

Japan space agency likely penetrated by cyber attack

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Japan's space agency was likely penetrated by a cyber attack this year by unknown entities but no sensitive information about rockets or satellites was accessed, officials said Wednesday.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) reported to the government that the "possibility is high that unauthorized access was made" to its central server, government spokesman Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters.

The server controls JAXA's intranet, but "we have received information that the intranet is not dealing with [sensitive information](#) such as the operation of rockets and satellites," Matsuno said.

A JAXA spokesman told AFP that the agency was investigating the incident in cooperation with police and cybersecurity vendor companies.

"We think that the vulnerability of network equipment was targeted," he said.

Police became aware of the attack earlier this year and notified JAXA, which was not unaware of the [cyber attack](#) until contacted by police, the Yomiuri Shimbun daily reported.

JAXA is the hub of Japan's space industry, working on new rockets and launches of satellites as well as the country's ongoing "Moon Sniper" mission which blasted off in September.

Nagoya Port, one of Japan's busiest, was crippled by a ransomware attack in July that was reportedly blamed on Lockbit, a Russia-based cybercrime organization.

Japan's National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity (NISC), the agency responsible for the nation's defenses against [cyber attacks](#), was itself infiltrated by hackers for as long as nine months, the Financial Times reported in August.

The same month the Washington Post cited US officials as saying that

Chinese hackers had compromised Japanese classified defense networks in 2020, raising concerns about the cyber defenses of one of Washington's closest allies in Asia.

The Japanese government denied the claims.

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