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Gerasimov Visits Russian Troops Near the Front Line With Pokrovsk

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Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russia's top military commander visited troops fighting near the strategic eastern Ukrainian city of Pokrovsk as they continue their slow advance toward the stronghold, Russia's Defense Ministry said Wednesday.

Russian forces have been inching closer to Pokrovsk in the Donetsk region since July 2024, marking some of their most significant territorial gains over the past several months. However, the advance has come at a high cost in personnel and equipment, according to analysts cited by the BBC.

A video released by the Russian Defense Ministry on Wednesday showed Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov arriving by helicopter at an unspecified location near the front line with Pokrovsk, where he received reports from field commanders and issued orders.

Gerasimov was also shown awarding medals to troops from the combined arms army within Russia's "Center" group of forces.

“I wish you success in upcoming battles to fully liberate the Donetsk soil,” he told the soldiers.

This marks Gerasimov’s fourth known visit to the area since last summer. The exact date of the latest visit was not disclosed.

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Pokrovsk serves as a vital logistics hub for Ukrainian forces. Capturing the city would pave the way for Russian troops to advance westward toward Dnipro, a major urban and industrial center.

Russia’s Defense Ministry claimed earlier this month that its troops were pushing into the Dnipropetrovsk region, which lies around 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) west of Pokrovsk.

Kremlin-installed officials in the partially occupied Donetsk region claimed the advance toward Dnipropetrovsk was intended to encircle Pokrovsk, according to the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), a U.S.-based think tank.

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