The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

YouTube Again Blocks German-Language RT channel

By AFP

December 16, 2021



t.me/MariaVladimirovnaZakharova

YouTube on Thursday again blocked a German-language channel of Russian state broadcaster RT for breaching user terms, having drawn Moscow's ire in the past with similar shutdowns.

Broadcaster RT — previously known as Russia Today — said on its website that YouTube had taken down its newly launched "Auf Sendung" (On Air) channel "without explanation".

The 24/7 channel can still be viewed on other platforms, including on the RT DE website.

A YouTube spokesperson told AFP that the channel was removed for trying to circumvent its earlier termination of RT's German channels RT DE and Der Fehlende Part.

"When a channel is terminated, the uploader is not allowed to use, own or create any other YouTube channels," the spokesperson said.

"As a result of this circumvention attempt, the new channel 'RT auf Sendung' was permanently removed for violating YouTube's terms of service."

Google-owned YouTube in September issued a warning to RT DE for violating its coronavirus disinformation guidelines and then shuttered two channels for breaching user terms.

The move angered Moscow, which accused YouTube of "censorship" and said the ban was likely aided by German authorities at a time of strained diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Berlin denied the claim and said it had "nothing to do with" YouTube's decision.

The latest YouTube spat comes as tensions are running high between Russia and Germany, a day after a Berlin court sentenced a Russian to life in jail over a 2019 assassination on German soil it says was ordered by Moscow.

The ruling prompted Germany to expel two Russian diplomats.

Germany has also echoed Western alarm about Russia's troop movements on the border with Ukraine, with new chancellor Olaf Scholz warning on Wednesday that Russia would pay "a high price" for invading Ukraine.

Launched in 2005 as "Russia Today", state-funded RT has expanded with broadcasters and websites in languages including English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

It has generated controversy in many countries, including the United States, where it was required to register as a "foreign agent", and in Britain, where authorities have threatened to revoke its broadcasting licence.

The channel has been banned in several countries, including the ex-Soviet republics of Lithuania and Latvia.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/12/16/rt-launches-247-german-channel-amid-tensions-a75837