

# Ukraine Accuses Russian Troops of Killing Civilians in Kharkiv Region

By [AFP](#)

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People evacuating from the town of Vovchansk. **Roman Pilipey / AFP**

Ukraine on Thursday accused Russia of detaining and killing civilians in the border town of Vovchansk in the northeastern Kharkiv region, where Russian forces launched a ground assault last week.

"Russian troops are taking civilians prisoner," Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko wrote on Telegram, adding that intelligence reports suggested Russian forces "trying to gain a foothold in the city did not allow local residents to evacuate."

"They began abducting people and driving them into basements," said Klymenko, noting there were "reports of the first shootings of civilians by the Russian military."

"One of the residents of Vovchansk tried to escape on foot, refused to follow the commands of the invaders, and was killed by the Russians," he added.

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Regional police had opened a "war crimes" investigation into the allegations, Klymenko said.

AFP could not verify the claims. There was no immediate response from Moscow about the allegations.

Ukraine has evacuated almost 9,000 people in the week since Russian forces stormed across the border in a surprise ground assault.

Russian soldiers have previously been accused of executing civilians in parts of Ukraine they captured and controlled since invading Ukraine in February 2022.

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