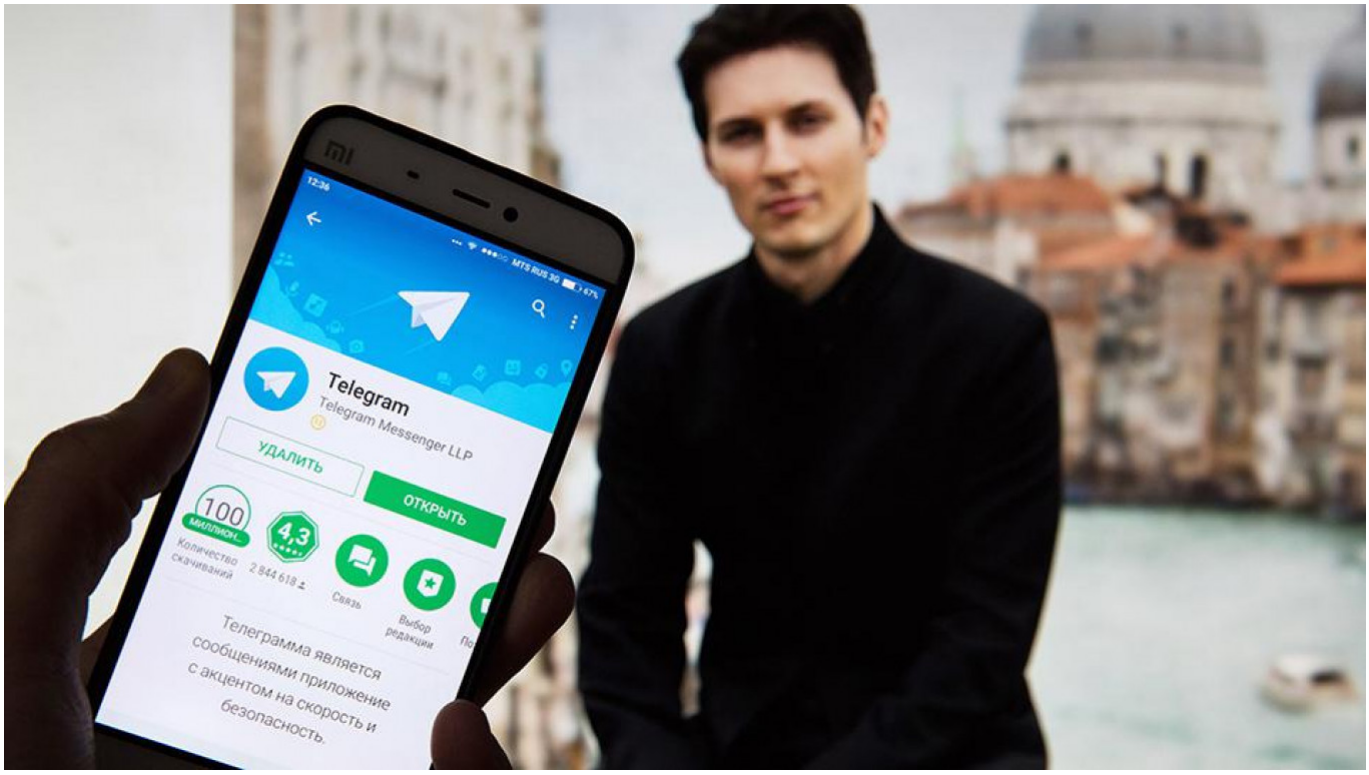
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Telegram Messaging App to Launch Pay-For Services in 2021

By AFP

December 23, 2020



Telegram has attracted nearly 500 million active users since its launch by Durov and his brother Nikolai in 2013. **Alexei Zotov / TASS**

Encrypted messaging app Telegram will launch pay-for services in 2021, its Russian-born founder Pavel Durov said Wednesday, as the growing company needed "at least a few hundred million dollars per year."

"Telegram will begin to generate revenue, starting next year," Durov said in a statement.

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"We will be able to launch countless new features and welcome billions of new users."

Durov, 36, said he did not plan to sell the company and therefore needed to look for other

ways to come up with funding.

Telegram is a popular social media platform in a number of countries, particularly in the former Soviet Union and Iran, and is used both for private communications and sharing information and news.

It has attracted nearly 500 million active users since its launch by Durov and his brother Nikolai in 2013.

"For most of Telegram's history, I paid for the expenses of the company from my personal savings," Durov said.

"However, with its current growth Telegram is on track to reach billions of users and to require appropriate funding."

He said that free features would remain free.

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