

Tunisia court to rule on blogger's appeal March 3

TUNIS - A Tunisian court said Tuesday it would rule next week on a blogger's appeal against a one-year jail sentence for defaming the military.

Yassine Ayari was sentenced by a military court last month after publishing blogs critical of the military, in a case that was criticised by rights groups. The 33-year-old was arrested on December 25 on his return to Tunisia from Paris, following an initial three-year sentence handed down the previous month in his absence.

After hearing from the defence Tuesday, a military appeals court said it would give its verdict on March 3 and that Ayari would remain in custody pending its decision. Ayari was also an activist during the regime of dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who was ousted in a 2011 uprising that triggered the Arab Spring revolts.

In the months prior to his arrest he had published blogs critical of the Nidaa Tounes party, which won Tunisia's first-post revolution parliamentary elections in October. New York-based Human Rights Watch has described the case against him as "not worthy of the new Tunisia".

Source: AFP

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