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Net user who 'incited' racial hatred tracked down

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Mimos Berhad has tracked down a person who allegedly incited racial disharmony through the Internet, Mimos chairman and chief executive officer Datuk Dr Tengku Azzman Shariffadeen said today.

Tengku Azzman said the person was "tracked" by the service provider upon the request of the police.

"Whether he is going to be charged, I do not know," he said, adding that the person's sole aim was to create "havoc".

Tengku Azzman said the person, a Malaysian, had claimed to be of two different races.

"He pretended to be Race A and said bad things about Race B. Then he pretended to be Race B and said bad things about Race A. Such behaviour can cause a lot of problems."

Tengku Azzman was speaking at a Press conference on Multimedia Asia '98 at the Mines Exhibition Centre.

He, however, assured Internet users that "tracking" was only done in special cases and when requested by the authorities.

Earlier, Mimos Bhd was instrumental in helping the authorities track four people who have since been charged with circulating rumours over the Internet about alleged riots in the Chow Kit area.

The four, including a woman were charged in the magistrate's court last Thursday under section 505(b) of the Penal Code and face a maximum two years' jail or fine, or both upon conviction.

On a question of whether certain websites were "blocked", Tengku Azzman said there was no such thing as censorship of websites.

"The Government has no intention of blocking out certain websites," he said, adding that the reason why certain sites were inaccessible could be due to jamming of lines as a result of too many people trying at the same time.

He was asked to comment on complaints by Internet users that some websites containing materials relating to sacked Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his reformation movement were allegedly blocked by certain quarters.

Tengku Azzman, however, warned users to be "careful over what they read over the Net".

"What is claimed to be the truth may not be at all ... more than 50 per cent and sometimes up to 80 per cent is not the truth."

Tengku Azzman said users should verify the source of information for authenticity.

Meanwhile, Tengku Azzman said unique to this year's Multimedia Asia '98 will be tomorrow's "Virtual Commonwealth" panel discussion via video-conferencing at the Palace of the Golden Horses.

The video conference dialogue which will interconnect six cities worldwide, will be launched and led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The 90-minute session will cut across three time zones and will be conducted in an open forum with worldwide access, live via the Internet.

Tengku Azzman said they were still negotiating on telecasting the session live over radio and television as well.

Multimedia Asia '98 - a multimedia conference and exhibition will be held from tomorrow to Oct 2.

This year's exhibition will showcase local and international leading

edge IT and multimedia technologies, architectural applications, systems and services.

"The concept behind the Virtual Commonwealth is based on the notion of promoting the "commonwealth" which is shared prosperity, well-being and welfare."

The Virtual Commonwealth hopes to create interaction on a global scale between world leaders to resolve issues in an interactive format.

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