As Ukrainian & Russian forces battle for control of Pokrovsk, Russian drones & missiles continue to hit Ukrainian cities

UK Defense Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine as of November 7.

As Friday's British Defence Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine indicates, last week the Russian forces continued to attack the Ukrainian forces at a number of locations from the area south of Sudzha in the Russian region of Kursk toward the city of Sumy to the area on the border north of Kharkiv and at a number of points along the long contact line in eastern and southeastern Ukraine that extends from the area east and southeast of Kupiansk to the area in Donetsk region west of Rubizhne and Chasiv Yar, toward the city of Pokrovsk and the area around it, and at several locations along the long contact line between the forces in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions in southeastern Ukraine.

The General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported that over the seven days last week from Sunday, Nov. 2 through Saturday, Nov. 8, the Russian forces conducted a total of 1,082 attacks against the Ukrainian forces defending the cities and towns in northeastern, eastern, and southeastern Ukraine. As in previous weeks, the largest number of Russian attacks last week were directed against the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk, which, if taken, would open a pathway northward toward the cities and towns in Donetsk region that are still held by Ukraine. The General Staff reported that over the seven days last week the Russian forces conducted a total of 459 attacks against the forces defending Pokrovsk and the area around it, a substantial increase over the 358 attacks against Pokrovsk the week before. Importantly, the daily reports indicated that Russian forces had moved into some portions of the city. If and when the Russian forces take the city, it will of course be regarded by the Russians as a major

victory for the Russians, comparable to their victory in taking Bakhmut in 2023 after a prolonged siege that was exceptionally costly, in terms of soldiers killed or wounded, for both sides. And importantly, taking Pokrovsk would open a pathway northward for the Russian forces toward Kostyantynivka and the other so-called “fortress cities” in Donetsk region such as Slovyansk and Kramatorsk.

But the Ukrainian forces reportedly continue to control much of Pokrovsk and have restored their control over some of the access routes into the city. On national television today, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, the Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief, said Pokrovsk is now heavily fortified and Ukrainian troops continue to hold their positions despite repeated Russian efforts to break through. “There are a few places where the Russians managed to get through our defenses,” he said. “But we know exactly where those are. Of course, we have Plan B and Plan C for all possible situations.” He said the situation remained under control and that access routes into the city have been restored. “Pokrovsk is a fortress,” he said. “The situation is difficult but stable.”

As the Russian forces continued to attack the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk and the other cities and towns of northeastern and eastern Ukraine, Russia’s war against the people of Ukraine continued in the air as well. On Friday night, Russia launched 458 drones, 13 cruise missiles and 32 ballistic missiles at hydroelectric and other facilities in Kyiv, Dnipro, Kharkiv and other cities, and in so doing damaged a number of apartment buildings and other structures and killed at least 12 people and wounded another 12. Last night, Russia’s war against the people of Ukraine continued as it launched more than 450 drones and 45 missiles at energy infrastructure and facilities that hit apartment buildings and killed or wounded Ukrainians in Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia and other cities.

In a message on Telegram today, President Zelenskyy said the Russian attacks showed that pressure on Russia “must be intensified.” “For every Moscow strike on energy infrastructure – aimed at harming ordinary people before winter – there must be a sanctions response targeting all Russian energy, with no exceptions.” Ukraine, he said, needs, and expects, “relevant decisions from the U.S., Europe and the G7.” He’s right.

David R. Cameron
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