

No registration for now but expect clampdown
Malaysiakini.com
April 10, 2007

Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Monday bloggers will not be forced to register themselves for now, but existing laws will be used to exert more control on irresponsible blogging.

"Even if we asked them to register there will be those who will go by other names and will use other channels, including using servers outside the country," Abdullah told reporters.

"This is not something we are considering at the moment and it has to be properly studied as there are existing laws and regulations to be considered," he said.

Abdullah said the government would instead study existing laws to see how they could be properly used to clamp down on bloggers if necessary.

"There are laws in the country and they will be enforced when they need to be enforced," Abdullah said.

"I know there are many who have now regretted their activities of posting their folk tales on the Internet," he said.

They're 'spreading lies'

Abdullah's comments come as ministers issued fresh warnings to bloggers, including suggesting that bloggers identify themselves.

Information Minister Zainuddin Maidin said last week that bloggers should not be exempt from the same controls as mainstream media, and accused them of using lies to overthrow the government.

Abdullah has also launched attacks on bloggers and Internet users, accusing them of spreading lies about the government.

He supported a controversial defamation lawsuit by the government-linked New Straits Times Press newspaper group against prominent bloggers Jeff Ooi and Ahirudin Attan, for posts criticising the daily and the government.

Rights groups have condemned the government's attacks, arguing that blogs offer a crucial alternative to the tightly-controlled mainstream media.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/65705>