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Russian Army Releases First Images of Oreshnik Launch System

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A mobile launcher system for the Oreshnik missile. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russia's Defense Ministry on Tuesday for the first time released images of the launch system for its new nuclear-capable hypersonic ballistic missile, codenamed Oreshnik, as it announced the weapon's deployment in neighboring Belarus.

A video posted on the ministry's Telegram channel showed a mobile launcher driving into a wooded area before parking, after which military personnel covered the vehicle with camouflage netting.

"All necessary conditions were established in advance for combat duty and for the accommodation of Russian servicemen," the military said in a statement accompanying the video.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko previously said that the Oreshnik would enter combat duty there by the end of 2025.

Russia's Defense Ministry did not disclose where in Belarus the missile system would be stationed. Reuters, citing U.S. researchers, reported that it may be deployed at a former airbase near Krichev, about 307 kilometers (190 miles) east of Minsk.

The missile, whose name means hazel tree in Russian, was publicly revealed in November 2024 after it was used in a strike on the Ukrainian city of Dnipro.

President Vladimir Putin described the attack at the time as a successful test and portrayed the missile's first use in combat as a warning to the United States and Britain as they considered providing Ukraine with long-range weapons capable of striking deep inside Russia.

Last month, Putin said Russia had begun moving toward mass production of the Oreshnik, having previously touted its destructive power as comparable to that of a nuclear weapon and claiming it could not be intercepted. Some experts have expressed skepticism toward those claims.

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