

Russian Nuclear Head Says Ukraine Attacked Fuel Trucks, Endangered Zaporizhzhia Plant

By [Reuters](#)

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The Zaporizhzhia plant, Europe's largest with six reactors, was seized by Russian forces in the early weeks of the Ukraine war that broke out in February 2022. **Alexander Polegenko/TASS**

The head of Russia's state nuclear energy corporation accused Ukraine on Sunday of attacking diesel fuel trucks, killing two Russian servicemen and deliberately jeopardizing safety at the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine.

Alexei Likhachev said the attack took place on Friday and also resulted in injuries to other Russian soldiers.

The Zaporizhzhia plant, Europe's largest with six reactors, was seized by Russian forces in the early weeks of the Ukraine war that broke out in February 2022. Each side has regularly accused the other of actions that endanger safety at the plant and increase the risk of a

nuclear accident.

Likhachev issued a statement saying Ukrainian forces had launched “a series of combined strikes” on Friday on fuel trucks which deliver diesel to the station.

“The strikes hit very close to the perimeter of the station's site,” he said.

“Two servicemen were killed, and a large number of Russian soldiers were injured, some seriously. They were all involved in supporting this purely civilian mission.”

Fuel is critically important for the plant as diesel generators provide power to keep nuclear fuel in the reactors cool when the plant's two external power links are down. Both were down for nearly three weeks in August and September.

Ukraine has demanded that Russia abandon the station and hand its operation back to Kyiv, a demand rejected by Moscow. The fuel currently generates no electricity.

The UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, has stationed an observer team permanently at the station, along with Ukraine's three other working plants.

The agency has repeatedly acted as an intermediary when disputes arise and last month helped arrange a local ceasefire in order to carry out repairs and restore external power links.

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