

Claims of hacking New York Times 'groundless': China

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China on Thursday dismissed accusations that it had [hacked into the system of the New York Times](#), in a cyberattack the paper linked to its expose of the wealth amassed by the family of Premier Wen Jiabao.

"The competent Chinese authorities have already issued a clear response to the groundless accusations made by the New York Times," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told reporters in Beijing.

Asked about cyberspying and hacking accusations made against China in general, he said: "To arbitrarily assert and to conclude without hard evidence that China participated in such hacking attacks is totally irresponsible.

"China is also a victim of hacking attacks. Chinese laws clearly forbid hacking attacks, and we hope relevant parties takes a responsible attitude on this issue."

Echoing his comments, the defence ministry said that the military had "never supported any hacking attacks".

"Cyberattacks have a transnational and anonymous nature; under such circumstances accusing the Chinese military of launching attacks through the web without irrefutable proof is unprofessional and baseless," it said in a statement sent to AFP.

The New York Times earlier announced it had fallen victim to hackers

and said they were possibly connected to China's military.

The hackers had over the past four months infiltrated computer systems and snatched staff passwords, and their probing has been particularly focused on the emails of Shanghai bureau chief David Barboza, the newspaper said.

According to a Barboza story published on October 25, close relatives of Wen have made billions of dollars in business dealings.

"Chinese hackers, using methods that some consultants have associated with the Chinese military in the past, breached The Times's network," the newspaper said, citing a wealth of digital evidence gathered by its security experts.

The newspaper said the IT consultants believed the attacks "started from the same university computers used by the Chinese military to attack United States military contractors in the past".

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