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Mobile Network Operators Warn Customers of Internet and Phone Disruptions Ahead of Victory Day

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Igor Ivanko / AFP

Mobile network operators have told their customers to expect significant disruptions to internet and text messaging services in Moscow this week as the city prepares for the annual Victory Day parade.

Beeline was the first to send out a text notification stating that "temporary mobile internet and SMS restrictions may occur" between Tuesday and Saturday due to security measures, the news agency Interfax reported on Monday.

The company told customers they should use Wi-Fi networks for data and 4G LTE when making calls in Moscow.

Three people in the Russian capital showed The Moscow Times screenshots of similar messages they received from their mobile network providers, MTS and Tele2.

Earlier, telecoms industry sources told BBC News Russian that internet restrictions are expected to intensify across all of Moscow this week.

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The disruptions come as Russian authorities scale back this year's Victory Day parade on Red Square, which, for the first time in nearly two decades, will not feature tanks, trucks, mobile missile launchers and other military vehicles.

The Kremlin said the change was made based on the ongoing risk of Ukrainian drone strikes.

While internet restrictions have become common since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, outages have worsened in recent months. Monitoring groups say most regions throughout the country now face daily internet disruptions.

President Vladimir Putin has defended the mobile internet blackouts as a vital security measure to defend against "terrorist attacks."

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