

China to regulate online comments

China's cyberspace authority has issued a document regulating online publicly posted comments.

In a regulation released by the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) Friday, the authority told website operators to better manage online comments with more effort to review content, conduct regular checks and formulate emergency response plans.

The regulation applies to information on public online platforms and only illegal information will be removed, ruling out privacy and free speech concerns, according to sources with the CAC.

While online comments were an important channel for Internet users to express opinions and conduct supervision, a number of problems, such as spreading rumors, obscene content and illegal information, still existed, the CAC sources said.

The regulation bans the selective deleting or recommending of online comments to seek illegal profits or promote improper values.

Software or the payment of people to post fake comments to promote certain information is also banned under the regulation.

On-screen comments on "bullet screen" video websites must be placed under proper management, according to the regulation.

Cyberspace administrations at national and provincial level should carry out checks on operators on a regular basis and a blacklist will be established for violators, it said.

The new regulation will take effect from October.