

Russia Orders Twitter, Facebook to Delete ‘Fake’ Coronavirus News

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The takedown orders come amid public suspicion toward Russia’s officially reported coronavirus numbers, which jumped to 840 on Thursday. **Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia’s state communications watchdog Roskomnadzor [said](#) it has asked Twitter and Facebook to delete “fake” stories surrounding the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

The takedown orders come amid public suspicion toward Russia’s officially reported coronavirus numbers, which jumped to 840 on Thursday. Experts warn that Russia's testing capacity is hampered by bureaucracy, while officials warn that the real number of cases is likely much higher.

Related article: [Russian News Outlets Ordered to Take Down ‘Fake’ Coronavirus News](#)

Facebook complied with Roskomnadzor’s request Wednesday and deleted “socially significant false information” about the number of coronavirus cases in Russia, the watchdog said in a statement Thursday.

It also [said](#) it asked Twitter to take down a fake story about an alleged curfew being adopted in Moscow. City officials have repeatedly [denied](#) reports that they plan to place the city under lockdown or impose a curfew.

The Russian capital ordered the closure of restaurants, parks, nightclubs and other establishments between March 28 and April 5, a period that President Vladimir Putin declared a paid holiday.

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Last week, Roskomnadzor [ordered](#) several Russian news outlets to take down unspecified information about the outbreak that it said was “fake.” The outlets [face](#) administrative fines of up to 500,000 rubles (\$6,200) under a law imposing penalties for “fake news” that Putin signed last year.

At the time, Roskomnadzor called on VKontakte, Facebook and Instagram to monitor and remove any fake coronavirus information on their websites.

Putin said earlier in March that fake news reports about coronavirus were being sent from abroad to spread panic among the Russian public.

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