

Overnight Ukrainian Drone Attacks Target Chemical Plants, Disrupt Moscow Airports

December 11, 2025



Social media

Russian forces shot down 287 Ukrainian drones overnight in one of the highest single-night totals since the war began, the Defense Ministry and officials [said](#) Thursday.

Temporary airport closures caused 200 flights to be delayed to and from Moscow, while eyewitness reports claimed two fertilizer plants were targeted in the western Novgorod and Smolensk regions.

Of the drones “intercepted and shot down” by Russian air defenses, 32 were headed toward Moscow and 40 more toward the Moscow region, the Defense Ministry said on Telegram.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin [said](#) throughout the night and into Thursday morning that emergency crews were working at the sites of the fallen drone debris, but did not comment on any damage or report any casualties.

Work at all four airports in the Russian capital was temporarily [suspended](#), said Russia's civil aviation authority Rosaviatsia. St. Petersburg's Pulkovo Airport said it was taking diverted flights.

In all, around 200 flights were [canceled](#) or delayed.

The drone strikes sparked a fire at or near one of Russia's largest chemical producers, the Acron mineral fertilizer plant in the northwestern city of Veliky Novgorod, according to eyewitness footage [geolocated](#) by the independent news outlet Astra.

Novgorod region Governor Alexander Dronov said 19 drones were shot down overnight, one person was injured and there was “[insignificant](#)” damage to buildings. Astra said it could not be conclusively confirmed from the eyewitness footage whether the Acron plant was directly struck.

Acron's subsidiary PAO Dorogobuzh may have also been attacked in the Smolensk region near the border with Belarus, the outlet [reported](#), citing eyewitnesses.

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Smolensk region Governor Vasily Anokhin [said](#) no infrastructure was destroyed or damaged and that there were no injuries in the attacks.

In Ukraine, the head of the Poltava regional military administration said that Russia had attacked local energy facilities overnight, sparking fires.

In an interview last week, the CEO of Ukraine's state-run gas operator told AFP the country may be facing its toughest winter since the start of the Russian offensive in February 2022.

Naftogaz CEO Sergiy Koretsky said this year's strikes have been more intense and started earlier in the winter, compounding the impact.

According to an AFP analysis of Ukrainian air force statistics, Russia has launched record numbers of drones and missiles at Ukraine in recent months.

Ukraine and its allies have been pushing for a plan to end Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II, with officials in Kyiv on Wednesday telling AFP that an updated proposal was submitted to Washington.

AFP contributed reporting.

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