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New Airstrip at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport Mired in Payment Dispute

By The Moscow Times

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Terminal D of Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport

Construction of a third landing strip at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport has become mired in a rancorous payment dispute, with a state company threatening to tear up its contract even as the project's contractor says the state has stopped paying for its work, newspaper Vedomosti reported.

The Administration of Civil Airports, a state enterprise charged with improving Russia's civil flight infrastructure, told Vedomosti last week that the construction contract would be dissolved because building work had halted.

The construction contractor, Inzhtransstroy, currently has no equipment or workers on site, the state company told the paper.

The contractor blamed the situation on delays in funding on state contracts that culminated

in a full halt in payments early this year, the report said.

"Complying with the work schedule for the third Sheremetyevo airstrip is not possible" until state financing starts arriving on time, an Inzhtransstroy spokesman told Vedomosti.

Inzhtransstroy has no knowledge of the state's intention of dissolving the contract, the company told the paper.

Construction of the third airstrip at Sheremetyevo is expected to cost about 26 billion rubles ($49 million), the report said, citing data from Inzhtransstroy's parent company Transstroy.

The airstrip is scheduled for completion in 2017 as part of Russia's preparations for the 2018 football World Cup. Sheremetyevo is Russia's largest airport, with a current capacity of 33.5 million passengers and plans to expand to 48.5 million passengers a year by 2017, the airport's CEO Mikhail Vasilenko told the Interfax news agency earlier this year.

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