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WhatsApp Disrupted in Dagestan to Stop Spread of Extremism – TASS

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Authorities in Russia's North Caucasus republic of Dagestan are slowing access to WhatsApp over the platform's refusal to curb the spread of "calls to participate in extremist actions," the state news agency TASS reported Monday, citing an unidentified source.

Users in Dagestan began experiencing disruptions with access to WhatsApp on Sunday, with additional reports saying that no social network was accessible there without a VPN.

"Demands were sent to the WhatsApp administration to stop the spread of calls to participate in extremist actions, but they were ignored," TASS quoted its source as saying.

The Muslim-majority region has been on high alert after coordinated attacks on two churches, two synagogues and a police checkpoint killed 22 people there last month.

TASS did not say when or whether the authorities planned to resume access to the popular messenger service.

The business publication Kommersant reported that VPNs worked only in 10-minute increments and had to be restarted to resume access to WhatsApp.

Russia banned WhatsApp owner Meta shortly after launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. That ruling banned Facebook and Instagram in the country but exempted WhatsApp from the restrictions.

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