The Moscow Times
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Russian Airline Shuts Down After Deadly Crash Near Moscow

May 31, 2018



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A regional Russian airline has been forced to cease operations over safety concerns months after one of its passenger planes crashed outside Moscow.

All 71 passengers and crew aboard Saratov Airlines Flight 703 were killed when it plummeted minutes after takeoff from Domodedovo Airport in February. Russia has grounded the carrier's entire fleet and all Antonov An-148 aircraft flights in the wake of the crash, after investigators attributed it to distorted speed readings caused by frozen equipment.

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On Wednesday, Russia's Transport Ministry announced that Saratov Airlines' license had been annulled effective this week.

“The airline doesn’t meet flight safety requirements and is unable to perform transportations without risks and threats to its passengers,” the Rosaviatsia Federal Air Transport Agency said in a statement.

Twelve other carriers, including Russia’s flagship Aeroflot, will transport around 8,700 passengers holding Saratov Airlines tickets in the next two weeks.

Saratov Airlines later announced it was shutting down, writing “there is one less airline in Russia.”

Original url:
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