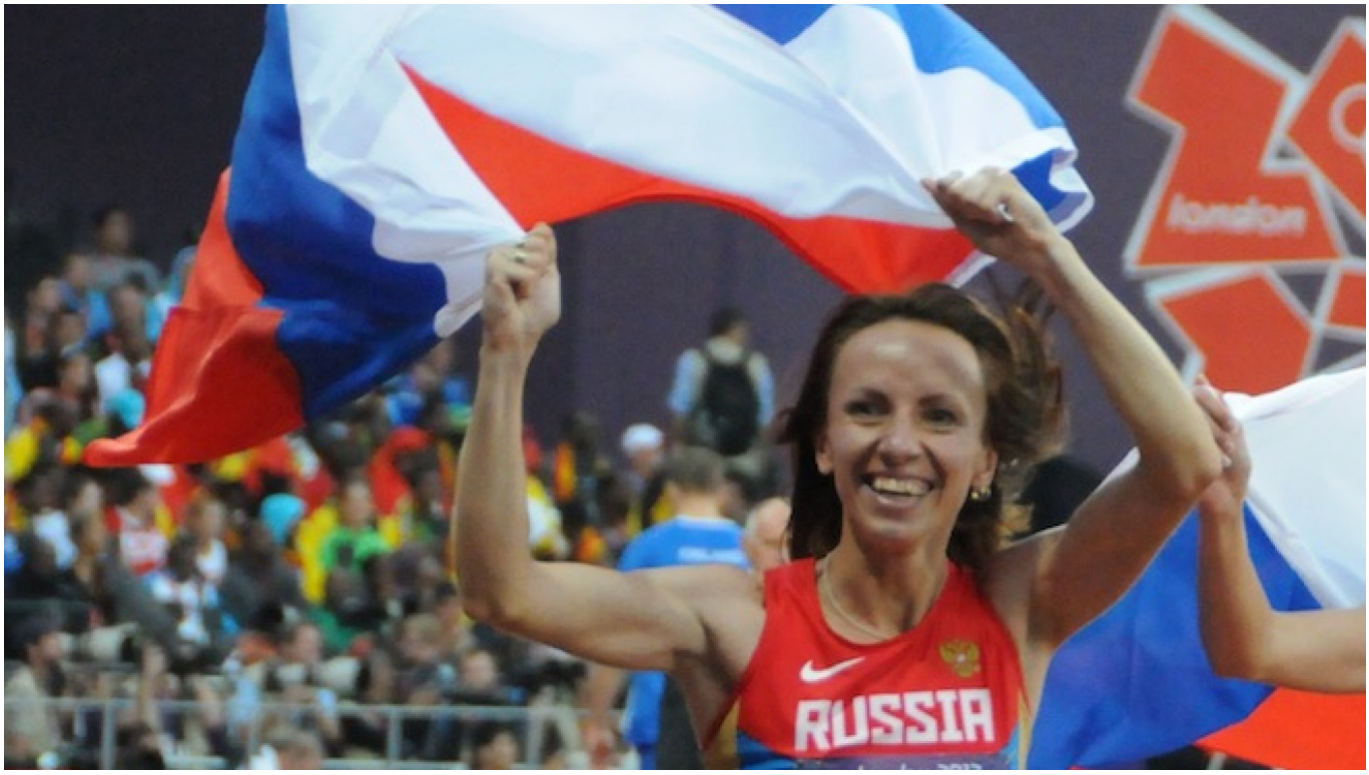
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Russian Athletics Ban Recommended by World Anti-Doping Agency

By The Moscow Times

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Maria Savinova-Farnosova

An independent commission by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has recommended that Russia be banned from athletics competition, the report published Monday said.

The commission investigated allegations of doping, cover-ups and extortion within both Russian athletics and the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF). Russia was found to have a "deeply rooted culture of cheating" that exploited athletes and involved coaches, doctors and laboratory personnel.

The report accused the Russian government of "direct intimidation" over the Moscow doping lab, and "recommended that WADA withdraw its accreditation of the Moscow laboratory as soon as possible. ... The Moscow laboratory is unable to act independently."

Russia has been running a "state-supported" doping program, commission leader Dick

Pound said, the BBC reported Monday.

The report confirms that athletes Yekaterina Poistogova, Anastasia Bazdyreva, Maria Savinova- Farnosova, Kristina Ugarova and Tatyana Myazina are guilty of doping, and recommends a lifetime ban for the athletes as well as five Russian athletics coaches.

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