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`Sites on the Internet not being censored or blocked'

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SITES on the Internet are not being censored or blocked, said president and chief executive officer of Mimos Bhd Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen.

Responding to questions on whether certain web sites on the political scene in the country are being censored as Internet users have found difficulty in accessing these sites, he said there is no intention to censor any sites on the Internet.

He added that users may find it difficult to access certain sites as these web sites may not have enough capacity to support increased requests.

Two weeks earlier Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Datuk Leo Moggie said the Government was not blocking certain sites on the Internet.

Speaking to reporters on the eve of the start of Multimedia Asia (MMA) '98 in Seri Kembangan yesterday, Tengku Azzman said Mimos had not received any request from the police to track the source of recent rumours that have surfaced on the Internet.

"Mimos tracks (the source of rumours) upon the request of the police where there is a suspicion of a crime," he said in reference to the four people nabbed by the police for spreading rumours via the Internet on rioting by Indonesians in the city last month.

The four were arrested after Mimos traced the source of the rumours to them.

He added that Mimos had also traced a Malaysian found to have instigated racial tension over the Internet.

Tengku Azzman said that while the Internet creates new avenues to source for information, he advised the public to be discerning over what they read on the Internet.

"More than 50 per cent to 80 per cent of the time, what you read is not true. Think of the Internet as a new media for information but at the same time be careful of what you read," he advised.

Earlier, he said for the first time MMA '98 will use the smart partnership module for its conference.

This year's MMA, the only officially sanctioned conference and exhibition for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), is themed "Moving MSC from Vision to Reality : Developing a Content-Rich Community".

The four-day event organised by the National Information Technology Council began yesterday. The highlight of this year's Multimedia Asia is the staging of the Virtual Commonwealth.

Themed "Governance in an Internetworked World : Towards a Global Civilised Society," the Virtual Commonwealth led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will involve onsite and offsite panelists.

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