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Europe

Pro-Russian hackers target Italy institutional websites -ANSA news agency

Reuters 2 minute read





A man holds a laptop computer as cyber code is projected on him in this illustration picture taken on May 13, 2017. REUTERS/Kacper Pempel/Illustration

ROME, May 11 (Reuters) - Pro-Russian hackers have attacked the websites of several Italian institutions, including the senate, ANSA news agency reported on Wednesday.

The hacker group "Killnet" claimed the attack, ANSA said, which also targeted the National Health Institute (ISS) and the Automobile Club d'Italia, a national drivers' association.

The websites of the senate, Italy's upper house of parliament, and the ISS were back online at 8.00 p.m. (1800 GMT). An hour earlier, it had been impossible to access them.

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Senate speaker Elisabetta Casellati said on Twitter that the hacker attack had not caused any damage.

"These are serious incidents, which should not be underestimated," she wrote.

The defence ministry, whose website was not available, said in a statement this was "due to long-planned maintenance activities ongoing on the website".

A source at the Italian cyber security agency told Reuters they were working with the affected administrations to restore the websites, suggesting "the first appropriate technical countermeasures".

Police said an investigation was ongoing, but made no further comment.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, many Western governments have raised alert levels in anticipation of possible cyber attacks on IT systems and infrastructure.

Late in March, Italian railway company Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane (FS) temporarily halted some ticket sale services fearing it had been targeted by a cyber attack. [read more](#)

In April, the ecology transition ministry said it had to shut down all its IT systems due to external threats.

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Reporting by Angelo Amante; Editing by Gareth Jones

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