

Info Department to counter opposition 'propaganda'
The Malaysian Insider
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 6 — The government has deployed the Department of Information to counter what it describes as the opposition's "propaganda" on the Internet, Bernama Online reported today.

According to its director-general, Ibrahim Abdul Rahman, this was necessary as Malaysians were generally receptive of what he called the "lies" being made by the opposition online.

"The dissemination of information through cyber space is more effective. So it's easy for the opposition to take advantage of this medium to hurl lies against our policies," Ibrahim was quoted as saying by the state news agency.

"Over time, it forms a negative perception and is planted in the people's minds. If it's not rectified, the perception will translate to action."

The report did not cite examples of the "lies" mentioned by Ibrahim or detail the measures that would be taken by the department.

In March, Information Minister Datuk Seri Rais Yatim also announced courses by his ministry to train veteran Umno members on the use of the Internet and the alternative media.

The Internet and social media have been partly credited for the gains made the opposition Pakatan Rakyat in Election 2008, when it denied Barisan Nasional its traditional supermajority in Parliament and seized control of five states.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is believed to be considering an early general election ahead of next year's deadline. The Malaysian Insider reported today that one may be called as early as July.

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