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Zelensky Says Ukraine 'Strengthening' Positions in Russia's Kursk

By AFP

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Russia's Kursk region **Vladimir Gerdo/TASS**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Saturday his forces were "strengthening" their positions in Russia's Kursk region, where Kyiv has been mounting a major ground offensive.

His comments come a day after Russian officials accused Ukraine of destroying a key bridge across the river Seym that cuts through the border region, as Kyiv seeks to disrupt the movement of Moscow's troops in the area.

Ukrainian army chief Oleksandr Syrsky "reported on the strengthening of the positions of our forces in the Kursk region and the expansion of stabilized territory", Zelensky said in a post on Telegram.

"As of this morning, we have replenished the exchange fund for our country," Zelensky said, referring to Russian soldiers Ukraine has captured to be used in future prisoner swaps.

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"I thank all the soldiers and commanders who are taking Russian soldiers prisoner and thus bringing the release of our soldiers and civilians held by Russia closer," Zelensky said.

Ukraine's army launched its surprise offensive into Russia on August 6, claiming to capture several dozen villages in the biggest cross-border attack on Russian soil since World War II.

Zelensky separately said the situation on the eastern front near the towns of Pokrovsk and Toretsk was "under control", after Russia reported it had made a string of advances towards them in recent weeks.

"(There were) dozens of Russian assaults on our positions over the last day. But our soldiers and units are doing everything to destroy the occupier and repel the attacks," Zelensky said.

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