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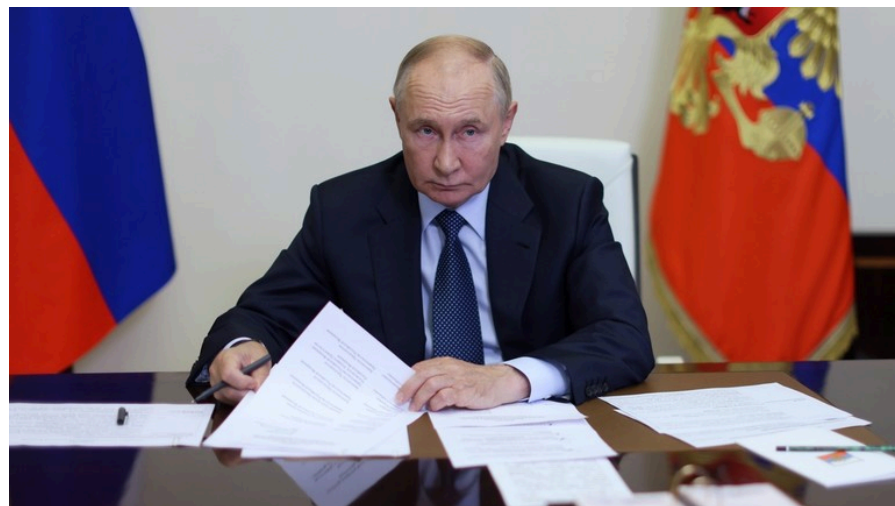
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# Ukraine tried to attack Russian nuclear plant – Putin

The IAEA has been notified of the attempted strike on the facility in Kursk Region, the president has said



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting with members of the government via videoconference at the Novo-Ogaryovo state residence outside Moscow, Russia. © Sputnik/Gavriil Grigorov

Ukrainian forces have attempted to strike Russia's Kursk Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), President Vladimir Putin has said during a cabinet meeting.

Kiev sent thousands of troops into Russia's Kursk Region earlier this month, attempting to reach the town of Kurchatov, where the nuclear facility is located. Moscow has declared the incursion an act of terrorism and has deployed additional troops to repel the invaders.

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*“Last night, the enemy attempted to strike the atomic power plant,”* Putin said at a cabinet meeting on Thursday afternoon. *“The International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] has been informed. They promised to come themselves and send specialists to assess the situation. I hope they actually do so.”*

The IAEA already has observers working at the Zaporozhye NPP, Europe’s largest such facility. The mission was deployed in the summer of 2023, as Ukrainian troops attempted to seize the plant. Earlier this month, a Ukrainian drone attack set one of the cooling towers at the plant on fire.

Rosatom CEO Alexey Likhachev has discussed the situation at both power plants with IAEA director Rafael Grossi, and invited him to visit Kursk to personally assess the situation, according to the Russian media.



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Grossi has accepted the invitation and is planning to visit Kursk next week, an IAEA spokesman told AFP. Afterwards, he will visit Kiev and speak with Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky.

According to Grossi, the IAEA is very concerned about any combat operations near the Kursk NPP, since it operates the same kind of reactors as the infamous Chernobyl NPP.

*“They don’t have a protective dome around them, just the normal roof, which means that the reactor’s core is pretty exposed,”* Grossi said. The presence of troops within artillery range *“is a source of enormous concern to me and the agency,”* he added, without specifying which forces he meant.

Moscow has repeatedly criticized the international agency for never identifying the perpetrator of the

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attacks on nuclear facilities, even though the IAEA staff has known perfectly well that Kiev is to blame.

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Last week, Russian military journalist Marat Khairullin reported that Ukraine was preparing a *“dirty bomb”* for a false flag attack on either the Kursk or Zaporozhye NPP. Moscow said it was taking the report seriously and warned that any such attack would be met immediately with *“tough military and military-technical countermeasures.”*



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