

Food Supplies Cut to Rebel Stronghold in East Ukraine

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Food supplies have been cut to the rebel stronghold of Luhansk in eastern Ukraine during a military offensive on the city by government forces, local officials said on Thursday.

✕The army says it has almost completely encircled Luhansk but has opened a humanitarian corridor to allow people to flee the city. It says it is not firing on residential areas although three people were reported killed in overnight shelling. ✕

"Chains of large supermarkets, food shops and markets work intermittently. Food deliveries to the city have stopped, supplies are decreasing every day. Shops only offer products from their stocks," the city authorities said in a statement on their website.

The United Nations said more than 1,000 people have been killed in the conflict in Ukraine since mid-April. This is around the time when pro-Russian separatists rose up in mainly Russian-speaking eastern Ukraine, prompting Kiev to launch an "anti-terrorist" operation to try to quell the rebellion. ✕

Luhansk had a pre-conflict population of more than 400,000. It is one of two big cities still in the hands of the separatists following advances by the government troops.

☒ In the other main rebel stronghold, Donetsk, shelling continued overnight on the outskirts but no new deaths were reported.

☒ Fighting in the region has prevented a team of more than 50 international experts from reaching the crash site of a Malaysian airliner downed over rebel-held territory on July 17, killing all 298 people aboard.

☒ The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, a security and rights body, said it was assessing the security of an alternative route to the site on Thursday.

☒ The failure to reach the site has stalled an investigation into the downing of the airliner. The remains of some victims are believed to still be on the site.

☒ In Kiev, a lawmaker said parliament had approved legislation to allow a larger international mission of military and nonmilitary representatives into Ukraine to help recover the last remains and conduct an investigation. Under this move, the mission will be able include up to 700 armed personnel.

See also:

[East Ukraine Rebel Leader Strelkov Bans Swearing to Appease God](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/31/food-supplies-cut-to-rebel-stronghold-in-east-ukraine-a-37869)

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