



Ukraine Under Attack: Record of 728 Russian Drones and Missiles

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KYIV, Ukraine - Ukraine experienced the most massive air attack since the start of the Russian invasion over three years ago, with Russia launching a record number of 728 Shahed and reconnaissance drones, along with 13 cruise and ballistic missiles, overnight between Tuesday and Wednesday.¹ This was reported by the Ukrainian Air Force on Wednesday, marking a further escalation after weeks of increasing Russian air and ground offensives.²

The city of Lutsk, located in northwestern Ukraine, bordering Poland and Belarus, was the hardest hit, although another 10 regions were targeted, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy stated. Lutsk hosts airports used by the Ukrainian military, with cargo planes and fighter jets regularly flying over the city. The western regions of Ukraine represent a crucial logistical backbone in the war, as airports and depots in these areas receive vital foreign military aid before forwarding it to other parts of the country. Russian long-range attacks have increasingly sought to disrupt these supply corridors.

The Russian Ministry of Defense stated that its forces targeted Ukrainian air bases and that "all designated targets were hit." Russia has recently attempted to overwhelm Ukrainian air defenses by launching massive air assaults, including a greater number of decoy drones in its attacks.³ The previous largest Russian air offensive was launched overnight between July 4 and 5, with the one before that less than a week earlier.

Simultaneously, the larger Russian army also launched a new offensive to break through parts of the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, where Ukrainian forces, short on personnel, are under heavy pressure.

International Responses and Reactions

U.S. President Donald Trump stated on Tuesday that he was not "happy" with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has not yielded to his demands for a ceasefire and peace since Trump took office in January and began pushing for a deal.⁴ On Monday, Trump had stated that the United States should send more weapons to Ukraine, just days after Washington suspended critical arms deliveries to Kyiv due to uncertainty about the U.S. administration's commitment to Ukraine's defense.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov commented that Trump "has a rather tough style in terms of the phrases he uses," adding that Moscow hopes to "continue our dialogue with Washington and our course aimed at repairing the severely damaged bilateral relations."

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Zelenskyy stated that the Kremlin was "making a point" with the overnight attack on western regions of Ukraine, while U.S.-led peace efforts falter. He urged Ukraine's partners to impose stricter sanctions on Russian oil and those who help finance the Kremlin's war by purchasing it. "Everyone who wants peace must act," said Zelenskyy, who is expected on Wednesday for a meeting with Pope Leo XIV during a visit to Italy.

Two people were injured in the Kyiv region during the overnight bombing, officials said, while emergency teams continue to assess the damage. Poland scrambled its fighters and put its armed forces on the highest level of alert in response to the Russian attack, wrote the Polish Armed Forces Operational Command in a post on X.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen warned on Tuesday that Russia could pose a credible threat to the security of the European Union by the end of the decade, and called for an acceleration of the defense industry in Europe and Ukraine within five years.

Ukrainian Air Defense and Drone Production

Ukrainian air defenses shot down 296 drones and seven missiles during the overnight attack, while another 415 drones were lost from radar or jammed, according to a statement from the air force. Ukrainian interceptor drones, developed to counter Russian Shahed drones, are showing increasing effectiveness, Zelenskyy emphasized, noting that many targets were intercepted and that domestic production of anti-aircraft drones is increasing in collaboration with some Western countries.

Western military analysts say that Russia is increasing its drone production and could soon be able to launch 1,000 drones a night against Ukraine. "Russia continues to expand its domestic drone production capacity amid an ever-growing role of tactical drones in frontline combat operations and increasingly large Russian long-range night attack packages against Ukraine," stated the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank, on Tuesday.

Ukraine has also developed its own offensive drone threat, reaching deep into Russian territory with some spectacular long-range attacks. The Russian Ministry of Defense stated on Wednesday that air defenses shot down 86 Ukrainian drones over six Russian regions overnight, including the Moscow region. Flights were temporarily suspended at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport and Kaluga International Airport, south of Moscow.

The governor of the Kursk region, bordering Russia, Alexander Khinshtein, reported that a Ukrainian drone attack on the region's capital shortly before midnight killed three people and injured seven, including a 5-year-old child.