

Hackers attack Thai court websites to protest sentences

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Hackers protesting Thailand's justice system have attacked official websites in the Southeast Asian nation for the second time this year, replacing or disabling the home pages of many sites affiliated with the court system.

A posting on a Facebook account associated with the loosely organized hacker group Anonymous said Wednesday's attacks were a protest against death sentences given on Dec. 24 to two Myanmar men convicted of murdering two young British tourists on the Thai resort island of Koh Tao. Critics say the men were scapegoats and unfairly convicted.

The posting said Anonymous was supporting a campaign to ask tourists to boycott Thailand until changes are made in the way Thai police investigate cases involving foreigners.

The Facebook post linked to a list of almost 300 Thai sites it said had been hacked. A random check showed some not working, some defaced and some operating. About a dozen police-affiliated sites were similarly struck on Jan. 5.

In both cases the pages that were substituted for the official home pages carried the name "Blink Hacker Group," the hashtag "Boycott Thailand," and a greeting to Myanmar [hackers](#). They also featured the white mask graphic used by Anonymous. Wednesday's hacked pages included the words "Failed Law We Want Justice!"

Court officials were unavailable for comment.

Police spokesman Gen. Dejnaronng Suthicharnbancha said he had not been informed of Wednesday's attacks. Asked about the earlier hacking of police websites, he said: "We have to admit that they have a certain level of ability. They messed with our (index) page, but they could not steal any of our information."

The case of the murdered British travelers attracted international attention. Two migrant workers from Myanmar, Win Zaw Htun and Zaw Lin, were convicted of murdering David Miller, 24, and Hannah Witheridge, 23, whose bodies were found on Sept. 14, 2014. Witheridge had also been raped.

Police rushed to solve the crime under intense pressure to limit negative publicity for the tourism industry, but the investigation and trial drew widespread criticism. Police were criticized for not properly securing the crime scene, conducting more than 200 random DNA tests, releasing names and pictures of suspects who turned out to be innocent, mishandling crucial DNA evidence from the victims and allegedly torturing their prime suspects.

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