

Feature Article

Russian strikes kill 17 across Ukraine in worst attack this year

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Reuters

By Anna Voitenko and Anna Pruchnicka

KYIV, April 16 (Reuters) - Russia unleashed its deadliest attack so far this year on the Ukrainian capital Kyiv and other cities overnight, killing at least 17 people, including a 12-year-old child, and wounding scores, in drone and missile strikes, officials said on Thursday.

In Russia, a major Ukrainian drone attack on the Black Sea port of Tuapse killed two people, including a 14-year-old girl, injured seven, and sparked a large fire, Russian officials and media reported. The port is home to a major oil refinery as well as an export hub for oil, coal and fertilizer.

Overnight in Kyiv, fires in several different places sent black smoke billowing into the sky. Its heavy smell lingered through the morning as residents and emergency crews cleaned debris scattered around heavily damaged buildings including apartment blocks and a hotel.

"I fear for our country and for everything we have. For the people. I feel so sorry for the children. So many people died today," said Olena Kapustian, 41, standing outside with her son.

ZELENSKIY CALLS FOR AID AND EFFECTIVE PRESSURE ON RUSSIA

Four people, including the child, died in Kyiv, mayor Vitali Klitschko said. Eight people were killed in Odesa, and four in the southeastern city of Dnipro, where Russian attacks set residential buildings ablaze, according to regional officials.

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said the night had proven that Russia did not deserve any easing of global policy or lifting of sanctions, with 100 people wounded alongside those killed.

"There can be no normalization of Russia as it is today. Pressure on Russia must work. And it is important to fulfill every promise of assistance to Ukraine on time," he said.

Moscow said it had carried out a "massive" strike on Ukraine that had hit energy targets used by Ukrainian forces and cruise missile and drone production, without giving details. Kyiv's drone forces commander said Ukrainian military struck two oil depots in Russia-occupied Crimea and infrastructure in Russia's southern port of Tuapse.

Ukraine said its air force units shot down or neutralised 31 missiles and 636 drones, but 12 missiles and 20 drones hit in the 24 hours to 7 a.m. (0500 GMT) on Thursday.

Rescue operations were ongoing and the toll could rise, Deputy Prime Minister Oleksiy Kuleba said, while Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha urged the international community to act.

"All decisions required to increase pressure on the aggressor must be unblocked now," he said on X. "It is immoral, counterproductive, and dangerous to delay sanctions against Russia or packages of support for Ukraine."

Klitschko said a drone, flying very low, slammed into an 18-storey building in the capital early on Thursday. Officials put the number of injured in the city at 60.

The mayor said a mother and child had been rescued from a building in a central district. Four emergency medical workers and two police officers were hurt in the city as they attended the sites, emergency services said.

Kapustian and her son were among residents of a huge apartment block hit by a drone in Kyiv watching rescue efforts near a children's play area littered with debris.

"My son got scared. This is the second time (the apartment block was hit)."

The EU's ambassador to Ukraine, Katarina Mathernova, posted a picture from a shelter. "This night was terrifying. My hands are still shaking," she wrote.

DNIPRO, ODESA UNDER ATTACK

Eight people were killed and 26 injured in the overnight strike on the southern city of Odesa, where a high-rise residential building was badly hit, officials said.

The regional governor said that port and critical infrastructure facilities in the city had also been damaged.

Serhiy Lysak, the head of the local military administration, also reported a new morning attack on the city, which hurt three people at a market.

In Dnipro, regional governor Oleksandr Hanzha said that four people were killed and 30 injured in an evening and overnight attack on the city; he posted pictures showing residential buildings ablaze. Another man was killed in the surrounding region, he added.

In Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city in the northeast, officials said two people had been injured in drone strikes.

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