

Russia Probes Telegram Founder Over Alleged Terror Links



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Russian authorities have opened a criminal investigation into Telegram co-founder Pavel Durov, alleging the messaging platform was used to facilitate terrorist and extremist activities, Russian state media reported Tuesday.

Citing materials from the Federal Security Service (FSB), the state daily Rossiyskaya Gazeta said

that since 2022 more than 153,000 crimes in Russia involved Telegram, including about 33,000 classified as terrorism-, sabotage-, or extremism-related. These allegedly included planned explosions, arson attacks on military enlistment offices, and targeted killings across several regions.

The report claimed Russian security services prevented 475 terrorist plots coordinated through Telegram, including 61 planned school shootings. It also alleged the March 2024 Crocus City Hall attack near Moscow and the assassinations of commentator Darya Dugina and blogger Maxim Fomin were organized via the app. Russian media further claimed Telegram analytics enabled hostile actors to track movements and personal data of military officials and relatives, with about 700 threats recorded against families.

Authorities also accused Telegram of failing to comply with content-removal requests.

Communications regulator Roskomnadzor reportedly sent more than 150,000 takedown notices to the company in recent years without response or substantive engagement.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said authorities had documented numerous violations and what he described as Telegram's unwillingness to cooperate with Russian agencies. He added that any decision on restricting or blocking messaging services lies with relevant regulators, not the Kremlin.

Telegram and Pavel Durov have not publicly responded to the reported investigation or the specific allegations cited by Russian state media.