

U.S. conducted cyber strike against Iran after Yemen raid on Saudi oil sites



Washington, October 17 (RHC)-- The United States has reportedly carried out a secret cyber attack against Iran in the week following Yemen's strikes on key Saudi oil facilities, which Washington blames on Tehran.

Two American officials, who were speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters on Wednesday that the operation took place in late September and targeted what they called Tehran's ability to spread "propaganda."

One of the officials claimed that the cyber attack had affected physical hardware, without elaborating.

The Pentagon declined to comment about the reported cyber strike, with spokeswoman Elissa Smith saying, "As a matter of policy and for operational security, we do not discuss cyberspace operations, intelligence, or planning."

On September 14, Yemeni armed forces conducted a large-scale operation against two Aramco installations, knocking out half of Saudi Arabia's oil production. The Yemeni Houthi Ansarullah movement took credit for the attacks and stressed that they came in response to the Saudi-led war on their country.

However, Riyadh and Washington — the main sponsor of the war on Yemen — pointed the finger at Iran, without providing any evidence.

Following the Aramco raids, U.S. media reported that Washington was considering possible cyber attacks against Iran. Iranian Minister of Petroleum Bijan Zangeneh said back then that “all companies and facilities of the oil industry should be fully alert to physical and cyber threats as sanctions target the petroleum industry.”

Earlier this month, Gholamreza Jalali, the head of Iran’s Civil Defense Organization which is in charge of cyber security, said the country was putting in place robust security measures to protect its vital infrastructure in the face of cyber attacks.

In June, Iranian Minister of Information and Communications Technology Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi reported an unsuccessful American cyber attack against the country’s missile control system.

Iran’s nuclear facilities have also been targeted in the past. In 2010, Stuxnet, a cyber weapon widely believed to be made by the U.S. and Israel, hit a uranium enrichment facility at Natanz, in the first publicly known example of a virus being used to attack industrial machinery.

Tehran later developed an indigenous firewall securing its sensitive industrial facilities against Stuxnet.

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