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Mass Evacuations in Russian Cities Continue After Bomb Threats

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Sergei Konkov / Tass

Schools, government buildings and shopping malls in more than a dozen Russian cities continue to be evacuated four days after local authorities started receiving anonymous bomb threats, the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday.

The evacuations began in Omsk on Sunday and continued in Ryazan that evening. Chelyabinsk, Ufa, Stavropol and Kopeisk received as many as 42 bomb scares in total on Monday.

By Tuesday, the anonymous threats were reported in Perm, Novosibirsk, Yekaterinburg and other cities, forcing the evacuation of an estimated 45,000 people.

The threats in Saratov region were made anonymously through internet voice calls, the Federal Security Service's (FSB) regional branch said Wednesday.

"The people involved in this are being identified," the local FSB office's press service told the

FreeNews-Volga agency. Interfax said no explosive devices were found at any of the listed locations.

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Saratov saw evacuations at City Hall and the municipal Duma, followed by reports of evacuations at a university.

At least five cities were targeted by bomb scares in the Russian Far East, Interfax reports. Regional airports in Irkutsk, Yakutsk and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky were evacuated in addition to government buildings, bus and train stations and schools.

In Siberia, an airport in Abakan was among 19 buildings to receive anonymous bomb threats. Three more Siberian cities evacuated shopping malls, government offices, schools and hospitals.

The Mediazona news outlet reported later in the day that Moscow saw evacuations at three train stations, three shopping malls and a university.

An unidentified law enforcement official in Chelyabinsk said on Tuesday there are grounds to assume that the bomb threats were "all organized abroad."

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