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Smoke Plume Rises Above Krasnodar Oil Depot After Ukraine and Russia Trade Deadly Barrages

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Smoke rises over the city of Tuapse and the Black Sea, visible from space, following a Ukrainian drone attack on April 16, 2026. **NASA**

A large plume of black smoke visible from space rose over the Black Sea on Thursday afternoon after a Ukrainian drone strike was reported to have sparked a fire at a major oil export hub in the southern Krasnodar region.

Krasnodar region Governor Venyamin Kondratyev said a woman and a teenage girl were killed in an attack on the port town of Tuapse. Several others sought medical attention for injuries they suffered, he added.

Telegram news channels, citing what were said to be eyewitness videos of the attack, reported that the Tuapse Oil Refinery may have been targeted and set ablaze by Ukrainian drones. Officials have not commented on those reports.

The refinery, owned by Rosneft and with an annual processing capacity of 12 million metric tons of oil, was previously attacked in March 2025.

NASA satellite imagery on Thursday showed a plume of smoke extending around 200 kilometers (125 miles) into the Black Sea from Tuapse, which is located 80 kilometers (50 miles) northwest of the resort city of Sochi.

Ukraine's military claimed it struck infrastructure in Tuapse and two oil depots in annexed Crimea.

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The Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body, said it launched a criminal probe into terrorism following the attacks in the Krasnodar region, which coincided with overnight Russian strikes that killed multiple people across Ukraine.

Investigators said Ukrainian drones also struck a Liberian-flagged oil tanker in Russian territorial waters. The vessel's captain, a Turkish citizen, was hospitalized, they said.

Russian Railways said an overhead line that brings power to electric trains was damaged in Tuapse. However, long-distance trains were running as normal, the company said, adding that none of its employees were injured.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defense systems intercepted 207 Ukrainian drones across the country between Wednesday night and Thursday morning.

Meanwhile, in Ukraine, officials said Russian attacks killed at least 14 people in Kyiv and Odesa, as well as in the Dnipropetrovsk region. Ukraine's military said Russia had launched more than 700 drones and missiles overnight.

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