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Key Doping Whistleblower Has a 'Psychiatric Problem,' Says Russian PM Medvedev

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Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has called the looming decision to ban Russia's Winter Olympics team over allegations of state-sponsored doping a political conspiracy.

The World-Anti Doping Agency (WADA) earlier this month ruled for the third year running that Russia's doping body was falling short of international standards. The decision was a blow to Russia's hopes of participating in February's games in South Korea, with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) expected to make a decision early next month.

"This discussion has become wholly political," Medvedev told journalists at his annual question and answer session broadcast on Kremlin-run television. "It has become a main topic of the anti-Russian campaign."

Medvedev's comments echoed President Vladimir Putin's response earlier this month to a ban on four Russian skiers following accusations of doping.

He denied the government ran a state-sponsored program and claimed the doping scandal was instigated by the United States to influence Russia's presidential elections scheduled for March next year.

"In response to our supposed interference in their elections, they want to cause problems in the Russian presidential election," Putin said.

Norway, Canada and the United States toppled Russia in the medal table for the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games this month after the IOC ruled to strip the host country of nine medals.

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During the round table discussion, Medvedev said that Russia's medal count in Sochi could not be contested.

"Nothing, in no way, puts in doubt the incredible results of the Russian Federation at our Olympic Games," he said. "It was a fair and absolutely objective win."

"And no international group will ever take that away from us," he added.

Medvedev also responded to the diary of a key whistleblower detailing meetings between then Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko and his deputy at the Sochi Games published Tuesday by The New York Times ahead of the IOC's crucial decision Dec. 5.

The entries of Grigory Rodchenkov, the former chief of Moscow's anti-doping lab, reveal that he had regular meetings with Mutko during the 2014 Olympics, and suggest that the whistleblower played a role in the state-run doping scheme.

"He has a psychiatric problem," Medvedev said of Rodchenkov. "All you have to do is look at his diaries and you will see that, most of all, this person needs psychiatric help."

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