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Putin Admits Ukrainian Strikes Driving Fuel Shortages

By AFP

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Vladimir Putin. **kremlin.ru**

President Vladimir Putin acknowledged Sunday that Russia is facing a "certain shortage" of fuel following a wave of repeated Ukrainian strikes targeting oil refineries and domestic supply lines.

"As for strikes against critical infrastructure in general, and energy infrastructure in particular, of course, these attacks on our infrastructure facilities create problems," Putin said in a Kremlin-published interview. "That's obvious."

"Right now we're observing a certain shortage, but it's not critical," he added.

The government's primary focus, Putin said, was to improve Russian air defense system capabilities and to ensure that fuel supplies reach consumers, especially in annexed Crimea, where local authorities declared a state of emergency last week.

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A few hours earlier, in a speech at the congress of the ruling United Russia party, Putin had vowed to restore security and overcome mounting challenges as Ukraine intensifies its retaliatory strikes against Russia.

"Yes, we see the problems, we are aware of them and are responding to them, but we will certainly ensure the security of both the country and our citizens, as well as the inviolability of Russia's borders," Putin told party members.

"We will undoubtedly overcome all the challenges facing us today, including terrorist attacks on our territory and infrastructure facilities," he added.

In the Kremlin interview, Putin also said he expects White House special envoy Steve Witkoff and U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner to visit Moscow after the "active phase" of the war in the Middle East passes.

Witkoff and Kushner have travelled to Russia several times over the past year as part of U.S.-mediated talks to end the Ukraine war.

"We are ready to continue negotiations... and discuss all the details," Putin said in response to a question about the trajectory of U.S.-Russia relations following the G7 summit in France, where Trump called on Russia to "make a deal with Ukraine."

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