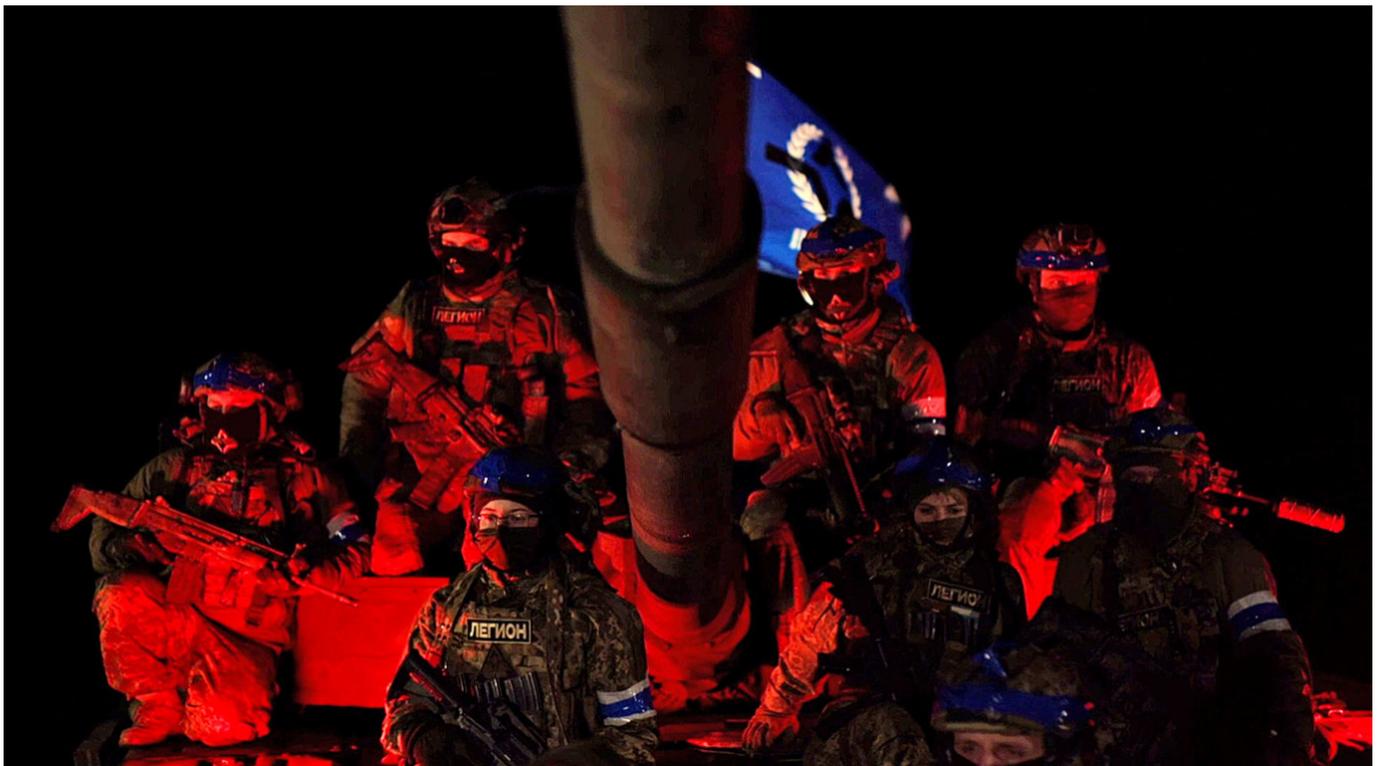


# Pro-Kyiv Militias Attack Russian Border Regions

March 12, 2024



Fighters from the Freedom of Russia Legion. [t.me/legionoffreedom](https://t.me/legionoffreedom)

*Updated with Freedom of Russia Legion claiming capture of village.*

A group of Russian volunteer forces fighting with Ukraine have captured the village of Tyotkino inside Russia, the group [said](#) Tuesday, after Moscow claimed to have pushed back attacks on two border regions.

"The settlement of Tyotkino in the Kursk region is entirely under the control of Russian liberation forces," the Freedom of Russia Legion wrote on social media, claiming that the Russian military was withdrawing from the village.

Russia's Defense Ministry [said](#) earlier that it had "thwarted" attempted border incursions by "Ukrainian terrorist groups" in the Kursk and Belgorod regions.

Unverified videos shared on the Telegram messaging app had [shown](#) what appeared to be armored vehicles entering villages in at least one of the border regions. In one video, gunfire

can be heard.

"Around 3:00 a.m. Moscow time, after intense shelling of civilian structures, Ukrainian terrorist groups, using tanks and armored vehicles, attempted to invade the territory of the Russian Federation," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

"All the attacks of the Ukrainian Armed Forces were repelled by the selfless actions of the Russian military. The enemy was hit by aircraft, rocket troops and artillery," it added.

According to Russia's Defense Ministry, up to 60 "Ukrainian terrorists," five tanks and an armored personnel carrier were "destroyed" in the attempted incursions.

### **Embed:**

The Defense Ministry's statement came after the anti-Kremlin militia groups Freedom of Russia Legion and Russian Volunteer Corps, both of which fight on the side of Kyiv, [said](#) they were "on the attack" and "crossing the border" into Russia.

Both groups published [videos](#) to Telegram that appeared to show their fighters, along with armored vehicles, engaging in combat. It was unclear where and when exactly the videos were shot.

The Freedom of Russia Legion said on social media its forces had "destroyed" a Russian armored military vehicle in the village of Tyotkino.

Meanwhile, the Russian Volunteer Corps [said](#) it would soon release more details about the attack.

A spokesman for Ukraine's military intelligence agency said that the Russian volunteer groups were not acting under orders from Kyiv in launching their assaults.

"On the territory of the Russian Federation, they act absolutely autonomously, on their own, and pursue their social and political program tasks," GUR spokesman Andriy Yusov told Ukrainian media.

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In the Kursk region, authorities [said](#) that an armed group had launched an assault from Ukraine.

"A sabotage and reconnaissance group attempted to break through [the border], there was a firefight. But there was no breakthrough," Governor Roman Starovoit said in a video message on Telegram.

He said the attack had targeted Tyotkino, which is located right on Russia's border with Ukraine.

Starovoit said one civilian was injured during the attack.

Authorities in the Belgorod region, while [reporting](#) a string of Ukrainian drone attacks across the region, had not confirmed whether an armed group had launched an incursion over the border.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) initially [denied](#) reports that armed militia groups had managed to enter the Kursk and Belgorod regions, according to state-run media.

However, it did say it had "stopped several attempts to violate the state border" of Russia since Sunday, as quoted by the TASS news agency.

"Over 100 enemy personnel, six tanks, Caesar self-propelled guns, 20 units of armored combat vehicles, a strong point have been destroyed," the law enforcement agency said without specifying whether those figures accounted for the reported incursions on Tuesday or for previous days as well.

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The Kremlin [said](#) later on Tuesday the Russian military was "on the alert" following the border attacks.

"Naturally, this kind of terrorist activity continues, there are strikes, or rather strikes against civilian structures and so on from the Kyiv regime," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists at a press briefing.

Last year, Russia witnessed a series of cross-border incursions by pro-Ukraine armed militants, the [deadliest](#) of which took place in the Belgorod region town of Shebekino in June.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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