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Ukrainian Troops Withdraw From Eastern Town of Siversk

By AFP

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Ivan Vysochinskiy / TASS

Ukrainian troops have withdrawn from the eastern town of Siversk, the General Staff said Tuesday, as Russia doubled down on its recent advances across the lengthy front line.

Russia announced the capture of the city in the heavily embattled Donetsk region almost two weeks ago, when Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov reported the gain to President Vladimir Putin in a televised meeting.

The Ukrainian army said that "to preserve the lives of our soldiers and the combat capability of our units, Ukrainian defenders have withdrawn from the settlement."

The Russians were helped by "a significant advantage in manpower and equipment" and weather conditions, it added.

The Ukrainian army was still fighting in Siversk's surroundings, and the city remains within

the reach of Ukraine's fire, according to Kyiv's General Staff.

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The Russian army has been slowly but steadily grinding through eastern Ukraine and taking ground from outnumbered and outgunned Ukrainian forces, with some of the fiercest battles taking place in Donetsk.

Putin, emboldened by recent gains, threatened at his year-end press conference last week to take more territory.

The Donetsk region is the key stumbling block in the U.S.-led settlement talks and Ukraine says it is under pressure to cede the remaining part of the region to Russia.

Siversk is located about 30 kilometers (18 miles) east of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk, the last two major cities still under Ukrainian control in Donetsk — an industrial and mining region in Moscow's sights.

The town was home to around 11,000 people before the war.

Eastern Ukraine has been ravaged since Russia launched its assault in February 2022, with tens of thousands of people killed and millions forced to flee their homes.

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