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Drone Hits Tanker Scheduled to Load Kazakh Oil at Russian Port

By AFP

January 13, 2026



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A drone crashed into a Kazakh-chartered oil tanker en route to a Russian Black Sea port earlier Tuesday, causing an explosion but no serious damage, Kazakhstan's state energy firm Kazmunaygas said.

Kazmunaygas did not say who was behind the attack.

Ukraine, which has waged a years-long campaign of strikes against Russia's energy sector in retaliation for Moscow's invasion, did not immediately comment.

The ship, named Matilda, was en route to load Kazakh oil at the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) terminal on Russia's southern Black Sea coast when the attack took place, Kazmunaygas said.

"There were no injuries among the crew. According to preliminary assessments, the vessel

remains seaworthy, and there are no signs of serious structural damage," it added.

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Russian state media reported Ukraine attacked at least one other ship in the Black Sea earlier Tuesday, but that it also remained seaworthy.

Ukraine has targeted the CPC terminal multiple times throughout the nearly four-year war, including a naval drone strike last November that damaged one of its three mooring points.

The Ukrainian military says the strikes help drain the energy revenues Moscow uses to fund the war and are a justified response to Russia's missile and drone attacks.

But the attacks have drawn frustration from Kazakhstan, which transports around 80% of its oil through the CPC terminal.

Russia launches nightly drone and missile strikes across Ukraine, regularly smashing into apartment blocks, offices and other civilian sites. The attacks have killed thousands of civilians over the last four years.

Ukraine's energy sector has also been heavily targeted, with strikes cutting heating and power to millions.

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