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Ukraine accuses Russia of 'shelling' nuclear plant

A firefight has been reported near Zaporozhskaya Nuclear Power Plant in Energodar

FILE PHOTO: A general view of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, near Enerhodar, Ukraine © Google Maps / screenshot

A fire broke out on Friday morning in a training building adjacent to the six-reactor Zaporozhskaya Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), which local Ukrainian authorities have blamed on shelling by Russian troops. Moscow had informed the international nuclear authorities on Tuesday that its forces had secured the territory around the plant and it was operating normally.

The facility is *"on fire,"* Energodar Mayor Dmitry Orlov claimed on his Telegram channel, blaming *"continuous enemy shelling of buildings and units of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe."* He did not give details

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as to which buildings might be ablaze or whether there was any danger to the reactors.

Ukraine's State Emergency Service later issued an update stating that the blaze had actually erupted in a *"training building"* adjacent to the nuclear site, not the facility's reactor buildings. While it noted firefighters were initially unable to respond due to the fighting, they were ultimately able to contain the blaze.

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The UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), meanwhile, said no *"essential equipment"* had been damaged at the plant, adding that there has been *"no change reported in radiation levels,"* citing Ukrainian officials.

The six-reactor nuclear power plant is Ukraine's largest. The territory around it came under the control of Russian troops on Monday, Moscow informed the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), adding that the plant staff continued their *"work on providing nuclear safety and monitoring radiation in normal mode of operation."* All of Ukraine's nuclear power plants remained under control of the national operator, Moscow noted.

Security camera footage from the plant indicated there was indeed a blaze on the premises, after apparent flares and tracer rounds had been fired towards one of the buildings. Ukrainian media reports earlier on Thursday claimed that negotiations with the local authorities had broken down and that a firefight broke out between Ukrainian and Russian forces controlling the surrounding area.

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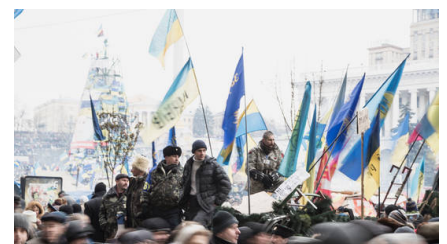**RT Features**

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Europe's largest nuclear power plant was on fire after the station came under fire from invading R forces, with Ukraine's foreign minister demanding immediate ceasefire at the site to avoid disaster

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Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted on Friday that if the plant blows up, it will be *"10 times larger than Chernobyl,"* referring to the 1986 nuclear disaster. Russian troops secured Chernobyl last week and were jointly patrolling the area with Ukrainian security, Moscow has said.

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Russia ordered its troops into Ukraine last week, describing the invasion as aimed at *"demilitarizing"* and *"denazifying"* the government in Kiev, and stopping what it called the *"genocide"* in the two breakaway regions of Donetsk and Lugansk. Ukraine has accused Moscow of an unprovoked offensive, with the US and NATO allies following suit.

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