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Russia Launches Pre-Emptive Strike in Olympics 'Info War'

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Carl Sandin / Zuma / TASS

Russia's Foreign Ministry has accused Western media of planning a smear campaign accusing Russia of hacking the upcoming Winter Olympics.

Following the leak of world anti-doping officials' emails by a Russian-linked hacking group last month, security researchers have reportedly warned of more state-sponsored cyberattacks at the Winter Games opening on Friday.

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"We know that Western media are planning pseudo-investigations on the subject of the 'Russian footprint' in hacking attacks on information resources related to the hosting of the Winter Olympic Games in the Republic of Korea," Russia's Foreign Ministry said.

"Of course, no evidence will be presented to the world," the ministry added in its online

statement on Thursday.

It warned that the "anti-Russian informational wave" could backfire and "provoke the activation of international terrorist and criminal groups."

The ministry did not name the countries preparing the attack but warned that "biased media" — including the Washington Post, Buzzfeed News — and cybersecurity firms "with close ties to the CIA and the NSA" could be involved.

"We suspect that this is how another provocation is being prepared [...] Certain forces are again trying to use the 'Russian threat' algorithm in the Olympic movement," the ministry said.

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