

Alleged computer hacker acquitted

Senior operator was accused by Education Ministry of hindering some of its e-services

- By Bassam Za'za', Senior Reporter
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Dubai: A court on Wednesday acquitted a senior computer operator of hacking into the e-system of the Education Ministry's website and hindering some of its e-services.

The Dubai Misdemeanours Court squashed the Education Ministry's civil lawsuit against the 35-year-old Egyptian senior computer operator — who worked for the ministry prior to this case — and rejected its civil compensation claim of Dh21,000 for lack of crime.

Civil lawsuit

"The court has acquitted 35-year-old H.S. for uncorroborated evidence. The ministry's civil lawsuit has also been dismissed," said Presiding Judge Abdullah Khlaif Abu Zaid when he pronounced Wednesday's judgment.

Prosecutors charged H.S. with unlawfully hacking into the Education Ministry's electronic information system and cancelling and omitting personal data belonging to the users of the ministry's main computer.

He was additionally charged with impeding the access to the Ministry's e-service programs over the internet.

H.S.'s lawyer Saeed Al Ghailani argued that his client was framed and that the accusations were fabricated against H.S.

'Malevolent complaint'

"The ministry lodged a malevolent complaint against my client accusing him of being the only employee who had access to the website. That was absolutely untrue. There is no crime. The website was not hacked or intruded... but it got hit by a virus," said Al Ghailani.

"That virus hit the website and the ministry's information system before and this was not the first time. I ask the court to pronounce my client's innocence," he added.

Confiscated items

Prosecution records said police confiscated at the suspect's house five computers, 52 CDs, four memory sticks and one flash memory.

Court records said the ministry's chief of the legal department informed the police that someone used the computer at the ministry's head office in Abu Dhabi and hacked into the e-mail system, e-services and e-gate and omitted several data.

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