The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Dozhd Drops Program That Ran Leningrad Poll, Ekho Moskvy Keen to Take Over

By Mark Lammey

February 03, 2014



Alexei Venediktov, chief editor of Ekho Moskvy radio station. **Andrei Romanenko / Wiki Commons**

Ekho Moskvy radio station has offered to take over a television program that has reportedly been canceled by its original broadcaster after it became embroiled in a scandal over a poll the show ran about World War II.

Alexei Venediktov, chief editor of Ekho Moskvy, said Monday on his Twitter account that Dozhd television has decided to pull the plug on the program, which is called "Diletanty," and that the radio station would broadcast the show instead, starting Feb. 6.

"Diletanty" — or "Laypeople" — ran a poll last Sunday, Jan. 26, which asked viewers whether Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, should have been surrendered to the Nazis during World War II in order to save hundreds of thousands of lives.

Between 300,000 and 1.5 million people died during the Nazi's near-900 day Siege of Leningrad, before it was eventually lifted in January 1944.

Internet users criticized the poll, which was run on the eve of the 70th anniversary of the blockade being lifted, and said that it was an insult to siege survivors and victims.

Dozhd deleted the poll shortly after posting it and the television channel's management has issued a number of apologies since then.

However, federal and St. Petersburg lawmakers asked the Prosecutor General's Office to check Dozhd for signs of extremism in an effort to have the television station punished, and at least five cable providers have suspended Dozhd broadcasts.

An unidentified prosecutor told Interfax on Friday that the inquiry was unlikely to lead to the channel's closure.

Venediktov said Monday that the program, which typically takes the format of a discussion with guests about the connection between past and present, is both "interesting" and "in-demand" and that he has asked two of the show's co-hosts, Dozhd journalists Tatyana Arno and Karina Orlova, to carry on in their roles.

Arno and Orlova have not replied to his offer yet, but Dozhd's general director, Natalya Sindeyeva, has "agreed in principle" to the idea, said Venediktov, who is also a co-host on the show.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/02/03/dozhd-drops-program-that-ran-leningrad-poll-ekho-moskvy-keen-to-take-over-a31681