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Italy Says It Thwarted Russian Cyberattacks Targeting Winter Olympics

By AFP

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Kirill Kuryavtsev / AFP

Italy said Wednesday it had thwarted a wave of Russian cyberattacks targeting websites linked to the upcoming Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics, as security measures intensified just hours before the opening ceremony.

Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said the attacks hit Italian Foreign Ministry offices abroad, as well as Olympic-related sites, such as hotels in the resort town of Cortina d'Ampezzo. His office said about 120 sites were affected, but that the attacks were "effectively neutralized."

International Olympic Committee communications director Mark Adams declined to comment.

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A pro-Russian hacker group claimed responsibility, saying the attacks were retaliation for Italy's support for Ukraine. In a statement posted on a Telegram channel attributed to the group Noname057, it warned that backing "Ukrainian terrorists" would be punished with distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks.

AFP could not independently verify the channel's ownership, though the statements matched claims cited by cybersecurity analysts.

Noname057 said it targeted several hotels in Cortina d'Ampezzo, one of the Olympic host towns. At least one hotel website remained inaccessible as of Wednesday afternoon.

Italy has deployed around 6,000 police officers and nearly 2,000 soldiers across Olympic venues stretching from Milan to the Dolomites.

Security is especially tight in Milan, where foreign leaders, including U.S. Vice President JD Vance, are expected to attend Friday's opening ceremony.

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