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Rosaviatsia Restricts Air Travel Across Middle East After Israel Launches Strikes on Iran

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Sergei Bobylev / TASS

Russia's civil aviation agency Rosaviatsia banned the country's airlines from entering airspace above several countries in the Middle East following overnight Israeli strikes on Iran.

"Due to the sharp escalation of the situation in the Middle East, Rosaviatsia has issued a notice for Russian aircraft operators to not operate flights to or from airports in Israel and Iran," the agency said in a statement on Telegram. It also restricted planes from entering airspace over Israel, Jordan, Iraq and Iran.

The restrictions will remain in effect until 2:59 a.m. Moscow time on June 26, Rosaviatsia said.

"This decision was made to ensure flight safety, which remains the top priority," the statement added.

The cancellations come after the Israel Defense Forces carried out large-scale attacks on "dozens" of sites across Iran, including its nuclear program, and reportedly killing several top military officials.

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Earlier, Russian airlines Aeroflot and Red Wings canceled flights to Iran and Israel due to safety concerns.

Aeroflot said it was forced to adjust the schedule for a number of flights, adding that several routes in the region would also be impacted. Flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha and the Maldives are now being rerouted through Pakistani airspace, it added.

The airline said the changes would remain in place until the situation stabilizes.

Israel's Ben Gurion Airport was closed until further notice as the country remained on high alert amid fears of Iranian retaliation.

Jordan, which borders Israel, announced Friday that it had closed its airspace.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the overnight attack, dubbed "Rising Lion," was aimed at "rolling back the Iranian threat to Israel's very survival," adding that it would take "many days."

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