

UFO Seen In Armenia, Region After Russian Missile Test



Armenia -- A mysterious flying object seen in the sky over Armenia, 6Jun2012.

Armenia was abuzz with speculation on Friday about a mysterious flying object that was observed in the South Caucasus and the Middle Eastern and subsequently linked with a ballistic missile test in Russia.

The swirling spiral of light could be seen in the skies over nearly a dozen regional countries for almost ten minutes late on Thursday. Its photographs and videos quickly appeared on Internet social networks and other websites, sparking conflicting theories.

"I saw a white spot that slowly grew to look like a flower," said one woman in Yerevan. "It kept opening up and the sky turned white. It then flashed strongly and resembled a big mushroom."

"Many people say it looked like an unidentified flying object," said another woman.

The Russian Defense Ministry announced on Friday that it test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile from the Kapustin Yar firing range in southern Russia at a time that coincided with the sightings. It suggested that the UFO watched in Armenia elsewhere in the broader region was the burning trail of the Topol missile.

Areg Mikaelian, the co-chairman of the Armenian Astronomical Association, found this explanation credible. "When I saw photographs of the object and started examining them, I realized that it's very artificial," Mikaelian told RFE/RL's Armenian service (Azatutyun.am). "A natural phenomenon does not look like that. It was apparently a military object."

Relevant authorities in Armenia were more careful in explaining the blaze. "When that object appeared in the sky our crisis management center received numerous alerts," said Nikolay Grigorian, the deputy head of the national Rescue Service subordinate to the Ministry of Emergency Situations. "Our officials photographed and filmed it," Grigorian told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "We contacted the Ministry of Defense and the National Security Service and even the [Metsamor] nuclear plant to clarify all matters. No problem related to us was identified."