



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on April 17, 2023

Ukrainian Rocket Attack on Orthodox Cathedral Kills One, Injures Six

On April 16 around 3:25 a.m. local time (00:25 GMT), Ukrainian forces fired a total of 20 rockets at the Voroshilovsky District of Donetsk, targeting the the Preobrazhensky Cathedral where the Orthodox Easter service was taking place. Consequently, the shelling disrupted the Easter celebrations, killed a woman, and wounded six others, according to Donetsk authorities.

Ukraine reportedly launched projectiles from the surroundings of the Ukrainian-held settlement of Ocheretyne, some 30 kilometers northwest of Donetsk, the Joint Center for Control and Coordination (JCCC) monitoring group stated.



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The shelling happened as many Orthodox Christians were leaving the cathedral after an Easter vigil. Due to the blasts, many panicked people dropped to the ground, while others, including children, hurried back to the cathedral for safety, [videos shared on social media](#) revealed.

“Toward the morning on Easter night, when the parishioners were at the service, the enemy attacked the center of Donetsk, in the area of the Preobrazhensky Cathedral. At the moment, we know of one dead and six injured,” acting Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR) head Denis Pushilin testified.

“The enemy deliberately attacked the area of the central cathedral on Easter night,” Pushilin asserted in a Telegram [post](#). Various civilian facilities in the area of the central square, such as a bus station, a pharmacy, several stores, and a market some 200 meters from the cathedral, fell prey to the rockets. Another video clip depicted how a kindergarten caught fire owing to a near-direct strike. Following a deadly attack on the town of Yasinovataya on Friday, Pushilin had cautioned believers to exercise vigilance during the Easter celebrations as “the enemy has intensified the shelling ... during the holidays.”

Sputnik News reported that some of the rockets ended up near the Svyato-Preobrazhensky cathedral in central Donetsk, where the Orthodox Easter service was underway. As a result, people had to flee the cathedral.

A few hours following the initial assault, a total of 12 155mm artillery shells bombarded the city in several volleys. Authorities had to scramble to tackle the fallout and help the wounded.

2023 marks the second year that Orthodox Christians of Ukraine have celebrated Holy Week in the shadow of a bloody conflict. Weeks before the Easter Sunday attack, Ukrainian forces had chased Moscow’s troops out from the area around Kyiv.

Previously, *The New American* [reported](#) that on March 10, the Zelensky regime tried to evict the Orthodox monks of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, a historic monastery and one of the most sacrosanct sites



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of the Orthodox world, by March 29. The Kyiv regime had lambasted the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) for breaching the terms of an agreement on the use of state property as a pretext for the forced expulsion. The government order came amid Great Lent, the most significant period of fasting for many denominations of Eastern Christianity.

Moreover, Hieromonk Feofan, a Donetsk priest, said in an interview with Sputnik News that expelling Orthodox monks from the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra during the Orthodox Great Lent, along with the capturing and burning of Orthodox churches by the Zelensky regime, were diabolical. However, the West has chosen to ignore these anti-religious atrocities, the priest added, despite claiming to be pro-democratic.

After opposing the 2014 U.S.-backed Maidan coup in Kyiv, the capital of the DPR had borne the brunt of many Ukrainian assaults that escalated weeks before the onset of the full-scale military conflict between Russia and Ukraine that erupted in February 2022. Ever since, the region has become a scene of brutal exchanges and massive bloodshed.

The Kyiv regime has been reliant on Western-backed aid to perpetuate its attacks on cities and civilians. Last October, Russia incorporated the DPR together with the People's Republic of Lugansk and the Zaporozhye and Kherson Regions after referendums in which a majority of locals voted in favor of the move. Notably, the degree of Ukrainian atrocities that surfaced following the departures of Russian troops is becoming more blatant as time passes.

At first glance, it may seem baffling why the Kyiv regime has been using their limited ammunition on peaceful residential areas instead of on military targets. When questioned why the Ukrainian Armed Forces persist in assaulting civilians, Donetsk residents typically cite the Ukrainian government's desire to decimate Donbass and its people. Additionally, Ukrainian politicians have launched a widespread campaign to incite hate and dehumanize residents.

"We will kill them with nuclear weapons," cautioned former Prime Minister [Yulia Tymoshenko](#), while ex-president [Petro Poroshenko](#) had threatened, "Our children will go to school, while their children will go sit in basements. That's how we will win this war."

Not surprisingly, whenever Ukrainian artillery kills civilians or strikes civilian targets, such as a residential complex, Kyiv officials deny any complicity, with many resorting to [untrue](#) claims that no such bombings happened. Since 2014, the Ukrainian military has been generating various excuses to allegedly clear themselves of any blame, using excuses such as "the air conditioner exploded" to explain the attacks away.

Rather than admitting the truth that they have attacked cities and civilians, the Kyiv regime has claimed that such civilian assaults have been "self-inflicted" — hinting that Russian forces assault cities under their watch, purportedly to villainize Ukrainian forces. Such has been the information war that has characterized Ukraine, prompting journalists to [work with intelligence sources](#) to obtain truthful details about the strikes.

In June 2022, the battle for Lysychansk had forced military units of the first corps of the People's Militia of the DPR out from their permanent locations. Lacking personnel back then, Russian forces had to rely on help from Donetsk. In turn, Ukraine ramped up strikes on Donetsk to pressure military leaders to return the units back to their locations.

Russian-backed Wagner Group fighters in the regions of Soledar and Bakhmut have been facing similar Ukrainian tactics whereby Kyiv tries to use civilian strikes to meddle with the Russian army's plans.



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Ultimately, it is futile to try justify Kyiv's artillery strikes in Donbass. That being said, the end game of Ukraine's top military echelons may likely be to undermine the strength and morale of Russian forces by perpetuating atrocities on civilians with NATO arms to assert eventual dominance over the affected areas, regardless of the human cost.



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