

China cracks down on vulgar content online

A number of online accounts have been shut down this week for posting vulgar content, according to the Beijing cyberspace administration.

The administration on Wednesday urged major online platforms to enforce the shutdowns to contribute to a healthier online environment. The platforms with closed accounts include the Twitter-like social media service Weibo, and WeChat, an instant messaging app.

Most of the banned accounts posted entertainment industry gossip, while some were owned by famous paparazzi. The administration accused them of vulgarity and invading the privacy of celebrities among other issues.

The shutdowns were enabled by the country's new cyber security law that was passed in November 2016 at the bimonthly session of the National People's Congress Standing Committee after a third reading, and went into effect on June 1.

The administration released another statement Thursday, calling on the public to report vulgar content on the Internet to provide a safer online environment for teenagers, with summer vacation approaching.

According to the statement, as of Thursday, a total of 11,798 pieces of vulgar content have been removed by the center for illegal and harmful online content in Beijing in 2017.

The shutdown has aroused mixed reactions from the Internet users, with some applauding the action.

"I cannot stand the constant invasion of celebrities' privacy, and some of the gossip is completely made up," said "Weierxiaojie" on Weibo. "It's so good to know that it has finally been taken down."

Others were concerned about the potential concealment of misconduct in the entertainment industry. "Now it is 'safer' for celebrities to misbehave," said Weibo user "jilongfei".

Users also pointed out many more accounts posting vulgar content have not yet been shut down, asking for further action to clean up the online environment.