The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Claims Western Intelligence Aided Ukraine in Striking Crimea Navy HQ

By AFP

September 27, 2023

Russia's Navy headquarters in Sevastopol after Friday's missile attack. **Halifers (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

Moscow on Wednesday accused Washington and London of helping Ukraine coordinate a missile strike on the headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in annexed Crimea last week.

"There is not the slightest doubt that the attack was planned in advance using Western intelligence assets, NATO satellite equipment and reconnaissance aircraft," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

She further claimed that the missile strike was carried out "in close coordination with the American and British intelligence services."

Ukraine took responsibility for the unprecedented missile attack that on Friday struck the headquarters of the Black Sea Fleet in the port city of Sevastopol, sparking a huge fire.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that the attack left one Russian serviceman missing, while Kyiv claimed that the strike killed 34 officers, including the fleet commander Viktor Sokolov.

However, video released Wednesday by the Defense Ministry showed Sokolov seemingly in good health and saying that the Black Sea Fleet was "fulfilling the tasks the command has set."

Since invading Ukraine last year, the Kremlin has accused Western powers of engaging in a proxy war against Russia by providing financial and military support to Kyiv.

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