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Russians Should Get Ready for More Internet Blackouts and Switch to Cash, Lawmaker Says

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Vladimir Gutenev **er.ru**

A senior Russian lawmaker is urging citizens to adjust to the growing likelihood of widespread internet disruptions by relying more on cash and preparing for reduced access to digital services.

Vladimir Gutenev, head of the State Duma's Industry and Trade Committee, told the pro-Kremlin news outlet Life that Russians should be ready for "regular and necessary" internet shutdowns and recommended withdrawing cash in advance to avoid being caught off guard.

"Restricting or shutting down the internet is a necessary measure," Gutenev said. "There are critical infrastructure facilities whose failure could have serious consequences."

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He acknowledged the country's reliance on digital payment systems but emphasized the need to prioritize national security over convenience.

"We're used to paying with cards or smartphones and having constant connectivity. But now it's important to accept temporary restrictions as a necessity," he said.

"Don't turn into a hipster who only lives in the center of Moscow," he added. "Life is not limited to comfort."

His comments follow a sharp rise in internet outages across Russia due to the threat of Ukrainian drone attacks in recent months.

Russian authorities say the temporary mobile internet shutdowns help prevent drones from receiving targeting coordinates via civilian networks.

According to the independent communications watchdog Na Svyazi, disruptions were reported in 77 regions by mid-July, including remote areas far from the front lines like the Primorye, Sakhalin and Kamchatka regions.

Mobile internet was shut down in 62 regions simultaneously on Monday.

While officials frame the outages as security measures, they have caused growing frustration among residents and business owners who depend on mobile networks for payment processing, communication and navigation.

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