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Travelers With Canceled Trips to Middle East to Receive Refunds, PM Mishustin Says

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EPA / TASS

The Russian government on Thursday ordered travel companies to provide refunds to Russians whose trips to the Middle East have been canceled due to the Iran war.

Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin signed a decree directing travel companies to use cash in their liability reserves to ensure consumer refunds for trips to 10 Middle East countries that were supposed to take place between Feb. 28 and March 31.

Mishustin signed a second decree that allows companies to defer legally required contributions to their liability reserves in the first quarter of 2026 given the ongoing disruptions to global travel due to hostilities in the region. Companies can now make those payments between April 15 and June 15.

“We expect this measure to support the industry and help tens of thousands of our citizens

whose trips were disrupted," Mishustin said at a cabinet meeting.

Russian travel companies are estimated to have lost around 3 billion rubles ($37 million) in the first 10 days of the war in the Middle East as they scrambled to evacuate 46,000 people from the Persian Gulf region. Roughly half of those people purchased travel packages.

The Middle East has become a major travel destination for Russians in recent years, largely due to European restrictions on air travel to and from Russia, as well as bans on issuing tourist visas to Russian nationals.

According to the FSB border service, Russians made 13.4 million tourist trips abroad last year, including 4.6 million to Turkey and 1.7 million to the UAE, the country's second-most popular destination.

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