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Russian Army Confirms Kursk Counteroffensive, Says Recaptured 10 Villages

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Russian Defense Ministry / TASS

Russia's Defense Ministry said Thursday that its forces were on the offensive in the Kursk region, recapturing nearly one dozen towns in the embroiled border region that were seized after Ukrainian forces launched their surprise incursion last month.

"Units of the 'North' grouping of forces liberated 10 settlements within two days," the Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement.

"Likewise, over the past day, units of the group repelled two enemy counterattacks near the towns of Fanaseyevka and Snagost, as well as thwarted an attempted attack near the town of Olgovka," the statement added.

Earlier, a senior-ranking military commander and pro-Russian war bloggers said Moscow's forces launched a "local counteroffensive" in the Korenevsky district, located on the border

with northeastern Ukraine's Sumy region.

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Kyiv claimed late last month to have taken control of some 100 Russian towns and villages, as well as almost 1,300 square kilometers (500 square miles) of territory in the Kursk region. Ukrainian forces stormed into the region on Aug. 6, forcing the evacuation of more than 150,000 people from border areas.

On Thursday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also confirmed that Russian forces had launched a counteroffensive in the Kursk region, but insisted Kyiv's incursion was still going according to plan.

"The Russians have launched counteroffensive actions," Zelensky said at a press conference. He did not provide details on the extent of Russian operations against Ukrainian forces.

AFP contributed reporting.

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