The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Two Ukrainian Servicemen Killed in East Ukraine

June 16, 2015



Members of the Ukrainian armed forces drive armoured vehicles and trucks as cows gather on the roadside near the village of Vidrodzhennya outside Artemivsk, Donetsk region.

Two Ukrainian serviceman have been killed and five wounded in separatist eastern territories in the past 24 hours as fighting extended along a large stretch of the frontline, the Ukrainian military said on Tuesday.

Violence has intensified in recent weeks despite a ceasefire which was brokered in the Belarussian capital of Minsk in mid-February. Government forces and separatists regularly accuse each other of violations.

"The enemy is using practically all means of attack available, from snipers to heavy weapons. Active fighting is going on along a broad stretch of the frontline — from Granitnoye to Horlivka," Ukrainian military spokesman Andriy Lysenko said, referring to two towns around 95 km apart. Lysenko was speaking at a regular midday briefing.

Pro-Russian rebels were also firing at government troop positions further north in Luhansk

region, he said in the televised briefing.

Senior separatist commander Eduard Basurin said three rebel fighters and five civilians had been wounded as a result of Ukrainian shelling of separatist-held territory, rebel press service DAN reported.

Representatives of Ukraine, Russia, the separatists and security watchdog OSCE were due to gather in Minsk later on Tuesday for one of their regular meetings on the implementation of the ceasefire deal.

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