China to stick to controversial software rule

June 23 2009

A woman surfs the internet on a laptop computer at a wireless cafe in Beijing. China will not back away from a new rule requiring that Internet filtering software be shipped with all computers sold in the country despite heavy criticism of the plan, state media has said.

China will not back away from a new rule requiring that Internet filtering software be shipped with all computers sold in the country despite heavy criticism of the plan, state media has said.

The report in the China Daily newspaper came after US officials raised concerns to the [Chinese government](#) last week.

Computer makers have been told that all PCs sold from July 1 must be shipped with the Chinese-made anti-pornography [software](#), a move that trade and rights groups say is a bid by Beijing to further tighten Internet controls.

The China Daily quoted an unnamed source at China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology saying the plan would not be changed, giving no other details.

US diplomats expressed their concerns in meetings with Chinese officials last week, an embassy spokesman told AFP on Monday.

"We had a preliminary meeting with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) and the Ministry of Commerce on Friday to lay out our concerns," embassy spokesman Richard Buangan told AFP.

With the world's largest online population of nearly 300 million people, China has a history of blocking sites it deems politically unacceptable or offensive, a system that is dubbed the "Great firewall of China".

Overseas and domestic Internet users have viewed the new software rule as an attempt by China to filter sensitive websites, but state-run press has defended it as necessary to prevent youngsters from accessing pornographic websites.

It has also pointed out that users can choose whether to load the software -- called Green Dam Youth Escort -- onto their computers or not.

The Chinese designers of the software last week said they were trying to fix security glitches in the programme.

Researchers at the University of Michigan, who examined the software, had said earlier it contained serious security vulnerabilities that could allow outside parties to take control of computers running it via remote access.

It also added that the software's text filter blocked words that included

obscenities and phrases considered politically sensitive to China's ruling Communist Party.

(c) 2009 AFP

Citation: China to stick to controversial software rule (2009, June 23) retrieved 25 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2009-06-china-controversial-software.html