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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Launches Drone Strikes Across Ukraine, Effectively Rejecting Ceasefire Proposal

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A village in Ukraine's Kharkiv region after a Russian attack. **State Emergency Service of Ukraine**

Russia launched dozens of drone attacks across Ukraine overnight, Ukraine's Air Force said early Monday, effectively rejecting Kyiv's call for a 30-day ceasefire to pave the way for peace talks.

According to Ukrainian military officials, Russian forces began launching Iranian-made Shahed drones around 11:00 p.m. Sunday, firing 108 drones across multiple regions. The Ukrainian Air Force said it shot down more than half of those drones.

"An additional 30 enemy decoy drones were lost due to location failure, with no negative consequences," the air force said in a statement.

Ukrainian authorities reported damage in the Odesa, Mykolaiv, Donetsk and Zhytomyr regions as a result of the strikes. Emergency officials said at least 22 people were injured in

Russian attacks over the past day.

Over the weekend, Ukraine and its European allies urged Russia to agree to a 30-day ceasefire beginning Monday, warning of additional sanctions if Moscow failed to comply. The ultimatum followed visits to Kyiv by the leaders of Britain, France, Germany and Poland for talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

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U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio reaffirmed Washington's support for an immediate ceasefire during a Sunday call with U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

"Our top priority remains bringing an end to the fighting and an immediate ceasefire," a State Department readout of the call said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had implicitly rejected the idea of a full ceasefire early Sunday when he proposed direct talks with Ukraine in Istanbul this week, an apparent attempt to seize the initiative amid mounting pressure from the West. During those talks, Putin said, the two sides might be able to agree to a pause in fighting.

Zelensky responded by challenging Putin to meet him personally in Istanbul on the proposed date, May 15. An anonymous Ukrainian official told Axios that Zelensky plans to travel to Turkey regardless of Moscow's stance on the 30-day ceasefire.

According to Putin aide Yuri Ushakov, direct negotiations this week would resume based on the early Istanbul talks held shortly after the February 2022 invasion — talks in which Russia demanded terms widely seen as a call for Kyiv's surrender.

Putin had ordered a unilateral 72-hour truce last week to coincide with Victory Day celebrations, but Ukrainian officials dismissed it as political theater. Both sides accused the other of violating the temporary pause.

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