

# Australia police, central bank websites hacked

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Australian police and central bank websites have fallen victim to cyber attacks

Australian police and central bank websites fell victim to cyber attacks Thursday with an Indonesian hacker claiming responsibility, reportedly demanding that Canberra apologise in an intensifying row over spying.

The row—triggered by reports that Australian spies tried to tap the phones of the Indonesian president, his wife and ministers—has pushed ties between Jakarta and Canberra to their lowest level since the turn of

the century.

Officials called the attack on the Australian Federal Police and the Reserve Bank of Australia "irresponsible", and said whoever was to blame could face prosecution.

"These attacks... will not influence government policy," the federal police said in a statement.

"Activities such as hacking, creating or propagating malicious viruses are not harmless fun. They can result in serious long-term consequences for individuals, such as criminal convictions or jail time."

Police officials said their site, which hosts no sensitive information, was operating when staff left work on Wednesday evening but it was down on Thursday morning.

The outage comes barely two weeks after activist group Anonymous Indonesia claimed responsibility for defacing more than 170 Australian websites to protest at reports of Canberra spying on its nearest neighbour and strategic ally.

Ties between the two countries have deteriorated after reports this week, based on documents leaked by US intelligence fugitive Edward Snowden, that Australia tried to listen to the phone calls of the Indonesian president, his wife and ministers in 2009.

A member of Anonymous Indonesia, using the hashtag #IndonesianCyberArmy, claimed responsibility for the latest attacks.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation contacted the hacker who said the sites were targeted "because (of) the act of spying by Australia".

The federal police and central bank were targeted "because we think (they are) most important sites of government companies in Australia".

The hacker added that the action was taken on behalf of "the people of Indonesia, and the Indonesian Origin cyber army", and demanded that Canberra apologise.

"We're going to strike again (unless) Australia apologises to the people of Indonesia."

The Australian Federal Police would not comment on who might be responsible but said it was working with the Cyber Security Operations Centre and Australia's Computer Emergency Response team to identify the hackers.

The central bank website was also targeted, with a spokesman saying that back-up systems ensured that while delays may be experienced the site remained operational.

"The bank has protections for its website, so the bank website remains secure," the spokesman said.

Anonymous is believed to be a loosely organised hacker collective that conducts online attacks internationally.

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