
PUTIN ANNOUNCES MILITARY SPENDING CUTS BUT INSISTS IT WILL NOT WEAKEN RUSSIAN ARMY

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RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin has announced that he will cut military spending in 2018 but still plans to re-equip the army and navy.

In a meeting with United Russia ruling party faction leader Vladimir Vasilyev, Putin said: "I want to remind you that significant budget savings for the next year are stipulated, by the way, due to a cut in defence spending.

This is not connected with the reduction of our plans to refit the army and navy. We will execute the state defence order and will make a new program.

In July Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev held a meeting on budget defence spending for the next three years.

The budget is being formed to complete the state programme of armament until 2020.

Mr Medvedev said that the re-equipment of the army and navy is on schedule.

It comes as Russia recently showed off its high tech military as it hosted the International Army Games in Siberia.

More than 4,000 soldiers and personnel from 28 countries are taking part in the event, including China, Iran, Egypt and Zimbabwe.

But since being launched by the Russian Defence Ministry three years ago, no country signed up to Nato has taken part in the war games.

Although Moscow says the invitation is open to anyone to compete, a Nato spokesman told Newsweek: "Military games are no substitute for proper transparency and confidence-building measures - such as OSCE observation of military exercises, which Russia routinely avoids.

Last month Putin displayed Russia's military might in a major display of its naval capabilities.

Earlier this month thousands of highly trained Russian seaman clutched assault rifles as gigantic submarines emerged from the water in a show of force ordered by the Russian President.

Russia is also due to begin the supplies of the T-90 tank to Iraq to aid in the battle against ISIS.

The T-90 is the third generation battle tank that entered service in 1993, its origins are from the

Soviet era.

Kaynak/Source: