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Moscow Says Russian Forces Advancing Inside Bakhmut

By AFP

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Valentin Sprinchak/TASS

Russia said Saturday that its forces were still pushing inside the frontline town of Bakhmut and had wrested control of an area in the eastern Ukrainian city.

"In the Donetsk direction, assault detachments liberated a block in the northwestern part of the city of Artemovsk," the defense ministry said, referring to Bakhmut by its Russian name.

The announcement came after the head of Russia's Wagner paramilitary group, which is leading the assault for Bakhmut, claimed that regular Russian troops were fleeing the flanks of the town and exposing his forces in its center.

The defense ministry had said earlier that it had redeployed forces north of Bakhmut, suggesting a possible pulling back of forces from the front.

But the ministry said Saturday that the regular army was providing support to Wagner forces.

"The units of the airborne forces provided support to the assault detachments and pinned down the enemy on the flanks," the ministry said in a statement.

Aviation and artillery targeted Ukrainian troops near several settlements in the eastern region of Donetsk including Chasiv Yar, the statement said.

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