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Russia Claims to Have Retaken 64% of Kursk Territory Lost After Ukraine's Offensive

By AFP

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The village of Sverdlikovo, Kursk region. **Alexei Dmitrashkovsky / Facebook**

Russia's army has retaken control of 64% of Kursk region territory initially captured by Ukrainian forces after they launched a surprise offensive in the border region last year, a senior Russian military official said Thursday.

"More than 800 square kilometers [309 square miles] have been liberated, which amounts to about 64% of the territory initially occupied," Sergei Rudskoi, first deputy head of Russia's General Staff, told the Krasnaya Zvezda military newspaper.

Based on Rudskoi's statements, Ukraine still controls more than 400 square kilometers (154 square miles) of territory in the Kursk region.

Last week, Ukraine's top military commander Oleksandr Syrsky said that Ukrainian forces

controlled around 500 square kilometers in Kursk, territory that Kyiv sees as an important bargaining chip in any talks on ending the war.

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President Vladimir Putin claimed Wednesday that Russian troops had crossed the border into Ukraine overnight, in what state media reported was an offensive launched from the Kursk region. Ukraine denied the claim.

"Currently the initiative in the Kursk region is fully on our side. Russian forces are advancing in all areas," Rudskoi told Krasnaya Zvezda.

He added that Russian forces have taken "around 75%" of Ukraine's Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, while Kyiv controls "less than 1%" of the eastern Luhansk region.

Moscow announced the annexation of all four regions in September 2022 despite not fully controlling any of them.

In 2024, Rudskoi said Russia took "almost 4,500 square kilometers of territory" in Ukraine, calling it a "breakthrough" year.

"The Kyiv regime will not be able to significantly change the situation on the battlefield any more," Rudskoi added.

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