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Google, Apple Delete Content at Russian Media Watchdog's Request

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The Roskomnadzor watchdog said Google Play and Apple's iTunes had removed access to content that it deemed to be extremist.

Digital stores Google Play and Apple's iTunes have stopped selling content deemed to be extremist in Russia following a request from the country's media watchdog, the agency said Friday via Twitter.

The announcement comes a day after the Izvestia daily reported that prosecutors had demanded the Russian watchdog block access to sites selling literature by Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and Islamic writer Sa'id bin Ali bin Wahf Al-Qahtani.

"The popular app stores http://iTunes.apple.com and http://play.google.com have deleted the extremist content," the Roskomnadzor watchdog confirmed Friday on Twitter.

A ruling by the Stavropolsky region court that entered into force on Wednesday bans the circulation of two tomes of Al-Qahtani's "Hisnul Muslim" (Fortress of the Muslim) in Russia. It also called on Roskomnadzor to block access to sections of the Google Play

and iTunes websites that were selling the literature, along with Hitler's "Mein Kampf," which has been banned in Russia for years.

Roskomnadzor head Vadim Ampelonsky told the BBC's Russian service Thursday that his agency had sent Apple and Google letters asking them to remove the literature to avoid being blocked.

Earlier this week Izvestia reported that Roskomnadzor has also threatened Google, Facebook and Twitter with fines and bans unless the companies comply with Moscow's demands to block content it deems extremist and to share information about online traffic on individual pages.

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