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Russia Shuts Crimean Bridge After Second Attack in 2 Days

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Russia halted road and rail traffic on the Crimean Bridge on Tuesday after the second reported Ukrainian strike in two days, as footage shared by Ukrainian monitoring channels appeared to show one of the bridge's main arches collapsing into the water.

Tuesday's closure on the bridge that spans the Kerch Strait came less than a day after traffic resumed following a drone attack that shut the crossing for more than 16 hours.

Ferries were carrying most of the traffic between the peninsula and the Russian mainland on Tuesday, and rail operator Grand Service Express said four passenger trains bound for Crimea had been delayed.

Sergei Aksyonov, the Russian-installed head of annexed Crimea, reported the latest strike after missile alerts were issued on both sides of the strait.

Russia's Transportation Ministry said it was assessing the damage.

The Ukrainian monitoring channel Krymsky Veter said four cruise missiles were fired at the

bridge. Eyewitness footage it published appeared to show a missile hitting a 227-meter arch. A separate video appeared to show the arch falling into the strait.

The footage could not be independently verified.

Related article: Ukraine Hits Crimean Bridge Amid Record Overnight Drone Attack

The Kremlin called the damage from Monday's attack "minor," though footage aired by Russian state media showed an arch leaning and satellite images published by the independent news outlet Astra appeared to show damage to the roadway in at least two places.

Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin said engineers and construction crews had been mobilized for repairs.

"We will organize all the work the way it needs to be done. As I said, we have the experience," Khusnullin wrote on Telegram.

The Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body, has opened a terrorism probe.

Russian-installed authorities in Crimea said two people were killed in a separate overnight drone attack in the peninsula's Leninsky district.

Russia's Defense Ministry said it had intercepted or destroyed 1,441 Ukrainian drones during the overnight barrage, a figure that could not be independently verified.

The 19-kilometer (12-mile) Crimean Bridge is one of two routes available to Moscow that connect the transport networks of mainland Russia and Crimea.

It has in the past been a key supply route for Russian forces in Ukraine and is widely viewed as one of Russian President Vladimir Putin's signature infrastructure projects.

It consists of a separate roadway and railway, both supported by concrete stilts, which give way to a wider span held by steel arches at the point where ships pass between the Black Sea and the smaller Azov Sea.

The bridge has been attacked by Ukraine several times since Putin sent Russian forces into Ukraine in February 2022. A truck bomb in October 2022 killed four people and limited the bridge's capacity for several months.

The overnight strike followed an intensification of Russian attacks in the past few months on bridges in Ukraine, including in the capital Kyiv.

Few countries have recognized Crimea as part of the Russian Federation but the Kremlin has said the question has been closed "forever."

Ukrainian officials made no comment on Monday's attack.

Reuters contributed reporting.

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