The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Facebook Cites Russian Law After Banning Navalny Probe on Instagram

February 16, 2018



Nastya Rybka (Anatasiyia Vashukevich) **Youtube**

Facebook has said it is complying with Russian law after blocking Instagram posts linked to opposition leader Alexei Navalny's expose of a Kremlin-linked oligarch.

Navalny published an online film on Feb. 8 about a yacht meeting between metals tycoon Oleg Deripaska and Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Prikhodko, a top foreign policy official, as part of an alleged campaign to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

After a request from Russia's media watchdog Roskomnadzor, Facebook, the owner of Instagram, blocked two posts by Nastya Rybka, the woman who had reportedly provided materials to Navalny's video investigation.

The first blocked post, titled "Training: Hunting for an Oligarch," featured Rybka and Deripaska together, while the second was a video in which a teary-eyed Rybka said she had been gang-raped on the yacht — a claim she later reversed, saying it was a joke.

Last week, Deripaska lodged lawsuits against Navalny for libel and against Rybka for publishing video materials that had been taken clandestinely in an invasion of privacy.

A Russian court ordered Roskomnadzor to block the posts until the dispute was resolved, a representative of Deripaska told the RBC business portal on Monday.

"In cases when state agencies believe that certain content on the Internet violates their laws, they may request restrictions to this content," Facebook told RBC.

"We carefully study such requests as to violation of local law and if necessary, block access to that content in the relevant country or region," it added.

Related article: Russia Blocks Navalny's Website After Billionaire Graft Probe

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/02/16/facebook-cites-russian-law-after-banning-navalny-probe-on-instagram-a60530