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Russia Claims East Ukraine Village Near Strategic Town

By AFP

February 09, 2025



A Ukrainian artilleryman of the 24th Mechanized Brigade stands on a camouflaged 2S1 'Gvozdika' 122mm self-propelled howitzer at an undisclosed location near Chasiv Yar, Donetsk region **AFP Photo / Press Service of the 24th Mechanized Brigade of Ukrainian Armed Forces**

Russia said Sunday that its forces had captured the eastern Ukrainian village of Orikhovo-Vasylivka, near the strategic military hub of Chasiv Yar that Moscow is attempting to seize.

There is intensive fighting in the frontline town of Chasiv Yar, one of the last remaining urban areas blocking Russia from advancing further into the region, according to Russian military bloggers.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in a daily briefing that "as a result of decisive attack actions, the South group of troops liberated the settlement of Orekhovo-Vasilevka in the Donetsk region," using the Russian name for the village.

Orikhovo-Vasylivka is located around 10 kilometres (six miles) north of Chasiv Yar and near the road to the Ukraine-held city of Sloviansk.

Related article: Russia Says Captured Key Mining Town of Toretsk in East Ukraine

The latest advance comes as Russian troops are pushing further into the Donetsk region. They claimed the key mining town of Toretsk on Friday, while Ukraine denies Moscow troops are in full control there.

Ukraine's Khortytsia army unit, which is fighting in the area, said Sunday that it had repelled attacks in the areas of Chasiv Yar and Toretsk and shot down a Russian military jet near Toretsk.

Ukraine's air force said that overnight, Russia had attacked six regions with 151 drones, of which it shot down 70 while a further 74 were lost "without negative consequences."

Russia's Defense Ministry said it had destroyed 35 Ukrainian drones overnight and one in the northwestern Leningrad region on Sunday morning.

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