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Varyag Flag Returns

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South Korea on Thursday loaned Russia the flag of the legendary cruiser Varyag ("The Varangian"), sunken in Seoul after a battle with a Japanese squadron at the beginning of the Russian-Japanese war of 1904 and 1905, Interfax reported.

The flag, previously kept in a museum in the city of Incheon, was presented to President Dmitry Medvedev during his trip to Korea.

It was installed on a new Russian warship, also named the Varyag, which will take it home. Korean legislation bans passing important cultural objects to other countries, but the flag is to be permanently stored in Russia and brought back to Korea for temporary exhibitions only.

The Varyag's last stand at Chemulpo Bay was one of the war's landmark events. ⊠

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