

privateDH: An Enhanced Diffie-Hellman Key-Exchange Protocol using RSA and AES Algorithms

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Abstract—RSA cryptography, an asymmetric communication protocol, is facing diverse issues. Recent research works suggest that RSA security has already broken. On the contrary, AES is the most used symmetric-key cryptography protocol, and it is also facing the same issues. Literature search suggests that there is an issue of cryptanalysis attacks in symmetric-key cryptography, and a shared secret key is required such cryptography; for instance, AES cryptography. The most famous key exchange protocol is Diffie-Hellman; however, it has an issue of the number field sieve discrete log algorithm attacks. Moreover, recent research suggest that Diffie-Hellman is less secure than widely perceived. In addition, there is another issue of Logjam attack that allows man-in-middle attack in Diffie-Hellman. To address above raised issues, we combine RSA, AES, and Diffie-Hellman algorithm to mitigate the potential attacks on the key exchange protocol, called privateDH. Our key objective is to provide guaranteed security to the Diffie-Hellman Algorithm. Therefore, privateDH does not share the data publicly with the intended party. Instead, privateDH encrypts all shareable data using the AES algorithm in the time of key exchange protocol. privateDH uses the RSA algorithm and retrieves the public key to avoid a man-in-the-middle attack. Thus, we demonstrate how to provide security to the Diffie-Hellman algorithm to defeat various kinds of possible future attacks.

Index Terms—Diffie-Hellman, Key agreement, Key Exchange, Public key, Private Key, Symmetric key cryptography, Asymmetric Cryptography, Security

I. INTRODUCTION

Cryptography is the most prominent research challenge to protect the data from adversaries in communication. It can be applied in asymmetric and symmetric communications. RSA cryptography is the most used asymmetric cryptography algorithm [1], [2]. However, symmetric communication requires key exchange protocol and encryption/decryption algorithm. Therefore, the most famous key-exchange protocols are Diffie-Hellman [3], Elliptic-curve Cryptography (ECC) [4], [5], and Elliptic-Curve Diffie-Hellman (ECDH) [6] algorithm. AES is the most used encryption/decryption standard for block cipher [7]–[9]. Symmetric key cryptography is the most secure way to exchange data between two parties, and therefore, it requires a key-agreement protocol. If the key-agreement protocol is broken, then the entire communica-

tion becomes insecure. Therefore, key-agreement protocol demands a security to protect from the attackers.

Recent literature suggests that RSA cryptography has an issue of integer factorization [10]. Also, it faces issues of low-exponential computation [11]–[13]. Moreover, RSA requires Optimal Encryption Asymmetric Padding [14]. Many new attacks have already been reported [15], [16]. The RSA cryptography have already been broken [17]–[20]. Therefore, many new techniques have been suggested to secure RSA [21], [22]. Furthermore, the public key cryptography requires a trusted third party to distribute the public key, which is a slow process [23]. Similarly, symmetric-key cryptography is prone to many attacks, particularly brute-force, cryptanalysis [24], and fault attacks [25]. Recent research suggests that symKrypt provides a strong resistance to cryptanalysis attacks [26]; however, it requires shared secret key and shared secret seed value. Moreover, Stealth is similar approach; however, it does not modifies the Diffie-Hellman algorithm [27].

The Diffie-Hellman algorithm is a widely used symmetric key exchange protocol. Securing key-agreement protocol is a key challenge for cryptographer because recent research suggests the failure of the Diffie-Hellman algorithm [28]. Adrian *et al.* finds that Diffie-Hellman algorithm allows man-in-middle-attack (MITM) [28]. Therefore, Diffie-Hellman requires security to protect from the attackers. The root cause is publicly shared keys which makes Diffie-Hellman a failure key-exchange protocol. Thus, our key objective is to provide security to the Diffie-Hellman algorithm. Therefore, Diffie-Hellman algorithm requires protection from MITM attacks and other possible attacks. Recent literature suggests the modification of Diffie-Hellman algorithm using diverse combination, for instance, Yusfrizal *et al.* [29] and Sejad *et al.* [30] combine AES to protect possible attacks but unable to deal with the MITM attack.

In the era of post quantum cryptography, it requires to protect the digital assets from the attacker in every aspects. Also, it demands a revisiting of the conventional cryptography. Therefore, we propose an enhance Diffie-Hellman algorithm

to provide guaranteed security. In this paper, we provide security to the Diffie-Hellman algorithm. We derive a private Diffie-Hellman algorithm, privateDH for short. The sender requires a public key of the receiver, and therefore, the sender retrieves the receiver’s public key from a trusted third party. The sender generates a random key for AES using a true random number generator, Rando [31]; however, there are also fast random number generators [32], [33]. The sender sends the generated random key to the receiver by encrypting own private key and the receiver’s public. The receiver decrypts the key from the received ciphertext using sender’s public key and its private key. The receiver initiates the Diffie-Hellman key exchange process. The receiver generates two prime numbers [34] and sends the prime numbers to the sender encrypting by the received key. Both the receiver and sender encrypt the whole communication using a single key, and the AES algorithm [7] is used to encrypt the communication. Therefore, privateDH maintains secret communication between the sender and the receiver in the entire computation process of the shared secret key. The conventional Diffie-Hellman algorithm shares the numbers over an insecure channel without encryption; however, privateDH encrypts all the number and shares secretly between the sender and receiver.

The main contributions of this paper are outlined below-

- We derive an enhanced Diffie-Hellman key exchange algorithm to provide a security while exchanging the key.
- We demonstrate how to use RSA and AES in the Diffie-Hellman algorithm.
- Also, we show how to achieve absolute security without communication overhead. But there is a computation overhead; however, it is negligible.
- We also analyze the various possible issues of our proposed solution.

The Diffie-Hellman algorithm is protected from an attacker using RSA and symmetric cryptography. Therefore, privateDH shows strong resistance against attackers and is able to compute shared secret key securely. In this paper, we demonstrate how to secure the Diffie-Hellman algorithm from attackers. There is no key-agreement protocol to guarantee security while computing the shared secret key, to the best of our knowledge.

II. BACKGROUND

In this section, we establish preliminaries and discuss the RSA, AES, and Diffie-Hellman algorithm.

A. RSA Cryptography

RSA cryptography is a well-known asymmetric cryptography algorithm that relies on public-private key cryptography [1], [2]. In RSA, the receiver publishes its public key and retains its private key. Anyone can send a message to the receiver by encrypting using the public key. Only the receiver can decrypt the message. The public key is published, and it is a long-term key. Attackers can break the security if the

public-private key pair is not renewed. Moreover, the public-private key is time-consuming cryptography, but it is useful in many applications.

RSA algorithm requires two large prime numbers; let the two large prime numbers be P_r and Q_r . The product of these two prime number is made public; let it be $n = P_r \times Q_r$. The P_r and Q_r are kept secret. The RSA algorithm calculates $\lambda(n) = \text{LCM}((P_r - 1), (Q_r - 1))$ which is also kept secret. Let us choose a public key exponent e where $1 < e < \lambda(n)$. Moreover, the e is coprime with $\lambda(n)$. Finally, the RSA algorithm computes a secret key as $d \times e \equiv 1 \pmod{\lambda(n)}$. RSA algorithm publishes (n, e) as a public key, and the rest parameters are kept secret.

1) *Encryption*: Let the m be the message to be encrypted, then RSA Algorithm encrypts using Equation (1).

$$m^e \equiv c \pmod{n} \quad (1)$$

2) *Decryption*: The sender sends the ciphertext c to the receiver using encrypting by the receiver’s public key. The receiver receives the ciphertext c and decrypts using its private key by Equation (2).

$$c^d \equiv m \pmod{n} \quad (2)$$

B. Advanced Encryption Standard

Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) is a block cipher algorithm for symmetric cryptography [7]. It is known as Rijndael. The round keys are derived from the cipher key using AES key schedule method. Moreover, AES performs an XOR operation in each byte of the state to combine with a byte of the round key, which is known as AddRoundKey. Each byte is replaced with another according to a lookup table in a non-linear substitution step, which is known as SubBytes. The last three rows of the state are shifted cyclically a certain number of steps in a transposition step, which is known as ShiftRows. MixColumns operates on the columns of the state to combine the four bytes in each column in a linear mixing operation. AES performs SubBytes, ShiftRows, MixColumns, and AddRoundKey in rounds 9, 11, and 13. Similarly, it performs SubBytes, ShiftRows, and AddRoundKey in rounds 10, 12, and 14.

C. Diffie-Hellman Cryptography

TABLE I
DIFFIE-HELLMAN KEY EXCHANGE PROTOCOL FOR THREE SECRET KEY GENERATION.

Sender \mathcal{A}	Attacker \mathcal{E}	Receiver \mathcal{B}
P	P	P
g	g	g
a		b
$A = g^a \pmod{P}$		$B = g^b \pmod{P}$
B	A, B	A
$SK = B^a \pmod{P}$		$SK = A^b \pmod{P}$

Table I shows the algorithm of Diffie-Hellman key exchange. Initially, both the sender and receiver share two prime

numbers P and g over the public channel. Then, the \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} generate random key a and b using a true-random number generator, respectively. Both the keys a and b are kept secret. The \mathcal{A} computes $A = g^a \bmod \mathcal{P}$, and sends the A to \mathcal{B} . Similarly, the \mathcal{B} computes $B = g^b \bmod \mathcal{P}$ and sends the B to \mathcal{A} . The \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} can compute the shared secret key $SK = B^a \bmod \mathcal{P}$ and $SK = A^b \bmod \mathcal{P}$, respectively.

III. PRIVATEDH: THE PROPOSED SYSTEM

We propose a private Diffie-Hellman algorithm, privateDH for short, to overcome the existing issues of the Diffie-Hellman algorithm [28]. It is a straightforward enhancement of the existing Diffie-Hellman algorithm to provide absolute security for key exchange. privateDH combines the Diffie-Hellman algorithm with RSA cryptography [1] and AES symmetric cryptography [7]. This section demonstrates how to provide absolute security to the key exchange protocol using the combination of RSA and AES cryptography.

A. Assumption

We have a few assumptions to establish the enhanced Diffie-Hellman key-exchange protocol, which are outlined below-

- We assume that the P_r and Q_r of RSA are large prime numbers, and integer factorization takes many years. Also, we assume that the e in the RSA is large, which is approximately equivalent to $2^{16} - 1$.
- We assume the public key of sender and the receiver are valid.
- privateDH depends on the trusted third party, and the trusted third party is assumed to be valid for public key distribution.

B. Description

Let us assume that the sender \mathcal{A} wishes to send a message to the receiver \mathcal{B} . Therefore, the \mathcal{A} encrypts hello to \mathcal{B} along with the key. The message is encrypted using the private key of the \mathcal{A} , and public key of \mathcal{B} . Therefore, only the \mathcal{B} can decrypt the message. The receiver \mathcal{B} decrypts the hello message using its private key and public key of \mathcal{A} . Instead of the hello message, the \mathcal{A} generates a random key, encrypts it using the private key of the \mathcal{A} , and public key of \mathcal{B} . The encrypted cipher is sent to the \mathcal{B} . The \mathcal{B} decrypts the key and initiates the Diffie-Hellman key exchange protocol. Thus, the \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} share the initial secret key successfully. The \mathcal{B} generates two random prime numbers using Rando [31], P and g ; encrypts the two prime numbers by AES using the initial shared secret key, and sends the ciphertext to the \mathcal{A} . The rest of the communications are encrypted using the shared key. The Diffie-Hellman algorithm requires two prime numbers P and g to share between \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} . All communications are encrypted using the shared key. The symmetric key cryptography uses AES cryptography algorithm [7]. Conventionally, Diffie-Hellman shares all the keys publicly excepts randomly selected numbers and shared

secret key. However, we suggest encrypting all the keys using the initial shared key between \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} . Thus, the Diffie-Hellman algorithm shares all the keys secretly.

C. Trusted Third Party

The sender \mathcal{A} requires the public key of \mathcal{B} to send a message. Thus, the \mathcal{A} retrieves the public key of \mathcal{B} from the trusted third party. The trusted third party facilitates the public keys. The trusted third party cannot be malicious; otherwise, privateDH fails.

D. Combination of the RSA, AES, and Diffie-Hellman algorithm

Figure 1 demonstrates the combination of the asymmetric and symmetric key exchange with time-frame. Table II demonstrates Diffie-Hellman key exchange protocol in the presence of the attackers. In this enhanced version, the parameters are shared between the sender and receiver by encryption. Conventional Diffie-Hellman shares the parameters publicly. Initially, the sender \mathcal{A} generates a random key using Rando [31], a true-random number generator, let the key be \mathcal{K} . The generated key \mathcal{K} is encrypted using the public key of \mathcal{B} , let the public key be \mathcal{B}_{pub} . The \mathcal{A} sends the generated key \mathcal{K} to the \mathcal{B} using Equation (3).

$$\zeta_1^A = Enc_{\mathcal{B}_{pub}}(Enc^{\mathcal{A}_{priv}}(\mathcal{K})) \quad (3)$$

Table II shows that the attacker \mathcal{E} can get the ciphertext ζ_1^A . The \mathcal{B} receives the ciphertext ζ_1^A and decrypts the message using its private key; let the private key be \mathcal{B}_{priv} and decryption process is shown in Equation (4).

$$\mathcal{K} = Dec^{\mathcal{B}_{priv}}(Dec^{\mathcal{A}_{pub}}(\zeta_1^A)) \quad (4)$$

The \mathcal{B} needs to generate two prime numbers; let the two prime numbers be the P and g . The two prime numbers are encrypted using shared key \mathcal{K} to send to the \mathcal{A} as shown in Equation (5).

$$\zeta_1^B = Enc^{\mathcal{K}}(P), \quad \zeta_2^B = Enc^{\mathcal{K}}(g) \quad (5)$$

Equation (5) uses AES block cipher algorithm to encrypts the P and g . The \mathcal{A} receives the two ciphertexts and decrypts the two shared prime numbers using Equation (6).

$$P = Dec^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_1^B), \quad g = Dec^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_2^B) \quad (6)$$

Equation (6) uses the AES algorithm to decrypt the ciphertext. Thus, both sender and receiver use the AES algorithm for encryption and decryption using the shared key \mathcal{K} and avoid public-key cryptography. The attacker can get the ciphertexts ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B . Meanwhile, the \mathcal{B} generates a random number using a true-random number generator [31], let the number be b . Also, the \mathcal{B} computes B and encrypts it using the shared key shown in Equation (7).

$$B = g^b \bmod P, \quad \zeta_3^B = Enc^{\mathcal{K}}(B) \quad (7)$$

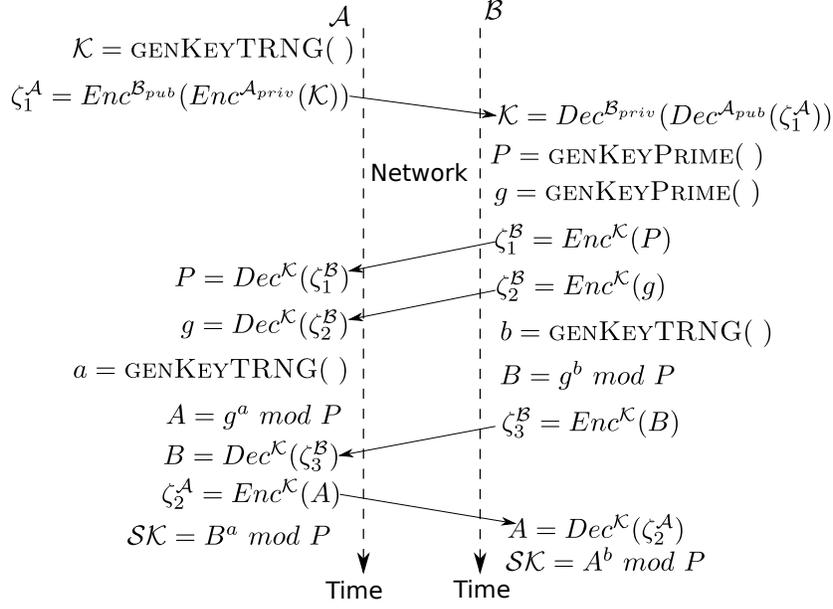


Fig. 1. Encryption-decryption using asymmetric and symmetric key to enhance Diffie-Hellman algorithm.

TABLE II

ENCRYPTION-DECRYPTION USING ASYMMETRIC AND SYMMETRIC KEY TO ENHANCE DIFFIE-HELLMAN ALGORITHM IN THE PRESENCE OF ATTACKER.

Sender \mathcal{A}	Attacker \mathcal{E}	Receiver \mathcal{B}
$\mathcal{K} = \text{KEYGENTRNG}()$ $\zeta_1^A = \text{Enc}^{\mathcal{B}_{pub}}(\text{Enc}^{\mathcal{A}_{priv}}(\mathcal{K}))$	$\mathcal{B}_{pub}, \mathcal{A}_{pub}$	
	ζ_1^A	$\mathcal{K} = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{B}_{pub}}(\text{Dec}^{\mathcal{A}_{pub}}(\zeta_1^A))$ $P = \text{GENKEYPRIME}(), g = \text{GENKEYPRIME}()$ $\zeta_1^B = \text{Enc}^{\mathcal{K}}(P), \zeta_2^B = \text{Enc}^{\mathcal{K}}(g)$
$P = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_1^B), g = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_2^B)$ $a = \text{GENKEYTRNG}()$ $A = g^a \text{ mod } P$	ζ_1^B, ζ_2^B	$b = \text{GENKEYTRNG}()$ $B = g^b \text{ mod } P, \zeta_3^B = \text{Enc}^{\mathcal{K}}(B)$
$B = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_3^B)$ $\zeta_2^A = \text{Enc}^{\mathcal{K}}(A)$		
$SK = B^a \text{ mod } P$	ζ_2^A	$A = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_2^A)$ $SK = A^b \text{ mod } P$

The \mathcal{B} sends the ciphertext ζ_3^B to \mathcal{A} . The attacker \mathcal{E} can get the ciphertext ζ_3^B from \mathcal{B} . In the meantime, the \mathcal{A} computes a random secret number using a true-random number generator [31]; let the random number be a and computes A using Equation (8).

$$A = g^a \text{ mod } P, \zeta_2^A = \text{Enc}^{\mathcal{K}}(A) \quad (8)$$

The \mathcal{A} sends the ciphertext ζ_2^A to \mathcal{B} . Similarly, the attacker \mathcal{E} can get the ciphertext ζ_2^A from \mathcal{A} . Simultaneously, the \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} receive the ciphertexts ζ_3^B and ζ_2^A , respectively. The \mathcal{A} decrypts the ciphertext using Equation (9) and compute shared secret key SK .

$$B = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_3^B), SK = B^a \text{ mod } P \quad (9)$$

Similarly, the \mathcal{B} decrypts the ciphertext using Equation (10) and compute shared secret key SK .

$$A = \text{Dec}^{\mathcal{K}}(\zeta_2^A), SK = A^b \text{ mod } P \quad (10)$$

Thus, the sender \mathcal{A} and receiver \mathcal{B} mutual computes shared secret key SK secretly. Therefore, the Diffie-Hellman does not share any parameters publicly. Now, the \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} can share the message by the shared secret key SK using symmetric key cryptography. The scope of privateDH ends at the beginning of the message sharing between the \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} . The attack on the symmetric key cryptography (block cipher or stream cipher) for message communication is out of the scope of privateDH.

IV. ANALYSIS

privateDH shares a random key initially to compute the shared secret key again. This section analyzes the requirement of the initial shared secret key and the overheads. Moreover, we explore various possible issues.

A. Overhead

There is an obvious computation overhead; however, there is no communication overhead. The total number of com-

munication is equal to the conventional Diffie-Hellman key exchange protocol. The computation overhead is clearly visible from Figure 1 and Table II. The encryption and decryption using public-private keys are not overhead because any conventional secure communication requires establishing the key exchange protocol. In the conventional secure communication setup, the trusted third party distributes the public key. Moreover, the sender retrieves the receiver's public key and sends a secret key by encrypting using the receiver's public key. The receiver sends the two random prime numbers to the sender by encrypting using a secret key instead of an acknowledgment message. Therefore, it reduces one communication overhead than the conventional secure symmetric communication. The computation overhead starts from the encryption and decryption of the g , B , and A as shown in Figure 1. The overheads of the sender are one encryption and two decryption. Similarly, the overheads of the receiver are two encryption and one decryption. However, these overheads are negligible because these are encrypted and decrypted using symmetric key cryptography. Thus, it is much faster than public-key cryptography. Moreover, privateDH is justifiable if security is the top concern.

B. Public key

There are diverse issues in the public key encryption, and under this circumstance, the public key may be broken at any time. Therefore, we are assuming that there is a quantum attack that can easily break a public key within eight hours [20]. In this assumption, the attacker can retrieve all the information excepts a , b , and SK , which becomes the conventional Diffie-Hellman algorithm. Let us assume that the public key is not broken. In this assumption, the security becomes tighter than the conventional Diffie-Hellman algorithm. The attacker will not be able to get the secret key generated by the sender. Thus, privateDH ensures security even if the public key is broken. The public key cryptography is slow, and thus, the sender performs encryption only once, and the receiver performs decryption only once.

C. Symmetric key

The symmetric key requires a shared secret key to encrypt and decrypt. privateDH shares the secret key \mathcal{K} encrypting using the receiver's public key, and all Diffie-Hellman communications are performed using symmetric-key cryptography. For instance, the receiver shares the prime numbers P and g to the sender by encrypting these prime numbers using \mathcal{K} . Moreover, the sender and receiver encrypt using \mathcal{K} for further communications. Let us assume that the attacker is able to break the security of symmetric cryptography by applying cryptanalysis. In this assumption, all parameters of privateDH are compromised, and thus, it becomes the conventional Diffie-Hellman algorithm. Therefore, privateDH ensures security even if the symmetric key cryptography is broken. The attacker will not get a and SK , and thus, privateDH is still secure.

D. Security measurement

Theorem 1. *privateDH reports a man-in-the-middle attack to the intended user if the attacker breaks the public key.*

Proof. The \mathcal{A} sends ciphertext ζ_1^A to the \mathcal{B} . The sender expects to receive the ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B from \mathcal{A} . The attacker \mathcal{E} is able to break the public-key cryptography, and thus, the \mathcal{E} returns ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B to \mathcal{A} before being sent by the \mathcal{B} . Because the attacker \mathcal{E} have already the private key of the corresponding public key. The \mathcal{A} proceeds with the return values of the \mathcal{E} . Meanwhile, the \mathcal{B} also sends ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B to \mathcal{A} . The \mathcal{A} receives two copies of the same ciphertexts ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B from different sources. In this case, the \mathcal{A} cannot differentiate between the attacker and the intended user. Therefore, the \mathcal{A} unable to process and privateDH fails. Thus, privateDH reports to both the attacker and intended user about the failure of the communication. \square

The public key can be broken, but it takes many CPU Core years. Therefore, the attacker can send back the ciphertext ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B to \mathcal{A} with certain time gaps. The \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} can complete the communication within that time gap. It might happen that the \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{E} have communicated the message successfully, and then, the ζ_1^B and ζ_2^B have arrived from the original source \mathcal{B} . In this case, the communications have already over. Therefore, nothing can be undone. However, the \mathcal{A} reports the incident to both the \mathcal{B} and \mathcal{E} such that the \mathcal{B} can rectify the issue. However, it is an assumed incident.

E. Attacks

Diverse attacks are carried out to defeat cryptography. Gidney and Ekerå [20] demonstrates that public keys can be broken in eight hours using quantum computing. Therefore, the public key can be compromised, and the attacker can store the precomputed private keys of corresponding public keys, but privateDH still ensures security. Similarly, symmetric-key cryptography is prone to various attacks, namely, brute-force, cryptanalysis [24], dictionary and fault attacks [25]. privateDH can ensure security if the symmetric key is broken using quantum cryptanalysis [24] or any other methods [25].

Let us assume that an attacker is able to get A and B ; then the attacker still has not broken the security of privateDH. Therefore, the attacker should attack the shared secret key SK . The probability of getting a shared secret key is $\frac{1}{2^\beta}$ using the brute-force method where β is the bit length of the key. It is hard to get the shared secret key.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper demonstrates the private Diffie-Hellman algorithm, privateDH for short, derived from the conventional Diffie-Hellman algorithm. The conventional Diffie-Hellman algorithm shares the numbers publicly in the insecure channel. Therefore, it is possible to attack the Diffie-Hellman algorithm, for instance, Logjam [28]. Therefore, securing key exchange protocol becomes a key challenge. Hence, privateDH provides security to the Diffie-Hellman algorithm by

using a combination of RSA and AES. We have demonstrated how the privateDH algorithm uses RSA and AES to secure the Diffie-Hellman algorithm with a few computation overheads. privateDH does not have any communication overhead. Moreover, privateDH shows its strong resistance against any attacks. privateDH can guarantee absolute security even if the attackers compromise the public key. Furthermore, it also ensures high security even if the attacker is able to break symmetric key cryptography. Therefore, privateDH can compute the secret key securely between two parties.

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