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## Culture And Media



### Malaysia: Expert calls for blogger rights

Kuala Lumpur, 2 August (AKI) - An independent judicial process is needed to resolve tensions between the Malaysian government and internet bloggers, a prominent lawyer said on Thursday.

Nizam Bashir, a lawyer and Malaysian blogger, said the government was using "exceptions in the law to restrict the freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution".

"The average citizen, if summoned to court, is worried about being considered 'guilty' until 'proven innocent'," he said.

"Because of this the government should reconsider its own actions and the judicial system should be courageous and reinforce democratic principles. At the moment my hope resides in the judicial system and I can only pray we don't get a bad response."

According to government leaks, prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, intends to call elections before the end of the year or the beginning of 2008.

In the last few days the youth wing of the UMNO, the party of Malay-Islamic extraction that leads the government coalition, has asked for the creation of 'cyber police' or an official organ to patrol the Internet for unsuitable content.

The government has recently threatened to use the anti-terrorism law against bloggers who write about Islam or other sensitive subjects. The law permits unlimited detention without trial.

Last week, Raja Petra Kamarudin, from the blog 'Malaysia Today' which is critical of the government, was interrogated by the police about the contents of his site.

Two weeks ago, another blogger Nathaniel Tan was arrested and jailed for five days for comments that appeared on his blog regarding instances of government corruption. The two cases are the latest in instances of intimidation in recent months.

In Malaysia, where most of the media is controlled by the government, bloggers have assumed the role of 'watchdog' and have increased in number, professionalism and credibility.

All-Blogs, the first national organisation of bloggers, was founded in April to protect bloggers and to open a dialogue with the government.

(Fsc/AKI)

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15:37 KOSOVO: BELGRADE CLARIFIES STAND ON EVE OF NEW TALKS  
14:59 ITALY-US: CULTURE MINISTER HOPES GETTY ART DEAL WILL ENCOURAGE OTHER MUSEUMS  
14:14 YEMEN: PHOTOS OF SUSPECTS IN TOURIST KILLINGS  
13:14 IRAQ: LOCAL AL-QAEDA FIGURE KILLED, STATE TELEVISION SAYS  
13:13 MALAYSIA: EXPERT CALLS FOR BLOGGER RIGHTS  
12:27 MACEDONIA: FORMER PM FACES FRAUD CHARGES  
11:10 PAKISTAN: MILITANTS IN MOSQUE BACK OFF

16:55 INDIA: STRAGE MUMBAI 1993, ATTORE TRASFERITO IN CARCERE PUNE  
16:23 LIBANO: UNIFIL, SOLDATI INDIANI TENGONO CORSI DI YOGA PER ABITANTI SUD  
16:18 INCENDI: COMMISSIONE UE, LUGLIO RECORD IN SUD EUROPA GIÀ BRUCIATI 3.376 KM QUADRATI  
16:12 M.O.: FRA HAMAS E FATAH SFIDA ANCHE SULLE PAGELLE SCOLASTICHE  
15:37 PAKISTAN: NEGATO A RAPPRESENTANTI GB INCONTRO CON DETENUTO BRITANNICO  
15:35 ISRAELE: NETANYAHU IN TESTA AI SONDAGGI PER PRIMARIE, LANDAU IL PIU GRADITO  
15:32 AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN: KARZAI E MUSHARRAF INAUGURERANNO JIRGA CONGIUNTA  
15:02 LIBANO: LANCIATI 5 RAZZI KATYUSHA DA NAHR AL-BARED

16:42 العراق: محافظ أربيل يحتجز ابن مسؤول محلي لإرغام والده العودة إلى العمل

16:12 العراق: مقترح للمطالباتي بغية مفاوضات جديدة بين التوافق والحكومة بعد فشل الأخيرة

15:53 فرنسا: زيارة السفير ايميه إلى الرئيس لحدود لا تغير سياستها تجاهه

15:42 الخارجية الإيطالية مستاءة لأحكام الإعدام بحق مئتين إيرانيين دراسة إحصائية: تزايد عدد سكان روما بفضل الأجانب

14:08 داليمما يبحث وأبو الغنيط قضايا المنطقة على ضوء زيارة رايس

13:47 النمسا: اتجاه قوي للمشاركة في قوات حفظ السلام بدافور

13:38 المفوضية الأوروبية: أمن احتياطيات الطاقة أولوية بالنسبة لنا

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