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Pro-Kremlin RT Network Launches India Service With Putin's Blessing

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RT editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan and Vladimir Putin at the launch of RT India. **kremlin.ru**

President Vladimir Putin on Friday presided over the launch of RT India, the Kremlin-funded broadcaster's newest regional channel, during his visit to the South Asian country this week.

"I sincerely hope that Russia Today will not only help showcase contemporary Russia, but also help in guiding our societies on key issues and the key areas of our cooperation," Putin said, using the network's former name.

RT India, based in New Delhi, will be broadcast in English. During the televised launch, RT editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan praised India as being "friendly and hospitable," juxtaposing it with Western countries that have banned or suspended RT broadcasts in recent years.

Following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, RT America was removed from many U.S. cable and satellite providers, while the European Commission suspended RT and its sister outlet Sputnik across the EU, citing concerns over Kremlin-backed influence campaigns.

Putin criticized those countries for being “afraid of the truth” and called RT “an effective channel” in promoting Russia’s perspective.

Ahead of Friday’s launch, RT staged a major promotional campaign across India, including billboards, digital ads, a themed train in Delhi, a green light projection on Mumbai’s Bandra-Worli Sea Link bridge and a matryoshka-shaped entrance at the New Delhi studio.

The network’s India debut video highlighted the New Delhi studio and featured quotes from Indian and Soviet leaders praising bilateral ties.

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