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Olympic Organizer Takes Over Russian Hockey League

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The chief organizer of February's Winter Olympics in Sochi, Dmitry Chernyshenko, has been hired as the new president of the Russia-based Kontinental Hockey League.

As head of the KHL, which is heavily backed by Russian government-owned companies, Chernyshenko will be tasked with creating a "strong league" as the basis for a "strong national team," Russian President Vladimir Putin said in comments reported by the TASS news agency.

Chernyshenko replaces Alexander Medvedev, deputy chairman of state-owned gas company Gazprom, as head of the KHL, which has 28 teams in seven countries.

The league has hit difficulties in recent months, with storied team Spartak Moscow and last season's finalist Lev Prague both suffering financial collapse, while the crisis in Ukraine forced another team, Donbass Donetsk, to suspend operations.

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