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Russian State Media Says France Rejected Olympic Accreditation Request

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Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti said Monday that French authorities rejected accreditation requests for its journalist to cover the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, which are set to kick off later this week.

Five RIA Novosti sports correspondents received identical letters on Sunday informing them that the event organizer, for reasons unknown, had not approved the requests they filed in February, the news agency said.

France's acting Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said Sunday that 4,340 out of nearly 1 million accreditation requests were rejected on grounds including terrorism, disinformation and cyber threats.

Almost 100 of the rejected applications came from Russians, Belarusians and other nationals suspected of being state agents acting as journalists, technical staff and physiotherapists, Darmanin told the weekly newspaper Le Journal du Dimanche.

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"We refused a large number of 'journalists' who claimed to cover the Games. On the other hand, we have accepted Russians who work for the International Olympic Committee (IOC)," he added.

The minister clarified that the rejected applicants "may not be there to carry out attacks," stressing that the Olympics are not under "serious threat" when they start on Friday.

"But in addition to intelligence and traditional espionage, there is the possibility of accessing entry points into computer networks to carry out a cyberattack," Darmanin said.

Earlier in April, France 24 channel commentator Douglas Herbert said his Russian wife and a Russian friend were rejected as volunteers for the 2024 Paris Olympics after failing background checks.

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