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Trump Accuses Putin of Talking 'Bulls***' on Ukraine

By Danny Kemp for AFP

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Jim Watson / AFP

President Donald Trump accused his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Tuesday of talking "bulls***" about Ukraine, saying that the United States would send Kyiv more weapons to defend itself.

Trump's expletive reflected his growing frustration with the Kremlin leader over the grinding war that Moscow launched nearly three and a half years ago.

"We get a lot of bullshit thrown at us by Putin, if you want to know the truth," Trump told reporters during a televised cabinet meeting at the White House.

"He's very nice all the time, but it turns out to be meaningless."

Trump reiterated that he was "very unhappy" with Putin since their phone call last week made no progress on the Ukraine peace deal that the U.S. president has pushed for since

returning to power.

Asked about his interest in a bill proposed by the Senate for further sanctions on Russia, Trump said: "I'm looking at it very strongly."

Trump's criticism of Putin came a day after he said he would send more weapons to Ukraine, in a reversal of Washington's announcement last week that it was halting some arms shipments.

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The U.S. president, who alarmed Kyiv and Western allies with his pivot toward Putin soon after returning to the White House, confirmed that decision on Tuesday.

"Putin is not treating human beings right. He's killing too many people. So we're sending some defensive weapons and I've approved that," Trump said.

Trump has promised to immediately send 10 Patriot interceptors — anti-missile systems — to Ukraine, according to U.S. news website Axios.

He also urged Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth to push defense contractors to increase production of armaments.

"We have to step them up, Pete, and let them make it at a much higher rate," he said.

'Difficult'

Moscow had no immediate reaction to Trump's strongly-worded comments about Putin — which come just two weeks after he also cursed while talking about the conflict between Israel and Iran.

But the Kremlin said that sending arms to Ukraine only serves to prolong the conflict.

"It is obvious of course that these actions probably do not align with attempts to promote a peaceful resolution," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying in a briefing.

Ukrainian officials have been left scrambling for clarity following the contradictory announcements from Washington.

Any pause in weapons deliveries poses a serious challenge for Kyiv, which is contending with some of Russia's largest missile and drone attacks of the war.

Putin launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and has shown little willingness to end the conflict despite pressure from Trump.

Moscow said Monday that its forces captured its first village in Ukraine's central Dnipropetrovsk region after advancing towards it for months.

The village of Dachne is in an important industrial mining territory that has come under mounting Russian air attacks.

Last month, Moscow said its forces had crossed the border into the Dnipropetrovsk region for the first time in its campaign.

Russia also launched a fresh large-scale drone and missile barrage on Monday including on Ukraine's military recruitment centers.

Kyiv said it carried out a drone attack on a Russian ammunition factory in the Moscow region.

Ukraine has so far denied any Russian foothold in Dnipropetrovsk. Ukraine's military said earlier Monday its forces "repelled" attacks in Dnipropetrovsk, including "in the vicinity" of Dachne.

Dnipropetrovsk is not one of the five Ukrainian regions — Donetsk, Kherson, Lugansk, Zaporizhzhia and Crimea — that Moscow has publicly claimed as Russian territory.

Describing the situation in Dnipropetrovsk as "difficult" for Kyiv's forces, Ukrainian military expert Oleksiy Kopytko said Russia hopes to create some kind of buffer zone in the region.

"Our troops are holding their ground quite steadily," he told AFP.

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