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Hackers post opposition speech on Kuwait government website



Cyber activists hacked into Kuwait's information ministry website and posted a speech that earned an opposition leader a five-year prison term, the ministry said on Wednesday. "The ministry's electronic website has been penetrated by hackers," a source at the ministry said in a brief statement carried by the official KUNA news agency. "The ministry immediately suspended the site as a precautionary measure and will take legal measures against those who did this." The statement made no reference to the posting of a speech that opposition leader and former MP Mussallam al-Barrak made on October 15, but activists on Twitter said the text of the speech had been visible on the site for some time. The ministry website remained suspended more than 10 hours after the cyber-attack which happened at about midnight (21:00 GMT) on Tuesday. Barrak was on Monday sentenced to five years in jail over the speech which was considered offensive to Emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah. The authorities have not yet arrested Barrak, and thousands of people demonstrated in a show of support for him outside his residence for the second night on Tuesday. They disrupted traffic at a key highway southwest of Kuwait City, watched on by police who took no action unlike on Monday. Ahead of the latest procession, a new group of prominent activists defiantly read parts of the speech, a day after activists had been joined by former MPs in doing so. Pro-government MPs on Wednesday strongly criticized Interior Minister Ahmad al-Humud al-Sabah for failing to implement a court ruling by arresting Barrak. "There is a direct threat to the head of state... and a challenge to the judicial authority... These people [the opposition] hold no respect to the state, regime and the judiciary," MP Maasuma al-Mubarak said in parliament. "If he [Barrak] refuses arrest, we should send him armored vehicles from the army and the national guard," said Nabeel al-Fadhli, a pro-government lawmaker.