Number Of Civilians Killed By Russian Shelling Mounts In Eastern Ukraine As Fighting Rages

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<https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-civilians-civilians-killed-fighting-rages/32569162.html>

At least five civilians were killed over the past 24 hours by Russian shelling in eastern Ukraine, a regional official said on August 29 as [**fighting continued**](https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-donbas-obstrily-zhertvy-postrazhdali/32569069.html)both in the east and southeast, where Ukrainian forces say are continuing to make advances toward the strategic city of Melitopol.

"The Russians killed five residents of the Donetsk region -- two in Dalny, one in Toretsk, one in Lyman, and one in Velyka Novosilka," Donetsk regional Governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said early on August 29, adding that another four people were wounded.

Kyrylenko said that there were also victims in Mariupol and Volnovas, but their number was impossible to establish at the moment.  
  
The latest toll came a day after three civilians [**were killed**](https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-syly-rf-obstrilyaly-toreck-zahybla-poraneni/32568548.html) in the eastern region of Poltava by the Russian shelling of an industrial plant and one died in the southern region of Kherson.  
  
On the battlefield, Ukrainian forces and Russian troops were locked in fierce combat in the east and southeast, with a total of more than 30 [**combat clashes**](https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-genshtab-zsu-zvedennia/32569032.html)registered over the past day, the General Staff of Ukraine's military said in its daily report on August 29.

"The Defense Forces of Ukraine continue to conduct an offensive operation in the Melitopol direction," the General Staff said, adding that Ukrainian forces were consolidating their gains.

Melitopol, in the Zaporizhzhya region, is a vital transit hub for Russian forces and a key link in its so-called “land bridge” between the Moscow-annexed Crimea and the parts of eastern Ukraine occupied by Russia.

On August 28, Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar confirmed that the village of Robotyne, which sits along an important road leading from the town of Orikhiv to Tokmak on the way to Melitopol, [**has been liberated**](https://t.me/s/annamaliar/1031).

The Ukrainian Army last week announced that it had raised the national flag in Robotyne and was evacuating civilians, as mopping-up operations were still under way.

"The defense forces of Ukraine were successful in the southeastern settlement of Robotyne," Malyar wrote.

"Our forces are advancing southeast of Robotyne and south of Mala Tokmachka in the Zaporizhzhya region," she said.

In Russia, the Defense Ministry said early on August 29 that two Ukrainian drones were shot down south of Moscow, without specifying the precise time and location.

"Unmanned aerial vehicles were destroyed by air defense forces over the territory of the Tula region," the message said.

It also did not mention any damages or casualties.

Earlier, the ministry reported the [**destruction of two drones**](https://www.currenttime.tv/a/minoborony-sbitye-bespilotniki-v-tulskoy-belgorodskoy-oblastyah/32569047.html) on the evening of August 28 over the Belgorod region bordering Ukraine. There were no reports of casualties or damage.

Ukraine did not comment.

Moscow and other regions of Russia have been repeatedly targeted by drone attacks in recent weeks, with the capital city's airports frequently suspending their operations.

One day after saying he expects “a powerful September for Ukraine,” Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on August 28 that the next meeting of the command staff has two tasks.

"The first is a report on preparations for the winter. Various aspects, including security. Second: a program of preparation for the use of new combat aircraft," [**he said**](https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1696245275696771190) on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter.

Zelenskiy said on August 27 that he expects “[**new defense packages**](https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-zelenskyi-veresen-pidgotovka/32566764.html) for Ukrainian soldiers” in the coming weeks.  
  
Separately, Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov said any suggestion of differences with Washington over Ukraine's military strategy were "mistaken and invented."

He told a news conference that Ukrainian Commander in Chief Valeriy Zaluzhniy was meeting "systematically" with senior officials from countries supplying Ukraine with weaponry.