

Putin declares martial law in annexed Ukraine regions

KYIV, Ukraine: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday declared martial law in four regions of Ukraine recently annexed by Moscow as his proxy officials in a southern city pulled out with Ukraine troops advancing.

The decree came as Ukraine said it had downed "several Russian rockets" over Kyiv in a third consecutive day of missile and drone attacks on the capital after a string of battlefield defeats for Moscow.

The introduction of military rule in the Moscow-controlled territories also gives additional power to authorities in southern Russian regions bordering Ukraine. "We are working on solving very complex large-

scale tasks to ensure security and protect the future of Russia," Putin said.

Pro-Kremlin officials meanwhile said they were pulling out of the key southern Ukraine city of Kherson on Wednesday, as Kyiv's forces advanced on territory in Russian hands since the war's earliest days.

In parts of Ukraine recently recaptured from Russian forces, meanwhile, repairs are underway before winter begins, but many residents still depend on humanitarian aid.

"Apart from this, nothing is working," said Ivan Zakharchenko, a 70-year-old resident of Izyum queueing for aid in the square where President Volodymyr Zelen-

sky celebrated the town's liberation just over a month ago. Kherson was the first and only major city to fall to Moscow's troops since the February invasion began and retaking it would be a crucial prize in Ukraine's counter-offensive. "The entire administration is already moving today," to the eastern bank of the Dnieper River, the Kherson region's Moscow-installed head, Vladimir Saldo, told Russian state television.

But Andriy Yermak, the Ukrainian presidency's chief of staff, called the moves a "propaganda show" and accused Russia of "trying to scare the people of Kherson". Ukrainian forces "do not fire at Ukrainian cities," Yermak said.

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PUNJAB EMERGENCY SERVICE advertisement. Includes logo, 'Join Rescue 1122 to Save Lives', 'STAFF REQUIRED FOR TEHSILS / TOWN PROJECTS', a table of job posts and qualifications, and contact information for Pakistan Testing Service.

India restricts Pulitzer-winning photographer from flying to US

NEW DELHI: Indian authorities have prevented an award-winning photographer from flying to the United States to collect her Pulitzer Prize, the latest of several Kashmiri journalists barred from leaving the country.

Sanna Irshad Mattoo was one of four journalists working for Reuters news agency that took home the prestigious award for feature photography this year. The 28-year-old has won plaudits for documenting life in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, a disputed and highly militarised Himalayan territory home to a decades-old insurgency.

Mattoo was stopped by immigration authorities at New Delhi airport late Tuesday and prevented from boarding while two of her colleagues were permitted to leave the country. She later tweeted a picture of her ticket that was stamped "cancelled without prejudice". "I don't know what to say... this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me," Mattoo, who is also a fellow of the prestigious Magnum Foundation, told AFP. "Only I was stopped without any reason and the others were allowed to go. Maybe it has something to do with me being a Kashmiri."

Tuesday was the second time this year that Mattoo was prevented from leaving India. In July she was stopped in a similar manner at the same airport while on her way to Paris for a book launch and photography exhibition.

India has sought to entrench its control of Kashmir, which is also claimed in full by neighbouring Pakistan and which has been a constant source. —AP

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COURT NOTICE section containing a notice from the court of Judge Banking Court No. VII Old State Bank building, Opp GPO, Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam, Lahore, regarding a suit for recovery of Rs 392,000.