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Russia Fines Google for Not Removing Illegal Content

By AFP

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Russia has been taking legal action against foreign tech companies for not deleting content banned by the authorities. **Firmbee.com / unsplash**

A Moscow court on Thursday again fined Google for failing to remove banned content as foreign tech giants face mounting pressure in Russia.

In recent months, Russia has been taking legal action against foreign tech companies for not deleting content banned by the authorities, including pornographic material or posts deemed extremist or condoning drugs or suicide.

Related article: Russia Fines Google Again for Not Removing Banned Content

On Thursday, the Tagansky district court slapped Google with three fines totaling 6 million rubles ($80,850) for the violation, according to the official Telegram channel of Moscow

courts.

Earlier this week, the U.S. company was hit with five other fines totalling 14 million rubles over the same charges.

Last month Google was fined 3 million rubles for breaching data storage laws.

According to the RIA Novosti news agency, Google has so far been fined 32.5 million rubles in Russia.

It was the first time the company was penalized under the controversial law that requires the personal data of Russian users to be stored on servers within Russia.

Moscow has recently ramped up pressure on foreign tech companies, especially social networks, after accusing them early this year of not removing posts calling for minors to join protests in support of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Facebook has been handed fines for failing to remove illegal content, while Twitter has had its service speeds in Russia throttled.

In recent years, the Russian government has also been tightening control over the internet under the pretext of fighting extremism and protecting minors.

But government critics have denounced official oversight of the web as a means to stifle debate and silence dissent.

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