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# Russia and North Korea Resume Direct Passenger Rail Service After 4-Year Hiatus

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The Korea-Russia Friendship Bridge. **TowerCard (CC BY-SA 3.0)**

Russia and North Korea will resume one of the world's longest passenger rail routes next week for the first time since Covid-19 border restrictions began four years ago, Russian Railways announced Monday.

North Korea sealed its borders in early 2020, barring even its own citizens from re-entering. Limited cross-border railway trade resumed in 2022, followed by a 17-minute passenger route between border towns last December.

Starting next Tuesday, June 17, non-stop trains will depart Pyongyang for an eight-day journey to Moscow, arriving June 25. The return leg will depart the Russian capital on June 26 and arrive in Pyongyang on July 4.

The route will operate twice a month — on the 3rd and 17th of each month — with return trips

scheduled one day after arrival. North Korean railway authorities will operate the route using their own compartment coaches.

“Pyongyang-Moscow is the longest non-stop railway route in the world: the distance between the capitals is more than 10,000 kilometers [6,200 miles] and the travel time is eight days,” Russian Railways said.

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The route includes scheduled stops in roughly a dozen Russian cities, including Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk and Yekaterinburg.

Monthly direct trains between Pyongyang and Khabarovsk will also resume starting June 19.

Moscow and Pyongyang have deepened political, military and cultural ties since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with a mutual defense pact signed last December.

Last month, Russian President Vladimir Putin publicly thanked North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for sending troops to support Russian forces in the Kursk region, confirming for the first time reports by Western and South Korean intelligence.

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