

WEATHER ON THIS DAY **EDITORS' BLOG**

> **LANGUAGES** اردو किन्दी वाश्ला

> > नेपाली

தமிழ் සිංහල

Censorship

Meghalava".

The order was issued by the Indian Government's Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) which holds the power to block internet sites deemed to be obscene or a national security threat.

Under the IT Act, Indian ISPs are liable for all third party data and content.

Since Indian ISPs lack the technical expertise to block a sub-group, they have responded by blocking Kynhun's IP address, which makes no distinction between it and other Yahoo discussion groups.

66 I publish a monthly newsletter which is distributed free of cost to more than 1,000 subscribers worldwide. Suddenly I learn that I can no longer have access to my data

Yahoo user Vivek Solev

Thousands of Indians have now flooded the CERT-IN's discussion board asking for the ban to be lifted.

Global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders says the case highlights the danger of internet censorship.

- Yahoo defends its name in India
- India looks to protect cyber
- India plans cyber defence centre

content of external internet sites

- Sri Lanka cabinet meets in north

"Blocking a few web pages can result in the blocking of hundreds of other web pages that have nothing to do with the banned content - this is a recurring problem on which we must remain very vigilant," secretary-general Robert Ménard said.

Indian cyberlaw expert, Pawan Duggal, says the government is on very thin legal ground.

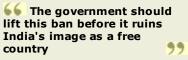
"The inherent sovereign power of the government to block can never be denied," he told BBC News Online.

"But the route they have taken is completely illegal and will be struck down if challenged in court."

Cyber chaos

Despite the legal grey area, the ban has in effect blocked out many Indians from the Yahoo discussion groups.

Vivek Soley lives in the central Indian town of Indore and maintains a subscribers list on yahoo.groups.com.



Yahoo user Naveen Rolands

"I publish a monthly newsletter which is distributed free of cost to more than 1,000 subscribers worldwide.

"Suddenly I learn that I can no longer have access to my data.

"Several other educational and information groups have also been blocked all because of one group," he says.

Naveen Rolands' eight-year-old daughter has a Yahoo group through which she shares photos and accounts of her travels with family and friends who are abroad.

That site is now blocked.

"I wonder who the real terrorists are," he said. "My daughter who uses Yahoo groups to share some photos? Or the bunch of clowns who call themselves politicians and [bureaucrats] who have given free publicity to an insurgent group?"

"The government should lift this ban before it ruins India's image as a free country."

Others point out that Kynhun had no more than about 20 subscribers.

"There are over 200 Kashmiri discussion groups with far more volatile views," says Pawan Duggal.

"With this action the government has opened a huge Pandora's box."

E-mail this to a friend



PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

E-mail news Mobiles Alerts News feeds Podcasts

News Front Page | Africa | Americas | Asia-Pacific | Europe | Middle East | South Asia UK | Business | Entertainment | Science/Nature | Technology | Health

Have Your Say | In Pictures | Week at a Glance | Country Profiles | In Depth | Programmes

■ BBC MMIX Back to top ^^

Help | Privacy and cookies policy | News sources | About the BBC | Contact us |