

Russian Army Liberates Sudzha in Kursk Border Region

March 13, 2025



The village of Cherkasskoye Porechnoye in the Sudzha District, Kursk Region. **Vladimir Gerdo / TASS**

Russia's Defense Ministry [announced](#) Thursday that its troops regained control over the town of Sudzha in the Kursk border region after seven months under Ukrainian control.

“Units of the ‘Sever’ group of forces liberated the settlements of Melovoy, Podol and Sudzha during the offensive,” the ministry said in a statement published on Telegram.

Ukrainian forces initially seized 1,376 square kilometers (531 square miles) of land in the Kursk region after launching a surprise ground offensive in August. Kyiv hoped to use the occupied territory as leverage in future peace negotiations with Russia.

However, over the past week, Russian troops have carried out a rapid counteroffensive and appear close to completely pushing Ukrainian forces out of the region.

As of Thursday, the area under Ukrainian control had shrunk to 140 square kilometers (54 square miles), according to DeepState, a battlefield tracker with ties to the Ukrainian military.

Sudzha was the only major Kursk region settlement held by Ukrainian forces following their August offensive.

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Ukraine's top military commander, Oleksandr Syrsky, [said](#) Wednesday that combat was ongoing in Sudzha's outskirts, which he claimed had been "almost completely destroyed" by Russian airstrikes.

Syrsky added that Ukrainian forces would maintain their defenses in the remaining parts of the Kursk region "as long as it's appropriate and necessary."

President Vladimir Putin visited the Kursk region on Wednesday, expressing confidence that his forces were on the brink of "fully liberating" the first Russian region to come under foreign occupation since World War II.

Later on Thursday, Russia's Defense Ministry [published](#) footage of its soldiers in Sudzha after they retook the town. The video shows badly damaged buildings and ruins, as well as burned-out cars and debris scattered across the town.

Meanwhile, more than 100 people previously reported missing in and around Sudzha were evacuated to safe locations, regional authorities said.

"Since yesterday and as of the morning of March 13, 120 civilians who were under occupation have been taken out of Sudzha," Acting Kursk region Governor Alexander Khinshtein [wrote](#) on Telegram early Thursday.

Around 90% of those evacuated had been [listed as missing](#) following Ukraine's offensive, according to Yury Mezinov, an aide to Russia's emergency situations minister.

Authorities previously reported that around 2,000 people had gone missing.

Related article: [Ukraine Risks Losing Kursk Foothold as Russia Pushes Forward](#)

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry released footage [showing](#) rescuers evacuating residents — many of them elderly — by bus. The ministry said more than 90 evacuees had been placed in temporary shelters.

Governor Khinshtein said evacuees were receiving medical and mental health assistance, as well as help restoring lost or damaged documents. "The work continues non-stop," he wrote.

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