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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Sochi Protest Zone Set Far From Olympics Arenas

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Russia has picked a spot where protests can be held during next month's Winter Olympics in Sochi and it is kilometers away from where the athletes will compete.

Dmitry Kozak, a deputy prime minister overseeing preparations for the Games, said Friday that a park in the town of Khosta will serve as the "protest zone."

Khosta is on the Black Sea coast between the city of Sochi and the Olympic Park, about 12 kilometers from the nearest arenas.

Russia is most likely to expect protests from critics of its anti-gay laws or other rights abuses.

"At the park in Khosta, people will be able freely to express their opinions without violating the rights of other citizens or the Olympic charter," Kozak said, the R-sport news agency reported.

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