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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Says Evacuated Over 350 Civilians From Retaken Areas in Kursk Region

By AFP

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A Russian Emergencies Ministry employee and Sudzha residents are seen by a bus during the evacuation. **Maxim Grigoryev/TASS**

Russia on Sunday said it has moved to safety 371 of its civilians from areas it retook from Ukrainian forces in its border Kursk region.

Little was known on civilian life in the areas held by Ukraine since last summer and there has been some anger in Russia about the fate of those left behind under Ukrainian control and the lack of information from local officials.

The civilians became trapped when Ukraine launched its surprise incursion in August 2024, more than two years into Russia's offensive.

"In total since March 12 from liberated inhabited areas 371 people have been moved, including

14 children," the acting Kursk region Governor Alexander Khinshtein said on social media.

Khinshtein said 220 of the civilians had been placed in temporary accommodation in the Kursk region, while the rest were staying with relatives.

The Russian Defense Ministry published images of mostly elderly people being taken by small vans from Sudzha and Kazachya Loknya, previously held by Ukraine.

The imagse showed people linimg up in a damaged school and being accompanied by Russian soldiers.

Some relatives of those stuck in Kyiv-held areas had pleaded for a civilian corridor to get them out, triggering concern and some anger at local Russian authorities.

It is unknown exactly how many civilians were left on the opposite side of the front line and cut off from their relatives in Kursk.

Ukraine has also been seeking the return of its civilians caught in Russian-occupied parts of the country since Moscow launched its 2022 offensive.

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