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Russian MFA Advises Against Travel to Iran After More Than 3K People Confirmed Killed During Protests

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Foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. **Pavel Bednyakov / AP / TASS**

The Foreign Ministry on Thursday advised Russian citizens to avoid travel to Iran after thousands of people were killed during weeks of nationwide protests in the Islamic republic that recalled the chaos surrounding the 1979 revolution.

"We ask Russians planning to travel to Iran to postpone their trips until the security situation has fully returned to normal," foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a press briefing.

Zakharova advised Russians who are currently in Iran to exercise "reasonable caution" and cooperate with local law enforcement and security services.

Mass demonstrations over soaring inflation began across Iran in late December. The government in Tehran led a brutal crackdown by introducing a countrywide internet blackout

and killing at least 3,117 people, though activist groups believe the death toll may be higher than that official count.

U.S. President Donald Trump initially talked about coming to the aid of the Iranian people, saying American military forces were "locked and loaded" should Iran start shooting at protesters. However, he later pulled back from those threats after Terhan assured him the killing of protesters would stop.

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At Thursday's press briefing, Zakharova said Russia "strongly urges all parties involved to refrain from hasty or reckless actions," noting that it was working in "close coordination with our Iranian partners, who continue to provide assessments of the developing situation."

President Vladimir Putin, who has remained largely silent about the crisis, last week spoke with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian over the phone as the Kremlin claimed the Kremlin leader was engaged in efforts to de-escalate tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

Zakharova said Russia stood ready to facilitate "respectful and equal dialogue that would pave the way for solutions acceptable to all stakeholders."

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