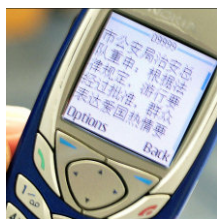


19 January 2007

By: Iohana Georgescu, Communications News Editor



## [Go to Jail for Lying by SMS](#)

### *In China spreading false rumors through SMS is punishable under law*

It all started with a false rumor that spread instantly causing panic among Chinese people. A considerable number of people received a message that warned them not to eat pork, because it may contain a virus that would cause cephalitis. And, guess what? This brought to introducing a law according to which people who intentionally spread false rumors will be going to jail. "Some pigs in the Tongzhou District of Beijing died for unknown reasons and were sold in the market in the form of pork, ham and sausage. The short message warned people not to eat pork as some may contain a virus that would cause purulent cephalitis," said a representative of the Beijing Government. Just after this happened, the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau thought it would be best to announce that people using the SMS to spread false information will go to jail and stay there for at least five years. So, no more telling lies via SMS or you may go to jail. Isn't this a little extreme, to say the least? Which means that if you discover something that can seriously harm or even kill your friends, you'll have to take your time, think things over, and analyze if what you're going to tell them is 100 percent true. Of course, by the time you do this it would be too late. But at least you didn't spread false information. It's rather silly really, not to be able to play a prank on somebody via SMS because you risk going to jail. This is only one among quite a few things available in Asia that are not available to the rest of the world. And while there are quite a lot of people who wish that the fancy and smart phones in Asia would be available for the rest of us, this time I guess people can be happy that it's not going to happen anywhere else except in China.