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Web content blocked by China

Internet users blocked from viewing 'politically dangerous' sites

SHANGHAI, China (AP) — Call it an upgrade of the Great Fire Wall of China. In the last week and a half, China has begun using more sophisticated, expensive technologies in an effort to keep its growing number of Internet users from viewing undesirable content on the Web. Starting about Sept. 1, users of the U.S.-based search engine Google have found themselves rerouted to a half dozen Chinese-run search engines that are less effective. Google has a feature for finding Chinese-language material online. A few days ago, users of another American search engine, Altavista.com, also found they were being rerouted to the same heavily censored Chinese sites. This week, users have begun complaining of an increase in selective blocking — being able to visit Web sites but not being able to see specific articles or other content of a politically sensitive nature. A common complaint has been that users can access a foreign media site but find only a blank screen when they try to call up an article on, for example, Chinese President Jiang Zemin. In its usual secretive way, Beijing made no announcement of the new measures and refused to confirm their existence. But analysts say the meas-

ures represent a technological leap from the earlier "Great Fire Wall" of China, which had clumsily tried to block entire Web sites deemed politically dangerous or pornographic. "Blocking has been escalated in the last week or so. It's a new high-water mark in Internet controls," said Duncan Clark, managing director of BDA China Ltd., a Beijing-based Internet consulting firm. Clark and others said the new blocking seems to be related to a Communist Party Congress scheduled for November — a time when restrictions on speech are often tightened. This congress is especially sensitive because Jiang is expected to give up his post as secretary-general, beginning a process of handing over power to younger leaders. Ben Edelman, a Harvard University researcher who has been documenting Chinese online censorship, said China's recent filtering modifications "show in new clarity their dedication to restricting access to content they deem undesirable, inappropriate or simply illegal." Analysts say they're more interested in whether the controls will be eased after the congress. Pressure to do so will be intense because of the economic costs, analysts said. Installing and upgrading new censorship software is expensive, and the

restrictions lead to less comprehensive searches and bog down all Internet use. On the other hand, authorities may be reluctant to give up their new powers. Chinese Internet companies may also want the restrictions kept in place to block foreign competitors. "It'll be an early test of the tenor of the new administration" that replaces Jiang, Clark said. The decision highlights a contradiction at the core of Beijing's Internet policy: it encourages commercial and educational use by China's 30 million-plus users while restricting it as a forum for political discussion. Many Chinese users are already complaining that the Internet's business utility is being damaged. "Without the English search engines, users in China are at a dead end," said Ben, a 36-year-old employee at a foreign company in Shanghai who uses the Internet for work. He asked that his family name not be used for fear of official retaliation. "Chinese engines don't provide sufficient information on Chinese-language sites, let alone English sites," he said. An operator at the customer service center of Shanghai Online, the largest service provider in China's largest city, said the company has been deluged with complaints.

"Users are quite angry. They rely on foreign search engines as a work tool," said the operator who spoke on condition of anonymity. "We can only hope that the Web will be shut down by the government and that we can do something about it." A marketing executive at Shanghai Online, who asked not to be named, said one of its Chinese-language search engines has surged this month. The government's blocking of entire sites is technologically fairly precise and involved placing filters at international gateways — China's piece of the Internet merged with the broader super-network. But gateways are proving, and the site-specific filters are too easily sidestepped by proxy servers, computers that help mask a user's location. The new, selective filtering technologies make it much more difficult to access foreign information, Clark said. Yet they are technically more difficult to administer — and more costly — requests are free to leave, but many incoming Web sites are blocked based on keywords. "The Chinese have been working on these technologies for years," Clark said.

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Report: Winter may bring high oil prices

LONDON (AP) — Higher, more volatile oil prices will loom this winter if OPEC refuses to boost crude production as major importing countries head into the peak heating oil season, an industry report warned Wednesday. A decrease last month in crude exports from Iraq has squeezed supplies and contributed to a dwindling of U.S. inventories. Global demand, meanwhile, is forecast to rise by a robust 1.6 million barrels a day in the fourth quarter, the International Energy Agency said in its monthly oil market report. Markets now face a challenge similar to that in 1999, when a plunge in oil inventories paved the way for a spike in prices and extreme instability, it said. "Today's situation is every bit as precarious, given the fragile state of the global economy and the threat of military action against Iraq," the agency said in an unusually pointed message. However, some respected industry analysts argued that the IEA has overstated this danger.

"We think it's exaggerated," said Leo Drollas, chief economist for the Center for Global Energy Studies. He suggested that the IEA might have "some kind of political agenda" for making such a sharp warning. The Paris-based IEA is the energy watchdog agency for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, a grouping of rich, oil-importing nations. It is, in effect, a consumer organization. "So they're sending a message saying, 'We need more oil just in case,'" said Lawrence Eagles, head of commodity research for London brokerage GNI Ltd. World oil production slipped to 76.1 million barrels in August, down 580,000 barrels a day from July. At the same time, the IEA raised its estimate of demand growth for the third quarter by 220,000 barrels a day to 76.5 million barrels. Global demand would swell to 78.1 million barrels a day in the fourth quarter, it said. The United States, the IEA's most powerful member and the world's biggest importer of oil, is seen to be leaning on the Organization of Petroleum Exporting

Countries to boost production while members meet in Osaka, Japan, on Sept. 19. Washington hopes an increase in steady energy markets if it goes against Iraq. Traders' concerns about the impact of a U.S.-led war against OPEC-member Iraq might have on Middle East oil supplies have already inflated the price of oil. Most estimates, this "war premium" has added \$2.4 to the price of each barrel. Last month, the price of U.S. light sweet crude burst through the psychologically important barrier of \$30 a barrel the first time since February 2000, a decrease in Iraqi exports of 270,000 barrels a day contributed to this upward pressure on prices. So did a 510,000 barrel cut in daily production from the North Sea, due to seasonal maintenance of oil rigs there, the report said. Average monthly oil prices have risen steadily from December to August, by 19 percent in New York and 43 percent in London, according to IEA data. The increase has been a boon for OPEC.

4.0 & GO
The week of September 15 - September 19

Acct 209	Part 1 of 2 Sun Sept 15 7pm-10pm	Part 2 of 2 Mon Sept 16 7pm-10pm	Check out our web page at www.4.0andGo.com	
Acct 229	Part 1 of 2 Tue Sept 17 9pm-12am	Part 2 of 2 Wed Sept 18 7pm-10pm	Next Week Biol, Chem, Econ, Info, Math, Mgmt, Mktg	
Acct 230	Part 1 of 2 Mon Sept 16 10pm-1am	Part 2 of 2 Tue Sept 17 6pm-9pm		
Chem 227	Part 1 of 3 Mon Sept 16 10pm-12am	Part 2 of 3 Tue Sept 17 8pm-11pm	Part 3 of 3 Wed Sept 18 8pm-11pm	
Finc 309	Part 1 of 4 Mon Sept 16 7pm-9pm	Part 2 of 4 Tue Sept 17 7pm-10pm	Part 3 of 4 Wed Sept 18 7pm-9pm	Part 4 of 4 Sun Sept 22 7pm-10pm
Finc 341	Part 1 of 4 Mon Sept 16 7pm-9pm	Part 2 of 4 Tue Sept 17 7pm-10pm	Part 3 of 4 Wed Sept 18 7pm-9pm	Part 4 of 4 Sun Sept 22 7pm-10pm
Mgmt 209	Part 1 of 2 Sun Sept 15 5pm-7pm	Part 2 of 2 Mon Sept 16 9pm-11pm		
Phys 201	Part 1 of 3 Mon Sept 16 6pm-9pm	Part 2 of 3 Tue Sept 17 6pm-9pm	Part 3 of 3 Wed Sept 18 6pm-9pm	
Phys 218	Part 1 of 3 Mon Sept 16 9pm-12am	Part 2 of 3 Tue Sept 17 9pm-12am	Part 3 of 3 Wed Sept 18 9pm-12am	

Tickets go on sale Sunday at 4:00 p.m. 4.0 & Go is located on the corner of SW Pkwy and Tx Ave, behind KFC next to Lack's.
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