The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

‘You Might As Well Ban Words’ – Pavel Durov on Russia's Proposal to Block Telegram

November 16, 2015



The instant messaging service was reportedly used by the terrorists behind a series of coordinated attacks in Paris on Friday night in which at least 120 people were killed.

A proposal to block the instant messaging service Telegram in Russia after Islamic State militants reportedly used the service to communicate during Friday's terror attacks in Paris garnered little support on Monday.

State Duma Deputy Alexander Ageyev on Monday was reported as having asked the head of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) Alexander Bortnikov to consider banning access to the service, state-run RIA Novosti reported Monday.

The instant messaging service was reportedly used by the terrorists behind a series of coordinated attacks in Paris on Friday night in which at least 120 people were killed.

“Telegram is actively used for propaganda purposes by the Islamic State,” Ageyev was cited as

saying in the report. “You can assume that they are recruiting Russian citizens for the Islamic State on there.”

The proposal was received with little enthusiasm.

Communications Minister Nikolai Nikiforov said blocking the service because it was popular among Islamic State militants would be “as smart as, for example, banning Toyota cars, because they would be popular among Islamic State [militants],” he was cited as saying in a separate RIA Novosti report.

Pavel Durov, the brain behind Telegram as well as Russia's biggest social networking site VKontakte, also mocked the proposal.

“I propose banning words. There's evidence [to suggest] that they're being used by terrorists to communicate,” he said Monday on his personal VKontakte page.

The Telegram messaging service allows users to send each other heavily encrypted messages.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/11/16/you-might-as-well-ban-words-pavel-durov-on-russias-proposal-to-block-telegram-a50790