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Russian POWs Arrive in Moscow After Latest Prisoner Swap

June 26, 2024



Released Russian prisoners of war arrive in Moscow. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Dozens of Russian soldiers who were released as part of a recent prisoner exchange with Ukraine arrived in Moscow on Wednesday, Russia's Defense Ministry said.

Russian and Ukrainian officials announced late Tuesday an exchange of 90 prisoners of war each, the biggest swap between the two warring sides in almost five months. The United Arab Emirates mediated the deal.

A video released by the Russian military showed the uniformed soldiers disembarking from an Il-76 airlifter in Moscow and boarding two coach buses.

"[The exchange] was unexpected. While in captivity, we were wondering how we'd be met at home," one of the soldiers said in the video. "Everyone who met us was smiling and happy, it was very pleasant."

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In its announcement of the swap, Moscow claimed that the soldiers faced "mortal danger in captivity" and would undergo treatment and rehabilitation.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, meanwhile, said Kyiv would "continue to work for the release of each and every one" of its soldiers captured by Russian forces.

Moscow and Kyiv have carried out over 50 prisoner exchanges since Moscow invaded Ukraine more than two years ago, despite ongoing hostilities and both sides accusing each other of derailing talks.

The last swap between the two warring sides took place at the end of May when they exchanged 75 prisoners each, also with the UAE's mediation.

In February, both sides said they swapped 100 prisoners each, their first exchange since Moscow accused Kyiv of downing a plane carrying captured Ukrainian soldiers.

AFP contributed reporting.

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