NET TROUBLE

Trai publishes Ids of netizens, site hacked

■ "Hactivists" claimed to have brought down Trai website

DC CORRESPONDENT
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Telecom regulator Trai on Monday faced flak from the netizens for revealing email Ids of people who have submitted their comments on net neutrality, potentially exposing them to spammers and phishing attacks.

Following the public release of email ids, Anonymous India, a group of "hacktivist", claimed to have brought down Trai website in "revenge" with a DDoS (distributed denial-of-service) attack.

"TRAI forgot about us hahaha! We reminded them that we are still here. Boom Boom http://trai.gov.in," tweeted Anonymous India.

It claimed that it was bringing down Trai website to prevent "spammers from accessing those email Ids posted by Trai publicly."

After some time it tweeted that it has stopped its attack on the website and it was back online. "Some of you have criticised us today for taking down TRAI but that's the way we roll. Trai, expect us! We are watching your every move!," it said.

In DDoS hackers log into a single website simultaneously, thereby causing denial of service for genuine users of the targeted system. Basically the flood of incoming messages to the target website essentially forces it to shut down.

However, Trai secretary Sudhir Gupta told a news agency there was a network issue from National Informatics Centre (NIC), which manages the website for

FACING FLAK

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On privacy issue, he said that whatever Trai received, "it has uploaded on the website."

Earlier in the day Trai was criticised on the social media for making the email Ids public. "Bravo, Trai for exposing a million plus email Ids of those who mailed U. And we shd trust U & the calls u take?," said one tweet.

Another tweet said :

■ However, Trai secretary although did not deny the hacking, but said that there was some network issue from NIC, which manages the website for most regulators and government departments.

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"Really! TRAI! You betrayed us!".

"While there cannot be anonymity in public consultations and Trai is obliged to reveal all responses, they must not reveal the email Ids or contact unless they can prove that petitioners provided no other form of identification, including a name," said Rajya Sabha MP and entrepreneur Rajeev Chandrasekhar.

Meanwhile in response to Trai consultation paper, telecom operators have suggested a licensing regime for over-the-top players such as WhatsApp and Skype.

On the other hand, technology service providers and individuals advocated for non-discriminatory access to internet.

Trai had invited comments till April 24 on its net neutrality consultation paper, while 'counter comments' can be submitted till May 8 to the submissions made public on Monday.

An open house will be held subsequently. Over a million people have submitted response to Trai on the consultation paper, which is unprecedented public participation in any regulatory consultation in India's history.