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Russian Troops Enter Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk Region for the First Time Since 2022 – NYT

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Telegram / Dnipropetrovsk Regional Military Administration head Serhii Lysak

Russian forces have secured a small foothold in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region for the first time since the early weeks of the full-scale war in 2022, The New York Times reported Friday.

Small groups of Russian soldiers crossed into the Dnipropetrovsk region from the occupied Donetsk region over the past weekend, three Ukrainian officers stationed in the area told The New York Times.

A battlefield map compiled by the U.S.-based Institute for the Study of War also indicates that Russia has claimed a small strip of territory inside Dnipropetrovsk.

The officers told the NYT that Russian troops have not seized any settlements and have only advanced along a few tree lines.

Military analysts and Ukrainian sources told the NYT that the move is more likely a symbolic

effort to erode Ukrainian morale and a strategic effort to reinforce Moscow's positions in neighboring areas rather than a push to seize the entire Dnipropetrovsk region.

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An officer from Ukraine's 72nd Brigade with the call sign "Barbarossa" told the NYT that Russia has amassed a substantial force in the area and may move further into Dnipropetrovsk.

On Sunday, the Russian Defense Ministry said that forces from a tank unit had reached the western border of the Donetsk region and were continuing their offensive in the Dnipropetrovsk region.

The Ukrainian military has so far not confirmed the presence of Russian troops in Dnipropetrovsk.

Russian negotiators at recent peace talks in Istanbul threatened Ukraine with further territorial losses if Kyiv refuses to accept Moscow's demands, which include the full surrender of four regions partially occupied by Russia.

A Russian official close to the Kremlin told The Moscow Times in March that Moscow was weighing the option of seizing parts of another Ukrainian region, like Dnipropetrovsk or Sumy, to use as bargaining chips for Kherson and Zaporizhzhia.

Moscow, which has the initiative on the battlefield, has repeatedly refused calls by Ukraine, Europe and U.S. President Donald Trump for a full and unconditional ceasefire even as it holds talks with Kyiv on a possible settlement to the war.

Dnipropetrovsk had an estimated population of 3 million before Russia launched its offensive. Around 1 million people lived in the regional capital, Dnipro.

It is an important mining and industrial hub for Ukraine and deeper Russian advances into the region could have a serious knock-on effect for Kyiv's struggling military and economy.

AFP contributed reporting.

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