The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
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Doping Whistleblower Works for U.S. Intelligence, Says Putin

December 14, 2017



Grigory Rodchenkov / Imago / TASS

President Vladimir Putin has said that the key whistleblower who uncovered Russia's state-sponsored doping scheme is working for U.S. intelligence agencies.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) earlier this month barred the Russian team from competing in the 2018 Winter Games largely based on evidence provided by Rodchenkov that the state directed a doping program for athletes during the 2014 Sochi Games.

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Grigory Rodchenkov, the former head of Moscow's anti-doping lab, fled to the United States in 2015 and is currently in an FBI witness protection program.

At his yearly press conference on Friday, Putin asserted that this meant he was working under the control of U.S. intelligence agencies.

“What substances do they give him to make him say what he says?” the president was cited as saying by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

He also questioned whether the United States was using Rodchenkov for political purposes, saying that Russia’s Olympic ban was “tied” to political processes happening in Russia.

“How is it that this individual came to head our anti-doping agency?” Putin asked.

“This is the mistake of those who made the decision, and I know very well who made the decision.”

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