



Analytical Brief / Précis analytique



TOP SECRET / [redacted] CANADIAN EYES ONLY

CAB 2023-24/51
September 20, 2023

India - [redacted]

For additional info on the collective capabilities of [redacted] -see also Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (CCCS) publication [redacted]

[redacted]

As India continues to develop its cyber capabilities, [redacted]

[redacted]

Moreover, as its capabilities develop, the GoI will likely seek to promote a pro-India and anti-Khalistani narrative in Canada using cognitive warfare techniques. (S//CEO)

India's acquisition of foreign cyber capabilities

[redacted]

According to open-source reporting, following a visit by Indian Prime Minister Modi to Israel in 2017, India acquired the NSO Group's Israeli-made spyware, Pegasus¹, along with sophisticated weapons and intelligence gear worth approximately US\$2 billion. Similar to other states that purchased the Pegasus spyware (e.g., Mexico and Panama), India voted in June 2019 in support of Israel at the UN's Economic and Social Council—a first for India. (S// [redacted])

PRC and Indian Rivalries

Tensions have risen between India and the PRC in recent years due to border clashes, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, the renaming of Indian-claimed territories as Chinese, and Beijing's increasing ambitions for the Indian Ocean.

[redacted]

¹ For additional CSIS assessments on this issue, see also [redacted] (S//CEO) and [redacted]



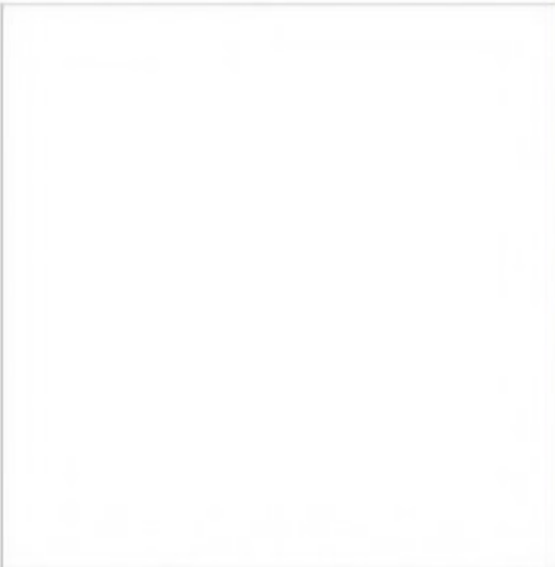
CAB 2023-24/51
September 20, 2023

TOP SECRET [] CANADIAN EYES ONLY

[]
[] In order for a client to connect to the Pegasus system, the NSO Group charges an initial fee of \$500,000, and additional fees to actually infiltrate phones. The company reportedly charged \$650,000 to infect 10 iPhone or Android devices, and \$500,000 to infiltrate five BlackBerry devices. The NSO Group allegedly offers discounts for returning clients (e.g., \$800,000 for an additional 100 phones, \$500,000 for an extra 50 phones, and so on) and charges 17% percent annual maintenance fee on client accounts. (TS/ [])

According to open-source reporting, India is looking to obtain new spyware from a company with a lower profile than the NSO Group; it has reportedly shown an interest in a number of Israeli companies, such as Quadream,² Cognytle,³ Intellexa.⁴ (U)

Use of Pegasus []



Cyber cooperation between Israel and India

Israel and India recognize the importance of strengthening their ties in the cyber realm. Israel's expertise in cybersecurity serves as a valuable model for India as it formulates its own national cybersecurity strategy. These efforts also serve to disrupt Beijing—a persistent cyber adversary for India. (U)

According to US-based cybersecurity firm, FireEye, in August 2021, Israel saw its first China-linked cyberattack, which hit dozens of Israeli private and government organizations. (U)

India's relationship with China continues to deteriorate and tensions between the two neighbours are heightened by consistent Chinese cyberattacks and cyber espionage campaigns against India. (U)

According to the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), an expanding India-Israel cyber partnership has the potential to redefine current geostrategic dynamics regionally, but also globally. (U)

According to Forbidden Stories' report entitled "the Pegasus project"⁵, more than 1,000 Indian phone numbers were identified among the nearly 50,000 worldwide Pegasus spyware victims. The Indian phone numbers included those of (i) Rahul Gandhi, India's main opposition leader; (ii) Ashok Lavasa, a key election official considered an obstacle to the ruling party; (iii) M. Hari Menon, the local head of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and; (iv) a group of Modi critics who were accused of plotting to overthrow the government. (U)

² Quadream's spyware, Reign, is able to remotely compromise iPhones without user interaction. (U)

³ Cognytle's spyware, Intercept, can give access to a victim's telephone calls, text messages, emails and location. (U)

⁴ Intellexa's spyware, Predator, has reportedly been discovered on the phones of Greek opposition leaders and journalists. (U)

⁵ The Pegasus Project was a collaboration by journalists from 17 media organizations in 10 countries, coordinated by Forbidden Stories, who uncovered how governments worldwide were using NSO Group's Pegasus spyware. (U)



Analytical Brief
Précis analytique

CAB 2023-24/51
September 20, 2023

TOP SECRET/ [] CANADIAN EYES ONLY

[]

[]

[]

[]

[]

[]

[]

[] cyber capabilities

[]

[]

[]



Intelligence Assessments Branch
Direction de l'évaluation du renseignement



Analytical Brief
Précis analytique

CAB 2023-24/51
September 20, 2023

TOP SECRET [] / CANADIAN EYES ONLY

India's interest in influence activities

[]

[] Cognitive warfare is the weaponization of—and dependence on—the latest advances in artificial intelligence (AI), cyber-psychology, cognitive science and neuroscience. It can be used anytime and anywhere; it can be applied to political, economic, cultural and social issues; it can be directed against anyone. Cyberspace has become a prominent domain in which capable actors may target a nation's entire population or subsets of individuals or social/cultural groups. (TS/[]/CEO)

[]

Cognitive Warfare
Cognitive warfare is an unconventional form of aggression that uses cyber tools to alter cognitive and decision-making processes of an individual or a group of individuals. It involves the integration of traditional psychological and information operations with the latest advances in computer, cognitive and neuroscience technologies. It is akin to information warfare, except that cognitive warfare depends on the use of cyber technologies to surreptitiously degrade, manipulate, modify or disrupt the capacity to know, understand or produce knowledge. (U//OUO)

[]

On September 23, 2022—just a few days after the start of the Canadian phase of voting in the Khalistan Referendum⁶—the GoI's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued a travel advisory warning Indian nationals and students in Canada to exercise caution and remain vigilant due to an increase in incidents of hate crime, sectarian violence and anti-India activities in Canada.

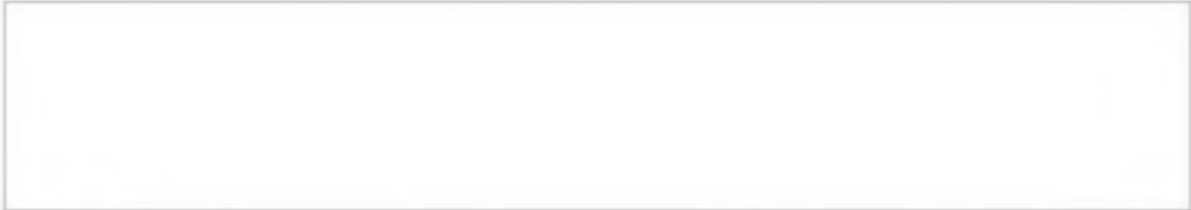
[]

⁶ The referendum on independence for the Indian state of Punjab and the creation of a new Sikh nation called Khalistan is a non-binding plebiscite organized by the United States-based advocacy group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ). The vote was previously known as 'Referendum 2020.' Referendum voting has been held in several locations around the world, including the United Kingdom and Switzerland, since October 31, 2021. Voting in Canada was held on September 18, 2022, in Brampton, ON, with a second round of voting scheduled for November 6, 2022, in Mississauga, ON. (U)



CAB 2023-24/51
September 20, 2023

TOP SECRET/[redacted]/CANADIAN EYES ONLY



Outlook

*International government demand for sophisticated cyber tools remains strong despite legal action against individual companies who have provided tools to target dissidents and critics.
The PRC and Pakistan remain India's main adversaries and India will almost certainly seek to become a more capable cyber actor in future years.*





CAB 2023-24/51
September 20, 2023

TOP SECRET/[] CANADIAN EYES ONLY

[]
CSIS_PUBLICATIONS / SCRS_PUBLICATIONS

THIS INFORMATION IS SHARED WITH YOUR ORGANIZATION FOR INTELLIGENCE PURPOSES ONLY AND MAY NOT BE USED IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS. THIS DOCUMENT MAY NOT BE RECLASSIFIED, DISSEMINATED OR DISCLOSED IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF CSIS. THIS DOCUMENT CONSTITUTES A RECORD WHICH MAY BE SUBJECT TO EXEMPTIONS UNDER THE FEDERAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT OR PRIVACY ACT OR UNDER APPLICABLE PROVINCIAL OR TERRITORIAL LEGISLATION. IF A REQUEST FOR ACCESS UNDER THESE ACTS IS MADE, THE RECEIVING AGENCY MUST CONSULT CSIS IN RELATION TO APPLYING THE AVAILABLE EXEMPTIONS. FURTHER, CSIS MAY TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS UNDER SECTION 38 OF THE CANADA EVIDENCE ACT OR OTHER LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THIS INFORMATION. IF YOU LEARN THAT THIS INFORMATION HAS OR MAY BE DISCLOSED, THAT THESE CAVEATS HAVE NOT BEEN RESPECTED OR IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ABIDE BY THESE CAVEATS, INFORM CSIS IMMEDIATELY.



Intelligence Assessments Branch
Direction de l'Évaluation du renseignement