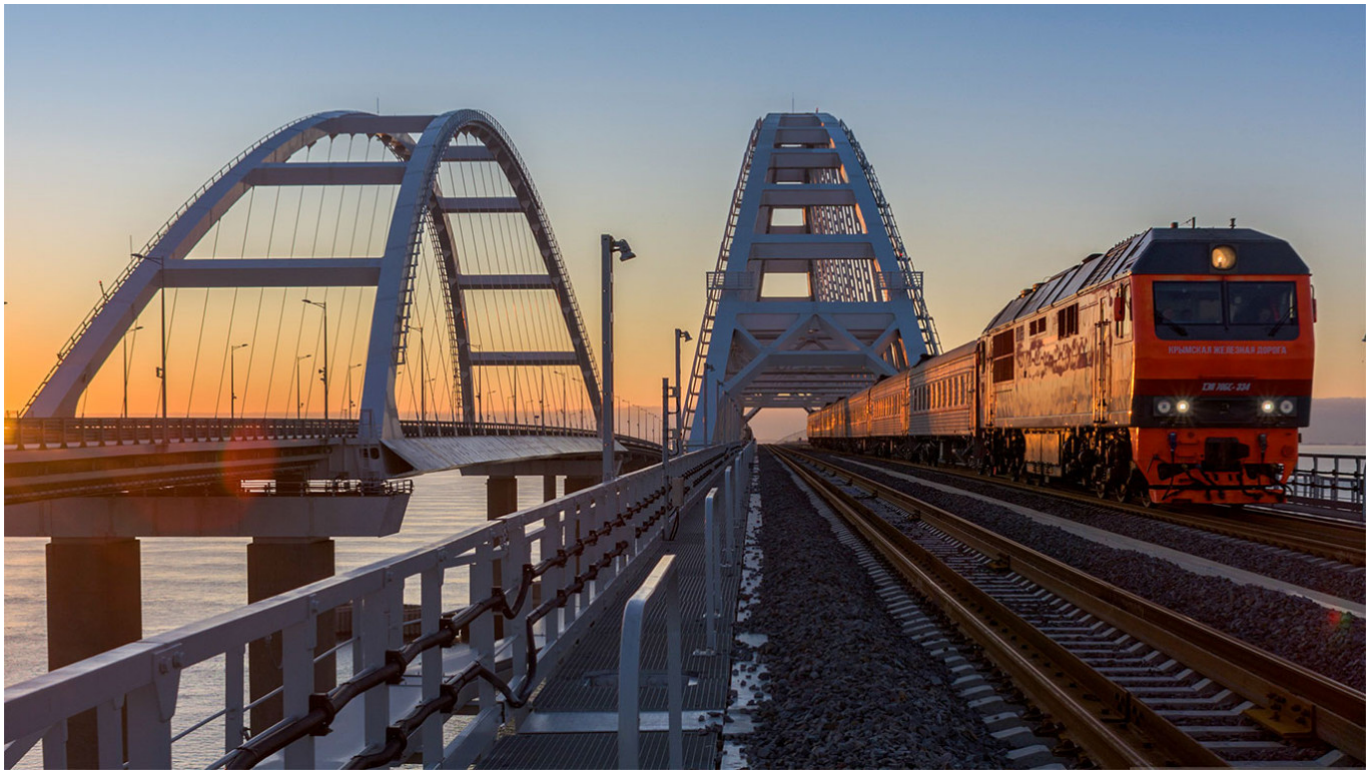
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Sabotage Acts in Russia More Than Double in 2023

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A train on the Crimean bridge, which was heavily damaged in an explosion in October 2022.
Rosavtodor.ru

The number of acts of sabotage in Russia has more than doubled so far in 2023 compared to the previous year amid the war in Ukraine, the independent news site Vyorstka reported Monday.

At least 57 attacks on Russian railways, military enlistment centers, energy sites and other targets were publicly reported in January-May 2023.

That compares with 21 similar attacks in 2022 and only one in 2021.

Nearly two-thirds of this year's attacks targeted railway tracks.

At least 26 Russian regions including annexed Crimea have experienced at least one such attack, with the Moscow region in the lead at nine.

May saw the highest number of acts of sabotage at 14, followed by 12 each in January,

February and April.

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Vyorstka said its tally included attempts to attack state property regardless of how successful they were.

The outlet discounted cases where authorities said they had detained suspects preparing to carry out attacks or cases in which the perpetrators had been tricked into committing the attacks by scammers.

Explosions at ammunition depots, arson attacks on military enlistment centers and damage caused to railway tracks have been regularly reported since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

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President Vladimir Putin in December tightened punishment for acts of sabotage with prison terms up to life sentences.

The head of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) this spring accused Ukraine and the West of recruiting young Russians to stage armed attacks in their home country.

The Kremlin has harshly cracked down on anti-war dissent since invading Ukraine in February 2022, with a growing number of fines and prison sentences for acts as innocuous as social media comments.

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