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Russian Forces Claim 'Significant' Advance in Southern Ukraine

By AFP

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A Russian T-80BVM tank in Ukraine. **Russian Defence Ministry / TASS**

Russian forces in southern Ukraine have "advanced significantly" around the village of Novopokrovka in the Zaporizhzhia region, Kremlin-installed officials said Tuesday.

"I'm in constant contact with our units... The situation is always tense, but not only do our guys continue to hold the line of defense, but they're also gradually moving forward," the Moscow-backed head of the occupied Zaporizhzhia region, Yevgeny Balitsky, said on Telegram.

Novopokrovka lies some 20 kilometers east of Robotyne, which Kyiv said it recaptured in the summer, though it has since struggled to maintain control of the village.

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Ukraine's military on Tuesday reported Russian attacks all along the frontline, including in the south.

"In the Zaporizhzhia area, the defense forces repelled three enemy attacks in the areas north of Pryutne and west of Novopokrovka of the Zaporizhzhia region," it said in its daily report.

The gains would put further pressure on Ukraine's control of Robotyne, a tiny southern village, as Russian forces control territory to the west, south and east of the village.

Kyiv's recapture of Robotyne in August was touted as one of the successes of its counteroffensive. But Ukraine's push to regain territory lost to Moscow has since stalled.

Russia has controlled large swathes of the Zaporizhzhia region since it first invaded Ukraine last year, though the regional capital is now back in Kyiv's control.

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