The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian, Belarusian Athletes Will Not Take Part in Olympics Opening Ceremony – IOC

By AFP

March 19, 2024

Fabrice Coffrini / AFP

Olympic chiefs announced Tuesday that Russian and Belarusian athletes competing in this summer's Paris Games under a neutral flag will not be able to take part in the opening ceremony.

Individual Neutral Athletes (AINs) from either country "will not participate in the parade of delegations and teams during the opening ceremony since they are individual athletes," IOC director James Macleod said after an executive board meeting of the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne.

"But an opportunity will be provided to them to experience the event," added Macleod.

The AINs will be on site, he said, but not included as passengers on the boat parade on the

River Seine.

Related article: Moscow Should Not Boycott Paris Olympics, Russian Sports Minister Says

Athletes from both countries had already been banned from attending the opening ceremony of the Paralympics, starting in Paris on Aug. 28, a little more than two weeks after the Olympics finish.

The IOC in December suspended Russia from the 2024 Games, but gave the green light for Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete as neutrals as long as they do not actively support the war on Ukraine.

Athletes from Russia and Belarus have faced sanctions from a multitude of sports since Moscow launched its assault on Ukraine in February 2022.

Over the past year a number of Olympic sports have eased restrictions, allowing athletes from both countries to return to competition under certain conditions.

However, Russians and Belarusians have remained banned from athletics.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/03/19/russian-belarusian-athletes-will-not-take-part-in-olympics-opening-ceremony-ioc-a84539