

Stealth aggression: US attacked Iran with cyberweapons, including after Saudi oil refinery airstrike – reports

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The US has conducted several cyberwarfare operations against Iran in recent months, including one in retaliation for the September 14 attack on Saudi oil infrastructure, according to Reuters sources.

The latest cyber-strike was conducted by the Pentagon sometime in late September and affected physical hardware, two sources [told](#) the news agency. The target is related to what the sources described as Tehran's ability to spread "*propaganda*." The operation was said to be smaller in scale than previous ones that took place during several months of US-Iranian brinkmanship.

Washington has a long record of using its cyber-offensive capabilities against Iran. The most famous example was Operation Olympic Games, which involved infecting industrial controllers at an Iranian uranium enrichment plant with a virus designed to damage centrifuges in ostensibly natural malfunctions. The campaign was conducted under the administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and was stopped after the virus, called Stuxnet, got out of control and spread across the internet, where it was identified by cybersecurity experts.

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The latest cyberoperation was meant as retaliation for the September 14 drone and missile

attack on a Saudi Arabian oil facility which the US and its allies blamed on Tehran. Yemen's Houthi rebels, who have been fighting against a Saudi-led military incursion into their country since 2015, claimed responsibility for the attack.

The escalation of tensions between the US and Iran started last year when President Donald Trump broke an international agreement signed by his predecessor and launched a "*maximum pressure*" campaign against Iran. Trump re-imposed economic sanctions which had been lifted in exchange for Iran's agreement to restrict its nuclear industry, and targeted Iranian oil exports, threatening buyers of Iranian crude with secondary sanctions.

Washington's public response to the September 14 airstrikes was to deploy additional troops and weapons to the region – the latest in a series of similar moves this year.

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