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Spanish police to watch web for fake news before vote

Madrid.— A team of more than 100 Spanish police officers will trawl the internet for signs of fake news and cyber attacks in the build-up to next month's snap election, the interior ministry said yesterday. Officials will keep a particularly close eye on Facebook, its WhatsApp messaging app, Twitter and other social media networks under a security plan to protect the vote, the ministry added.

Social media giants have promised to do more to remove misleading postings and make it easier for voters to identify political campaign ads on their networks.

But the European Commission said last month that Google, Facebook and Twitter had fallen short of their pledges before a run of key European polls.

Russia has denied accusations that it helped spread false information to

influence the U.S. presidential election and Britain's referendum on European Union membership in 2016 and Germany's national election in 2017. Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called snap elections for April 28 last month after his socialist minority government failed to pass his 2019 budget.

The new security plan would be launched on April 1, the interior ministry said

Spain orders Franco's body be exhumed from mausoleum

Spain will exhume the body of dictator Francisco Franco to remove it from a state mausoleum seen by many as a monument to fascism, the Socialist government announced yesterday, in one of its last moves before a snap election due on April 28. The plan to move divides opinion in a country conflicted about the dictatorship that ended with his death in 1975. The exhumation has been delayed several times, but the government said yesterday it would go ahead on June 10.

Franco will be taken from the Valley of the Fallen mausoleum to be reburied next to his wife, Carmen Polo, in the family tomb at Mingorrubio El Pardo, a state cemetery where various political figures are buried, in a ceremony without media coverage, Deputy Prime Minister Carmen Calvo said. His family opposes the exhumation and has taken the issue to courts, but the Supreme Court has been silent so far. "The dictator's family and those around them have made use of every available legal instrument ... forcing delays in the process," Calvo said after cabinet agreed to push ahead. She added that if a new government emerging from next month's election were to try to cancel the reburial, it would first have to change the so-called historical memory law, approved in 2007, that condemns the Franco regime and orders the removal of its symbols. El *Independiente* newspaper quoted Luis Felipe Utrera-Molina, a lawyer for the Franco family, as dismissing the decision as "fireworks" and saying the government could not legally access Franco's burial place to exhume the remains. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez promised to remove Franco's remains before the end of his term, one of several high-profile measures intended to appeal to left-wing voters. The Socialists have long sought to transform the Valley of the Fallen into a memorial to victims of the civil war in which 500,000 combatants and civilians were killed.



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