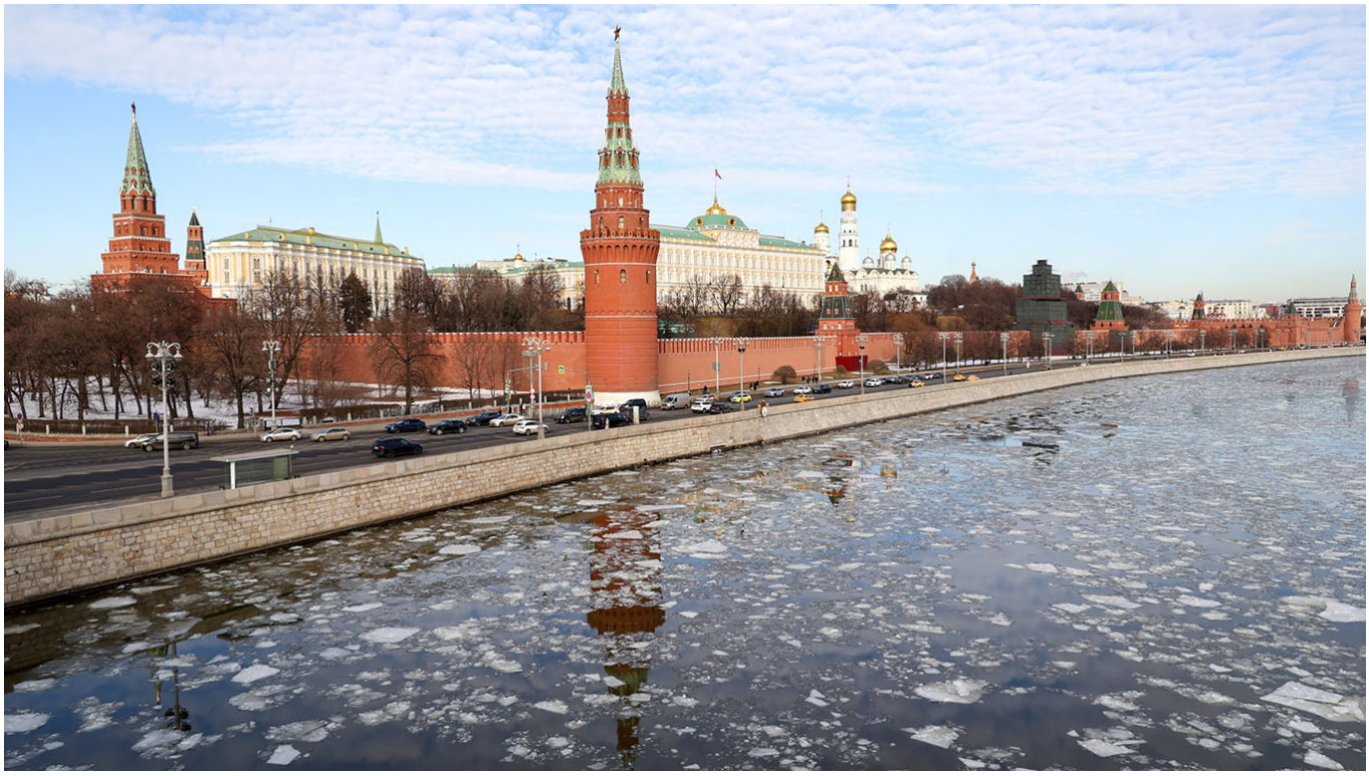
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Kremlin Says It's Waiting for Official Confirmation of U.S.-Ukraine Minerals Deal

By AFP

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The Kremlin in Moscow. **Yaroslav Chingaev / Moskva News Agency**

The Kremlin said Wednesday that it was still waiting for official confirmation that the United States and Ukraine had agreed on the terms of a landmark minerals deal.

U.S. President Donald Trump had demanded Ukraine give access to its strategic minerals to compensate for the billions of dollars of military and other aid it received under former president Joe Biden.

A senior Ukrainian official told AFP late Tuesday that Kyiv had agreed on the framework of a deal, and that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky could sign it as soon as Friday.

"So far, there are no official statements on this matter. We have only heard that Zelensky seemed to be going to Washington on Friday," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told

reporters.

"There will probably be attempts to make this visit somewhat substantive," he added.

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Zelensky later on Wednesday said he hopes to visit Washington this week to meet Trump and discuss future U.S. support for Ukraine and a possible minerals deal.

"This is a start, this is a framework agreement," Zelensky told reporters. "This deal could be a great success or simply disappear. Whether it's a big success, I think, depends on our conversation with President Trump. We'll draw conclusions after."

Further discussions between U.S. and Ukrainian officials would determine the nature of security guarantees for Ukraine and the exact sums of money at stake in the agreement.

Officials in Kyiv hope that a minerals deal will improve relations with the Trump administration, which have soured amid a war of words between the U.S. president and Zelensky.

Ukraine also wants security guarantees, though the current draft of the deal does not place any specific security commitments on the United States, according to a senior Ukrainian official.

At the same time, Moscow has touted the possibility of U.S. investment in strategic minerals found in Russia and parts of Ukraine under the control of Russian troops.

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