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Libya’s Eastern Government Suspects Drone Attack Caused Explosion on Russian Ship

By Reuters

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This satellite image published by Radio Liberty shows fire on the Russian vessel docked at Benghazi port. **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty/Planet Labs**

Libya's eastern-based government said on Sunday that a preliminary investigation indicated a suspected drone attack had caused an explosion at the Benghazi naval base in eastern Libya aboard a Russian ship docked at the city's port.

The government said the vessel had stopped at Benghazi port to refuel and resupply on its way back to Russia, under maritime cooperation agreements between the two countries.

Two medical sources said no deaths had been reported, but there were injuries. The number and nationalities of those injured were not immediately known.

There was no immediate reaction from Russian authorities, and no one had claimed

responsibility for the suspected attack.

Government condemns suspected attack

The eastern-based government said port and naval base facilities, including warehouses, were safe and that normal operations had resumed after the fire was brought under control and the site secured.

It condemned the suspected attack as a violation of Libya's sovereignty and a threat to maritime safety, saying it would take legal and diplomatic measures against anyone found responsible.

The government stressed that Libya was not a party to the war between Russia and Ukraine, or to any armed conflict beyond its borders, saying its relations with friendly countries were a sovereign matter.

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"The Libyan government will not allow Libyan ports, territory or territorial waters to be turned into an arena for settling scores or exporting international conflicts," Libya's eastern-based government added.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Ukrainian forces have repeatedly used naval drones and missiles to target Russian warships and naval facilities in the Black Sea.

In December 2025, Ukraine said it had struck a Russian-linked oil tanker with aerial drones in the Mediterranean, although the precise location of the attack was not clear. In March 2026, Russia accused Ukraine of attacking a Russian LNG tanker with naval drones launched from the Libyan coast.

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