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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Missiles Pound Kyiv Ahead of Russian Invasion Anniversary

By AFP

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Ukrainian State Emergency Service

Explosions rocked Ukraine's capital Kyiv early on Sunday with officials warning of a ballistic missile attack, just two days before the fourth anniversary of Russia's invasion.

AFP journalists in Kyiv heard a series of blasts starting at around 4:00 am, shortly after an air raid alert was issued, with the air force later widening the alert warning nationwide citing the threat of missiles.

"The enemy is attacking the capital with ballistic weapons," the head of Kyiv's military administration Tymur Tkachenko said on Telegram, urging people to remain in shelters.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Telegram that two wounded people, a woman and a child, were rushed to hospitals from the suburbs.

The Ukrainian capital, regularly targeted by Russian missile and drone attacks since the start

of the invasion on February 24, 2022, has faced waves of overnight strikes in recent weeks as Moscow has intensified its winter assaults on energy and military infrastructure.

Temperatures had plunged to nearly minus 10 degrees Celsius when the capital was struck, with emergency services deployed across the city.

Tkachenko said the attacks had caused a fire on the roof of a residential building.

The bombardment prompted heightened vigilance across Ukraine, all the way to the western border.

Poland's Operational Command said early Sunday it was scrambling jets after detecting "long-range aviation of the Russian Federation conducting strikes on the territory of Ukraine."

It also came hours after blasts in Lviv, a western city near the Polish border that rarely sees deadly attacks.

Explosions ripped through a central shopping street at around midnight, killing a policewoman and injuring 15 people after officers responded to a reported break-in.

"This is clearly an act of terrorism," Mayor Andriy Sadovyi said, offering no details on perpetrators.

Ukraine 'not losing'

Ukraine will mark four years since Russia's assault on February 24, 2022, a war that has shattered towns, uprooted millions and killed large numbers on both sides.

Moscow occupies close to a fifth of Ukrainian territory and continues to grind forward in places, especially in the eastern Donbas region, despite heavy losses and repeated Ukrainian strikes on logistics.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky told AFP on Friday that Ukraine was "definitely not losing" the war and that victory remained the goal.

He said Ukrainian forces had clawed back about 300 square kilometres of territory in recent counter-attacks, gains AFP could not immediately verify.

If confirmed, they would be Kyiv's most significant advances since 2023.

Sweeping outages of Starlink internet terminals across the Ukraine front, shut down by owner Elon Musk following a plea from Kyiv, have enabled the push, according to Zelensky.

The United States is pushing both sides to end the war, brokering several rounds of talks in recent weeks without a clear breakthrough.

Zelensky, under mounting pressure from Washington to consider concessions, said on X on Saturday he planned consultations with European leaders in the coming days and wanted deeper involvement from Middle Eastern states and Turkey.

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