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Russia Cuts 2016 World Ice Hockey Championship Budget by 30 Percent

By The Moscow Times

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The 2016 World Hockey Championship will take place in Moscow and St. Petersburg from May 6-22.

Russia's Sports Ministry will cut spending on preparations for the 2016 Ice Hockey World Championship by 30 percent, as an economic slump puts pressure on the government's budget, the TASS news agency reported Thursday.

Following a request from the Finance Ministry to trim expenditure on the tournament, the Sports Ministry will shrink its budget by 90 million rubles ($1.4 million) to 210 million rubles ($3.2 million), Yulia Lenda, director of the Sports Ministry's budget department, was quoted as saying by TASS.

The cut will have a knock-on effect on Russian sport. The new budget will not be enough to fund the hockey cup, Lenda said, so the Sports Ministry will divert money from planned spending on the Russian national Olympic team ahead of the Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro next year.

“Whatever happens, we will hold the hockey championship, but will have to cut spending on preparations [for the Olympics],” Lenda said, according to the Interfax news agency.

The 2016 World Hockey Championship will take place in Moscow and St. Petersburg from May 6-22. It will be the seventh time Russia has hosted the competition.

With Russia's economy contracting amid a slump in oil prices, the government has already been forced to trim spending on another major sporting event, football's FIFA World Cup, which is due to be held in the country in 2018.

Some 30 billion rubles ($465 million) were shaved off the budget for the World Cup this summer, taking planned spending on the event to 631 billion rubles ($10 billion).

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