

Damage reported in six regions; Russian soldiers creep through gas pipeline to strike Ukrainian forces in Kursk

- Kyiv set to hold truce talks with US officials in KSA
- Russia claims capture of village in Ukraine's Sumy region

Ukraine said yesterday that Russia launched over one hundred drones overnight, targeting the capital and several regions at a crucial point in the war as Washington has frozen aid supplies.

The wave of attacks followed deadly strikes Friday and Saturday in eastern and northeastern Ukraine that killed at least 14 people.

Ukraine is set to hold negotiations with US officials in Saudi Arabia tomorrow, with Washington hoping to forge a deal on a ceasefire and a "framework" for a peace agreement after freezing arms shipments to Kyiv and blocking access to intelligence reports and satellite imagery.

President Volodymyr Zelensky said on X yesterday that Ukraine is "fully committed" to having a constructive dialogue with US representatives in Saudi Arabia next week, even as Donald Trump said he found it "easier" to deal with Russia than with Ukraine in efforts to end the war.

In Ukraine, its air force said Russia launched 119 drones overnight, of which 71 were downed in a dozen regions and in Kyiv, while 37 others went missing without causing harm.

It said drones caused damage in six regions, without giving specifics, reports AFP.

Meanwhile, Russian special forces crept miles through a major gas pipeline near the town of Sudzha in an attempt to surprise Ukrainian forces as part of a major offensive to eject Ukrainian soldiers from the western Russian region of Kursk, pro-Russian war bloggers said.

Thousands of Ukrainian soldiers seized about 1,300 square km of Russia's Kursk region in August last year in what Kyiv said was an attempt to gain a bargaining chip in future negotiations and to force Russia to shift military forces from eastern Ukraine, reports Reuters.

In its daily update on the situation in Kursk, Russia's Defence Ministry said its forces had retaken the village of Lebedevka, as well as seizing Novenke, a hamlet across the border in Ukraine's neighbouring Sumy region.

Yuri Podolyaka, a Ukrainian-born, pro-Russian military blogger, said Russian special forces had walked miles along the inside of the major gas pipeline and some had spent several days in the pipe before surprising Ukrainian forces from the rear near Sudzha.

Pro-Russian war blogger Two Majors said a major battle was under way for Sudzha and that Russian forces had surprised Ukrainian soldiers by entering the area via a major gas pipeline.

A statement from Ukraine's airborne assault forces said that Russian soldiers had used the pipeline in an attempt to gain a foothold, but the Russians were promptly detected and attacked with rockets, artillery and drones.