The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia's Zhirinovsky Proposes 'Parallel Olympics' If Athlete Ban Upheld

June 21, 2016



Vladimir Zhirinovsky

Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the outspoken leader of Russia's LDPR party, has called for the country to host its own Olympics if track-and-field athletes are barred from competing at the upcoming games in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro.

“If our team can't go to Rio, I think it would be appropriate to host our own parallel Olympics in Russia,” Zhirinovsky said to journalists on Monday.

“There are a lot of sportspeople who can't go to Brazil for different reasons, so they should come to Moscow or Sochi, and we'll hold a regional, European Olympic Games,” he said, the TASS news agency reported.

The International Olympic Committee will meet in Lausanne on Tuesday to discuss the unanimous decision by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) to ban the Russian athletics team from the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

The Russian track-and-field team has been banned from competition since November 2015 after an independent commission by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) declared the Russian Athletics Federation "non-compliant" with the IAAF's anti-doping code.

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists on Friday that Moscow supports the right of clean athletes from Russia to take part in the Olympics.

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