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Wave of Russian Strikes Wounds 12 in Ukraine

By AFP

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A local resident holds her dog at a site of a Russian attack in the city of Smila, Cherkasy region. **Handout / Ukrainian State Emergency Service / AFP**

Fresh Russian strikes targeting Ukrainian regions in the night of Saturday to Sunday wounded at least s12 people, according to the war-torn country's authorities.

Since launching its invasion in February 2022 Russia has launched near-nightly bombardments of its neighbour's towns and cities, raining down drones and missiles on military and civilian targets alike.

Talks on ending the fighting between the two sides are at an impasse, with Kyiv accusing Moscow, which occupies nearly one-fifth of Ukraine's territory, of wanting the war to drag on.

In the night the Russian army launched 477 drones and 60 missiles of various types,

according to the Ukrainian air fosrce, which said it had intercepted 475 and 39 of those respectively.

The strikes led to "six impacts," the air force said, without giving further details.

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Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky argued that the bombardment showed that his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin "has long decided to pursue this war, despite the international community's calls for peace."

"Ukraine must reinforce its aerial defence, which is the best way to protect lives," he added, repeating his willingness to buy U.S.-made Patriot anti-missile systems.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who has tilted Washington's policy on the war in favor of Moscow since retaking office, has not responded to Kyiv's request.

In the central Cherkasy region, the Russian strikes wounded a total of six people, including a child, the Ukrainian police said on Telegram.

Far from the frontline in the western Ivano-Frankivsk region, the strikes likewise wounded a woman who was "taken to hospital," according to the regional governor Svitlana Onyshchuk.

Besides the civilian casualties, a fighter pilot was killed in the night after his F-16 jet was damaged in mid-air "without him having the time to eject," according to an air force statement.

Paying the pilot his respects, Zelensky said he was working to shoot down Russian projectiles before his death.

In the morning after the nighttime strikes, a Russian drone attack killed a 60-year-old man after hitting his car in the northwest Kharkiv region, where the Russian army is on the march, according to the authorities.

For its part, the Russian army said it had intercepted three Ukrainian drones during the night of Saturday to Sunday.

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