

**Suspending The Edge will worsen economy, says Transparency International**  
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Suspending The Edge Weekly and The Edge Financial Daily will only worsen the economy and lead to a loss of confidence in the country, anti-graft watchdog Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) said today.

TI-M said the government seemed to have reneged on its promises to protect free speech, Internet freedom and accept criticism, when it resorted to "irrational measures" to silence critics of debt-laden state investment vehicle 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

"Suspending a newspaper which reported on the 1MDB scandal is not going to help the government in any way. In fact, it will have more negative impact on Malaysia in terms of its international standing, sovereign ratings and the other ratings, including the international perception on our press freedom.

"On another point, the Malaysian government seems to have reneged on its promise not to censor the Internet by blocking access to Sarawak Report. All these unpleasant acts will lead to loss of confidence in this country and impact on our economy negatively as seen by the free fall of ringgit," TI-M president Datuk Akhbar Satar said in a statement.

He added that any decision to suspend the business papers should only be considered after investigations into 1MDB were complete, and the findings revealed some basis for action to be taken over the coverage.

But he said that while this would be fairer, TI-M still believed the best option was for the Home Ministry to pursue legal action against The Edge if it felt the publication violated the law or threatened national interests and public order through its reporting.

"The government of the day with the promise of inclusiveness could help in resolving the mess that we are in now. The day and age where government knows all and knows best is so long over.

"In a democracy, the government cannot function unless the people are well informed and free to participate in public issues by having the widest choice of alternative solutions for the problems that arise."

The Home Ministry on Friday suspended the publishing permit of The Edge Weekly and The Edge Financial Daily for three months beginning tomorrow.

A letter from the ministry stated that the publications' coverage of 1MDB was "prejudicial or likely to be prejudicial to public order, security or likely to alarm public opinion or is likely to be prejudicial to public and national interests". – July 26, 2015.

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