

## **Russia blames US for alleged drone attack on Kremlin, considers retribution: Live Ukraine updates**

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov blamed the U.S. on Thursday for what Russia claims was an assassination attempt by Ukraine targeting Russian President Vladimir Putin – and said retaliation options were being weighed.

"Attempts to disown this both in Kyiv and in Washington are, of course, absolutely ridiculous," Peskov said. "We know very well that decisions on such actions and such terrorist attacks are made not in Kyiv but in Washington."

Kyiv has dismissed the allegation as a manufactured pretext by Moscow to justify massive strikes on Ukraine's battered cities. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby, asked about Russia's claim on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," said Peskov was "just lying."

"I can assure you that there was no involvement by the United States," Kirby said. "Whatever it was, it didn't involve us."

Peskov declined to provide details on possible retribution, suggesting only "well-thought-out steps that meet the interests of our country." Moscow has not presented any evidence of Ukrainian or U.S. involvement in the drone strikes, but it launched a missile and drone assault on Kyiv for the third time in four days.

U.S intelligence officials are still trying to determine who was behind the drone incident and are exploring various possibilities, an official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter told the Associated Press.

The Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said several indicators suggest the strike was internally conducted and purposefully staged "in an attempt to bring the war home to a Russian domestic audience" and increase public support for more call-ups and other sacrifices.

Moscow says its defenses shot down two drones attempting a strike early Wednesday morning on the Kremlin residence of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who was outside Moscow at the time and was unaffected, according to his office. Ukraine denied involvement.

"We are attacking neither Putin nor Moscow," Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. "We are fighting on our own territory, defending our villages and cities."