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Putin Awards Payments to WWII Veterans Ahead of Soviet Victory Anniversary

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A veteran during the Victory Day parade on Red Square in Moscow. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that he signed a decree awarding 80,000 rubles ($780) to the country's World War II veterans ahead of the 80th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany.

The Kremlin leader said the one-time lump sum will be handed out to the surviving frontline soldiers, their widows and former child prisoners of concentration camps.

Adult prisoners, home front workers, survivors of the Siege of Leningrad, as well as those who built defensive structures and worked at air defense facilities and naval and air bases, will receive 55,000 rubles ($535).

"Our duty is to do our best to make the lives of those who saved our country worthwhile and prosperous," Putin said.

He made the announcement at the organizing committee session tasked with preparations for Victory Day. Russia marks the date on May 9 with a large military procession on Red Square.

Putin and Russian officials regularly evoke the memory of World War II, known in Russia as the Great Patriotic War, to justify and win over public support for the ongoing invasion of Ukraine, which the Kremlin leader casts as a fight against fascism.

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