

Kremlin Confirms Putin's Trip to North Korea

By [AFP](#)

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Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit North Korea this week, the Kremlin announced Monday, confirming previously reported travel plans that come amid suspicions in the West that Pyongyang is supplying Moscow with weapons for use in Ukraine.

Putin will visit North Korea on Tuesday, his second trip to the isolated country since he first came to power 24 years ago. During that first trip, the Russian president met with former leader Kim Jong Il.

The Kremlin chief's visit comes nine months after he hosted North Korea's Kim Jong Un on a rare foreign trip to the Russian Far East, where the pair lavished each other with praise.

"President Vladimir Putin on June 18-19 will go to the North Korean Democratic Republic on a friendly state visit," the Kremlin said in a statement on Monday. Putin will then travel to

Vietnam.

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Western countries, South Korea and Kyiv have accused Pyongyang of sending weapons to Moscow for use in Ukraine, in violation of UN sanctions that ban trade in North Korean weapons.

Washington and Seoul say Russia has reciprocated by providing Pyongyang with technical help for its satellite program and sending aid to the food-deprived country.

Putin has scaled down his trips abroad since launching the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, but has paid some high-profile visits to Moscow's few key allies, including a two-day trip to China in May.

Pyongyang is isolated diplomatically and rarely hosts foreign guests. The country has further closed itself off since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Russia and North Korea, which share a short land border, have historic links, with the Soviet Union having helped found the tiny state after the Korean War in the 1950s.

Since the fall of the U.S.S.R., Russia has been one of the few countries to maintain working relations with Pyongyang.

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