

What we know about the attacks

Most of the attacks came in 2016 and 2017, though there have been a handful of reported incidents this year as well.

A senior administration official told CNN that investigators have torn apart buildings where diplomatic employees encountered the sounds but found no acoustic devices, leading law enforcement to believe

Microwaves Suspected In 'Sonic Attacks' On US Diplomats In Cuba And China, Scientists Say

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



that the injuries were the result of microwaves beamed from a nearby location and that the "sounds" were merely a means of masking the microwave attacks.

This is only a theory, the official said, and there is no concrete evidence to back it. However, brain scans on the injured personnel showed changes that indicate damage, the official said.

'Everything fits'

Beatrice Golomb, a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Diego, concurred with Smith in a paper slated for publication later this month.

"Reported facts appear consistent with pulsed (radio frequency/microwave radiation) as the source of injury in Cuba diplomats. Non-diplomats citing symptoms from RF/MW ... report compatible health conditions," she concluded in her report.

"Everything fits," Golomb said in a university news release. "The specifics of the varied sounds that the diplomats reported hearing during the apparent inciting episodes, such as chirping, ringing and buzzing, cohere in detail with known properties of so-called 'microwave hearing,' also known as the Frey effect."

According to The New York Times, analysts are increasingly citing the Frey effect, named for scientist Allan Frey, who found microwaves can dupe the brain into hearing what it perceives to be normal sounds.

This may account for the loud ringing, buzzing and grinding experienced by the injured diplomats.

Microwaves are common. Radios, satellite television, radars, GPS, Bluetooth, cell phones and, of course, microwave ovens employ them, and they're deemed harmless in most applications, though the newspaper points out that governments, including the United States and Russia, have for decades studied ways to weaponize them.

The weapon itself would be portable, according to The New York Times, capable of being held in one's hand or mounted on a vehicle, and while most would work over the span of only a few blocks, high-powered versions could fire microwave beams up to several miles.



Speaking at the White House, President Trump said that Cuba was 'responsible' for the attacks on diplomats.

In a statement, the US State Department on Sunday neither confirmed nor denied the possibility that microwaves were behind the diplomatic injuries.

"The health and well-being of our personnel remains our top priority," the statement said. "The investigation into the origin of these symptoms continues. The inter-agency community is working diligently to determine the cause of the symptoms, as well as to develop mitigation strategies."

The Cuban government has yet to respond. Previously, it not only denied involvement in the attacks but cast doubt on whether they actually occurred. In June, Cuba's Foreign Ministry said "political motivations" drove the United States to withdraw its embassy personnel.

"There is no credible hypothesis or conclusions adhered to science that justify the actions taken by the government of the United States against Cuba to the detriment of the bilateral relationship," the statement said.



Microwaves suspected in 'sonic attacks' on US diplomats in Cuba and China, scientists say.

Less than two weeks later, the US State Department announced yet another diplomatic employee suffered "health effects" consistent with those experienced by other embassy personnel, and a second employee was being evaluated.

At that time, 25 Americans in Havana had been affected by the attacks, State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said.

China, too

In June, the State Department expanded a health alert for China after a series of supposed acoustic incidents that left diplomatic personnel suffering injuries similar to their counterparts in Cuba. The original health alert 16 days earlier was issued solely for Guangzhou, where an American was diagnosed with a mild brain injury after complaining of mysterious sonic phenomena.

In the expanded alert, the State Department said it had sent an unspecified number of employees stationed in China back to the United States for medical testing.

The reason the incidents have been characterized in the past as sonic or acoustic attacks is because they coincided with high-pitched sounds. Diplomats to Cuba in particular experienced a variety of symptoms, including sharp ear pain, headaches, ringing in one ear, vertigo, disorientation, attention issues and signs consistent with mild traumatic brain injury or concussion.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said earlier this year he was establishing a Health Incidents Response Task Force, led by Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan and including representatives from the departments of Justice as well as Health and Human Services.

The task force will serve as the "coordinating body for department and inter-agency activities, including identification and treatment of affected personnel and family members, investigation and risk mitigation, messaging, and diplomatic outreach," Pompeo said in a statement.

The sophistication of the attack has led US officials to suspect a third country is involved, perhaps as retribution against the United States or Canada -- whose diplomats have also been targeted -- or to drive a wedge between those countries and Cuba.



In August 2017, officials included Russia as a list of countries that have an adversarial relationship with the United States and that American investigators suspected might be involved. Russia is one of the few countries that have used microwave technology before, and a theory among investigators is that some rogue Cuban intelligence officials worked with Russia because they were not happy with the détente between United States and Cuba, the senior administration official said. (Courtesy <https://www.cnn.com>)

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先夫鄔顯榮生於一九三五年三月五日，働於二零一八年八月三十一日凌晨一點二十分，因心臟衰竭病逝於 Houston Hospice 安息主懷，享年八十三歲。
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