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Gazprom Invited to Recover Object Found Near Nord Stream Pipeline

By AFP

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An object found near the Nord Stream 2 pipeline in Danish waters of the Baltic sea. **Danish Ministry of Defence**

Denmark has invited Russian energy giant Gazprom to help recover a mystery object that was spotted near the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline six months after sections of it were sabotaged.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who revealed the discovery of the object earlier this month, said experts believe that the object could be a signal antenna to activate an explosive in that part of the pipeline.

German, Swedish and Danish authorities are investigating the undersea explosions that sparked four leaks on the two Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea in September, seven months after Russia invaded Ukraine.

The Danish energy agency released a photo late Thursday of the cylindrical object standing

near the Nord Stream 2 pipeline at the bottom of the sea.

The agency said it is "possible" that the object is a maritime smoke buoy, 40 centimeters tall and 10 centimeters wide, and that it "does not pose an immediate safety risk."

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"With a view to further clarifying the nature of the object, Danish authorities have decided to salvage the object with assistance from the Danish Defense," it said in a statement.

The agency added that it was still waiting for a response from the pipeline's owner before starting the recovery operation.

Gazprom holds a majority stake in the twin pipelines, with the rest owned by German, Dutch, and French companies.

German prosecutors said earlier this month that in January investigators searched a ship suspected of having transported explosives used in the blasts.

Confirmation of the searches came after the New York Times reported that U.S. officials had seen new intelligence indicating that a "pro-Ukrainian group" was responsible for the sabotage.

The Ukrainian government denied involvement in the action, while the Kremlin rejected the Times report as a "diversion."

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