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# In Photos: Life Under Russian Occupation in Ukraine's Mariupol

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Russia has held the southern Ukrainian city of Mariupol since May 2022, when its brutal three-month siege of the city ended. The port city on the Sea of Azov, which had a pre-war population of 480,000, was nearly completely destroyed by a brutal Russian siege in the spring of 2022. The United Nations said it has recorded some 2,000 civilian deaths in Mariupol, but noted that the true toll may be thousands higher. The Kremlin claimed to have annexed the city and the wider Donetsk region following September 2022 referendums that were widely panned as a sham. Since then, Russia has regularly boasted of its efforts to reconstruct the city which it razed to the ground itself. As Ukraine seeks to gain momentum with its summer counteroffensive, some observers have said Kyiv could seek to advance toward Mariupol in an effort to cut off the land bridge between Russia and Crimea. Here is a look at life in Russian-occupied Mariupol:



**Stringer / AFP**

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