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NETHERLANDS

Broadcaster prohibited from making recordings in court during high-profile case

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On 24 January 2020, the District Court of Noord-Nederlands announced that the Dutch broadcaster RTL was no longer permitted to make recordings in the court during an ongoing high-profile case. Furthermore, the court announced that RTL, with the exception of its news programme *RTL Nieuws*, was prohibited from making recordings for other broadcasters in the court for the next three months. The court stated that the measures were being imposed due to a programme broadcast by RTL on 21 January 2020.

The issue arose in a case currently before the court, known as the Ruinerwold case, which made headlines around the world. In October 2019, police discovered a family of six in a farmhouse near the village of Ruinerwold, in the north-eastern province of Drenthe. Two suspects are currently before the District Court of Noord-Nederlands, with one having been arrested on suspicion of deprivation of liberty and sexual abuse. On 21 January 2020, a hearing in the case took place in the district court. The television programme *RTL Boulevard* had asked to film the hearing, including the voice of the suspects. The court granted certain permissions for recordings in the courtroom by *RTL Boulevard*. However, the court imposed a number of reporting restrictions during the hearing, including if suspects appeared at trial, no video or audio recordings could be made. Furthermore, the name and personal details of suspects and victims who were mentioned by others during the proceedings had to be removed during editing. This was to ensure the privacy of the suspects.

However, on 21 January 2020, during another well-known programme on RTL, *Jinek*, the voice of one of the suspects during the hearing was broadcast. This led the Court to issue its announcement on 24 January 2020, prohibiting RTL from making furher recordings in the Ruinerwold case. The court stated that it was imposing the restriction as a result of the *Jinek* broadcast on 21 January 2020. The court stated that *RTL Boulevard* was responsible for the recordings in the courtroom, and that the violation of the recording ban was “not acceptable to the Court.” The court also stated that it had “made its dissatisfaction known to representatives of both *Jinek* and *RTL Boulevard* and has communicated the measures it has taken to the management of RTL.” Finally, the *Jinek* programme-makers informed the court that the fragment had been now removed from the broadcast.

Rechtbank neemt maatregelen richting RTL na uitzending Jinek, 24 januari 2020

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https://www.rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie-en-contact/Organisatie/Rechtbanken/Rechtbank-Noord-Nederland/Nieuws/Paginas/Rechtbank-neemt-maatregelen-richting-RTL-na-uitzending-Jinek.aspx

Court takes measures towards RTL after Jinek broadcast, 24 January 2020

Motivering afwijzing opnamen Alles uitklappen, 21 januari 2020, strafzaak 'Ruinerwold', rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 21 januari 2020

https://www.rechtspraak.nl/Persinformatie/Paginas/Opnamen-in-de-rechtszaal.aspx#e28c0a02-d3e8-408c-b252-079be5804ee93ac3b2ca-02cd-449d-b600-44132ccdd62186

Justification for rejecting recordings, 21 January 2020, Ruinerwold case, District Court of Noord-Nederlands

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