

BlackBerry says Indian security fears answered

January 13 2011, by Ammu Kannampilly



An Indian salesman checks a phone given for repairs at a BlackBerry store in Mumbai, 2010. The Canadian maker of BlackBerry said Thursday it had found a way out of an ongoing standoff in India over allowing security agencies access to the smartphone's encrypted messaging service.

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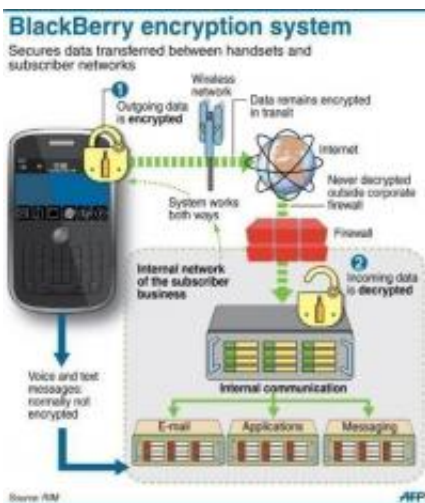
However, the solution did not include providing access to corporate e-mail services, [Research In Motion](#) (RIM) said in a statement.

India had given RIM until January 31 to come up with a solution that would permit its intelligence agencies to monitor [encrypted data](#) -- amid concerns in New Delhi that militants may use the services to plan and

carry out attacks.

In its statement, RIM said its revised access capability "meets the standard required by the government of India for all consumer messaging services".

Indian agencies will now be able to monitor the BlackBerry's messenger and public email services, but not corporate emails, the statement added.



Graphic showing the main elements of the BlackBerry encryption system. The Canadian maker of BlackBerry said Thursday it had found a way out of an ongoing standoff in India over allowing security agencies access to the smartphone's encrypted messaging service.

RIM's representatives have met home and telecommunications ministry officials repeatedly in an effort to end a three-year deadlock over the issue.

Banning the service would create disruption for India's corporations, which widely use the BlackBerry. The smartphone has 1.1 million users

in India, including many non-corporate clients.

Ministry officials in New Delhi were not available to comment on the RIM announcement.

India's minister of state for communications Sachin Pilot had told parliament last month that no answer to the standoff had been found.

The January 31 date was the third time that the government has extended the deadline for BlackBerry to meet its requirements.

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.

Ultra-conservative [Saudi Arabia](#) made a similar announcement last year when it decided not to impose a proposed ban.

India has also told [Google](#) and [Skype](#) that they must set up servers in the country to allow law enforcers to screen traffic, as the country widens its security offensive on Internet communications firms.

BlackBerry has become a global market leader in the smartphone sector thanks to its heavy encryption, and analysts say any compromise with the Indian government could damage its popularity with its high-profile clientele.

RIM said Monday it would start filtering web services in Indonesia after the mainly Muslim country threatened to restrict or block the company's domestic services to prevent access to Internet pornography.

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