

BN reinstates ban on news portals ahead of GE13

MalaysiaKini.com

April 15, 2013

The BN has reinstated its long-standing ban on online media journalists ahead of national polls.

This comes as the ruling coalition enters a sensitive time, with only 20 days left to polling day for the 13th general election.

News portals Malaysiakini and The Malaysian Insider as well as online TV channel KiniTV were barred from covering caretaker Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's announcement of BN's general election candidates at the Umno headquarters this morning.

The Umno secretariat told Malaysiakini that this was based on "orders from the top".

He added that the ban was only recently instituted.

All BN chiefs have descended on the headquarters as the ruling coalition's candidates list will be handed to them by Najib.

The online media were banned from most BN events prior to 2008, but the government softened its stance after it acknowledged it had lost the "cyber war" during the 12th general election debacle.

Since then, the government had moved to recognise the online media, allowing it limited coverage to its events until recently.

The online media were similarly banned from the post-BN supreme council meeting press conference on April 4.

Since taking power, Pakatan Rakyat has also sought to ban Utusan Malaysia and TV3 from its events.

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Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/226834>

