

Russian Investigative Committee Tells TV Networks to Stop Capitalizing on 'Raped Girls'

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Russian federal investigators say the country's mass media is making matters worse by devoting so much coverage and attention to child victims of rape and other violent crimes. On Monday, a senior advisor to the chairman of the Investigative Committee called for tougher controls on the media, when it comes to stories about minors targeted in serious crimes.

Speaking at parliamentary hearings in Russia's Federation Council, Igor Komissarov said that TV talk shows have chased higher ratings by inviting teenage rape victims and their families onto the airwaves, provoking scandals that bring in more viewers, while also fueling greater interest in committing violent crimes, Komissarov argued.

"Popular television talk shows are earning big money and scoring high ratings, using raped girls," the Investigative Committee official said.

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Acknowledging that “it’s impossible to ban the Internet and the mass media,” Komissarov also stressed that children need to be educated to understand the dangers of sharing potentially damaging information about themselves and others.

Last week, Russia’s state censor, Roskomnadzor, said it would “take measures” against the national TV network Channel One for airing five different episodes of the show “Pust Govoryat” about an underage girl raped by a 21-year-old man. The girl’s story galvanized Russian public opinion, with many rallying to the rapist’s defense, saying the girl invited sexual advances.

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