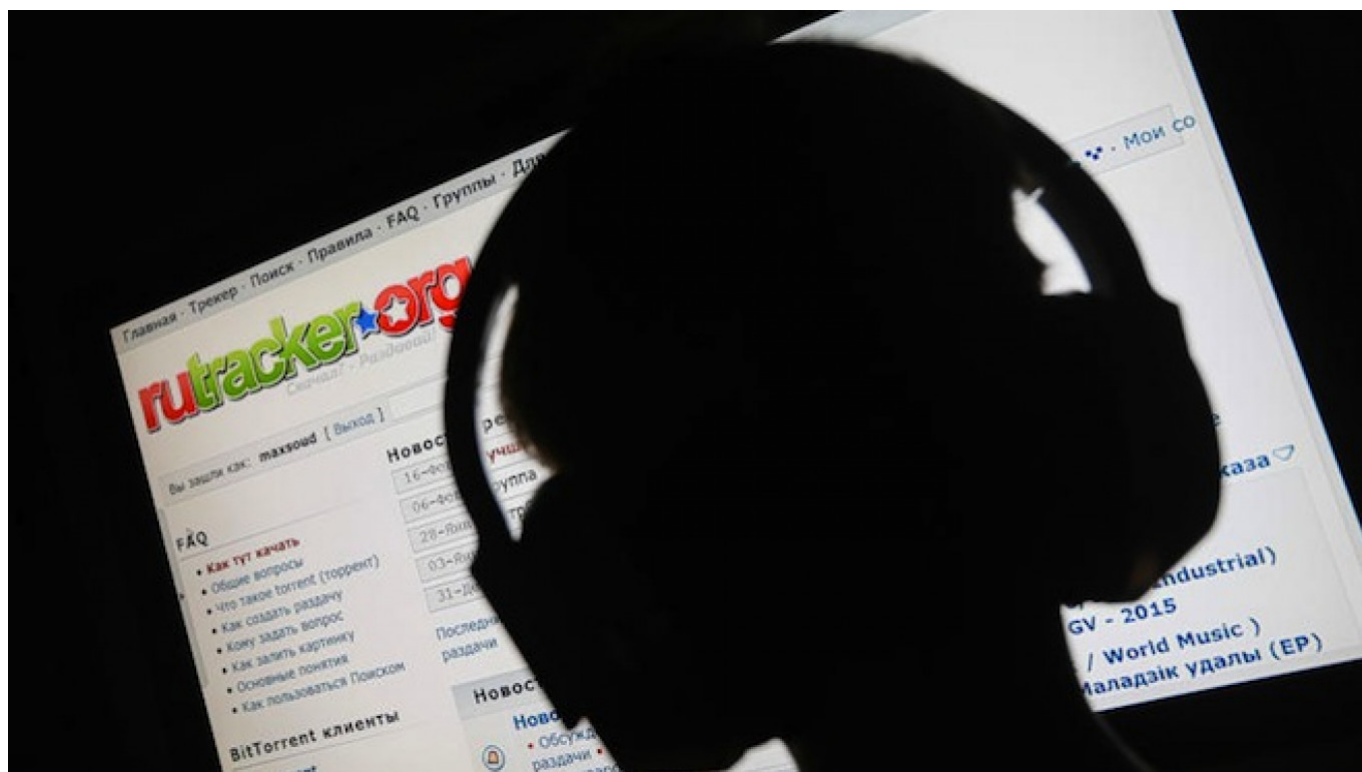


Moscow Court Orders Torrents Site Rutracker.org Blocked for Good

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November 09, 2015



Rutracker can appeal the decision before it enters into force.

Moscow City Court has ordered the permanent shutdown of Rutracker.org, the world's largest Russian-language torrents website, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday, citing the court's spokeswoman.

The website will be blocked after the court's decision comes into force in 30 days, spokeswoman Ulyana Solopova told RIA Novosti.

Rutracker can appeal the decision before it enters into force.

The claim to block Rutracker.org was filed by Russian publishing house Eksmo on Sept. 23 over the distribution by the torrents website of books by a number of Russian authors, including sci-fi writer Alexander Gromov and detective novelist Daria Dontsova. Eksmo had previously filed two lawsuits against the site.

Set up in 2004, Rutracker.org is one of the most popular streaming websites in Russia. In September the website was visited 76.3 million times from desktop computers alone, the Kommersant newspaper reported last month, citing SimilarWeb, a company that monitors website traffic.

Under Russian legislation, a website containing illegal material can be blocked forever after a second lawsuit from the same rights holder.

On Oct. 14, the first 11 websites were blocked for good by a court decision, including the streaming website Rutor.org, the RBC newspaper reported.

Eksmo is not the only rights holder seeking the closure of the torrents website Rutracker.org. Last month, the torrents tracker faced lawsuits from Warner Music Russia over the illegal distribution of music. Following the court's decision, the company removed the illegal content.

Commenting on the matter, a representative from Rutracker.org, whose name wasn't given, told the Vedomosti newspaper Monday that since the closure of the website affects the interests of Russians, it is only logical that the company will appeal the court decision.

The company representative also said that they “will certainly recommend that users go around the block,” and will help and advise them on how to set up software to do that.

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Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/11/09/moscow-court-orders-torrents-site-rutrackerorg-blocked-for-good-a50678>