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Sochi Asks Muscovites to Stay Away During Russia's Coronavirus Holiday

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The Krasnodar region where Sochi is situated has suspended access to nightclubs, cinemas, food courts, swimming pools and other public spaces until further notice. **Dmitry Feoktistov / TASS**

The popular southern Russian resort city of Sochi has asked Muscovites to stay away during a week-long nationwide holiday that President Vladimir Putin declared in a move to slow the spread of coronavirus.

Putin announced the paid holiday between March 30 and April 5 as part of social and economic measures he unveiled in his first public address since Russia confirmed its first coronavirus infection over a month ago.

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Alexei Kopaygorodsky, the mayor of Sochi, which hosted the Winter Olympics in 2014, urged guests and residents to avoid his city during that period.

“I ask all residents to refrain from visiting public places in the coming days for your health and for the common good,” Kopaygorodsky wrote on his VKontakte page Wednesday.

“I separately request potential resort guests to treat the situation with understanding and not visit Sochi for at least next week,” he added.

The Krasnodar region where Sochi is situated has suspended access to nightclubs, cinemas, food courts, swimming pools and other public spaces until further notice.

Sochi has confirmed five coronavirus cases in the city. Russia’s overall coronavirus cases jumped to 840 after the largest day-to-day increase on Thursday.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin has also asked Russians from other regions to avoid traveling to the Russian capital after ordering the closure of recreational centers and nightclubs. The mayor later ordered the city’s shops, with the exception of pharmacies and grocery stores, restaurants, cafes and bars to close from March 28 until April 5.

“There’ll be nothing to do in Moscow,” Sobyanin said Wednesday. “So it’s better to stay home.”

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