

## China shuts down, blocks 15,000 porn websites: state media

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A man surfs the internet in Beijing in 2009. China shut down or blocked more than 15,000 pornographic websites last year as part of a campaign to crack down on sexual content online, state media reported Tuesday.

China shut down or blocked more than 15,000 pornographic websites last year as part of a campaign to crack down on sexual content online, state media reported Tuesday.

"More than 1.5 million items of lewd content have been deleted from the Internet" in 2009, said Mao Xiaomao, vice director of the banned publications bureau of the General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP), according to Xinhua.

Chinese courts tried 1,273 porn-related criminal cases involving a total of 1,580 people in the first ten months of last year, the news agency said,

citing a Supreme People's Court spokesman.

Beijing has vowed tougher online policing in 2010 as a key element of "state security."

A Xinhua report on December 31 said [China](#) arrested more than 5,000 people in a crackdown on Internet pornography in 2009.

It maintains strict [censorship](#) of the Internet to curb what the government deems to be unhealthy content including porn and violence -- an effort that has become known as the "Great Firewall of China."

A college student who said his studies suffered after he discovered [Internet](#) porn was awarded 10,000 yuan (1,466 dollars) as part of a government scheme to reward [Internet users](#) for reporting porn websites, Xinhua reported earlier this month.

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