Whistle-blowers' details go public

Hackers cracked into the website of South Africa's police and downloaded information that could leave whistle-blowers vulnerable, the police and a government data agency said Wednesday (22 May).

State Information Technology Agency (Sita), which hosts all of the government's websites, said that last week the hackers accessed information relating to crimes posted by some 15,000 whistle-blowers and complainants.

"Most of the information was submitted anonymously. We are concerned because there is information where people have given further details" of crimes," Daniel Mashao, Sita's divisional manager, was quoted by Sapa as saying.

The hackers posted the information onto a public website.

Local media said some of the whistle-blowers' details that may have been compromised including phone numbers, identity numbers and email addresses provided between 2005 and 2013.

The hacker "DomainerAnon" claimed responsibility for the cyber attack in a tweet late last week, saying it was linked to last year's killing by police of 34 striking workers at the Marikana platinum mine operated by Lonmin.

Police have launched an investigation into the breach, which was only discovered on Monday (20 May).

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge