

Pakistan expected to unblock YouTube

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This file photo shows a young Pakistani man browsing the popular video sharing website YouTube at an internet cafe in Karachi, on May 27, 2010. Pakistan is expected to unblock access to YouTube on Saturday after taking measures to filter blasphemous material and pornography, according to a cabinet minister.

Pakistan is expected to unblock access to the popular video sharing website YouTube on Saturday after taking measures to filter blasphemous material and pornography, a cabinet minister said.

Pakistani Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf in September ordered the

blocking of [YouTube](#) after the US-based website refused to heed the government's call to remove a controversial anti-Islam video.

Weeks of protests in Pakistan over the crudely made "Innocence of Muslims" film saw more than 20 people killed and caused serious damage in major cities.

Pakistan Interior Minister Rehman Malik said on Twitter the decision to allow access was due to huge public demand, and that the [telecom regulator](#) would install a firewall to maintain a block on unseemly content.

"There was a great demand to unblock YouTube from all sections of society... expect the notification today," Malik said.

"PTA (Pakistan Telecommunication Authority) is finalising negotiations for acquiring a powerful firewall software to totally block pornographic and blasphemous material," he added.

Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan (ISPAK) said they have not yet received the notification, but welcomed the minister's announcement.

ISPAK Convener Wahajus Siraj told AFP that when the ban first came into force, Internet [video traffic](#) in Pakistan plummeted by up to 30 percent.

"It is a good development because many people, especially students and institutions, were using YouTube for education, and were facing difficulties as alternate websites were not as good," he said.

According to PTA there are 2.1 million [Internet subscribers](#) in Pakistan.

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