The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukraine Operates Sabotage Cells, Smuggles Drones in Russia – CNN

June 05, 2023



Video grab

Kyiv has cultivated sabotage cells inside Russia and has started supplying them with Ukrainian-made drones, CNN reported Monday, citing multiple unnamed sources familiar with U.S. intelligence.

The noticeable increase in drone attacks on Russian soil — starting with an early May strike on the Kremlin — is likely "a culmination of months" of work, one of the sources was quoted as saying.

The cells are believed to be a mix of well-trained Ukrainian operatives and pro-Ukraine sympathizers.

Kyiv reportedly supplies its cell with drones via the "vast and very difficult to control" Russian-Ukrainian border.

As a result, CNN reported that U.S. officials believe the May 3 attack on the Kremlin was

launched from within Russia.

Despite public criticism, U.S. and Western officials privately laud Ukraine's cross-border attacks as a "smart military strategy that could divert Russian resources to protecting its own territory."

Kyiv itself has not acknowledged any role in the attacks.

Related article: Sabotage Acts in Russia More Than Double in 2023

A U.S. source who had spoken to Ukrainian officials in recent days said Kyiv plans to continue the attacks as "a good distraction tactic" for Russian troops, according to CNN.

The stepped-up drone strikes come ahead of a widely anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive aimed at retaking lands occupied by Moscow.

Independent Russian media says the number of acts of sabotage inside the country has more than doubled so far in 2023.

Russia's domestic intelligence agency, the Federal Security Service (FSB), has announced several arrests of Ukrainian or pro-Ukrainian saboteurs in recent weeks.

This spring, the head of the FSB accused Kyiv and the West of recruiting young Russians to stage armed attacks in their home country.

Russian law enforcement authorities have stepped up random car inspections and announced a series of restrictions on drone flying after the embarrassing incidents that exposed gaps in Russia's domestic security.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/05/ukraine-operates-sabotage-cells-smuggles-drones-in-russia-cnn-a81402