

# Russia, Ukraine Exchange Drone Strikes as War Rages on



In this photo taken from a video released by Russian Defense Ministry press service on Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2024, Russian Gvozdika 120mm howitzer fires towards Ukrainian positions at border area of Kursk region, Russia.

KYIV, Ukraine (Dispatches) — Russia and Ukraine exchanged scores of drone strikes Wednesday as North Korea's top diplomat arrived in Russia for talks.

Ukraine's air force said that Russia launched 62 drones and one missile overnight, adding that 33 of them were intercepted and 25 were jammed.

The drones struck a residential building and a kindergarten in Kyiv, injuring nine people, including a child, according to the city administration. "Russian drones did not change their constant tactics — they approached the capital from different directions, at different heights," it said.

Russian attacks also targeted other regions of Ukraine, killing at least four and injuring about 30 others over the past 24 hours, authorities said.

At the same time, Russian forces have pressed their slow-moving offensive in eastern Ukraine. In Moscow, the Defense Ministry announced the capture of the village of

Kruhlyakivka in the Kharkiv region.

The ministry said that air defenses downed 25 Ukrainian drones over several regions in the country's west and southwest.

The new attacks come as North Korea's Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui traveled to Russia for talks.

The Pentagon alleges North Korea has sent about 10,000 troops to Russia, and that they will likely fight against Ukraine "over the next several weeks."

Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary, said Tuesday that a "relatively small number" of North Korean troops are now in the Kursk region, where Russia has struggled to push back a Ukrainian incursion.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday during a trip to Iceland, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy denied that his government had set a goal of capturing the Kursk nuclear power plant as Russia has suggested. "If we wanted to occupy their nuclear station, we could do it, but we never wanted it," he said.

Talking about the "victory plan"

that he has presented to Ukraine's Western allies, Zelenskyy said that while many of them began to accept it, some told him that he wanted too much. "Too much of what? We want to live. Is it too much? Just to live," he said.

Zelenskyy also complained that some confidential parts of his plan were leaked to the media, including Kyiv's call on the U.S. to provide long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles that was reported by The New York Times.

"They say that Ukraine wants or wanted a lot of missiles, like Tomahawks and etcetera, but it was confidential information between Ukraine and White House," he said. "How to understand these messages? So, it means between partners there is nothing confidential."

Meanwhile, Russia on Wednesday accused Britain of using a Black Sea grain corridor to deliver arms to Ukraine, after denying London's allegations that Russian attacks on Ukrainian ports had disrupted crucial grain supplies for other countries.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said last week that an increase in Russian attacks on Ukraine's Black Sea ports was delaying vital aid reaching the Palestinians and stopping crucial grain supplies from being delivered to the global south.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said that Starmer's allegations that Moscow was damaging global food security with such strikes were wide of the mark.

"Such baseless yet thunderous outrage from London once again confirms just the opposite: the direct involvement of the UK in supplying arms to the Kiev regime using the Black Sea sea corridor," she told a press briefing.

## India, China Complete Troops Pull-Back From Border Face-Off Points



File photo of army convoy carrying military material on its way to Ladakh amid border tension with China, at Manali-Leh highway, India.

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India and China have completed pulling back their troops from two face-off points on their disputed Himalayan frontier as planned, an Indian defense official said on Wednesday.

The nuclear-armed neighbors reached a deal last week on patrolling the frontier in the Indian territory of Ladakh to end a four-year military stand-off, paving the way for improved bilateral political and business ties.

The disengagement that began last week has been completed and verification of the process is in progress, the Indian official told Reuters.

Soldiers will exchange sweets in a goodwill gesture on Thursday and will begin their patrols of the frontier soon after commanders on the ground finalize the modalities, he added.

There was no immediate comment from Beijing on the troops pull-back.

The mostly undemarcated border of about 4,000 km (2,500 miles)

that runs along the Himalayas has been a source of tension between the world's two most populous nations for decades and led to a brief but bloody war in 1962.

Four years ago, 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers were killed during border clashes. The two sides then stopped patrolling several points on the border in Ladakh to avoid new confrontations, while moving tens of thousands of new troops and military equipment closer to the freezing mountainous region.

They later pulled back troops from five face-off points but the last such withdrawal took place over two years ago.

Days after the two countries reached their new border pact, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held their first formal talks in five years on the sidelines of a BRICS summit in Russia and agreed to boost communications and resolve conflicts to help improve relations.

The thaw is expected to boost economic ties that were hurt by the border tensions, although Indian officials said New Delhi would move cautiously given the trust deficit that has built up.

## DR Congo Wants UN Peacekeepers Out

KINSHASA (AP) - Many Congolese who once looked to the UN peacekeeping force with hope are now angry. Multiple protests, some of them violent, have targeted the force in recent years.

Last year, at Congo's request, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to draw down the peacekeeping force and gradually hand over its security responsibilities to Congo's government by this December.

Local protesters have recently escalated their calls for United Nations forces to leave the region, saying the soldiers have failed to protect civilians against an alarming surge of violence carried out by an

array of militant groups.

Congo desperately wants stability in its mineral-rich east, of intense interest to the global economy. But political friction means the government wants the longtime United Nations peacekeeping force there to get out.

In August 2021, United Nations peacekeepers opened fire at a border crossing in the Democratic Republic of Congo killing two people and injuring 15 others in a spasm of violence that punctuated weeks of tensions over the agency's role in Africa's second-largest nation.

The UN force established new bases between the frontlines and about 600,000 displaced people sheltering around Goma. It is train-

ing Congolese soldiers in the hope that they can fill the security void once it leaves.

Congo's communication minister, Patrick Muyaya, said there would be a new timeline for MONUSCO's departure, but didn't give details. He said a joint team of government and UN officials was evaluating the situation.

Global interest in eastern Congo's minerals is one reason the violence is so difficult to contain, experts said.

Congo is the world's largest producer of cobalt, a mineral used to make lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles and smartphones. It also has substantial gold, diamond, copper and cobalt reserves.

## Report: U.S. Running Low on Interceptor Missiles Amid Mideast, Ukraine Wars



A Standard Missile Three is being launched from the guided missile cruiser USS Shiloh during a ballistic missile flight test on June 22, 2006 at sea in the Pacific Ocean.

LONDON (Dispatches) - U.S. stockpiles of air-defense missiles are running low amid surging demand in Israel and Ukraine, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Pentagon officials and analysts are reportedly "concerned" over U.S. readiness due to an inability to produce new missiles faster than they are being used.

The figures by the report suggested that since October last year, more than 100 Standard Missiles have been launched in an attempt to intercept incoming missiles, including those fired by resistance groups like Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"The shortfall could become even more urgent after Israel's Friday night strikes on Iran, which U.S. officials fear might spark another wave of attacks by Tehran," the WSJ further said.

"The U.S. has not developed a defense industrial base intended for a large-scale war of attrition in both Europe and the Middle East, while meeting its own readiness standards," Elias Yousif, deputy director of the Conventional Defense Program at the Stimson Center, told the WSJ. "And both of those wars are extended conflicts, which was not part of U.S. defense planning."

Washington cannot publicly disclose its stockpile strength due to security concerns. Pentagon officials said there are no plans to increase production of Standard Missiles.

"Over the course of the last year, the Department of Defense has augmented our force posture in the region to protect U.S. forces and support the defense of Israel, while always taking into account U.S. readiness and stockpiles," Pentagon spokeswoman Sabrina Singh told the WSJ.

## Spain Flash Floods Kill At Least 72 People in Valencia Region



Cars are being swept away by the water, after floods preceded by heavy rains caused the river to overflow its banks in the town of Alora, Malaga, Spain, Oct 29, 2024.

LA ALCUDIA (Reuters) - At least 72 people have been killed in the deadliest flooding to hit Spain for three decades after torrential rain battered the eastern region of Valencia, leaving roads and towns under water, local authorities said on Wednesday.

Rescuers using dinghies worked in the dark to scour the floodwaters, rescuing several people, television pictures from the town of Utiel showed, and emergency services were still working to reach the worst-hit areas.

"For those who at this moment are still looking for their loved ones, the whole of Spain weeps with you," Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said in a televised address. "To the villages and cities destroyed by this tragedy, I say the same: Together, we will rebuild your streets, your squares, your bridges," he said.

Carlos Mazon, the regional leader of Valencia, one of Spain's most important agricultural regions, said some people remained isolated in inaccessible locations.

"If (emergency services) have not arrived, it's not due to a lack of means or predisposition, but a problem of access," Mazon told a press conference, adding that reaching certain areas was "absolutely impossible".

Dozens of videos shared on social media overnight appeared to show people trapped by the floodwaters, with some climbing into trees to avoid being swept away. Footage showed rescue workers transporting several women in a bulldozer's bucket.

Firefighters could be seen freeing drivers whose cars were stranded in flooded streets in the town of Alzira.

Trains to the cities of Madrid and Barcelona were cancelled due to the flood-

ing, and schools and other essential services were suspended in the worst-hit areas, officials said.

The death toll appeared to be the worst in Europe from flooding since 2021 when at least 185 people died in Germany.

It is the worst flood-related disaster in Spain since 1996, when 87 people died near in a town in the Pyrenees mountains.

Scientists say extreme weather events are becoming more frequent in Europe due to climate change. Meteorologists think the warming of the Mediterranean, which increases water evaporation, plays a key role in making torrential rains more severe.

"Events of this type, which used to occur many decades apart, are now becoming more frequent and their destructive capacity is greater," said Ernesto Rodriguez Camino, senior state meteorologist and a member of the Spanish Meteorological Association.

Emergency services in the region urged citizens to avoid all road travel and to follow further official advice, and a military unit specialized in rescue operations was deployed in some places to help local emergency workers.

Spain's state weather agency AEMET declared a red alert on Tuesday in Valencia, a leading citrus-growing region, with some areas such as Turis and Utiel recording 200 mm (7.9 inches) of rainfall.

It said the rain had since stopped but said that Castellon in the north of the region would remain on orange alert until 2 pm (1300 GMT).

ASAJA, one of Spain's largest farmer groups, said on Tuesday it expected significant damage to crops.



WASHINGTON (AP) - President Joe Biden took a swipe against Donald Trump's supporters on Tuesday as he reacted to the Republican presidential nominee's weekend rally at Madison Square Garden, which was overshadowed by crude and racist rhetoric. In a call organized by the Hispanic advocacy group Voto Latino, Biden responded to a comic at Trump's rally who called Puerto Rico a "floating island of garbage." Biden's initial comments were garbled. "Just the other day, a speaker at his rally called Puerto Rico a floating island of garbage. Well, let me tell you something, I don't, I don't know the Puerto Rican that I know, the Puerto Rico where I'm from—in my home state of Delaware. They're good, decent honorable people," he said.

MOSCOW (Xinhua) - Washington's recent actions against Russian journalists violate the right to access information and media pluralism, Russia's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday. A film crew from Russia's Izvestia newspaper, who arrived in Washington to cover the upcoming presidential election, was detained and subjected to hours of interrogation on Tuesday night, resulting in one member being expelled from the country, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The Russian journalists had notified US authorities of their intentions and received permission before their arrival, ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said.

TBILISI (Reuters) - State prosecutors in Georgia said on Wednesday they had launched an investigation into opposition allegations that last weekend's parliamentary election was rigged, and summoned President Salome Zourabichvili to testify. But Zourabichvili, who has alleged repeatedly that the vote count was falsified to give victory to her opponents in the ruling Georgian Dream party, said it was not her job to supply the evidence. "It's not up to the president to provide proof of election fraud," she told reporters. "Observers and everyday citizens have shown proofs of how massive the rigging of elections was." Zourabichvili and other government critics have cast the vote as a pivotal moment for Georgia, a country which has ambitions to join the European Union.

BEIJING (AFP) - Three Chinese astronauts including the country's only woman spaceflight engineer entered the Tiangong space station on Wednesday following an early morning launch into orbit. The Shenzhou-19 mission took off with its trio of space explorers from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. Among the crew is Wang Haoze, 34, China's only woman spaceflight engineer, according to the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA). She is the third Chinese woman to take part in a crewed mission. China has ramped up plans to achieve its "space dream" under President Xi Jinping. Its space program was the third to put humans in orbit and has also landed robotic rovers on Mars and the Moon.

MAPUTO (Reuters) - At least 10 people were shot dead and another 63 injured by gunfire during post-election protests in Mozambique last week, medical associations said on Wednesday, as the country braced for further demonstrations. Protests broke out before and after Mozambique's electoral commission announced that ruling party Frelimo had won an Oct. 9 poll, extending its 49 years in power. Opposition candidates, civil society groups and observers said the election was rigged. The electoral commission has declined to comment on allegations of fraud, while Frelimo did not reply to requests for comment. Police responded to the protests with teargas and gunfire. Interior Minister Pascoal Ronda told reporters on Tuesday that the protests were violent and that security forces were compelled to restore public order, which resulted in deaths.