

## DieNet and #Shiite\_Harvest claimed responsibility for disabling ten significant Iraqi websites

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In a recent cyber offensive, a group identifying with the hashtags #DieNet and #Shiite\_Harvest claimed responsibility for disabling ten significant Iraqi websites. This action was framed as support for their affiliates in the “Shiite Harvest.” The targeted websites include:

1. Iraqi Electronic Passport Website
2. Central Bank of Iraq
3. Iraqi Media Network
4. Flight and Hotel Booking Website
5. Iraqi Official Repository Website
6. Largest Electronic Car Market in Iraq
7. Trade Bank of Iraq
8. Suzuki Website in Iraq

## 9. Iraq Entry Visa Portal

## 10. Citizen Government Website

### Verification of Attacks

The group provided evidence of these disruptions through multiple reports on the platform check-host.net. Each link corresponds to a specific website, detailing its inaccessibility during the attack period:

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Central Bank of Iraq

Iraqi Media Network

Flight and Hotel Booking Website

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Iraq Entry Visa Portal

Citizen Government Website

### Context and Implications

The term “Shiite Harvest” has been associated with cyber campaigns targeting Shiite entities. In 2008, a series of cyberattacks targeted Shiite websites, leading to a cyber conflict characterized by some experts as a virtual sectarian battle.

The recent attacks underscore the persistent vulnerabilities within Iraq’s digital infrastructure. Freedom House’s 2021 report on Iraq highlighted that both governmental and nongovernmental websites remain susceptible to cyberattacks, emphasizing the need for enhanced cybersecurity measures.

### Motivations and Attribution

The explicit mention of supporting the “Shiite Harvest” suggests motivations rooted in sectarian dynamics. The use of hashtags like #DieNet and #Shiite\_Harvest indicates a coordinated effort, possibly by Sunni-affiliated hacktivist groups aiming to disrupt Shiite-associated institutions. Historically, such cyber offensives have been employed as tools for political and ideological expression, reflecting offline sectarian tensions in the digital realm.

This coordinated cyberattack on critical Iraqi websites highlights the ongoing challenges posed by sectarian-motivated cyber threats. The recurrence of such incidents emphasizes the urgent need for Iraq to bolster its

cybersecurity infrastructure, develop robust defense mechanisms, and foster regional collaborations to mitigate future threats.

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