

Work of WADA Hackers in 'World's Interest,' Says Putin

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Russian President Vladimir Putin has commended the work of hackers who leaked athletes' confidential medical files for being "of interest to the international community," the state-run TASS news agency reported on Friday.

A group of hackers working under the name "Fancy Bear" first leaked the WADA medical records for a number of U.S. athletes on Sept. 13, claiming that they were guilty of taking banned performance-enhancing drugs. A second leak on Sept. 15 released further records for athletes from eight countries, including Russian boxer, Misha Aloyan.

Speaking at a summit on Friday, Putin said that the leak raised

“a
lot of questions.”

"It seems as if healthy athletes legally take drugs which are prohibited for others, while those who suffer from serious illnesses or severe disabilities are excluded from the Paralympic Games on the mere suspicion of doping," said Putin.

"We do not partake in what these hackers do, but what they have done is of interest to the international community, especially the sports community," he said.

Relations between Russia and WADA have plummeted since July, when a WADA-backed report accused the Russian state of promoting, carrying out and covering up a widespread doping scheme for its athletes. The claims led to Russia's entire Paralympic team being excluded from this year's Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

A number of media outlets have reported that the “Fancy Bear” group consists of Russian hackers, claims which Russian Sports Minister Vitaliy Mutko has denied.

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