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# Kursk Region Official Sacked Amid Protests Over Housing Compensation

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A local official in southwestern Russia's Kursk region was sacked Tuesday after residents who were displaced by Ukraine's cross-border incursion came out over the weekend to protest a lack of compensation for lost housing.

"The head of Sudzhansky district will be relieved of his post today," Kursk region Governor Alexei Smirnov told residents who had gathered inside an auditorium. A video of the meeting showed the crowd erupting in applause following the announcement.

Displaced residents of the Sudzhansky district staged a rally in Kursk on Sunday, accusing local authorities of failing to compensate them for lost housing or providing them with suitable temporary accommodation.

They also slammed Sudzhansky district head Alexander Bogachev for ignoring their concerns. Local authorities, in their turn, accused them of holding an unauthorized rally.

On Thursday, the displaced residents of another border district, Bolshesoldatsky, staged a rally in Kursk over high rent prices for temporary accommodation and to demand housing certificates.

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The Sudzhansky district had a population of around 25,000 before the Ukrainian forces launched a surprise incursion in early August. Its administrative center, Sudzha, is a town of about 5,000 people and is also home to a key gas transit hub between Russia and Europe.

"Someone had to be a scapegoat. Unfortunately, that's how it works here," Bogachev told the RTVI broadcaster when asked for comment about his dismissal.

During a meeting with Smirnov on Monday, Bogachev acknowledged shortcomings in his own work but also accused regional authorities of disorganized relief efforts.

Governor Smirnov, who had agreed to meet the displaced residents following their protests, promised housing certificates to those who lost their homes during the Ukrainian incursion.

Regional construction authorities declined last month to issue housing certificates, arguing that doing so would spark a mass outward migration of the working-age population from the Kursk region.

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