

India says no BlackBerry solution so far

December 3 2010



BlackBerry mobile phones are displayed at a shop in New Delhi in August 2010. India said Friday no solution has been found to an ongoing standoff over BlackBerry's messaging services, which it has threatened to shut down unless its intelligence agencies can monitor them.

India said Friday no solution has been found to an ongoing standoff over BlackBerry's messaging services, which it has threatened to shut down unless its intelligence agencies can monitor them.

The Indian government and BlackBerry maker Research In Motion (RIM) are seeking to end a three-year deadlock over New Delhi's demand that its security agencies be able to decipher heavily encrypted data carried on the smartphones.

"Voice, SMS and individual email communications can be intercepted and monitored by security agencies in readable format," India's minister

of state for communications Sachin Pilot told parliament in a written submission.

"However, security agencies are not able to intercept and monitor the communications" made through BlackBerry's corporate email and messenger chatting services, Pilot said.

In October, India was reported to have granted BlackBerry an extension to a January 31 deadline to provide access to its communications -- the third extension so far.

RIM's representatives have met home and telecommunications ministry officials repeatedly in an effort to allay concerns that unmonitored BlackBerry services could be used by terrorists.

RIM said Friday that is enabling carriers in India "to be able to provide the same degree of lawful access to consumer data services, including BlackBerry Messenger, that occurs with respect to other consumer products and services offered by other companies including RIM's competitors."

RIM contended that it is fully cooperating with the government in India.

India has agreed that "RIM should not be singled out from other technology companies with respect to either consumer data services or enterprise data services," the Canada-based Blackberry maker said.

The government has "acknowledged" that any legal demand for access to strongly encrypted data should be directed at enterprises since RIM doesn't have access to customers' encryption keys, according to RIM.

On October 29, the Ministry of Home Affairs acknowledged RIM's progress and indicated that BlackBerry Messenger services will continue

to be available, RIM said.

"We are confident that any outstanding concerns between RIM and the government of India can be resolved to our mutual satisfaction," the company said in a statement.

India, battling insurgencies ranging from Kashmir in the northwest to the far-flung northeast, fears militants might use encrypted data to plan attacks.

India has been testing solutions suggested by RIM to access its data.

Banning the service would create disruption for India's corporations, which widely use the BlackBerry. The smartphone has 1.1 million users in India, although these include non-corporate clients.

In October, the United Arab Emirates withdrew a threatened ban on BlackBerry services after saying they had been brought into compliance with the Gulf state's regulatory framework, though it did not provide details of the changes.

(c) 2010 AFP

Citation: India says no BlackBerry solution so far (2010, December 3) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-12-india-blackberry-solution.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.