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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Money 'Not a Factor' in Determining Whether to Sack Coach Capello

By The Moscow Times

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The hefty payout Russia would face were it to fire national team football coach Fabio Capello will not be a factor in the country's decision over his professional fate, the Russian sports minister said Saturday.

"There never was and never will be an issue of money in relation to Capello. ... I do not want to announce anything, but I can say that there are no problems with the termination of [Capello's] contract," R-Sport news site quoted Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko as saying Saturday.

Reports emerged last week that Capello stands to gain upward of 21 million euros ($24 million) in compensation if Russia opts to let him go. Under Capello, the 2018 World Cup host

nation has won only two of its last 10 competitive matches, jeopardizing its chances of qualifying for next year's European Championship.

Mutko told the TASS news agency last week that a decision had already been made regarding Capello's fate. The executive committee of the Russian Football Union convenes on Wednesday to discuss the head coach's future.

Capello is thought to have been the highest paid coach at last year's World Cup in Brazil, earning an annual $11,235,210, according to Forbes. He reportedly has not paid for months after his squad crashed out of the tournament without a win.

Capello told The Moscow Times in December that he had not refused to work over the salary dispute out of respect for his employer and hoped that issues with his payment would soon be resolved.

The 69-year-old Italian joined the Russian squad in 2012. After Russia officially qualified for the 2014 World Cup in October 2013, Capello's contract was extended until the end the 2018 tournament.

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