

# China blocks Xi searches after Bloomberg report

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China blocked web searches Saturday for the name of leader-in-waiting Xi Jinping (pictured in May), a day after cutting access to Bloomberg sites following the agency's publication of a report on his family's wealth.

China blocked web searches on Saturday for the name of leader-in-waiting Xi Jinping, a day after cutting access to Bloomberg sites following the agency's publication of a report on his family's wealth.

Financial newswire Bloomberg used publicly available records to compile a list of investments by Chinese Vice President Xi's extended family, which the agency said totalled \$376 million.

The [report](#) did not trace any assets to Xi, expected to become Chinese president in an upcoming leadership transition, his wife, or their daughter and said there was no indication of wrongdoing by Xi or his

family.

Nevertheless the story, which highlighted the access to riches enjoyed by the elite in a country with a growing [wealth gap](#), prompted Chinese authorities to block access to all of Bloomberg's sites from within China after its publication Friday.

On Saturday, censors went a step further and blocked searches for Xi's name on the Internet and in microblogs. Access to the report remained blocked, as well as to Bloomberg sites and the site of its affiliate Business Week.

"Our Bloomberg.com website is currently inaccessible in China in reaction, we believe, to a Bloomberg News story that was published on Friday," company spokesman Ty Trippet told AFP in an email.

Chinese authorities were not immediately available to comment on the [Internet censorship](#) on Saturday.

Beijing regularly blocks Internet searches of information that it considers sensitive under a vast online censorship system known as the "Great Firewall."

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists condemned the censorship and urged China to stop blocking overseas websites and news.

"China cannot have lasting success as an international power if officials block global business news because they don't like a critical report," Bob Dietz, CPJ Asia program coordinator, said in a statement.

"Leaders must put China's business interests above their own by unblocking Bloomberg's website."

The Bloomberg report said that Xi's family -- largely his sisters and their spouses -- held an 18 percent indirect stake in a rare-earths company with \$1.73 billion in assets, a \$20 million holding in a tech company and had financial links to leading real estate firms.

Xi is widely expected to be named head of the ruling Communist Party later this year and become president next March in the country's once-in-a-decade leadership transition.

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