

MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

July 28, 2023



Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

7/28/23 23:59* PST

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SUMMARY – DAY 519

It has been 3,439 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 154 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine. While we expected today's operational tempo to be lower due to weather, the severe storms didn't materialize. Despite this, the operational tempo was very low, with Ukrainian forces consolidating recent gains and Russian forces moving to reinforce new defensive positions.

Most Russian milbloggers were focused on the Ukrainian missile strikes in Russia, the Russia-Africa Summit, and denying that Ukraine made any gains in the Orikhiv Operational Area.

- Ukrainian forces continue to push Russian forces away from Borova
- Russian troops are on the outskirts of Klishchiivka, and Chechen Akhmat withdrew from Andriivka, but neither settlement is officially liberated
- Ukrainian forces made additional gains north of Kurdyumivka
- Ukrainian forces continue to improve their positions near Kamyanske

- Russian troops in Urozhaine are in a technical encirclement, with the only route out under Ukrainian fire control
- Members of the Russian 247th Airborne Assault Regiment (VDV) are rioting
- Members of the Russian 70th Motor Rifle Regiment are rioting
- The Russian 810th Naval Infantry is appealing for funds to buy ATVs, night vision goggles, and other equipment
- Not everything went to plan during the July 27, 2023, offensive between Robotyne and Verbove, with Ukrainian officers outraged at the tactics used by one company
- The Russian navy has started threatening civilian cargo ships in the Black Sea
- At least one Ukrainian S-200 missile struck Taganrog, wounding 16
- Two Russian SRBMs hit Dnipro, wounding nine
- The SBU has issued an arrest warrant for Serhii Yevsyukov, the former head of the infamous Olenivka Penal Colony, for leading the torture of 100 Ukrainian soldiers

DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

1. Due to a lack of troop rotation, growing ammunition shortages, and weak commanders, we maintain that Russian combat potential is reaching the point of exhaustion.
2. Russian ammunition shortages in the Zaporizhzhia and Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka AOs have spread to eastern Kherson.
3. We maintain that the current Ukrainian military activity is subordinate offensives and shaping operations, and the main operation has not started.
4. We maintain that signals from Kyiv indicating the next phase of the summer offensive is being prepared are accurate. There are three operational areas where we believe the next phase could start.
5. Despite Ukraine's plans to move to the next phase, we maintain that Western partners are not meeting their promised military training, heavy equipment, and ammunition dates, negatively impacting Ukraine's military capabilities.
6. The Russian Federation's defacto blockade of the western Black Sea has put shipping in the territorial waters of Bulgaria and Romania at risk, and if the

- European Union, United Nations, and/or NATO do not respond with any action, preferably non-military, Russian aggression on the border nations of Ukraine will continue to expand and eventually lead to an international incident.
7. While public support for former FSB Colonel Igor Strelkov Girkin has rapidly faded, it still indicates that Russian President Vladimir Putin has been weakened after the failed Prigozhin Insurrection and continues to face a small but very real possibility of another insurrection or coup attempt.
 8. The Russian Ministry of Defense remains in a chaotic state, incapable of creating mission cohesion between penal units, mobiks, conscripts, elite forces, PMCs, and proxy forces.
 9. Mistrust among the command structures of the Russian Ministry of Defense, intelligence, and security community is negatively impacting Russia's ability to wage war within Ukraine.
 10. 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.
 11. While the possibility of an intentional nuclear accident caused by Russian occupiers at the Zaporizhzhia

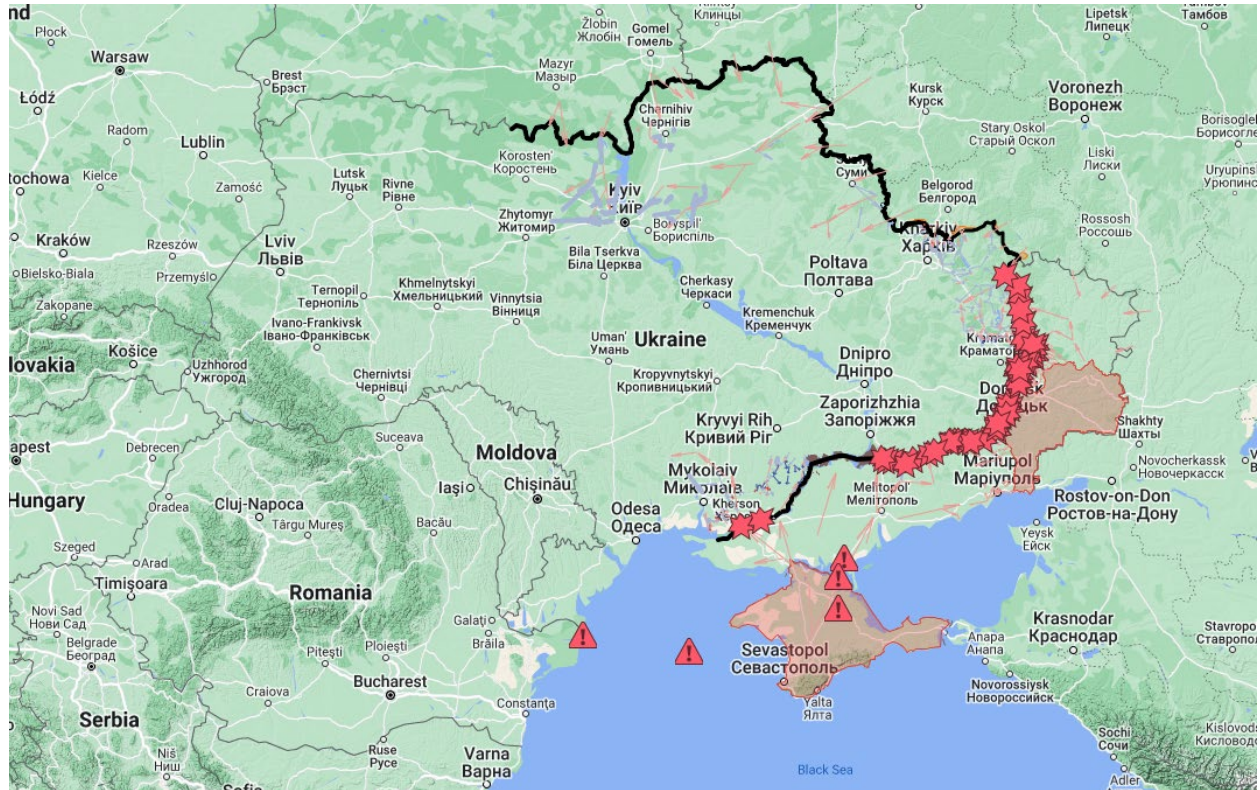


Nuclear Power Plant remains low, the threat should be taken seriously.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

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TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP

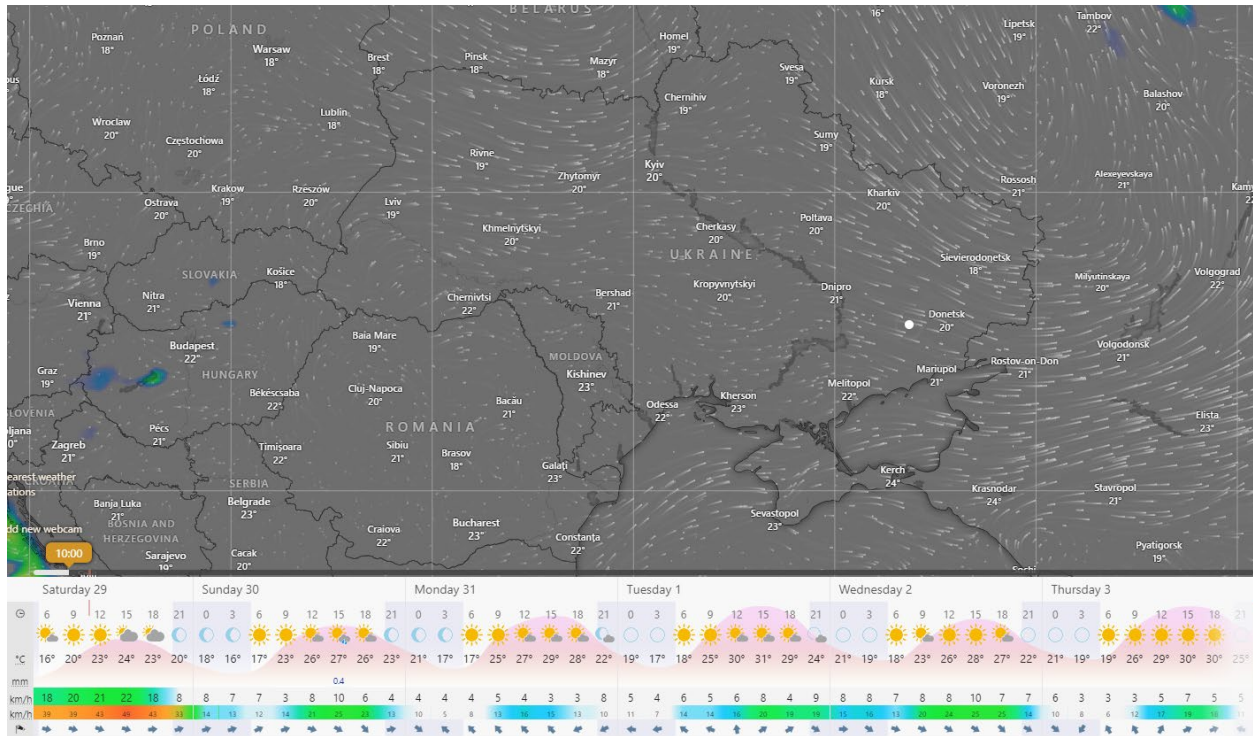


About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The 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](#)

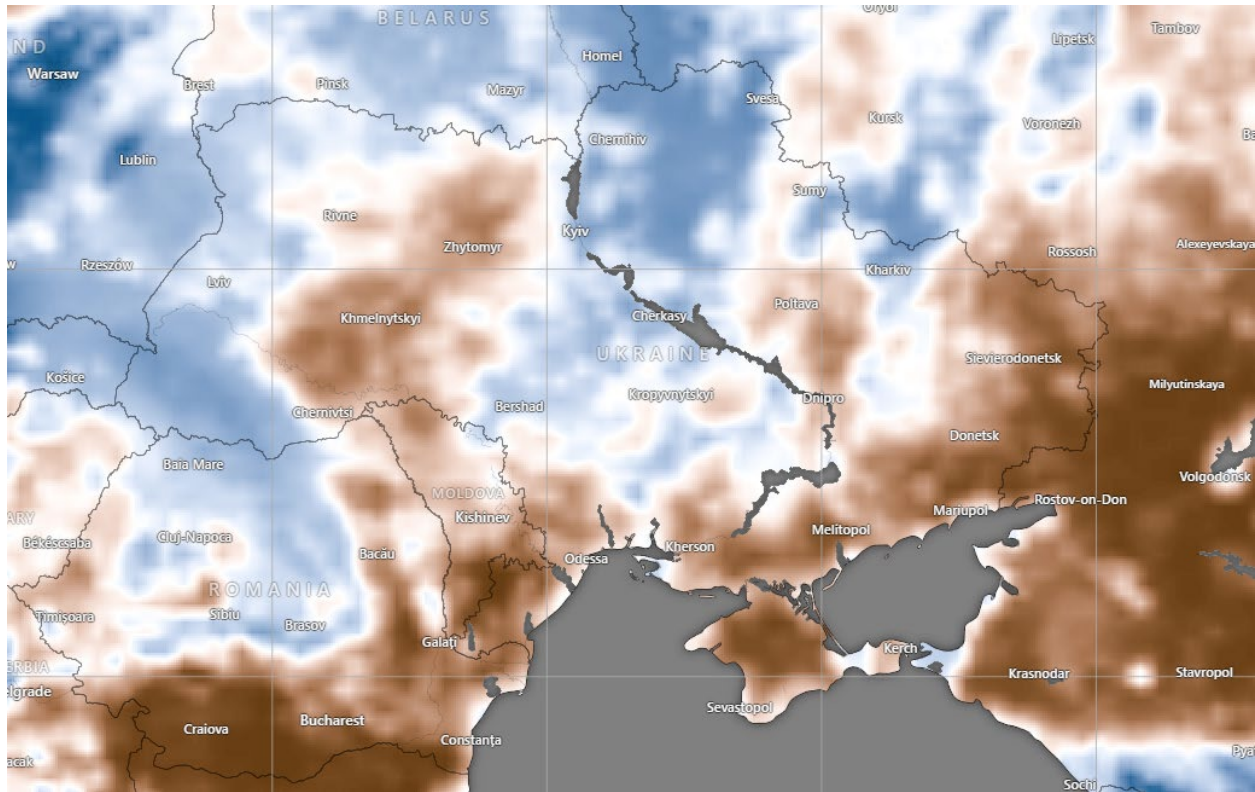


UKRAINE WEATHER



The cold front has moved across Ukraine, with a dry week ahead. High temperatures will be between 21° and 35° Celcius, with lows of 13° to 22° with mostly sunny conditions and clear nights.

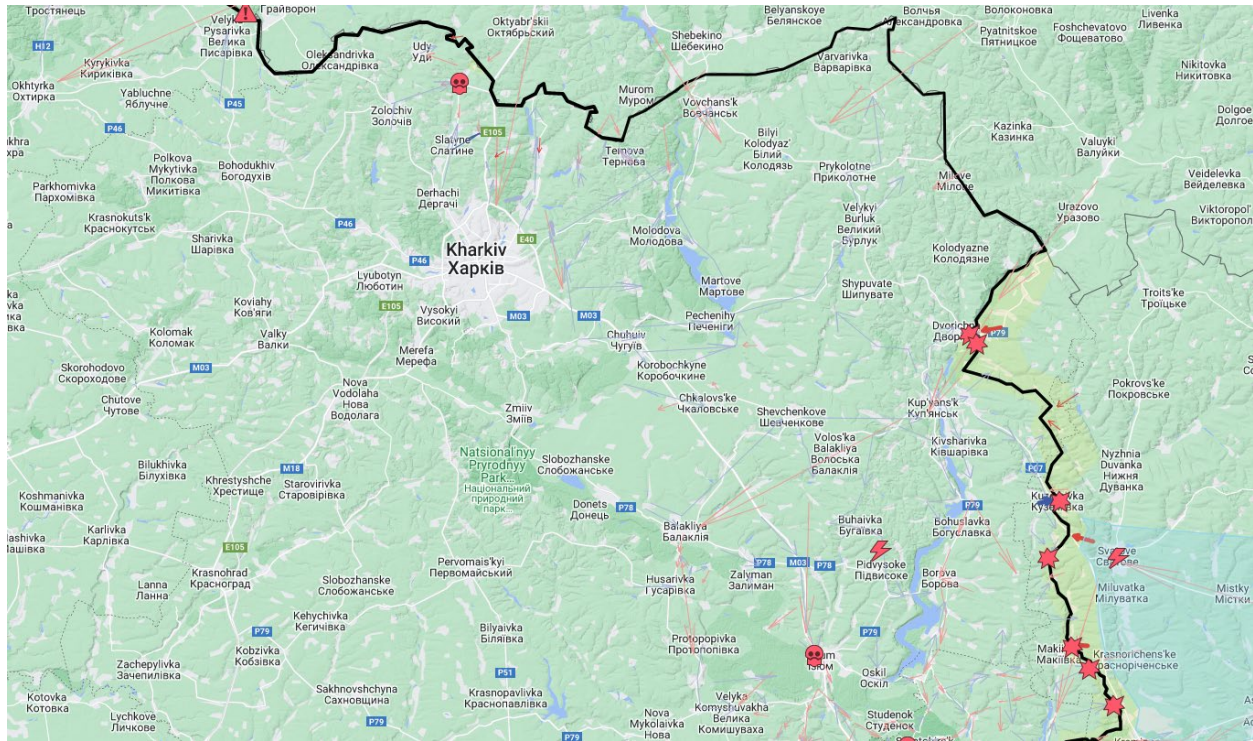
SOIL SATURATION AND HYDROLOGY



On August 5, 2023, the GFS model predicts soil saturation will be between 10% and 40% in eastern and southern Ukraine.

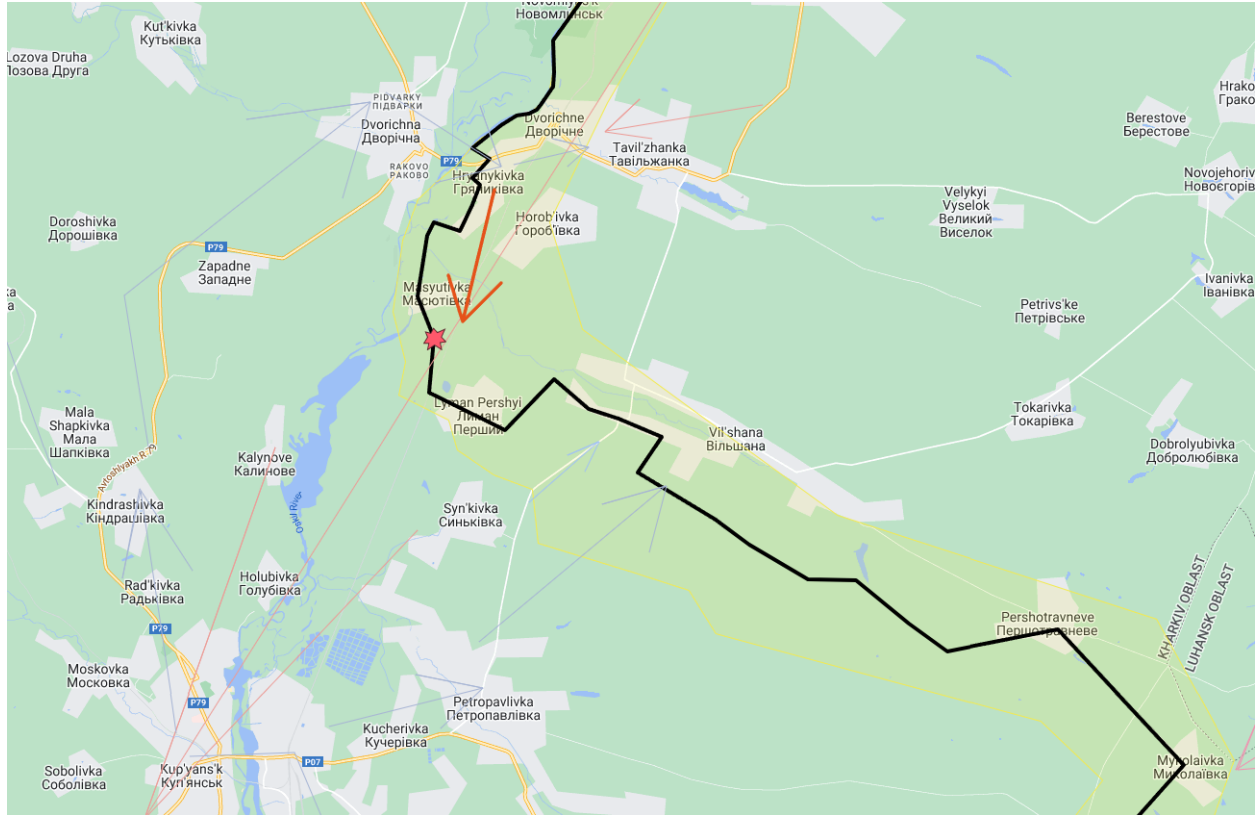
The soil saturation model does not consider the lakebed of the Kakhovka Reservoir. Soil saturation is between 35% to 80% in the theater of war. Weather was calmer on July 28 than forecast, with tractability issues isolated to the Kerch Strait due to high winds slowing ferry operations.

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



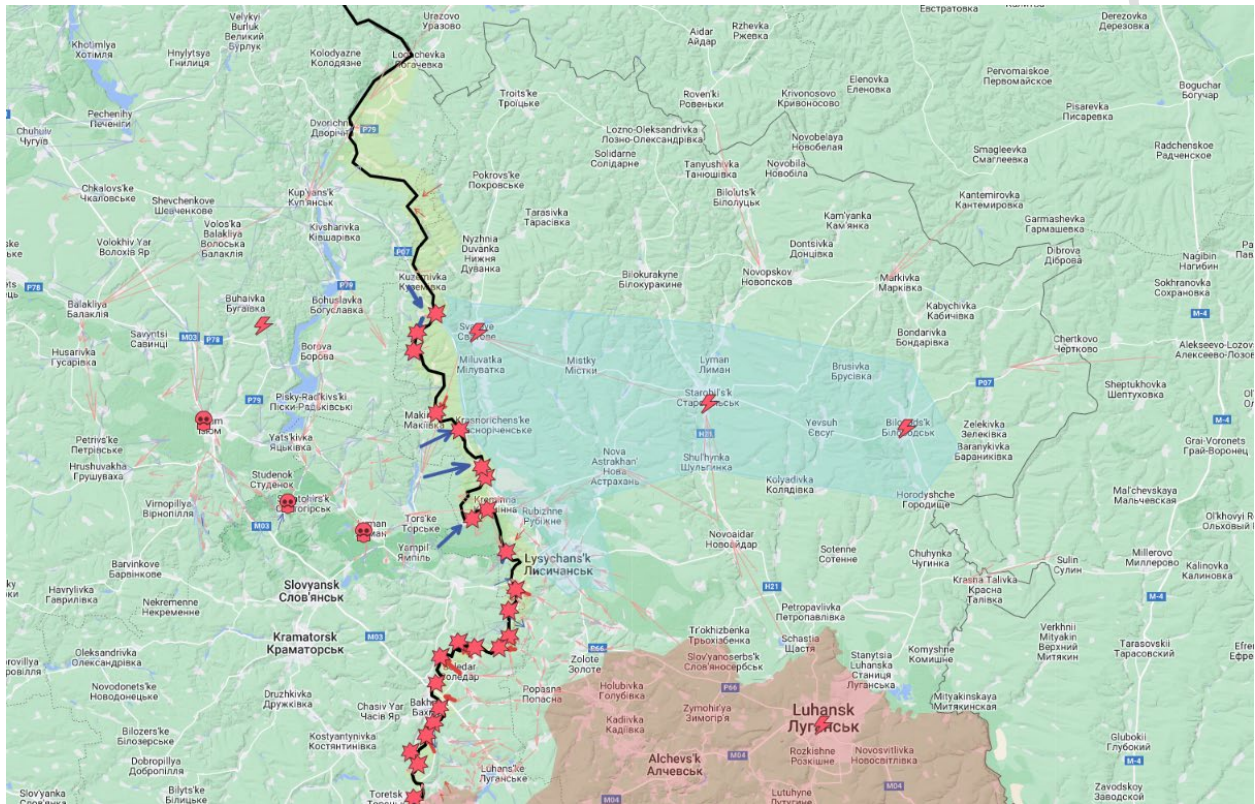
Dvorichna Operational Area

Russian mercenary milblogger Rybar reported that fighting continued west of [Lyman Pershyi](#) and claimed that Russian forces advanced west toward the Oskil River. No other source made the claim, and there was no video or picture evidence. We did not adjust the map.¹

¹ <https://t.me/rybar/50192>

DONBAS REGION

LUHANSK

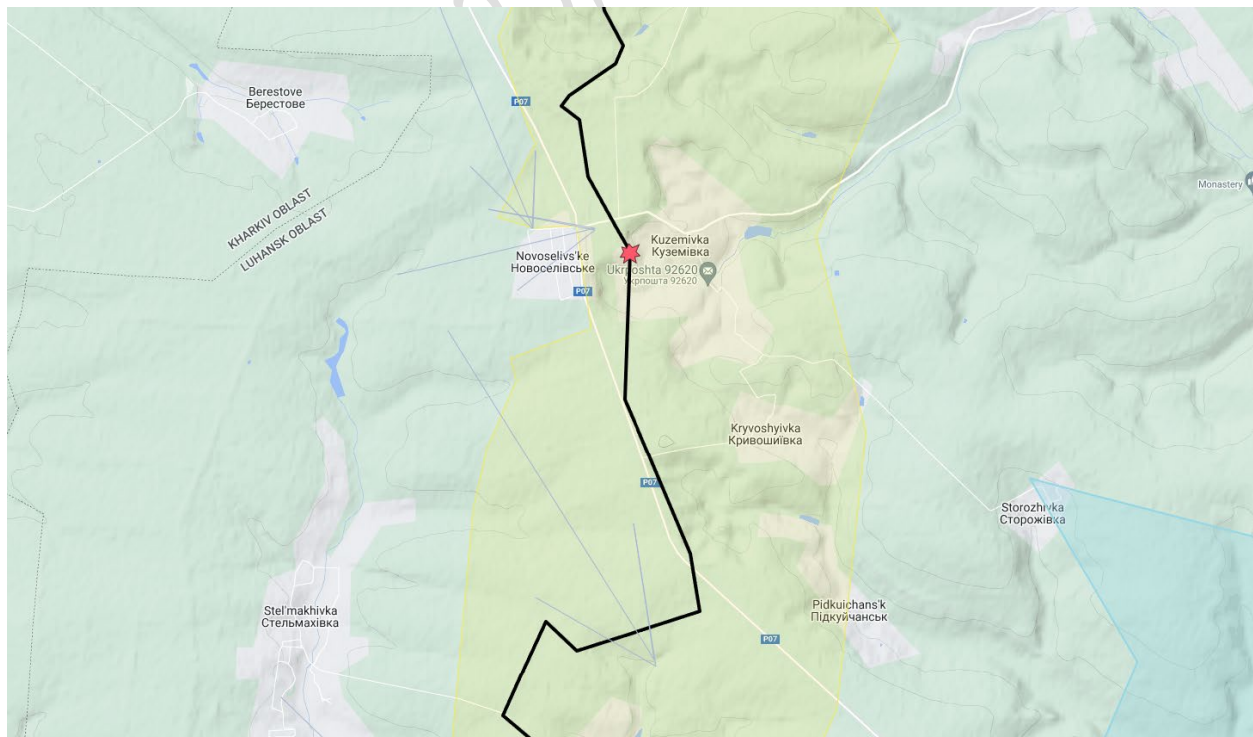


Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, control insurgent activity, set conditions to capture the rest of the region, and support September 2023 elections

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

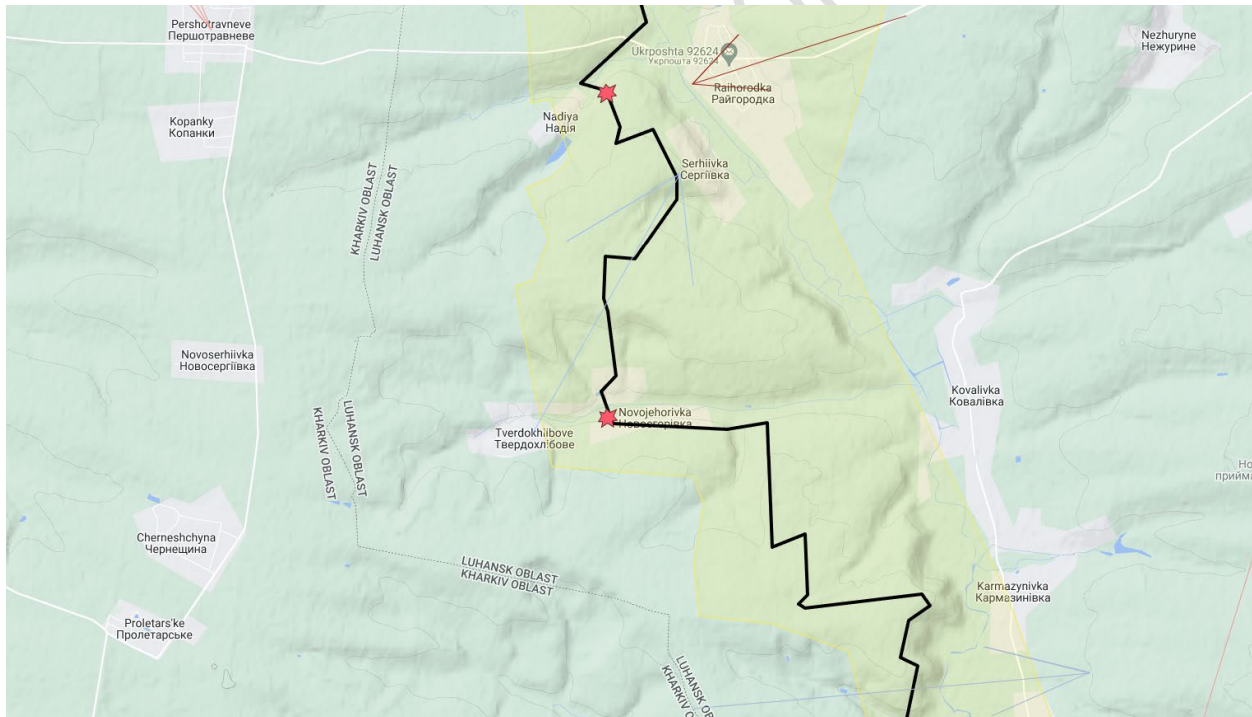
Free Luhansk

Operational Command East spokesperson Colonel Serhii Cherevaty reported there were four combat clashes today from Dvorichna [Kharkiv] to Bilohorivka [Luhansk], with the Russian Air Force and army aviation (VKS) carrying out five airstrikes. Russian forces fired 558 artillery rounds, mortars, Grad and Smerch rockets fired by multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), indirect tank fire, drone-delivered IEDs, and bombs on Ukrainian positions and civilians.



Svatove Operational Area

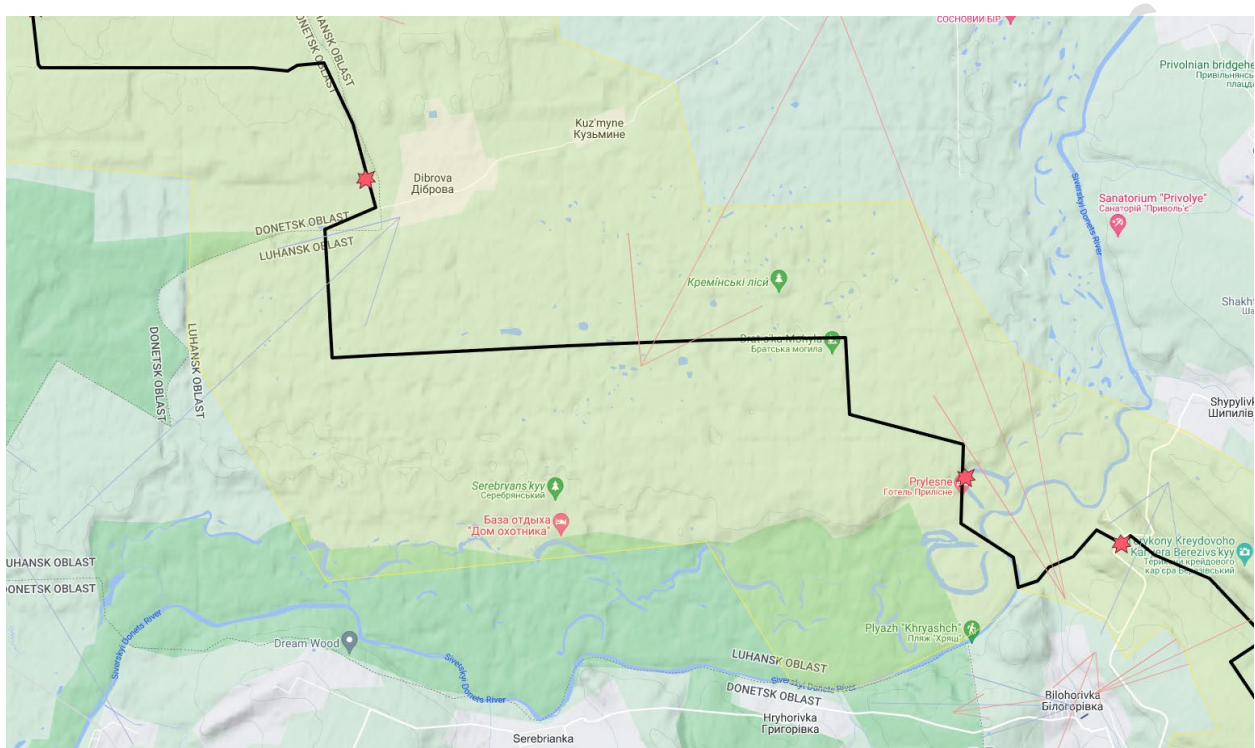
The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported that they launched an offensive in the western part of [Kuzemivka](#).² Based on their report, we moved the line of conflict east of Novoselivkse and east of the railroad station at the P-07 Highway. We also moved Novoselivske from contested to under Ukrainian military control.



Ukrainian forces made incremental gains south of [Novojehorivka](#), resulting in a small map change. Russian

² https://t.me/mod_russia/28693 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

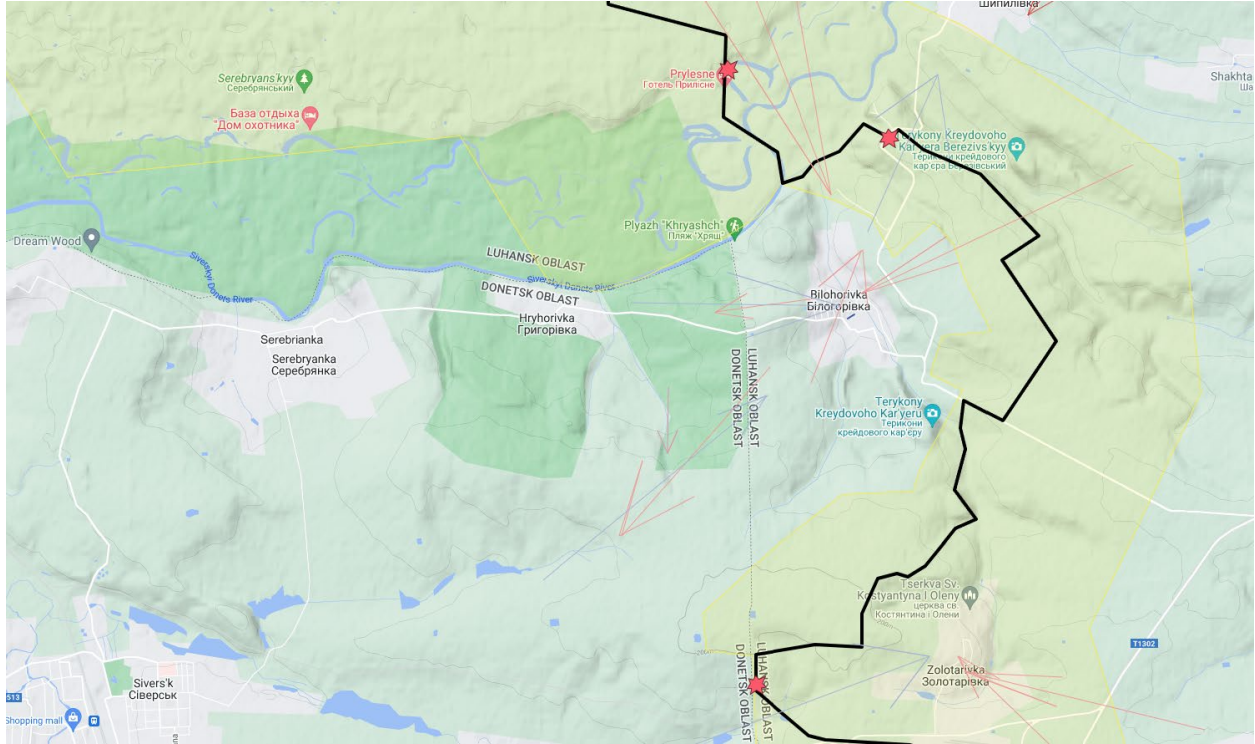
milblogger claims that there was an 8 kilometers advance toward Borova are false.



Kreminna Operational Area

RMOD claimed that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive in the area of [Dibrova](#).³

³ https://t.me/mod_russia/28693 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

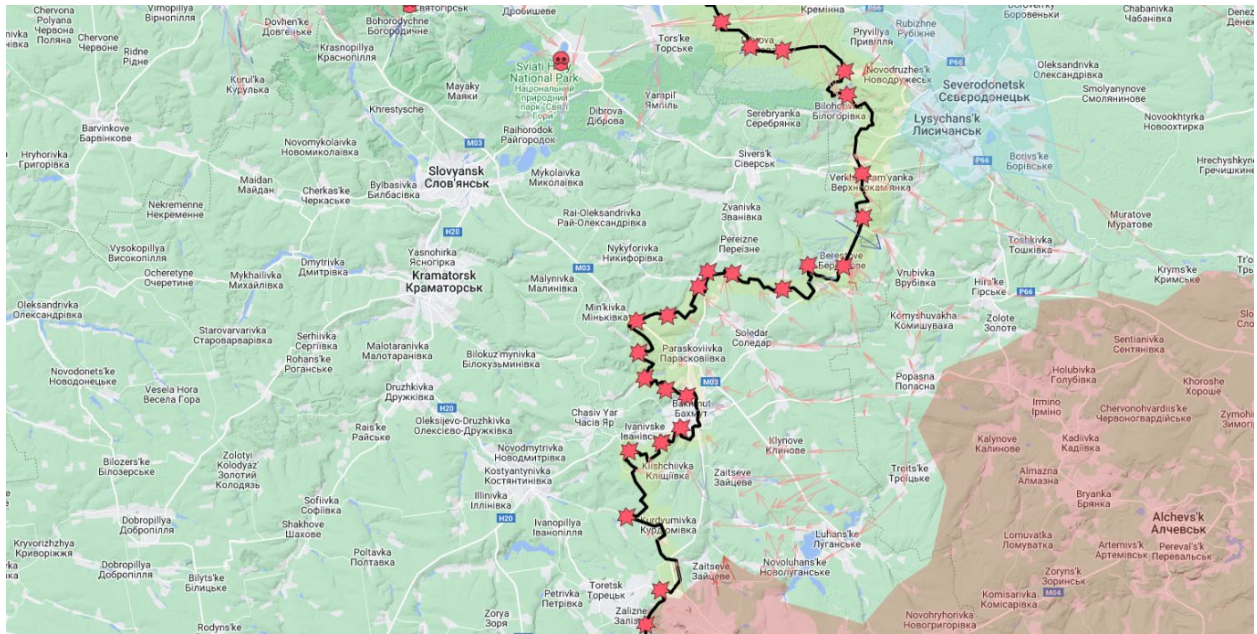


Lysychansk Operational Area

RMOD also claimed that Ukraine conducted offensive operations in the area of [Bilohorivka](#) [Luhansk].⁴

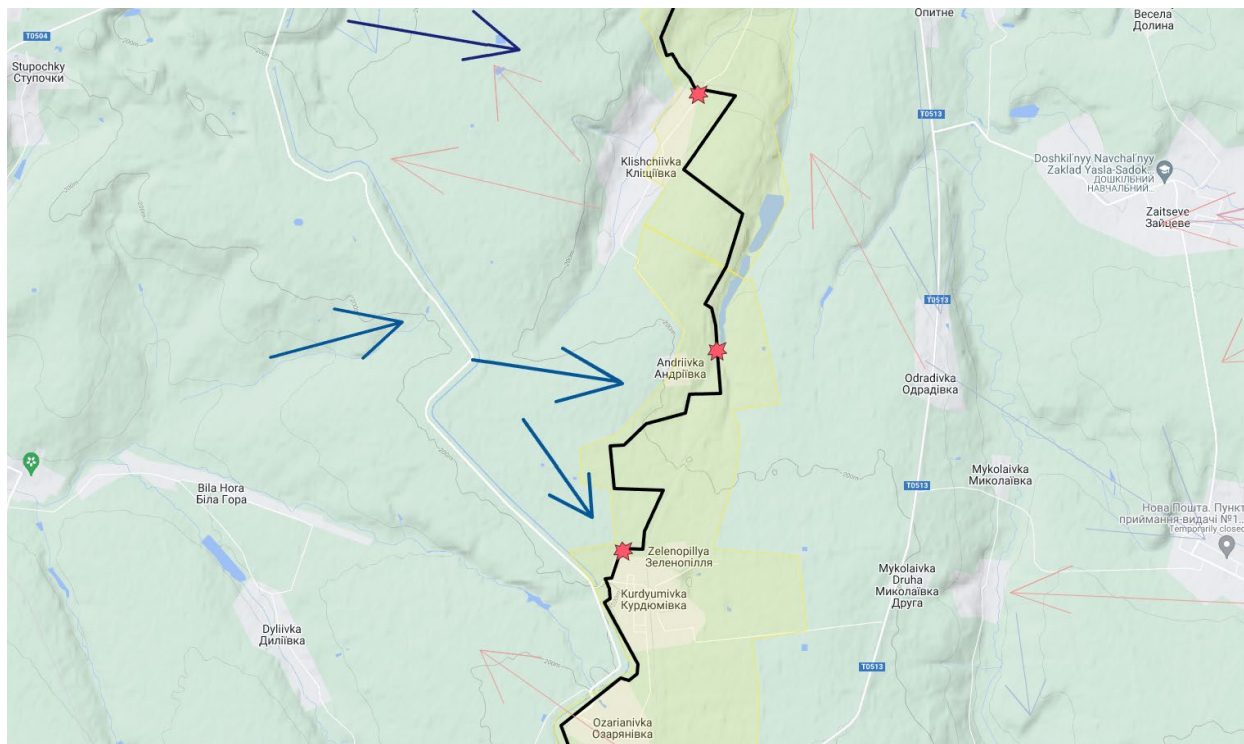
⁴ https://t.me/mod_russia/28693 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

NORTHEAST DONETSK



Russian Objective: Complete the capture of Bakhmut, set conditions to attack Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, and Siversk, and capture the entire region, set conditions for September 2023 elections

Ukrainian Objective: Defend Siversk and Bakhmut, collapse the Russian flanks while maximizing casualties, draw Russian reserves into the Bakhmut and Soledar operational areas, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties

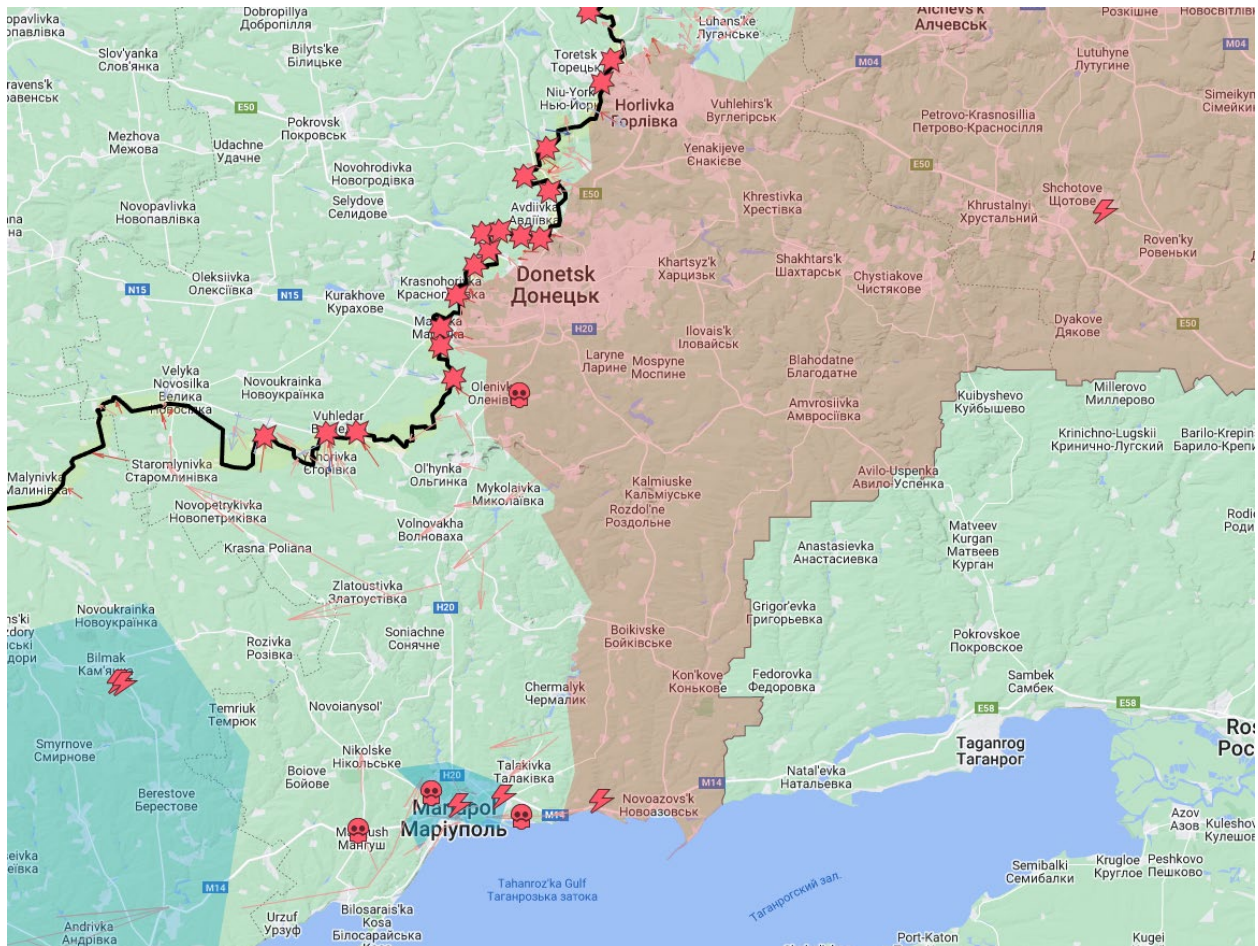


Klishchiivka Operational Area

Russian forces have been pushed to the outskirts of [Klishchiivka](#), where fighting continues. The map has been adjusted, with the northeastern third of the settlement still contested. In [Andriivka](#), the surviving elements of the Chechen Akhmat 54th Brigade reportedly withdrew, with Russian forces now east of the railroad tracks. The settlement is reportedly empty. We adjusted the line of conflict east but left the status as contested. Ukrainian forces made additional incremental gains north of [Kurdyumivka](#), approaching the railroad tracks on the western edge of [Zelenopillya](#). There were no reports of significant Russian offensive operations.

ASSESSMENT: Russian forces are clinging to this chain of settlements because their loss will force a Russian withdrawal back to the T-513 Highway and almost certainly mean the critical ground line of communication (GLOC – supply line) will come under Ukrainian fire control. The T-513 enters Bakhmut through Opytne and is west of the Bakhmutkova River. The loss of the GLOC would complicate Russian logistics and supply into the central and western parts of the occupied city. During the Private Military Company Wagner Group led attacks on the city, the bridges over the river were destroyed. While the T-504 Highway can supply areas east of the river, bringing supplies to the center will be exposed to Ukrainian artillery and drone operations. The situation for Russian defenders in Klishchiivka and the outskirts of Andriivka is untenable and increasingly difficult in Zelenopillya and Kurdyumivka.

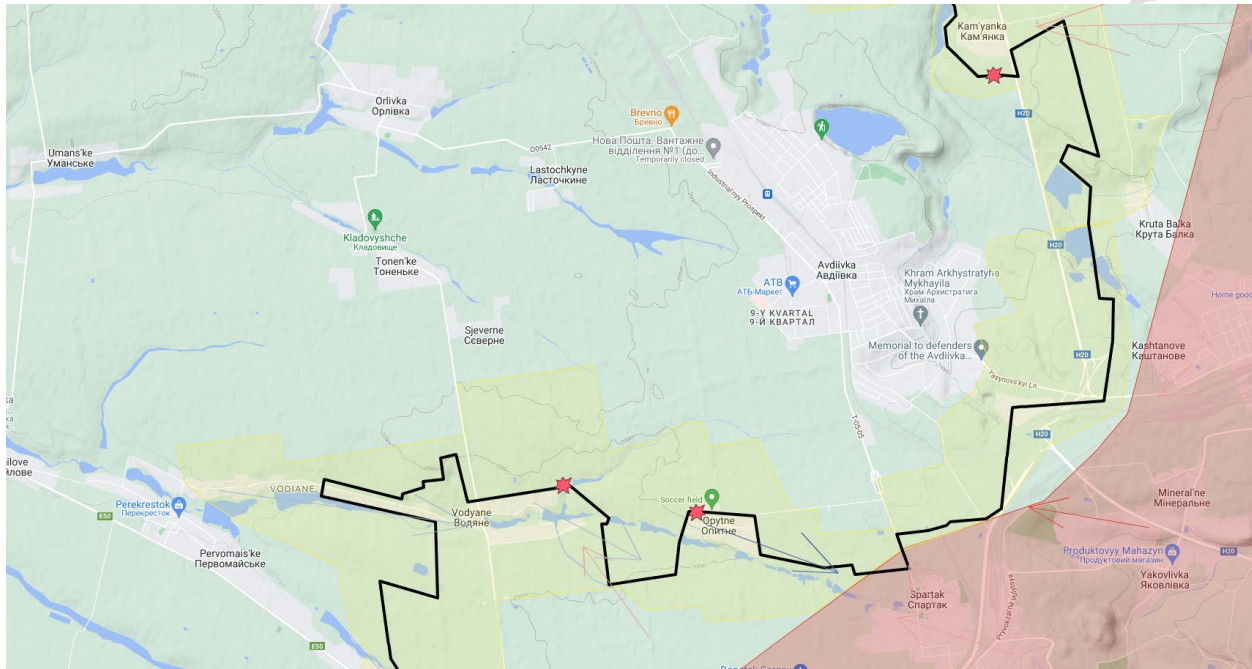
SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, set conditions for September 2023 elections, capture the remainder of the oblast

Ukrainian Objective: Set conditions for larger offensive operations, find and exploit Russian defensive weaknesses,

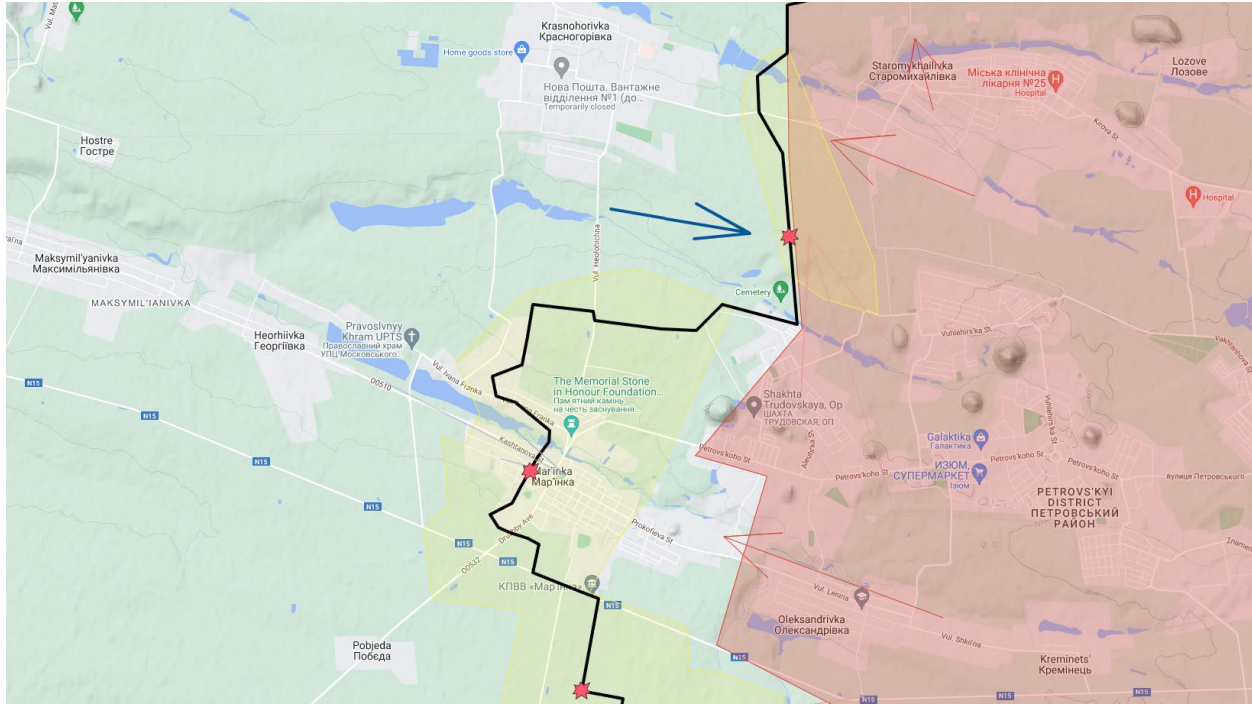
destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies, and disrupt logistics



Avdiivka Operational Area

RMOD claimed Ukrainian forces launched offensive operations in the [Sjeverne and Vodyane](#) gray area and near [Pervomaiske](#).⁵ There were no reports of significant Russian offensive operations.

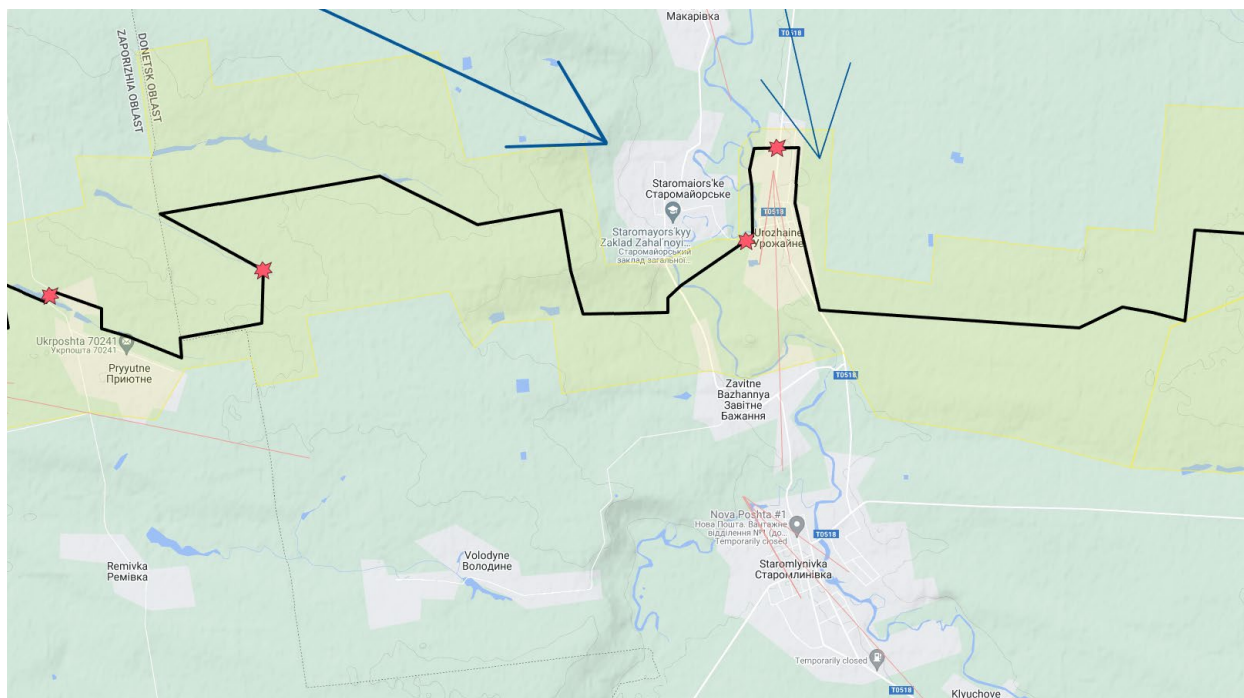
⁵ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10702>



Marinka Operational Area

The fighting remained positional in Marinka, with no change to the situation.⁶

⁶ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10702>



Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction


Russian claims that a counteroffensive was launched in [Staromaiorske](#) and the RMOD denial that Ukraine liberated the settlement are false. A video showed members of the Ukrainian 7th Battalion walking through the settlement's remains, gathering weapons from the remains of the 247th Parachute Regiment (VDV) and discussing Russian Mir. There are some images at the end of the video that some people may find disturbing. You can watch the video by [clicking here](#).⁷

⁷ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1684860008184356864>

Russian forces still occupy [Urozhaine](#), and we adjusted the map based on better intelligence, showing Ukrainian forces further south to the east of the settlement. Fighting was reported, but not a push on Russian troops, which are currently in a technical encirclement with a single line of retreat toward Zavitne Bazhannya.

ASSESSMENT: Less of an assessment and more of a theory. Ukrainian forces may hope to force the Russian troops in Urozhaine to surrender. Their only path of retreat is through areas where Ukraine holds complete fire control. A withdrawal on the T-518 Highway would expose Russian troops to M30A1 rockets fired by HIMARS and potential DPICM (cluster munitions) rounds. Surviving members of the Russian 247th Parachute Regiment have low morale, and the unit is combat destroyed.

Occupied Donetsk

In the occupied city of Donetsk, the Ministry of Internal Affairs headquarters was shelled by Ukrainian forces,  [causing moderate damage to the building](#).⁸

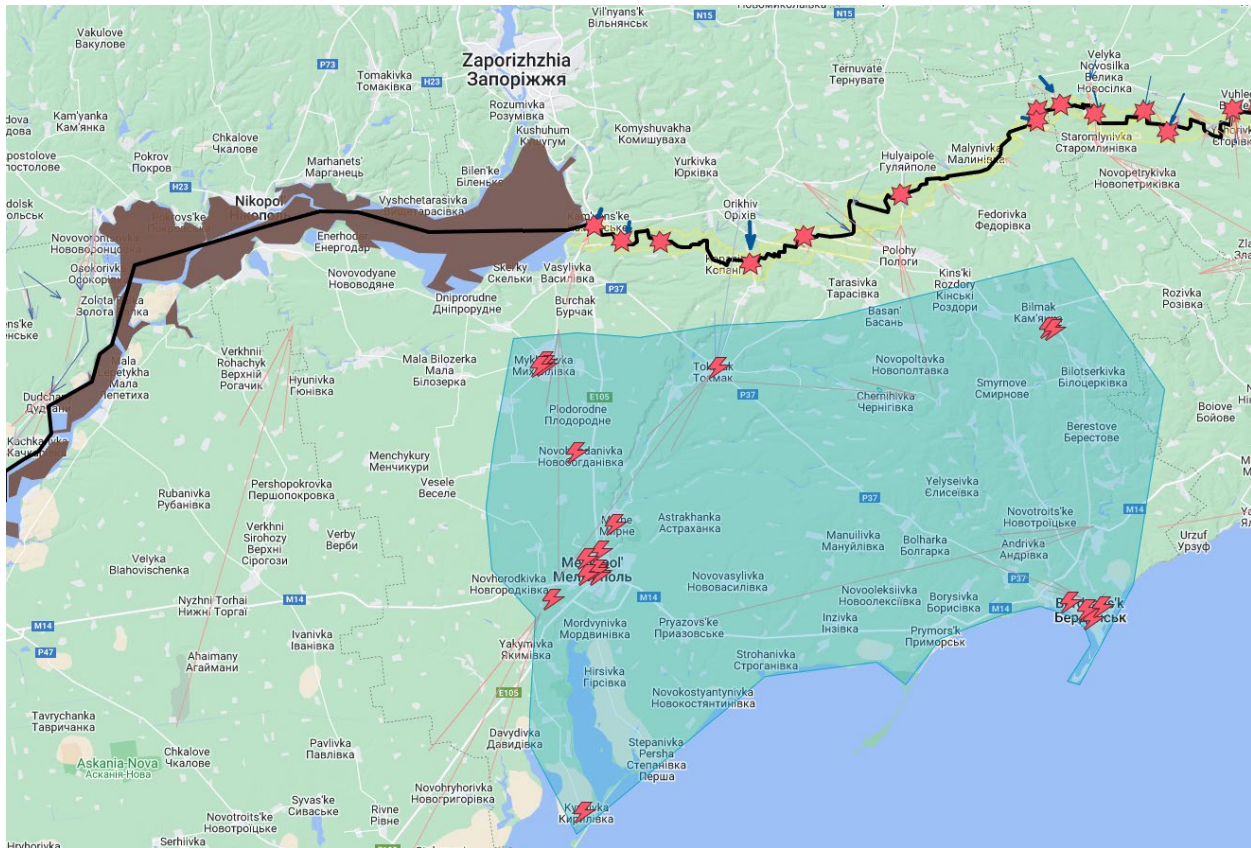
⁸ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5645



In Mariupol, insurgents reported that the transport of Russian military equipment restarted, with convoys carrying ammunition and materiel in the direction of Berdyansk.⁹ There were also reports that Russian forces were reinforcing defense positions around Manhush and along the Mariupol-Nikolske Line along the T-803 Highway.

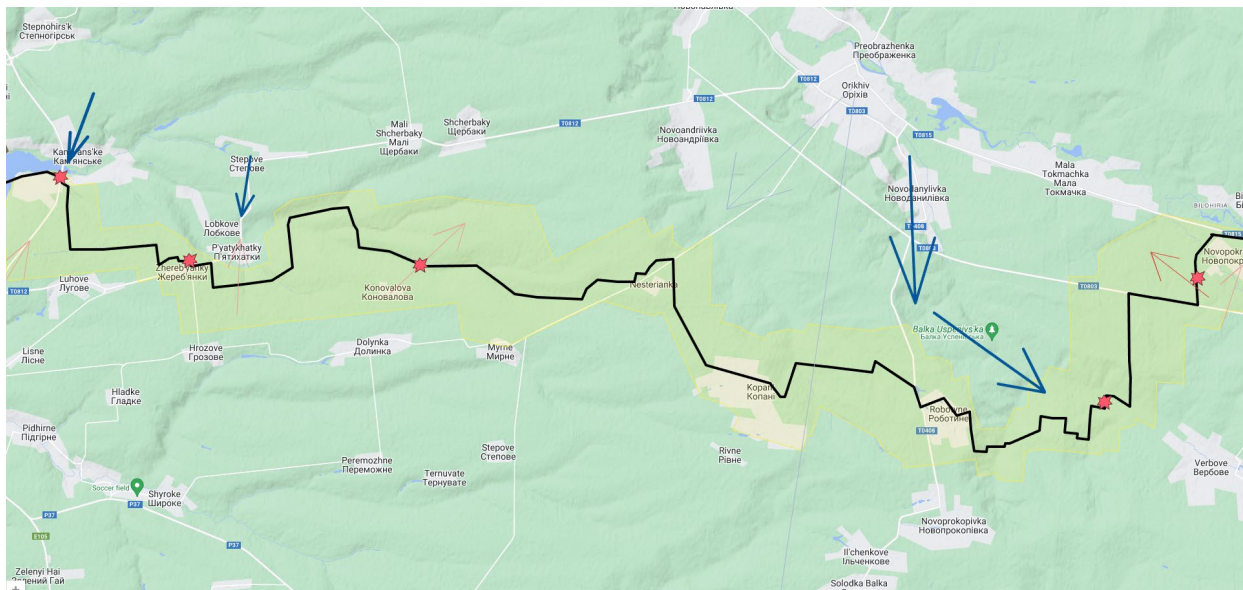
⁹ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/12025>

ZAPORIZHIA



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, set conditions for September 2023 elections, capture the remainder of the oblast, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians with continued attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Exploit weaknesses on the line of conflict, break Russian defensive lines, liberate Russian-occupied areas, and protect civilians



Orikhiv Operational Area

Ukrainian forces were consolidating their gains while Russian commanders worked to reinforce the Surovikin Line. Members of the Russian 70th Motor Rifle Regiment openly mutinied against their commander, Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Klecherev, [claiming the commander only cares about personal gain](#) and that troops haven't been rotated in over a year.¹⁰

The 70th is defending the eastern flank of the Surovikin Line near Verbove, with the 22nd Guards Spetsnaz Brigade south of them as blocking troops. West of their positions on the most brittle part of the line, elements of the Russian

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/PStyleOne1/status/1684963955955961857>


Special Combat Army Reserves, BARS-1, BARS-3, and BARS-14, are on defense, with the 417th and 100th Reconnaissance Brigades in reserve. The 291st Guards Motor Rifle and the 1430th Motor Rifle Regiments continue to hold Robotyne but have been bypassed.

Ukrainian forces continued to make incremental gains toward [Luhove](#), defended by BARS-32. The push was in the southwest direction, which moved Ukrainian forces closer to the M-18/E-105 Highway in Kamyanske.

The Russian 810th Guards Naval Infantry publicly appealed for funds for ATV four-wheelers, night vision gear and scopes, and other unspecified equipment.¹¹ While other units have done fundraisers, it is unusual for one of the elite Russian amphibious assault units, reconstituted at least twice since April 2022, to ask for public funds for equipment that the Russian Ministry of Defense should be providing. The 70th Motor Rifle Regiment also appealed for funds to purchase first aid kits, body armor, helmets, thermal imaging equipment, and drones.¹²

¹¹ https://t.me/Hard_Blog_Line/9043

¹² https://t.me/nm_dnr/10729

While the Ukrainian offensive was a tactical success, breaking the first line of Russian defense and advancing to the dragon teeth of the Surovikin Line, not every advance was well executed. East of Robotyne, Russian drones captured a Ukrainian advance of BMP-1 infantry fighting vehicles (IFV) advancing into an area between two Russian-occupied treelines called a kill box. Artillery laid smoke to obscure the advance, but it appears it was in the wrong area. The infantry in the IFVs dismounted and achieved their mission objective, capturing both Russian trenches. However,  [the IFVs stayed in the kill box during the assault](#) and took direct fire from rocket-propelled grenades and antitank-guided missiles. The IFVs clustered together in an open area, with at least five destroyed.¹³ Multiple Ukrainian officers with social media presences analyzed and denounced the attack as a military failure.¹⁴

Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

Claims by Russian sources of explosions in Enerhodar were false. There was no update on the status of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.


¹³ <https://twitter.com/Teoyaomiquu/status/1685075457962627072>

¹⁴ https://twitter.com/Tatarigami_UA/status/1685074787553378304

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Black Sea

Operational Command South (OKS) reported seven Black Sea Fleet vessels on patrol, including one Kilo-class submarine capable of launching up to four Kalibr cruise missiles.¹⁵

Operational Command South (OKS) director of communications, Captain Nataliya Humenyuk, said that the Russian military was openly warning ships transiting the Black Sea that if they headed toward Ukraine ports, they would be sunk.¹⁶ The Russian Ministry of Defense has started  [questioning vessels in English and Russian](#) on their cargo manifests and destinations and threatening to attack.¹⁷ The head of the Center for Global Studies and Strategy Security Programs, Pavlo Lakiychuk, said that civilian vessels were hugging the Bulgarian coast to stay in their territorial waters.¹⁸ More than a hundred ships are blocked in the Black Sea or near Romanian ports.

¹⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107377>

¹⁶ https://t.me/our_odessa/51400

¹⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107547>

¹⁸ https://t.me/our_odessa/51428

The Russian Ministry of Defense also closed the waters of the Kerch Strait and the surrounding area to all small ships and personal watercraft due to “enhanced security measures.”¹⁹ A French-flagged cargo vessel was prevented from transiting the strait, with Russian officials accusing the vessel of gun-running for Ukraine in May 2023 without evidence. No effort was made to board the ship.

Odesa

Investigators are trying to understand how a patient handed a live grenade to their therapeutic masseur. Somehow the pin was pulled, and the grenade exploded in the Trade Hall of Odesa. The masseur was killed, and the owner of the grenade suffered a closed-head brain injury due to the blast occurring in an enclosed space.²⁰

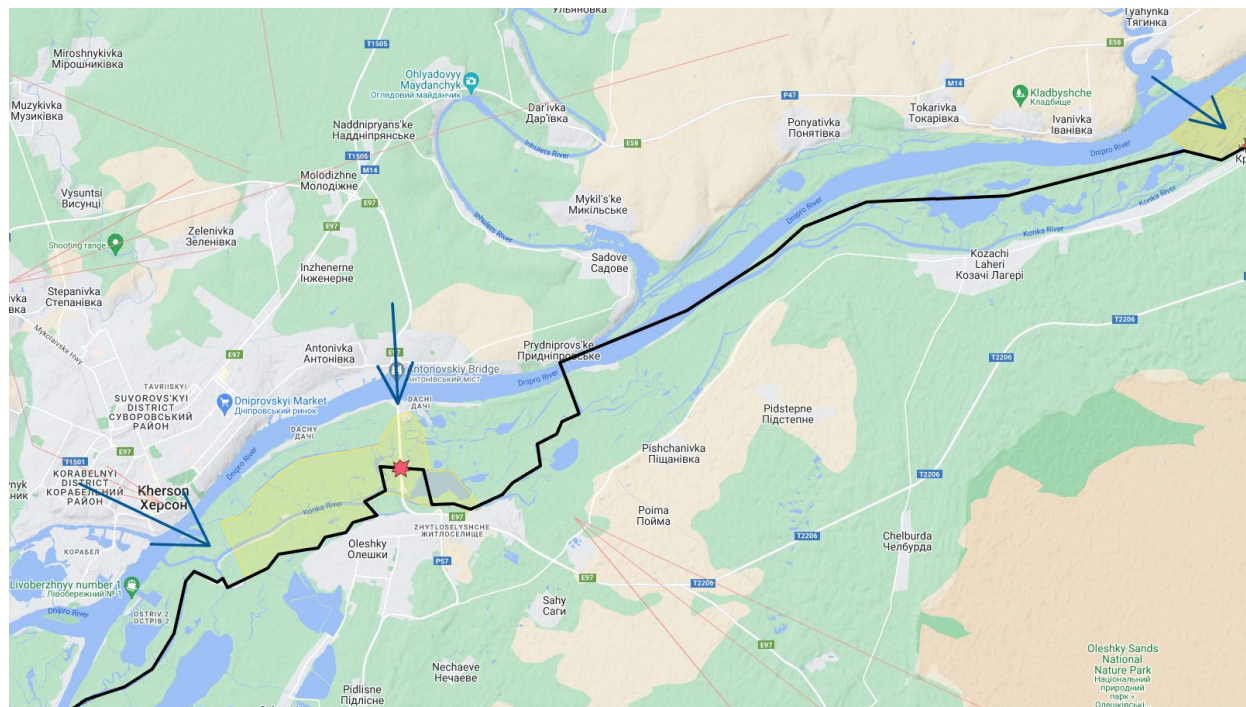
WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

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

¹⁹ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5642

²⁰ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107544>


Ukrainian Objective: Deter attacks, and protect civilian lives



While there are no specific updates on the left (east) bank of the Dnipro River, Russian milbloggers were complaining that multiple Ukrainian special operation forces (SSO) and sabotage and reconnaissance units (DRG) were freely operating from west of Dachi to Krynyky.

Dnipropetrovsk

Two Russian Iskander-M short-range ballistic missiles 📷 [struck Dnipro, heavily 📺 damaging a 12-story apartment](#)

complex that is  still under construction and destroying the Security Services of Ukraine (SBU) offices.^{21 22 23} The wing of the apartment building struck was unoccupied, with initial reports stating that the wounded were nine construction workers, with four in hospital.

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: Complete the liberation of the Kharkiv oblast, maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

There wasn't any significant activity.

²¹ <https://t.me/suspilnenews/22889>

²² <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107618>



²³ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107616>

RUSSIAN FRONT

Russian Objective: Stabilize government control and civil order, prevent further insurrection, 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

Rostov Region

An S-200 air defense missile used for ground attack struck a museum in the coastal city of Taganrog after Russian air defenses damaged the missile. It struck within 5 kilometers from a Russian airbase and 2 kilometers from the port. Russian officials admit that they intercepted the missile, although  [video of the impact shows it was nearly intact](#).²⁴ Sixteen people were reportedly wounded.²⁵ A second missile was  [reportedly intercepted near Azov](#), but it was unclear if this was the missile that struck the museum being hit or a second strike.²⁶

²⁴ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5645

²⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107572>

²⁶ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107590>

Moscow Region

Rybar claimed that Russian air defense systems intercepted a drone near Ptichnoye in the Troitsky district of Moscow with no damage or casualties.²⁷

Samara Region

Russian officials claimed that an explosion at the Kuibyshev Oil Refinery was caused by saboteurs who planted a bomb at the plant.²⁸ Russian officials are accusing an employee at the plant of causing the blast.

THEATERWIDE

Every time Ukraine extends martial law by 90 days, as required by law, Russian disinformation ramps up that Ukraine is preparing a total mobilization because no troops are left. We must remind everyone that mobilization and martial law were declared every three months in February 2022. Under Ukrainian law, it can only be declared 90 days at a time. The same Russian propagandists saying the entire Ukrainian army is wiped out and no men are

²⁷ <https://t.me/rybar/50192>

²⁸ <https://twitter.com/LXSummer1/status/1684929693433139201>

available shared videos 45 days ago of young Ukrainians at night clubs and eating at McDonald's to "prove" there was no war.²⁹

Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani was in Kyiv on Friday to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. After the meeting, Zelenskyy said, "Qatar will be with us in implementing the Peace Formula, joint global efforts. We agreed on cooperation for the return of Ukrainian children who were deported to Russia."³⁰

Qatar will also provide Ukraine \$100 million in humanitarian aid for medical care, education, humanitarian demining, and other important social and humanitarian projects.

A Canadian official confirmed the statement from the Mayor of Rzeszów, Poland, Konrad Fiołek, that a joint American, British, Canadian, and Polish repair base would be built in the city and permanently manned by a small NATO force.³¹ The primary mission will be to provide repair

²⁹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107594>

³⁰ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/28/7413302/>

³¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/28/7413291/>

services to Ukrainian tanks and other armored vehicles. NATO and Western-provided equipment is proving more robust than Soviet and Post-Soviet era military hardware, with a significantly higher percentage of vehicles being recovered and repairable.

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

RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES

Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the [Oryx Database](#) from February 24, 2022, to July 24, 2023. 11,373 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,018 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
Main Battle Tanks	2024	244	8.30:1	↓
Medium Duty Tanks	140	344	0.41:1	—
Armored fighting Vehicles	928	301	3.08:1	↓
Infantry Fighting Vehicles	2569	654	3.93:1	↓
Armored Personnel Carriers	335	312	1.07:1	↓
MRAPs	46	128	0.36:1	—
Infantry Mobility Vehicles	199	342	0.58:1	—
Command and Communications Vehicles	244	16	15.25:1	—
Engineering Vehicles	326	73	4.47:1	↓
Towed Artillery	261	140	1.86:1	↓
Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars	463	186	2.49:1	↓
MLRS	246	50	4.92:1	↓
SAMs	133	117	1.14:1	↑
Mobile Radars	39	69	0.57:1	↑
EW/ECW	44	4	11.00:1	—
Winged Aircraft	84	69	1.22:1	↓
Helicopters	106	31	3.42:1	—
Naval Vessels	12	26	0.46:1	—

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR

In occupied Rozivka, Zaporizhzhia, two platoons of the 247th Parachute Regiment, 7th Assault Division, refused to be deployed to the Staromaiores area due to heavy losses among the unit. It is reported that they sabotaged armored vehicles to prevent their deployment.³²

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The SBU has issued a warrant for Serhii Yevsyukov, the former head of the infamous Olenivka Penal Colony, for the torture of 100 Ukrainian soldiers.³³ Victims were taken to a "disciplinary center" adjacent to the colony, where they were physically and psychologically tortured, tantamount to "slow murder." Yevsyukov is accused of supervising torture sessions and is currently hiding in occupied Ukraine.

In response to an official request from journalists, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine reported that in their conclusion, a thermobaric grenade launcher was used

³² <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107557>

³³ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/107516>

during the July 28, 2022, bombing of the barracks at Olenivka, which killed up to 56 Ukrainian POWs and wounded 130 more. Our investigation, published on July 30, 2022, [reached similar conclusions made by the SBU and GUR](#), including the disciplinary center, torture, and abuse.

Russian occupiers are accused of kidnapping ZNPP employee Serhii Potynh and repeatedly torturing him for a month. Energoatom officials said, "He was seen at the police station where Russians are holding city residents and ZNPP employees" and had been taken to the hospital more than once because he was on the brink of death.³⁴

Russian President Vladimir Putin told African leaders in St. Petersburg that Moscow would provide 25,000 to 50,000 tons of free grain over the next three months to meet the shortfall created by the Russian blockade of the Black Sea.³⁵ While Putin and Moscow sent a message to African leaders of slipping away from the history of Western colonization, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa told Putin during a joint press conference that Africa "didn't come to ask for some kind of gift" and called for Moscow to rejoin the Black Sea Grain Initiative immediately.³⁶

³⁴ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/28/7413305/>

³⁵ https://t.me/shot_shot/54777

³⁶ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/38004>

EXCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT: We reviewed the Black Sea Grain Initiative's (BSGI) United Nations cargo manifest database.³⁷ From July 28, 2022, to July 16, 2023, 4.42 million tons of grain and edible oils were directly shipped to Africa from Ukrainian ports. That is an average of 368,333 tons per month. If Russia ships 50,000 tons of free grain in the next 90 days, it would equal four days of BSGI shipments to Africa. President Putin claimed that in 2022 the Russian Federation shipped 10.5 million tons of grain to Africa. To fill the gap, Moscow will need to increase shipments by more than 40%. It is readily apparent why President Ramaphosa wants Ukrainian grain shipments restored.

GEOPOLITICS

The United States Senate passed its version of the 2024 Defense budget, a record \$886 billion in non-inflation-adjusted dollars, by a vote of 86 to 11. The Senate version stripped out controversial social measures that the United States House added to their version of the bill, which passed almost along party lines 219-210. The Senate also added its own amendments to its version of the budget. The Senate version will go back to the House, where the

³⁷ <https://www.un.org/en/black-sea-grain-initiative/vessel-movements>

amended version will be debated. The United States defense budget has received wide bipartisan support since 1961, but U.S. politics are highly polarized. The current fiscal year ends on September 30, 2023. Neither version threatened to remove almost \$60 billion in military aid for Ukraine or remove the extension of Presidential Lend-Lease authority.

ECONOMIC

Japan expanded its sanctions against Russia. The new measures ban the shipment of cars and light trucks with engines larger than 1.9 liters, electric and hybrid vehicles, regardless of engine displacement (if applicable), and tires for large vehicles and trucks.³⁸

³⁸ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5629


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 use their reports and maps to identify combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. We do not use claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed because of a documented and historical pattern of producing fabrications. They frequently engage in blatant misinformation and disinformation and consistently deny 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.