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Ukraine Accuses Russia of Deadly Strike on Civilians in Kursk Region

February 02, 2025

General Staff of Ukrainian Army /screenshot / X

Ukraine accused Russia on Saturday of killing four people in a strike on a boarding school sheltering civilians in the Kursk region town of Sudzha, which Kyiv has occupied for over five months.

Kyiv launched a surprise cross-border offensive into Russia's Kursk region last August, seizing dozens of villages and small towns including the regional hub of Sudzha – home to about 6,000 people before the fighting.

"Russian aviation struck a boarding school in the town of Sudzha, Kursk region, with a guided aerial bomb," the Ukrainian army's general staff said on Telegram messaging app.

"The strike was carried out on purpose," it added.

It said "dozens of local residents were inside the building preparing to evacuate" at the time of the attack, and that rescue work was underway.

"In the course of the rubble removal works, 84 civilians were rescued and provided with medical aid, their health condition is satisfactory, four are in serious condition, and four people died," it said in a later post.

Embed:

> Сьогодні, 1 лютого, о 16:54 російська авіація завдала удару керованою авіаційною бомбою (КАБ) по інтернату в місті Суджа Курської області. Удару завдано цілеспрямовано.
> Докладніше: https://t.co/PCtQnMEw8q pic.twitter.com/J7RFO29H7Z
>
> — Генеральний штаб ЗСУ (@GeneralStaffUA) February 1, 2025

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky accused Russia of striking its "own civilians" in the town. He shared a video on social media showing a heavily damaged building, as well as an wounded man lying on the ground.

"They destroyed the building even though dozens of civilians were there," Zelensky said in a post on X.

"Russian bombs destroy Ukrainian homes the same way. And even against their own civilians, the Russian army uses similar tactics."

Oleksiy Dmytrashkivsky, spokesman for Ukraine's military command in the region, said most of those inside the building were elderly.

AFP was not able to immediately verify Ukraine's claim.

The Russian Ministry of Defense accused Ukrainian forces of striking a boarding school in Sudzha.

The ministry claims that missiles were launched from the Sumy region of Ukraine and were detected by air Russian defense systems. The ministry called the shelling a provocation by the Ukrainian Armed Forces, aimed at "diverting attention from the atrocities of the Kyiv regime."

Thousands of Russian civilians are thought to be trapped by fighting in the border region.

A Russian official in Kursk told AFP last week that authorities were working "constantly" to secure the return of Russian civilians caught behind the front lines.

AFP contributed reporting

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