

Russia Banned From 2018 Winter Games Over Doping

The [International Paralympic Committee](#) (IPC) has suspended Russia, which was already suspended from next month's Rio Paralympics, for the winter edition in Pyeongchang, South Korea in 2018 because of a state-sponsored [sports doping](#) program.

The latest punishment handed out by the IPC was announced by the Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC) on Tuesday. The RPC said on its website the decision taken by the IPC, upheld by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) regarding Russian Paralympians being excluded from the 2016 [Paralympic Games](#) in Rio de Janeiro, has also been extended to include the Winter Games in 2018 in Pyeongchang.

A few days back, the Court of Arbitration for Sport, sport's highest tribunal, rejected an appeal by the RPC against the Rio ban. Russia has already appealed against the CAS ruling to the Swiss Federal Court and a result is expected soon. The Federal Court can only overturn the decision by CAS on the basis of a procedural mistake and not on the merits of the case.

The IPC decision to exclude the team of Russia means at least 260 competitors from the country are now set to miss the September 7-18 Paralympics.

The president of the IPC, Sir Philip Craven, remarked after the ban on Russia was announced for the Rio Games that he hopes the ban will act as a catalyst for change in Russia. Craven remarked after the CAS endorsed its ban on Russia Paralympians that we are greatly encouraged that the CAS panel has upheld the IPC governing board's unanimous decision to hold the Russian Paralympic Committee accountable for its membership responsibilities and obligations. The IPC President added the CAS decision underlines our strong belief that doping has absolutely no place in Paralympic sport and further improves our ability to ensure fair competition and a level playing field for all Para athletes around the world.

A few days back, Moscow acknowledged mistakes it had made in tackling sports doping. Russian President Vladimir Putin called the Paralympic ban cynical and immoral and remarked the decision to bar Russian athletes, including those who had not tested

positive for any banned substances, was a vivid manifestation of how the humanistic foundations of sport and Olympism are shamelessly flouted by politics. Putin went on to add that the decision to disqualify our Paralympic team is outside the law, outside morality and outside humanity. The Russian head of state also remarked it is simply cynical to vent one's anger on those for whom sport has become the meaning of their life and also commented that he even feels pity for those taking such decisions because they must well understand that it is so demeaning for them.

David Weir, Great Britain's leading wheelchair athlete, extended his support behind decision of the IPC to exclude Russia from the Rio 2016 Paralympics. The 10-time Paralympic medalist, who won four gold medals at London 2012, said the IPC decision is a bold step, but a right one in the wake of widespread evidence of a State-sponsored doping program.