

Musk restores some suspended Twitter accounts of journalists

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Twitter owner Elon Musk has drawn anger and warnings from the EU and UN after suspending the accounts of half a dozen prominent journalists.

The Twitter accounts of several journalists suspended after Elon Musk accused them of endangering his family were reinstated Saturday, but

some said the billionaire owner offered full use of the platform only if they deleted posts about tracking his location.

Musk had drawn anger and warnings from the European Union and United Nations after suspending the accounts of more than a half-dozen prominent journalists from The New York Times, CNN, The Washington Post and other outlets.

"The people have spoken. Accounts who doxxed my location will have their suspension lifted now," the Twitter owner tweeted late Friday.

Doxxing generally means publishing private information on the Internet to harass or embarrass someone.

Musk carried out a Twitter poll asking whether he should restore the suspended accounts now or in a week's time. Nearly 59 percent of the 3.69 million who took part said he should restore the accounts now.

Some of the suspended accounts were reactivated, with former Vox journalist Aaron Rupar, Mashable reporter Matt Binder and freelancer Tony Webster tweeting again Saturday.

Speaking later on MSNBC, Rupar warned that Twitter's crackdown, even if temporary, would have a "chilling effect on coverage of Elon Musk" and make reporters think twice about running afoul of the company's new owner.

The accounts of some other journalists remained suspended early Saturday, including those of Business Insider's Linette Lopez and former MSNBC anchor Keith Olbermann.

CNN's Donie O'Sullivan, who has reported at length on Musk, said that while his suspended account became viewable Saturday, Twitter has

imposed a condition for him to be able to tweet again.

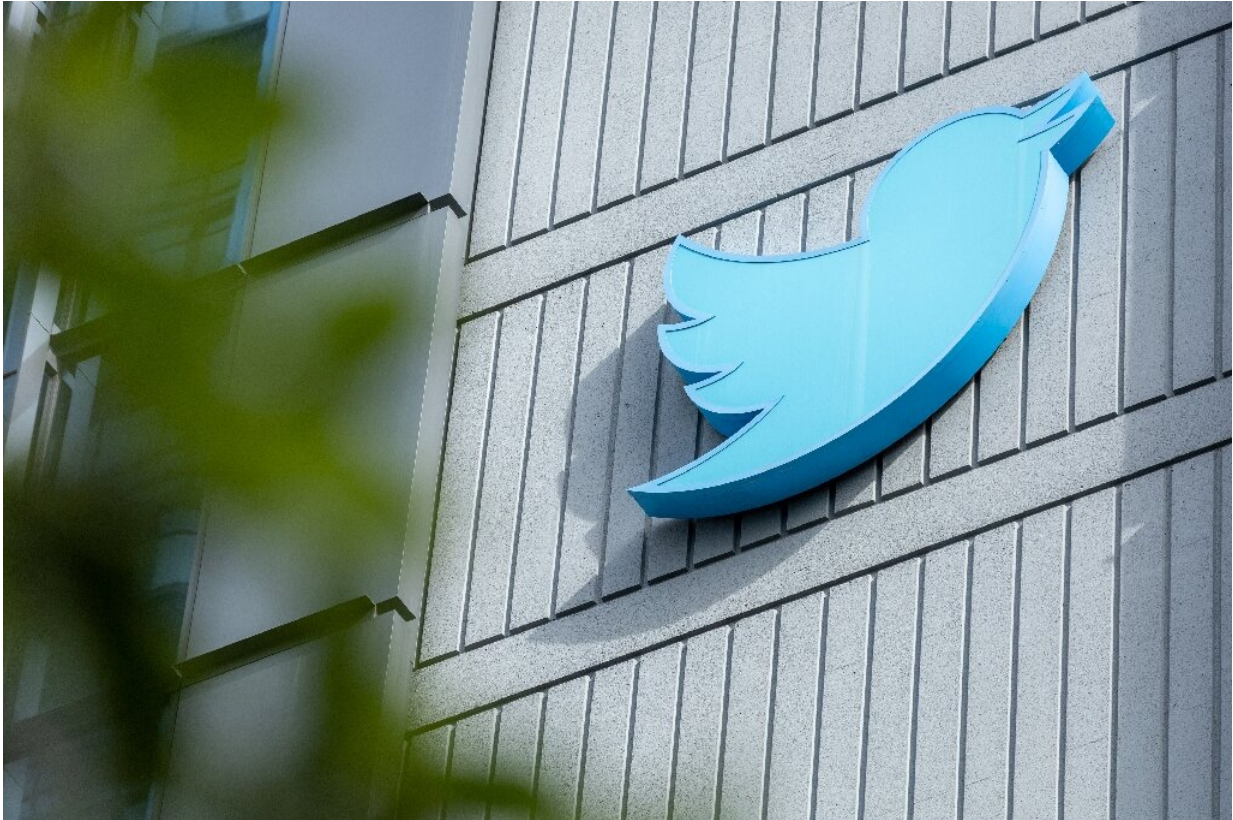
He said Twitter demanded he remove a post that it says violates its rules against posting [private information](#).

"Right now, unless I agree to remove that tweet at the behest of the billionaire, I won't be allowed to tweet on the platform," O'Sullivan told CNN.

The latest controversy began Wednesday when Musk suspended @elonjet, an account that tracked flights of his private plane.

Musk said the move was necessary after a car in Los Angeles carrying one of his children was followed by "a crazy stalker"; he seemed to blame the jet tracking for the incident.

Some of the suspended journalists had reported on the affair, including tweets linking to the suspended @elonjet account, which Musk said amounted to offering "assassination coordinates" against him and his family.



Twitter has lurched from one controversy to the next since Musk took control after paying \$44 billion for the firm.

In a chat hosted live on Twitter, Musk provided no evidence for his claim but told suspended reporters that on Twitter "everyone's going to be treated the same... they're not special because you're a journalist."

Pressed further on his allegations, Musk ended the conversation. Twitter Spaces, the feature where the chat took place, was then suspended. The live audio service was back up Friday, with Musk saying the platform had been fixing a bug.

As of Saturday, the Musk plane-tracking account remained suspended.

Musk's deactivations have drawn sharp criticism from [media organizations](#), the EU and the United Nations.

UN rights chief Volker Turk welcomed Musk's decision to reinstate the accounts, "but serious concerns remain," he posted on Twitter.

He also urged Musk to "commit to making decisions based on publicly-available policies that respect rights, including free speech. Nothing less."

Earlier, the spokesman for UN chief Antonio Guterres called the suspensions a "dangerous precedent at a time when journalists all over the world are facing censorship, physical threats and even worse."

The EU had warned that Twitter could face fines through European laws.

"News about arbitrary suspension of journalists on Twitter is worrying," EU commissioner Vera Jourova tweeted after the move.

Controversies

Twitter has lurched from one controversy to the next since Musk took control of the company in October.

The billionaire's talk of unfettered speech, coupled with the instability surrounding the company, has scared off major advertisers and caught the attention of regulators.

Musk has reinstated the [account](#) of former US president Donald Trump and lashed out against the outgoing key US advisor on COVID-19, Anthony Fauci, a frequent target of vitriol in right-wing media.

CNN has reported that Twitter's former head of trust and safety fled his home after baseless attacks on Twitter content moderation, endorsed by Musk.

Meanwhile, a purge initiated by Musk at Twitter left more than half of its 7,500 employees out of work.

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