

India networks told to be able to monitor BlackBerry: source

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An Indian salesman stands next to a BlackBerry display in a shop in New Delhi on August 2010. India has told telecom service providers to make sure security agencies can monitor messages sent on BlackBerry phones through their networks, a domestic mobile phone company executive said Monday.

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Telecom operators have a responsibility under Indian law to ensure security agencies can access all services carried on their networks.

India last month said it had given the Canadian makers of the BlackBerry smartphone a 60-day reprieve on a threat to ban its messaging services after the firm agreed to give security forces "lawful

access" to data.

The Department of Telecommunications has told mobile operators to give a "compliance report" by Wednesday that their networks have been "upgraded" to allow law enforcers to intercept BlackBerry data, the Press Trust of India said.

A senior executive of a leading mobile phone company, who did not want to be named, told AFP the notice concerning BlackBerry messages "has been sent to all (telecom) providers."

He could not say what changes networks might need to make to monitor the communications sent through the smartphones, which are manufactured by [Research in Motion](#) (RIM).

The government, battling insurgencies as far apart as Kashmir in the northwest to the remote northeast, fears the heavily encrypted communications sent through BlackBerry handsets could be used by militants to plan attacks.

The government notice said telecom service providers would soon be told the date when they would have show the interception methods are working.

BlackBerry had no immediate comment on the notice.

RIM was quoted as saying last week it was continuing discussions with governments in India and other countries which have security concerns about BlackBerry's [messaging services](#) and believed "good progress" had been made.

RIM has insisted it is seeking to honour its commitment to be as cooperative as possible with governments "in the spirit" of supporting

national security needs while preserving "the lawful needs of citizens and corporations".

India can already monitor so-called BlackBerry "consumer mails" which have a lower level of encryption.

India had sent a similar formal notice to mobile operators ordering them to ensure [security agencies](#) could monitor [BlackBerry](#) messages in mid-August.

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