

European court upholds broadcasting ban on Russia's RT



Vehicles of Russian state-controlled broadcaster Russia Today (RT) are seen at Red Square in central Moscow.??

Luxembourg, July 27 (RHC)-- A top European Union court has upheld a broadcast ban imposed on state-owned channel Russia Today (RT) as part of the bloc's sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

The judgement by the Luxembourg-based General Court on Wednesday threw out an appeal against the ban, which the EU imposed over accusations that the network spreads disinformation.

"The Grand Chamber of the General Court dismisses RT France's application for annulment of acts of the Council, adopted following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, temporarily prohibiting that organisation from broadcasting content," the ruling said.

"The limitations on RT France's freedom of expression which the restrictive measures at issue are liable to have are proportionate, inasmuch as they are appropriate and necessary to the aims pursued," it

added.

The Kremlin reacted to the court's decision by saying it was "extremely negative" and that Russia would take similar measures against Western media in response. In a call with reporters, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said RT was unable to work in Europe but he hoped it would find loopholes to resume broadcasting.

The EU's move days after the February 24 invasion targeted Russian state media RT, Sputnik and their subsidiaries, preventing their content from being broadcast or disseminated by EU operators.

European Commission chief Von der Leyen said at the time said the broadcasters "will no longer be able to spread their lies to justify Putin's war and to sow division in our Union".

Sputnik responded with a sardonic statement, saying: "We suggest the European Commission not stop halfway and ban the internet altogether."

RT's French subsidiary tweeted the ban "goes against the very principles of freedom of expression" and said it was a victim of "censorship." RT France had argued in its application for annulment that the sanctions were discriminatory on the basis of nationality.

The broadcaster can still file an appeal to the European Court of Justice, the bloc's most senior legal body.

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