

# Russia Hits Ukrainian Airbases, Carries Out Daylight Strikes



Smoke rises in the sky over the city after a Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, May 29, 2023.

KYIV (Dispatches) -- Russia said on Monday its military had hit Ukrainian airbases in overnight strikes and Ukrainian forces had shelled industrial facilities inside Russia. Explosions rattled Kyiv during daylight as Russian ballistic missiles took aim at the Ukrainian capital, hours after a more common nighttime barrage of the city by drones and cruise missiles. In a rare acknowledgement of damage to a military "target", Ukraine said that work was under way to restore a runway and that five aircraft were taken out of service in the western region of Khmelnytskyi, although it did not name the site or sites.

A large military airfield was located in the region before the war. "At the moment, work is continuing to contain fires in storage facilities for fuel and lubricants and munitions," the Khmelnytskyi region governor's office said. Russian state-owned news agency RIA cited the defense ministry as saying more than one air base was hit, but there was no confirmation from Ukraine of damage to any other air bases. The Ukrainian capital came under attack for the 16th time this month in the morning after a second successive night of bombardments. But officials

said most of the drones and missiles fired overnight had been shot down and no targets were hit in the morning. Russian forces fired 11 ballistic and cruise missiles at Kyiv at about 11:30 a.m. (0830 GMT; 4:30 a.m. EDT), according to Ukraine's chief of staff, Valerii Zaluzhnyi. All of them were shot down, he said, and puffs of white smoke could be seen in the blue sky over the city from street level. The attacks, which sent Kyiv residents running for shelter in metro stations, were part of a new wave of Russian airstrikes this month as Ukraine, armed with new Western weapons, prepares a push to try to take back territory occupied by Russian forces. Ukraine's military said an attack on Odesa port had caused a fire and damaged infrastructure but did not specify whether the damage threatened grain exports. Ukraine said it had shot down 29 of 35 drones and 37 of 40 cruise missiles fired overnight by Russia, and the Kyiv military administration said its air defenses had shot down over 40 of the "targets" fired at it. "Another difficult night for the capital," mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Telegram. The attack follows one the previous night - the largest drone barrage yet launched on Kyiv - in which one person was killed and several injured. In Sunday's attack, 36 drones were downed over the city.

## On Alert, Japan Vows to Down North Korean Missile



Japanese soldiers walk past a Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) missile at the Defense Ministry in Tokyo, Oct. 8, 2017.

TOKYO/SEOUL (Reuters) -- Japan put its ballistic missile defenses on alert on Monday and vowed to shoot down any projectile that threatens its territory, after North Korea notified it of a planned satellite launch between May 31 and June 11. The nuclear-armed North says it has completed its first military spy satellite and leader Kim Jong Un has approved final preparations for the launch. It would be the North's latest step in a series of missile launches and weapons tests in recent months, including one of a new, solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile. Tokyo expects North Korea to fire the rocket carrying its satellite

over Japan's southwest island chain as it did in 2016, a defense ministry spokesman said. Analysts say the new satellite is part of a surveillance technology program that includes drones, aimed at improving the ability to strike targets in wartime. "We will take destructive measures against ballistic and other missiles that are confirmed to land in our territory," Japan's defense ministry said in a statement. Japan would use its Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) or Patriot Missile PAC-3 to destroy a North Korean missile, it added. Any North Korean missile launch would be a serious violation of UN Security Council resolutions con-

demning its nuclear and missile activity, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters. South Korea joined Japan in calling on the reclusive North to scrap its plan, which it described as "illegal". "If North Korea presses ahead, it will pay the price and suffer," a spokesperson of the South's foreign ministry said in a statement. Kim Gunn, the South's special envoy for peace and security affairs on the peninsula, held a three-way telephone call with his counterparts from Japan and the United States, the ministry added. They agreed to work together closely in leading a united response by the international community to Pyongyang's planned move, it said. But with no serious leverage left on Pyongyang, calls by Tokyo and Seoul to halt the launch will have little effect, said Chad O'Carroll, chief executive of Korea Risk Group, which monitors North Korea. "Coming amid major U.S.-ROK military drills and in the wake of South Korea's own satellite launch, North Korea is likely to view Seoul's critique as extremely hypocritical." South Korea's domestically made space rocket delivered a commercial grade satellite into orbit for the first time on Thursday. North Korea has tried several times to launch "earth observation" satellites, of which two appeared to have been successfully placed in orbit, the latest in 2016.

## Shaky Ceasefire Under Threat Amid Clashes in Sudan

CAIRO (AP) -- Sudan's warring sides were under pressure Monday to extend a shaky ceasefire in their battle for control of the country, after two key international mediators signaled impatience with persistent truce violations. A week-long truce between Sudan's military and its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, was to expire Monday evening. Sudan descended into chaos after fighting erupted in mid-April between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and the RSF, commanded by Gen. Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo. The fighting has killed at least 866 civilians and wounded thousands more, according to the Sudan Doctors' Syndicate, which tracks civilian casualties. The toll could be much higher, the medical group said. The conflict has turned the capital, Khartoum, and other urban areas into battlefields, forcing nearly 1.4 million people to flee their homes to safer areas inside Sudan or crossing into neighboring countries. Early on, foreign governments raced to evacuate their diplomats and nationals as thousands of foreign residents scrambled to get out of the African nation. In Sunday's statement, the mediators noted that the military continued to carry out airstrikes, while the RSF was still occupying people's homes and seizing properties. Fuel, money, aid supplies and vehicles belonging to a hu-

manitarian convoy were stolen, with theft occurring both in areas controlled by the military and by the RSF, a Saudi and U.S. statement said. Alan Boswell of the International Crisis Group think tank said the joint statement was meant to pressure both sides into greater compliance, at a time when the U.S. and Saudi Arabia don't have an alternative for the Jeddah talks. "There is still no clear path to a successful ceasefire," said Boswell, who is project director for the Horn of Africa at the Crisis Group. "It's becoming clearer by the day that mediators can't afford to wait for a stable ceasefire to kick-start the wider political process needed to find a way out of the conflict." The conflict has come to a stalemate as neither side has been able to deliver a decisive blow. The war has inflicted widespread destruction in residential areas in Khartoum and its adjacent cities of Omdurman and Bahri. Residents reported storming and looting of their homes, mostly by the paramilitary troops. Many took to social media to condemn looting and seizing their homes allegedly by the RSF. Aid groups' offices, healthcare facilities and other civilian infrastructure were also attacked and looted. Many hospitals have become inaccessible since fighting began in April 15.

## Spanish PM Calls for Snap Election After Election Rout



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez appears after he casts his vote at a polling station during Regional elections, in Madrid, May 28, 2023.

MADRID (Reuters) -- Spain's Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez unexpectedly called a snap national election on Monday and his main rival spelled out the aim of becoming the country's next leader, after left-wing parties were routed in a regional ballot. Sanchez, who had repeatedly said he wanted to see out a full term in office, portrayed Sunday's crippling defeat as a clear vote of no confidence in his coalition government. The mainstream conservative People's Party (PP) of Alberto Nunez Feijoo won outright control of two regional administrations and could run six more in partnership with the far-right Vox, whose leader said he was ready to form coalitions with the PP. In all, 12 regions were contested. Sanchez, saying he felt compelled to "take personal responsibility for the results", called the national election for July 23. The announcement - the biggest gamble in the career of a politician with a well-established reputation as a risk-taker - wrongfooted most of Sanchez's government and even some members of his inner circle. Sunday's results indicate the PP and the far-right Vox could unseat Sanchez's Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) if they replicated that performance at national level. Vox leader Santiago Abascal said his party was open "creating an alternative" to Sanchez by forming national and regional governing coalitions with the PP.

Sanchez had previously said the national election would be in December, and it is rare for a Spanish government to call a snap ballot after a poor regional election - especially when much of the country will be on holiday. Pablo Simon, professor of political science at Madrid's Carlos III University, said Sanchez's strategy may be to rally support by raising the specter of a first far-right party in government since dictator Francisco Franco died in 1975, at a time when Spain will also hold the six-month EU presidency. Sources close to the prime minister said almost no one within the government knew of his decision beforehand. "The move has caught us by surprise, but now we know about it, it is the bold gesture we need to win," said a senior government official. David Hernandez Martinez, professor of international relations at Madrid's Complutense University, said Sanchez had hoped to use Spain's EU presidency to sell himself to voters as an international statesman, and "this puts a huge spanner in his plans." But the prime minister has become known for taking unexpected political risks. He took office in June 2018 by winning the first no-confidence vote in Spanish history, removing PP Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy after negotiating a pact with Catalan and Basque pro-independence parties. The fragility of his coalition government forced him to call snap elections twice in 2019.

## Knee-Jerk Opposition Grows Against Empowering Aboriginals



First Nations Referendum Working Group member Marcia Langton, centre, is seen during a news conference with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, right, at Parliament House in Canberra, on March 23, 2023.

SYDNEY (AFP) -- Australia's prime minister took a swipe Monday at "doomsayers" using fear tactics in a referendum to give Indigenous people a voice on laws that affect them. Debate on the so-called Voice has turned increasingly acrimonious, with supporters decrying deliberate disinformation and opponents saying it risks opening a racial divide. If passed, Indigenous Australians -- whose ancestors have lived on the continent for at least 60,000 years -- would have a constitutionally enshrined right to be consulted by the government on laws that impact their community. More than 200 years since British colonization and the ensuing persecution of Indigenous people, they remain greatly disadvantaged with higher incarceration and jobless rates, and a life expectancy about eight years shorter than that of other Australians. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has stressed the symbolic but modest nature of the proposed change, which would not confer a right of veto to Indigenous people. "All it's about is recognizing Aboriginal people in our constitution and, secondly, saying that where matters affect them we should listen

to them," the center-left Labor leader told a radio interviewer. "And that's just common courtesy." Australia's conservative opposition Liberal Party leader Peter Dutton has hardened his rhetoric, though, last week declaring the change would "re-racialize our nation." "It will have an Orwellian effect where all Australians are equal, but some Australians are more equal than others," he said. The political battle over Indigenous recognition is already leaving a mark on the community. One of Australia's top television journalists, Stan Grant, quit his current affairs show with national broadcaster ABC this month citing "relentless" racial attacks he faced as an Indigenous person in the spotlight. Last Wednesday, state Liberal MP Bev McArthur said Indigenous people should be grateful for the "wonderful things that have been enabled via colonization" such as hospitals, running water and electricity. McArthur, an upper house MP representing the western Victoria region who opposes a federal Indigenous voice to parliament, issued the statement a day after the Geelong city council voted to stop recognizing January 26 as Australia Day.

## News in Brief

MESA, Ariz. (AP) -- A suspect has been arrested in connection with five separate shootings in the Phoenix metro area that left four people dead and a woman wounded, authorities said. Mesa police said 20-year-old Iren Byers was taken into custody Sunday on suspicion of four counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted first-degree murder. A motive for the shootings wasn't immediately clear, but police said Byers took responsibility for the shootings and told officers where they could find the clothes and gun used in the crimes. Police said video surveillance footage showed the suspect wearing the clothing reported by witnesses at multiple shooting scenes. The names of the victims were being withheld Sunday until relatives could be notified. It was unclear Sunday if Byers has a lawyer yet who could speak on his behalf.

MANILA, Philippines (AP) -- Philippine officials began evacuating thousands of villagers, shut down schools and offices and imposed a no-sail ban Monday as Typhoon Mawar approached the country's northern provinces a week after battering the U.S. territory of Guam. The typhoon is packing maximum sustained winds of 155 kph (96 mph) and gusts of up to 190 kph (118 mph) but is forecast to spare the mountainous region a direct hit. Current projections show the typhoon veering northeast toward Taiwan or southern Japan. Although it's expected to slow down considerably, authorities warned of dangerous tidal surges, flash floods and landslides as it blows past the northernmost province of Batanes from Tuesday to Wednesday. Disaster-preparedness officials said the typhoon's course could change abruptly and there was no room for complacency.

TRIPOLI (AFP) -- Drone strikes in Libya killed at least two people and wounded others, including an MP's nephew, the lawmaker said, days after accusing the Tripoli-based government of targeting his home. The strikes near the western city of Zawiyah were part of an operation that the authorities said was targeting smuggling networks. But lawmakers in the country's eastern-based parliament accused the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity (GNU) of hitting the home of Zawiyah representative Ali Bouzribah. Bouzribah said in a Facebook post that his nephew had been injured and two other men killed in the strikes Sunday. Images and video circulated on social media of both those killed and the lawmaker's injured nephew in a hospital bed. The strikes targeted Al-Maya, a small port between Zawiyah and the capital that has seen repeated clashes between rival militias in recent weeks.

JIUQUAN, China (AFP) -- China will send its first civilian astronaut into space as part of a crewed mission to the Tiangong space station on Tuesday, its Manned Space Agency announced, as Beijing pushes ahead with its extra-terrestrial ambitions. The world's second-largest economy has invested billions of dollars into its military-run space program, trying to catch up with the United States and Russia after years of belatedly matching their milestones. Until now, all Chinese astronauts sent into space have been part of the People's Liberation Army. "Payload expert Gui Haichao is a professor at Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics," China Manned Space Agency Spokesperson Lin Xiqiang told reporters Monday. Gui will be "mainly responsible for the on-orbit operation of space science experimental payloads", Lin said. The commander is Jing Haipeng -- on his fourth mission into space, according to state media -- and the third crew member is engineer Zhu Yangzhu.

MINSK (Reuters) -- Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said that if any other country wanted to join a Russia-Belarus union there could be "nuclear weapons for everyone." Russia moved ahead last week with a plan to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, in the Kremlin's first deployment of such warheads outside Russia since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, spurring concerns in the West. In an interview published on Russia's state television late on Sunday, Lukashenko, President Vladimir Putin's staunchest ally among Russia's neighbors, said that it must be "strategically understood" that Minsk and Moscow have a unique chance to unite. "No one is against Kazakhstan and other countries having the same close relations that we have with the Russian Federation," Lukashenko said. "If someone is worried ... (then) it is very simple: join in the Union State of Belarus and Russia. That's all: there will be nuclear weapons for everyone."

CARACAS (AFP) -- Indigenous locals attacked a military outpost in the Amazon with bows and arrows, Venezuela's military reported. The incident occurred on Friday, a source linked to indigenous rights defenders told AFP. No injuries were reported. The attack with traditional weapons was in retaliation for the armed forces confiscating "contraband materials" meant to be used in illegal mining, regional General Domingo Hernandez Larez posted on Twitter. The materials were being sent to illegal mining camps in the Yacapana National Park, in Amazonas state, on the border with Colombia and Brazil, he added. Some five tons of food and various supplies were seized by the armed forces in the previous days during military operations against illegal mining, he added.