

Ukraine repels Russian drone strikes

Debris damages Odesa warehouse, pressure on Avdiivka, Kherson intensifies, says Kyiv

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine shot down 14 attack drones and a cruise missile fired by Russia at its south and east overnight, but debris from a downed drone damaged a warehouse at the Black Sea port of Odesa, officials said yesterday.

Air defences brought down nine Iranian-made Shahed drones over the southern region of Odesa, which is home to Ukraine's main Black Sea ports, and no one was reported injured, governor Oleh Kiper wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

There was no comment from Moscow, which denies targeting civilian infrastructure.

Russia has intensified attacks on port and grain infrastructure since quitting a UN-brokered deal in July that had allowed Kyiv to ship its grain via the Black Sea.

Ukraine, a major grain producer, has been trying to establish a new shipping corridor to revive its exports across the Black Sea, traditionally its main route to global markets, despite a de facto Russian blockade.

The regions of Kherson in the south, Donetsk in the east and Sumy in the

northeast were also targeted in the attack, the Interior Ministry said.

All 14 drones, including 13 Shaheds, and a cruise missile were shot down in the strike, the air force said, praising air defence systems supplied by the West.

"Western weapons have proven and continue to prove their effectiveness on the battlefield," Mykola Oleshchuk, commander of the air force, wrote in a statement on Telegram.

Meanwhile, Russian forces aiming to contain a four-month-old Ukrainian counteroffensive maintained unrelenting pressure on the shattered town of Avdiivka in the east and intensified shelling in the southern area of Kherson.

Russia has focused on the industrial east since pulling back from a failed advance on Kyiv and its forces have tried to maintain positions in Kherson since abandoning the region's main town late last year.

The general staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces, in its evening report, said Ukrainian forces repelled nearly 20 Russian attacks around Avdiivka, its buildings now largely reduced to shells. Russian air strikes hit nearby villages, it said.



Palestinian children receive food at a UN-run school in Rafah, on the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

BORDER TENSIONS

Over 19,000 displaced in Lebanon

Says UN agency

AFP, Beirut

More than 19,000 people have been displaced in Lebanon amid an uptick in tensions between Israel and Hezbollah at the country's southern border, figures released yesterday by a United Nations agency showed.

"An increase in cross-border incidents" has resulted in the displacement of 19,646 people in Lebanon, "both within the south and elsewhere within the country", said the International Organization for Migration.

"We expect the numbers to rise as the cross-border tensions continue" or if there is an escalation in violence, IOM spokesperson Mohammedali Abunajela told AFP in a statement.

Iran-backed Shiite Muslim group Hezbollah has launched escalating attacks on Israel, raising fears the group intends open a front from Lebanon in support of ally Hamas.

Israel has carried out cross-border strikes and bombardments on Lebanon. Thousands of civilians have fled, many heading to other parts of the south or areas in or outside the capital Beirut.

Lebanon, grappling with political paralysis and a four-year-long economic crisis, has not implemented an evacuation plan, but Prime Minister Najib Mikati has said the country was developing an emergency response "as a precaution".

The IOM's Abunajela said that "amidst a deteriorating economic situation and the significant rise in poverty across all populations in Lebanon, internal displacements may add additional stress to the resources of host communities".

Most of the displaced are currently "sheltered in host and family settings, while there are three designated schools, managed by local authorities that are also used as shelters", Abunajela said.

'They betrayed and bombed us'

Says Gaza teenager who saw parents, siblings killed after seeking safety in south

REUTERS, Gaza

When the Israeli army told Palestinians in the Beach refugee camp in Gaza City to flee south because it was safer, 18-year-old Dima Al-Lamdani's family prayed they would escape relentless air strikes.

But days later, Lamdani was left to identify the bodies of her relatives at a makeshift morgue in the southern city of Khan Younis. She said she lost her parents, seven siblings and four members of her uncle's family in an Israeli air strike.

"They told us to evacuate your place and go to Khan Younis because it is safe... They betrayed us and bombed us," she said.

She said her family and that of her uncle travelled in two cars across Gaza, which has faced the heaviest bombardment after the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched an attack into Israel on October 7.

Lamdani's family was staying at a temporary shelter in Khan Younis when she said: "At 4.30 am I was awake and sitting with my aunt drinking coffee. Suddenly I woke up in the middle of ruins. Everyone around me was screaming, so I screamed."

Lamdani, the side of her face grazed and bruised, said after searching for her family members in the morgue on October 17 that only her brother and two young cousins had survived.

"This is a nightmare. It will never be wiped from my memory," she said. "I had a sister, 16. They wrote my name on the white sheet they wrapped her body in, they thought it was me."



An Israeli military spokesperson said: "The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) has been encouraging residents of the northern Gaza Strip to move southward and not to stay in the vicinity of Hamas terror targets within Gaza City."

"But, ultimately, Hamas has entrenched itself among the civilian population throughout the Gaza Strip. So, wherever a Hamas target arises, the IDF will strike at it in order to thwart the terrorist capabilities of the group, while taking feasible precautions to mitigate the harm to uninvolved civilians."

Gaza health authorities said more than 5,000 people have been killed in Israel's two weeks of bombardment and more than 15,000 have been injured.

After October 7, Israel imposed a total blockade on the Gaza Strip, which is running out of water, food, medicines and fuel for its 2.3 million people.

Yesterday, aid workers and security sources said a third convoy of aid trucks entered the Rafah crossing from Egypt bound for Gaza. Rafah is the main crossing that does not border Israel.

UN officials say about 100 trucks a day are needed to meet essential needs in Gaza. On Saturday and Sunday, 34 trucks passed through.

Hamas said more was needed. "Letting limited quantities of aid enter the Gaza Strip in the past two days doesn't answer the growing requirements of our people during the savage aggression and the ongoing blockade," it said in a statement.

US can't build Biden's 'new world order'

Says Kremlin

REUTERS, Moscow

The Kremlin said yesterday that it agreed with US President Joe Biden on the need to build a "new world order", but that it disagreed that the United States was capable of building it.

In a call with reporters, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that the US was talking about an "American-centric" world order that would not exist in future.

The exchange was emblematic of a contest, playing out against the background of the Ukraine and Gaza wars, in which Russia is trying to persuade developing countries to join it in building a new world free of US "hegemony".

In a speech on Friday, Biden said the order that had worked well for 50 years after World War Two had "sort of run out of steam" and a new one was needed. He said Americans had "an opportunity to do things, if we're bold enough and have enough confidence in ourselves, to unite the world in ways that it never has been".

Peskov said Moscow was in rare agreement with Biden about the need for a new order that, in his words, would be "free from the concentration of all mechanisms of world governance in the hands of one state". But he said Russia disagreed with Biden about the capacity of the United States to build such a system.

ARSON SUSPECT LYNCHED

Algeria sentences 38 to death

AFP, Algiers

Thirty-eight people were sentenced to death in Algeria yesterday over the lynching of a man who was accused of arson while trying to fight deadly wildfires. The death sentences will be commuted to life in prison as the North African country has maintained a moratorium on capital punishment since the last executions in 1993. The 38-year-old painter Djamel Ben Ismail was killed in the northeastern Kabylie region, setting off a wave of revulsion across the country in 2021. Ben Ismail had turned himself in to police after hearing he was suspected of arson at the height of blazes which killed at least 90 people nationwide. Videos posted online showed a crowd surrounding a police van and beating a man inside it, then dragging him out and setting him on fire.

World's oldest dog Bobi dies

REUTERS, Lisbon

Bobi, the world's oldest dog, has died aged 31 in Portugal, Guinness World Records said yesterday. A purebred Rafeiro Alentejano who spent his entire life in a village in central Portugal, Bobi lived for 31 years and 165 days, breaking a record held since 1939 by an Australian cattle-dog that died at 29 years and five months. "Despite outliving every dog in history, his 11,478 days on earth would never be enough for those who loved him," said Karen Becker, a veterinarian who met Bobi several times and who was the first to announce his death on social media. "Godspeed, Bobi." He was declared the world's oldest dog in February this year. Bobi's breed, which traditionally has been used as sheepdogs, usually has a life expectancy of 12 to 14 years.



What aid? They are giving us 2 canned food, what for? Breakfast, lunch and dinner for the children?

— Nasser Abu Amer, Palestinian man taking shelter at United Nations school in Khan Younis, Gaza with his wife and eight children.

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