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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Army Claims Advances in Sumy as Ukraine Orders Evacuations

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Evacuations in the Sumy region. **State Emergency Service of Ukraine**

Russia's Defense Ministry on Monday claimed the capture of another village in Ukraine's northeastern Sumy region, as local authorities issued fresh evacuation orders following deadly attacks on civilian areas.

The village of Marine, located less than 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the Russian border, sits on a highway linking the city of Sumy to the Russian town of Sudzha in the Kursk region. It is the furthest point Russian forces have reportedly reached in Sumy after earlier capturing several border villages in March and April.

Russia's Defense Ministry said this month its forces were creating a "buffer zone" along the Sumy-Kursk border, following a proposal by President Vladimir Putin during a visit to the area earlier this year.

The initiative came after Russia's Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov told Putin that the Kursk region had been "fully liberated" with the help of North Korean soldiers. Ukrainian

forces occupied parts of the border region following a surprise incursion in August.

After Russia's Defense Ministry announced the capture of Marine, Sumy region Governor Oleh Hryhorov said nearly 56,000 of the more than 86,000 residents subject to a mandatory evacuation order had relocated.

The latest evacuations followed a Russian drone strike on a minibus in the Sumy region town of Bilopilia on Saturday that killed nine people and injured seven others.

On Friday, direct peace talks between Russia and Ukraine resumed in Turkey. A source familiar with the negotiations told AFP that Moscow had threatened to seize Ukraine's Sumy and Kharkiv regions despite previously making no formal territorial claims to either.

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