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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Strike Toll Rises to 8, Rescue Operation Underway

By AFP

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State Emergency Service of Ukraine

Rescuers were working Wednesday to find people under the rubble of a building destroyed in a Russian attack the day before that killed eight people, Ukrainian officials said.

The attack on Zaporizhzhia on Tuesday was the latest in an intensifying series of strikes on southern Ukraine, reinforcing fears of a new Russian offensive in the area.

"So far eight people have died as a result of the Russian missile attack on a private medical facility in the city," the emergency services said.

"Rescue operations are ongoing at the scene. There are probably still people under the rubble," they added.

The emergency services published photos of rescuers carrying a corpse in a white body bag, and of a psychologist speaking to a man in tears.

Another 22 people were wounded in the attack, including a five-year-old girl, according to the interior ministry.

Zaporizhzhia is one of four Ukrainian regions Moscow claimed to have annexed in 2022 without fully controlling them.

In mid-November, the Ukrainian army warned that Russia was building up infantry and armored vehicles while stepping up aerial bombardments ahead of planned attacks along Ukraine's southern front.

Escalated fighting in the Zaporizhzhia region would pose a significant threat to Ukrainian forces, which are losing ground in the eastern Donetsk region and the Russian border region of Kursk.

Ukraine has been pleading for more support from its allies to help it fend off Russian troops on the battlefield and daily aerial attacks.

President Volodymyr Zelensky reiterated that call in his daily address after the strike on Zaporizhzhia.

"We don't have enough systems to protect our country from Russian missiles. But our partners have these systems. Again and again, we repeat that air defense should save lives, not gather dust in warehouses," he said.

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