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Drone Sales Surge Twentyfold in Russia

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Denis Voronin / Moskva News Agency

Amateur drone sales in Russia have skyrocketed this year as the war in Ukraine has exposed a dire shortage of the small and effective devices on the battlefield, the Kommersant business daily reported Monday, citing the analytical service Moneyplace.

Russia's largest online retailer Wildberries recorded a twentyfold increase in sales to 26,700 drones in January-March.

Fellow e-commerce giant Ozon saw a fifteenfold surge to 17,600 drones sold over the same time.

Some 20% of all camera drones purchased in Russia are directly sent to aid in the country's "special military operation" in Ukraine, Kommersant cited an unnamed industry source as saying.

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“It’s currently one of the essential goods for the military,” said TelecomDaily research agency CEO Denis Kuskov.

“Quadcopters are mostly sent to the Ukrainian border given the ban on flights in some [Russian] regions,” Kuskov added.

Russian authorities have established no-fly zones for drones in at least 40 regions amid a spate of drone attacks on Russian territory.

An intercepted drone strike on the Kremlin in the days leading up to the Victory Day holiday this month triggered new restrictions on drones in Moscow and the surrounding region.

Kyiv rejects Moscow’s accusations of launching drones at targets inside Russian territory including the Kremlin strike, which Moscow described as an assassination attempt on President Vladimir Putin.

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