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Key Figure in Russian Doping Scandal Nagornykh Resigns

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Yury Nagornykh **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

A deputy sports minister named by world anti-doping authorities as having played a key role in Russia's doping scandal has resigned, according to Russian state media.

Yury Nagornykh was "released from his duties" on Oct. 20, the TASS state-run news agency reported Monday, citing the Russian Sports Ministry's human resources department. Nagornykh had voluntarily given up the post, the report said.

Nagornykh was among several top Russian sports officials named in the latest report into state-sponsored doping by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), published in July.

In the report by Richard McLaren, Nagornykh and several other senior Russian officials were accused of covering up the positive doping probes of Russian athletes since 2011.

The report, released on the eve of the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, also named anti-doping advisor Natalya Zhelanova but stopped short of directly incriminating the then-Sports

Minister Vitaly Mutko, other than saying it was “inconceivable” he would not have known about the dirty dealings.

Nagornykh, Zhelanova and several other senior officials were suspended following the report and little was known about their fates until Monday's news of Nagornykh's resignation.

His departure comes on the back of the announced resignation of the head of Russia's Olympic Committee Alexander Zhukov and the appointment of Mutko as deputy prime minister last week, a move which is widely seen as a promotion.

The staff reshuffle appears to be a purge of those Russian officials implicated in the scandal, while publicly maintaining their innocence.

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