The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

6 Killed in Central Ukraine as Moscow Says Intensified Strikes

By Emmanuel Peuchot for AFP

July 31, 2023



Rescuers carry the body of a resident retrieved after a nine-story residential building was partially destroyed as a result of Russian missiles strike in Kryvyi Rih. **Anatolii Stepanov / AFP**

A missile strike on a residential building in Ukraine killed six and wounded dozens on Monday, as Russia said it stepped up strikes against Ukrainian military facilities in response to attacks on its territory, including Moscow.

Two missiles landed close to the centre of the central Ukrainian city of Kryvyi Rih just after 9:00 a.m. (06:00 GMT), Ukrainian Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko wrote on Telegram.

Among the dead were a 10-year-old girl and her 45-year-old mother, while 75 people were injured, according to local authorities.

One of the strikes hit a large nine-story residential apartment block, punching a huge hole in the facade that destroyed flats on several floors and sparked a fire.

Firefighters used a cherry-picker crane to direct jets of water at the fire, while the emergency ministry said part of the building had collapsed while the rubble was being cleared.

As the toll of the strike rose, Russia said it had intensified attacks on military infrastructure in Ukraine after increasingly frequent drone assaults blamed on Kyiv.

Russia on Sunday said it had downed Ukrainian drones targeting Moscow and annexed Crimea in the latest wave of drone attacks.

'Act of desperation'

"Against the background of the failure of the so-called 'counteroffensive', Kyiv... has focused on carrying out terrorist attacks on civilian infrastructure," Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Monday.

In response, "the intensity of our strikes against Ukrainian military facilities... has been considerably increased," Shoigu said.

Sunday's drone attack damaged two office towers in a Moscow business district, shattering several windows and leaving documents strewn on the ground.

The capital and its environs, lying about 500 kilometers (310 miles) from the Ukrainian border, had rarely been targeted during the conflict until several drone attacks this year.

Following the strikes, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned Sunday that war was coming to Russia.

"Gradually, the war is returning to the territory of Russia — to its symbolic centres and military bases, and this is an inevitable, natural and absolutely fair process," Zelensky said.

The Kremlin responded Monday, describing the strikes on the capital as an "act of desperation" by Ukraine following setbacks on the battlefield.

"It is obvious that the counteroffensive is not a success," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, adding that the situation was "very difficult" for Ukrainian forces on the front.

"All possible measures have been taken to defend civil infrastructure" against Ukrainian strikes, Peskov added.

Ukraine began its long-awaited counteroffensive in June but has made modest advances in the face of stiff resistance from Russian forces on the frontline.

Zelensky's hometown

President Volodymyr Zelensky, who was born and grew up in Kryvyi Rih, said Russians were "continuing to terrorise peaceful cities and people."

The strikes in the city also damaged an academic building, according to the head of the city's military administration Oleksandr Vilkul.

In the southern city of Kherson, Russian shelling killed four and injured another 17, said the head of Ukraine's presidential office, Andriy Yermak.

"The enemy is hitting residential neighborhoods," Yermak said.

Meanwhile, shelling by Kyiv's armed forces killed two people and wounded six in Ukraine's eastern city of Donetsk, which is controlled by Russian forces, Moscow-installed authorities said.

"A bus was destroyed by the shelling... Two people died and six were wounded," the Russian-installed head of the Donetsk region Denis Pushilin said on Telegram.

Russian forces had repelled Ukrainian attacks in the east and south of the country, while it continued its own offensive around Kupiansk, the Defense Ministry said in its daily briefing.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/07/31/6-killed-in-entral-ukraine-as-moscow-says-intensified-strikes-a82014