

**Dr M slams gov't for banning blog site  
Malaysiakini.com  
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Dr Mahathir Mohamad today condemned the government for reneging on its long-held promise of not censoring the Internet - a policy in which he was the architect.  
MCPX

mahathir hulu langat 120408 press conference "When a government makes a promise to the country and then reneges on its promise, then not only will the government lose credibility but also any respect that the public may have for it."

The former premier, who implemented the no-Internet censorship policy in the mid-1990s, said the government's action shows "a degree of oppressive arrogance worthy of a totalitarian state".

On Wednesday, Malaysiakini reported that government-backed watchdog Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission had ordered all internet service providers (ISPs) in the country to block Malaysia Today.

malaysia today website 270808 "I do not often agree with Malaysia-Today.net and (website editor) Raja Petra Kamaruddin. He had been sometimes quite irresponsible," said Mahathir in his Chedet blog.

"But court action had already been taken against him. He is not above the law and if he is found guilty there are already adequate punishment that can be passed against (him)."

bar council sedition forum 110808 raja petra Raja Petra (left) is already facing a slew of court actions including a sedition charge and a defamation suit after linking Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his wife to the sensational murder of a Mongolian woman.

Yesterday, Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar defended the move, saying that the site had been banned because it published "libelous, defamatory and slanderous" content.

Meanwhile, opposition party PKR has also slammed the government's decision, saying that it was a desperate act by a shell-shocked Barisan Nasional government.

Calling it the latest onslaught on civil liberties, the opposition party added that the decision is tantamount to internet censorship.

"It is also a desperate act by the BN government that is still reeling from its repeated defeats and refusing to listen to the clear signals demonstrated by the rakyat time and again via the ballot box.

salahuddin hashim pkr sec gen "The grounds given that Malaysia Today is a seditious website are completely baseless and unfounded in any principle of law, given that there are ample laws which govern such activities and there has yet to be a single court in all of Malaysia that has found the website to contain seditious content," added PKR secretary-general Salahuddin Hashim in a statement today.

**Beginning of the slippery slope?**

However, Salahuddin pointed out that "pre-emptive strikes such as these are weak and pathetic attempts to hide a desperation borne of absolute moral bankruptcy".

He said PKR also views seriously the possibility that this is merely the first step in a comprehensive and reprehensible attempt to curb the access of Malaysians to the Internet, which in the past few years has been the bastion of freedom for those seeking alternative views.

"PKR calls upon the MCMC and the government to keep its promise to the MSC (Multimedia Super Corridor) and to immediately revoke this order, and resist any temptation to arrogantly show callous disregard for the right of Malaysians to access alternative information," he said.

Under the MSC's 10 Point Bill of Guarantees, the government promises to ensure no internet censorship.

Raja Petra, who is founder of Malaysia Today, has since established a mirror site with a foreign provider.

"I will fight the government action all the way. Their action will not stop me from writing," he told Malaysiakini, promising to challenge the shutdown in court.

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