China defence website gets 2 mln hack attacks: report

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A soldier mans his post in front of the Ministry of National Defense in Beijing. The website of China's defence ministry has been hacked more than two million times since it was launched three months ago, according to state media.

The website of China's defence ministry has been hacked more than two million times since it was launched three months ago, state media said on Wednesday.

"From the first day the national defence ministry website went online, it received a large volume of uninterrupted attacks," Ji Guilin, the editor-in-chief of the website told the People's Daily in an interview.

"In the first month of operations there were more than 2.3 million hack attacks."

Ji did not say whether the attacks were launched from inside or outside China, but the assaults were largely ineffective due to website security and safeguard measures, he said.

The attacks either tried to infiltrate the website in search of military secrets, or sought to disrupt the website operations, he added.

The ministry launched the website -- including an English version -- on August 20 as part of a charm offensive aimed at countering foreign fears about China's robust military modernisation efforts.

The site includes news reports, official photos and videos, facts and figures about the military, and explanations of the country's national defence policies. China's Great Wall features in the logo.

Ji said that in the first three months of operations, the website received 1.25 billion hits, with up to 40 percent of them coming from Beijing and the provinces of Guangdong and Jiangsu.

Hits on the English version of the website mostly came from the United States, Australia and Britain, he said, while US web users logged the most overseas hits on the Chinese-language site.

The ministry earlier said the website was designed to "let the outside world have a better perception of China's national defence policy" and promote the army's modernisation drive.

China has roughly doubled its military budget since 2006, according to official government figures that some overseas analysts say vastly downplay what Beijing actually spends.

China has the world's largest military, with 2.3 million troops.

The Pentagon in recent years has raised concerns about China's development of cruise and ballistic missiles, its 2007 test of a satellite-striking weapon, an apparent rise in cyber-espionage by China's military and other issues.

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