

Turkish government lifts Twitter ban

April 3 2014, by Suzan Fraser

Turkey's government lifted its ban on Twitter on Thursday—a day after the country's highest court ruled that the block was a violation of freedom and must be restored.

Turkey blocked access to the [social media](#) website two weeks ago after some users posted links suggesting [government corruption](#). Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan vowed to "rip out the roots" of Twitter for allowing the postings.

The government also blocked access to YouTube following the leak of an audio recording of a high-level security meeting discussing a possible intervention in Syria. The moves sparked international criticism and the ban was challenged in several Turkish courts. The Constitution Court ruled against the Twitter ban on Wednesday.

However, the high court decision was limited to Twitter. Access to YouTube remained blocked.

The leaks were posted on Twitter and YouTube in the run up to local elections on March 30, which gave Erdogan's ruling party a decisive victory.

Twitter welcomed the lifting of the ban and European Commission Vice President Neelie Kroes tweeted that unblocking YouTube was a "good move for free speech."

Though the court's ruling was published in the Official Gazette early

Thursday—a move that would normally give it immediate effect—the government took several hours to reinstate access.

The apparent foot-dragging raised questions as to whether the [government](#) would flout the order, as it had done with a previous ruling by a lower court.

Despite the ban, many tech-savvy users, including President Abdullah Gul, had found ways to continue tweeting and posted videos on YouTube.

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