

Egyptian judge wants websites blocked

Judge asks courts to block 29 additional websites, brings lawsuit against directors of HRinfo, Hisham Mubarak Law Centre and blogger Amr Gharbia.

Cairo – Judge Abdel Fatah Murad has asked the Administrative Judiciary Court to block 29 websites, in addition to the 21 he had previously requested be made inaccessible. The judge amended his original list of websites following a 5 May 2007 investigation of the case by the court, resulting in a total of 50 websites presently vulnerable to closure as a result of the judge's request.

Moreover, the judge has filed a new lawsuit against Gamal Eid, HRinfo's Executive Director, Ahmed Seif El Islam, Executive Director of Hisham Mubarak Law Center, and Amr Gharbia, administrator of the celebrated blog, Holiat Saheb Al-Ashgar, which is under investigation by the public prosecutor's office. The judge is accusing the three men of extortion and is demanding 50,000 EGP (approx. US\$8,800) in damages.

The three men, including the organisation's executive director, were summoned for questioning in a new case fabricated by Judge Fatah Murad. The same judge has now initiated three separate cases against HRinfo and its partners.

HRinfo considers these cases to carry contradictions and misrepresent certain facts.

Judge Fatah Murad has also claimed that he cooperates with organisations such as Reporters Without Borders, Human Rights Watch, International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) and Amnesty International. However, according to HRinfo, this contradicts his request to block the IFEX website, which covers the news of these member organisations.

HRinfo considers this campaign against free expression by Judge Fatah Murad to be an attempt to distract public attention from his illegal plagiarism of HRinfo's report on the Internet, as well as his misrepresentation of its contents. The organisation has initiated proceedings to strip the judge of his immunity so that he can be prosecuted for plagiarism. It is clear that the judge has had the support and cooperation of the state security apparatus in acquiring information and attacking bloggers and human rights organisations that defend freedom of expression.

Article by courtesy [HRinfo](https://www.hrinfo.net)