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News Item

Benin is Taxing Use of Social Media Apps Like Facebook, WhatsApp | Quartz Africa

By Abdi Latif Dahir
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> Benin has joined a growing list of African states imposing levies for using the internet.
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> The government passed a decree in late August taxing its citizens for accessing the internet and social-media apps. The directive, first proposed in July, institutes a fee (link in French) of 5 CFA francs ($0.008) per megabyte consumed through services like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter. It also introduces a 5% fee, on top of taxes, on texting and calls, according to advocacy group Internet Sans Frontières (ISF).
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> The new law has been denounced, with citizens and advocates using the hashtag #Taxepamesmo ("Don't tax my megabytes") to call on officials to cancel the levy. The increased fees will not only burden the poorest consumers and widen the digital divide, but they will also be "disastrous" for the nation's nascent digital economy, says ISF's executive director Julie Owono. A petition against the levy on Change.org has garnered nearly 7,000 signatures since it was created five days ago.

Source: Benin is Taxing Use of Social Media Apps Like Facebook, WhatsApp | Quartz Africa