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Vending Machines Appearing After Hundreds of Staffed Kiosks Removed Around Moscow

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About 150 vending machines with snacks will be installed in pedestrian underpasses around Moscow.

About 150 vending machines with snacks and beverages will soon be installed in pedestrian underpasses around Moscow, state media reported Friday, following an extensive campaign to remove staffed kiosks.

Shortly after Mayor Sergei Sobyanin was appointed in late 2010, City Hall began a campaign to get rid of the numerous staffed kiosks that dotted Moscow's sidewalks and underpasses and that mainly sold convenience store items such as snacks, newspapers, small toys and DVDs.

The campaign, initially touted as a beautification project, began with sidewalk-based kiosks and has apparently been extended to pedestrian underpasses in recent years, with hundreds of the miniature convenience stores disappearing throughout the downtown.

Now the municipal company in charge of maintaining bridges, roads and underpasses —

Gormost — has announced a tender for companies to obtain two permits to install about 75 vending machines apiece, the city-sponsored news agency M24 reported.

The tender will take place on April 20, with a beginning price of about 4.4 million rubles ($75,000) for each lot, and the contracts will last 11 months, the report said, citing Gormost's press service.

The vending machines are set to be installed in about 30 underpasses, but there are hundreds more underpasses around the city, the report noted. Gormost is in charge of about 400 underpasses in all, and the Moscow subway system has an additional 135 in its stations.

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