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AP

NY Times images of slain Ukrainian civilians show war's toll



DAVID BAUDER

March 7, 2022 · 4 min read

In this article:

Lynsey Addario
Photojournalist

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Times' front-page photo Monday of the grisly aftermath of a Russian attack on civilians in Ukraine offers a reminder of how journalists try to weigh the sensibilities of customers with the need to illustrate the reality of war.

The picture, taken by photographer Lynsey Addario, shows Ukrainian soldiers tending to the bloodied bodies of four people moments after a mortar exploded near them.

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The newspaper, when it tweeted out a story about the incident late Sunday, warned people that it contained graphic images. Yet the photo was also used prominently on the Times' website and took up four of five columns on the top of Monday's newspaper, where there is no chance for such a warning.

Cliff Levy, deputy managing editor of The Times, tweeted that Monday was one of the most important front pages of the war because of Addario's photo.

In a statement, Meaghan Loram, director of photography for The Times, said the newspaper doesn't have a "blanket policy for decisions like this," instead encouraging editors to ask themselves and consult with others on a series of questions that include whether a photo's news value demands that it be seen. Among the factors Loram says the Times also considers are whether "the photograph portrays the people in a dignified manner, whether it feels exploitative or gratuitous" and whether a decision to run the image would be the same if it came from another country or region.

The Times takes "seriously our duty as journalists to show our readers an unvarnished and accurate account of the world's events, which are sometimes very difficult to see but necessary to understand," Loram said.

"I don't see anything wrong with it at all," said Fred Ritchin, former dean of the International Center of Photography School. "I think it was used in a way that respects the privacy of the individuals but still gives credence to the events that are going on."

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Russia has carried out at least 34 attacks on Ukrainian hospitals and medical facilities in the first month of war: AP

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