

Putin Vows Response to Ukrainian Attacks on Russian Border Regions

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Vladimir Putin. kremlin.ru

President Vladimir Putin [said](#) Friday that his military would respond to this week's spate of Ukrainian attacks on Russia, which he described as an attempt by Kyiv to derail the March 15-17 presidential election.

"The goal of these pointless acts from a military standpoint and criminal acts from a humanitarian standpoint was to try to disrupt Russia's presidential election," Putin told Russia's Security Council.

He added that Ukrainian forces made five unsuccessful attempts to cross into western Russia's Belgorod and Kursk regions so far this week as a three-day voting period kicked off in Russia on Friday.

Anti-Kremlin militia groups fighting on the side of Kyiv have claimed responsibility for the incursions.

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Russia's Defense Ministry [said](#) Friday that it had repelled a Ukrainian incursion into the Belgorod region village of Kozinka the previous day, as well as all other attempts by "sabotage groups" over the past week to breach its territory.

At least one person was killed and two others were injured in an attack on the Russian city of Belgorod the same day, local authorities said, just shortly after pro-Kyiv militias warned of an imminent strike.

In his address to Russia's Security Council, Putin acknowledged that the Ukrainian attacks had led to civilian losses and vowed that the strikes "will not go unpunished."

"I'm confident our people, the Russian population will respond with even bigger unity," he said.

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