

Investigative Committee Vice-Chairman speaks at meeting of independent anti-doping commission



Vice-Chairman of the RF Investigative Committee Ilya Lazutov has taken part in a meeting of the Independent Anti-Doping Commission. His report is presented below.

The RF investigative Committee pays special attention to the progress and results of investigation of cases opened into violation of anti-doping laws and regulations.

I am sure that as a result of that investigation we will identify all the guilty ones and with enough evidence the cases will be referred to courts.

Now I will go over to the essence of the issue.

The Head Office of the Investigative Committee continues investigations against senior officials of Rusathletics and former acting director of the Anti-Doping Center, a federal state unitary enterprise, Grigory Rodchenkov suspected of abuse of powers under Article 201 of the RF Penal Code.

The investigation is checking all data including on violation of anti-doping code by Russian athletes,

coaches and officials of the Russian Sports Ministry, heads and staff of Rusathletics, Rusada and Anti-Doping Center. Arguments on opening sample bottles and manipulation of biological samples mentioned by WADA independent expert McLaren in his report of 16 July 2016 are being looked into.

Officials of Russia's Sports Ministry, heads and staff of Rusathletics, Russian National Teams Training Center, Rusada and Anti-Doping Center responsible for observing international anti-doping rules, standards for taking, analyzing and storing samples have given testimonies.

By now we have interrogated former deputy minister of sports Y. Nagornykh and advisor of sports minister N. Zhelanova, deputy director of the Sports Ministry's Science and Education Department A. Abalyan, CEOs of Rusada A. Antseliovich and of the Anti-Doping Center M. Dikunets, senior coach of Russian athletics teams N. Lukashkin and former senior coach A. Melnikov, former president of Rusathletics V. Balakhnichev, former deputy director of the All-Russian Research Institute of Physical Culture and Sports S. Portugalov, and more than 50 athletes, coaches and managers. Investigative operations are going to be continued until all the circumstances have been found out.

The Investigative Committee remains open for cooperation with foreign competent bodies, international NGOs, including WADA and International Olympic Committee and expects their assistance.

Requests of legal assistance have been sent to the following countries among others to get necessary material and information:

- To the United States of America to get testimony from Grigory Rodchenkov;
- To Canada, requesting WADA to provide copies of materials Mr. McLaren based his report on;
- To Switzerland, requesting Berlinger, a company producing Bereg Kit doping sample bottles, to provide information and documents concerning the storage and opening of the bottles and to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne to provide rulings on appeals filed by Russian athletes, Russian Olympic Committee and Russian Paralympic Committee against their disqualification and ban from official competition including the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio-de-Janeiro;

To get the data and materials mentioned above, requests were sent to WADA, Berlinger and the Court of Arbitration for Sport via Interpol.

The grounds to send those requests were the necessity of information exchange and of the access to the information that has extreme importance for further investigation.

Forensic and medical examinations are checking Mr. McLaren's arguments that Berek Kit bottles may have been opened and the doping samples of Russian athletes may have been tampered with.

Mr. McLaren claims to have been present at the demonstration of opening the bottles, while official spokespersons of Berlinger, the exclusive supplier for WADA, deny any possibility that bottles can be opened.

We hope for the assistance of Berlinger company, whose managers have to give an unambiguous answer on the possibility of opening their bottles, if such experiments have been run, who ran them and what the result was.

We have requested from Berlinger company quality certificates for their bottles and the information on expert examinations which may give answers to those questions.

In case the containers may have been broken into imperceptibly, then abrogation of all samples stored in Berlinger's bottles should be discussed as any one of them could have been manipulated.

Going back to our investigation, it should be noted that up until now no information, material or evidence of a state-run doping program in Russian sports have been received from foreign representatives.

Some materials and information, including media reports are being checked. A number of criminal investigations may be opened into them so we are not disclosing their contents yet.

The investigation is now ongoing, but the time when it will be finished depends on how fast we will get replies to the requests we sent to our overseas colleagues. Unfortunately, we have received no reply from any of international establishments. But we still hope to get them.

Seizing the opportunity, I would like to ask our foreign colleagues to provide us with documents necessary for further impartial investigation.

As for Grigory Rodchenkov, we have to say that in 2011, he was prosecuted for illegal drug dealing.

During our investigation we reveal more and more facts confirming that Mr. Rodchenkov benefited for a long time using his position to incline athletes to dope.

Some of the athletes (I am not going to name them) have claimed that Mr. Rodchenkov coerced them into taking drugs, the effects of which they did not know, but were then confirmed as doping.

Additionally, in the course of the investigation we have more and more questions to ask of Mr. Rodchenkov and a group of individuals that may have been involved in the criminal activity. I cannot say more today, as I must keep the investigation secret, but it can deal with not only revealed crimes,

but criminal schemes run by Mr. Rodchenkov.

In conclusion I have to point out that today we realize that if the Anti-Doping Center was run by a furtive man to put it mildly, then he was capable of setting up, creating and leading a criminal group. So we do not quite understand how one could believe a man involved in drug dealing and deem the things he says trustworthy evidence. This is to get real, weighty evidence and to find truth the Investigative Committee continues the investigation.

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