



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



April 27, 2022



Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 63

The assessments and opinions expressed in the SITREP are not representative, endorsed, or reflective of the Rondeli Foundation. We are grateful for the daily maps they foundation creates, and their diligence in assessing territorial gains and changes in the Russia-Ukraine War.

It has been 2,981 days since Russia first invaded Ukraine and nine weeks since the start of total war.

After significant gains by Russian forces yesterday, there was little change over the last 24 hours. Russian forces made small gains around Severodonetsk while Ukrainian forces solidified control of three key villages on the edge of Kherson (city).

In Rubihzne, Ukrainian forces moved the line of conflict about 200 meters north, despite Russian claims the settlement had been captured. Russian troops captured Oleksandrivka, west of Severodentsk. Russian and Russia-backed forces have advanced about 900 meters southwest of Train Station 1 over the last 72 hours.

Russian forces secured the settlement of Zarichne but are held north of Yampil. Claims of Ukrainian forces mass surrendering at Yampil and the village's capture made on April 26 were false. The settlement of Torske remains disputed.

Heavy fighting continued along the Izyum axis. Russian forces recaptured Zapody, directly west of Izyum but otherwise made no additional forward progress. Russian troops appear to be attempting a wider encirclement to bypass well-established Ukrainian defenses at Slovyansk and Barvinkove.

There was continued fighting along the entire axis from Horlivka to Hulyaipole. Russian forces captured the settlement of Novosilka, advancing north from Rivnopil.

Fighting for control of the Azovstal Metallurgical Plant compound continues in Mariupol, with fresh fighting just north of the main port. Russia plans a propaganda tour for Kremlin-aligned journalists later in the week.

Southwest of Kherson, Oleksandrivka is moved back to contested again, with Ukrainian forces making small gains.

Northwest of Kherson, Ukrainian forces liberated the settlements of Blahodatne and Kyselivka and moved Klapaya to contested control. The line of conflict has moved to within 11 kilometers of the Russian base at Kherson International Airport.

Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Kharkiv and Mykolaiv.

There are multiple reports of Russia setting up filtration and concentration camps and committing torture, extrajudicial executions, forced labor, forced military conscription, kidnappings, ransom demands, and using civilians as human shields.

Transnistria claimed that a group of armed terrorists tried to enter the Cobasna Ammunition Depot, causing a shootout when they were discovered. Tension is high within the breakaway republic, Moldova, and the Ukrainian region of Budjak. Russia and Russian state media continue a disinformation campaign claiming Ukraine is planning to attack Transnistria in cooperation with Romania.

ASSESSMENT: Russian advances in eastern Ukraine continue, but our position is unchanged. If Russia is attempting to outflank Slovyansk and Barvinkove, south of Izyum, we believe they are incapable of maintaining the lines of communication and supply, particularly on the western flank. We remain unconvinced that Russian forces can collapse the Severodonetsk salient, connect to Slovyansk, **and** hold the containment.

We are more concerned about external issues and geopolitics, raising tensions in Western Europe. Russia cut off the natural gas supply to Poland and neutral Bulgaria today. Ukraine is projecting its power further into Russia, with two strikes on military targets and likely a third one attempted in the past 24 hours.

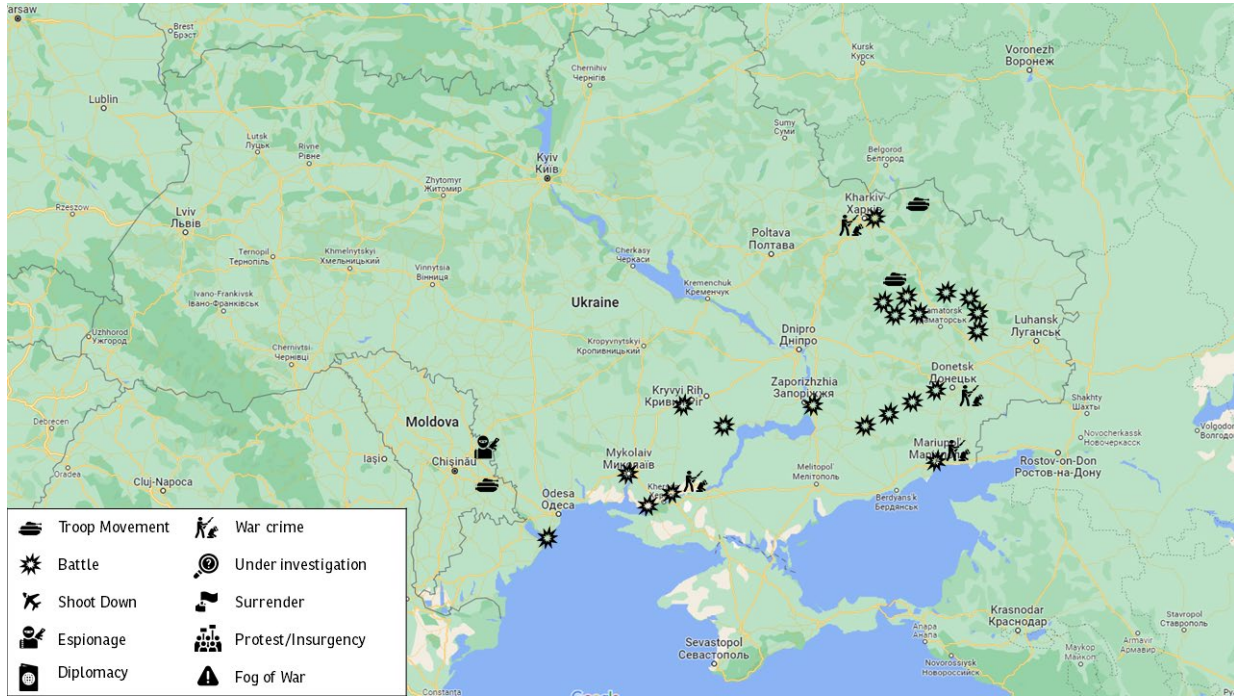
Russian state media has reopened the dialog to justify the use of nuclear weapons and that Russia is under imminent threat of total destruction by NATO. We maintain that threats of nuclear war are propaganda to convince a Russian audience they need to continue to back the special military operation in Ukraine while sowing fear, uncertainty and doubt across NATO and its supporting allies.

Finland declared they would apply for NATO membership independent of Sweden's decision. Australia announced they were shipping six M777 155mm towed artillery pieces to Ukraine, adding to the list of nations providing lethal aid. A coalition of 43 countries attended the Ukraine summit yesterday hosted by the United States Secretary of Defense, including Israel, South Korea, and Kenya.

These events put added pressure on the Kremlin while fueling Russian state media messaging. Sanctions have crippled Russia's ability to replace precision munitions and armored vehicles. The brain drain among experienced leaders who have been killed in action or sanctioned will take years to replace.

We remain concerned that we are stuck in the Mutual Assured Destruction Instability Paradox, and the situation has destabilized more during the last week.

KEY EVENTS MAP



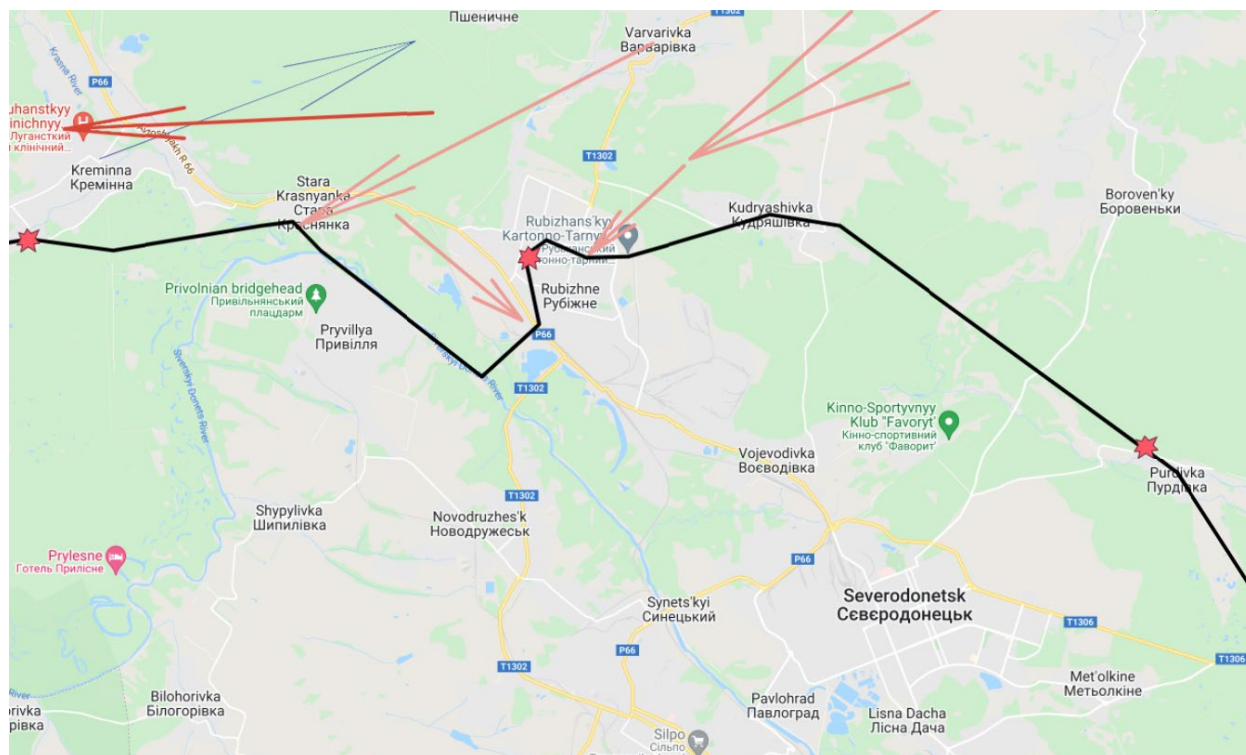
DONBAS REGION

Russian forces captured Zarichne and Oleksandrivka (Luhansk Oblast). Fighting in Mariupol continued with reports that Ukrainian troops continue to be resupplied.

LUHANSK

Severodonetsk Salient

Intense fighting continued in Rubizhne and Popasnya. Chechens backed by Russian state media made another claim that Rubizhne was captured. The reports are untrue, and there was some evidence that the line of contact moved 100 to 200 meters north, pushing Russian forces back. Rubizhne remains disputed.



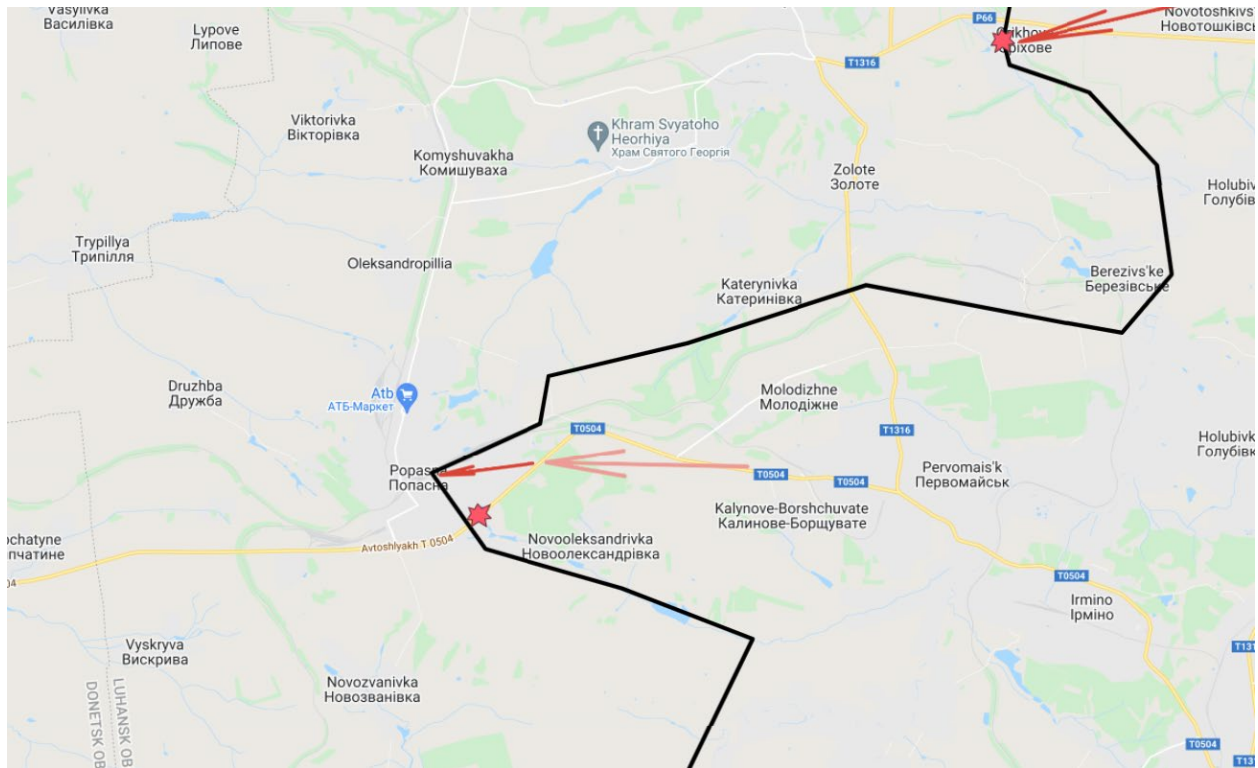
Russia and Ukraine released videos showing the fighting in Popasna. Russian state media launched a drone 270 meters west-southwest of Train Station 1.¹ The footage showed intense artillery fire approximately 300 meters southwest.² A video released by Ukraine confirms where the line of conflict is, showing drone-directed artillery firing on Russian or Russia-backed forces 900 meters west-southwest of Railroad Station 1.^{3 4}

¹ <https://goo.gl/maps/nauK9xXJw3JLWCAH7>

² <https://twitter.com/nowakkmichal/status/1519459245565132801> [Russian State Media Rating: Valid, but with staged fighting – Geolocation at 1:07 and 1:58]

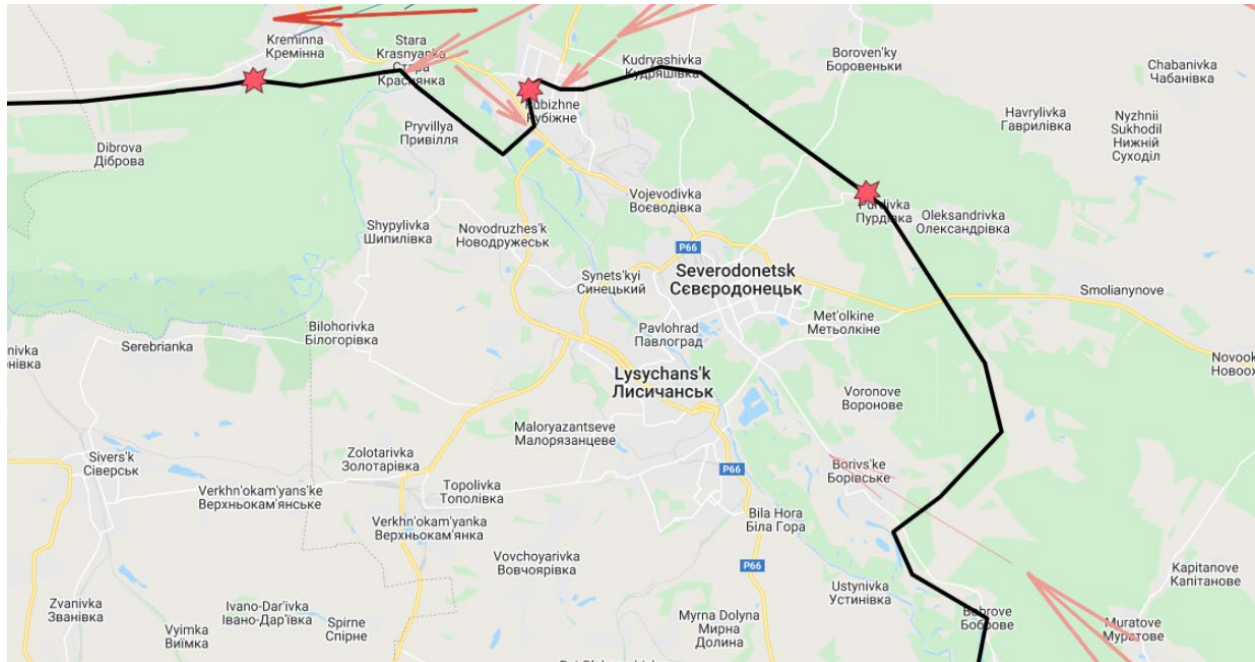
³ https://twitter.com/200_zoka/status/1519348782898495489

⁴ <https://goo.gl/maps/3AmALXtk71qScJtj9> [Geolocation at 0:35]



West of Severodonetsk, Russian forces captured Oleksandrivka, and fighting continued in Orikhove. Two American volunteers, Manus McCaffrey and Paul Gray were wounded in action.⁵ (viewer discretion is advised).

⁵ https://twitter.com/Syria_Protector/status/1519403071880712192



Ukrainian forces destroyed a Russian ammunition dump in Irmino located at a mine.⁶ The video was geolocated, and the fire was confirmed using NASA FIRMS data.⁷

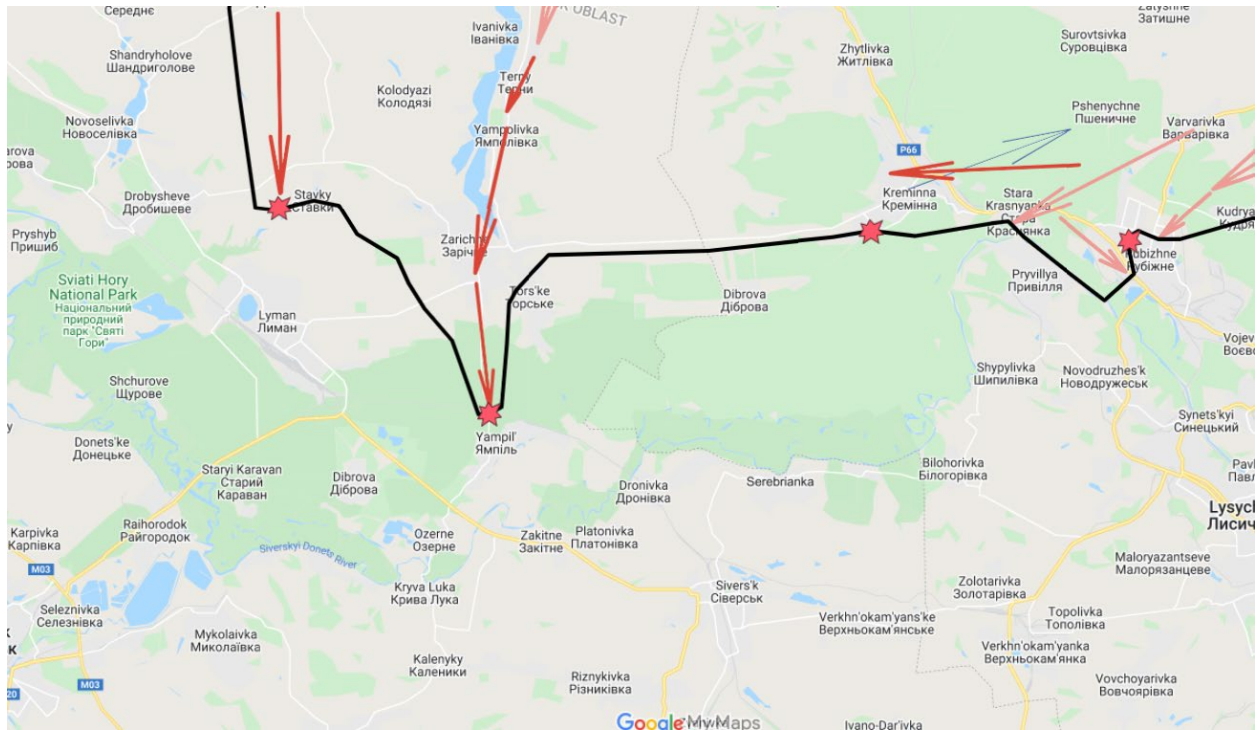
Severodonetsk Westward Offensive

Russian forces secured Zarichne but could not advance west nor south into Yampil. Ukrainian forces destroyed a bridge that crosses the Sivero Donets River on the southern side of Yampil.⁸ Ukrainian forces are suffering heavy losses in their defense along the axis.

⁶ <https://twitter.com/PVB40/status/1519019762025697280>

⁷ <https://twitter.com/zcjbrooker/status/1519037564958691328>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/JulianRoepcke/status/1519261834498478080/photo/1>



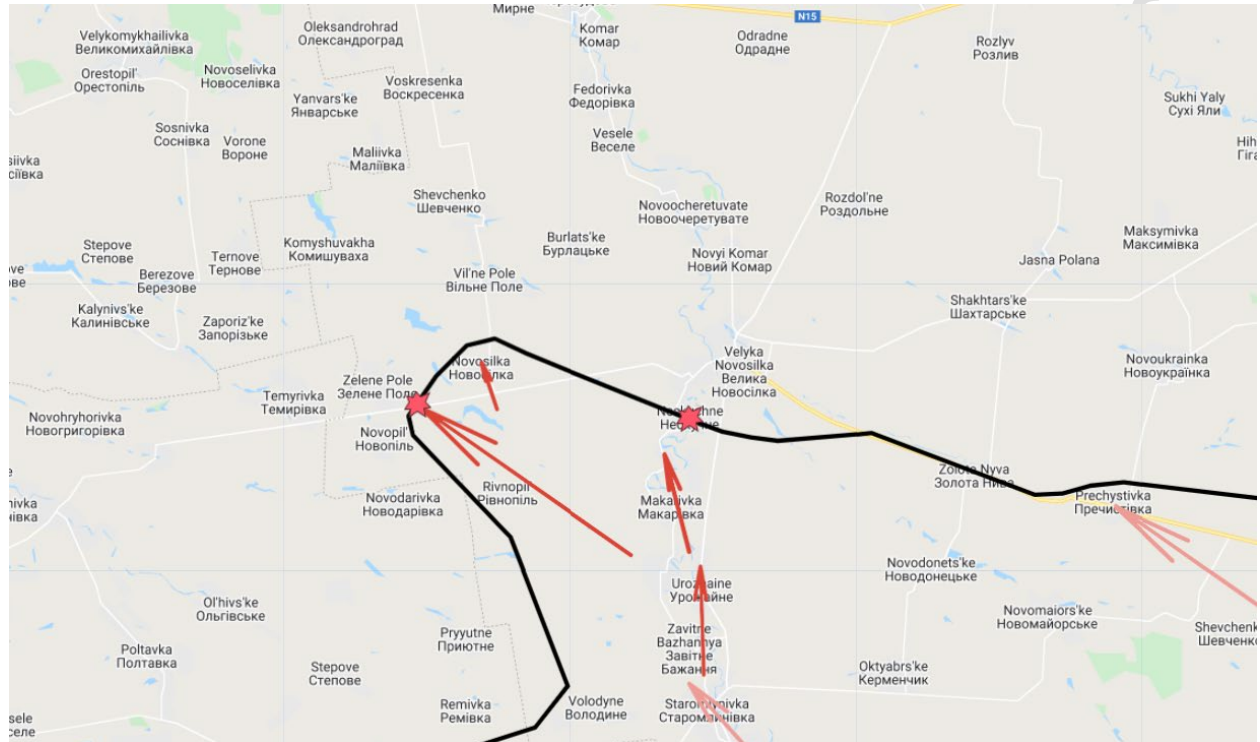
ASSESSMENT: Ukrainian forces yielded Zarichne and are under tremendous pressure at Yampil. They continue to prevent Russian forces from creating a small encirclement by advancing west toward Izyum.

DONETSK TO WESTERN ZAPORIZHIA

Russian forces captured the hamlet of Novosilka,⁹ west of Velkyia Novosilka. Otherwise, there was little movement

⁹ 47.83452678923735, 36.685611831795654

along the line of conflict from Horlivka to Velyka Novosilka and further west into the Zaporizhia Oblast to Huyaipole.



The exchange of artillery, rocket fire, and airstrikes continued across the axis.

There are reports of heavy fighting in Neskuchne, south of Velyka Novosilka. Russian forces had captured the village of Maraiivka, 5 kilometers to the south, on April 26.¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1519115826519064577>

SOUTH DONBAS – AZOV SEA

Russian and Ukrainian Marines are still fighting in Mariupol, and the perimeter of engagement has expanded.¹¹ There are reports of approximately 100 Ukrainian marines fighting near the main port.¹² NASA FIRMS data has shown sustained fires just north of the port for over 24 hours.



¹¹ <https://twitter.com/visegrad24/status/1519427618755465219>

¹² <https://twitter.com/InsiderGeo/status/1519397498770665472>

Ukraine's GRU reported that Russia plans a Pro-Kremlin press tour in Mariupol on April 28.¹³

ASSESSMENT: Russian forces continue to make slow progress across the region, except in Mariupol. With sustained fighting around the main port, the security situation has deteriorated. Russian forces maintain control over almost the entire city, but the victory declaration seven days ago was premature.

A week ago, we had assessed that Ukrainian forces would continue to fight and seek opportunities to strike at other areas within the city.

¹³ <https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1519370357878235136>

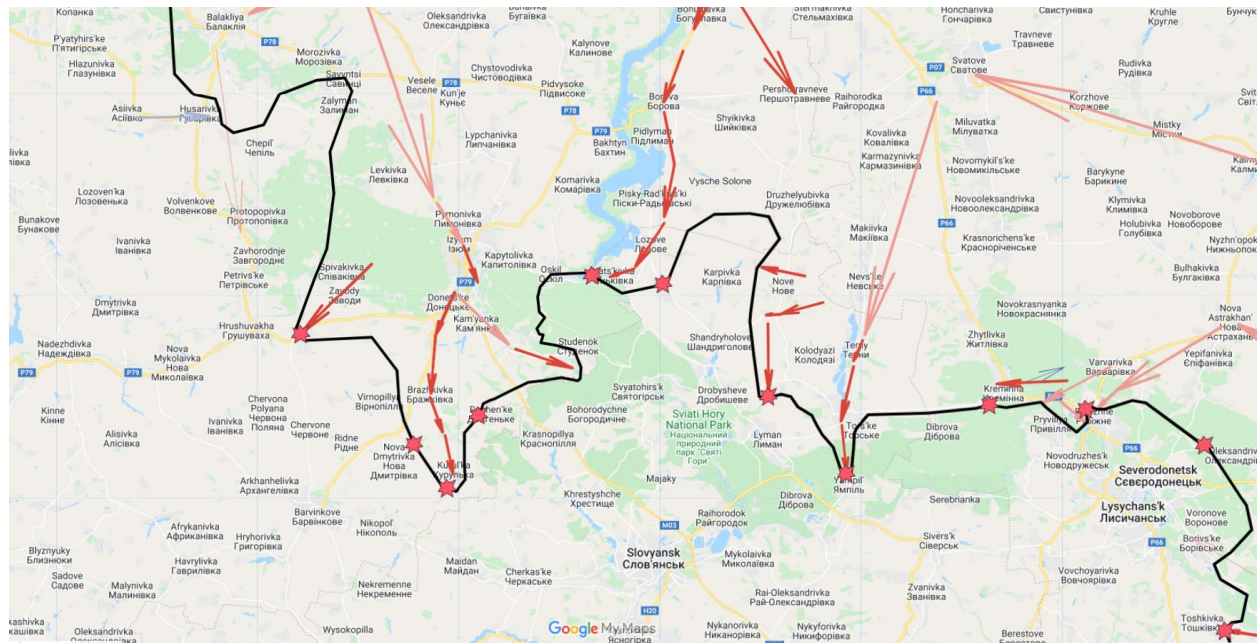
KHARKIV REGION

Along the Izyum axis, Russian forces continued their advance in three columns in a coordinated way.

The first column is advancing southwest from Izyum toward Barvinkove. That group turned and advanced west recapturing Zavody and securing 20 square kilometers of the surrounding territory. In some areas, Ukrainian forces were overrun so quickly that they couldn't complete setting up new defenses.

The second column is advancing southeast from Izyum. The advance could be attempting to reach Slovyansk or move east to connect with Russian forces at Zarichne. Russian troops made small gains east of Sukha Kamyanka.

The third column is advancing south along the eastern shore of the Oskil River. There was no change in territorial control.



Shelling of civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Kharkiv.

DNIPRO, KHERSON & MYKOLAIV, ZAPORIZHIA REGION

Shelling and rocket fire continued around Mykolaiv and to the south of Kryvvi Rih, with no change in territorial control.

Ukrainian forces are holding Russian troops back at Hulyaipole, destroying several armored vehicles.^{14 15}

Ukrainian forces successfully destroyed the TV transmitter tower in the city of Kherson, knocking the broadcast of Russian state media off the air for a period of time.^{16 17} The Ukrainian Air Force distracted Russian air defenses using a Cold War-era drone, enabling the strike on the tower.

There are multiple reports that Ukrainian forces have liberated the settlements of Blahodatne, Kyselivka, and Klapaya.¹⁸ Based on the information from reliable sources, we consider these settlements liberated.

Fighting was renewed around Oleksandrivka (the one southwest of Kherson), and we are moving the town back to contested status.

ASSESSMENT: With a reduction in artillery attacks on Mykolaiv, we believe that Ukrainian forces have been successful in pushing Russian forces back into Kherson.

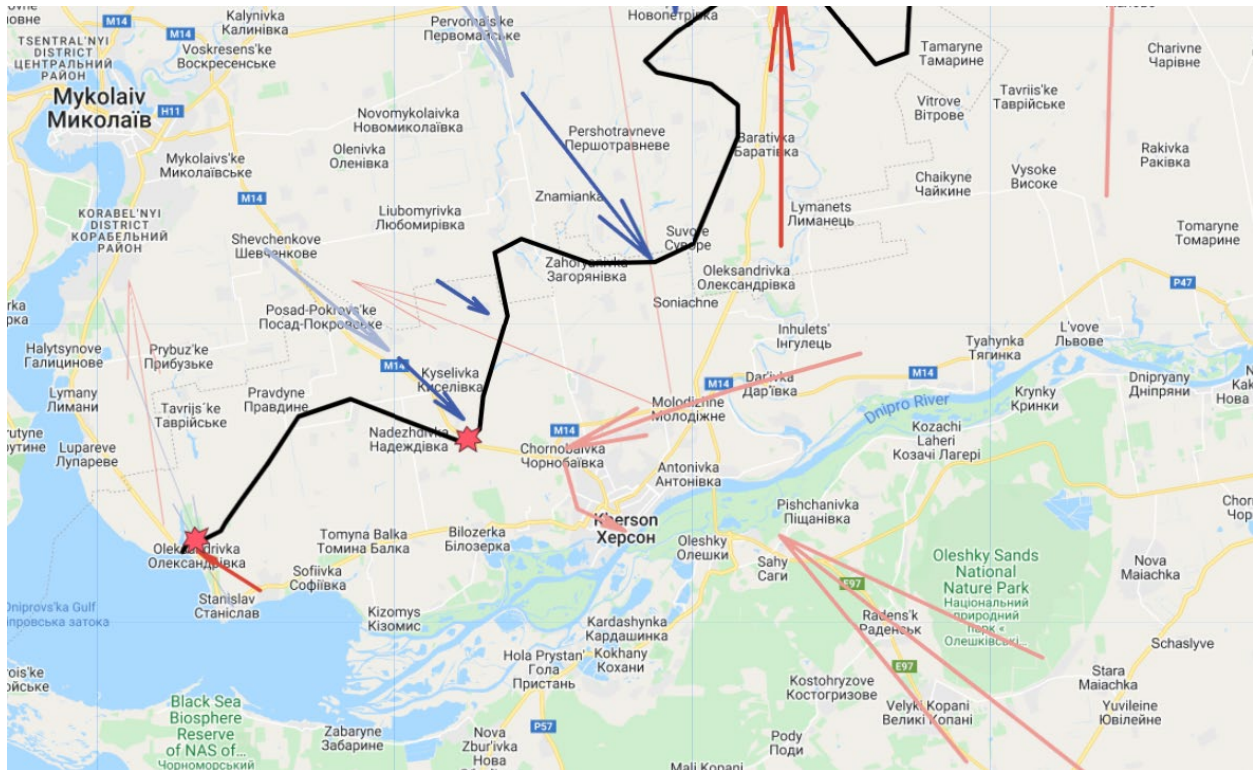
¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/ThomasMutschler/status/1519521069471879171>

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/Josegarzonvelez/status/1519501795076227074>

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1519425274739408898>

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1519425540998025223>

¹⁸ <https://twitter.com/BarracudaVol1/status/1519460318962982917>



Large protests against the Russian occupation of Kherson were held today. Russian troops fired rubber bullets, deployed teargas, and used stun grenades on the protesters, injuring four – one seriously.¹⁹

Russia is planning to hold a plebiscite on May 1 to pass a referendum declaring the oblast part of Russia.

¹⁹ https://twitter.com/A_SHEKH0VTS0V/status/1519303573670174720

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 & ODESA REGION

There are reports that the Zatoka Bridge, a vital rail connection west of Odesa, was hit by a missile a second time. There have been no reports of damage, and recent satellite images show the bridge is still intact.²⁰

WEST REGION

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

²⁰ <https://twitter.com/CovertShores/status/1519331373701603329>

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Transnistria claims they thwarted a terrorist attack against the Cobasna Ammunition Depot.²¹ This was likely another false flag to drive growing tension in the region.

Transnistria and Ukraine have started to militarize border crossings.²²

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

There are many reports of Russia setting up filtration and concentration camps in occupied areas in Ukraine.

Thousands have been detained or disappeared. There are numerous allegations of torture, rape, and extrajudicial executions.

There are numerous reports of forced conscription, particularly in the Donbas, Zaphorizia, and parts of Kharkiv. Forced conscripts are integrated with forces loyal to Russia, where they are sent on the most dangerous assignments and killed if they refuse or attempt desertion.

²¹ <https://twitter.com/visegrad24/status/1519248380907642881>

²² <https://twitter.com/EuropeanOSINT/status/1519488704787718144>

There are widespread reports that residents of Mariupol are being forced to work on city clean-up, demining, and the removal of corpses in exchange for food and drinking water.²³

Men are sent to filtration camps to be sorted into three groups. The first is civil servants and former military – they are imprisoned without trial, and some are executed. The second are those of military age who did not work in government or the military. They are used for forced conscription into the DNR militia. The remainder is used as forced labor.²⁴

There were videos released by Russian state media allegedly showing Ukrainian soldiers that had been captured in Mariupol. Those were only a handful of Ukrainian soldiers, and the video wasn't from Mariupol.

²³ <https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1518906212477292545>

²⁴ <https://twitter.com/VigilantinfoN/status/1517442996341551105>



The video is from an overcrowded prison camp in the remote village of Molodizhne in the Donetsk Oblast. According to the United States State Department, the center has held political, religious, and ethnic prisoners since the Russian occupation began in 2014.²⁵

²⁵ <https://www.state.gov/report/custom/cafe43f802/>



Prisoners are moved out of the prison for extreme torture, allegedly in the basement of homes east of the camp.

There are reports of widespread diseases such as dysentery, and no food, water, or bedding for those who pass through the filtration camps before reaching the Donetsk prison camps.²⁶

Russia released a declaration that they plan to seize farm production from the Kherson Oblast for the next two growing seasons to “replenish the fund of agricultural

²⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61208404>

products."²⁷ The memorandum went on to say that the seizures would continue during the period of the "special military operation" as a "benefit for small farmers."

The U.N. humanitarian office began coordinating the evacuation of civilians from the steel plant after Secretary-General António Guterres reached an agreement in principle with Russian President Vladimir Putin on April 26. Most believe that no deal will be achieved.

GEOPOLITICAL

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency warned that the safety level at Europe's largest nuclear plant, now under Russian occupation in Ukraine, is like a "red light blinking." Rafael Grossi said the agency had tried in vain to get access to make repairs to areas damaged when Russian forces attacked the plant in March.

Yesterday we added a note that there were ***unconfirmed*** reports that Russia had not shut off natural gas deliveries to Poland. The reports were without merit.

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/femeninna/status/1519335761837010953>



ECONOMIC

The rouble strengthened again, trading at a better than pre-war level of 73 to 1 dollar.

The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air estimated Russia had earned \$66 billion in fossil fuel sales since February 24. The report claims Germany has been the most significant global buyer, paying almost \$10 billion for refined fuel, oil, and natural gas deliveries.

Oil and gasoline prices dropped, with WTI closing at \$99 a barrel and Brent crude falling to \$103. United States gasoline futures dropped to \$3.24 a gallon.

DISINFORMATION EVALUATION

No update