

Kyiv Says Eastern Front 'Deteriorated' as Russia Claims Village

By [AFP](#)

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Ukrainian servicemen drive in a military vehicle on a road near the town of Chasiv Yar. **Roman Pilipey / AFP**

Ukraine's commander-in-chief Oleksandr Syrsky said Saturday the situation on the eastern front had worsened significantly as Russia claimed the capture of a village near the occupied industrial town of Avdiivka.

"The situation on the eastern front has deteriorated significantly in recent days," said Syrsky, who took over as commander-in-chief in February after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky fired his popular predecessor, Valery Zaluzhny.

Zelensky said in his evening address that the "situation at the front, in some areas, is difficult."

Germany on Saturday announced it would send an additional Patriot air defense system to

Ukraine, the third it has supplied so far, citing "massive and ongoing Russian airstrikes."

Zelensky thanked German Chancellor Olaf Scholz for "a real manifestation of support for Ukraine at a critical time for us."

Zelensky said in his evening address he was also "working" with Germany on the supply of an additional Iris-T air defense system, which is capable of short- and medium-range protection against missiles and drones.

Russia's Defense Ministry announced its troops had "liberated" the village of Pervomaiske in the Donetsk region, about 11 kilometers west of the largely destroyed town of Avdiivka, captured by Russia in the middle of February.

Ukraine did not confirm this, however. Its General Staff said Saturday evening that troops had repelled Russian attacks aimed at pushing them out of Pervomaiske and other villages nearby.

Ukrainian prosecutors said Russia on Saturday launched air strikes on villages in the Donetsk region, killing three including a 60-year-old man and a 66-year-old woman, and wounding four.

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On his Telegram channel, Syrsky wrote of "a significant intensification of the enemy's offensive after the presidential elections in Russia" last month.

The commander-in-chief added decisions were being taken "to strengthen the most problematic defense areas with electronic warfare and air defense."

In the south, Russia accused Ukraine on Saturday of killing 10 by shelling the occupied town of Tokmak in the Zaporizhzhia region.

Ukrainian authorities in Zaporizhzhia said Russia had struck the region more than 400 times over the last day, including from planes.

Russia also said one man was killed by Ukrainian shelling of the occupied town of Oleshky in the southern Kherson region.

Russia is now securing fresh territorial gains and trying to press onward against Ukrainian units hobbled by delays in the supply of vital Western military aid.

In the east, Russia "is actively attacking our positions in the Lyman and Bakhmut sectors ... In the Pokrovsk sector, they are trying to break through our defense using dozens of tanks and armored personnel carriers," Syrsky said.

"The issue of achieving technical superiority over the enemy in high-tech weapons has again arisen. Only this will enable us to defeat a larger enemy," Syrsky said.

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