

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Website URL: <http://help-pakistan.com/main>

Press Releases: <http://help-pakistan.com/main/press-release/>

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Don't Block the Blog Continues to Fight Pakistan's Internet Blockade at 1st Year Anniversary

It has been exactly one year since the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority initiated a blanket block on the entire blogspot.com domain. So far there seems no recourse to the ban despite the repeated attempts of a strong lobby of individuals pressuring the concerned authorities to review this unfair ban. The **Don't Block the Blog (DBTB)** team, (with the support of other Pakistani and international bloggers,) highlighted this issue successfully in both the national and the international press. Since the blockade, a couple of savvy Pakistani programmers have created sites that help by-pass the ban for internet users in Pakistan. The DBTB team specifically launched the Bloggers.Pakistan web site (www.bloggers.pk), the first Pakistani Blog Aggregator, to help encourage blogging and to ensure that those unfairly banned Pakistani blogs that were not fully censored by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, giving them a chance to be read by the global internet audience in Pakistan as well as internationally.

Since the censorship continues even one year down, the team members of **Don't Block the Blog** would like to issue an advisory to all affected and prospective bloggers in Pakistan to establish new blogs preferably on some other free blog hosting services for example like <http://wordpress.com>, <http://www.livejournal.com> or <http://movabletype.com> hence keeping the blog hosted on a domain outside the envelope of the URL's blocked in Pakistan.

Don't Block the Blog & Help-Pakistan.com

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DON'T BLOCK THE BLOG campaign has over the year become recognized internationally as a credible organization representing free speech issues in Pakistan. To an extent that their banner is hosted on a number of websites around the world, surely a testament that many people believe in supporting the cause to relieve the censorship in Pakistan. We continue to strongly oppose any form of internet censorship and request national and international bloggers, print media, and free speech organizations to help support our cause and to continue to highlight this issue of the unfair blanket ban of blogs for internet users in Pakistan.

Background:

The PTA (Pakistan Telecommunication Authority) initially blocked access to the blogspot domain on the 3rd of March 2006, due to a Supreme Court decision dated 2nd March 2006 instructing the PTA to ban 12 offending websites which highlighted the blasphemous cartoons on the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In adherence to the Supreme Court ruling, all 12 sites were blocked including one that was hosted on the blogspot domain. But rather than block the offending blogspot website, the PTA blocked the entire domain (www.blogspot.com) which happens to be one of the most popular blog hosting domains hosting upwards of 8 million blogs globally, according to some estimates.

The **Don't Block the Blog (DBTB)** campaign (<http://www.help-pakistan.com/main/>) was launched by **the Alvi-e team**, Dr. Awab Alvi and Omer Alvie, on 3rd March, 2006 in order to highlight the unfair blanket ban of the blogspot domain and additionally to show support for free internet speech in general. Approximately at the same time the Society Against Internet Censorship in Pakistan (formerly known as The Action Group Against Blogspot Ban in Pakistan - AGABBIP) (<http://groups.google.com/group/AGABBIP>), a mailing list with dozens of contributing members also was formed to protest this form of censorship in Pakistan.

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