The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Putin Flies Supersonic Bomber During Tatarstan Visit

February 22, 2024



Putin bords a Tu-160M strategic bomber. **Dmitry Azarov, Kommersant / kremlin.ru**

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday flew a Tupolev Tu-160M strategic bomber, state-run news agencies reported, in what is likely a campaign stunt ahead of the March 15-17 presidential election.

The Tu-160M, a modernized version of a Cold War-era bomber, has two internal bomb bays, each of which can hold up to six cruise missiles or 12 short-range nuclear missiles.

"Together we are observing this unique moment," Kremlin journalist Pavel Zarubin said in a video of the takeoff published on his Telegram channel, adding that the flight route was a "military secret."

Embed:

State media reported that Putin's flight time totaled 30 minutes, while the Interfax news

agency quoted the Russian leader as saying after landing that the aircraft had "excellent equipment."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporter Zarubin that Putin decided to fly the strategic bomber during a visit on Wednesday to the Kazan Aviation Plant in the republic of Tatarstan.

Putin previously flew a Tu-160 during a training exercise outside Moscow in 2005.

The modernized Tu-160M made its first test flight in January 2022, one month before Russian forces invaded Ukraine.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/02/22/putin-flies-supersonic-bomber-during-tatarstan-visit-a84209