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Zelensky denies Russian claims of encircled Ukrainian troops



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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has refuted claims made by Russian President Vladimir Putin, stating that Ukrainian troops have not been encircled by Russian forces in the Kursk region. Putin had claimed that Russian forces had “isolated” Ukrainian soldiers, leaving them with only two options: surrender or die. Former U.S. President Donald Trump later echoed these claims, describing Ukrainian forces as being in a “very bad and vulnerable position.”

However, Ukrainian officials and independent analysts have disputed the allegations. The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) found no evidence to suggest that Ukrainian troops were encircled in Kursk or along the frontline in Ukraine. The Ukrainian military also dismissed the reports as political manipulation, asserting that their units in Kursk had successfully regrouped to more advantageous defensive positions.

Zelensky emphasized that Ukrainian forces in the region were carrying out their tasks effectively and repelling Russian and North Korean troops. Despite the claims of encirclement, Zelensky acknowledged a build-up of Russian forces along Ukraine’s eastern border, signaling a possible threat to the Sumy region.

While Russian military bloggers have reported Ukraine losing territory in Kursk, the ISW speculates that Putin’s claims may be intended to divert attention from his ambiguous stance on a

U.S.-backed ceasefire proposal. The situation remains fluid, with ongoing clashes between Russian and Ukrainian forces in the region.