



## Eventful 24 Hours: Moscow Terror Attack Follows Massive UA Grid Strikes

### Description

**WORLD :** Let's begin with the tragic event that has eclipsed everything else: a large terrorist attack on a packed Friday night shopping center at the outskirts of Moscow. But while there are many dead, and the event is clearly momentous, there is actually not much of *substance* to be said on it yet, without rehashing the same baseless gun-jumping discussions from Twitter and elsewhere.

There's simply too little solid verifiable information, so we'll only gloss it over for now, and tie it into events on the ground in Ukraine at the end.

The more directly salient events occurred last night, when Russia launched one of the larger and more impactful strikes of the war, hitting numerous Ukrainian hydro-electric power plants, including the big one in Dnipro—one of the largest in Europe—Zaporozhye, and a plant in Kharkov, as well as dozens of other military production sites in Kiev and west Ukraine.

**The important question revolves around why these sudden attacks?**

**There are a few possibilities:**

1. It's merely part of the pre-planned campaign to degrade Ukraine's infrastructure, particularly in advance of a planned larger Spring military campaign. The attacks' association with Ukraine's recent provocations, i.e. terror strikes on Belgorod, are merely coincidental.
2. The strikes are a direct response to Ukraine's recent provocations, including targeting of Russia's oil and gas infrastructure, terrorist actions against Belgorod region, etc. This is Putin's way of signaling to Ukraine that they've crossed a red line.
3. Or a combination of the two.

One of the reasons for the third option being most likely is that it's very plausible that Russia was forced by political necessities to make at least *some* kind of show of repaying all the recent criminal actions of the Kiev regime.

However, at the same time, there are increasing reports about various Russian mass buildups and preparations for a large offensive later this year. One of the interesting little mentioned aspects is that—if you'll recall—both before and after Kakhovka dam was destroyed, Ukraine played water level games with the Dnipro dam, by opening the sluices to further exacerbate the flooding and destroy Russian positions all along the Dnieper River.

**Note Shoigu's statement at the time about the Dnipro dam:**

And also, Shoigu in his report today stated the following:  
raising water levels from the Dnipropetrovsk hydro-el

▪ *According to the available information, the amount of water released from the Dnipropetrovsk HPP has been noticeably increased, which is aimed at raising water levels in the territories. This fact indicates that the Kyiv regime plans to advance.*

What is my point? That even without the functioning Kakhovka Dam to control Dnieper River water levels, Ukraine still retained an ability to do that with the other dams upriver, like this Dnipro one. That means, we can surmise that Russia's disabling of the Dnipro dam could *potentially* have something to do with taking away Kiev's abilities to mess with the Dnieper River water levels.

### **Why would Russia want to do that?**

Logic would suggest one possibility being that Russia intends to cross the river, and doesn't want Kiev to have any further abilities to 'flood them out' and destroy supply lines.

Recall that the current locus of the conflict revolves around Odessa: there is a race to the city, with NATO now licking its chops to capture it. Macron has even reportedly made a new statement that Ukraine could "collapse very quickly", which answers one of the questions I posed in the last report about why the sudden urgency:



**Les comptes n’y sont pas.** Autour d’un plateau, le président est venu venir au gros morceau des caisses de l’Etat (le chef de l’Etat a évoqué les européennes. Il a dit que ce n’est pas la première fois) — et, du même coup,

**“L’heure est plus au commentaire qu’à la modération”,** a-t-il grondé selon l’un des participants. On retenait aussi un “ça contribue peu et ça contribue à une vraie reprise en main des troupes, se met à dire encore, parmi les propos présidentiels, notre

**Calendrier.** D’après deux autres invités de l’émission, une meilleure défense du bilan de ses eurodébat d’avril “qui montrent qu’on est au rendez-vous”, tomber très vite”, aurait-il notamment déclaré. L’évoqué.

**Calendar.** After two other guests of the Palace, Macron has a better defence of the balance sheet of its meps, before proposing which indicates that it is the rendezvous of History”. “Ukraine quickly,” he reportedly said, according to the first participant

And Ukrainian Rada Deputy Goncharenko made the most official admission of potential NATO involvement when he posted that, while in Paris, he had meetings specifically about a French military contingent potentially being sent to Ukraine:







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20th of March

And so, what is happening in France and what is being talked about in European capitals.

I am currently in France at a meeting of my PACE committee.

In parallel, I communicate with my French colleagues. And I can already say that everything is serious. We are talking about the military contingent.

1. The discussion on the introduction of French troops into Ukraine is really underway. The number of soldiers in the contingent has not yet been definitively determined. But Macron is VERY determined.

2. France is creating a coalition of allies. Poland will probably enter there. The Baltic countries too. There is also a search in other European countries.

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Macron is considering several options. The first is a joint base for training and production of ammunition on the territory of Ukraine. They choose where exactly. Currently, there are 2 main points in the West of Ukraine that are being considered.

The second is not to create a separate place for the deployment of the contingent, but to have groups of French military personnel where they are needed.

Important! We are not talking about the direct participation of foreign military in the fighting.

The idea of a mission for European soldiers on the border with Belarus, which will release the Ukrainian military from this direction, is also being worked out. This will strengthen the Eastern and Southern directions.

The news is really sensational. It looks like France is tired of Russia. Europe is preparing to show its strength.



This was followed by Orban indicating the possibility that France/NATO could send troops in 2-3 months' time:

# Orban Not Ruling Out That West Will Decide to Send Troops to Ukraine in Two-Three Months

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Though I must say the above is somewhat taken out of context and sensationalized, because Orban was merely rhetorically remarking that it “wouldn’t surprise him” if that happened rather than implying some confirmed information. Similarly, anything told to Goncharenko will have been morale-boosting wishful thinking meant to convey ‘European strength’ and ‘solidarity’.

But to get back to the point at hand: Given that there’s even a potential for NATO involvement in the semi-near future, Russia could be poised to attempt an assault toward Odessa via the river, as outlined earlier.

I have vehemently called this impossible before—and I stand by my earlier assessments. The likelihood of a cross-river assault is very low, but I'm merely posing the possibilities for why Russia felt the need to hit the dam. You may say: well, they hit other plants so the strikes were likely aimed at degrading the electric grid. But a wrinkle: Russia hit both the engine room of the DniproHES *and* the cranes which open and lower the sluice gates. If they wanted to merely knock out its power generation, the turbines would presumably suffice. But why hit the cranes that open the sluice gates to control water levels too? True, they could merely have been 'thorough'.

But recall: the Soviets *did* manage to successfully cross the Dnieper in WWII, in 1943's 'Battle of Dnieper'.





So it *is* possible, or was once—but under modern conditions of enemy ISR and long range precision strikes, like those of HIMARs, etc., it's not likely.

**However:**

1. Ukraine's precision strike systems are being heavily attritioned now, HIMARS have been recently struck multiple times as Russia's own ISR capabilities are said to be massively ramping up with new satellites, mass use of drones and UMPK glide-bombs, streamlined/optimized kill chains, etc.
2. I'm not sure what the water level is currently, but if the levels are still low or nonexistent in places due to the Kakhovka dam destruction, then it could make such crossings more plausible.
3. Historic depletion of Ukraine's artillery munitions could allow acceptable counterfire levels for such a foray.

Like I said, I still view it as highly unlikely—for *now*—but it's a possibility worth enumerating for the sake of discussion. We already know Russian command is adverse to losses and retreated from Kherson-side entirely just owing to the remote possibility of being stranded there with pontoon and logistics lines taken out. However, the fact that NATO's intentions to take the city have now become crystalized could result in Russian command taking the chance to accelerate Odessa's capture, rather than waiting for the full surrender of the AFU as I had expected would be the case.

Recall that the French military officials themselves showed a map with French troops guarding the Dnieper *specifically*, as one of the possibilities for their usage. And Goncharenko confirmed this above, stating the Dnieper is one of the considered placements for French troops. Why would that be?

Further recall Macron's earlier words: the AFU may face a rapid or sudden 'collapse'. Maybe Russia is laying the ground for a potential lightning offensive across the Dnieper.

*RUSSIA TAKES CHARGE OF DNIEPER RIVER (which divides Ukraine into East and West) – Defense Minister Shoigu.*

*Russian forces have created a Dnieper River Flotilla, an army corps, a motorized rifle division and a brigade of river boats – Shoigu in top vid.*

So, Russia is creating special river crossing divisions in the marine corps, as well as a new Dnepr Flotilla, all before blowing the largest dam on the river. It could all be merely perfunctory strengthening of forces and a campaign of methodical infrastructure degradation, or the precursor for some kind of planned escalation across the river.

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Now, the second biggest matter.

## BY SIMPLICIUS THE THINKER

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