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Russians, Belarusians to Be Allowed Back to International Badminton Competitions

By AFP

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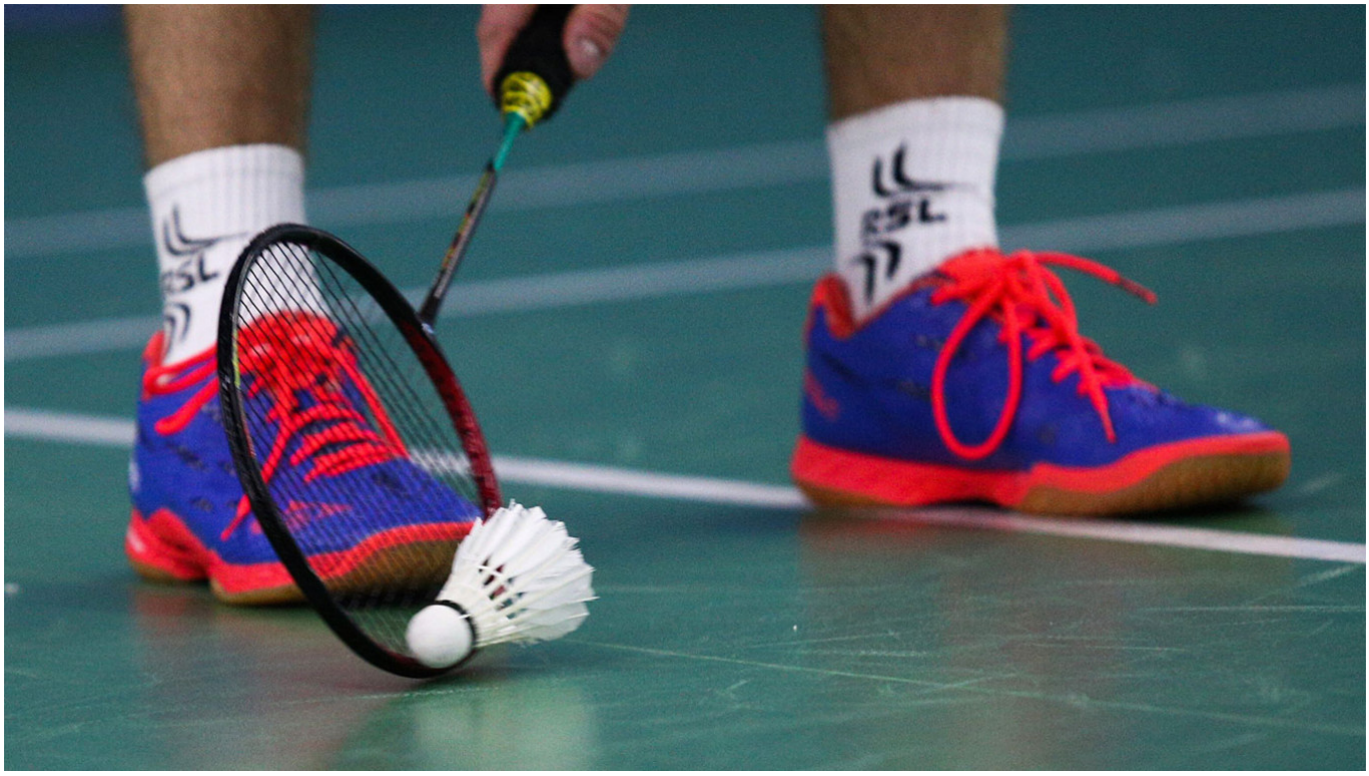

Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Russian and Belarusian athletes will be allowed to return to international badminton competitions starting February 2024, the sport's governing body announced.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) said players from the two countries, who have been banned due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, would be able to compete as neutral athletes.

The International Olympic Committee has yet to decide whether or not Russians and Belarusians will be able to compete at next year's Paris Games.

But earlier this year the IOC did recommend that they compete in Olympic qualifying events under a neutral flag.

"We feel the decision to lift the suspension on Russian and Belarussian athletes who meet the criteria to participate as individual neutral athletes is a positive step forward as part of our endeavor to promote peace and solidarity," said BWF president Poul-Erik Hoyer Larsen.

The BWF said the first steps toward reintegrating Russians and Belarusians would start this September.

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