

Exclusive: Russia has secret war drones project in China, intel sources say

Sept 25 (Reuters) - Russia has established a weapons programme in China to develop and produce long-range attack drones for use in the war against Ukraine, according to two sources from a European intelligence agency and documents reviewed by Reuters.

IEMZ Kupol, a subsidiary of Russian state-owned arms company Almaz-Antey, has developed and flight-tested a new drone model called Garpiya-3 (G3) in China with the help of local specialists, according to one of the documents, a report that Kupol sent to the Russian defence ministry earlier this year outlining its work.

Kupol told the defence ministry in a subsequent update that it was able to produce drones including the G3 at scale at a factory in China so the weapons could be deployed in the "special military operation" in Ukraine, the term Moscow uses for the war.

Kupol, Almaz-Antey and the Russian defence ministry did not respond to requests for comment for this article. China's foreign ministry told Reuters it was not aware of such a project, adding that Beijing had strict control measures on the export of drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

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