The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Asian Olympic Chiefs Say Russians Can Take Part in Asian Games

January 26, 2023



2018 Asian Games opening ceremony. **Fars Media Corporation (CC BY 4.0)**

Russian and Belarusian athletes will be able to compete in this year's Asian Games despite the invasion of Ukraine, the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) said on Thursday.

The offer comes after the International Olympic Committee said on Wednesday that a return for Russians at the 2024 Paris Games should be "further explored" despite calls from Ukraine for them to be banned.

Russia and Belarus have been sidelined from most Olympic sports for nearly a year following the invasion of Ukraine.

"All athletes, regardless of their nationality or the passport they hold, should be able to compete in sports competitions," the OCA said in a statement.

The OCA echoed the IOC which said on Wednesday that "no athlete should be prevented from competing just because of their passport."

The IOC pledged solidarity with Ukraine but said it was seeking a "pathway" for Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete at the 2024 Games in Paris.

The move from Asia offers a potential way for Russian athletes to compete in events which serve as qualifiers for the Paris Olympics. Qualifying in some sports is already underway.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/01/26/asian-olympic-chiefs-say-russians-can-take-part-in-asian-games-a80054