

**MALCONTENT NEWS
RUSSIA-UKRAINE
SITUATION REPORT**

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Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 575

It has been 3,496 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 211 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

With the restart of the War Report podcast, Friday reports are combat only, and Saturday is the podcast team's day off.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

- Russian forces launched a series of spoiling attacks north of Bakhmut
- Russian forces are attempting to stop the Ukrainian advances from Andriivka
- Positional fighting became intense in the Avdiivka area of operation (AO)
- Heavy fighting continued south of Orikhiv from Novoprokpivka to Verbove
- **Special Assessment:** How Ukraine achieved naval parity in the Black Sea without a traditional navy
- Special Operation Crab Track successfully hit the main headquarters of the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol with three Storm Shadow cruise missiles

- Two cruise missiles struck near Zatoka in the Odesa oblast
- Russian forces continued massive punitive artillery strikes on the right (west) bank of the Dnipro River
- Debris from a Shahed-136 kamikaze drone landed on "critical infrastructure" in the city of Dnipro
- Russian cruise missiles struck civilian areas of Kremenchuk, wounding 31 and killing one
- Ukrainian air defense shot down 14 out of 15 Shahed - 136 kamikaze drones
- The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, praised Ukraine's efforts to meet European Union requirements for accession to the economic bloc
- The United States news agency NBC is reporting that U.S. President Joe Biden has authorized the shipment of a "small batch" of ATACMS missiles
- Danish officials confirmed that 12 out of 20 Leopard 1-A5 tanks shipped to Ukraine were not combatworthy
- Canada announced a three-year \$428 million military aid package to Ukraine
- Luxembourg announced a new military aid package for Ukraine
- Thousands of newly produced 122 mm artillery rounds were delivered to Ukraine
- The Czech Republic and Sweden are in discussions to provide Saab JAS-39 Gripen fighter plane training to Ukrainian pilots

- The Russian Federation 2024 budget will increase military spending to 6% of GDP and dedicate 30% of the national budget to “classified” spending
- Russia’s electronic subscription service is not ready for the biannual conscription, which is set to begin on October 1
- Russian officials report that the demographic crisis is worsening, with the number of men from 30 to 39 shrinking by 30%

DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

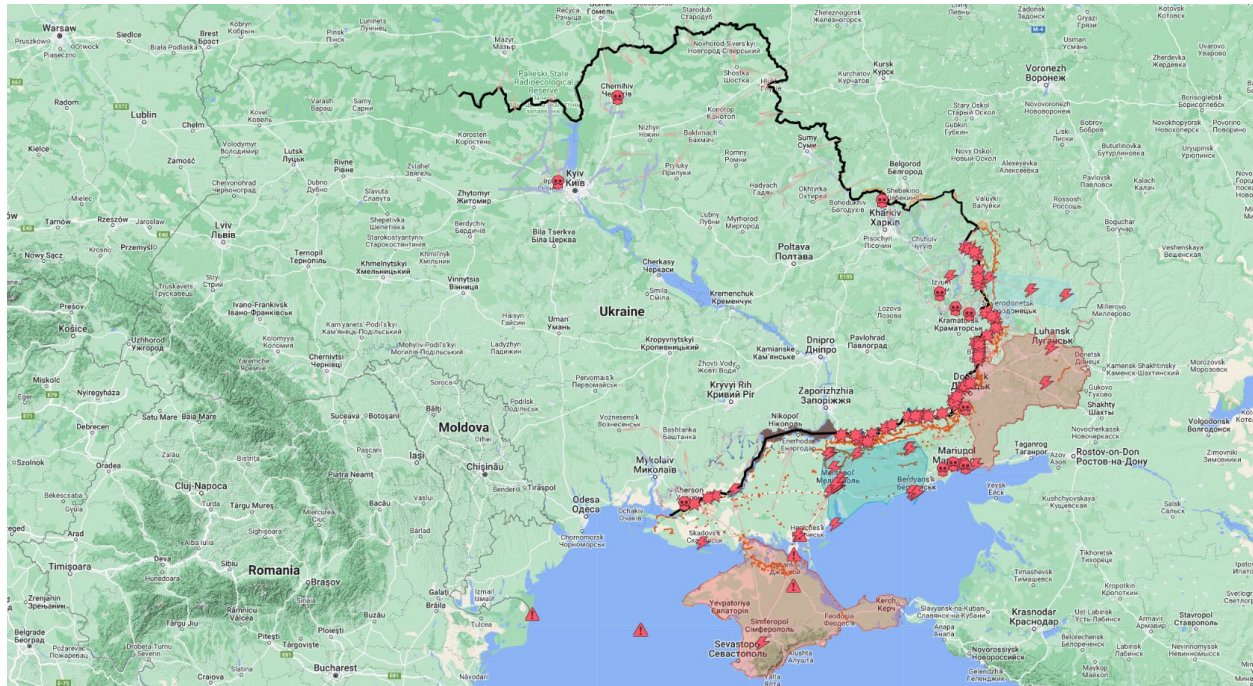
1. Our assessment shows a high risk of a significant punitive missile and drone attack targeting Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure within the next three to five days.
2. The Russian Ministry of Defense remains in a chaotic state, incapable of creating mission cohesion between penal units, mobiks, conscripts, elite forces, and proxy forces.
3. At the direction of President Vladimir Putin, the Russian government is in the largest purge of dissident voices and perceived internal enemies since the Soviet era, including the leaders, mercenaries, and

- employees of PMC Wagner, objective state media journalists and war bloggers, far-right nationalists who want the Kremlin to take more aggressive action in Ukraine, and human rights activists.
4. There remains a possibility of partisan violence within Russia after the killings of Yevgeny Prigozhin and Dmitry Utkin. President Putin's stature, both inside and outside of Russia, remains in a weakened state.
 5. Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu are some of the best allies available for the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense due to their acceptance of systemic corruption, political infighting, waste of military resources, and refusal to adapt to the realities within the theater of war.
 6. The soft response by Ukraine's allies after Russian aggression on Ukraine's border has further emboldened Moscow to take increasing risks, which could cause a significant international incident.
 7. The perceived slow progress of the Ukrainian summer-fall offensive, questions about the capabilities of Ukrainian military commanders at the battalion and brigade level, and ongoing anticorruption measures highlighting the problems within the Ukrainian government are unfairly straining Western support.
 8. Western partners are not meeting their promised military training, heavy equipment, and ammunition

- delivery dates, and these continued delays are negatively impacting Ukraine's military capabilities.
9. The growing number of combat ineffective and combat destroyed Russian units has forced commanders to commit strategic reserves meant for a fall-winter counteroffensive into defensive operations. Additionally, due to declining combat potential, Russian commanders are activating the reserves from the second and third echelons of the Prigozhin and Surovikin Lines.
 10. In our assessment, Russia will attempt to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure over the fall and winter.
 11. While the possibility of an intentional nuclear accident caused by Russian occupiers at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant remains low, the threat should be taken seriously.



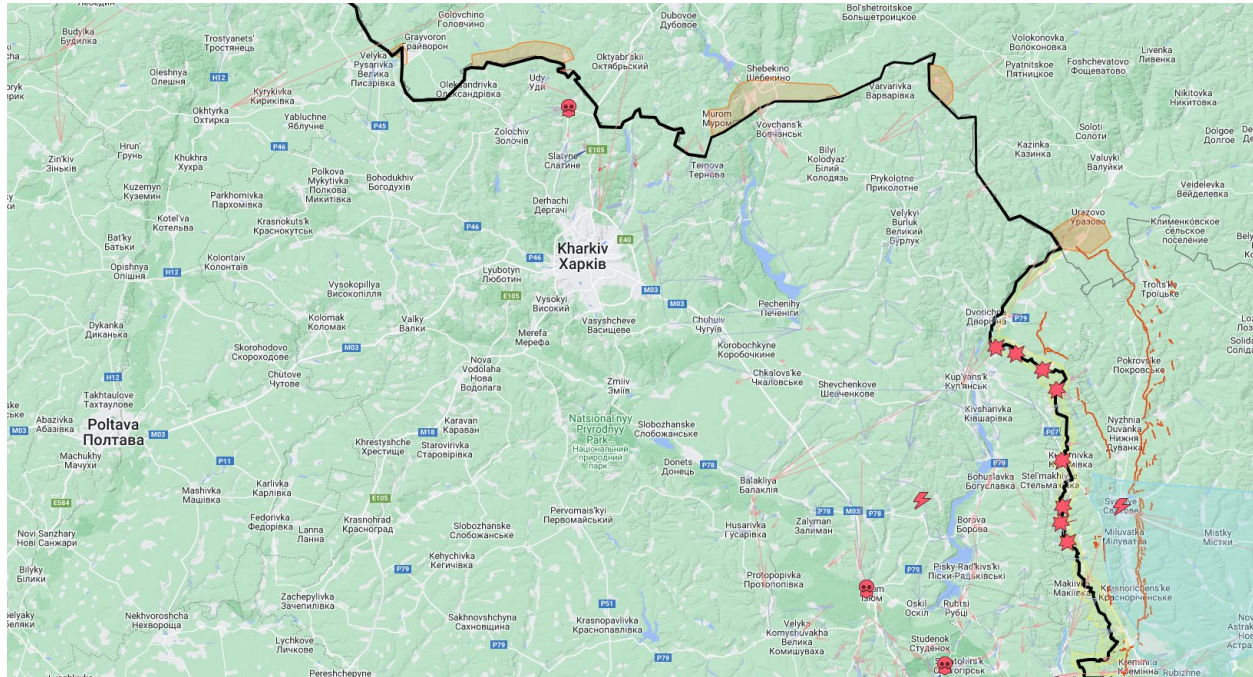
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. If you see a settlement name highlighted [like this](#), it is a link to our war map that will take you to the location explained in the Situation Report.

[Russia-Ukraine War Report Map](#)

KHARKIV



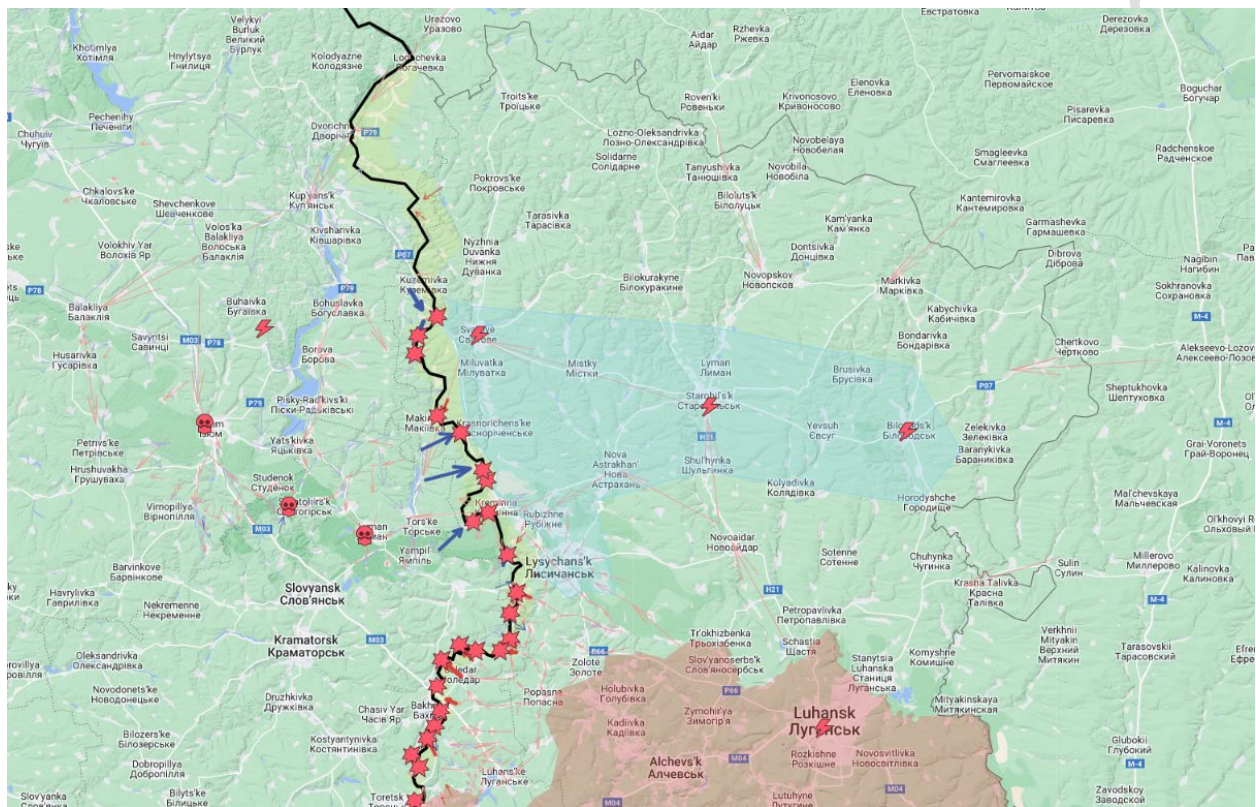
Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians near the line of conflict

Ukrainian Objective: Liberate the northeastern corner of the oblast, hold defensive lines in the Dvorichna and Kupyansk Operational Areas, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure

There weren't any significant events in this region.

DONBAS REGION

LUHANSK



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, control insurgent activity, and set conditions to capture the rest of the region

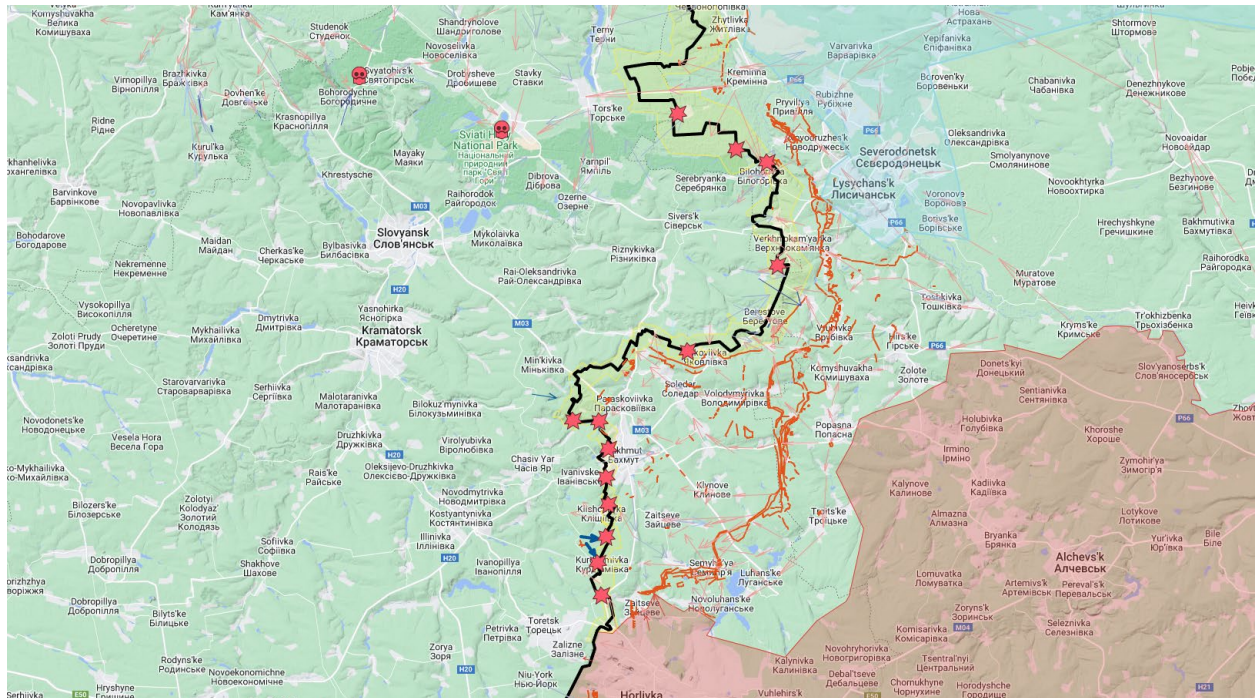
Ukrainian Objective: Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents



There weren't any significant events in this region.

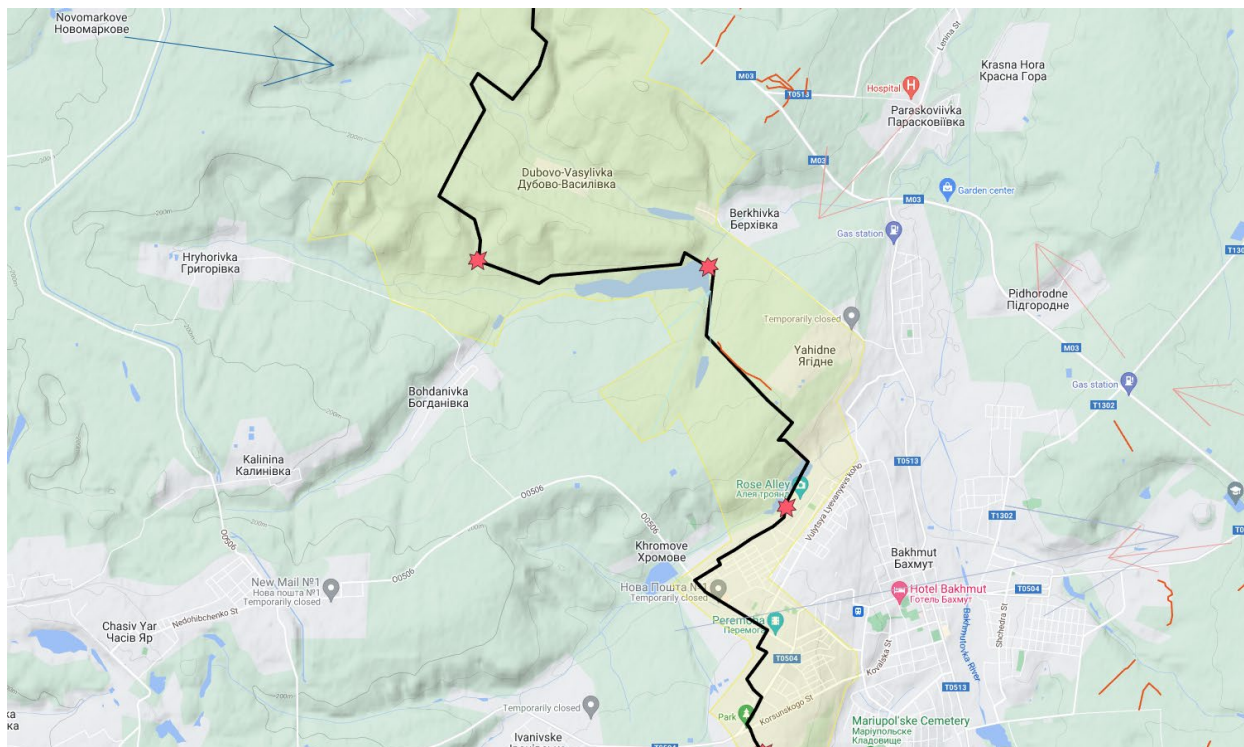
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NORTHEAST DONETSK



Russian Objective: Complete the capture of Bakhmut, set conditions to attack Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, and Siversk, and capture the entire region

Ukrainian Objective: Defend Siversk, collapse the Russian flanks north and south of Bakhmut, cut off the ground lines of communication into Bakhmut and Soledar and liberate both operational areas, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties



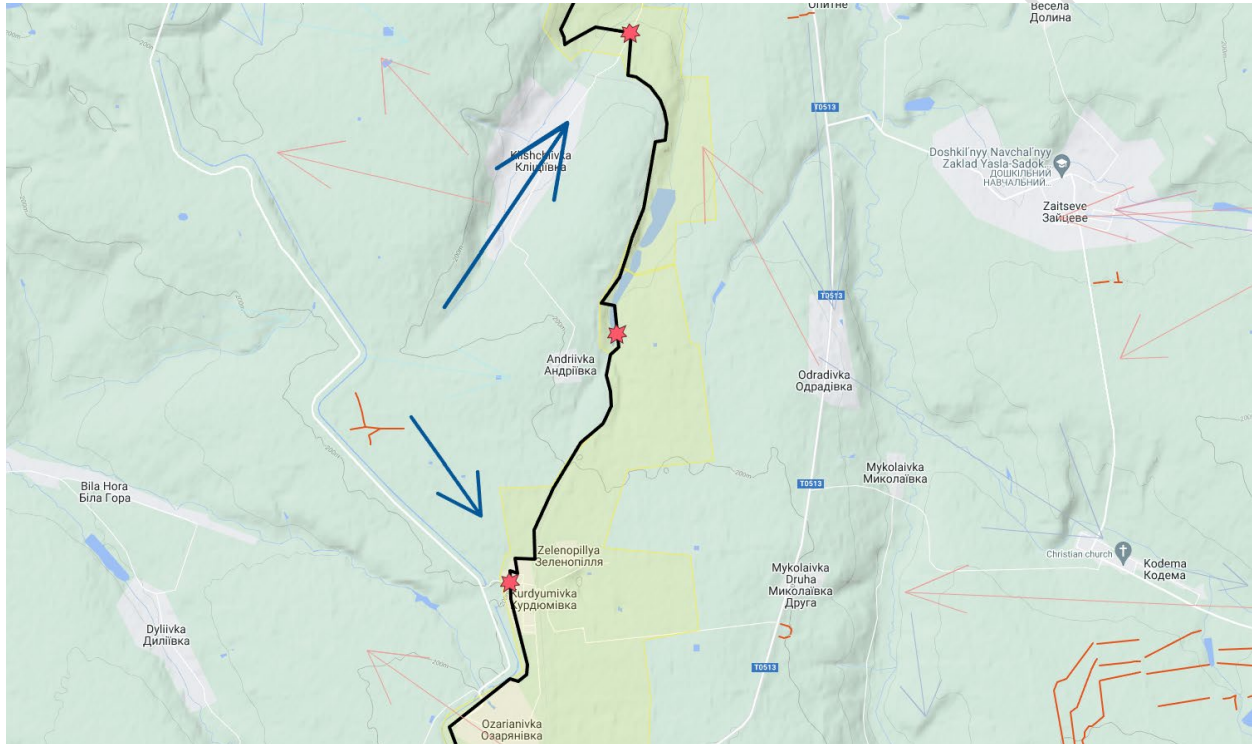
Bakhmut Operational Area

The Russian 200th Arctic Separate Guards Motor Rifle Brigade tried to expand their perimeter at Dubovo-Vasylivka, attacking in the directions of [Minkivka](#) – using the M-03/E-40 Highway, [Zaliznyanske](#), [Orikhovo-Vasylivka](#), and [Hryhorivka](#).¹ None of the attacks were successful. Russian forces also attacked from [Berkhivka](#) but could not move the line of conflict.²

¹ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12230>

² <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17661>

ASSESSMENT: We do not believe this represents the start of a larger offensive operation. Russian commanders are likely executing spoiling attacks in an attempt to pull Ukrainian reserves from south of Bakhmut.




Klishchiivka Operational Area

Russian forces continue to counterattack in the area of [Andriivka](#). They were unable to retake lost positions.^{3 4} Ukrainian forces are targeting Russian logistics on the

³ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12230>

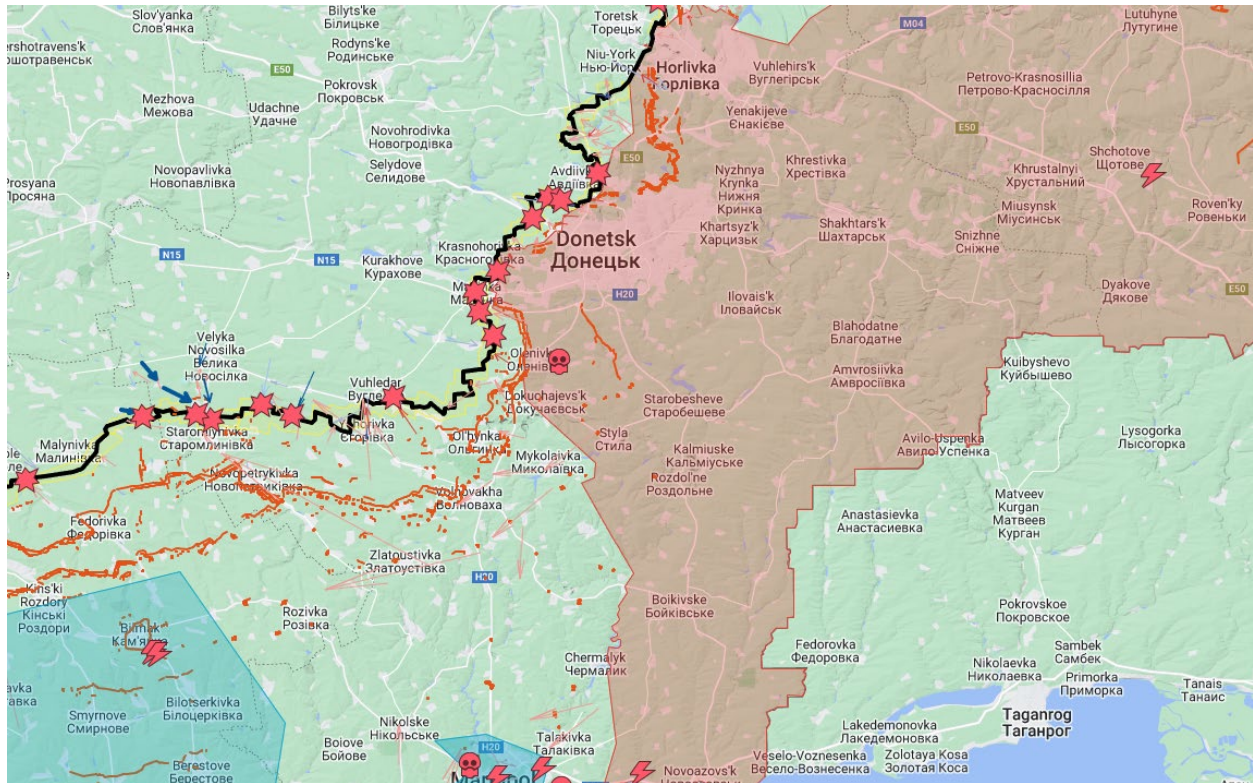
⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/15202>

Klischchiivka-Bakmut Road,  [attacking vehicles trying to advance south](#) from Bakhmut.⁵

COPYRIGHT 2023, MALCONTENT NEWS

⁵ https://twitter.com/Escadrone_/status/1705103655563624796

SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, and capture the remainder of the oblast

Ukrainian Objective: Find and exploit Russian defensive weaknesses, set conditions for an offensive in the Volnovakha and Mariupol directions, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies, and disrupt logistics

Avdiivka and Marinka Operational Areas

The region was more active on September 22, but most fighting was positional. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU) reported that Russian troops attacked in the "north region" of [Avdiivka](#), and Russian sources reported a failed Russian attack in the no man's land between [Vodyane and Sjeverne](#).⁶

There have been no significant changes in southwest Donetsk. RMOD claimed that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Vesele](#) at the base of the Krasnohorivka Plateau – that's the settlement north of Avdiivka.^{7 8 9}

Russian and Ukrainian sources reported fighting east of [Krasnohorivka](#) and in the area of [Marinka](#).^{10 11}

⁶ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12230>

⁷ https://t.me/mod_russia/30689 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

⁸ https://t.me/mod_russia/30720 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

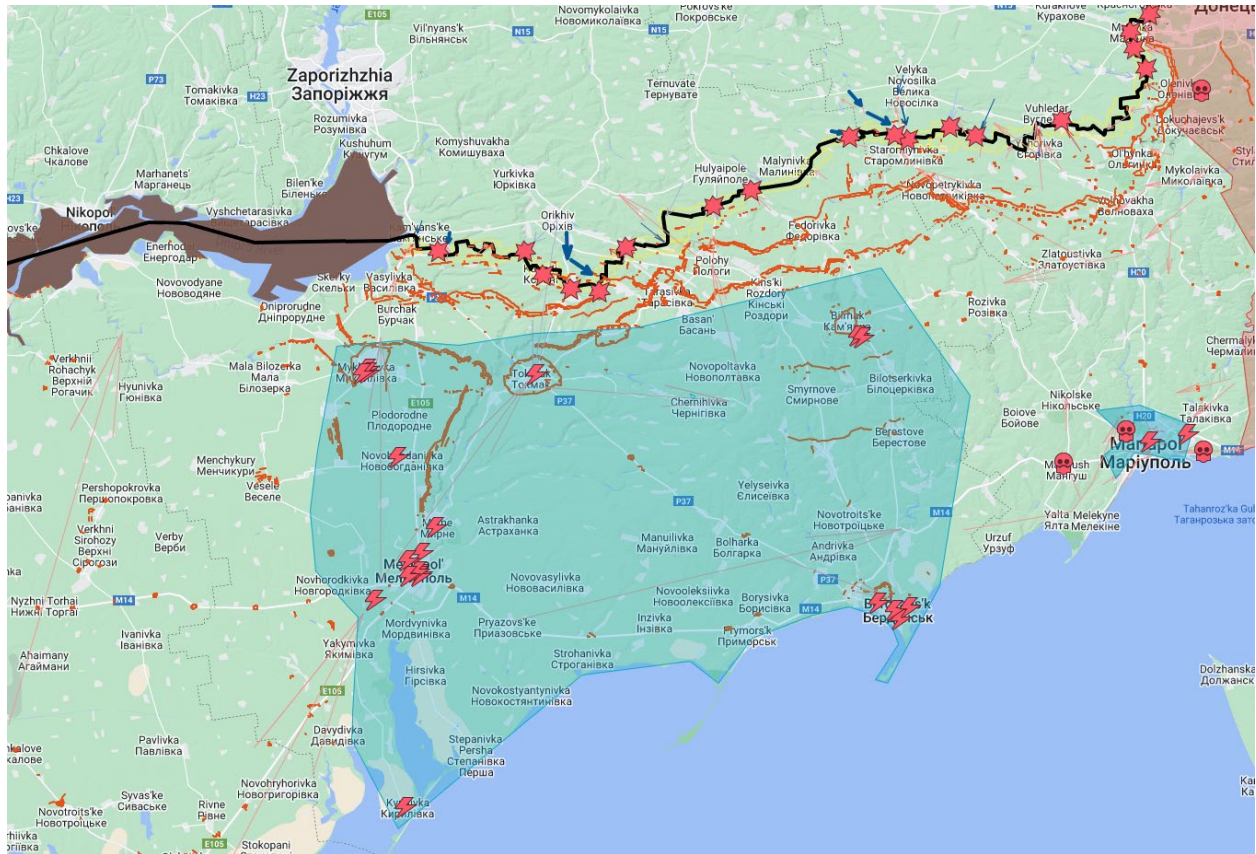
⁹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/15202>

¹⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12230>

¹¹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/15202>

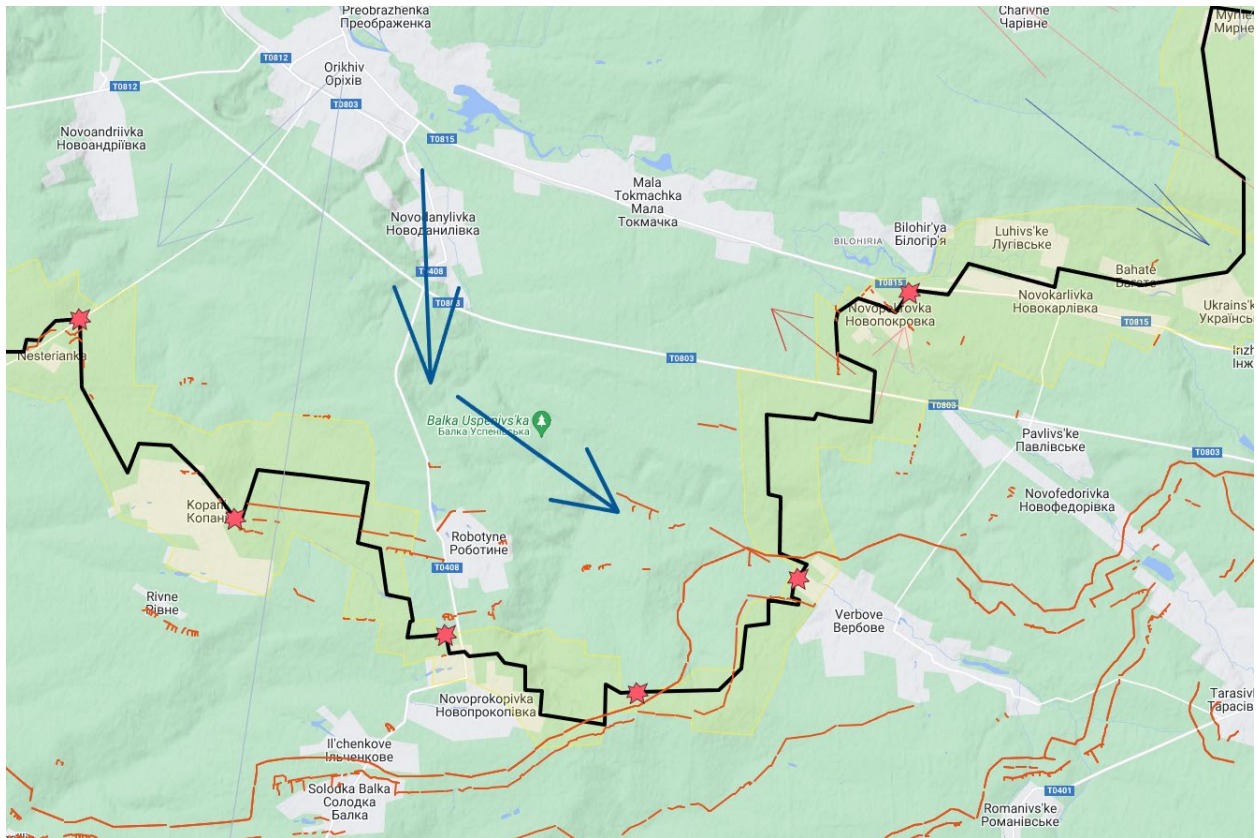


ZAPORIZHIA



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, prepare to launch a fall-winter offensive to capture the remainder of the oblast, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians with continued attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Break through the Surovikin Line and sever the Russian landbridge from Crimea to Donetsk, liberate Russian-occupied areas, and protect civilians



Orikhiv Operational Area

Fighting continued along the entire axis from west of [Robotyne](#), north and east of [Novoprokopivka](#), along the Surovikin Line following the 160-meter heights, to the western edge of [Verbove](#).^{12 13} A Russian counterattack in the area of Robotyne failed. Ukrainian sources are maintaining tight operational security.

¹² <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12230>

¹³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/15202>



Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

There was no change in the status of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

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BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Black Sea

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT: An unrecognized component of Ukraine's counteroffensive has been fought in the Black Sea. The current offensive would be extremely difficult without the sinking of the guided missile cruiser Moskva on April 14, 2022. The core mission of the warship was to provide antiship and anti-aircraft capabilities and command and control for aircraft. The Moskva was incapable of launching Kalibr cruise missiles, and its sinking forced the Black Sea Fleet to operate further away from the Ukrainian coast.

In response, Russian forces brought additional air defense assets to Zmiinyi Island (Snake Island) to create a static Moskva on the rocky outpost. On June 30, 2022, Ukrainian forces regained control, forcing the Russian navy to operate approximately 100 kilometers from the coast of Ukraine, out of the range of Harpoon and Neptune antiship missiles.

Since July 2022, Ukrainian forces have used cruise missiles, antiradiation missiles, and rockets fired by HIMARS to destroy Russian air defenses in occupied Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, and Crimea. Low-band early warning radar systems, high-band tracking and targeting radars, command, control, communications, and surface-to-air anti-aircraft missile batteries were located, prioritized, and destroyed.

The introduction of Mk.1 uncrewed surface vessels (USV) in September 2022 rapidly evolved into the Mk.5 SeaBaby USV that has been used to attack the Kerch (Crimean) Bridge and damaged at least three warships and one auxiliary fleet oil tanker. Unable to fully address the threat the Ukrainian USV fleet represented, Russian commanders became increasingly reluctant to put vessels of the Black Sea Fleet on patrol.

This enabled Ukrainian Special Operation Forces (SSO) to launch a series of attacks over six to eight weeks and retake control of the Boyko Towers, five natural gas platforms in the Black Sea. Russia was using the towers to launch airstrikes, extend radar coverage, and for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions.

Ukrainian SSO also launched at least two attacks on occupied Crimea, destroying at least one radar and an S-400 anti-aircraft battery. While no single system is a wonder weapon, the loss of the PREDEL-E over the horizon coastal radar on August 27 – 28 was a significant loss to an already degraded radar and air defense network.

Additionally, the Russian S-400 anti-aircraft systems have underperformed, resulting in a criminal investigation launched in July 2022 when it became clear they had a lower-than-specified success rate intercepting rockets fired by HIMARS. It is unclear if the underperformance is due to the air defense system, the training of the operators, command and control, rules of engagement, or a combination of these factors.

The Russian Black Sea Fleet now operates off the east coast of the Crimean Peninsula, the Kerch Strait, and does escort duty of auxiliary fleet oil tankers and gun runner vessels near the Bosphorus Strait.

While many are fond of saying that Ukraine does not have a functional navy – which, when viewed through the lens of tonnage, is an accurate statement – the Ukrainian Navy has

executed a masterful asymmetrical counteroffensive and has achieved “naval” parity to the Black Sea.

Occupied Crimea

Ukrainian SSO completed Special Operation Crab Trap, destroying the headquarters of the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol.^{14 15}

“The audacious and painstaking work of the Special Operations Forces made it possible to ‘timely and precisely’ strike the headquarters of the Black Sea Fleet during a meeting of the leadership of the Russian fleet in the temporarily occupied city of Sevastopol...The details of the operation will become known when it is possible, and the result - dozens of dead and wounded occupiers, including the top management of the fleet.”



The Crimean Tartar insurgent organization ATESH claimed they aided the attack by providing “correction,” indicating that they were tracking the movement of high-value targets.¹⁶ The insurgent organization also stated there were “very grateful to the Ministry of Defense of the Russian

¹⁴ https://t.me/ukr_sof/748

¹⁵ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12231>

¹⁶ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115830>


Federation for the delay in payments" because it aided in gaining cooperation from Russian officers. The Main Defense Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GUR) did not mention ATESH by name but did report that area residents aided the operation.

Iranian and British dual citizen Russian propagandist Johnny Miller, who works for Iran's English language Press-TV,  [captured two of the three Storm Shadow missiles](#) that struck the headquarters building.¹⁷ The facility was hit by three missiles,  [all captured on video](#).¹⁸

Storm Shadow cruise missiles are equipped with a Bomb Royal Ordnance Augmented Charge, or BROACH, warhead. It has two charges, with the first meant to penetrate soil, concrete, or other materials and a secondary charge on a delayed fuse to cause additional damage after penetrating the structure. The damage within the Black Sea Fleet headquarters is likely significantly worse than the exterior

¹⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115794>

¹⁸ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115854>

of the building indicates. After being struck,  [the building burned for four hours](#).¹⁹

Head of the GUR, Kyrylo Budanov, told Voice of America, "Among the wounded is the commander of the group, Colonel General [Alexander] Romanchuk, in very serious condition. The chief of staff, Lieutenant General [Oleg] Tsekov, is unconscious. The number of casualties among ordinary military personnel who are not headquarters employees is still being established. These are the military who are carrying service, security, and so on."^{20 21}

We could not independently verify the status of either general. Colonel General Romanchuk is the commander of the ongoing Russian defense in Zaporizhzhia, and his loss would almost certainly create a short operational pause for Russian forces due to their top-down command structure.

Multiple Russian sources claim that the Black Sea Fleet commander, Admiral Viktor Sokolov, was killed. Budanov did not mention Sokolov in his interview, and like


¹⁹ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/6414

²⁰ <https://t.me/uniannet/112270>

²¹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115869>

Romanchuk and Tsekov, we could not independently verify the claim.²²

At the time of publication, there were reports of new explosions at Suharnaya Balka, with smoke rising from the area. There was no evidence that ammunition bunkers or energy infrastructure was significantly damaged, but we were still working on the battle damage assessment.

There was a pass of the Sentinel-2 L2A satellite with clear weather on September 21, providing low-resolution images  [of Saki Military Airfield near Novofedorivka](#), which Ukraine claimed was attacked by up to a dozen kamikaze drones. A comparison of images from September 13 to 21 did not show damage to the base. Ukraine did not specify the drones used or who executed the attack. It is possible that smaller quadcopters or Australian-designed flat-packed cardboard drones were used. If this were the case, no satellite imaging source available to civilians would provide adequate resolution.

²² <https://t.me/ShrikeNews/10562>

Odesa

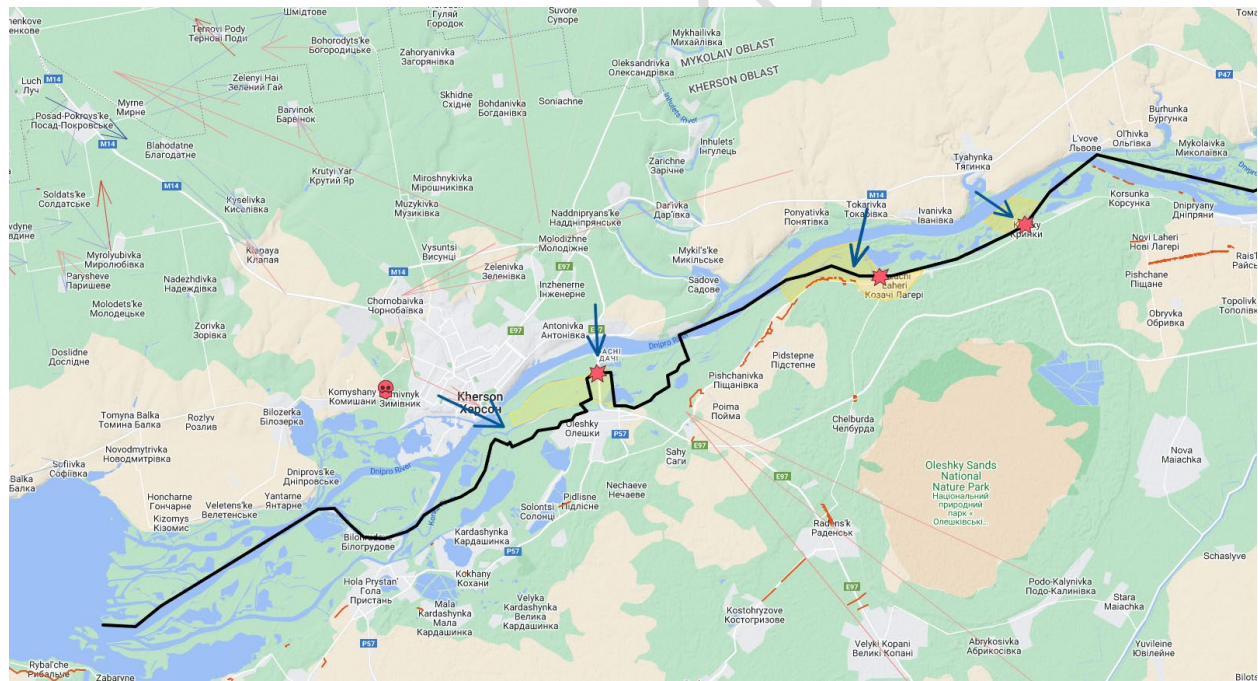
Director of Communications for Operational Command South (OKS), Nataliya Humenyuk, reported that two more P-800 Onik antiship cruise missiles were launched at Bihorod-Dnistrovsky District of Odesa.²³ Both struck unpopulated areas near Zatoka.

²³ <https://t.me/suspilnenews/24493>

KHERSON

Russian Objective: Prevent Ukrainian advances into eastern Kherson, terrorize the civilian population in free Kherson, and maintain GLOCs to Zaporizhzhia

Ukrainian Objective: Deter attacks on Ukrainian civilians, lock Russian troops and military assets in place, and protect civilian lives



Russian forces continued intense shelling of the Dnipro River's right (west) bank for the fourth day in a row. Over the last 24 hours, 598 artillery rounds, mortars, Grad

rockets from multiple launch rocket systems, indirect fire from tanks, antitank guided missiles, drone-delivered IEDs, and UMPK glide bombs were used. Kherson Oblast Administrative and Military Governor (OVA) Alexander Prokudin reported that the residential quarters of Kherson, medical centers, schools, a point of invincibility, a grain elevator in Beryslav, a penitentiary, and critical civilian infrastructure were targeted.²⁴ One person was killed and three wounded.

Occupied Kherson

A Russian based in occupied Oleshky was attacked on September 21. There was no information on casualties.²⁵ OKS spokesperson Humenyuk did not provide any additional details.

²⁴ <https://t.me/olexandrprokudin/1385>

²⁵ https://twitter.com/front_ukrainian/status/1705484751295910330

WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

Russian Objective: Launch terror attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure to break morale

Ukrainian Objective: Deter attacks and protect civilian lives

Dnipropetrovsk

A Shahed-136 kamikaze drone that was shot down during an attack on September 22 landed on critical infrastructure in Dnipro.²⁶

Poltava

At least one Russian cruise missile struck civilian areas in Kremenchuk. One person was killed and 31 injured, including three children. Sixteen were in hospital with varying degrees of injury.²⁷

²⁶ <https://t.me/astrapress/38572>

²⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115861>

NORTHERN AND NORTHEASTERN UKRAINE

Russian Objective: Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale

Ukrainian Objective: Maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

There wasn't any significant activity in this region.

RUSSIAN FRONT

Russian Objective: Stabilize government control and civil order, prevent renewed insurrections, repel Russian partisan attacks, secure the state border

Ukrainian-Backed Russian Partisan Objective: Motivate other Russians to fight against the Putin regime, accelerate the downfall of the Russian government, foment civil unrest

There wasn't any significant activity in this region.

While we can't confirm the source of the blast, and it is very unlikely a Ukrainian drone reached Tula, the rat in the transformer story is now suspicious since the Russian government felt compelled to about what caused the sound of an explosion.

BELARUSIAN FRONT

There weren't any significant activity in this region.

THEATERWIDE

On the night of September 22 – 23, Russian forces attacked the Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropetrovsk region with 15 Shahed-136 kamikaze drones, with air defense intercepting 14.²⁸

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, told the Washington Post, "Sooner or later, Ukraine will become part of the European Union, because it is unthinkable for Ukraine to remain between Russia and the EU. It is impressive how Ukrainians are reforming their country while fighting. I am amazed by the determination of Ukrainians to join the European Union."

We had previously reported that the E.U. would issue a favorable report on the candidacy status of Ukraine and Moldova in October and move both nations to the next phase of accession by the end of 2023.

United States news agency NBC reported that United States President Joe Biden has authorized sending a "small" quantity of ATACMS missiles to Ukraine. They did not name

²⁸ https://t.me/Nazars_look/17472

their sources, and the White House had not confirmed the report. The amount of coverage indicates that this has moved passed the rumor stage.²⁹

German news agency Bild reported that the transfer of ATACMS from the U.S. would influence the German government to reconsider supplying Ukraine with Taurus cruise missiles.³⁰

Minister of Defense of Denmark, Troels Lund Poulsen, confirmed that 12 out of 20 Leopard 1-A5 main battle tanks sent to Ukraine were not battleworthy and are undergoing repairs in Ukraine.³¹ Two more Leopard 1s in Poland, out of a batch of ten, were also found to have "serious defects."

Canada announced a multiyear \$428 million (USD - CAD 650 million) military aid package to Ukraine. The three-year tranche includes 50 armored vehicles that will be built in Canada and military training for Ukrainian pilots and technicians for the F-16.³²

²⁹ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/6421

³⁰ https://t.me/couch_IU/43194

³¹ [United States Department of Defense](#) [United States Government Website]

³² <https://t.me/uniannet/112254>

Luxembourg announced a new military aid package for Ukraine, which includes nine Primoco One 150 reconnaissance drones, 3.2 million rounds of 12.7 mm ammunition, 16 armored ambulances, and 150 night vision goggles.³³

Thousands more  [122 mm HE artillery rounds](#) were delivered to Ukraine from a jointly-owned enterprise in an unnamed NATO country.³⁴

The Minister of Defense of the Czech Republic, Jana Černochová, said they were negotiating with Swedish officials about possibly training Ukrainian pilots on the Saab JAS-39 Gripen fighter plane.³⁵ Ukrainian pilots have already completed familiarization training on the JAS-39, and many military experts believe the Swedish fighter plane is an even better fit for the theater of war than the F-16. Unlike the F-16, which the F-35 is rapidly replacing, sending hundreds of aircraft to inactive reserve, less than 150 JAS-39 airframes are available.

³³ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115820>

³⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115720>

³⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/115828>



The table for equipment losses was **updated on September 20, 2023**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24.

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RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES

Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the [Oryx Database](#) from February 24, 2022, to September 13, 2023.

12,221 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,456 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
Main Battle Tanks	2179	286	7.62:1	↓
Medium Duty Tanks	150	366	0.41:1	—
Armored fighting Vehicles	978	327	2.99:1	↓
Infantry Fighting Vehicles	2797	750	3.73:1	—
Armored Personnel Carriers	351	344	1.02:1	↓
MRAPs	47	158	0.30:1	—
Infantry Mobility Vehicles	208	371	0.56:1	—
Command and Communications Vehicles	251	17	14.76:1	—
Engineering Vehicles	343	82	4.18:1	↓
Towed Artillery	300	159	1.89:1	—
Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars	530	216	2.45:1	↑
MLRS	271	50	5.42:1	↑
SAMs	180	129	1.40:1	↑
Mobile Radars	45	78	0.58:1	—
EW/ECW	54	4	13.50:1	—
Winged Aircraft	92	72	1.28:1	—
Helicopters	112	35	3.20:1	—
Naval Vessels and Submarines	17	27	0.63:1	—

MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR

The Russian Federation plans to increase military spending in the 2024 fiscal year from 3.9% of GDP to 6.0%.

Bloomberg reported that classified spending, not included in the military budget, is set to balloon to 11.1 trillion roubles, 30% of the entire state budget.³⁶

The State Duma Defense Committee admitted that Russia's electronic summons service is not ready for the biannual fall conscription period, set to start on October 1.³⁷ The Ministry of Digital Development said the unified register of military records, which includes sending summons for military service by phone app and text, won't be operational before 2025. For the autumn conscription period, a fine for failure to appear at the military registration and enlistment office can only be levied if the conscript is summoned by hand delivery or registered mail.

Deputy Prime Minister of Russia for Social Policy, Labour, Health and Pensions, Tatiana Golikova, said the labor market would soon lose one-third of male workers aged 30 to 39. "We are frightened by the imbalance that, due to

³⁶ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/6418

³⁷ <https://t.me/rusbrief/157714>

demographics, is developing in the near future by age 30–39 years old. This is the most in-demand personnel, the most ready for change. Their number is reduced by 30%."

Editor's Note: Where did 30% of the men in Russia aged 30 to 39 go?


RUMORS


Many messages and e-mails we receive ask why we didn't cover a certain story or whether we are aware of a report and what we think. The rumor section is a list of claims or stories we are aware of but not reporting on because there isn't enough information to support or discover the truth.


- Did Russia destroy two Mig-29s and three Su-25s at Kryvyi Rih with new long-range Lancet kamikaze drones?
- Have more than 260,000 Russian soldiers died in Ukraine since February 24, 2022?
- North Korean ammunition is coming to Russia?
- Will Ukraine get Taurus cruise missiles?
- Will Russia announce a surge in mobilization with the fall conscription?
- Were two Russian generals seriously wounded and one admiral killed in Sevastopol?


Notes on Sourcing Information


Malcontent News uses a wide range of sources to create our daily Situation Report, the foundation for the Russian-Ukraine War Report Podcast. There are some notable sources that we frequently use and others that we don't. The most common sources currently, or in the past, we have used for the Theater of War section of the Situation Report include the following.


 **Russian Ministry of Defense Morning Report:** We use the RMOD Morning Report to identify combat reports, shelling locations, and territorial control change claims. We do not consider claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed valid without videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation, or third-party confirmation from recognized Western news outlets or trusted Ukrainian sources.


 **Rybar:** We consider Rybar a mercenary organization because they are staffed by former Russian Ministry of Defense public relations officers who actively provide target information to the Russian military. Their operational budget is \$20,000 a month, while they claim they receive no government funding. We only use their reports to identify combat locations. We no longer consider their territorial control changes due to a three-month pattern from June to August 2023 of repeated publication of blatant disinformation and a years-long pattern of denying all Russian war crimes.


 **War Gonzo:** We consider War Gonzo a mercenary organization because their employees have recorded themselves actively engaging in direct combat, specifically in Marinka. Recently, War Gonzo admitted in their daily report to leveraging the information from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They intermix combat reports with their own on a 24-hour delay. We use their reports for **unique claims** about combat, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. Although the War Gonzo daily reports are moderately accurate, they occasionally engage in blatant disinformation and misinformation.

 **Readovka:** We consider Readovka to be a Kremlin-aligned propagandist organization. Their daily reports are a word-for-word repeat of the RMOD Morning Report and provide no value to our analysis. They occasionally provide credible information through videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

 **Igor "Girkin" Strelkov:** We consider Strelkov to be a convicted war criminal who is highly informed, specifically about the situation in the Donbas. We use his combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement information. In the Donbas, we consider his reports to be highly accurate. The fidelity of information he provides in Zaporizhia, Kherson, and Kharkiv appears to come from other social media channels with a history of spreading misinformation and is of lower quality. Reports he shares outside of the Donbas provided by Russian Federation 1st Army Corps units have greater fidelity.

 **Andrei Morozov:** Morozov is a pro-Russian milblogger and a radio communications and logistics specialist with the Russian 2nd Army Corps. We consider him a provider of high-quality information, especially within his fields of specialty. In the fall of 2022, Morozov was detained by OMON for up to three weeks due to his content and has had his online material censored by the Kremlin several times over the last 11 months.

 **Private Military Company Wagner Group Social Media:** We consider reports from PMC Wagner of Russian victories as overstating gains and reports of Russian failures, particularly among the Russian Ministry of Defense and the 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the Russian Army, as overstating problems. We do not consider claims of territorial control changes from Wagner as authentic without pictures, videos, or **unique** Russian State Media reports that include a video that can be geolocated.

 **Luhansk People's Republic Joint Center for Control and Coordination:** We only use their reports about large-scale artillery and HIMARS strikes in the occupied territories.

⊖ **Leonid Pasechnik:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared leader of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic.

⚠ **Donetsk People's Republic People's Militia:** We only use their reports for videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

⊖ **Donetsk People's Republic Territorial Defense:** We do not use combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from their public relations and social media channels. They have repeatedly engaged in misinformation and disinformation.

⊖ **Denis Pushilin:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic.

⚠ **Ramzan Kadyrov:** The contribution and impact of Chechen forces in Ukraine have become minimal, and Akhmat no longer produces large volumes of video content that can be geolocated. We continue to monitor his channels.

✅ **General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine:** We consider the morning and evening reports, specifically combat reports, territorial control changes, and troop movements, from GSAFU to be high quality. The Ukrainian General Staff uses clever wording to create plausible deniability of battlefield failures. Combat reports start with "repelled attacks of the occupant forces in the vicinities of," which negates reporting fighting in areas where territory was lost. Instead of misinformation or disinformation, GSAFU engages in omission. Reports about problems within the Russian military are given more weight if the SBU or GUR reinforces them or if there is added confirmation in the Russian milblogger information space.

✅ **DeepState:** We use the Daily Report from DeepState for combat reports and territorial control changes. They frequently support their claims with geolocated, time, date, and weather-confirmed pictures and videos, making them a high-quality Ukrainian-based source. They occasionally overstate Russian territorial control claims but never present disinformation or

misinformation. Combined with the reports from GSAFU, gaps in combat reports are filled. We support DeepState through their Patreon at \$10 a month.

✔ **Institute for the Study of War:** We occasionally leverage the map and territorial control change information produced by the ISW when there is conflicting data. Their presentation of Russian-assessed, Ukrainian-assessed, and Russian-claimed information is helpful when our analysts have to make a judgment call due to the absence of verifiable information. We do not copy from their map but take their territorial control information as an additional data point when assessing our own changes.

⚠ **Ivan Fedorov:** We use information about insurgent activity and HIMARS strikes in Zaporizhia provided by Fedorov, the exiled mayor of Melitiopol.

✔ **Vitaly Kim:** When there are reports of potential air raids in Ukraine, we monitor Kim, the Mykolaiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor, for realtime reports. Kim is consistently one of the first, if not the first, Ukrainian government official to confirm kamikaze drones or missiles have been launched toward Ukraine.

⊖ **Oleksiy Arestovych:** We no longer use the information provided by Arestovych after being fired from his role as the Chief Advisor to the President of Ukraine. Before being terminated, Arestovych had developed a reputation for providing exaggerated, unverified, and false claims for Ukrainian successes and failures.