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Mutko Accuses British of Unfair Anti-Doping Practices at London Olympics

By The Moscow Times

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KAZAN — Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko said that the British Olympic authorities were in breach of international anti-doping practices at the 2012 London games.

Mutko's comments came a day after British newspaper the Mail on Sunday alleged Russian track and field competitors were encouraged to dope ahead of the London Games and that the head of the national drug test laboratory had faced criminal charges in connection with alleged supplies of banned substances.

"In London, there was a little house behind barbed wire, and British athletes went there, but they didn't allow us in, and that's a breach," he said when asked about the Mail on Sunday's claims.

Mutko added that Russia would not get away with the same when the country hosts next year's Winter Olympics.

"If we did that at home in Sochi, we would just be ripped apart," he said.

Mutko did not specify which facility in London he was referring to. The main Olympic drug testing laboratory was situated in Harlow, on the outskirts of London, in a compound secured with razor wire.

Mutko also said the allegations against Russia could be part of a conspiracy to discredit the national laboratory in Moscow and have its accreditation removed before it handles thousands of doping tests at next year's Olympics.

No British athletes tested positive for doping at the London Olympics, although the host team did include some athletes who had returned to competition after serving drug bans.

Five members of the Russian team have either tested positive for banned substances or admitted doping during or since the London Olympics. The most notable is discus thrower Daria Pishchalnikova, who has been stripped of the silver medal she won in London and banned for 10 years.

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