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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukraine Says Clinging On to Part of Key Town Russia Says Captured

By AFP

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Russian servicemen on the front line in Ukraine. **Dmitry Yagodkin / TASS**

Kyiv's army said on Tuesday it was clinging on to part of Kurakhove, a strategic town in Ukraine's east that Russia said it had seized the previous day.

Moscow hailed the capture of the "important logistics hub," saying it would enable Russian forces to seize the rest of the eastern Donetsk region "at an accelerated pace."

But the Ukrainian army said Tuesday fighting was still ongoing on the fringes of the town and accused Russia of using scorched-earth tactics to "completely destroy" it.

"Ukrainian troops are holding on in the western part of the town, on the western outskirts of the town," Victor Tregubov, a spokesperson for Ukraine's Khortytsia army unit, which is fighting in the area, said in an interview on national TV.

A "large part of the town has been destroyed", he said, adding that Russians were grinding through the area, clearing the town building by building.

"They are actually trying to dismantle the town brick by brick," Tregubov said.

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He claimed Ukraine was "inflicting losses on them so that they do not advance further."

Kurakhove had a pre-conflict population of around 18,000 people. It is home to a power station, is located near a reservoir and has a major lithium deposit.

Tregubov said Ukraine still controlled the power plant.

Russia's troops have been advancing in the eastern Donetsk region — which Moscow claimed to have annexed in 2022 — for months.

Both sides are trying to secure fresh territory ahead of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump returning to office later this month.

The Republican has vowed to bring swift peace to the nearly three-year war but has not outlined a concrete plan.

Russia said Ukraine launched a fresh "counter-attack" in its Kursk border region over the weekend, five months after Kyiv's army first seized dozens of settlements in a shock cross-border offensive.

Elsewhere on the front lines, both sides reported civilian deaths in the southern Kherson region — part of which is occupied by Russian forces.

A 62-year-old man was killed when a Russian drone dropped explosives on his car, the Ukrainian governor of the region Oleksandr Prokudin said on social media.

And Russian state media quoted a Moscow-installed official as saying Ukrainian shelling killed one person in the village of Oleshki, under Russia's control.

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