Russian Air Defense Fires on Civilian Plane After Mistaking It for Ukrainian Drone

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Security guards at an oil refinery in the republic of Bashkortostan opened fire on a civilian airplane Wednesday night after mistaking it for a Ukrainian drone, local media [reported](#) Thursday.

The Antonov An-2, a single-engine biplane more commonly known as a "Kukuruznik," was conducting an aerial photography mission between the regional capital Ufa and the industrial city of Salavat. Two pilots and a photographer were on board the aircraft.

Despite having prior flight clearance and operating with navigation lights, the plane [came under fire](#) while flying at an altitude of around 300 meters (980 feet) near an oil refinery in Salavat, according to the business newspaper Kommersant.

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The incident triggered air raid alerts in Salavat, where emergency hotlines were flooded with calls reporting what residents believed to be an unidentified drone overhead, said Radik Muratov, head of Salavat's Civil Services and Emergency Situations Department.

"It was actually a planned flight by an AkRusavia company aircraft, which landed safely at Ufa Airport," Muratov was [quoted](#) as saying by the state-run Bashinform news agency. He did not comment on the reported gunfire.

The aircraft's pilots, finding no fuel leakage, returned to Ufa after notifying flight dispatchers of the incident. The local branch of Russia's air transportation authority Rosaviatsiya launched an investigation, according to Kommersant.

In May, the Gazprom Neftekhim Salavat oil refinery was [targeted](#) in the first-ever drone attack in Bashkortostan, a region located about 1,200 kilometers (745 miles) from the Ukrainian border.

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