

Spain orders Airbnb to remove 65,000 rental listings

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Spain has ordered Airbnb to remove over 65,000 holiday rental listings from its platform, citing violations of housing regulations.

The Consumer Rights Ministry has announced that most of the listings in question lack the mandatory license number, while others do not specify whether the property is owned by a private individual or a company.

Consumer Rights Minister Pablo Bustinduy stressed the importance of restoring oversight in the holiday rental market, which he described as being riddled with “illegality.”

He declared, “No more excuses. Enough with protecting those who make a business out of the right to housing in our country.”

Bustinduy confirmed that Madrid’s high court has backed the ministry's move to remove around 5,800 of the listings immediately.

Airbnb has announced plans to implement the order but also intends to challenge it.

As reported by Reuters, a company spokesperson criticized the ministry's actions, arguing that it lacks jurisdiction over short-term rentals and has failed to present sufficient evidence of non-compliance.

The spokesperson also claimed that some of the listings in question are for non-touristic, seasonal use.

The Spanish government and regional and local authorities are increasing pressure on platforms like Airbnb and Booking.com as part of broader efforts to tackle the housing crisis.

Locals across Spain blame the rise in short-term rentals for soaring rents and shrinking long-term housing availability.

Spain's housing issue has escalated since the collapse of a real estate bubble more than 15 years ago.

Official figures show that as of November 2023, approximately 321,000 homes were registered as holiday rentals, a 15pc increase since 2020. Authorities believe many more operate without licences.

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