

NKorea's Twitter account hacked amid tension (Update)

April 4 2013, by Youkyung Lee

Hackers apparently broke into at least two of North Korea's government-run online sites Thursday, as tensions rose on the Korean Peninsula.

The North's Uriminzokkiri Twitter and Flickr accounts stopped sending out content typical of that posted by the regime in Pyongyang, such as photos of North's leader Kim Jong Un meeting with military officials.

Instead, a picture posted Thursday on the North's Flickr site shows Kim's face with a pig-like snout and a drawing of Mickey Mouse on his chest. Underneath, the text reads: "Threatening world peace with ICBMs and Nuclear weapons/Wasting money while his people starve to death."

Another posting says "We are Anonymous" in white letters against a black background. Anonymous is a name of a hacker activist group. A statement purporting to come from the attackers and widely circulated online said that they had compromised 15,000 user records hosted on Uriminzokkiri.com and other websites. The authenticity of the statement couldn't be confirmed, but the North's official website did not open Thursday.

Tweets on the North's Twitter account said "Hacked" followed by a link to North Korea-related websites. One tweet said "Tango Down" followed by a link to the North's Flickr page.

Uriminzokkiri, a North Korea government-run agency, opened its Twitter account in 2010. It has more than 13,000 followers. The North

uses social media to praise its system and leaders, and to repeat commentaries sent out by North's official Korean Central News Agency.

Tensions have been high in recent days between North and South Korea, and the North's military warned Thursday that it had been authorized to attack the U.S. North Korea is angry about sanctions against its nuclear program and joint military drills between the U.S. and South Korea.

North and South have fired claims of cyberattacks at each other recently. Last month computers froze at six major South Korean companies—three banks and three television networks—and North Korea's Internet shut down.

Meanwhile, the website for the U.S. forces stationed in South Korea has been closed since Tuesday and their public affairs office said Friday that the problem does not have to do with any hacking.

"Initial assessments indicate it is the result of an internal server issue," it said on the website without elaboration.

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