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Moscow Says Striking Areas Lost to Ukraine Counteroffensive

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TASS

The Russian Defense Ministry said Monday it is carrying out strikes in areas of northeastern Ukraine that Kyiv's forces recaptured in recent days in a shock counteroffensive.

Ukraine over the weekend retook nearly all of the Kharkiv region, including the strategic cities of Izyum and Kupiansk, ending months of Russian occupation and marking one of the greatest setbacks suffered by Russian forces in their nearly seven-month invasion.

"Missile strikes near Kupiansk and Izyum hit personnel and equipment of the Ukrainian nationalist formation Kraken, the 113th Territorial Defense Brigade and the 93rd mechanized brigade," Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said in Monday's daily briefing.

"There are enemy losses — up to 250 soldiers and more than 20 pieces of equipment," Konashenkov said in the briefing.

Separately on Monday, the Kremlin ruled out negotiations following Ukraine's massive

advance and said its "special military operation continues and will continue until the objectives that were originally set are achieved."

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The Defense Ministry's announcement of retaliatory strikes follows an alleged Russian strike on a thermal power station in Kharkiv that caused widespread blackouts across the region Sunday evening.

Kyiv has accused Russia of deliberately targeting civilian infrastructure.

"No military facilities, the goal is to deprive people of light & heat," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy wrote on Twitter of the attacks.

In a bid to play down Kyiv's advances Saturday, Konashenkov claimed Moscow's retreat was a decision to "regroup" its forces to Ukraine's eastern Donbas region, which is held by Russia and pro-Moscow separatists.

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