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TODAY'S EDITION

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Hackers Hit Syrian Government Websites (WT)

By Shaun Waterman
[Washington Times](#), September 27, 2011

Hackers supporting Syria's anti-government protesters attacked 10 websites belonging to central or local government ministries, spreading the six month-long bloody rebellion against the dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad into cyberspace.

They replaced the websites' home pages with caricatures of Mr. Assad, protesters' videos, an interactive map showing the names of more than 2,300 protesters reportedly killed by the Syrian military and links to a page with tips on how to avoid online surveillance by Syria's intelligence agencies.

The Syrian Ministry of Transport home page was replaced by a caricature of Mr. Assad, with the caption in Arabic: "Don't let Bashar monitor you online."

Caricatures of Mr. Assad are illegal in Syria.

The home page of the Ministry of Culture over the weekend showed two videos: one of a popular singer with his throat cut, and another of a respected political cartoonist whose hands were broken. Both attacks were reportedly carried out by pro-government thugs.

The hacks, carried out Sunday and Monday, were orchestrated by the online collective known as Anonymous, a group being hunted by the FBI for their hacking illegal activities.

They have launched online campaigns in the United States and in Europe to support of the anti-secrecy group WikiLeaks, targeting financial and government websites.

The hackers' assault comes after weeks of attacks by the so-called Syrian Electronic Army, a group of pro-government hackers.

The group is widely believed to be associated with Syrian intelligence agencies, who have targeted Facebook pages and other Web sites associated with the protesters.

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