

Kazakhstan blocks popular blogging platforms

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A man works on a computer. Kazakhstan blocked access to several popular blogging sites after a court said they contributed to the spread of "terrorism" and religious extremism in the Central Asian state.

Kazakhstan on Friday blocked access to several popular blogging sites after a court said they contributed to the spread of "terrorism" and religious extremism in the Central Asian state.

A city court in the republic's capital Astana ruled that sites such as livejournal.com and liveinternet.ru -- both popular among Russian speakers throughout the former Soviet republics -- posed a general [security risk](#).

The sites helped promote "terrorism and religious extremism and (contained) calls to acts of terrorism and the manufacture of explosive

devices," court spokeswoman Ailana Iskendirova told the tengrinews.kz website.

There was no immediate comments from either Internet resource. The Interfax news agency quoted a Kazakh source as saying that more than 20 sites had been blocked in all.

Communications Minister Askar Zhumagaliyev confirmed the decision on his Twitter account.

"Access to the site is blocked because of the court decision," the minister said in response to comments from several frustrated Internet users.

The state-run telecommunication company Kazakhtelecom also confirmed the decision, saying it was blocking access in line with the ruling.

Sandwiched between Russia and China, Kazakhstan is an energy-rich secular Muslim nation which has been ruled since Soviet times by the authoritarian President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

[Kazakhstan](#) was hit by two rare bombings in May -- just a month after Nazarbayev's re-election to a third decade in power -- that killed two people in attacks staged near security service buildings.

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