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You Can't See the Ground at This Russian Playground

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This Sunday, a video appeared on YouTube apparently recorded the same day in the city of Yakutsk, showing a group of children having a grand time at a playground. Two boys are rocking a seesaw, another sits in a swing, and the others just kind of stand around — in the mud, in puddles maybe a foot deep.

Russian opposition leader and presidential hopeful Alexei Navalny drew attention to the video on Twitter, joking that the Kremlin's obsession with foreign military conflicts has resulted in neglected childcare at home.

"Yeah who cares about kids' playgrounds in Yakutsk, when there's trouble in Palmyra. And another thing — let's discuss the fascists in Kiev!" Navalny tweeted facetiously.

On Monday, following the public backlash, city official Yelena Stepanova told the radio station Govorit Moskva that a local management company was supposed to pump the mud water from the park, adding that residents in flooded areas should report any problems to utility

workers.

Stepanova also said that many of the houses surrounding the flooded playground are extremely old and scheduled for demolition, as part of a federal program to modernize the city's roadways.

"We have constant, eternal problems with the subsoil. Just a year after laying new asphalt, there are holes in the pavement," Stepanova explained.

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