

Russia Begins Major Naval Exercises With Most of Its Fleet

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Russian Defense Ministry

Russia's Navy began planned drills involving all but one of its fleets and an overwhelming majority of its warships, the defense ministry [said](#) Tuesday.

"Units and formations of the Russian Navy have started scheduled exercises in the operational zones of the Northern, Pacific and Baltic Fleets, as well as in the area of responsibility of the Caspian Flotilla," the Defense Ministry said.

The multi-day drills notably omit the Russian Navy's Black Sea Fleet, which has faced significant losses due to Ukrainian attacks in and around the annexed Crimean peninsula since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion.

Kyiv says its attacks have put one-third of Russia's Black Sea warships out of action since the invasion began in February 2022, as it seeks to protect its shipping routes and prevent attacks from the sea. The Black Sea Fleet commander was [quietly replaced](#) earlier this year.

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Russia's latest naval exercises involve some 20,000 servicemen and 300 surface ships, submarines and support vessels, according to the defense ministry's statement published on Tuesday.

"Over the next several days, the ships' crews, naval aviation units and coastal troops... will perform more than 300 combat exercises with the practical use of weapons," it said.

A video accompanying the military's statement showed warships passing the Russky Bridge in Russia's Far East port of Vladivostok, crews firing naval artillery and officers reporting to their superiors from command posts.

"The main purpose of the exercise is to test the actions of the Navy's military control bodies at all levels, as well as the readiness of the crews of ships, naval aviation units and coastal troops of the Russian Navy to fulfill the tasks as intended," the military said.

The drills come two days after President Vladimir Putin oversaw a Navy Day parade in St. Petersburg, during which he [threatened](#) to restart the production of intermediate-range nuclear weapons if the United States deploys missiles in Germany or elsewhere in Europe.

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