

Ukraine strikes the Kerch Bridge again: railway link targeted after road span collapse

Published on 19/11/2026

Ukrainian forces have launched a new, intense attack against the **Kerch Bridge**, the strategic infrastructure linking mainland Russia to the occupied Crimean Peninsula. The action, carried out overnight between November 18 and 19, marks the **third raid in less than four days** and is clearly aimed at severing the only artery that remained operational after the devastating November 17 attack, which caused the collapse of the main span and more than 220 meters of the road section.

Moscow confirms and train services suspended

The new raid was announced by **Sergey Aksyonov**, Moscow-installed governor of Crimea, in a message on his Telegram channel. *«Following another attack on the Crimea Bridge, traffic has been temporarily suspended. All relevant services are at work, and a damage assessment is underway»*, Aksyonov said, urging the public to avoid the area.

According to local monitoring channels and testimony from residents of the city of Kerch, at least **15-16 explosions** were heard overnight, accompanied by the activation of Russian air defenses. Witnesses reported intense flashes and at least two direct strikes on the **railway section**, which had miraculously remained operational despite the severe structural damage sustained in the previous attack. Russia's Ministry of Transport confirmed the temporary suspension of train traffic, announcing only a partial restoration of service in the afternoon.

A planned seven-phase campaign

The offensive against the 19-kilometer bridge — the symbolic centerpiece of the 2014 annexation, personally inaugurated by Vladimir Putin in 2018 — was not an isolated incident, but the culmination of a **complex operation structured in seven phases** and lasting several weeks, jointly conducted by Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) and the Defense Forces.

- **Suppression of air defenses (SEAD/DEAD):** During the preliminary phases, Kyiv systematically neutralized Russian radar systems and antiaircraft batteries deployed to protect the strait, opening a corridor for strike assets.
- **Combined use of missiles and drones:** The attack employed a mix of long-range drones, **Neptune** cruise missiles, and the new domestically produced **Palianytsia** missile-drones, demonstrating a penetration capability that Russian defenses were unable to contain.
- **Retaliation and geopolitical timing:** President Volodymyr Zelensky claimed the operation as a direct response to Russia's continuing bombardment of Ukrainian energy infrastructure, recalling that *«the war will always return to where it began»*. Military sources in Kyiv also stressed that the strike was timed to undermine Putin's image on the eve of the APEC summit in Shenzhen with Xi Jinping and Donald Trump.

Logistical and strategic implications

The destruction of the road span has already forced Moscow to drastically reorganize its supply flows, with experts estimating that reconstruction will take more than a year. In addition, debris from the collapsed structure in the strait is obstructing the passage of large commercial and military vessels bound for the Sea of Azov.

- **Isolation of the peninsula:** With the road section out of service — as the Ukrainian General Staff itself joked in a message congratulating Lisbon's Vasco da Gama Bridge on

regaining the title of Europe's longest bridge — Crimea's entire logistical sustainability now depends on the railway and the so-called **land corridor** through the occupied regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia.

- **Vulnerability of ground lines of communication (GLOC):** The land corridor, however, is already under constant pressure from Ukrainian drones and artillery, especially following the destruction of the Chonhar and Henichesk bridges.

If the next waves of attacks succeed in bringing down the railway arch as well, Crimea would effectively become a logistical island, severely undermining Russian forces' ability to sustain military operations across Ukraine's entire southern theater.