

Cyberattack hits Norway, pro-Russian hacker group fingered

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A cyberattack temporarily knocked out public and private websites in Norway in the past 24 hours, Norwegian authorities said Wednesday.

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre said that to his knowledge the attack "has not caused any significant damage."

The distributed-denial-of-service (DDOS) attack targeted a secure national data network forcing the temporary suspension of online services for several hours, the Norwegian National Security Authority said.

A criminal pro-Russian group seems to be behind the attacks, NSM head Sofie Nystrøm said. She added that the attacks "give the impression that we are a piece in the current political situation in Europe."

Norwegian media reported that the country's ambassador to Moscow was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Wednesday for a complaint over Russian supplies being prevented from transiting via Norway to an Arctic Russian coal-mining settlement.

The Barentsburg settlement is in the Svalbard archipelago, more than 800 kilometers (500 miles) north of the Norwegian mainland. The European Union has slapped sanctions on several Russian goods due to the war in Ukraine. Norway is not a member of the EU but mirrors its line on most topics. Under a 1920 treaty, Norway has sovereignty over the Svalbard archipelago, but other signatory countries have rights to exploit its natural resources.

Wednesday's cyberattack on Norway came two days after a similar attack temporarily knocked out public and private websites in Lithuania with a pro-Moscow hacker group reportedly claiming responsibility.

That incident came a week after Russian officials threatened to retaliate because Lithuania restricted the transit of steel and ferrous metals sanctioned by the EU through its territory to Russia's exclave of Kaliningrad.

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