INTERNATIONAL







A view of a high-rise apartment block which was hit by recent shelling in Kyiv, yesterday; women and children cross the border from Ukraine to Poland at the Korczowa-Krakovets border crossing; and a demonstrator holds up placards during an anti-war protest in Munich, Germany. Russian forces pounded Ukrainian cities with artillery and cruise missiles yesterday for a third day running but a defiant President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said the capital Kyiv remained in Ukrainian hands. PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS



It's time to padlock the embassies and continue contacts looking at each other through binoculars and gun sights.... The sanctions are being imposed for one simple reason - political impotence arising from their inability to change

Russia's course. Ex-president of Russia **Dmitry Medvedey**

Ukrainians flee as fighting flares

REUTERS

Refugees fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine continued to pour across its western borders yesterday, with around 100,000 reaching Poland in two days and some finding temporary sanctuary in sports halls and others in churches.

As Russian forces pounded Ukrainian cities including the capital Kyiv with artillery and cruise missiles, fearful families thronged European Union borders hoping to enter Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary.

Ukrainians already safely in the European Union waited anxiously at the borders for relatives to join them; many had walked for miles to try to reach safety.

"The most important thing is that people survive," said Katharina Asselborn, wiping away tears as she waited at the Polish border for her sister, aunt and her three children from their home in Odessa.

"I don't know what will happen next. They lost their own house. It's so terrible. The last 30 kilometres to the border they went on foot."

At the Hungarian border town of Beregsurany, 69-year-old Ilona Varga crossed into the European Union on foot, leaving behind her home, shop and hopes she might soon return.

"My kids are telling me to move over to Hungary for good, and they are right," Varga said. "But it is so hard to leave everything behind, I was born here, I grew up here, I have my work here, everything ties me here."

At the same border post, 58-year-old Nataliya Ableyeva brought a stranger's two children to safety after border guards prevented their fighting-age Ukrainian father from crossing.

"Their father simply handed over the two kids to me, and trusted me, giving me their passports to bring them over," she said. On the Hungarian side, the two children were reunited with their mother.

In Poland, which has the region's largest Ukrainian community of about 1 million people, a further 9,000 people had crossed the border since 7 am yesterday, Deputy Interior Minister Pawel Szefernaker told a news conference.

At Medyka in the south, some 85 km (50 miles) from Lviv in western Ukraine, thousands of Ukrainians waited for officials to process them as refugees. A group of women dragging suitcases with small children sitting on them shouted "Glory to Ukraine" as they passed.

The Polish government has reserved 70,000 hospital beds for the war wounded and prepared a train to transport the injured from Ukraine. More train wagons been loaded with humanitarian supplies for the Lviv region.

Czech railways sent special trains that arrived early yesterday at the Polish border carrying Ukrainians living in the Czech Republic to meet family members who had escaped the war.

In the Slovak border town Ubla, officials put refugees in a local gymnasium where foldout beds and air mattresses filled a basketball court. Volunteers handed out sandwiches while young children giggled and played with donated stuffed animals. The country's interior ministry said over the past 24 hours, authorities processed 10,526 people at the Slovak-Ukraine border. Before the conflict, they averaged 1,444 people daily.

In Romania, the Orthodox Church housed refugees at a 15th century monastery. In neighbouring Bulgaria, two buses, carrying ethnic Bulgarians from Odessa arrived early yesterday and a third one was on its way. Bulgaria has sent another four buses to Kyiv to evacuate people from its 250,000 minority in Ukraine.

INVASION OF UKRAINE

Developments

AGENCIES

BATTLE FOR KYIV

Ukrainian soldiers beat back a Russian attack in the capital Kyiv only hours after President Volodymyr Zelensky warns Moscow would attempt to take the city before dawn. He has said at press briefing that his country will triumph over Russian forces. A day before, Russian President Vladimir Putin called on the Ukrainian army to overthrow the government.

WEST SENDING WEAPONS

Zelensky says "weapons and equipment from our partners are on the way to Ukraine" after talking to French President Emmanuel Macron, while Prague is sending automatic and sniper rifles, pistols and ammunition valued at 7.6 million euros (\$8.6 million). Us also to release \$350 million in military aid to Ukraine.

SWIFT DECISION SOON

A decision to cut Russia off from the global SWIFT payment system will be taken in a matter of days, the governor of a central bank within the euro zone told Reuters. The United States and the European Union add Russian leader Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to their sanctions list. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson also says he is planning "imminent" sanctions against them.

'3,500 RUSSIAN SOLDIERS KILLED'

According to a post on Ukrainian military's Facebook page, more than 3,500 Russian soldiers involved in the invasion have been killed and almost 200 taken prisoner. They

> add that Russia has also lost 14 aircraft, eight helicopters, and 102 tanks so far. The BBC is unable to independently verify any of these claims. Russia has so far not acknowledged any casualties.

NO 'WAR' OR 'INVASION'

Russia orders its media to remove reports describing its attack on Ukraine as an "assault,

invasion, or declaration of war" or face being blocked and fined.

COUPLE READIES FOR WAR HOURS AFTER MARRIAGE

Ukrainian citizens Yaryna Arieva and Sviatoslav Fursin got married just hours after Russia launched its invasion of their country. They spent their first day as a married couple collecting their rifles and getting ready to defend Ukraine. It was supposed to be a May wedding, but the couple were no longer sure of what their future holds. Arieva and Fursin have both signed up with the Territorial Defense Forces, a branch of Ukraine's armed forces that is comprised mostly of volunteers. Once armed, the couple headed to the office of their political party, the European

SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

The US and allies responded with a barrage of sanctions after President Vladimir Putin defied Western warnings to unleash a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24

Key measures announced so far by US, EU, UK, Canada, Japan, Australia, **New Zealand**

INCLUDING: FINANCE

Top 10 Russian

financial institutions

Oil and gas

representing nearly 80 percent of Russias banking sector now under **US** restrictions

Sberbank banned from conducting transactions through the US CAPTA

Aviation EU ban on aircraft

VTB and 3 other banks hit with "full blocking sanctions" meaning all US-held assets to be frozen

Defence and aerospace Gazproms oil and natural gas units cut off from Western

credit markets EU export bans on equipment and tech for refinery upgrades

and aviation parts **UK banned Aeroflot** from using British

jets Feb 25

KEY INDUSTRIES

Exports of key high-tech goods cut off, includes semiconductors, computers, telecoms. information security,

lasers, and sensors

Mixed

 Canadian export permits for goods worth \$550 million in aerospace, IT and airspace Feb 24, mining cancelled Russian private

INDIVIDUALS

EU agrees to freeze the European assets of Putin and FM Sergei Lavrov US and Canada also to

sanction Putin and Lavrov

Personal assets of dozens of officials frozen Canada sanctioned 58

Australia on Feb 26 added 8 oligarchs and 339 MPs to their list of sanctioned individuals

Football UEFA

moved to Paris Formula 1

individuals and entities

OTHERS

Champions League final taken away from Saint Petersburg

Russian Grand Prix cancelled Skiing

World Cup events in Russia cancelled Eurovision

Russia banned from the song contest Head of Division in the rank of General Manager/ Deputy General Manager. No. of Post: 01

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TALIBAN RULE IN AFGHANISTAN

Few women return as universities reopen

AFP, Afghanistan

Afghanistan's main universities yesterday reopened six months after the Taliban returned to power, but only a trickle of women returned to now-segregated classes.

Most secondary schools for girls and all public universities were shuttered following the Taliban's August 15 takeover, sparking fears women would be barred from education -- as happened during the first rule of the hardline Islamists, from 1996-2001.

The Taliban insist they will allow

girls and women to be educated this time around -- but only in segregated classes and according to an Islamic curriculum.

Kabul University, the country's oldest, re-opened vesterday without fanfare -- and few students in attendance. Taliban guards refused journalists access to the sprawling campus and chased away media teams lingering near the entrance.

AFP, however, spoke to some students away from the gates, who expressed mixed feelings after their first day back.

"I am happy that the university

resumed...we want to continue our studies," said an English major who asked to be identified only as Basira. But she said there were "some

difficulties" -- including students being scolded by Taliban guards for bringing their mobile phones to Another student, Maryam, said

only seven women attended her class. A similar picture emerged from campuses across the country, although no students returned to class at Panjshir University, in the heartland of a nascent resistance to the Taliban's rule.

