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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Air Barrage on Kyiv Kills At Least 18

By Reuters

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Residents pass through debris at a site of a Russian missile and drone strikes in Kyiv on July 2, 2026.
REUTERS / Alina Smutko

Russia launched a barrage of drones and missiles at Kyiv on Thursday morning, tearing apart several residential buildings, killing at least 18 people and wounding dozens more.

Multiple explosions shook central Kyiv and reverberated across the capital throughout the night as thousands of residents rushed to bomb shelters and underground metro stations.

The attack caused the widest destruction in Kyiv so far this year and was the deadliest since at least May, when 24 people were killed in a strike that brought down an apartment block.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who cut short a visit to Ireland to return home, said damage had been reported at more than 20 sites across the capital.

"The main strike was directed at Kyiv," Zelensky said. "Air defense supplies for Ukraine are

an absolute and critical priority," he said, urging Ukraine's allies to maintain contributions to a fund to buy U.S. weapons, including Patriot air defense missiles for Ukraine.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko announced a day of mourning in Kyiv for Friday. He said that damage was recorded across the entire city of about 3 million people, with some buildings heavily damaged.

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Russia launched 74 missiles and 496 drones overnight, the Ukrainian air force said. Air force spokesperson Yuri Ihnat said the number of ballistic missiles was unusually high and the interception rate for them was low.

Russia's Defense Ministry, in a Telegram post, said it targeted military and energy facilities, as well as airports in Kyiv and other locations.

It said the attack was retaliation for Ukrainian drone strikes on Russia.

Ukraine, which has stepped up strikes in recent weeks on Russia's domestic fuel supply, said it had hit an oil refinery overnight in the Russian region of Nizhny Novgorod, where the local governor said one person was killed in a strike on an industrial facility.

The Kremlin said Russian military commanders briefed President Vladimir Putin about the Russian attacks, adding that Moscow would continue to increase pressure on Ukraine to achieve its war aims.

Poland, a NATO and EU member, briefly scrambled fighter jets during the barrage as a preventive measure. Finland also briefly issued a temporary aviation restriction zone in the eastern Gulf of Finland, its defense forces said.

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