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Moscow Ring Road Turns 50

By The Moscow Times

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The Moscow Ring Road turned 50 on Monday — and would not be recognizable to the first drivers who took their cars for a spin around the 108.9-kilometer stretch on Nov. 5, 1962.

When plans were drawn up more than half a century ago, the MKAD was envisaged as an asphalt highway with four lanes, capable of accommodating 36,000 vehicles a day.

However, the current ring road stands at 10 lanes, with 216,000 vehicles a day.

Large-scale renovation began in 1994 and saw the implementation of technologies unique in Russia at the time, Vesti.ru reported Monday. The innovations included screens to reduce noise pollution in populated areas; footbridges over traffic lanes, and even tunnels allowing wildlife in the Losiny Ostrov district to migrate safely.

Nevertheless, city planners say the MKAD is once again in need of modernization, with traffic jams and road accidents commonplace. Talks have been under way since 2009 to further expand parts of the road, while various strategies are being adopted to cope with the traffic,

including flyovers and new interchanges that are now under construction.

Itar-Tass reported late last month that plans have been approved for the installation of helicopter pads on the MKAD from January.

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