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Google Updates Doodle in Nod Toward Gay Rights Issues in Russia

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Google has updated its homepage with a new rainbow-colored logo.

Google has updated its homepage with a new rainbow-colored logo in a move that many have interpreted as a show of support for LGBT rights in Russia ahead of the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Sochi on Friday.

The new Google Doodle is accompanied by a quote from the Olympic Charter proclaiming the equality and fairness of the Olympic spirit. The Google Doodle also featured images of Winter Games sports.

The buildup to Games has been somewhat overshadowed by consistent calls for Russian authorities to repeal a recent law banning the dissemination of "gay propaganda" to minors that activists says is a blatant attack on gay rights.

Russian media reports about the logo prompted a spectrum of responses from readers. Some

praised Google for what they perceive to be its support for gay rights — due to the fact that the rainbow flag has been adopted as a symbol of LGBT pride and diversity — while others condemned it.

Some readers said that sometimes a rainbow is just a rainbow.

Gay rights activists gathered outside the Russian Consulate in New York on Thursday to protest against what they see as a conflict between the Olympic spirit and Russia's anti-gay laws.

"We've come to Russia's doorstep on the eve of the Sochi Olympics with a simple message for Vladimir Putin: Overturn your anti-gay laws and respect the human rights of all Russians, or continue to be shamed before the whole world," Ann Northrop, an activist from Queer Nation, said in an emailed statement.

Google declined to comment on its Olympic logo, saying it wanted the image to speak for itself, The Associated Press reported.

"Google is certainly showing more courage than any of the Olympic sponsors ... ," Queer Nation said in an email.

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