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Kremlin Offers Thoughts and Prayers to Businesses Hurting From Constant Internet Outages

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Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

The Kremlin said Thursday that it is not planning to offer financial support to businesses that have seen their bottom lines negatively impacted by persistent mobile internet outages in Moscow and other cities throughout the country in recent months.

“These kinds of support measures are not under consideration at this time,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked about the possibility of state compensation for lost sales.

Peskov defended the frequent outages as a necessary side effect of government security measures. He described the disruptions as essential to ensuring civilian safety, which he called the “absolute priority” for officials as the country faces the threat of Ukrainian drone strikes.

There is no official data on the impact of security-linked internet curbs, which can make it difficult to process payments, order taxis and navigate the city, among other things. Some estimates suggest businesses in Moscow may lose around 1 billion rubles ($13.4 million) per day during outages.

Russia's Digital Development Ministry said Thursday that mobile internet will be completely shut off in Moscow on May 9, when the city will hold its annual Victory Day parade on Red Square.

The ministry said that Saturday's planned disruption will also affect the government's so-called "whitelist" — a catalog of services meant to remain available during outages, including the Gosuslugi public services portal, Yandex, as well as the social media websites VKontakte and Odnoklassniki.

Peskov told reporters on Thursday that law enforcement and security services are operating on high alert ahead of Victory Day.

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