

Russia Using Chinese Engines to Make Attack Drones – Reuters

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Russian drone wreckage in Ukraine. **National Police of Ukraine**

Russia has been using Chinese-made engines to produce long-range attack drones for deployment in Ukraine since at least mid-2023, Reuters [reported](#) Friday, citing European intelligence sources.

The Russian company IEMZ Kupol was said to have manufactured over 2,500 Garpiya-A1 drones between July 2023 and July 2024. The Garpiya drone has a maximum takeoff weight of under 300 kilograms and a range of 1,500 kilometers.

According to a European intelligence agency cited by Reuters, the Garpiya “closely resembles” Iranian-designed Shahed drones but is powered by Limbach L-550 E engines. Originally designed by an unidentified German company, the engines are now produced by the Chinese firm Xiamen Limbach.

In December, the U.S. [sanctioned](#) IEMZ Kupol over its production of anti-aircraft defense equipment and kamikaze attack drones. IEMZ Kupol is a subsidiary of Almaz-Antey, Russia’s

largest defense contractor, which has also been sanctioned.

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China's Foreign Ministry told Reuters that it "strictly controls" the export of products with potential military applications but noted that it is not prohibited from trading with Russia. Neither the Russian nor the Chinese companies mentioned in the report responded to requests for comment.

Reuters also reported that Russia's Defense Ministry signed a 1 billion ruble (\$10.9 million) contract with IEMZ Kupol in early 2023 to develop a factory to produce the drones.

The Garpiyas are reportedly manufactured at a former cement factory in republic of Udmurtia's capital city of Izhevsk, where previous investigative [reports](#) indicated that commercial sites had been converted into drone production plants since the start of the war. IEMZ Kupol allegedly purchased the cement factory in 2020.

Ukraine estimates that Russia has [launched](#) nearly 14,000 drones against civilian and military targets since its full-scale invasion in February 2022, with the majority being Iranian-designed Shaheds.

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