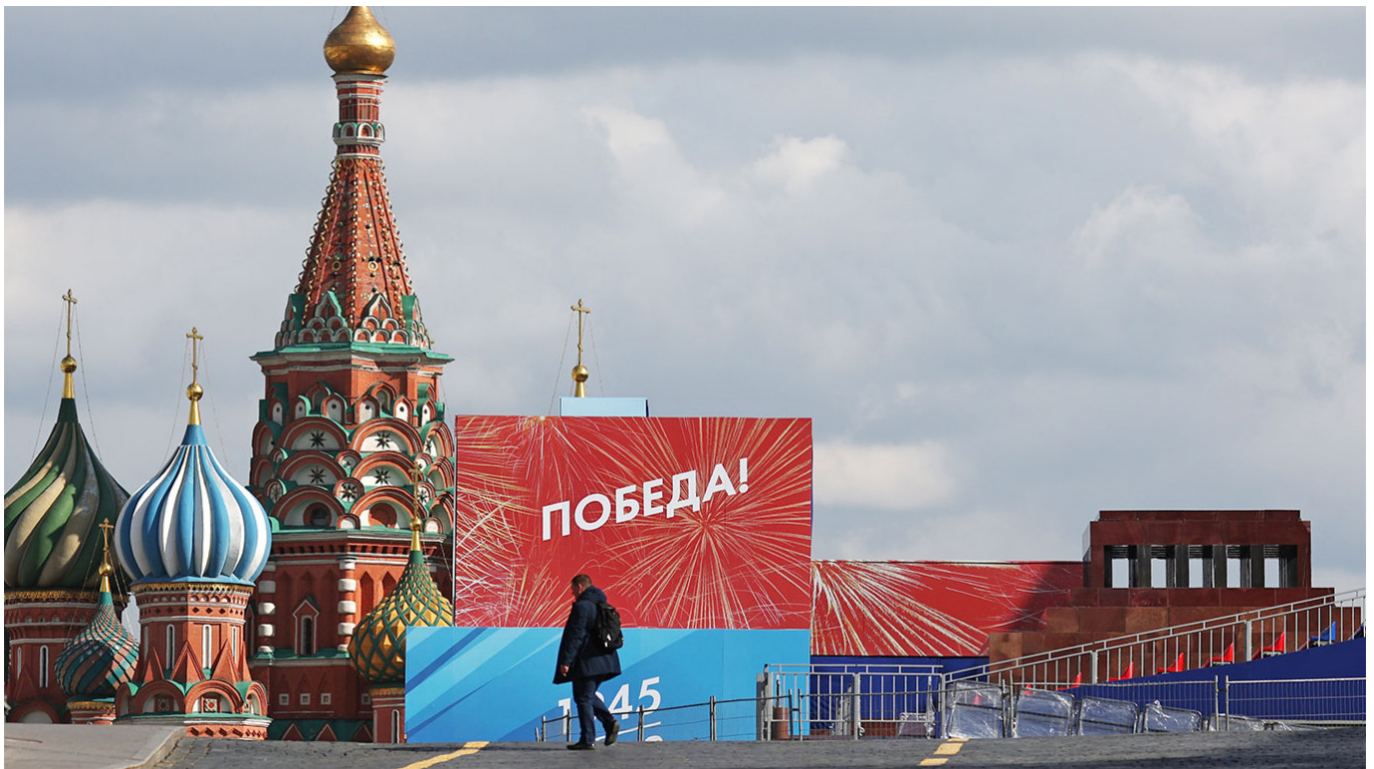


At Least 20 Russian Cities Scrap WWII Victory Parades

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A view of Red Square decorated for the upcoming Victory Day marking the 78th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War II. **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

At least 21 Russian cities have called off their annual military parades marking the Soviet victory in World War II next week, the independent Vyorstka media outlet [reported](#) Thursday, as the country has alleged a flurry of drone attacks on its territory ahead of a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Russia celebrates the Victory Day holiday every year on May 9 with military parades in many cities, including a centerpiece military parade on Red Square attended by President Vladimir Putin. This year, the holiday takes place as Kyiv is widely expected to launch a major counteroffensive against invading Russian troops.

Cities near Russia's border with Ukraine, which have faced repeated shelling and drone strikes in the 14 months since Moscow launched its offensive on Kyiv, will not hold their Victory Day parades.

Further from the frontlines, the May 9 parades have also been called off in Siberia's Tyumen, Nizhnevartovsk, Surgut regions as well as the Khanty–Mansiysk autonomous district.

Security concerns were cited in at least eight cities, including Tyumen.

Related article: [Russia to Close Red Square 2 Weeks Ahead of WWII Victory Parade](#)

The northwestern cities of Pskov and Velikiye Luki near the Estonian border cited “moral and ethical” reasons for calling off the celebrations, saying the sounds of fireworks could scare off wounded soldiers hospitalized in the region.

This year, authorities sealed off Red Square to the public for an unprecedented two weeks ahead of the parade.

Western Russia's Belgorod and Kursk regions as well as annexed Crimea were the first to cancel their Victory Day events last month.

Moscow, St. Petersburg and nearby regions imposed no-fly zones this week amid a spate of alleged drone attacks which Russia said targeted the Kremlin as well as transport and energy infrastructure.

Ukraine denied any role in the alleged drone strike attempt on the Kremlin.

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