

Turkey keeps YouTube ban in place despite court orders

ANKARA, TURKEY: Turkey's government said it would keep its block on YouTube in place despite two separate courts ordering the ban be lifted.



Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan won the March general elections but has still not lifted the ban on YouTube and Twitter. Image: Wikipedia

In a statement, Turkey's Information and Communications Technologies Authority (BTK) said the ban would remain as illegal content was still available on the video-sharing site.

"The measure blocking access to the [YouTube](#) internet site remains in place because some of the content (deemed illegal) keeps being broadcast," the BTK said in a statement.

YouTube was originally blocked on 27 March after an audio recording of top civilian and military officials appeared, allegedly of high-level security talks on Syria.

However, a court in the capital Ankara lifted the ban last week, saying a blanket ban violated human rights and instead limited the restriction to people accessing 15 specific videos.

That ruling was followed by a higher Ankara court this declaring the blocking of YouTube as illegal.

Despite this, the BTK said YouTube had only removed some of the links deemed offending by the government and added that access to other links had been blocked only in Turkey, while they could still be viewed abroad.

Turkey also blocked Twitter last month after it was used to spread a spate of anonymous leaks implicating Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his inner circle in corruption allegations.

But the government had to comply with a Constitutional Court ruling that found the ban on the microblogging site violated free speech.

The Internet clampdown ahead of March local elections sparked outrage in Turkey and abroad, with rights groups deploring the curbs as setback to freedom of expression in the EU-hopeful country.

Erdogan's Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) scored a sweeping victory in the municipal polls despite sleaze claims and Internet bans.

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