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Russian Media Watchdog Asks Court to 'Immediately' Ban Telegram

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Sergei Konkov / TASS

Russia's state regulator has asked a court to "immediately" ban the popular Telegram messaging service over its refusal to provide tools to decrypt users' messages.

The Roskomnadzor media watchdog moved to block Telegram after it missed a deadline last week to turn over tools to decrypt online communication to the government. Moscow's Tagansky District Court is scheduled to decide the messenger's fate at a trial scheduled for Friday, April 13.

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"Since Telegram did not provide keys to decode messages, we are filing a request to immediately enforce the court ruling," Interfax cited a Roskomnadzor representative as saying.

By law, Telegram can appeal the first ruling in court, keeping the popular app online until a second ruling.

The Tagansky District Court court has also satisfied Roskomnadzor's request to include Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) as a third party in the case. The FSB has sought encryption keys from Telegram since the April 2017 St. Petersburg metro bombings.

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