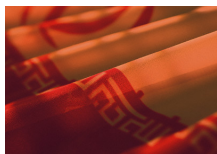


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By: Vlad Constandes, SEO News Editor



[Iran Pulling the Plug on the Internet](#)

It's happening next week

The 14th of March will come hammering down a huge decision from the Iranian Government, that to shut the Internet down as a whole. Being ranked fourth in the top of press freedom infringing, after Turkmenistan, North Korea and Eritrea, Iran won't have any type of online covering of the elections day. The government officially wants to ensure that it has unimpeded internet service for the election, but it just had an upgrade in that direction, according to the Iranian Students' Network Agency. It is not the first time the Iranian officials have restricted Internet use; in 2006, download speeds greater than 128 Kbps have been banned, and several sites have been shut down for being religiously or politically not safe. That's the kind of actions you would expect in a country that ranks so low in press freedom, but shutting the entire Internet flow down takes the game to a totally new level. I'm on a wild spree of bad jokes here, but what if the government decides to do this more often, like hot running water was only allowed between certain hours under many communist regimes? They have the power to, and apparently they're not shy to use it. The forthcoming general elections have the Conservatives and Reformists vying for power, with the current president, Mohammad Khatami being a part of the latter, more specifically of the Militant Clerics Society. Pulling the plug on the Internet is something never done before, to my knowledge, at such high a level, nationwide. The implications involved beneath the see-through thin veil of an excuse are very wide and denote just how much power a single party can have. It might be out there to consider that election fraud will happen, but keeping the public from knowing the results and polls via web is definitely an indication that it might happen.