



**UNC CHARLOTTE**  
**College of Computing and Informatics**  
Department of Software and Information Systems

Enterprise and Infrastructure Protection  
ITIS 6230

**MIDTERM PROJECT**  
**PKI LAB**  
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This lab was focused on providing hands-on experience on Public Key Infrastructure (PKI). It provided a better understanding of how PKI works, how it is used to protect the Web and how Man-In-The-Middle Attacks can be defeated by PKI.

In **task 1**, I had to become a Certification Authority (CA). The CA uses the *openssl.conf* file to issue certificates for other servers. I had to create the respective directories as mentioned in the *openssl.conf* file and then run the command *openssl req -new -x509 -keyout ca.key -out ca.crt -config openssl.cnf* which created the CA's key and public key certificate.

```
[02/23/20]seed@VM:~/EipMidterm$ openssl req -new -x509 -keyout ca.key -out ca.crt -config openssl.cnf
Generating a 2048 bit RSA private key
.....+
++
.....+++
writing new private key to 'ca.key'
Enter PEM pass phrase:
Verifying - Enter PEM pass phrase:
-----
You are about to be asked to enter information that will be incorporated
into your certificate request.
What you are about to enter is what is called a Distinguished Name or a DN.
There are quite a few fields but you can leave some blank
For some fields there will be a default value,
If you enter '.', the field will be left blank.
-----
Country Name (2 letter code) [AU]:US
State or Province Name (full name) [Some-State]:NC
Locality Name (eg, city) []:Charlotte
Organization Name (eg, company) [Internet Widgits Pty Ltd]:abc
Organizational Unit Name (eg, section) []:abc
Common Name (e.g. server FQDN or YOUR name) []:sahil
Email Address []:sbhirud2@uncc.edu
[02/23/20]seed@VM:~/EipMidterm$
```

In **task 2**, I created a certificate for **SEEDPKILab2018.com** by performing the following step as mentioned in the SEED Documentation:

1. Generated the public/private key pair for it.
2. Generated a Certificate Signing Request (CSR) – It is a document which includes company's public key which is sent to the CA who generates a certificate for it once it authenticates the server.
3. Generated the certificate.

```

[02/20/20]seed@VM:~/EipMidterm$ openssl ca -in server.csr -out server.crt -cert ca.crt -keyfile ca.key \
> -config openssl.cnf
Using configuration from openssl.cnf
Enter pass phrase for ca.key:
Check that the request matches the signature
Signature ok
Certificate Details:
  Serial Number: 4096 (0x1000)
  Validity
    Not Before: Feb 21 01:33:45 2020 GMT
    Not After : Feb 20 01:33:45 2021 GMT
  Subject:
    countryName           = US
    stateOrProvinceName   = NC
    organizationName      = Internet Widgits Pty Ltd
    commonName            = SEEDPKILab2018.com
  X509v3 extensions:
    X509v3 Basic Constraints:
      CA:FALSE
    Netscape Comment:
      OpenSSL Generated Certificate
    X509v3 Subject Key Identifier:
      7B:CC:D7:34:1D:BF:78:1E:90:DF:94:F8:C5:89:AF:C8:41:D3:A9:A2
    X509v3 Authority Key Identifier:
      keyid:98:B5:76:8B:FF:DA:06:DE:3F:EB:B3:66:34:B1:59:3B:DF:A8:F6:95

Certificate is to be certified until Feb 20 01:33:45 2021 GMT (365 days)
Sign the certificate? [y/n]:y

1 out of 1 certificate requests certified, commit? [y/n]:y
Write out database with 1 new entries
Data Base Updated
[02/20/20]seed@VM:~/EipMidterm$ █

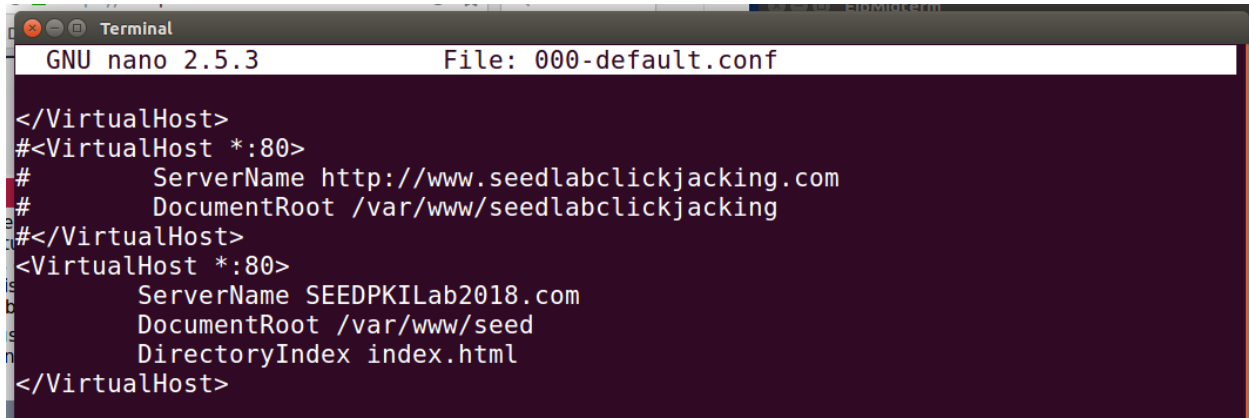
```

Next, in **task 3**, I deployed the certificate in Apache Web Server, which is openssl's built in web server. Firstly, I had to configure the DNS to recognize the name of our website by editing the */etc/hosts* file. Then, I configured the web server for the certificate generated in Task 2. While accessing the URL, I received an error from the browser saying Invalid Security Certificate. Next, I manually added the CA's certificate in the browser. Finally, I tested the website <https://SEEDPKILab2018.com:4433> where 4433 is the port number on which the server is listening. The website displayed a list of ciphers supported by openssl.



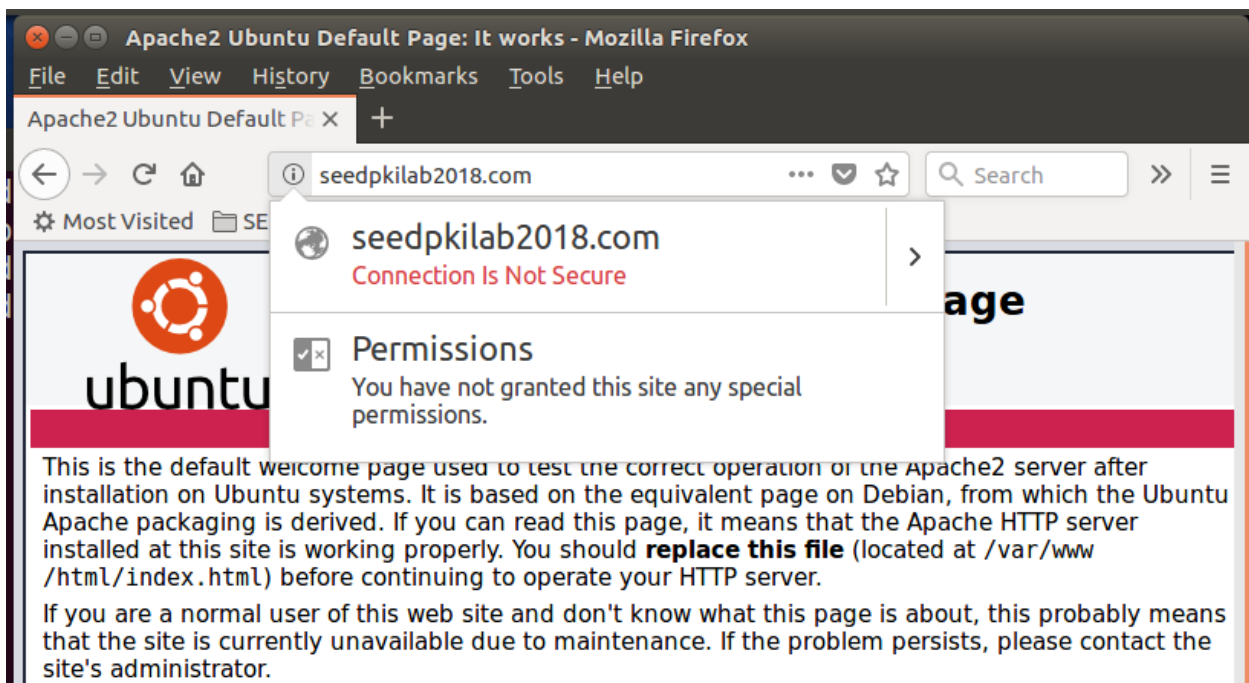
*/etc/apache2/sites-available/000-default.conf* for HTTP website and */etc/apache2/sites-available/default-ssl.conf* for HTTPS websites.

After configuring the server, I tested the configuration file for errors, enabled SSL module, enabled the site and restarted Apache server.



```
GNU nano 2.5.3      File: 000-default.conf

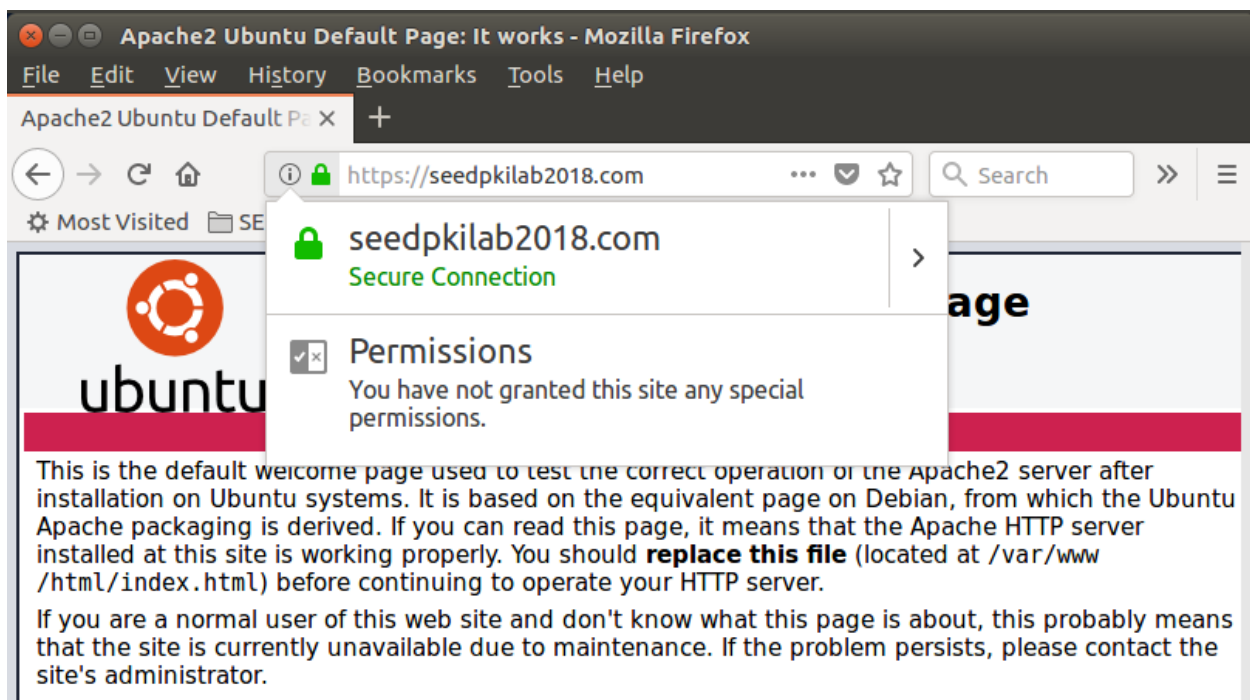
</VirtualHost>
#<VirtualHost *:80>
#       ServerName http://www.seedlabclickjacking.com
#       DocumentRoot /var/www/seedlabclickjacking
#</VirtualHost>
<VirtualHost *:80>
    ServerName SEEDPKILab2018.com
    DocumentRoot /var/www/seed
    DirectoryIndex index.html
</VirtualHost>
```



```
Terminal
GNU nano 2.5.3 File: default-ssl.conf

</VirtualHost>
<VirtualHost *:443>
    ServerName seedpkilab2018.com
    DocumentRoot /var/www/seed
    DirectoryIndex index.html
    SSLEngine On
    SSLCertificateFile /home/seed/EipMidterm/server.crt
    SSLCertificateKeyFile /home/seed/EipMidterm/server.pem
</VirtualHost>
</IfModule>

# vim: syntax=apache ts=4 sw=4 sts=4 sr noet
```



In **task 5**, I launched a MITM attack in which I had to perform the following steps:

1. Setting up the malicious website – I used the Apache server to impersonate **gmail.com** by adding a VirtualHost entry in the Apache's SSL configuration file.

```
Terminal
GNU nano 2.5.3      File: default-ssl.conf

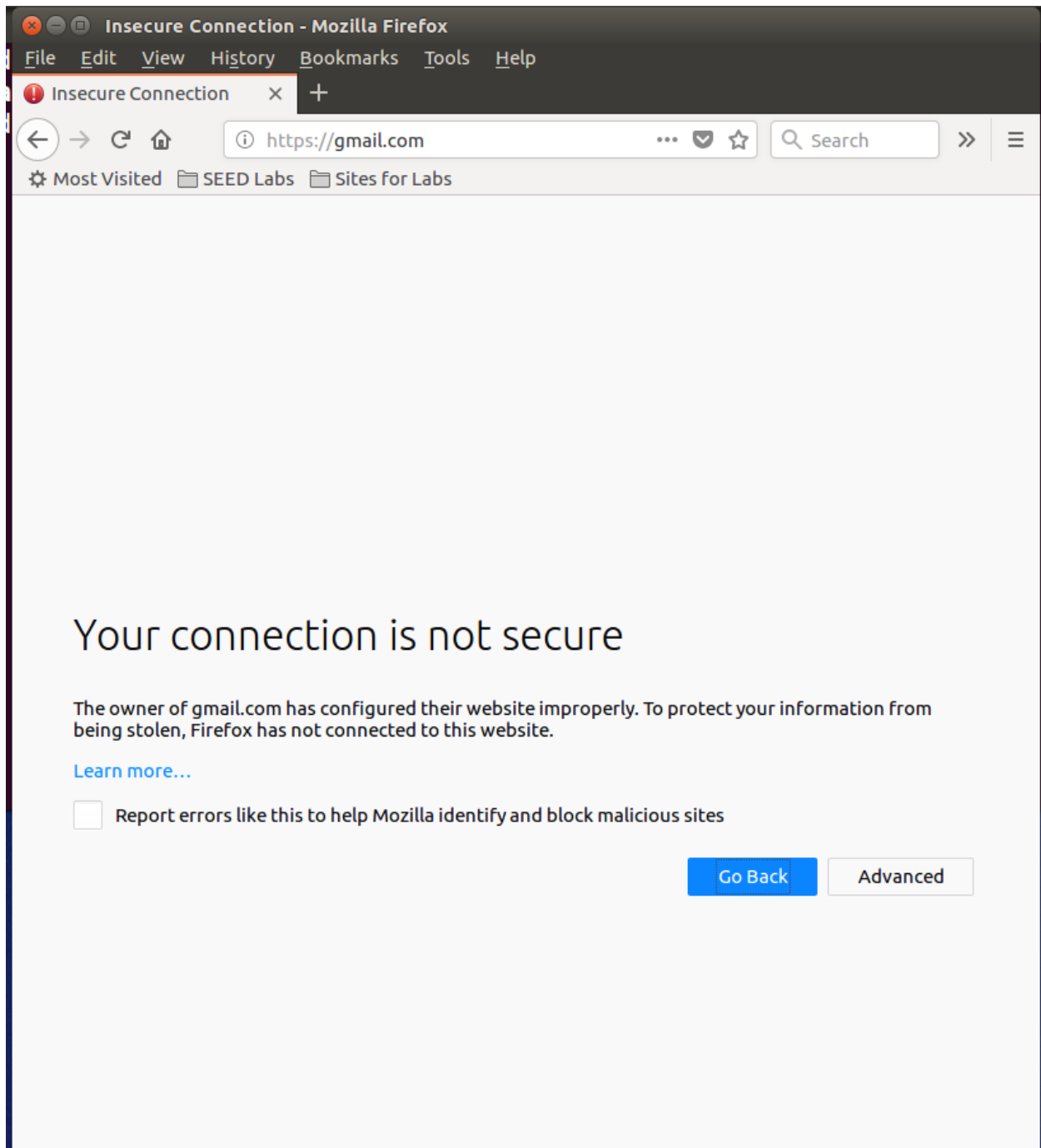
</VirtualHost>

<VirtualHost *:443>
    ServerName SEEDPKILab2018.com
    DocumentRoot /var/www/seed
    DirectoryIndex index.html
    SSLEngine On
    SSLCertificateFile /home/seed/EipMidterm/server.crt
    SSLCertificateKeyFile /home/seed/EipMidterm/server.pem
</VirtualHost>

<VirtualHost *:443>
    ServerName gmail.com
    DocumentRoot /var/www/seed
    DirectoryIndex index.html
    SSLEngine On
    SSLCertificateFile /home/seed/EipMidterm/server.crt
    SSLCertificateKeyFile /home/seed/EipMidterm/server.pem
</VirtualHost>

^G Get Help  ^O Write Out ^W Where Is  ^K Cut Text  ^J Justify   ^C Cur Pos
^X Exit      ^R Read File ^\ Replace   ^U Uncut Text ^T To Spell  ^_ Go To Line
```

2. Becoming the man in the middle – I manually poisoned the DNS cache of the user by modifying */etc/hosts* and adding an entry for **gmail.com**
3. Browse the target website – I visited the website and the browser showed an error saying that the connection is not secure i.e. PKI is saving the victim from visiting the malicious website.



In task 6, assuming that the root CA has been compromised, the attacker can now generate any certificate using the CA's private key. So, he generates a certificate which matches the domain name of the malicious server and performs the MITM attack as described in Task 5. The result (shown below) shows that the victim can land on the malicious website without him/her knowing that it is a malicious one.



Therefore, I inferred that if an attacker gains access to the root CA then he/she can bypass the security provided to the users by PKI.

```
Terminal
[02/23/20]seed@VM:~/EipMidterm$ openssl ca -in server.csr -out server.crt -cert ca.crt -keyfile ca.key \
> -config openssl.cnf
Using configuration from openssl.cnf
Enter pass phrase for ca.key:
Check that the request matches the signature
Signature ok
Certificate Details:
  Serial Number: 4097 (0x1001)
  Validity
    Not Before: Feb 23 16:06:18 2020 GMT
    Not After : Feb 22 16:06:18 2021 GMT
  Subject:
    countryName           = US
    stateOrProvinceName   = NC
    organizationName      = uncc
    organizationalUnitName = eip
    commonName            = www.gmail.com
  X509v3 extensions:
    X509v3 Basic Constraints:
      CA:FALSE
    Netscape Comment:
      OpenSSL Generated Certificate
    X509v3 Subject Key Identifier:
      74:84:64:50:F8:B1:98:9D:0C:6F:86:F0:38:12:29:C0:12:54:F7:03
    X509v3 Authority Key Identifier:
      keyid:98:B5:76:8B:FF:DA:06:DE:3F:EB:B3:66:34:B1:59:3B:DF:A8:F6:95

Certificate is to be certified until Feb 22 16:06:18 2021 GMT (365 days)
Sign the certificate? [y/n]:y

1 out of 1 certificate requests certified, commit? [y/n]y
Write out database with 1 new entries
Data Base Updated
[02/23/20]seed@VM:~/EipMidterm$
```

