

Thailand blocks access to WikiLeaks website

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File photo shows Thais using an internet cafe in Bangkok. Thai authorities have used their emergency powers to block domestic access to the WikiLeaks whistleblower website on security grounds, a government official said Wednesday.

Thai authorities have used their emergency powers to block domestic access to the WikiLeaks whistleblower website on security grounds, a government official said Wednesday.

The order came from the government unit set up to oversee the response to political unrest that rocked the nation's capital earlier this year, a spokeswoman for the Information and Communication Technology Ministry said.

"Access to this website has been temporarily suspended under the 2005 emergency decree," she said.

Thailand has removed tens of thousands of web pages from the Internet in recent years, mainly for insulting the monarchy, a serious crime punishable by up to 15 years in jail.

A special [cyber crime](#) agency has also been set up to stamp out online criticism of the royal family.

Emergency rule, enshrined in Thai law since 2005, was imposed across many parts of Thailand during two months of anti-government protests in Bangkok from mid-March that left 91 people dead, ending with a bloody army crackdown.

Authorities have used the decree, which remains in place in seven out of Thailand's 76 provinces including Bangkok, to arrest hundreds of suspects and silence anti-government media.

[Wikileaks](#) has been the focus of international attention in recent weeks after it released thousands of military documents on the conflict in Afghanistan.

These included claims of meetings between Pakistani spies and the Taliban and that civilian deaths caused by international forces were covered up.

They also included the names of some Afghan informants -- prompting US military claims that the leaks endangered lives.

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