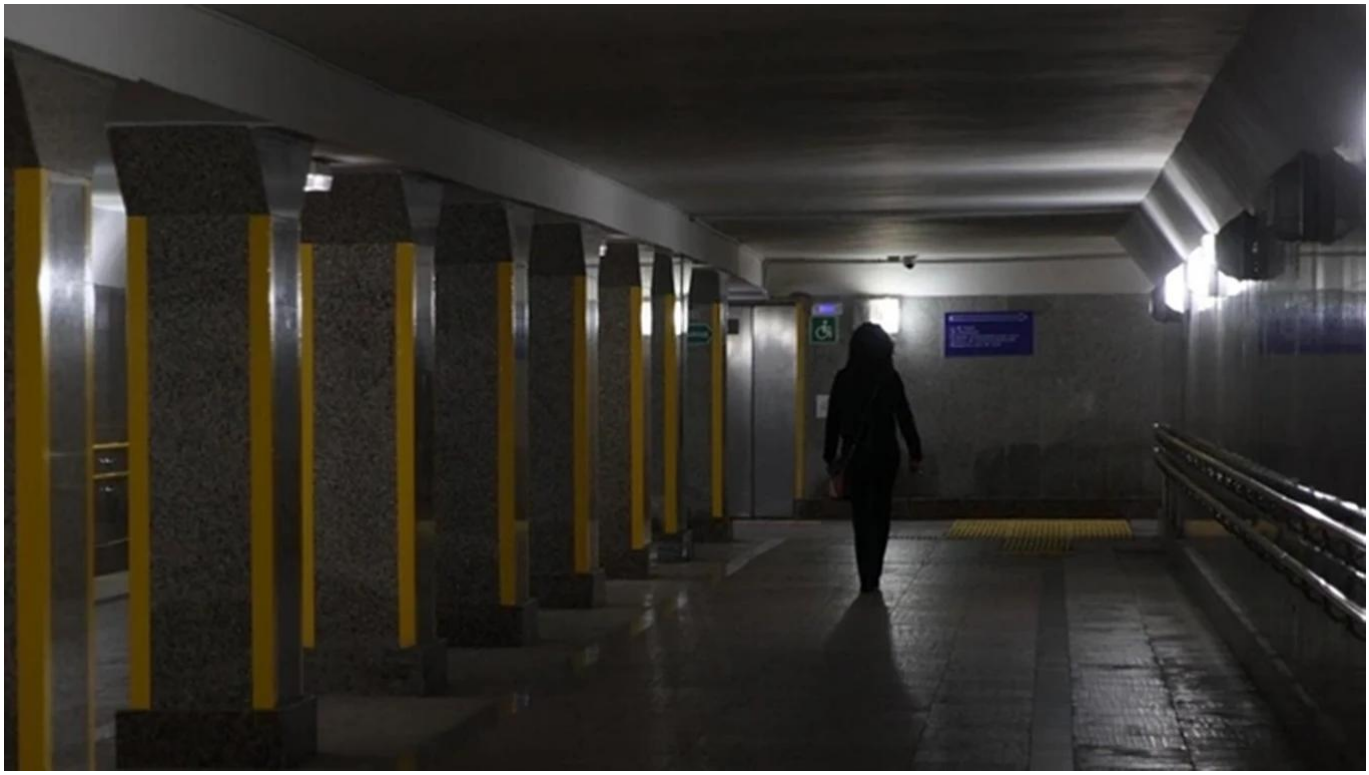
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Parts of Western Siberia and the Ural Mountains Issue First Missile Alert Since 2022 Invasion

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Russian authorities on Friday issued a missile alert across all six regions of the Ural Federal District for the first time since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022.

Nearly 20 regions across the country issued missile alerts starting at 2:25 p.m. Moscow time. Local officials urged residents to seek shelter and warned that mobile internet services would be temporarily disrupted.

"For the first time ever, a 'Missile Danger' alert has been issued across the entire Ural Federal District," Artyom Zhoga, the Kremlin's envoy to the district, wrote in a post on Telegram.

Among the regions affected was the Yamalo-Nenets autonomous district, a vast Arctic territory located roughly 2,300 kilometers (1,400 miles) from the Ukrainian border, and Western Siberia's Tyumen region.

The regions of Sverdlovsk, Kurgan and Chelyabinsk, as well as the Khanty-Mansi autonomous district, also make up the Ural Federal District.

Civil aviation authorities grounded flights at several regional airports during the alerts. They began to lift those restrictions around 4:40 p.m. Moscow time.

Despite the missile warning, no missile strikes were reported on Friday afternoon. The alert follows overnight Ukrainian drone strikes that killed at least three people in the Volgograd and Bryansk regions.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said intelligence reports indicate Russia is preparing a "new major strike against Ukrainian cities and communities."

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