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Putin Visits Crimea Bridge After October Blast

By AFP

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Mikhail Metzel / POOL / TASS

President Vladimir Putin on Monday visited the bridge that links Moscow-annexed Crimea to the Russian mainland weeks after the vital link was hit by a blast, images on state television showed.

It was the closest the 70-year-old Russian leader has come to the frontline in Ukraine, after sending troops to the pro-Western country on Feb. 24.

Putin drove a Mercedes across the bridge as Russia re-opened it to traffic following an October blast that Moscow blamed on Ukraine.

The Kremlin chief also heard a report from Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin about repair work on the bridge and spoke to construction workers.

After suffering humiliating military defeats on the ground in Ukraine, Russia began targeting

Ukrainian energy infrastructure in October, causing sweeping blackouts.

On Friday, Putin described the Russian attacks as Moscow's "inevitable" response to Ukraine's strikes on Russian infrastructure including the Crimean bridge.

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