Russia says it's taken Chasiv Yar. Ukraine disputes the claim.

UK Defence Intelligence map of battlefield situation in Ukraine as of August 1, 2025.

As Friday's British Defence Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine indicates, last week the Russian forces continued to attack the Ukrainian forces that still hold a small portion of Russia's Kursk region on the border north of Sumy as well as those defending Kharkiv and Kupiansk in northeastern Ukraine. The Russian forces also continued to attack toward Chasiv Yar, a small city with a pre-war population of about 12,000 that is 10 kilometers west of Bakhmut, which the Russian forces took after a prolonged siege in 2023. And they continued to attack toward the city of Pokrovsk in Donetsk region. But as the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported in its daily updates last week, the Russian forces also continued to attack the Ukrainian forces defending other cities and towns in eastern Ukraine – most notably, Lyman, 30 kilometers southeast of Izium; Kramatorsk, about 25 kilometers northwest of Chasiv Yar; Toretsk, about 20 kilometers south of Chasiv Yar; Vremivka, about 50 kilometers south of Pokrovsk; the Orikhiv area southeast of Zaporizhzhia; and the area in Kherson region adjacent to the Dnipro River in southern Ukraine.

The General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported that over the seven days last week from Sunday through Saturday, the Russian forces conducted a total of 1,098 attacks against the Ukrainian forces defending the cities and towns in northeastern and eastern Ukraine, 79 less than the 1,177 attacks they conducted in the previous week. As was the case in the previous week and indeed in every week over the past several months, the largest number of Russian attacks were directed against the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk, an important transit hub on the highway between Donetsk city and Dnipro and one that, if taken, would not only open a pathway toward Dnipro but also one toward Kostyantynivka, Kramatorsk and Sloviansk in the northern portion of Donetsk region. Over the seven days last week, the Russian forces conducted 361

attacks against the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk, slightly fewer than the 409 attacks in the previous week but still far more than against any other target in eastern Ukraine.

Perhaps the most notable development in the continuing war in eastern Ukraine last week was Russia's claim Thursday that it had taken Chasiv Yar. Ukraine immediately disputed the claim, and in an address that evening President Zelenskyy said, "There were Russian fake reports today – you saw them – about Chasiv Yar. This is Russian disinformation. Ukrainian units are holding our positions, and every Russian attempt to advance in the Donetsk, Sumy, and Kharkiv regions is ultimately being repelled by us. It is not easy, but it is the defense of Ukrainians' very right to life."

Zelenskyy also said he had received a report that day from Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, about the situation in the Pokrovsk area: "The front line – especially the Pokrovsk sector – our units are holding all their positions. Pokrovsk and Dobropillia are currently seeing the heaviest fighting. [Dobropillia, which had a pre-war population of about 25,000, is 30 kilometers north of Pokrovsk.] And it is important that our warriors are eliminating Russian sabotage and reconnaissance groups – small units constantly attempting to break into the city and establish footholds. This is the Russian tactic, and our response to it is the destruction of the occupier."

While the war continues on the ground, it also continues in the air. As happens every night, on Saturday night Russia attacked Kyiv and other cities with Shahed drones, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that from late Saturday night into the early hours of Sunday morning, Russia fired 76 drones and seven missiles - one Iskander ballistic missile, one cruise missile, and five surface-to-air missiles – at eight targets in Ukraine. The Air Force announced that last night Russia fired 162 drones along with a Kinzhal air-launched hypersonic ballistic missile at several targets Ukraine. Those strikes come on top of Russia's massive drone and missile attack on Kyiv Thursday night that killed 31, including five children, and injured more than 150, of whom 16 were children. Ukraine in response hit three important Russian oil facilities Friday and Saturday night – a refinery in Ryazan, an oil storage facility in Voronezh, and an oil depot in Sochi.

Last week President Trump set this Friday as the deadline for Russia to agree to a ceasefire or face additional sanctions including secondary tariffs on the countries buying Russian oil – most notably, China and India. In anticipation of the deadline, Steve Witkoff, President Trump's special envoy who has met with Putin several times, may go to Moscow on Wednesday or Thursday. Dmitry Peskov, Putin's press secretary, said, "We are always glad to see Mr. Witkoff in Moscow. We consider talks with him important, substantive and very useful."

In the meantime, the war continues with no end in sight.

David R. Cameron, August 4, 2025.