

Russia Hits Kyiv With Deadly Attack After Vowing Retaliation

By [AFP](#)

May 24, 2026



Russia pounded Kyiv with a large missile and drone attack early on Sunday, killing two people and wounding 56, authorities said. **Telegram / State Security Service of Ukraine**

Russia pounded Kyiv with a large missile and drone attack early on Sunday, killing two people and wounding 56, authorities said, after President Vladimir Putin threatened retaliation for strikes in Russian-occupied eastern Ukraine.

Multiple rounds of loud explosions were heard in the Ukrainian capital throughout the early hours of the morning, AFP journalists said.

“Tonight Kyiv region is once again enduring a mass enemy attack with strike drones, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles,” said Mykola Kalashnyk, the head of the regional military administration.

The blasts caused a residential building near the government district to shake, while dozens

of people took shelter in an underground metro station in the city center, AFP reporters said.

Residents were instructed to stay in shelters, as city authorities warned fires had broken out and Mayor Vitali Klitschko said two people had been killed and at least 56 wounded, 30 of them in hospitals.

Ukrainian authorities and the U.S. embassy had earlier warned of a possible significant attack on Kyiv, after Russia said it would “punish” those responsible for deadly strikes in a part of eastern Ukraine under its control.

Klitschko said damage had been recorded in every district of Kyiv, adding that a strike on a school had sparked a fire, and another on a business center had led to people being trapped in a shelter.

Ukrainian authorities said Russian strikes had also wounded three people in the broader Kyiv region, 11 in the Cherkasy region and seven in the Dnipropetrovsk region.

Related article: [Ukraine, U.S. Embassy Warn of Possible Major Russian Airstrike](#)

Ukraine had been expecting a major attack after its own forces launched a drone barrage on Starobilsk, in the Russian-occupied east of the country, which Moscow said hit a college dormitory and killed at least 18 people.

Launched overnight on Thursday to Friday, the drone salvo — one of Ukraine's deadliest such strikes in months — also wounded 42 in the city, located in the occupied Luhansk region, trapping people beneath the debris.

Ukraine denied targeting civilians, saying it had hit a Russian drone unit stationed in the area.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said on Friday those responsible would face “inevitable and severe punishment.”

On Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned that Ukraine was “seeing signs of preparation for a combined strike on Ukrainian territory, including Kyiv.”

He said on social media that Moscow may deploy “various types of weaponry,” including the nuclear-capable Oreshnik hypersonic missile. There were no initial reports that an Oreshnik had been used.

Similarly, the U.S. embassy said it had “received information concerning a potentially significant air attack that may occur at any time over the next 24 hours.”

Ukraine regularly targets Russian-controlled areas of the country with drones, saying the strikes are retaliation for Russian attacks.

Related article: [Russia Requests UN Security Council Meeting After Deadly Ukrainian Attack on Luhansk Vocational School](#)

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry said on Saturday it had pulled two more bodies from the rubble of the dormitory in Starobilsk, taking the death toll to 18.

Video shared by the ministry showed dozens of rescuers sifting through what remained of a section of the five-story building.

Most of those killed and missing were young women born between 2003 and 2008, according to a list of casualties published by the Moscow-backed governor of occupied Luhansk, Leonid Pasechnik.

“The region and the entire country share the fate of these people and the pain of their families,” he said on Telegram.

The United Nations said on Friday it “strongly condemns any attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, wherever they occur,” adding that it could not verify details due to restricted access to the area.

Starobilsk lies about 65 kilometers (40 miles) from the front line in eastern Ukraine. It was captured by Russian forces in the early months of the offensive in 2022.

Kyiv has recently expanded its drone capabilities and stepped up strikes on undisputed Russian territory, including residential areas and oil export infrastructure.

Moscow has launched mass barrages of missiles and drones at Ukraine almost daily since invading the country in 2022, also hitting infrastructure and causing civilian deaths. It denies targeting civilians.

U.S.-led efforts to negotiate an end to more than four years of war have slowed in recent months, with Washington's attention diverted towards its conflict in the Middle East.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/05/24/russia-hits-kyiv-with-deadly-attack-after-vowing-retaliati-on-a92829>