

Russia Opening New Fronts in Avdiivka Battle – Ukraine

By [AFP](#)

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Russian Tornado-S multiple launch rocket system. **Russian Defense Ministry / TASS**

Russian forces are assaulting the industrial town of Avdiivka in eastern Ukraine from two new directions, Ukrainian officials said on Monday, as Moscow expanded its bid to capture the near-encircled town.

Moscow has been trying for nearly two months to seize Avdiivka, an industrial town in the eastern Donetsk region that has become the fiercest flashpoint on the sprawling front line.

"The current third wave of enemy assaults differs from the previous two in that they have conditionally opened two new directions," said Vitaliy Barabash, the head of the town's military administration.

"The launching of new directions proves that the enemy has been given a command to capture the city at any cost," he told state media.

Barabash said the new pushes by Russian forces were an attempt to distract Ukrainian defenses and close a gap west of the town that would see it entirely encircled.

Related article: [Russia Intensely Attacking Avdiivka, Robotyne, Says Ukraine](#)

Independent military analysts have said that Russian forces are making incremental gains around Avdiivka but at an extremely high cost.

Barabash said there were around 1,300 civilians remaining in the town, which was once home to some 30,000 people.

Avdiivka lies in the Donetsk region, partially controlled by Kremlin-backed separatists since 2014 and one of four Ukrainian regions Moscow claimed to have annexed last year.

Oil depot

Meanwhile, Kyiv said on Monday it had destroyed a major oil depot in an overnight drone attack on Russian-controlled territory in the eastern Luhansk region of Ukraine.

"It exploded loudly and was burning brightly," said Ukrainian regional head Artem Lysogor, who published a video showing a large fire and smoke billowing from an industrial oil drum.

Russian state media also reported a Ukrainian attack on an oil depot in Luhansk and said the resulting fire had been extinguished.

Both sides said they had downed dozens of other enemy drones.

Russia's Defense Ministry said it intercepted 30 Ukrainian drones, while Kyiv said it shot down 18 of 23 that Russia fired overnight, as well as one guided missile.

Separately, Ukraine's interior ministry said rescuers had pulled the body of a dead child from the rubble of a residential building in the eastern city of Novogrodivka following a Russian shelling attack last week.

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