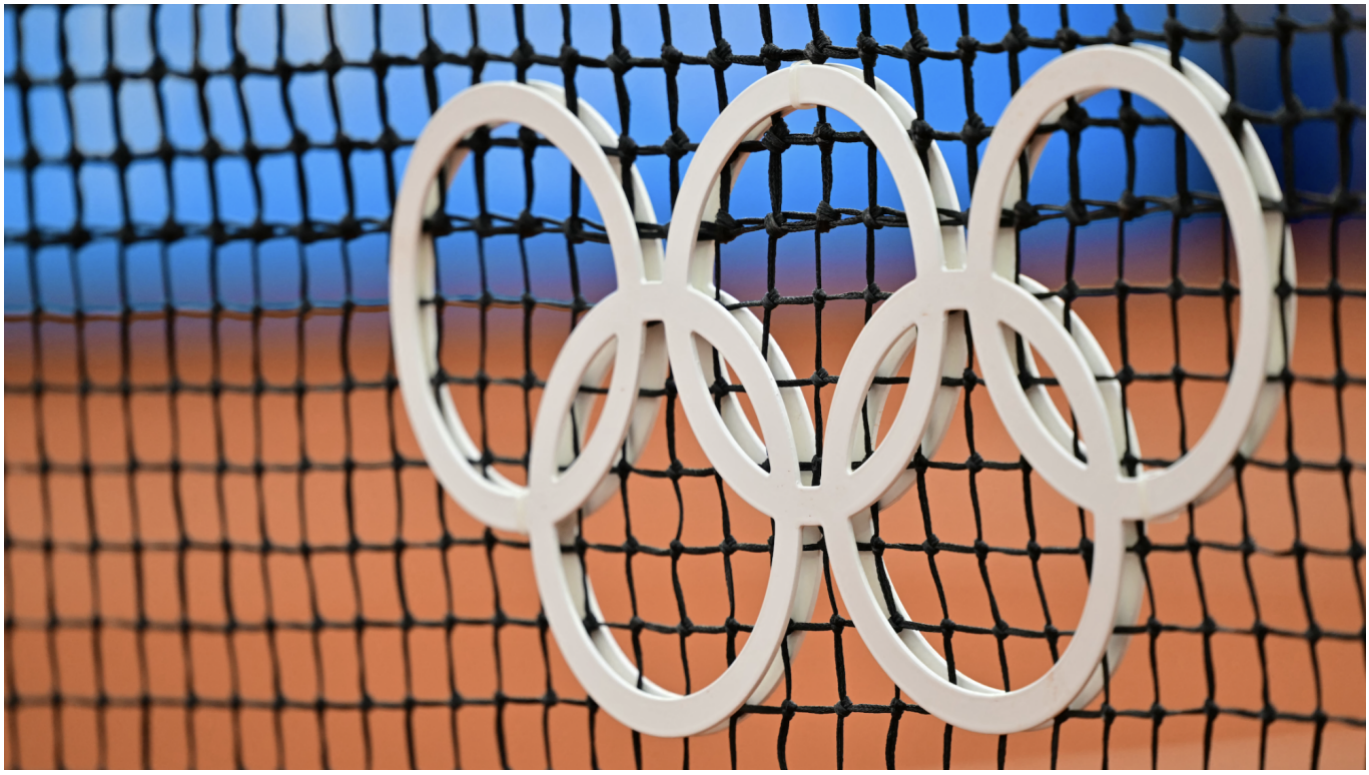
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Russia Slams Olympic Opening as ‘Massive Failure'

By AFP

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Martin BERNETTI/AFP

Russia on Saturday slammed the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympic Games as a "massive failure".

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova gave a long list of shortcomings at Friday's ceremony, which was not broadcast live on Russian television.

"I wasn't planning to watch the opening. But after seeing the photos, I couldn't believe it wasn't a deep fake or photoshop," the spokeswoman wrote on Telegram

Only a few Russian athletes have been approved to participate in the Games as "neutrals". Competitors under the Russian flag have been banned over Russia's war in Ukraine.

Zakharova wrote that the "ridiculous open-air opening ceremony forced guests to sit for hours under pouring rain".

"The organizers did not think of either seeding the clouds or awnings," she said, referring to Russia's practice of sending up planes ahead of major outdoor events to attempt to break up clouds.

France detained a Russian man just ahead of the Games' opening, accusing him of a "destabilization" plot for the event.

"I wonder how many more 'spies' had to be embedded for the opening of the Olympics in Paris to end up such a massive failure?" commented Zakharova.

Zakharova also mocked the "transport collapse" on the day, after three arson attacks on the rail system, and France's blaming this on sabotage.

She said the center of Paris was "transformed into a ghetto for homeless people", while "rats flooded the streets".

Other targets were the U.S. rapper Snoop Dogg carrying the Olympic torch and gaffes such as introducing the South Korean team as North Korea and raising the Olympic flag upside-down.

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Zakharova picked on a part of the opening ceremony featuring drag queens, interpreted by some as parodying The Last Supper. She called it a "mockery of a sacred story for Christians", saying that "the Apostles were shown as transvestites".

"Evidently in Paris they decided that if the Olympic rings are multi-colored, you can turn it all into one giant gay parade," she added.

A spokesman for the Russian Orthodox Church, Vakhtang Kipshidze, also condemned this section, writing on his personal Telegram channel that it was "cultural and historical suicide".

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