

# BlackBerry users fear ban in Middle East

By **STEPHEN JONES**  
Epoch Times Staff

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—Governments in the Middle East may be considering banning the immensely popular BlackBerry smartphone on the grounds that the device undermines national security.

A statement voicing concerns about the device was issued by the United Arab Emirates telecoms regulator on Sunday, prompting fears from the country's half million BlackBerry users over an eventual ban.

The UAE follows Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and India in voicing protest over the device manufacturer, Research in Motion (RIM), and its refusal to disclose e-mail data of its customers.

"Currently, BlackBerry operates beyond the jurisdiction of national legislation, since it is the only device operating in the UAE that immediately exports its data offshore and is managed by a foreign, commercial organization," a statement from the UAE's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) said.

"As a result of how BlackBerry data is managed and stored, in their current form, certain BlackBerry applications allow people to misuse the service, causing serious social, judicial, and national security repercussions."

The UAE, a conservative Muslim country, tightly regulates the Internet use of its 6 million inhabitants and filters out adult material.

In addition, e-mail, phone, and text messages are monitored for inappropriate material as well as unsubstantiated rumours that could undermine national security.

However, since BlackBerry customers communicate over a secure encryption that only passes through RIM servers in Canada and the U.K., authorities in the UAE have been unable to monitor users.



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The TRA has been in negotiations with RIM over allowing UAE officials access to e-mail and messenger records, but there has been little progress.

A number among the 500,000 BlackBerry users in the UAE fear a total ban on the device.

It is not the only country to object however. Earlier this month, Indian officials gave RIM a deadline to provide access to its

network. Intelligence officials have been lobbying BlackBerry for two years, since encrypted data sent over BlackBerry's was used to coordinate the Mumbai bombings in 2008.

In March this year, Saudi Arabian authorities were reported to have demanded RIM give access to its BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) network, threatening to

shut down the service. However, the communication and information technology commission later decided against a block.

The Arab Times reported in May that Interior ministry officials in Kuwait were planning on shutting down BBM, although no block has yet been imposed.

In 2007, France banned legislators and government officials from carrying a BlackBerry device on the grounds that messages could be intercepted by U.S. security services.

One phone forensics investigator in the U.K. who wished to remain anonymous told The Epoch Times that the concern from Middle Eastern governments "sounded fishy."

"From what I know, BlackBerry is fairly secure and there's not an issue with trust with RIM. It makes you wonder."

## THE MARKETING CORNER



President and CEO of Ford Motor Company Alan Mulally is all smiles as he speaks with the media at the Ford Annual Shareholder Meeting on May 13. Ford last Friday posted quarterly profits of \$2.6 billion, exceeding expectations. WILLIAM THOMAS CAIN/GETTY IMAGES

## Ford reports blowout second quarter

By **ANTONIO PEREZ**  
Epoch Times Staff

Ford Motor Co.'s second-quarter profits of US\$2.6 billion blew away all expectations, solidifying the automaker's recovery and going a long way to help the economy of its home state of Michigan.

Fellow "Big Three" automakers General Motors Co. and Chrysler Group have yet to report their earnings, but the early word is that sales have been encouraging.

More importantly for Ford, the higher profits were due to a 20-percent increase in sales, reflected by higher prices for the vehicles sold. This is important for the company, as it means that it didn't have to resort to discounts, promotions, and other deep incentives to entice consumers to purchase a car.

Chief Executive Officer Alan Mulally's turnaround plan has been especially swift. The company has relied on a steady stream of freshly designed new models such as the redesigned Taurus, Mustang, and the Fusion and Edge, all of which are popular

among consumers. Earlier this month the Focus, Mustang, and Taurus took highest honours in the J.D. Power and Associates 2010 Initial Quality Study in the compact cars, mid-size sporty cars, and large cars categories, respectively.

Also this month the 2010 Ford Flex and 2010 Ford Fusion received the Top Safety Pick designation from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

On Monday the automaker unveiled its newly redesigned and more fuel-efficient 2011 Ford Explorer SUV, featuring innovative inflatable second-row seat belts.

Later this year it will introduce its highly anticipated new Ford Focus, based on the European version of the car that has been extremely popular overseas.

The \$2.6 billion profit was the fifth straight profitable quarter for the Dearborn, Mich.-based automaker, which is also the No. 2 carmaker in the United States.

The results are even more impressive considering that the U.S. automobile market is still relatively weak, after touching a 30-year low in 2009.



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# Outgoing BP CEO defends company's response

Company announces \$17.2 billion Q2 loss

By **ANTONIO PEREZ**  
Epoch Times Staff

With Robert Dudley slated to take over from BP's embattled CEO Tony Hayward in October, Hayward defended his company's role in cleaning up the Gulf oil spill—in an effort to appease U.S. lawmakers and the general public.

"From day one I decided that I would personally lead BP's efforts to stem the leak and contain the damage, a logistical operation unprecedented in scale and cost," Hayward said in a statement.

"We have now capped the oil flow and we are doing everything within our power to clean up the spill and to make restitution to everyone with legitimate claims."

BP announced this week that Hayward and the company's board agreed mutually to move on, and that he would be replaced in October by Robert Dudley, a company executive currently overseeing the cleanup efforts in the U.S. BP has said it will nominate him as a non-executive board member of its TNK-BP joint venture in Russia.

Hayward had been criticized by the U.S. media and lawmakers for his lacklustre response to the oil spill, which was caused by an explosion on April 20 aboard the Deepwater Horizon oil rig, a rig leased by BP.

At one point during the aftermath, Hayward told the media that he wanted to "get his life back," prompting backlash from the U.S. public.

"It may not have been a great PR success," Hayward told the Guardian regarding his statement. "You can argue about whether it could ever have been a great PR success. Operationally we capped the well and cleaned up a hell of a lot of the oil."

**MASSIVE LOSS**  
As expected, BP swung to a second-



Robert Dudley, incoming BP CEO (R, background), with outgoing BP CEO Tony Hayward at the White House on June 16. Hayward defended BP's response to the Gulf oil spill this week. WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

quarter loss of US\$17.2 billion, due to costs to clean up the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and liabilities arising from the disaster.

BP announced a \$32.2 billion total charge, which includes \$20 billion it would contribute to a fund set up in agreement with the U.S. government to cover future damages. The company said it would look to sell an additional \$30 billion in assets to help cover future cleanup costs.

"The costs and charges involved in meeting our commitments in

responding to the Gulf of Mexico oil spill are very significant and this \$17 billion reported loss reflects that," Hayward said.

"However outside the Gulf it is very encouraging that BP's global business has delivered another strong underlying performance."

BP suspended its dividend following the disaster, but hinted it may reinstate dividends by February 2011.

In the same period last year, BP recorded a \$4.4 billion net income.