

Rumors swirl over bitcoin inventor Nakamoto's identity

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Computer scientist Craig Wright says he is "Satoshi Nakamoto", the pseudonym of bitcoin's creator.

An Australian man went on trial in London this week over his claims of inventing bitcoin—not the first time someone has been linked to being

the cryptocurrency's enigmatic creator.

Computer scientist Craig Wright, 53, says he is "Satoshi Nakamoto", the pseudonym of [bitcoin](#)'s creator and author of a white paper that introduced the cryptocurrency to the world in 2008.

He is being sued by cryptocurrency activists who say he's lied and forged documents in his attempts to pretend he is bitcoin's founder.

Bitcoin saw its popularity skyrocket to become the largest cryptocurrency, and now has a market capitalization of \$880 billion according to specialist website Coingecko.

However, after collaborating with fellow developers to finesse the code, the mysterious Satoshi disappeared from the radar in about 2011. Multiple theories have since emerged regarding his identity.

Hal Finney

American developer and cryptographer Hal Finney was the first person to receive the virtual unit, when Satoshi himself sent him ten bitcoins as a test.

However, in October 2023, the theory that Finney was in fact Satoshi was discredited by a high-profile blogger in the crypto community.

The amateur sleuth said he unearthed evidence suggesting that Finney, who died in 2014, was taking part in a running race at a time when Satoshi had been answering emails and carrying out bitcoin transactions, thereby ruling him out.

Dorian Nakamoto

Japanese-American engineer Dorian Nakamoto was among the first to be suspected of shaking up the world of currency, following a report in 2014 by Newsweek magazine that he was behind the digital token.

"I am no longer involved in that and I cannot discuss it. It's been turned over to other people. They are in charge of it now. I no longer have any connection," he was quoted by as saying by Newsweek.

He has since denied being Satoshi Nakamoto.

Back in 2012, bitcoin's shadowy creator had claimed to be a 37-year-old man living in Japan, according to a profile posted online.

Yet critics cast doubt on this hypothesis, citing Satoshi Nakamoto's excellent English and typically British turns of phrase.

Nick Szabo

Szabo, a US computer scientist of Hungarian origin, was among the [early adopters](#) of decentralized cryptocurrencies and was named by a blogger in 2013 as a possible candidate to have created bitcoin.

However, industry insiders argue that there is no tangible proof that he is Satoshi, beyond circumstantial evidence.

Craig Wright

Wright has been on trial this week at London's High Court, with proceedings expected to last until mid-March.

The enigmatic Australian programmer describes himself on X as "Creator of Bitcoin" and insists he has the required skills and knowledge

to have invented it.

Crypto Open Patent Alliance (COPA), a non-profit organization set up to keep cryptocurrency technology free from patents, is suing Wright over his claims first made in 2016.

COPA accuses Wright, nicknamed 'Faketoshi' by detractors, of lying about his identity and of forging and manipulating documents.

Wright has been involved in a number of lawsuits brought by himself, but this time around is being asked to defend himself.

Elon Musk

The richest man in the world has also been in the frame, after a former intern at his SpaceX company wrote a series of articles speculating that Satoshi was in fact Musk.

The ex-intern, writing on Medium website, claimed the billionaire uses similar language and expressions to those given by Satoshi, adding that a close colleague of Musk seemed too embarrassed to discuss it.

However, tech-savvy Musk rejected the allegations in late 2017 in the face of such meager evidence.

Uncertainty prevails

Despite feverish speculation, uncertainty reigns supreme.

Some commentators argue that a work of such scope and complexity as bitcoin could only be the work of a group of people, rather than a single developer.

Others say that it is highly likely the real Satoshi Nakamoto is either dead—or wishes to preserve the integrity of bitcoin's collective ethos by maintaining his own anonymity.

Satoshi Nakamoto meanwhile still possesses about 980,000 bitcoins, according to industry researcher Sergio Lerner.

If the bitcoin king is alive, and decides to cash in, that could potentially crash the cryptocurrency because they are together worth about \$44 billion at current prices.

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