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Suspected Russian Drone Found at Military Training Site in Lithuania

By AFP

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Lithuanian Border Guard Service

A drone believed to be Russian-made was found at a military training site after it flew into Lithuanian airspace from neighboring Belarus, Lithuania's army said on Friday.

The drone was first spotted in the early hours of Monday, with residents recording its flight over parts of the capital, Vilnius, before it disappeared from view.

"It's likely the same one that entered Lithuanian territory on Monday. Based on preliminary information, it appears to be a Gerbera drone, but the details are still being verified," the Lithuanian military said in a statement.

Gerbera-type drones, used by Russia in its war against Ukraine, are often deployed as decoys to overwhelm or distract air defenses.

Lithuanian military authorities recovered the drone at the Gaižiūnai training grounds, near

the town of Rukla, which also hosts a NATO multinational battalion.

“I consider it a provocation,” Mindaugas Sinkevičius, acting head of the ruling Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, told reporters, citing the location where the drone was found.

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Lithuanian authorities said the drone was initially detected in Belarusian airspace but was later lost from radar.

The government has faced criticism over what some called a slow response. Lithuania’s Defense Ministry said it would review its procedures and revise rules to allow the military to shoot down suspicious drones more easily.

A similar Gerbera drone entered Lithuanian airspace from Belarus on July 10, prompting some officials to seek safety in bomb shelters.

Russia has launched thousands of drones in its war against Ukraine, with some straying into neighboring countries, including Poland, Romania, Moldova and Latvia.

In September 2024, a Russian Shahed-type attack drone crashed in Latvia.

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