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Russia and North Korea Resume Regular Passenger Rail Service

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A passenger of the Khabarovsk-Pyongyang train during boarding. **Yuri Smityuk / TAS**

Russia and North Korea have resumed regular passenger rail service, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday, citing a regional customs official.

Service had been suspended for four years since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

The 17-minute journey will run between Khasan in Russia's Far Eastern Primorsky region and Tumangang on the North Korean side. The towns are just two miles apart, separated by the Tumen River. The train is set to run three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, crossing the Korea-Russia Friendship Bridge.

A representative of Russia's Far Eastern Railway said that the first train left the Khasan station Monday at 8:30 am Moscow time. Two Russian citizens crossed the border.

Both countries are looking to increase cross-border tourism. In 2024, more than 1,000 Russian tourists have so far visited North Korea, the Russian consulate in Chongjin told

Russia's state-run TASS news agency in October.

Irregular passenger rail service began in June 2024 as part of a trial. A regional customs official told RIA Novosti that 1,200 people have traveled in both directions.

Related article: Russia-North Korea Defense Pact Enters Into Force

Passenger trains between Russia and China also resumed Sunday after a four-year hiatus, Russian Railways told RIA Novosti. The train will run between Grodekovo in Russia's Primosrky region and Suifenhe on the Chinese side.

The alliance between Russia and North Korea has strengthened significantly in recent years.

A defense pact between the two countries entered into force on Dec. 5, and North Korean troops are now fighting for Russia against Ukraine in the Kursk region.

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