

Ukraine Says Conducting Combat Operations in Russia's Kursk Region

By [AFP](#)

January 07, 2025



Ukrainian soldiers. [Roman Pilipey / AFP](#)

Ukraine said Tuesday its forces struck a Russian military "command post" in Russia's Kursk region during "combat operations," while backtracking on a claim it had launched a fresh offensive in the border area.

Russia's army said over the weekend that Kyiv was mounting a "counterattack" in the region, where Ukraine's forces have held onto a swathe of territory since a shock incursion last August.

In an English-language statement, Kyiv's army said it had launched a "high-precision" strike near the village of Belya — southeast of Kyiv-controlled territory — without saying if it had used Western long-range weapons.

An original version of the statement, published by the Ukrainian General Staff on its Telegram

account, said Ukraine had launched "new offensive operations" in the Kursk region.

The post was then edited and the reference to a "new offensive" removed.

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"This strike is an integral part of the combat operations of units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces, which conduct combat operations" in the Kursk region, the updated statement said.

Pro-Kremlin military bloggers have reported a powerful new Ukrainian offensive, but Kyiv has not commented on those reports, only saying in regular daily briefings that fighting in the region was ongoing.

President Volodymyr Zelensky had on Monday also alluded to fighting in the Kursk region in his evening address, stating that Kyiv was "maintaining a buffer zone on Russian territory" and "actively destroying Russian military potential there."

It is not clear if Ukraine had advanced much in the region, but the assault would come nearly three years into Moscow's invasion and two weeks before U.S. President-elect Donald Trump will return to the White House.

Trump has vowed to begin talks to end the Ukraine war and Kyiv's hold in Kursk could influence any negotiations.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday that Ukraine's "position in Kursk" would "factor in any negotiation that may come about in the coming year."

Ukraine launched a surprise incursion into the western border region in August 2024, before Russia repelled some attacks, including with the help of North Korean soldiers sent by Pyongyang.

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