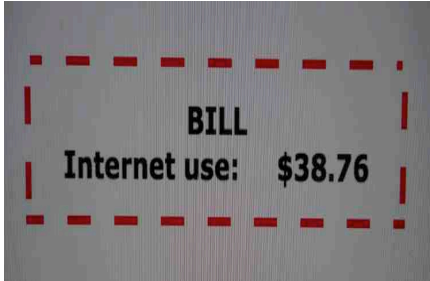


Hungary freezes Internet tax plan

3rd November, 2014



A proposed tax on the Internet has been put on hold by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban. Hungary's government was pushing full

steam ahead to impose a tax on Internet traffic. It faced huge opposition from the public and from businesses. Mr Orban announced his government had frozen the plans after witnessing huge street protests in the capital Budapest. He also eventually took heed of warnings from the European Union that the tax would be a mistake. Orban announced his climb-down in a radio broadcast on Friday, saying: "This tax in its current form cannot be introduced. If the people not only dislike something but also consider it unreasonable, then it should not be done."

Hungary's U-turn on an Internet tax is not yet a victory for the people. Prime Minister Orban said he had not scrapped the idea altogether. He said there would be consultations starting in January next year to investigate the potential of generating tax revenue from the Internet. He said it would obviously have to be different in nature to the one just binned. That involved a 60-cent tax one on every gigabyte of data someone consumed. Critics voiced concerns this would limit freedom of expression and hurt online companies. Citizens will continue to campaign for a tax-free Internet. An anti-tax Facebook page already has over 250,000 Likes.

Sources: Reuters / Computer World / Al Jazeera

Writing

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a government putting a tax on Internet use.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

tax / on hold / full steam ahead / opposition / street protests / mistake / climb-down / U-turn / scrapped / consultations / investigate / potential / freedom of expression

True / False

- Hungary had planned to tax the Internet and steam power. T / F
- There were big protests in the streets of Hungary's capital. T / F
- The European Union warned Hungary about imposing an Internet tax. T / F
- Hungary's Prime Minister said the people were being unreasonable. T / F
- Hungary did a left-turn with its Internet tax plans. T / F
- Hungary's leader no longer has plans to introduce an Internet tax. T / F
- Hungary had wanted to tax every gigabyte of data that people used. T / F
- An anti-tax Facebook page has over a quarter-of-a-million Likes. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. proposed | a. possibility |
| 2. put on hold | b. unacceptable |
| 3. huge | c. frozen |
| 4. eventually | d. carry on |
| 5. unreasonable | e. planned |
| 6. victory | f. abandoned |
| 7. scrapped | g. restrict |
| 8. potential | h. enormous |
| 9. limit | i. success |
| 10. continue | j. finally |

Discussion – Student A

- Do you think Hungary will eventually get an Internet tax?
- Are you surprised most countries do not tax the Internet?
- What is the best way for governments to get money from the Internet?
- What do you think of the taxation system in your country?
- What tax would you really like to change, and why?
- What else can citizens do to keep the Internet tax away?
- How effective do you think the anti-tax Facebook page is?
- What questions would you like to ask Hungary's leader?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. A proposed tax on the Internet has | a. from the public |
| 2. pushing full | b. revenue |
| 3. It faced huge opposition | c. unreasonable |
| 4. huge street | d. expression |
| 5. consider it | e. steam ahead |
| 6. not yet a victory | f. potential |
| 7. investigate the | g. protests in the capital |
| 8. generating tax | h. to campaign |
| 9. limit freedom of | i. been put on hold |
| 10. Citizens will continue | j. for the people |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the idea of an Internet tax?
- How important is the Internet to you?
- What things should never be taxed?
- Is the Internet already too expensive?
- Would you protest in the street against an Internet tax?
- Is it good the Hungarian prime minister listened to the people?
- Would your government listen to you in a similar situation?
- Would your online usage change if there was an Internet tax?

Spelling

- A osperdpo tax on the Internet
- Orban nonucneda his government
- after qtnewsiis huge street protests
- He also laentveluy took heed of warnings
- in a radio abrotscad
- consider it ennrsbalaeuo
- he had not drpscpae the idea altogether
- there would be nuilsatncoost
- investigate the olaniptte
- every ieggaybt of data someone consumed
- Critics dvoeci concerns
- Citizens will continue to agmpnica

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. c	3. h	4. j	5. b
6. i	7. f	8. a	9. g	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Internet tax

You think an Internet tax is the thing most worthwhile to protest in the streets against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): government corruption, food prices or jobs.

Role B – Government corruption

You think government corruption is the thing most worthwhile to protest in the streets against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): an Internet tax, food prices or jobs.

Role C – Food prices

You think food prices is the thing most worthwhile to protest in the streets against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): government corruption, an Internet tax or jobs.

Role D – Jobs

You think jobs is the thing most worthwhile to protest in the streets against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): government corruption, food prices or an Internet tax.

Speaking – Protests

Rank these with your partner. Put the things you would protest most about at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| • Nuclear power | • Internet tax |
| • Freedom of speech | • Going to war |
| • Anti-racism | • Government corruption |
| • Jobs | • Food prices |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.