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Tone Down Trump Praise, Kremlin Tells State Media

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A man takes pictures with a cardboard cutout of U.S. President Donald Trump in the center of Moscow.
Yuri Kochetkov / EPA / TASS

The Kremlin has advised Russian state-run media outlets to avoid excessive praise of U.S. President Donald Trump and instead highlight President Vladimir Putin's diplomatic skills, the independent Vyorstka news outlet reported.

According to Vyorstka, state media heads have been urged to maintain a cautious and balanced tone amid the sudden thaw in U.S.-Russia relations and the possibility of a ceasefire in Ukraine. The directive is intended to prevent overly favorable coverage of Trump in case negotiations between the two countries fail.

This measured approach aligns with the Kremlin's broader media strategy, which prioritizes flexibility in messaging to allow for strategic adjustments when necessary. By refraining from outright endorsement of Trump, state media can more easily shift the narrative if diplomatic efforts stall or the U.S. president alters his stance.

A source familiar with regular Kremlin editorial meetings told Vyorstka that Russian leadership wants media coverage to foster a "positive atmosphere" around the renewed diplomatic engagement.

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Yet Russian media should not be praising Trump, but rather "presenting him as someone who had the wisdom to accept Putin's extended hand," the source explained.

This framing ensures that Russian officials can assert they made every effort to engage diplomatically should relations deteriorate, Vyorstka cited its source as saying.

Despite these unofficial guidelines, Russian media outlets have taken varied approaches in their coverage. Some state-controlled television channels have expressed optimism about Trump's willingness to engage with Moscow, depicting it as a pragmatic shift in U.S. foreign policy.

Others, particularly pro-war bloggers and military correspondents, have reacted with skepticism, especially concerning potential agreements on joint resource extraction projects.

Concerns have emerged over reports that Russia might partner with the U.S. on rare earth minerals, with hardliners viewing such a move as a possible concession rather than a diplomatic victory.

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