The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
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Ukrainian Attacks Are Preventing Return of Displaced Residents to Russia's Kursk Region, Governor Says

June 19, 2025

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Cross-border Ukrainian drone and artillery strikes are preventing displaced civilians from returning to parts of Russia's Kursk region, Acting Governor Alexander Khinshtein said Wednesday.

"We'll only allow residents to return when we're fully confident there's no longer any threat," Khinshtein told the RBC news outlet. "No one will take on the risk of sending people back under drones or missile strikes."

More than 150,000 residents were ordered to leave border communities after Ukrainian forces launched a surprise incursion into the Kursk region in August 2024.

Some displaced civilians later staged protests over poor living conditions and what they said was insufficient government support and compensation for destroyed homes.

Russia's military declared the Kursk region fully cleared of Ukrainian troops in April. Khinshtein and other officials estimate that around 300 civilians were killed during the nine-month occupation.

More than 570 people remain missing, according to Khinshtein.

Russian forces began clearing mines from recaptured areas in March, a process authorities say could take more than a year.

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