

Turkey 'arrests 32' in raid on hacker group

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Thousands take part in a march in Istanbul last month against a possible internet filter system that government announced in February and plans to implement in August

Turkish police have arrested 32 people suspected of belonging to a cabal of hackers who sabotaged government websites to protest against Internet censorship, the Anatolia news agency reported on Tuesday.

Nine minors arrested in the sweep were subsequently released, Anatolia said.

The arrests came in a Monday raid in several Turkish cities against the international hackers group Anonymous, which rose to fame with a series of attacks on websites linked to the Church of Scientology.

The group gained further prominence after launching retaliatory attacks

on companies perceived to be enemies of the whistle-blowing website Wikileaks.

Last week, on the eve of legislative elections in Turkey, Anonymous hacked several Turkish websites, including that of the Turkish telecoms authority TIB, which regulates Internet use and helped develop the government's [Internet censorship](#) programme.

Turkey has blocked access to thousands of websites, particularly those with [sexual content](#) or material considered insulting to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey.

In November, a Turkish court quashed a three-year ban on the popular video hosting site [Youtube](#), which was the fifth most popular site in the country until it was closed for showing clips deemed disrespectful to Ataturk.

The Vienna-based Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe has voiced repeated concern over Turkish policies that restrict access to information, which some suggest are hampering Ankara's progress towards EU membership.

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