

S Korean websites 'attacked by North'

AFP, Seoul

South Korea's intelligence service believes North Korea or its sympathisers may have staged a major cyber attack that shut down US and South Korean websites, lawmakers were quoted saying yesterday.

The attack late Tuesday hit a total of 25 US and South Korean sites -- some of them official -- with those in South Korea shut down for nearly four hours.

"This is not a simple attack by individuals. The attack appeared to have been elaborately prepared and staged by a certain organisation or state," Seoul's National Intelligence Service (NIS) said in a statement.

Yonhap news agency said the NIS, which has launched an investigation, told parliament's intelligence committee that the communist North or people sympathetic to the isolated state may have been to blame.

"The NIS has been telling committee members that North Korea or a pro-North Korean force might be behind the cyber terror," it quoted one legislator as saying.

The committee, which is briefed in private, was reportedly to receive an official report Thursday from the intelligence service. An NIS spokesman said he could not disclose what information was given to committee members.

In its statement the NIS said US authorities were cooperating to track down those responsible for hijacking 12,000 personal computers in South Korea and 8,000 abroad which were exploited as vehicles for the attacks.

"The sites hit yesterday included 14 US sites including government ones," a spokesman for the Korea Information Security Agency told AFP, refusing to confirm a Yonhap report that the White House website was among those targeted.

In Korea, the defence and foreign ministries, the ruling party, parliament and the US-South Korea combined forces military command were among the 11 entities affected.

South Korea is one of the world's most wired countries, with 95 percent of homes having broadband access, according to a recent US survey.

Habiganj hostages

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off. As Arab Ali made a bit of delay in complying, Shaheen in anger destroyed a computer in the room, police said.

Arab Ali managed to escape captivity giving Shaheen the excuse of offering Asr prayers around 6:30pm.

When law enforcers asked Shaheen to surrender, since he had no hostages, Shaheen requested 30 minutes time.

Habiganj SP Akkas Uddin Bhuiyan told The Daily Star over cellphone that after the time had expired Shaheen set off bombs and made a run for it. In the balcony, law enforcers shot him several times with shotguns and he was injured in the leg. He also sustained burn injuries from the explosion, the SP added.

The whole thing ended around 7:30pm.

Shaheen who hails from Bahula in Habiganj Sadar was undergoing treatment at a hospital in the district, sources said.

The SP said during initial interrogation the captured man claimed that he is not involved in any militant organisation. He also claimed that he only tried to create panic.

"After investigation we will know whether he is a militant and what his intentions were," Akkas Uddin said.

Rab, police, and intelligence personnel were present during the standoff. Rab's bomb squad was called into action to deactivate two devices that Shaheen failed to set off.

The incumbent chief of banned Islamist organisation Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Maulana Saidur Rahman also hails from Habiganj. Before joining JMB, Saidur was the Habiganj district Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami.

First Tipai info

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about the issue. We are on the way of justice, and will win as we did in 1971."

The Bapa president said the southwestern and northern parts of the country are bearing the brunt of Farakka Barrage, and now another part has become the target of Tipaimukh Dam. He said one cannot be a friend by destroying lands and water of another country.

"It is a rape of nature that is what will happen if Tipaimukh Dam is constructed," Professor Muzaffer said, adding that no government can sustain ignoring public interests.

Speaking at the roundtable, BNP leader and former water resources minister major (retd) Hafizuddin called for national unity to resist construction of the Indian dam project.

"Don't depend on politicians. Depend on people and create mass opinion like that of 1971, India will be compelled to sit and negotiate for resolving the problem," he said.

Refuting the government's claim that the BNP did not protest against the project during its rule, Hafizuddin said "It is actually Awami League that did not raise the issue during the Joint Rivers Commission meetings."

He called for linking the

Core cell

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"Investigation is going on into the recent garment factory violence and we have already got some information," Hasina added.

She urged factory owners and labourers to remain alert so that none can use them for evil gains. "I personally believe garment labourers were not involved in damaging their own factories from where they earn their livelihoods," Hasina said.

In response to a query of AL lawmaker Brig Gen (retd) SK Abu Bakr on forming a parliamentary body to eliminate corruption, the premier said her government is taking steps to ensure that the Anti-Corruption Commission can work independently.

She urged the ACC to examine if there is consistency in people's incomes and expenditures.

Hasina blamed the military rulers of the past for spreading corruption everywhere in the society. "The military dictators, whenever they snatched state power, spread corruption by providing undue facilities to a vested interest quarter of the society," she said.

Hasina said democracy and democratic practice must be continued to fight corruption.

On formation of parliamentary bodies, she said lawmakers have the authority to form parliamentary bodies if they want to probe anything.

In response to a query of Jatiya Party lawmaker Raushan Ershad on women's empowerment, the premier said she has planned to elect the speaker or deputy speaker of parliament herself in the future.

Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, rejected Chief Whip Abdus Shahid's proposal to bring Bangabandhu's graveyard to the capital and build a memorial in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"It is better to let his graveyard be there where he has been lying in eternal peace by the side of his mother," Hasina said.

On AL lawmaker Atiur Rahman's proposal on building a monument to express hatred for the razakars, al-badis and al-shams on a specific day, the prime minister said it is not a matter of one specific day, the Bangladeshi nation will hate the 1971 collaborators of the Pakistan army forever.

Hasina informed the House that the project to build Swadhinata Stambha in Suhrawardy Udayan will complete as per schedule.

Dhaka canals

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committee will place its report to the parliamentary body.

Another committee was formed with the officials of land records and survey department, additional deputy commissioners of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Munshiganj to bring navigability in the rivers of Dhaka by freeing them from grabbers.

"We asked director general of land records to take necessary measures to demarcate the canals in the city in next three months to free them from grabbers," AKM Mozammel Huq, chief of the parliamentary body, told The Daily Star after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

He alleged that individuals, Dhaka City Corporation and different government departments grabbed the canals and built structures there, blocking water flow that caused water logging in the capital during the monsoon.

"We will ask the government to have the canals concreted over so that no one can grab them again," the committee chief said about the future plan on their recovery from grabbers to protect the city's canals.

About recovering lands on the riverbanks from grabbers, Mozammel Huq said they asked the land ministry to file cases under the provision of bonafide mistakes in the land law to ensure recovery of the grabbed lands.

He said the officials of the industries ministry and environment department have sought three months time to identify the industries responsible for river and environment pollution.

"They will also measure the amount of waste the industries dump into the rivers causing pollution," Mozammel said.

The parliamentary body earlier asked the industries ministry and environment department to take steps to prevent the industries from dumping waste in the rivers.

BB governor

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unnecessarily.

A mutual understanding between Bangladesh, India and Nepal could pave the way for landlocked Nepal to use the Mongla port, which would ultimately benefit Bangladesh, he said.

In exchange for the facility, Bangladesh could ask Nepal to export power and gas, needed badly for the country's industrial growth, said Rahman.

"We have unfortunately failed to do so until now, depriving a large segment of the poor who could have been benefited from trade opportunities," he said.

The seminar was part of the two-day regional conference jointly organised by South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM) and Commonwealth Secretariat, UK, in collaboration with Bangladesh Investment Climate Fund (BICF) on issues related to regional integration in South Asia.

Dr Mustafa Mujeri, director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), presided over the function.

The BB governor said now South Asia is one of the fastest growing regions in terms of economy but it is essential to increase intra-regional trade, which is about 5 percent of the total trade in the region.

Speakers at the function stressed the need for facilitating foreign direct investment (FDI) to enhance economic activities in the region.

BIDS Research Fellow Nazneen Ahmed said India's overbearing attitude on many bilateral issues, including water sharing, has created a

Clouds hang

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Cricquet Board (WICB) regarding players' contract.

With the WICB clamouring for replacements, it was not clear whether the full-strength team or an alternative second-string side will face the Tigers in the match.

The Test will start at 9pm Bangladesh Standard Time (BST) with TEN Sports beaming the live coverage from the Caribbean.

The tough challenge awaits for the new Bangladesh captain as his side is going to play five-day cricket after five months and especially after the confidence-sapping performance in the ICC World Twenty20 in England.

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Sohel Taj

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return, but he did not confirm any date," one of the top officials of the home ministry told The Daily Star yesterday.

Azgar Ali Rashid Khan, president of Kapasip upazila unit of Awami League, however said the state minister will return home by July 14. Sohel Taj, son of the country's first prime minister Tajuddin Ahmed, was elected a lawmaker for the second time from the constituency.

She said standardisation, certification and custom rules create obstruction to regional trade and investment.

Prof Mustafizur Rahman, executive director of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the measures taken by Vietnam and India to increase their FDI inflow in the last few years need to be studied.

It is still a matter of debate whether Bangladesh would prefer export-related or import-substitute FDI, he said.

Speakers also put emphasis on infrastructure development to attract more FDI in Bangladesh as well as other countries in the region.

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