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Russian News Outlets Fined for Sharing Profane Rap Battle Video

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Rap artists Oxxxymiron and Slava KPSS **Screenshot Youtube**

Russia's media watchdog Roskomondzor announced on Monday it was bringing fines against six news outlets for sharing a video of an expletive-ridden rap battle between Russian rappers Oxxxymiron and Slava KPSS.

Six outlets including the RIA Novosti news agency and the opposition-leaning Dozhd television channel will be forced to pay 50,000 ruble ($850) fines for violating laws on broadcasting profanity. An additional 26 media outlets that shared links to the video are to receive warning letters.

The video, uploaded to YouTube on Aug. 6, features a rap battle between veterans Oxxxymiron and Slava KPSS in St. Petersburg. With more than 10 million views in 24 hours, the video took the Russian internet by storm and even provoked divisive reactions from high-profile politicians.

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny praised the performance on Facebook, referring to it as "postmodern poetry," while Russian MP Gennady Onishchenko compared the scenes to a street brawl.

In 2014, Vladimir Putin signed a law into effect that prohibits the use of profane language in the public sphere, including in written, televised and radio broadcasted media as well as in films, theatrical productions and concerts.

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