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Ukraine Drones Spark Fire at Key Transneft Oil Hub in Tatarstan

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Ukrainian drone strikes have caused a fire at a key oil pumping station for Russia's pipeline monopoly Transneft in the republic of Tatarstan, media reported and officials confirmed early Monday.

"As a result of falling drone debris, a local fire broke out in an industrial zone," said the administration of the region's Almetyevsk district, adding that there were no victims and no threat to the local population.

Telegram news channel Astra, reporting on residents of Almetyevsk witnessing explosions and a fire at around 4 a.m. local time, said it had geolocated the target as the Kaleykino pumping station. Shot, a Telegram channel with purported links to Russia's security services, said residents of Almetyevsk heard up to seven loud explosions which were followed by a fire at around 5 a.m.

Kaleykino serves as a critical receiving and mixing terminal that aggregates crude oil flows

from several Russian regions and facilitates the transport of nearly 30% of the country's crude oil toward major export routes like the Druzhba pipeline.

Oil supplies to Hungary and Slovakia via Druzhba stopped following a Jan. 27 airstrike on pipeline equipment in Western Ukraine which Kyiv blamed on Russia.

Hungary last week threatened to block the European Union's 90-billion-euro ($106 million) loan for Ukraine and the EU's next package of sanctions against Russia until Kyiv resumed oil transit.

The Almetyevsk district's Telegram account said emergency crews were still dealing with the fire hours after first reporting on the attack.

Ukraine has ramped up attacks on Russia's oil infrastructure since last year, targeting a key source of revenue for the Kremlin's war effort.

Russia's Defense Ministry said three of the 152 Ukrainian drones repelled by its air defense systems had been intercepted or shot down over the republic of Tatarstan.

On Saturday, Astra reported that residents and officials witnessed Ukrainian drone strikes in Almetyevsk near the aviation electronics production plant Radiopribor.

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