

Russia Throwing Large Numbers of Troops at Ukraine's Avdiivka, Mayor Says

By [AFP](#)

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The town of Avdiivka in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region. **Serg @NHunter007 / X**

Large numbers of Russian troops are pushing to capture the frontline town of Avdiivka, its Ukrainian mayor said Thursday, escalating a months-long effort to capture the industrial hub.

Late last year, Moscow launched a costly bid to seize the town, which has been caught up in fighting since 2014 when it briefly fell to Moscow-backed separatists.

"Unfortunately, the enemy is pressing from all directions. There is not a single part of our city that is more or less calm," Mayor Vitaly Barabash told state media.

"They are storming with very large forces," he added.

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The capture of Avdiivka would provide a much-needed victory for Moscow ahead of the second anniversary of its invasion, as well as for Russian President Vladimir Putin personally as he seeks re-election in March.

Avdiivka is located in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, which the Kremlin claims is part of Russia, along with four other Ukrainian territories that Moscow says it has annexed.

Barabash characterized the ongoing fighting for the town as "very hot" and "very difficult."

"The situation in some areas is simply unreal," he said.

Fewer than 950 people remain in the frontline town, of an estimated pre-war population of around 33,000 people, Barabash added.

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