Russian attacks continue in northeastern & eastern Ukraine as drones & missiles hit Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, other cities

As Friday's British Defence Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine, above, indicates, last week the Russian forces continued to attack, as they have for the past several months, the Ukrainian forces that still hold a small portion of Russia's Kursk region; toward the city of Sumy just south of Kursk; toward Kharkiv city; toward Kupiansk in Kharkiv region in northeastern Ukraine, toward the area around Chasiv Yar in Donetsk region, and toward Pokrovsk, also in Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine. But as the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported in its daily updates, the Russian forces also continued to attack the Ukrainian forces defending other cities and towns in eastern Ukraine – among them, Lyman about 30 kilometers southeast of Izium, Kramatorsk about 25 kilometers northwest of Chasiv Yar, Toretsk about 20 kilometers south of Chasiv Yar, Vremivka about 50 kilometers south of Pokrovsk, the Orikhiv area southeast of Zaporizhzhia, and in area in Kherson region adjacent to the Dnipro River in southern Ukraine.

The General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported that over the past week from Sunday, June 1 through Saturday, June 7, the Russian forces conducted a total of 1,058 attacks against the Ukrainian forces defending the cities and towns in northeastern and eastern Ukraine. And in the first three days of this week, from Sunday through yesterday, the Russian forces conducted 553 attacks against the Ukrainian forces defending the cities and towns of eastern Ukraine, compared with a total of 466 attacks in the first three days of last week, which suggests the total number of attacks this week will substantially exceed last week's total.

As in previous weeks, the largest number of Russian attacks in eastern Ukraine last week were directed against the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk, an important transit hub on the highway that links Donetsk city with Dnipro and,

perhaps more importantly for the Russians at this point in the war, a city that, if taken, would open a pathway northward for their forces toward Kostyantynivka, Kramatorsk and Sloviansk and the remaining portion of Donetsk region they don't currently hold. Over the seven days last week, the Russian forces conducted a total of 350 attacks, one-third of all their attacks against all their targets in eastern and northeastern Ukraine last week, against the forces defending Pokrovsk. Over the past three days this week, the Russian forces conducted 145 attacks against the forces defending Pokrovsk.

As the war continued on the ground in northern, northeastern, and eastern Ukraine last week and continues to do so this week, it also continues in the air. Last Thursday, for example, Russia fired 407 drones, 38 cruise missiles, six ballistic missiles, and one anti-radar missile at a wide range of civilian and military targets in Ukraine. On Sunday night, the Russians fired 479 drones and 20 missiles at both military and civilian targets, the latter including apartment buildings, schools, and hospitals. On Monday night, the Russians fired 315 drones and seven ballistic missiles at Kyiv, Kharkiv, and other cities. Over the past week, the Russians have fired almost 1500 drones and almost 100 missiles at both civilian and military targets.

When the Russian and Ukrainian representatives met in Istanbul for the first time on May 16, both sides agreed to return 1,000 prisoners of war to the other side over three days on May 23-25 and subsequently did so. Although the second meeting of the representatives on June 2 lasted only a little more than an hour and produced no agreement on any movement toward an end to the conflict, the two sides did at least, building on the success of the earlier exchange of 1,000 prisoners of war, agree to an all-for-all exchange of prisoners of war who are seriously wounded or seriously sick as well as an all-for-all exchange of prisoners of war who are 18 to 25. The first exchange took place on Monday. The Ukrainian prisoners of war, many of them draped in Ukrainian flags, were greeted with cheers of "Slava Ukraini!" (Glory to Ukraine!) and "Heroiam slava!" (Glory to the heroes!) - cheers that were well deserved given what they had gone through.

David R. Cameron
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