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Ukraine Hits Ust-Luga Oil Terminal in Largest Overnight Drone Attack of the Year

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Ust-Luga port in the Leningrad region. **Ust-Luga Port**

Ukraine launched its largest overnight wave of drone attacks on Russia so far this year between Tuesday and Wednesday, sparking a fire at the Baltic Sea port of Ust-Luga in the northwestern Leningrad region.

Governor Alexander Drozdenko said firefighters were battling a blaze at the port, which can handle around 700,000 barrels of oil exports per day. He did not provide details on the extent of the damage but said there were no casualties.

A source cited by Reuters said the terminal, which also exports coal, grains and fertilizers, was sealed off and several oil storage tanks had caught fire.

Drozdenko said 56 drones were intercepted in the skies above the Leningrad region overnight. A residential building in the city of Vyborg, around 100 kilometers (62 miles) north of Ust-

Luga, was damaged, he said.

Unverified images published on social media appeared to show an old building in the city, which is popular among tourists, engulfed in flames.

Related article: Ukraine Strikes Primorsk Port in Northwestern Russia, Damaging Fuel Reservoirs

Not far from Vyborg lies Primorsk port, one of Russia's largest oil export hubs, which was targeted on Monday and reportedly forced to halt operations temporarily.

Industry sources told Reuters at the time of that attack that Ust-Luga was also shut down, though that was never officially confirmed.

In Kronstadt, an island town administratively part of St. Petersburg and home to the Russian Navy's Baltic Fleet, several homes and vehicles were damaged during the overnight drone attack, authorities there said.

A power plant in Estonia was also hit by a drone that had flown from Russian airspace, while another crashed in Latvia, with officials in Riga saying that it was likely a Ukrainian drone gone astray.

Overall, Russia's Defense Ministry said it downed 389 Ukrainian drones across multiple regions and annexed Crimea overnight.

The western Bryansk region reported the highest number of incoming drones, days after a Ukrainian missile attack on a microchip plant there killed seven people.

In the neighboring Belgorod region, Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said around 450,000 people were without power after Ukrainian drones caused "serious" damage to the electrical grid. One person was killed in the attacks, he added.

Both Ukraine and Russia regularly launch drone and missile strikes at each other's territory, with officials in Kyiv justifying their attacks as retaliation for Russia's full-scale invasion and ongoing occupation of Ukrainian territory.

Ukraine has stepped up its strikes on Russian energy infrastructure in recent weeks by targeting oil facilities in a bid to disrupt the Kremlin's war financing.

The latest attacks come at a volatile moment for global energy markets as the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran drives up oil prices and raises fears of supply disruptions.

AFP contributed reporting.

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