

Hacker claims credit for WikiLeaks takedown

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A screengrab from the Wikileaks website. A computer hacker known as the "Jester" who calls himself a "hacktivist for good" is taking credit for temporarily taking down the WikiLeaks website.

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WikiLeaks.org came under a distributed-denial-of-service (DDoS) attack on Sunday shortly before it began releasing the first batch of some 250,000 US diplomatic cables.

The "Jester," a hacker who has targeted extremist websites in the past, claimed responsibility for the [cyberattack](#) on [WikiLeaks](#) in a message on his Twitter feed, @th3j35t3r.

"www.wikileaks.org - TANGO DOWN - for attempting to endanger the lives of our troops, 'other assets' & foreign relations #wikileaks #fail," the message from "Jester" said.

Mikko Hypponen, chief research officer at computer security firm F-Secure, told AFP he believed the [hacker](#) could carry out the attack on WikiLeaks.

"He's demonstrated previously that he is capable of launching effective denial-of-service attacks, and he's claimed the responsibility for this one as well," Hypponen said by email. "He has the capability and the motive."

Classic DDoS attacks occur when legions of "zombie" computers, normally machines infected with viruses, are commanded to simultaneously visit a website.

Such a massive onslaught of demand can overwhelm servers, slowing service or knocking it offline completely.

WikiLeaks eventually went ahead and began publishing the US diplomatic memos at another address, cablegate.wikileaks.org.

On his website, th3j35t3r.wordpress.com/, the "Jester" provides the following description of himself: "Hacktivist for good. Obstructing the lines of communication for terrorists, sympathizers, fixers, facilitators, oppressive regimes and other general bad guys."

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