

Russian Minister: Infrastructure Needed for Yarovaya's Anti-Terror Law Doesn't Exist

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The  **Moscow Times**

Russia's deputy minister for economic development has said that the data storage infrastructure needed for new anti-terror legislation doesn't exist anywhere in the world, the Interfax news agency reported Thursday.

Russia's Deputy Minister for Economic Development Oleg Fomichev said Thursday that it was "very difficult to say" what timescale would be needed to have the necessary infrastructure in place.

"This kind of equipment doesn't exist anywhere in the world in such a quantity at the moment," he said.

The new law, authored by ultra conservative United Russia lawmaker Irina Yarovaya, will require mobile operators to store customers' messages, including photos and videos, for six

months. Internet companies will also face a fine of up to 1 million rubles (\$15,700) for not decoding users' data at the request of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB).

Four of Russia's biggest mobile operators last month wrote a joint letter to Russian Federation Council head Valentina Matvienko to complain about the burden the new law would place upon them.

They claim that building the necessary storage capacity will cost them 2.2 trillion rubles (\$33.8 billion), lead to increased tariffs and reduce tax revenues from mobile operators.

Yarovaya responded to the claims, calling them a "baseless" excuse to raise prices.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who signed the legislation into law last week, called on Russian companies to be given the task of producing the required storage systems "as quickly as possible" saying that it will be a beneficial stimulus for Russian business.

The legislation, often called the "Big Brother Law," has been strongly criticized by businesses and human rights groups with former whistleblower Edward Snowden calling it "a violation against human rights and common sense."

The new laws include restrictions on religious activity, an increase in the number of crimes children between 14 and 17 can be prosecuted for and criminalizes a failure to report terrorist activities to the authorities.

Moscow authorities announced Thursday that they will allow an opposition protest against the new laws to go ahead. The events organizer Leonid Volkov, a close ally of opposition politician Alexey Navalny, confirmed that the event will take place in central Moscow on July 26.

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