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India readies cyber command service to combat espionage threats online

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No army, air force or navy can ignore the cyber world and live with it. Wars of this century will be fought not just on land, air and water, but also in the virtual space. So, with an aim to counter cyber attacks, India would soon set up a tri-service cyber command, **army (/topic/army)** chief Gen Bikram Singh said.

The ministry of defence has a draft on the subject ready which the cabinet committee on security, headed by the prime minister, would be taking up for discussion in the days to come. "A note for the cabinet committee on security has been prepared for setting up the tri-service cyber command," Gen Singh said.

Sources said the office of the chairman, chief of staff committee, has written a detailed note to defence minister AK Antony regarding setting up cyber command. Officials, privy to drafting the cabinet note, told **dna** that the need to have a cyber command has been felt for a long time, as the **cyber security (/topic/cyber-security)** infrastructure of the country is "weak".

This is evident from recent incidents of cyber attacks on India. Last year, Chinese **hackers (/topic/hackers)** broke into sensitive computer systems at the headquarters of the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam, where the indigenous nuclear submarine Arihant has been undergoing sea trials.

Recently, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) computer systems were breached and sensitive files were leaked. A top **defence ministry (/topic/defence-ministry)** officer admitted that India has delayed on the cyber security front. "Cyber command would ensure both offensive and defensive cyber security capabilities. Issues like cyber warfare, cyber **terrorism (/topic/terrorism)** and cyber espionage would be taken care of by a cyber command," the officer said.

Prime minister Manmohan Singh, while addressing the combined commanders conference in November, highlighted the need for developing capacities to counter what he described as "global surveillance operations".

That NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden had allegedly collected information and intercepted communications in India has lent urgency to setting up a cyber command. As per a recent report, the US is the biggest buyer of malware in the world. Global cyber espionage networks are being actively used to spy on other countries. The command and control servers of malware FinFisher were also found in 36 countries, including India.

What do you think about this?

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