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Russia Vows to Finish Building World Cup Stadium 3 Days Before First Test Match

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Sergei Fadeichev / TASS

Russian authorities have pledged to finish constructing a 2018 FIFA World Cup stadium beset with delays and cost overruns three days ahead of its first test match.

The city of Samara on the Volga River is scheduled to host six matches in the football championship that Russia hosts from June 14 to July 15 this year. A recent FIFA inspection has said "a huge amount of work" remained in the construction of the reported $315 million Samara Arena, Reuters reported.

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Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich said Wednesday that the "problematic stadium in Samara" would be ready on April 25, ahead of its first test match on April 28, Kommersant reported.

Approximately 70 percent of the stadium's facilities will not be ready by the deadline, Kommersant cited an unnamed official overseeing construction as saying Wednesday.

"Everything else will be finished later," the official said, listing drainage, sewage and the power grid systems as "clearly not conforming to the design."

"They clearly saved money on that [...] The stadium will still be handed off, but it's unclear what to do with it after the World Cup," he added.

Alexei Sorokin, chief of the Russia 2018 Organizing Committee, has said the grass for the Samara Arena will soon be delivered from Germany and laid within a week, the TASS news agency reported.

Sports Minister Pavel Kolobkov estimated that maintenance costs of the stadium could amount to around 200 million rubles per year ($3,5 million). Control over the stadium is expected to be handed over to regional authorities in 2019.

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