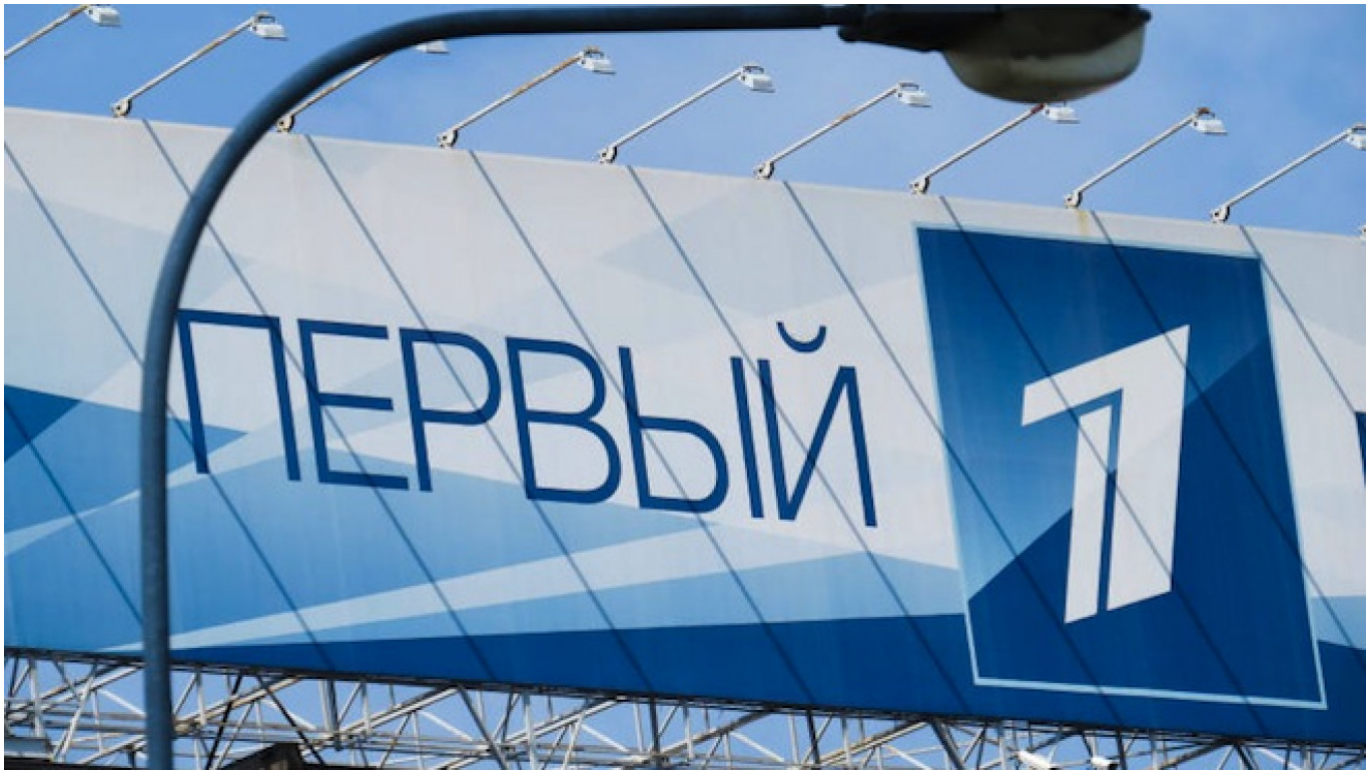
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Russian TV Report on Alleged Berlin Rape Criticized in Germany

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A German lawyer has asked prosecutors in Berlin to investigate a report on Russian state television that may have been faked about the rape of an underage girl by migrants in Germany.

Martin Luithle told German broadcaster Deutsche Welle that the report, aired at prime time on Jan. 16, violated German laws and was incitement to racial hatred.

It detailed the disappearance and rape of a 13-year-old Russian-speaking girl in Berlin by Arab migrants and a supposed coverup by German police.

Its authenticity was quickly disputed by the police, who say they have found no evidence either of abduction or rape, and by bloggers who questioned the material used in the report.

Luithle said the report was filmed as a piece of propaganda. Russian state television has glorified in needling European countries over their tolerance, and portrays the continent as riven with contradictions and social dysfunction.

The incident has been compared to an infamous Channel One report from eastern Ukraine in 2014, which offered an eyewitness account of the public crucifixion of a 3-year-old boy by Ukrainian soldiers. The report was exposed as a fraud. Channel One never apologized.

While Channel One is not under German jurisdiction, Luithle said the channel's reporter, Ivan Blagoi, had violated the country's laws with the report. Some six million Russian speakers in Germany have access to Channel One, according to Deutsche Welle.

Luithle said that Blagoi could face a prison term of between three months and five years.

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