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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Trump Demands Putin End War After Russian Airstrikes on Kyiv Leave 12 Dead

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First responders at the site of a Russian strike in Kyiv. **Ukraine's State Emergency Service**

U.S. President Donald Trump called on Russia's Vladimir Putin to end his war on Ukraine after Russian airstrikes against Kyiv early Thursday killed at least 12 people and wounded dozens more, making it the deadliest attack on the Ukrainian capital in nearly a year.

"I am not happy with the Russian strikes on KYIV. Not necessary, and very bad timing," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "Vladimir, STOP! 5000 soldiers a week are dying. Let's get this Peace Deal DONE!"

Loud blasts sounded over Kyiv at around 1:00 a.m. on Thursday after air raid sirens blared across the city, warning residents to head to shelters. During the night, rescue workers sifted through the rubble of destroyed buildings and tackled blazes in apartment blocks.

Initially, emergency authorities said eight people were killed and around 60 others were

wounded. However, later in the day, the toll was updated to 12 people dead and 90 injured.

"As of 5:30 p.m., the death toll in Kyiv's Sviatoshynskyi district has risen to 12 after rescuers recovered the bodies of two more people from under the rubble," Ukraine's State Emergency Service said in a statement on Telegram. "Rescue operations are ongoing."

The attacks throw yet more doubt on already fraught U.S. efforts to push Russia and Ukraine to agree to a ceasefire, hours after Trump lashed out at Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for refusing to accept Moscow's occupation of Crimea as a condition for peace.

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Zelensky cancelled part of his trip to South Africa after Russia fired its barrage of missiles and drones at Kyiv, announcing that he would return to Ukraine immediately after meeting the country's president Cyril Ramaphosa.

"It has been 44 days since Ukraine agreed to a full ceasefire and a halt to strikes... And it has been 44 days of Russia continuing to kill our people," the Ukrainian leader wrote on X. "The strikes must be stopped immediately and unconditionally."

Zelensky later told reporters in South Africa that the attack in Kyiv is part of Moscow's pressure campaign on Washington, which he said is not pushing the Kremlin hard enough to negotiate peace in earnest.

Putin has yet to respond to Zelensky's proposal to halt air attacks on civilian targets. Last month, the Kremlin leader also rejected a U.S.-Ukrainian call for a full and unconditional ceasefire.

"Putin shows only a desire to kill," Andriy Yermak, a top aide to Zelensky, said as Russia unleashed its attack overnight. "The attacks on civilians must stop."

Later on Thursday, Russia's Defense Ministry claimed that the overnight attacks it carried out against Ukraine targeted "military sites" using "high-precision weapons," as well as drones.

"The targets were Ukrainian facilities involved in the aviation, missile and space, machine-building and armored vehicle industries, as well as sites producing rocket fuel and gunpowder," the Defense Ministry said in a statement. "All objectives were hit and the strike achieved its intended goals."

Kyiv was last hit by missiles in early April when at least three people were wounded. It has been the target of sporadic attacks since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Russia's military has launched some of its most deadly and brazen air attacks on Ukraine over the last month, defying Trump's push to bring a rapid end to the war.

AFP contributed reporting.

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