



**MALCONTENT NEWS
RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR
SITUATION REPORT**



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Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 224

It has been 3,130 days since Russia occupied Crimea on February 27, 2014.

Our chief content officer is traveling due to a personal matter. Today's report will be brief, not include some of our usual features, and will have less detailed maps. We thank you for your understanding.

DAILY ASSESSMENT

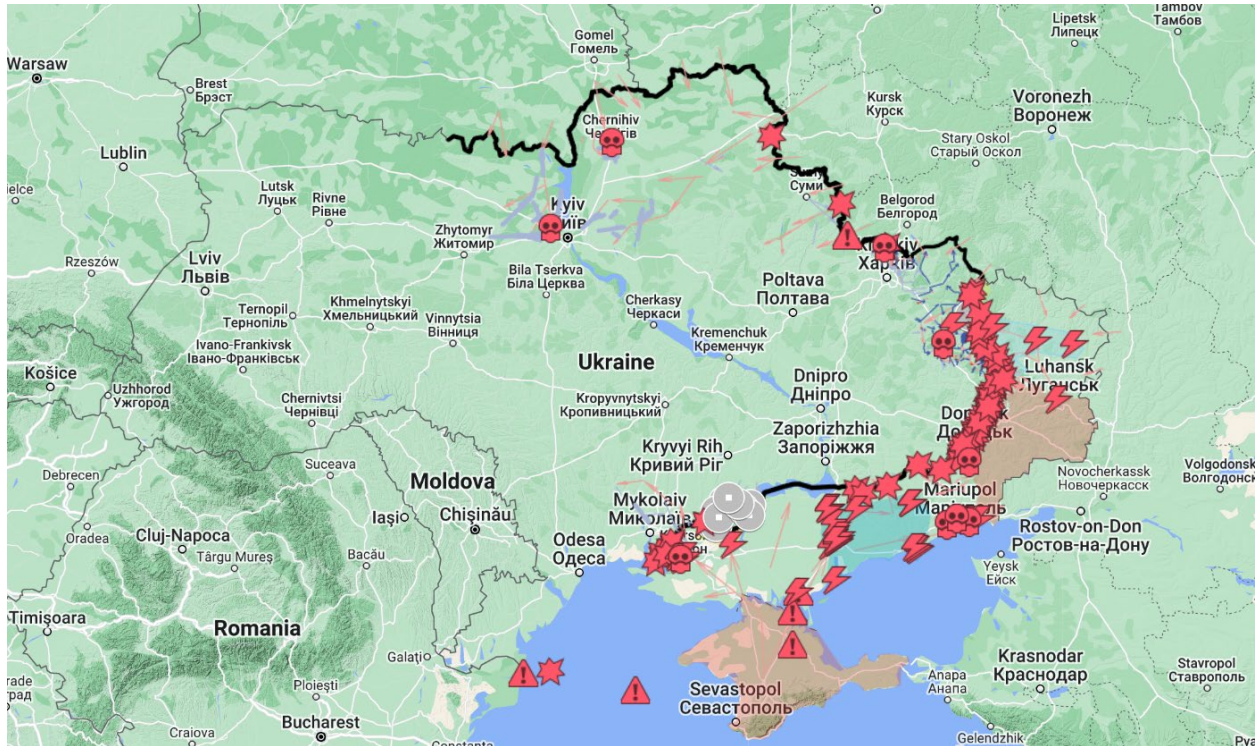
We assess the following:

1. Conflict within the Kremlin among military leaders has spilled over into the public sphere. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu is at significant risk of being fired as President Putin appears to be setting him up to be blamed for the failed "special military operation."
2. Our assessment that the Kremlin's crisis in the information space is damaging Russian President Vladimir Putin's reputation was accurate with infighting among his most senior military leaders.

3. We maintain our assessment that Russia is incapable of responding simultaneously to three counteroffensives in Luhansk, Kharkiv, and Kherson.
4. We maintain that if a Russian force of company size or larger surrenders in northern Kherson, it will create a cascade of surrendering Russian troops.
5. We maintain that mass surrenders could become a logistical problem for Ukraine, which could overwhelm the ongoing counteroffensive.
6. We maintain that using tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield is highly unlikely as it would require striking what the Kremlin believes is Russian soil and Russian forces are incapable of fighting in a conventional environment, let alone a CBRN setting.
7. We maintain Russia's mobilization efforts are ineffective due to corruption, a lack of preparation, violation of the social contract with the Russian people, and conscripts being sent en masse to Ukraine without vital equipment or training.
8. We maintain that the next three days are critical as the Kremlin reveals its border intentions.
9. In our assessment, there is a heightened risk of terror attacks on cities in central and western Ukraine over the next few days with the ratification of the sham referendum borders. To be explicitly clear, we have no belief or concern that would include weapons of mass destruction.

10. We maintain we are in the Mutually Assured Destruction Instability Paradox due to irresponsible language from the Kremlin, looming decisions from Moscow leadership, and the deteriorating kinetic warfare situation for Russian troops in Ukraine.
11. We maintain our assessment that the Russian military in Ukraine is combat destroyed is accurate, and the Russian military has no meaningful way to respond to the ongoing and accelerating collapse on multiple fronts. Conscripts that were rushed to the Donbas in the past week have not slowed the deterioration and are not contributing to improving combat power.

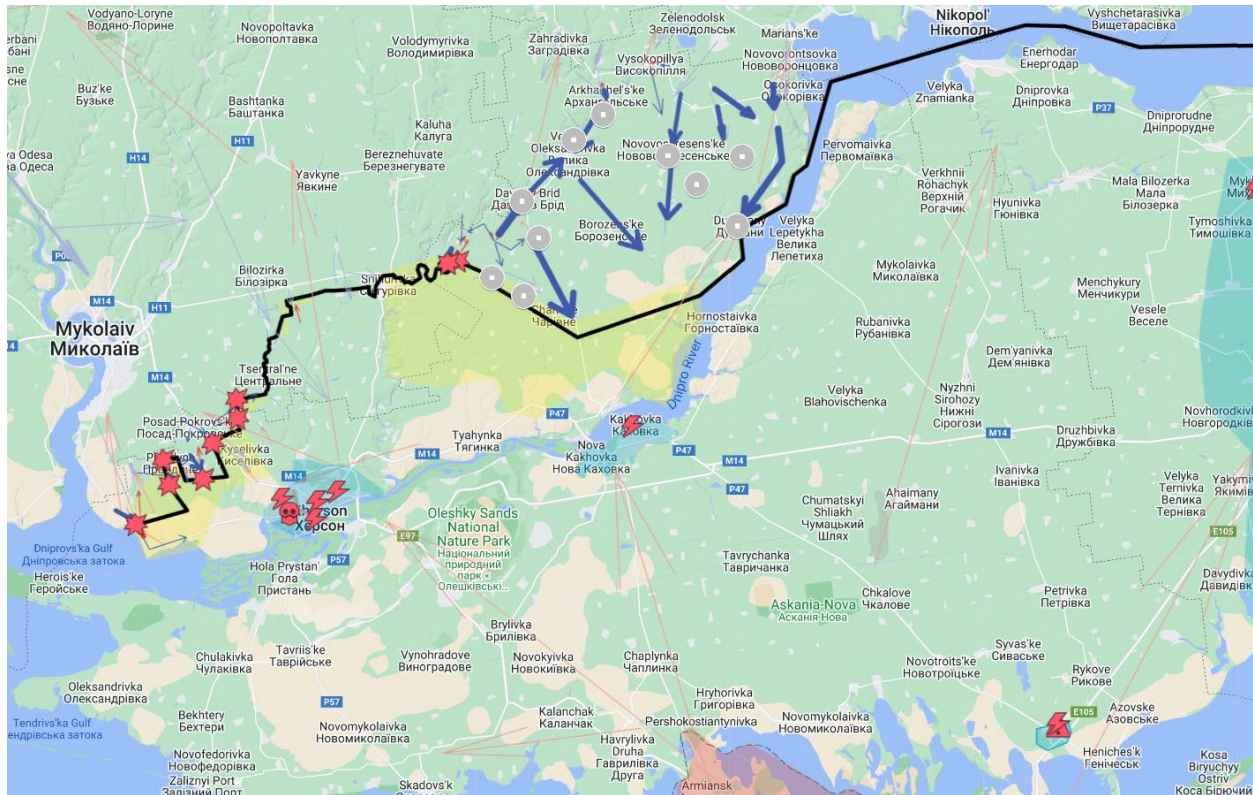
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



Information about changes made to the map: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgency, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at Saky Naval Airbase. Based on your feedback, we changed the archived offensive flags to "gray circles." The 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 [Kherson](#), the link will take you to the exact location explained in the Situation Report.

You can visit our war map at <http://www.rusvukrmap.com>

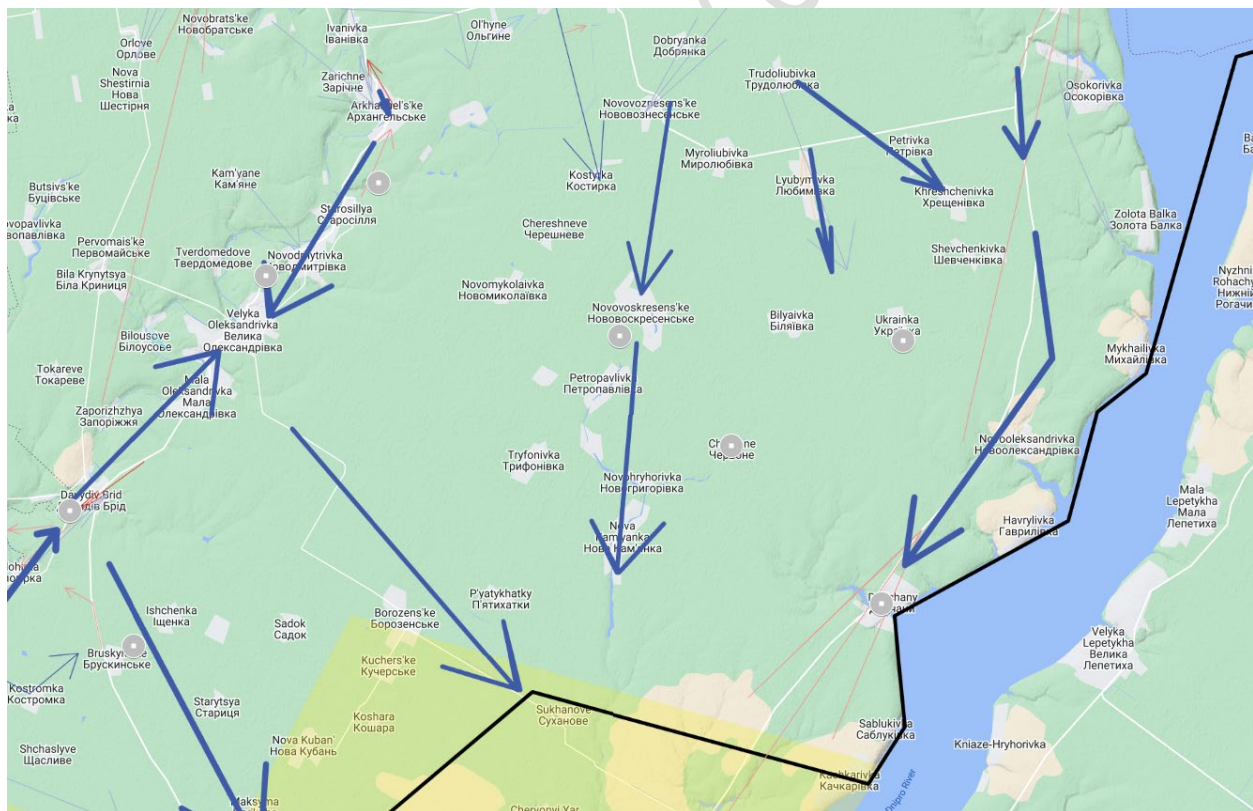
KHERSON COUNTEROFFENSIVE & MYKOLAIV



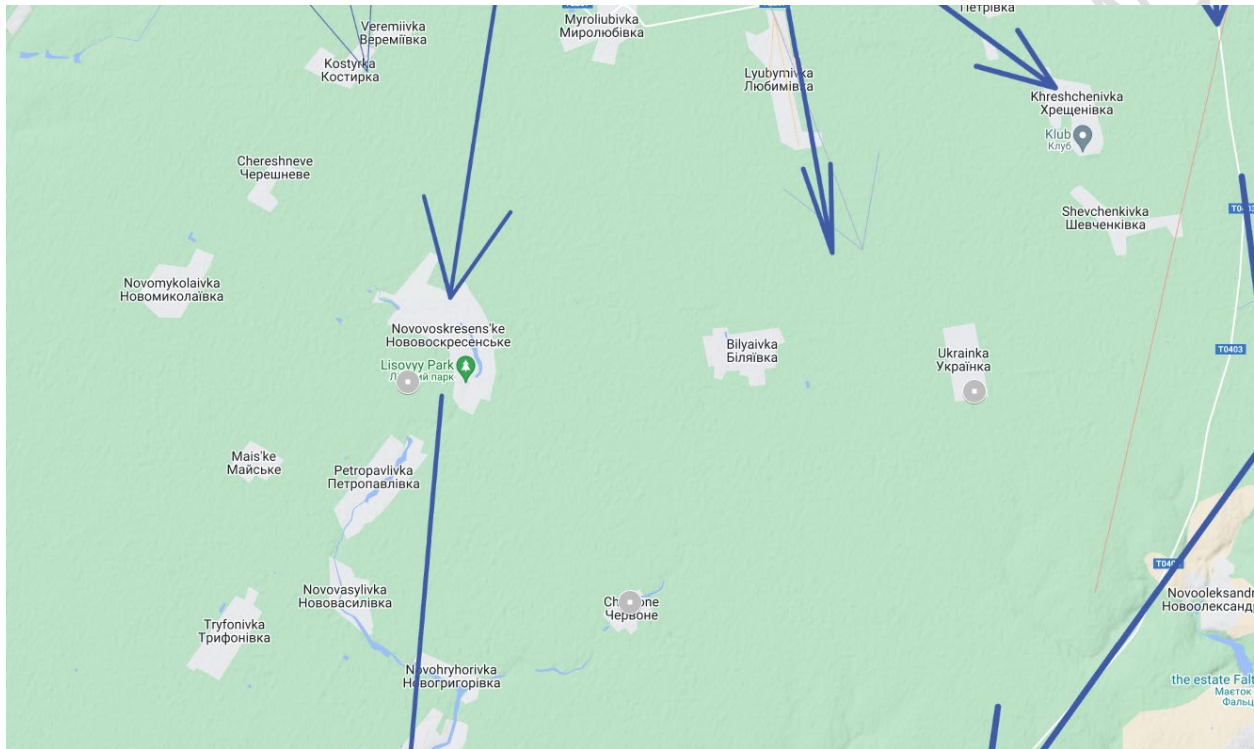
Russian Objective: Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, hold existing defensive lines, protect remaining Lines of Communication (LOC – supply lines), defend Kherson, prevent envelopment on the western side of the Dnipro River, restrict insurgent activity

Ukrainian Objective: Liberate the Kherson oblast west of the Dnipro River, push Russian forces back far enough to end multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) attacks on Mykolaiv and Kryvvi Rih

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine maintained tight operational security. The names of liberated settlements and towns are not released until Ukraine has established fire control to minimize Russian shelling. The BBC reported last week that journalists aren't allowed into areas, with a few exceptions, that are closer than 15 kilometers to the front line. The Russian information space acknowledged the retreat, but their reporting was chaotic and contradictory.



One Russian milblogger claimed the new Russian line of defense stretched from Kostyrka to Mylove – which is impossible.



Ukrainian forces liberated Petropavlivka and Nova Kamyanka, both well south of the suggested new line of defense. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reported the settlements of Novovoskresenske, Novohryhorivka, and Petropavlivka were liberated.¹ Given Ukrainian policy on when liberations are announced to protect operational security and minimize civilian

¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/10/5/7370549/>

casualties, the actual line of conflict is between 10 to 15 kilometers south. That would put Ukrainian troops a few kilometers north of Mylove and supports Russian reports that Ukrainian forces are advancing on the town.

Private and semi-private Russian Telegram channels continue to paint a chaotic picture. Some units are attempting to hold positions while others are in retreat. Numerous complaints remain about a lack of support from command and control, requests for artillery and close air support going unanswered, and units not coordinating attacks. It was reported that some Russian troops are destroying ammunition caches and abandoned equipment as they withdraw.

Operational Command South reported up to 150 wounded Russian troops are staged in Vesele, waiting to cross the Kakhovka bridge to go to military hospitals.

Our assessment that the reported Russian withdrawal from Snihurivka was fake was correct. There are reports that Russian officers withdrew from the fortified settlement leaving Russian troops behind. We can't confirm the veracity of those reports, but that aligns with the experiences of some Russian units.

ASSESSMENT: Not all Russian commanders are abandoning the front lines. You don't end up with dead colonels and generals if they all retreat.

There were reports the Ninel hotel and brothel in Kherson, which was housing Russian FSB agents, was hit by rockets fired by HIMARS. There were claims up to seven Russian security agents were killed.²

In Inhulets, A Russian barracks was also hit by rockets or possibly long-range artillery, causing heavy damage.³

Repeated attacks on Nova Kakhovka were reported within the town and on the partial repair of the bridge at the Kakhovka Dam.

The Ukrainian air force performed four air strikes, and ground forces carried out 350 fire missions. In maintaining operational security, there wasn't information on what was targeted.

² https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1577563222382624768

³ https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1577596430138707969



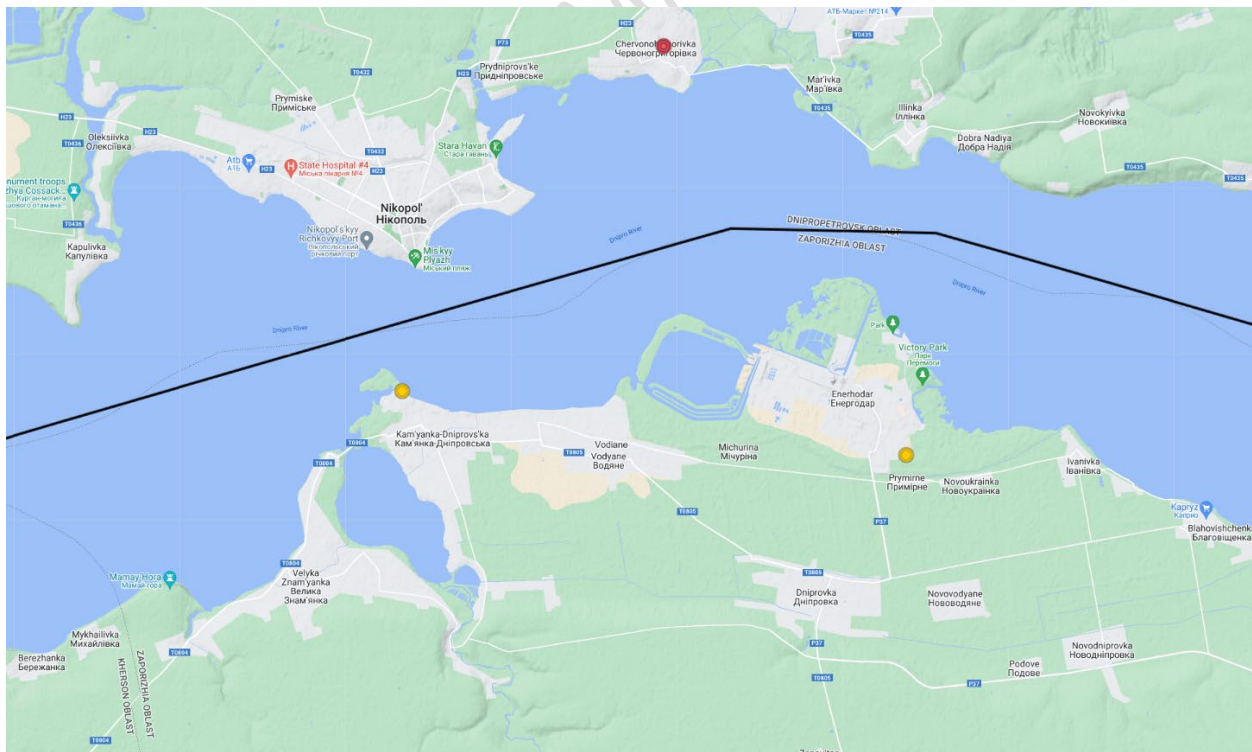
ASSESSMENT: We maintain that Russian troops will find it challenging to establish defensive lines with the Ukrainian military pressing on the line of conflict.

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DNIPROPETROVSK & NORTHERN ZAPORIZHIA

Russian Objective: Integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, capture the rest of the oblast, break civilian will with continued terror attacks, and turn popular opinion against Ukraine by terrorizing the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

Ukrainian Objective: Prevent further Russian advances, exploit weaknesses on the line of conflict, and prepare the area's civilian population for a nuclear accident



The situation at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant is deteriorating again. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree claiming ownership of Europe's largest nuclear power station on October 5. His action was widely condemned.

The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Mariano Grossi, said he would engage in consultations with the relevant authorities in meetings he is having this week in Kyiv and Moscow. The IAEA is still attempting to get Russia to agree to demilitarize the area around the plant and the plant itself. Only the Kremlin is holding back a deal claiming they still need to protect ZNPP from "terrorists."

Onsite inspectors with the IAEA told Grossi that Russia plans to replace the Ukrainian staff with employees from Rosatom. Additionally, employees of the Ukrainian state nuclear power company Energoatom reported that Russia intends to restart Reactor 5. Currently, all six reactors are in a cold shutdown state.

The IAEA also reported that an industrial area between the ZNPP and the industrial areas of Enerhodar was shelled by artillery. The first such incident in almost a week. Plant

operations were not impacted, and radication levels remained normal.

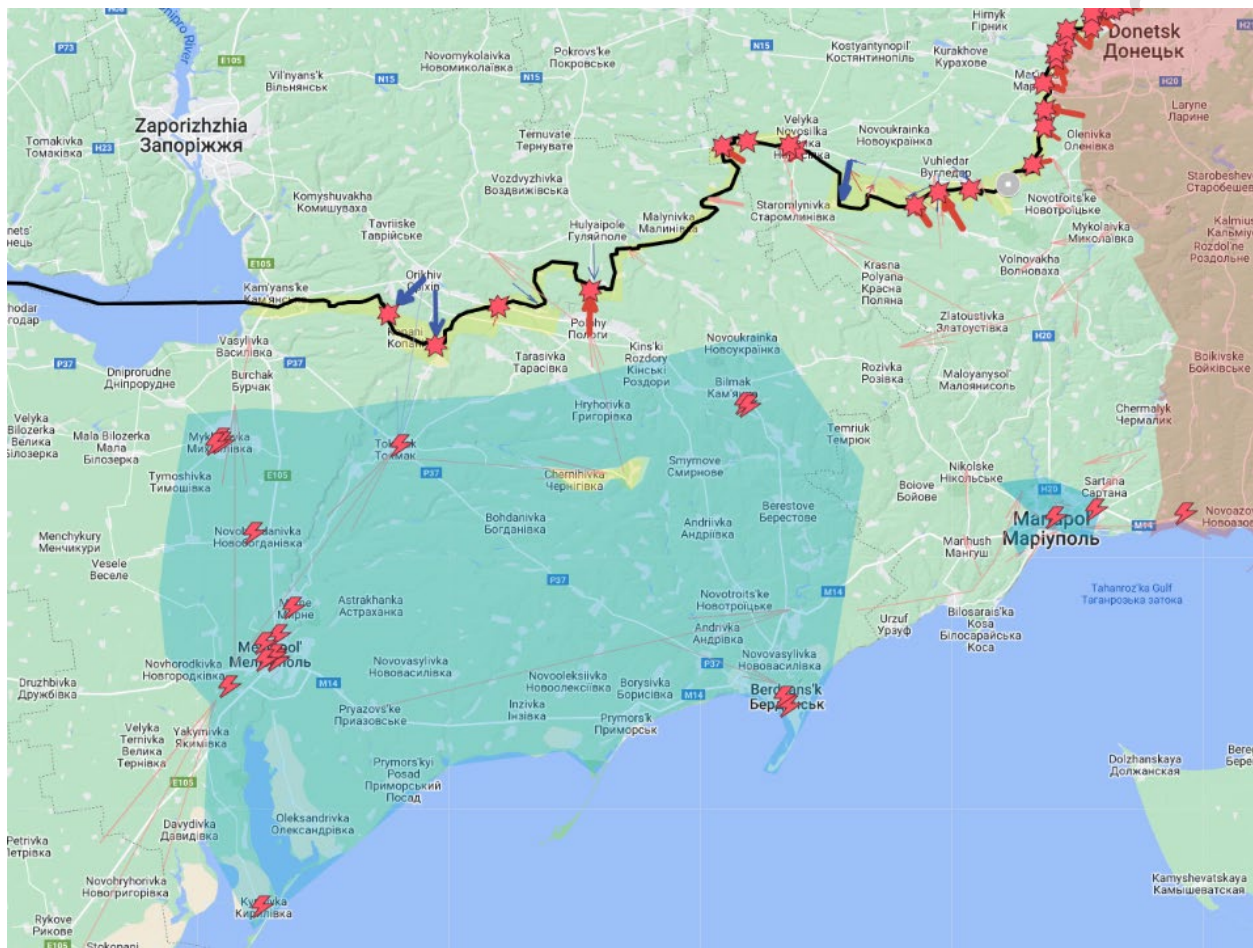
At the time of publication, there were no reports of shelling in Nikopol or Marhanets or missile attacks in Dnipropetrovsk. The Ukrainian counteroffensives have likely pushed Grad and Smerch rockets fired by multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) out of the range of Kryvvi Rih.

ASSESSMENT: We don't see any reason to believe that the Nikopol hromada won't be attacked tonight.

Russian forces have not used strategic bombers to hit Ukrainian targets from a stand-off distance in quite some time, and there have been very few Kalibr and Iskander-M missile attacks theaterwide.

DONBAS REGION

SOUTHERN ZAPORIZHZHIA

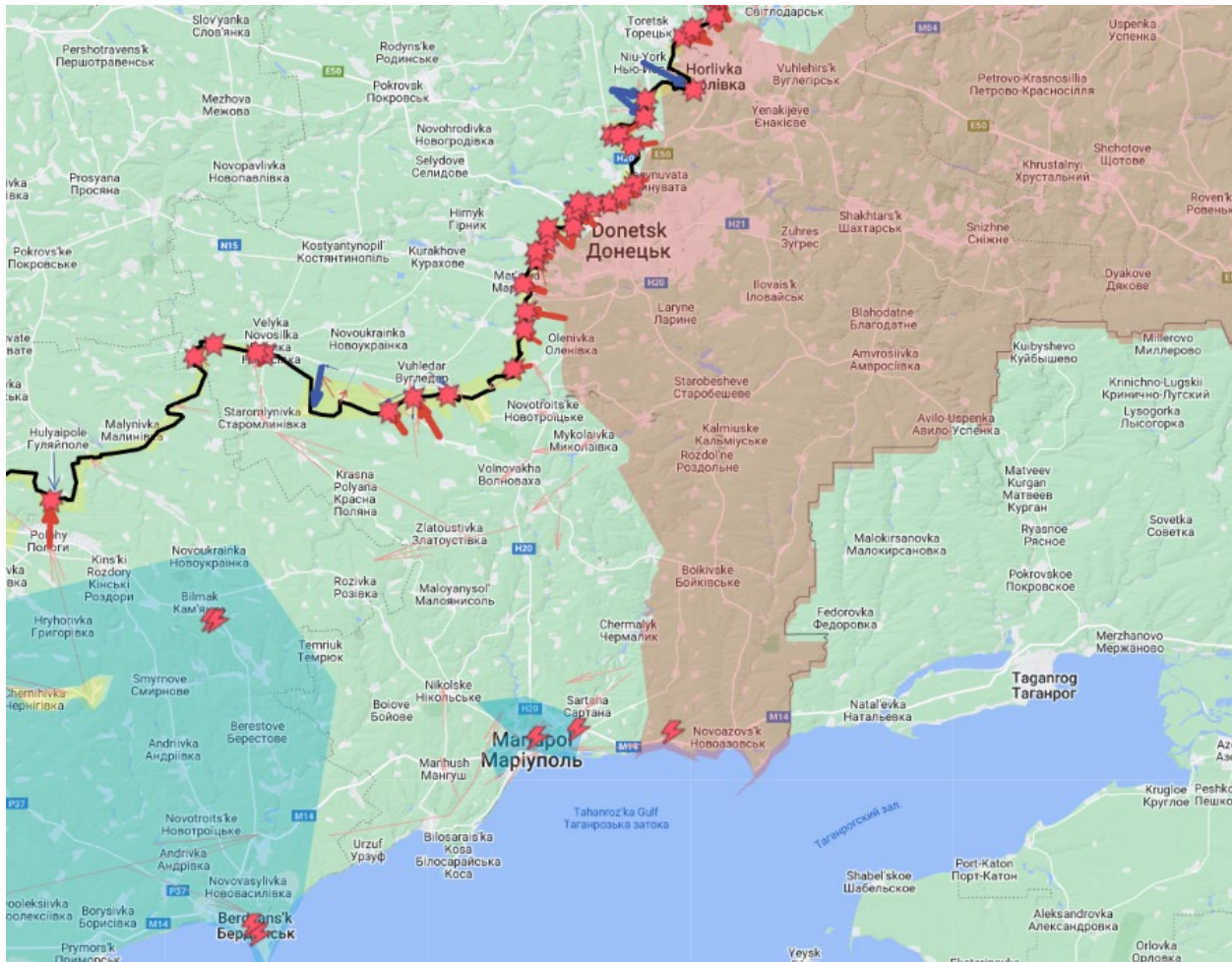


Russian Objective: Integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, capture the rest of the oblast, defend the existing line of conflict, and end the insurrection that is throughout the Russian-controlled territory

Ukrainian Objective: Fix Russian assets in place to prevent redeployment, defend the existing line of conflict while finding and exploiting weaknesses, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies and disrupt logistics, support and expand the insurrection in occupied territories

The only fighting we can report is sporadic artillery fire from the Donetsk-Zaporizhia administrative border to Hulyaipole to Orikhiv.

SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK

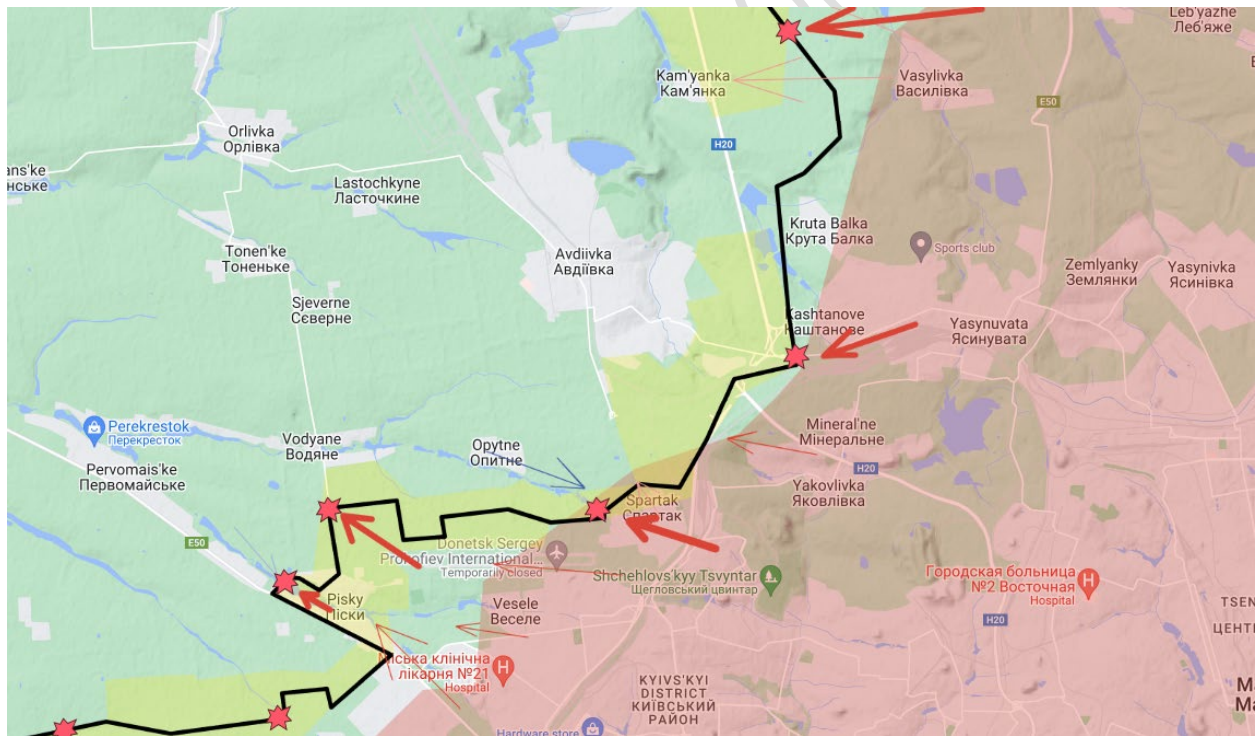


Russian Objective: Integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, capture the rest of the oblast, maintain existing defensive lines, and bring the insurrection across southwestern Donetsk under control

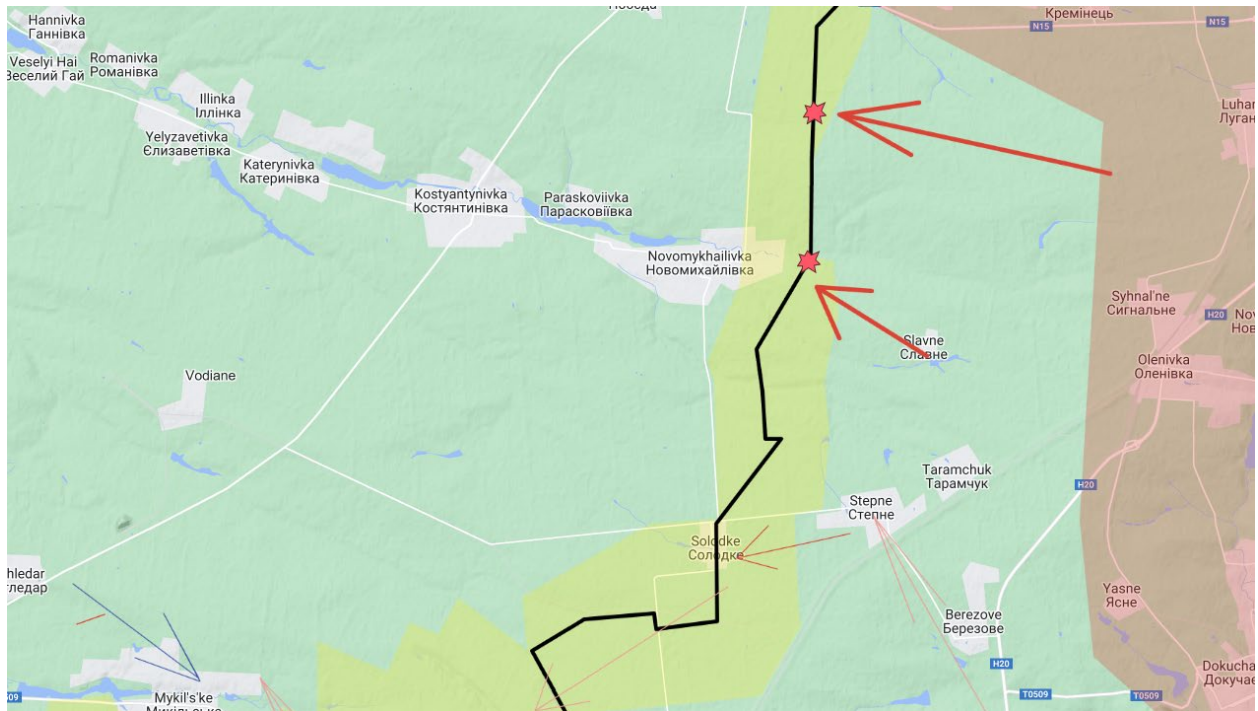
Ukrainian Objective: Lock Russian military assets in place, defend the existing line of conflict while finding and

exploiting weaknesses, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies and disrupt logistics

The Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) militia public relations channel reported fighting in one area. They claimed to have destroyed two mortar units and three armored vehicles in the oblast. Ukraine executed over 190 fire missions on the occupied territory.



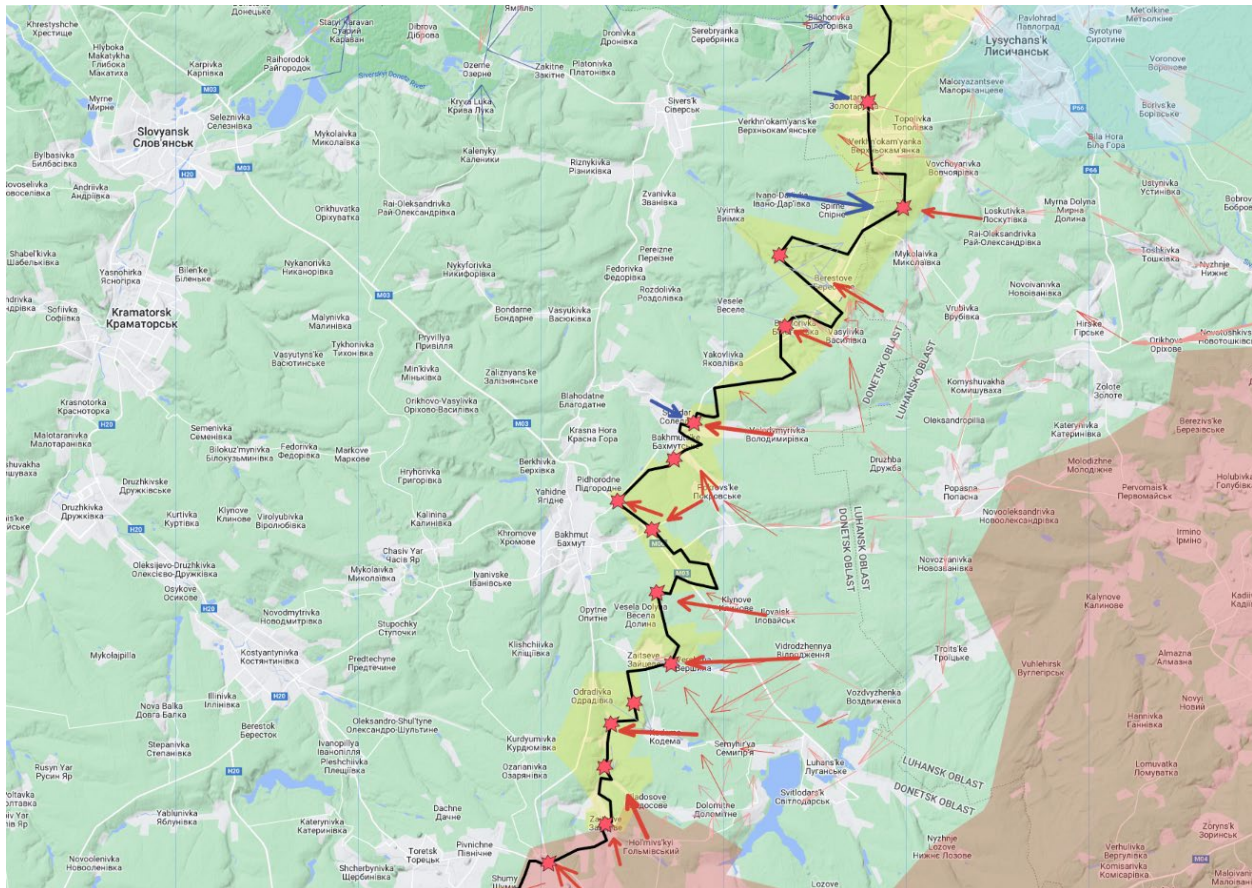
DNR militia leaders released a video showing positional fight in Avdiivka, resulting in losses for both belligerents.



The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported fighting near Novomykhailivka with no change in the situation.

Our assessment was correct that the fighting reported on September 4 by the GSAFU near Vuhledar was insignificant, with Ukrainian positions in Pavlivka reportedly shelled today.

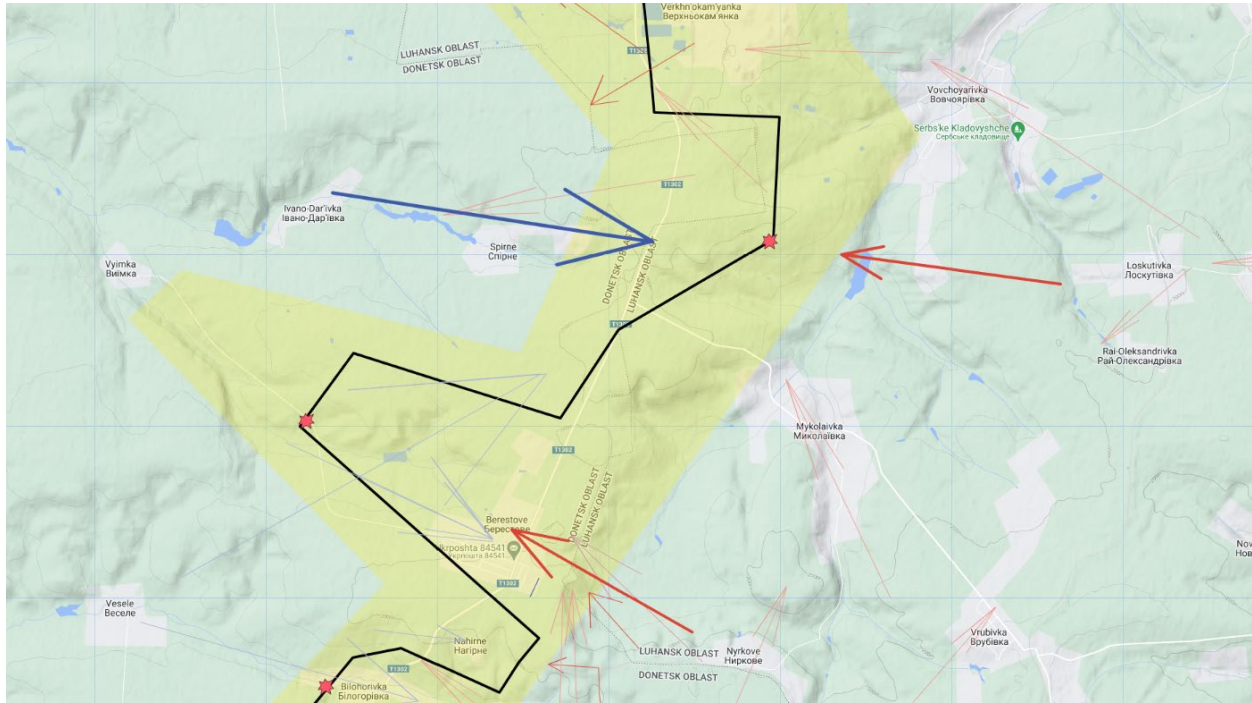
NORTHEAST DONETSK



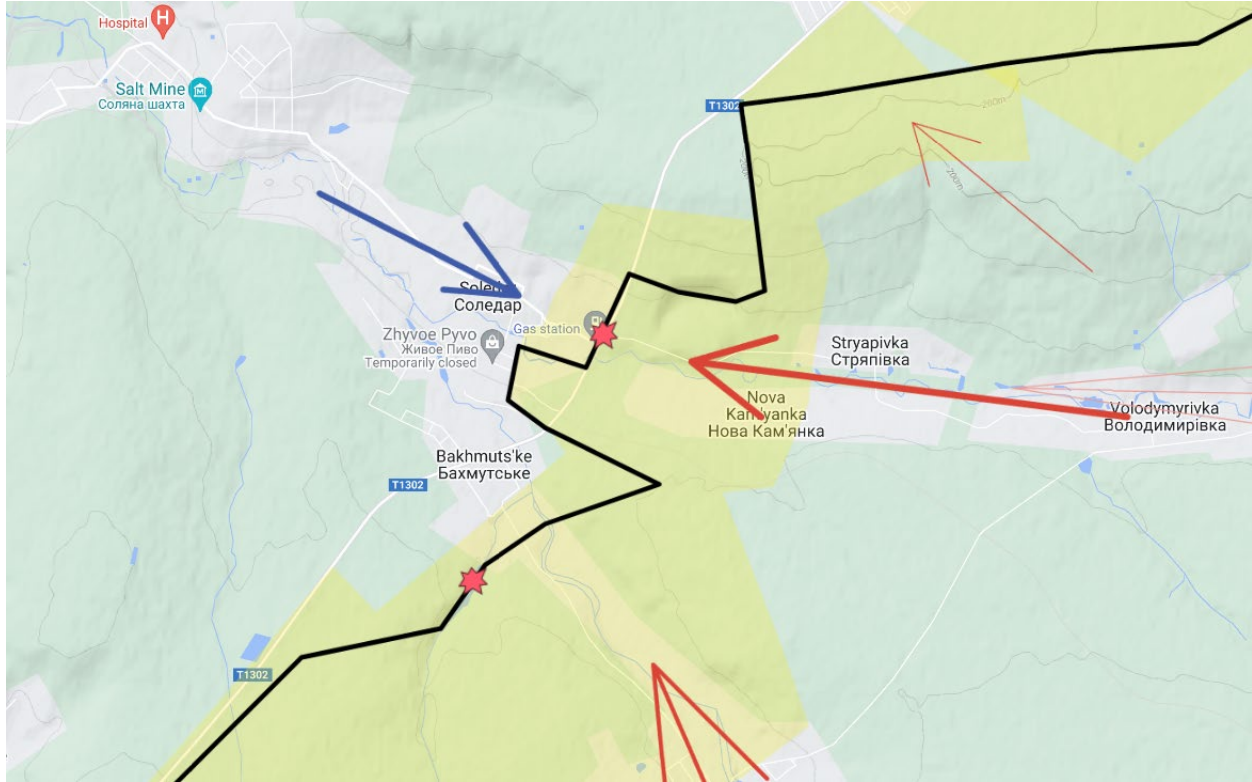
Russian Objective: Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, defend against Ukrainian advances toward Luhansk, capture Bakhmut/Soledar

Ukrainian Objective: Defend Bakhmut-Soldar while managing equipment and personnel losses, minimize civilian casualties, and defend GLOCs

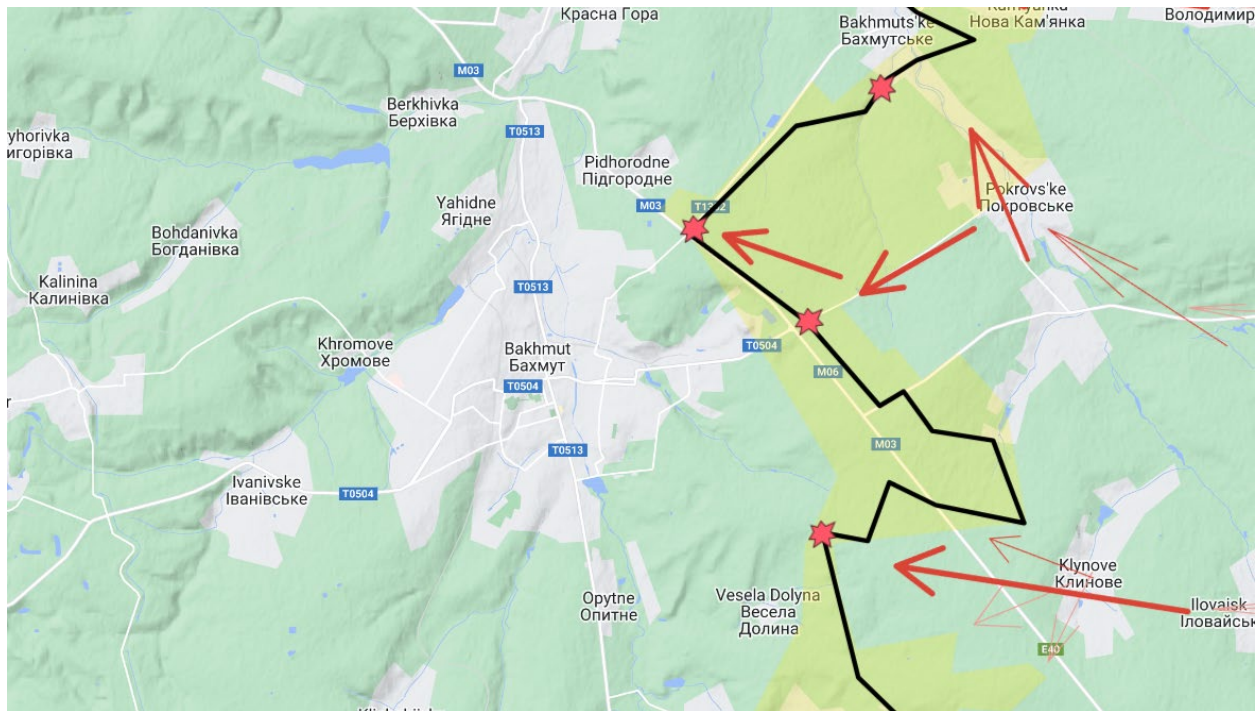
The situation in northeast Donetsk remains unchanged.



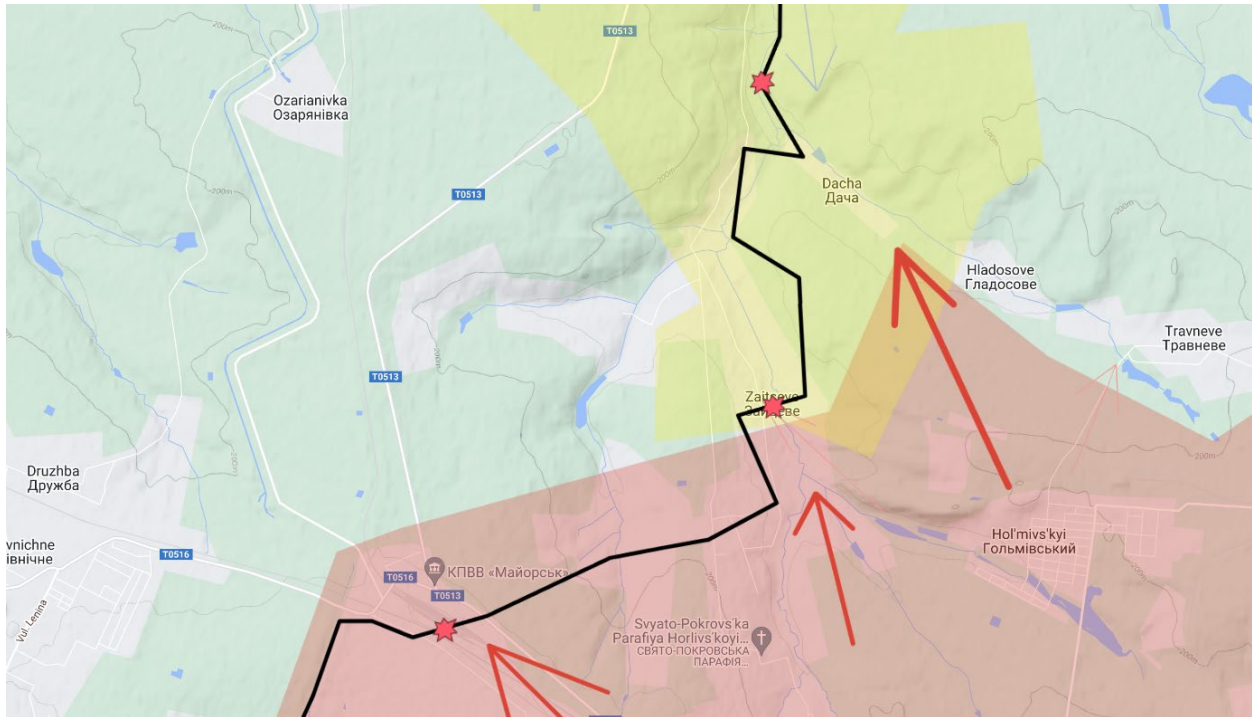
Russian forces continued their attempts to advance on [Vyimka](#) without success.



Fighting continued on the southern edge of [Bakhmutske](#) led by Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner Group, with no change in the situation.



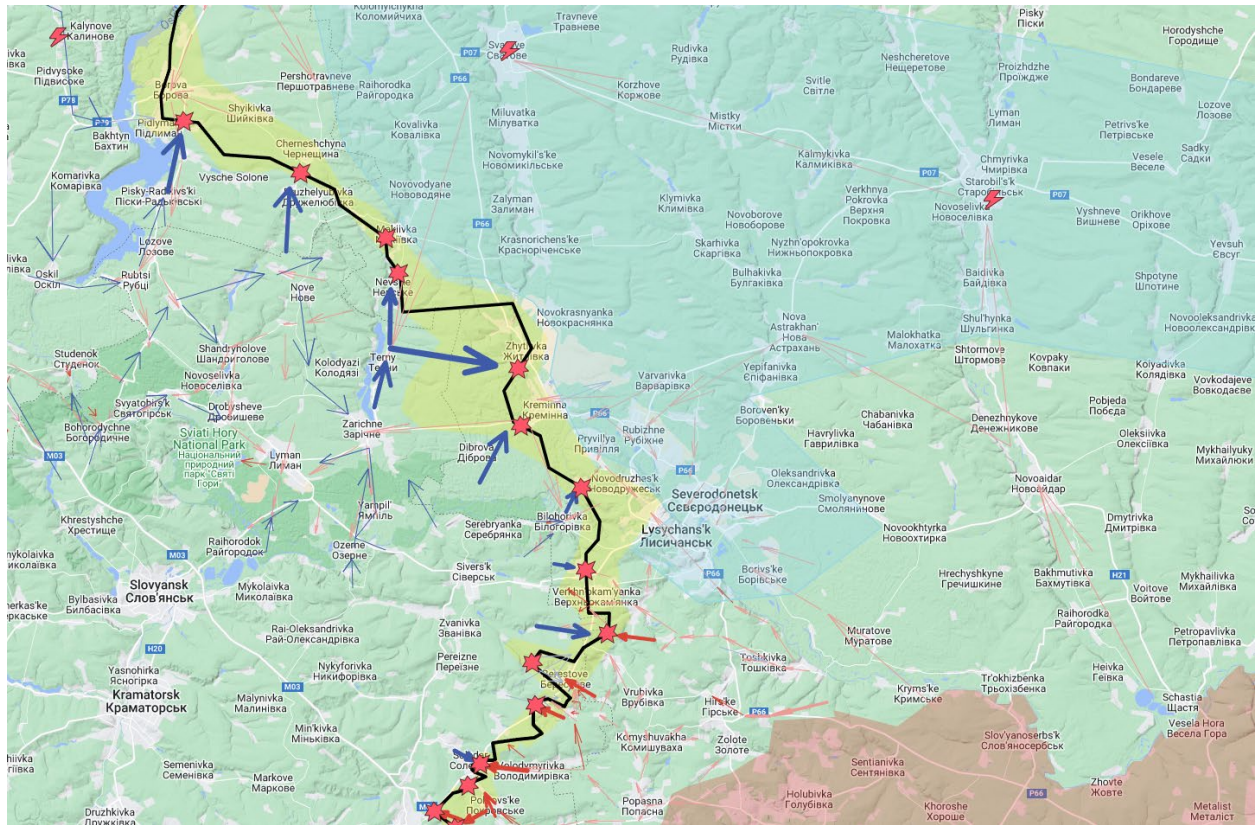
There is continued fighting east of Bakhmut, with a wide range of rumors coming from Pro-Russian channels. Some have reported that Ukrainian forces are withdrawing from the city, which we find highly unlikely. Others report the direct opposite and believe Ukraine will deliver a large counteroffensive in the immediate future. We see no evidence that supports either suggestion and is representative of the confusion and frustration among Russian milbloggers.



The 1st Army Corps of the DNR, 3rd Brigade, continued attacks on Mayorsk but could not build upon the incremental gains they made on Monday.

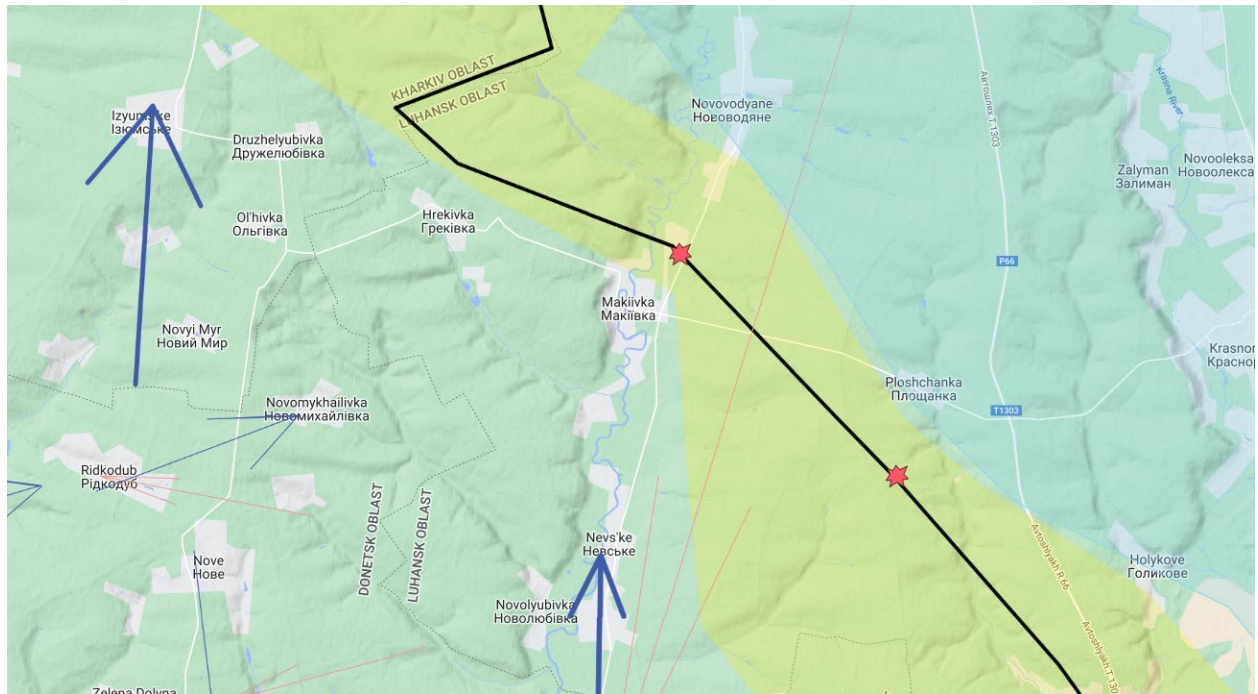
War crime investigators discovered a mass grave in Lyman with at least 50 bodies of civilians. The site is being exhumed.

LUHANSK



Russian Objective: Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, hold current defensive lines, and control insurgency

Ukrainian Objective: Break Russian defensive lines, prevent the retreat of Russian soldiers from Lyman, make opportunistic territorial gains, support insurgents, interdict supplies



Defensive lines for Russian forces, which have barely been formed, appear to be cracking, with Svatove and Kreminna facing a growing risk of encirclement. Pro-Russian sources reported that Hrekivka and Makiivka in Luhansk are under Ukrainian control, and Ukrainian forces were advancing on Raihorodka. Raihorodka is only 14 kilometers west of Svatove.

In Svatove, the security situation is declining. Russian sources reported that most civilians have been evacuated and that Ukrainian troops are advancing from three directions to the key transit and supply hub. Despite almost eight months of occupation, it does not appear much in the

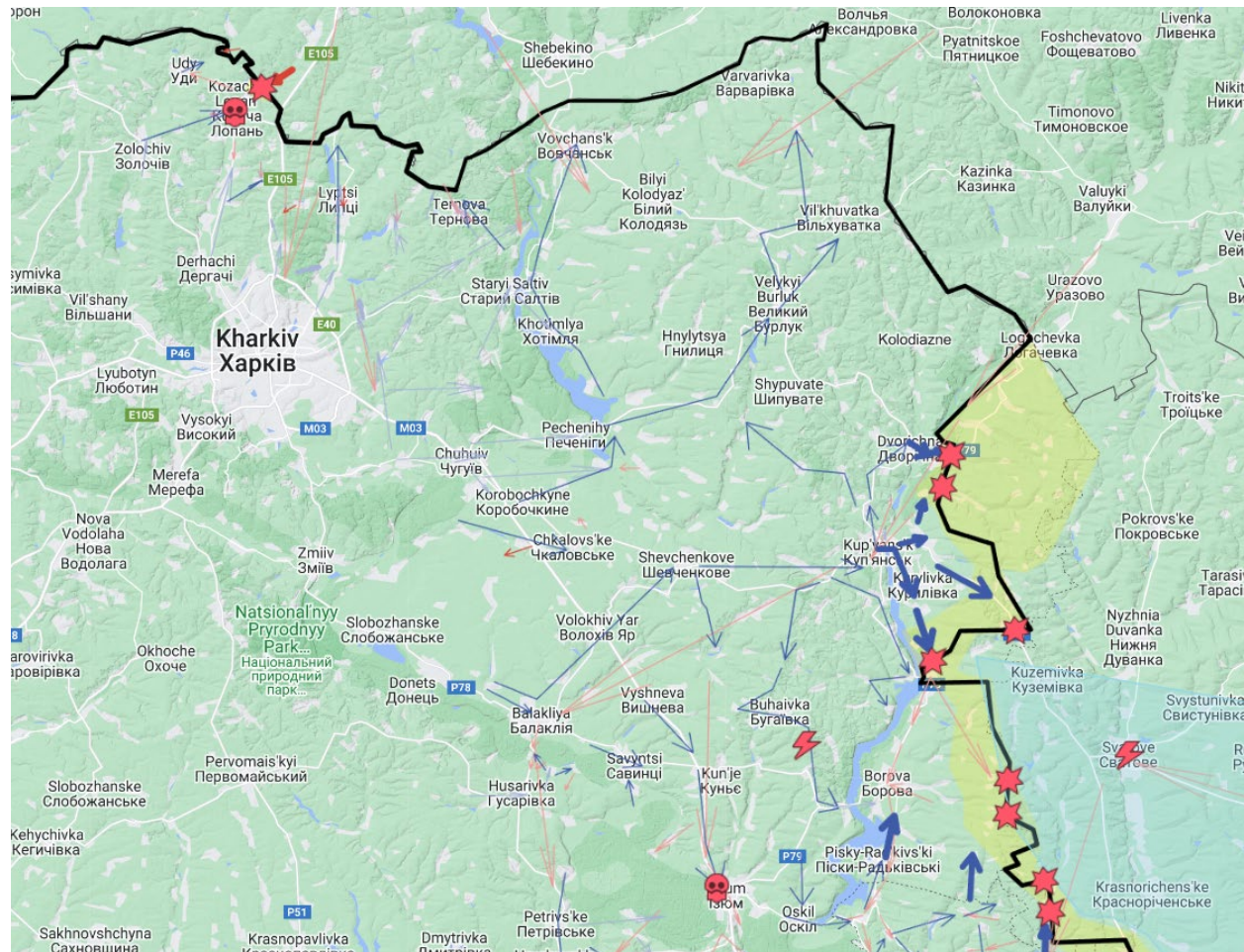
form of defenses were built. Ukraine won't attack the city head-on and is working on encirclement.

The situation in Kreminna is calm, but Ukrainian forces appear to be working on developing an encirclement with reports of advances to the north and south of the town. Pro-Russian accounts claim the P-66 Highway between Kreminna and Svatove is severed and has been closed to civilian traffic. We cannot confirm the veracity of these claims.

Luhansk Oblast Administrative and Military Governor Serhei Haidai reported that six villages in the oblast had been liberated but did not name which ones to protect operational security.



KHARKIV



Russian Objective: Retreat and minimize casualties, prevent Ukrainian forces from advancing from their bridgeheads on the east bank of the Oskil River, and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale

Ukrainian Objective: Liberate all of Kharkiv oblast, sever GLOCs into Luhansk, protect civilian lives, and defend the Ukrainian border

With Ukrainian forces controlling 98% of the oblast, there is little to report. Pro-Russian sources claim Ukrainian forces are advancing on Orlyanske. We can't verify the veracity of this claim.

Otherwise, Ukrainian forces worked to consolidate the new territory on the east bank of the Oskil and started the work of rebuilding the region.

CHERNIHIV & SUMY REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in this region.

KYIV REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in this region.

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA & ODESA REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in this region.

WESTERN & CENTRAL UKRAINE

There wasn't any significant military action in this region.

RUSSIAN FRONT

There appears to be significant infighting among some of the most powerful military leaders in Russia that are spilling over into the public sphere. Russian President

Putin is setting up Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu to take the blame for the failures of the "special military operation."

President Putin signed a decree that defers the mobilization of all part-time and full-time students, citing inaction by the Russian Ministry of Defense as his reason for intervention. This is a direct attack on Shoigu, who announced last week that deferments would be made.

Aspiring dentist don-don Ramzan Kadyrov was promoted to Colonel General, the same rank as Alexandr Lapin, who commands Russia's Central Military District and has been a target of Kadyrov's online rants. Kadyrov has also blamed the Russian Ministry of Defense, without naming Shoigu, for the failures. The promotion indicates that Kadyrov is moving deeper into Putin's inner circle and has successfully been a sycophant. It has also fueled speculation that Kadyrov could become the new Central Military District commander or replace Shoigu as Minister of Defense.

ASSESSMENT: If President Putin is trying to set up Shoigu for being fired due to lying about the situation in Ukraine and troop readiness, Kadyrov won't be an upgrade.

Retired General Andrey Katapolov, a member of the state Duma, came after Shoigu saying that all the lies from the Ministry of Defense must stop. Although the statement was broad, he narrowed it down by saying "individual leaders" were responsible for the deception coming from the MOD.

PMC Wagner Group head Yevgeny Prigozhin appears to be going after Shoigu, with the Kremlin fighting back. A video appeared today of alleged mobiks in Belgorod. They claimed they had been given equipment, guns, and ammunition but no direction after and had waited for a week for training with no support, housing, or food. Some of the refusniks were wearing PMC Wagner patches on their uniforms. Hours later, detaining Alexei Slobodenyuk, who manages multiple PMC Wagner social media disinformation accounts, was detained by the FSB and accused of fraud. Some have suggested that the arrest hours after the potentially fake video of refusniks areas was released shows the Kremlin is cracking down on disconnect about the special military operation. Prigozhin has been increasingly vocal in his criticism of the Russian MOD, and many Wagner channels appear to have turned the focus of their internal disinformation operations into Russia. If the detention has led to a formal fraud charge,

Slobodenyuk will face a Russian justice system with a 99% conviction rate.

Prigozhin is another member of Putin's inner circle and is potentially fleecing the Kremlin by rushing penal units of mercenaries to the front with almost no training while being paid \$70,000 to \$100,000 for each mercenary's six-month contract. Their average life span is from one to three weeks once they get in country.

ASSESSMENT: Changing leadership at the Russian MOD will not change the culture within the Russian military that has festered for decades, if not more than a century. It won't recover the tens of billions of roubles worth of missing equipment and undone maintenance. Kadyrov will be a worse military leader than Shoigu and has repeatedly amplified lies about Chechen troops' status, successes, and fighting skills. Prigozhin would be the better leader but won't do anything to address the corruption that has destroyed the Russian military. On the contrary, it is likely he will only make it worse.

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

The United States announced another \$625 million military aid package to Ukraine. Military hardware provided includes:

- Four High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) GMLRS launchers and ammunition;
- 16 155mm M777 Howitzers;
- 75,000 155mm artillery rounds;
- 500 precision-guided 155mm Excalibur artillery shells;
- 1,000 155mm rounds of Remote Anti-Armor Mine (RAAM) Systems;
- 16 M109 105mm Howitzers;
- 30,000 120mm mortar rounds;
- 200 MaxxPro Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles;

The package also includes a number of small arms weapons and ammunition.

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION & MILITARY STATUS

Only reporting kinetic warfare



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