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Chinese hackers cyber-attacking British government networks



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Chinese computer hackers are infiltrating British government networks, giving them access to secret information, according to media reports on Thursday.

The reports in *The Times* and *The Independent* newspapers come a day after US President George W. Bush said he may bring up the issue of suspected Chinese cyber-attacks on the US defence department in a meeting with China's President Hu Jintao.

"China is engaged in hostile intelligence activities, and instead of using the old-fashioned methods, they are focusing on electronic means to hack into systems to discover Britain's defence and foreign policy secrets, and they are technologically pretty advanced and adept at it," an unnamed government source told *The Times*.

Another senior government source, meanwhile, told *The Independent*: "Governments throughout the West have been aware of this for a number of years. It has been an ongoing practice by the Chinese. They are trying it all the time. The firewalls that need to go in are going in."

Both the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence have declined to comment on the reports.

In Washington, the Pentagon said Tuesday that several nations and groups were trying to break into the US military's computer system after the *Financial Times* reported China's military had successfully hacked into the network in June.

Unnamed officials told the *Financial Times* the attack was by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) and that it led to the shutdown of a computer system serving the office of Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

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