The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

What We Know About the Aftermath of Ukraine's Wildberries Drone Strikes

By Moscow Times Reporter

July 20, 2026

Smoke billows from a Wildberries warehouse in Elektrostal, Moscow region. **Social Media / via REUTERS**

Russia is assessing the damage after Ukrainian drone strikes targeted warehouses operated by privately owned online retailer Wildberries on Saturday, killing eight people and injuring more than 70 others.

Russian analysts have estimated the total economic damage caused by the attacks at up to 100 billion rubles ($1.3 billion), making it one of the costliest strikes on Russia's commercial infrastructure since the start of the war.

The Moscow Times looks at the aftermath of the strikes against Wildberries' warehouses in the Moscow and Tambov regions and the reasons behind the attacks:

Why was Wildberries targeted?

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said the strikes were carried out in response to Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure in Ukraine, an apparent reference to last week's deadly strikes on facilities belonging to the Ukrainian postal and logistics company Nova Poshta.

Zelensky also claimed that Wildberries warehouses contained components used "to supply sanctioned components for drone production and navigation equipment."

Wildberries, Russia's largest marketplace, was founded in 2004 by businesswoman Tatyana Kim. The international e-commerce platform offers a wide range of products, from clothing and footwear to electronics and groceries.

There is no publicly confirmed evidence that the company cooperates with Russia's Defense Ministry. Yet dual-use items were listed on Wildberries' online platform, including body armor, combat helmets, camouflage clothing and fiber-optic cable used in drones.

Related article: Wildberries Stops Compensating Sellers for Products Damaged in Airstrikes

Kim described the weekend's attacks as "terrible events for our company and our country" and "a pain that cannot be expressed in words." The company has not, however, commented on accusations that it provided military equipment.

Ukraine's drone forces commander Robert Brovdi said the strikes were also intended as psychological operations aimed at disrupting what he described as the "illusion of a comfortable peacetime" life in Russia.

"This is about destroying, within seconds, the illusion of a comfortable peacetime existence for the obedient population of the aggressor state — striking at the most sensitive part of the comfort zone of ordinary imperial patriots and supporters of [President Vladimir] Putin," Brovdi said.

What was damaged?

The drone strikes, classified by Russia as terror attacks, targeted one of Wildberries' most important logistics hubs and disrupted around 7% of the company's logistics capacity.

The Elektrostal warehouse in the Moscow region is one of the company's largest logistics centers, covering more than 360,000 square meters and employing over 8,000 people. The Kotovsk logistics center in Tambov was opened last year and is designed to store up to 54 million products.

Restoring the damaged facilities is expected to cost up to 35.8 billion rubles ($457 million), a bill that insurance companies are unlikely to fully cover, experts told the Kommersant newspaper.

Wildberries' merchants, many of whom are small business owners, stand to be hit the hardest after their goods stored in the warehouses were destroyed, wiping out months of investment

and leaving them without the inventory that supported their day-to-day operations.

Following the attacks, merchants flooded social media with videos describing the losses they suffered after their goods were destroyed.

"Most of my inventory is gone, but the taxes, salaries and obligations to manufacturers and our teams remain," businesswoman Alisa Goldberg said in an Instagram post. She added that she was grateful that the losses were only financial, saying: "No amount of money is worth a human life."

Other merchants affected by the attack have called on customers to support their companies by purchasing their products.

"I am bankrupt. Just yesterday I was an entrepreneur, and today I am bankrupt. My entire clothing collection has burned down," said Anastasia, an entrepreneur and clothing store owner, in an Instagram post asking her followers for support.

"The only way to keep my brand from closing right now is to operate through pre-orders, because I lost all of my clothing stock and all of my funds," she said.

According to Wildberries' marketplace agreement, the company is exempt from liability for failing to fulfill its obligations if the failure is caused by force majeure events such as drone attacks.

Wildberries said it "was already working on the amount of payments to sellers and other financial support measures" despite the company having "no legal obligation to compensate for lost goods."

The company on Saturday introduced storage fee discounts for 45 days after delivery and a 100% discount on transit shipments to regional warehouses for those affected by the attacks.

Wildberries also said it would provide 2 million rubles ($25,500) in compensation to the families of those killed and 1 million rubles ($12,700) to employees who suffered serious injuries.

Just weeks earlier, the company updated its vendor partnership agreement to remove its financial liability for goods lost or damaged during missile strikes, drone attacks and civil unrest.

Safety issues

While the Wildberries warehouse attacks marked the first strikes against a Russian online retailer since the start of Moscow's full-scale invasion, they reflect a broader shift in Ukraine's drone warfare tactics.

Ukraine has intensified its drone campaign in recent months, targeting critical infrastructure like oil refineries and industrial facilities located deep inside Russia.

Experts say Ukrainian forces have developed the ability to overwhelm Russian air-defense systems, including by deploying large numbers of drones simultaneously.

Reports also suggest that there may have been violations during the evacuation of Wildberries warehouse workers.

According to eyewitnesses, some managers allegedly kept employees inside the buildings after the attacks, while workers had to manually open automatic gates and evacuate through narrow exits to the warehouses, independent media outlets Post and IStories reported.

One Wildberries employee said that, instead of organizing an evacuation, supervisors gathered workers and instructed them to return barcode scanners. A member of an unofficial Wildberries employees' union also said workers may have faced delays while evacuating due to concerns that they could steal goods.

Another eyewitness told journalists that "the fire alarm did not go off immediately" and "only activated when there was already a large cloud of smoke and the fire was raging."

Wildberries denied those claims, saying that emergency systems operated in a timely manner and that all evacuation exits were open "immediately after the emergency."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/07/20/what-we-know-about-the-aftermath-of-ukraines-wildberries-drone-strikes-a93285