The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Kremlin Praises Performance of Russian Air Defenses After Record Drone Attack on Moscow

June 19, 2026



Fires at the Gazprom Neft oil refinery outside of Moscow on June 19, 2026. **Social media**

The Kremlin on Friday praised the "high performance" of Russian air defense systems following the largest-ever Ukrainian air raid on Moscow since the start of the war, which ignited huge blazes at an oil refinery that supplies a major share of the capital's fuel.

An eight-year-old girl was killed and at least 17 others were wounded on Thursday during a major drone attack that targeted the Gazprom Neft-operated refinery located just south of Moscow.

"Our air defense systems are performing highly, no matter what," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters during a daily press briefing more than 24 hours after the attack.

President Vladimir Putin has not yet commented on the large-scale air raid.

According to multiple reports and some Russian military bloggers citing video footage of the

incident shared on social media, stray Russian air defense missiles may have been partly responsible for some of the destruction at the Gazprom Neft-operated oil refinery.

The exiled news outlet IStories reported that a surface-to-air missile appeared to hit an oil storage tank directly, launching a dome-shaped roof several hundred feet into the air.

The Moscow Times could not independently verify those reports.

Related article: Ukraine Sets Major Oil Refinery Ablaze in Largest-Ever Drone Attack on Moscow

Thursday's attack marked the second drone strike on the Moscow oil refinery this week. Sources cited by Reuters claimed the June 16 attack damaged a distillation unit that accounts for 53% of the refinery's capacity, while the June 18 attack damaged a more modern Euro+ unit that accounts for the other 47%.

Peskov sought to downplay the scale of the damage, pointing instead to daily Russian attacks on Ukrainian cities and claiming that the Russian military holds the upper hand on the battlefield in eastern Ukraine.

"You should look for more footage coming out of various cities in Ukraine," Peskov said. "The strikes carried out by our armed forces are quite impressive."

On Friday, Ukrainian authorities said Russian attacks killed an eight-year-old girl in the city of Pavlohrad and injured 10 people in the eastern Kharkiv region.

Separate Russian drone strikes in the Black Sea killed a crew member and wounded five others aboard two civilian merchant ships flying the flags of Panama and Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Responding to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's statement that Thursday's attack on Moscow should force Russia to the negotiating table, Peskov said that Kyiv's continued drone campaign "is not a path toward negotiations."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/06/19/kremlin-praises-performance-of-russian-air-defenses-after-record-drone-attack-on-moscow-a93057