# Putin faces embarrassment as Crimea Victory Day parade cancelled amid rising Ukrainian drone attacks



Vladimir Putin faces significant embarrassment following the cancellation of Russia's annual Victory Day military parade in Crimea, which was scheduled to take place on May 9 in the port city of Sevastopol. The decision comes just days after a Ukrainian sea drone attack reportedly destroyed a Russian Su-30 fighter jet valued at approximately £35 million near the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk. The cancellation has been attributed to "security concerns," as stated by Russian-installed governor Mikhail Razvozhayev, and is seen as a blow to the Kremlin’s military image.

The Victory Day celebrations have long been a significant event in Russia, commemorating the Soviet Union's triumph over Nazi Germany. Traditionally, these parades serve as a platform for Putin to galvanise domestic support for the ongoing military campaign in Ukraine. The recent developments, however, have raised questions regarding the Kremlin’s capacity to protect its strategic assets, especially in territories under its control since the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, issued a warning prior to the holiday, cautioning foreign officials about potential risks associated with attending the commemorative events. He suggested that Moscow might orchestrate "provocations, including arsons, explosions or other actions" that could be falsely attributed to Ukrainian forces.

Despite limited details from Russian authorities regarding the Novorossiysk incident, Ukrainian military intelligence corroborated the successful deployment of a sea drone, noting that the Su-30 was engaged in a combat mission at the time of its destruction. This marks a first in the conflict, illustrating the increasing effectiveness of Ukraine's unmanned maritime technology against Russian military assets.

Sevastopol, pivotal as the home of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, has previously been a centre of military pride but has recently experienced multiple attacks targeting fuel depots, naval vessels, and command installations. The shift away from the customary large-scale celebrations across various Russian cities, attributed to fears of sabotage and drone strikes, highlights a notable change in security dynamics.

The recent loss of a high-value military aircraft and the cancellation of such a prestigious event represent a symbolic defeat for Putin, who has consistently portrayed Crimea as an inseparable part of Russia. While the Kremlin maintains that it is fully in control of the region, the combined impact of diminished military festivities and Ukraine's ongoing efforts to disrupt Russian operations could undermine this narrative.

As Victory Day approaches, discussions among Russian commentators suggest that this year's observances will be markedly subdued, reflecting the shifting reality on the ground in Ukraine and the limitations now faced by Russian military operations in both Crimea and the broader Black Sea region.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://tass.com/society/1602961> - This article reports that authorities in Crimea and Sevastopol decided not to hold any parades or marches for Victory Day on May 9 due to security concerns, as stated by Sergey Aksyonov, head of Crimea.
* <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-ato/3695393-russia-canceled-may-9-parades-in-regions-bordering-ukraine-for-security-reasons-british-intelligence.html> - The British Ministry of Defense reported that several Russian regions bordering Ukraine, including Crimea, canceled their May 9 Victory Day parades for security reasons, highlighting a sensitive communication challenge for the Kremlin.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/02/russian-regions-scrap-victory-day-parades-amid-fear-of-ukraine-strikes> - This article discusses how at least six Russian regions, including Crimea, canceled their May 9 Victory Day parades amid fears of Ukrainian strikes, with officials citing safety concerns.
* <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2024/04/19/7451941/> - Sergey Aksyonov, the Russian-appointed head of occupied Crimea, announced that for security reasons, the 9 May Victory Day parade and the 'Immortal Regiment' march would not be held on the peninsula.
* <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/04/12/7397484/> - The Kremlin-appointed head of Crimea, Sergey Aksyonov, announced that a demonstration and parade would not be held on the occupied peninsula this year on 1 May and Victory Day, citing security reasons.
* <https://www.kyivpost.com/post/31377> - Russia canceled the annual Victory Day parade on May 9 in occupied Crimea due to 'security issues,' as announced by Sergey Aksyonov, head of Russian-occupied Crimea.
* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/2051010/putin-humiliated-victory-day-parade-scrapped-crimea> - Please view link - unable to able to access data