Iran rejects it is replicating China's internet controls

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In China, a special project has been implemented and it has its own home-grown platforms but we have our own expansion model and of course we are seeking to cooperate and interact with all countries including China," Zarepour was quoted as saying in a Tuesday report by the Iranian telecoms ministry.

The minister made the remarks in response to a journalist who asked him whether Iran's internet expansion model is based on the current Chinese system.

However, the minister said the Iran's cooperation with China will mostly focus on the expansion of the communication infrastructure in the country as he said that the Chinese are global pioneers in the field.

For nearly a year, Iran has been encouraging internet users in the country to migrate to domestic platforms as access to major social media websites, including Instagram and WhatsApp, remain restricted or banned because of their role in an unrest that broke out in Iran last September and lasted for several months.

Zarepour said "young Iranian experts" had created the platforms that are needed for communications between the people and for other online services.

He suggested that Iran may ease its restrictions on those foreign-based social media platforms that comply with the country's rules.

No one in the country is after cutting the internet or creating restrictions on it," said the minister.