

**Internet will be censored if I am PM again, says Dr Mahathir**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**26 March, 2014**

Malaysia's longest serving prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (pic) said today he would introduce internet censorship if he was chosen to lead the country again.

Dr Mahathir expressed his regrets that he made a promise not to censor the Internet during his 22-year tenure as Malaysia's PM.

"If I was appointed as the premier again, the first thing I will do is censor the internet," he said.

"The time has come for us to filter the internet," Dr Mahathir said when delivering the closing speech at the Senior Police Officer's College in Cheras today.

His remarks could have been prompted by the growing attacks on the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN), especially its lynchpin Umno in recent years through various media platforms on the net.

The opposition's ability to leverage on the various media provided by the internet is widely acknowledged as one of the key reasons for its march in the last two general elections, especially in denying BN a two-third majority.

The internet has also provided an alternative to the mainstream media which long has been controlled by Umno and Barisan Nasional.

Dr Mahathir said the internet had contributed to social problems and the crime index, which had spiked recently.

"Although I gave my word to the Multimedia Super Corridor adviser when I was the PM, but I did not give assurances the internet would not be filtered."

"At that time, I did not know what could come from the internet," said Dr Mahathir.

The 88-year-old said Putrajaya had the capability and expertise to censor the internet, saying it was important so that the rakyat was not exposed to negative elements.

"We can filter the internet, even in Germany, they have long had this expertise. We can do it, we have the technology.

"It might be a bit costly but the returns will be worth it because Malaysians will not be exposed to negative elements such as violence in film and television," said Dr Mahathir, who also writes on social and political issues on his Chedet blog.

He did not discount the possibility that censoring the internet would invite criticism from various quarters.

Malaysia might also be labelled as an undemocratic country but Dr Mahathir insisted this move would ensure internal security was preserved.

"If our country is described as unmodern, undemocratic, so be it.

"This is our country, we have the right to uphold internal security," he added.

Dr Mahathir had promised that Malaysia would not censor the internet in order to attract investors to develop the MSC.

However, he said that freedom needed to be controlled because the people are still too undisciplined and immature to practice democracy.

"We are a young country and democracy is still new, the people do not know how to control themselves, how to discipline themselves," he said. – March 26, 2014.

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Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/internet-will-be-censored-if-i-am-pm-again-says-dr-mahathir>