

RUSSIAN PUSH TO DEFEND DONBAS CITIES

by our Eastern European Affairs correspondent

CLASHES CONTINUE all along the western front as Ukrainian forces dig in to halt the advance of the Russians in the central Donbas. Fierce fighting continues for settlements west of the Donetsk Ring Road in renewed Russian efforts to push the Ukrainian artillery batteries back to end the shelling of Donetsk city and other Donbas towns near the front.

Back in Kiev, the puppet regime has been rocked by the resignation of one of Zelensky's key advisers after he said on TV that Ukraine's

air defences had brought down the Russian missile that destroyed a tower block in the city of Dnipro. That was soon followed by the news of the death of top minister in a helicopter crash.

Last week a Russian cruise missile smashed into an apartment building in the south-eastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro claiming the lives of at least 45 people and injuring another 79. The Ukrainians immediately accused the Russians of deliberately targeting a civilian area. But at the United Nations the Russian envoy said the tragedy would never have happened



if Ukraine had not illegally stationed air defences in the residential area in the first place. Vassily Nebenzia said that the Russian missile "that targeted an energy infrastructural facility was downed by Ukrainian air defences" – a claim that was confirmed by Alexei Arestovich, one of Zelensky's chief advisers, on Ukrainian TV soon after.

He soon came under fire from the armed forces, who deny bringing down the Russian rocket, but it was the torrent of abuse from the nationalist and Nazi camp that brought him down. Arestovich resigned on Tuesday, saying: "The level of hate directed at me is incomparable with the consequences of the on-air mistake."

Whilst there are plenty more willing to take Arestovich's place on the gravy train, the death of the Minister of Internal Affairs the following day is another matter altogether.

The interior minister, Denis Monastyrsky, and his deputy, Yevgeny Yenin, were killed when their helicopter plunged to its doom over Brovary in the Kiev region on Wednesday. Burning kerosene flooded the area in front of an apartment

building and a kindergarten. According to most recent reports, 24 people, including three children, were killed in the crash.

The Interior Ministry is in charge of the revived national guard, which includes all the Nazi battalions, and the death of the minister, a prominent member of the Zelensky's Servant of the People party, could easily provoke a crisis of confidence in the puppet regime.

Although the Ukrainian media say this was an accident, darker rumours are

already spreading like wild-fire. Some say the crash was caused by technical failure due to shoddy servicing, others say that the Ukrainian helicopter was mistaken for a Russian intruder and brought down by the 'friendly fire' of their own anti-aircraft defences. Some, in the Russian media, even say that the crash was sabotage ordered by one of the shadowy factions in the Zelensky camp to clear the decks for a coming power struggle amongst the highest echelons of the ruling clique.

FUND

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