

Ukraine Fighting 'Intense' Battles in Donetsk Region

By [AFP](#)

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Lyudmila, 68, salvages belongings from her apartment in a damaged residential building following overnight Russian strikes in the town of Selydove. **Genya Savilov / AFP**

Ukraine said on Friday that Russian forces were concentrating their firepower on the Pokrovsk front in the eastern Donetsk region, where overnight strikes wounded at least six civilians.

The Kremlin annexed the industrial territory in late 2022, months after invading, and its forces are making incremental gains there.

"The enemy is intensively attacking Ukrainian defenders in the Pokrovsk sector," the Ukrainian military said in its evening briefing.

"The situation is difficult, but controlled by the Defence Forces. Our soldiers are making efforts to prevent the enemy from advancing deep into Ukrainian territory."

In the war-battered town of Selydove near the front line in Donetsk, officials said six people were wounded by Russian aerial attacks overnight.

AFP journalists on the scene hours after the attack saw the interior of a supermarket reduced to heaps of metal and glass under a partially gutted roof.

The force of the explosion, which tore open a neighboring building, also blew out the windows of residential buildings across the street.

Oleg, a 57-year-old resident, said he heard a strange noise at around 9.00 pm on Thursday.

He thought it was several helicopters flying overhead until he saw the explosion.

Lyudmila, still in shock, assessed the damage in her flat where the windows had been blown out by the blast.

'Everything blown away'

"Everything was blown away," the 68-year-old told AFP, her face bruised by the blast.

Kyiv and Moscow staged dozens of drone and missile attacks overnight and during the day Friday.

The two sides have stepped up cross-border aerial assaults in recent weeks, with Kyiv targeting Russian energy facilities and Moscow launching retaliatory barrages.

In Russia's southern Belgorod region, five people were killed when shelling caused a section of a five-story block of apartments to collapse in the border town of Shebekino, which often comes under attack from the Ukrainian side, regional authorities said.

Embed:

Emergency services said they had found the bodies of a man and a woman in the rubble and seven people were wounded.

Russia said it had downed 87 Ukrainian drones, 70 of which had targeted the southern Rostov region that houses the headquarters of its military operation against Ukraine.

Russia's Defense Ministry said 70 drones were downed over Rostov, six each over Kursk and Voronezh, two each over Volgograd and the Belgorod region bordering Ukraine, and one over the annexed Crimean peninsula.

Attacks sparked power cuts in several areas of the Rostov region, its governor Vasily Golubev said on social media.

In the Voronezh region, which borders Ukraine, a fuel reservoir was slightly damaged by falling debris, its governor Alexander Gusev said.

Ukraine's General Staff meanwhile said that Russia launched 17 missiles during the day and nearly 500 drones.

During the day, drone attacks killed a 54-year-old man in the southern Kherson region and wounded a 17-year-old girl in the eastern city of Dnipro, regional authorities said.

Three people were wounded in a drone attack in the eastern Sumy region and several homes were damaged in the neighboring Kharkiv region.

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