



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



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Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 340

It has been 3,258 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on February 27, 2014.

DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

1. We concur with recent assessments by other analysts that it is highly likely the Russian Federation will launch a new offensive before February 24 to try and deliver a tactical victory before the anniversary of the widescale invasion of Ukraine.
2. We maintain that the significant increase in disinformation and misinformation from Russian sources is being directed by Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, Valery Gerasimov, as part of his hybrid warfare doctrine.
3. The RAND Corporation agreed with our assessment that Ukraine holds the battlefield initiative – while we maintain the exception for the Soledar-Bakhmut axis.¹

¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/28/7386922/>

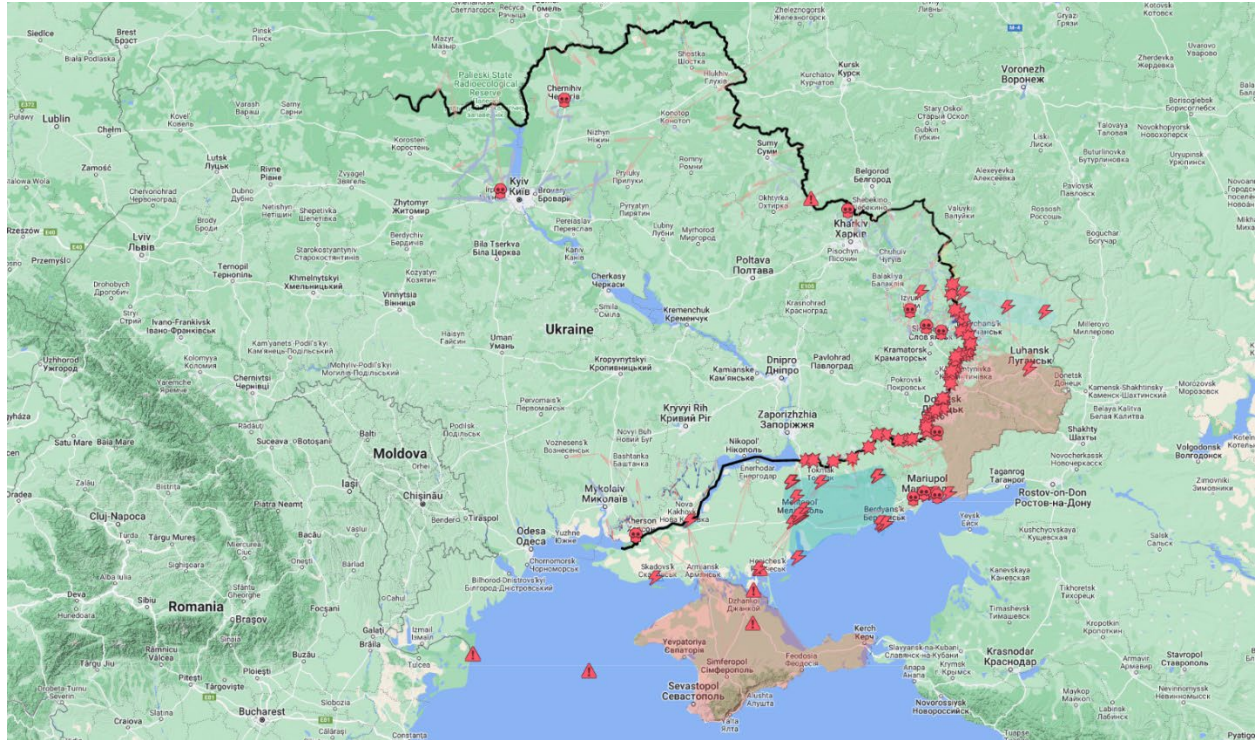
4. We maintain that the Russian military within Ukraine remains combat ineffective and is relying on World War II tactics that Field Marshal Georgy Zhukov would recognize to move the line of conflict.
5. We maintain that the power struggle between military leaders aligned with Russian Minister of Defense Sergey Shoigu versus those aligned to Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner Group head Yevgeny Prigozhin is continuing, and Russian President Vladimir Putin is the largest benefactor.
6. We maintain that punitive missile and drone strikes targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure will continue.
7. We maintain that Russian forces will continue to target electrical, heating, and potable water infrastructure.
8. We maintain that the Russian Federation's inventory of Kalibr cruise missiles is critically low based on the continued decline of launches from the Black Sea Fleet.
9. We maintain that the risk of a nuclear accident caused by the deenergization of Ukrainian nuclear power plants caused by Russian electrical infrastructure destruction is possible.
10. We assess there will be a second wave of partial mobilization in the Russian Federation in February 2023 as an extension of current legal decrees and has

likely started after a statement made by Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov.

11. We assess that the threat of Russian forces in Belarus crossing into Ukraine as part of an offensive operation is negligible.

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TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP

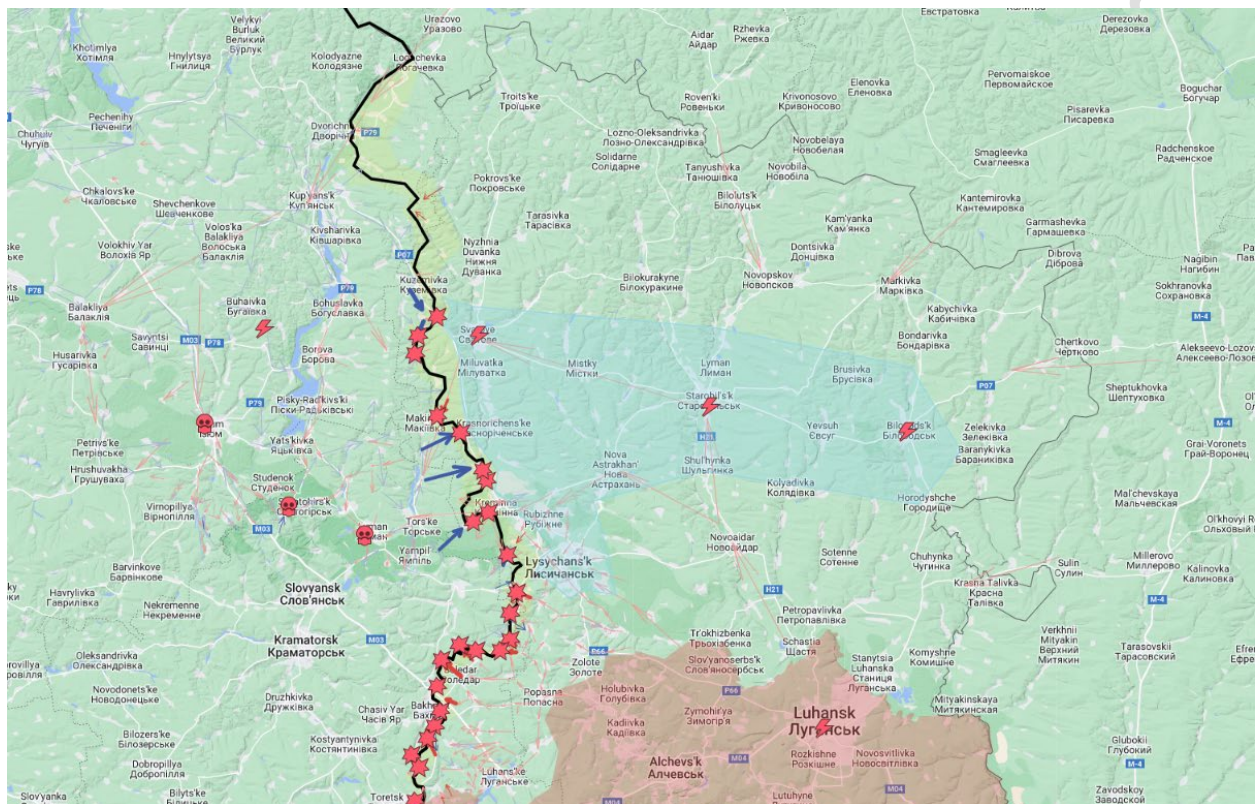


About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The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

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

DONBAS REGION

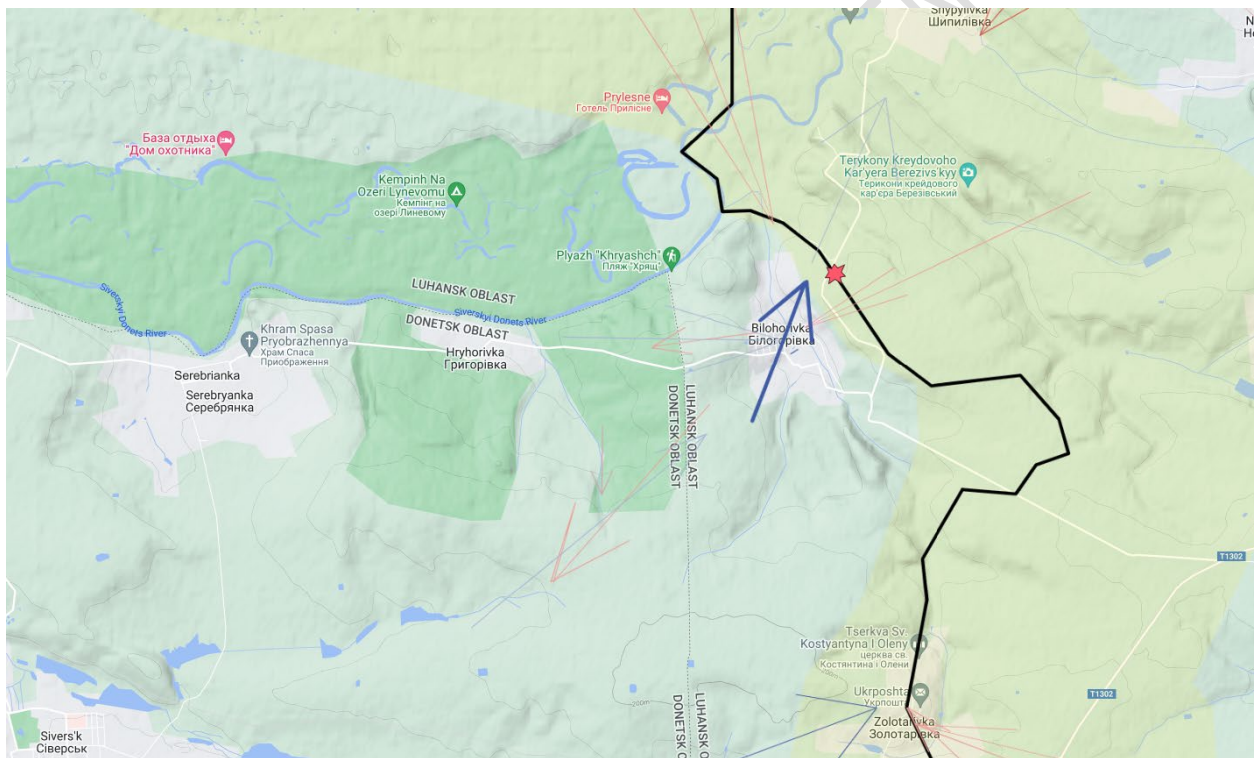
LUHANSK



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

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

There was very little fighting reported in Luhansk by any reliable source, with artillery exchanges and squad-size units fighting positional battles. Winter weather has moved into most of Ukraine, but temperatures are moderate, hovering around freezing with light periods of snow.



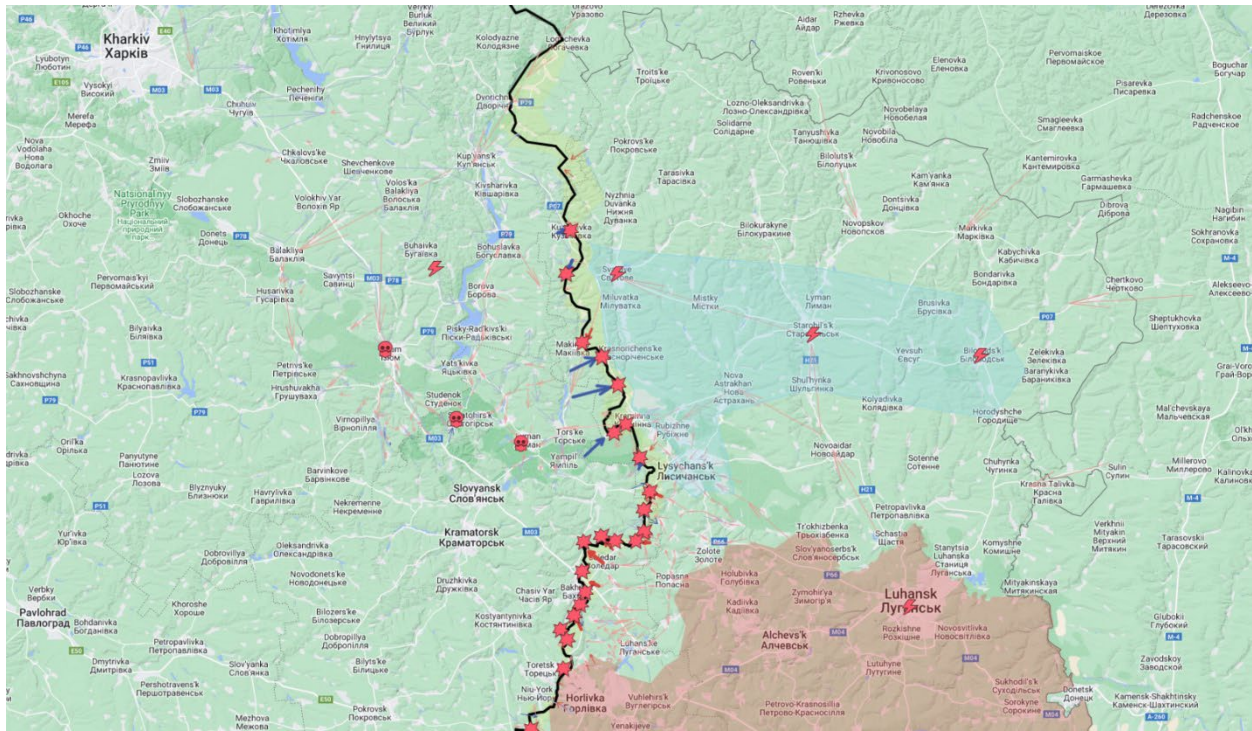
Ukrainian forces repelled an attack on [Bilohorivka](#) with no change in the situation.²

² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

There was a rocket attack by HIMARS in Alchevsk, with two rockets striking the city, according to the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Joint Center for Control and Coordination (JCCC).³

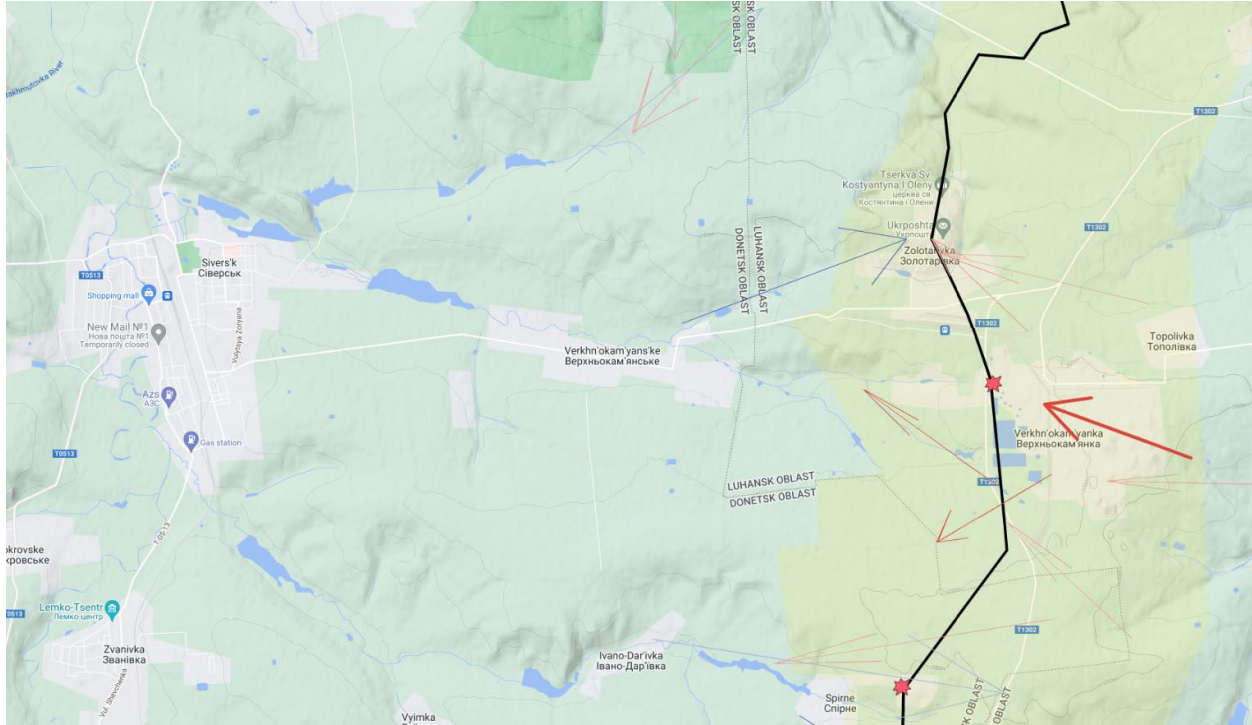
³ https://t.me/LPR_JCCC/8010

NORTHEAST DONETSK



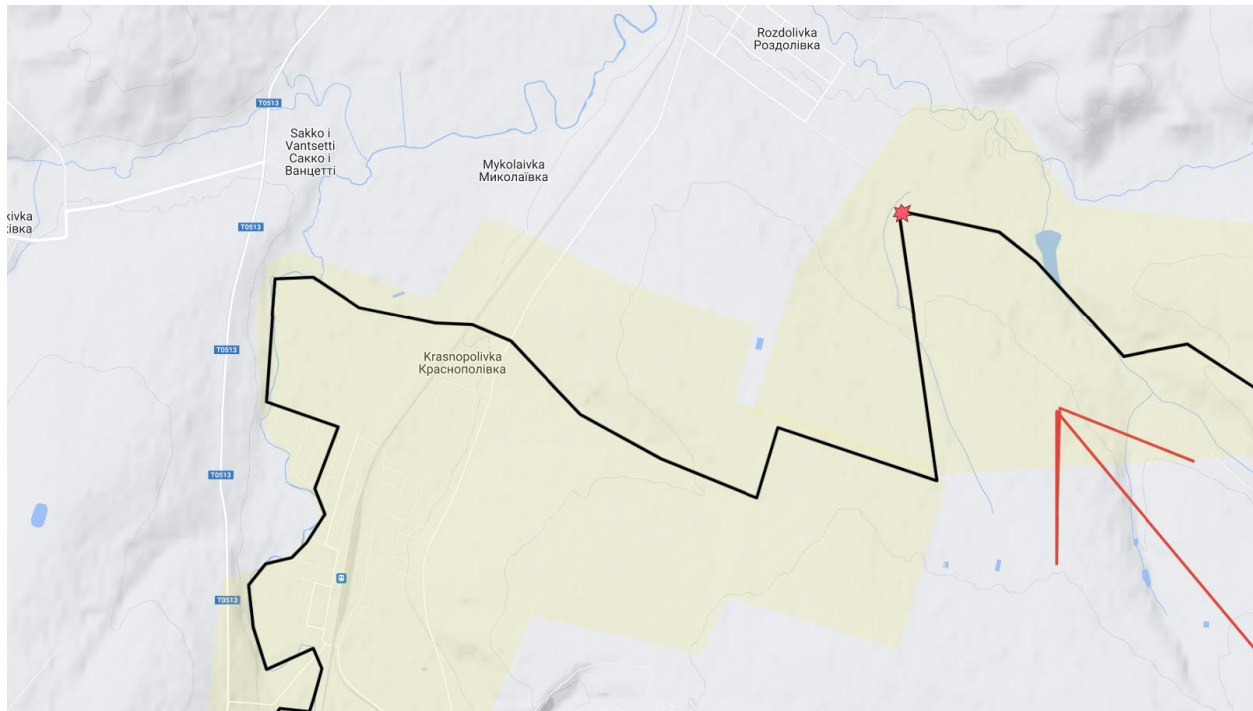
Russian Objective: Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, defend against Ukrainian advances toward Luhansk, capture Bakhmut

Ukrainian Objective: Defend Bakhmut, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties



On the Siversk axis, Russian forces continued attempts to advance on [Verknokamyanske](#) from the oil refinery and remained unsuccessful.⁶

⁶ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)



On the Soledar axis, Russian forces are taking more of a leading role due to heavy losses among PMC Wagner units. Russian troops continued attempts to advance from Krasnopolivka in the directions of [Sakko I Vantsetti](#) and [Rozdolivka](#) and were unable to break through Ukrainian defensive lines.^{7 8 9}

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported that an attack in the area of [Sil'](#) was repulsed.¹⁰ We have not seen evidence of Russian forces crossing the

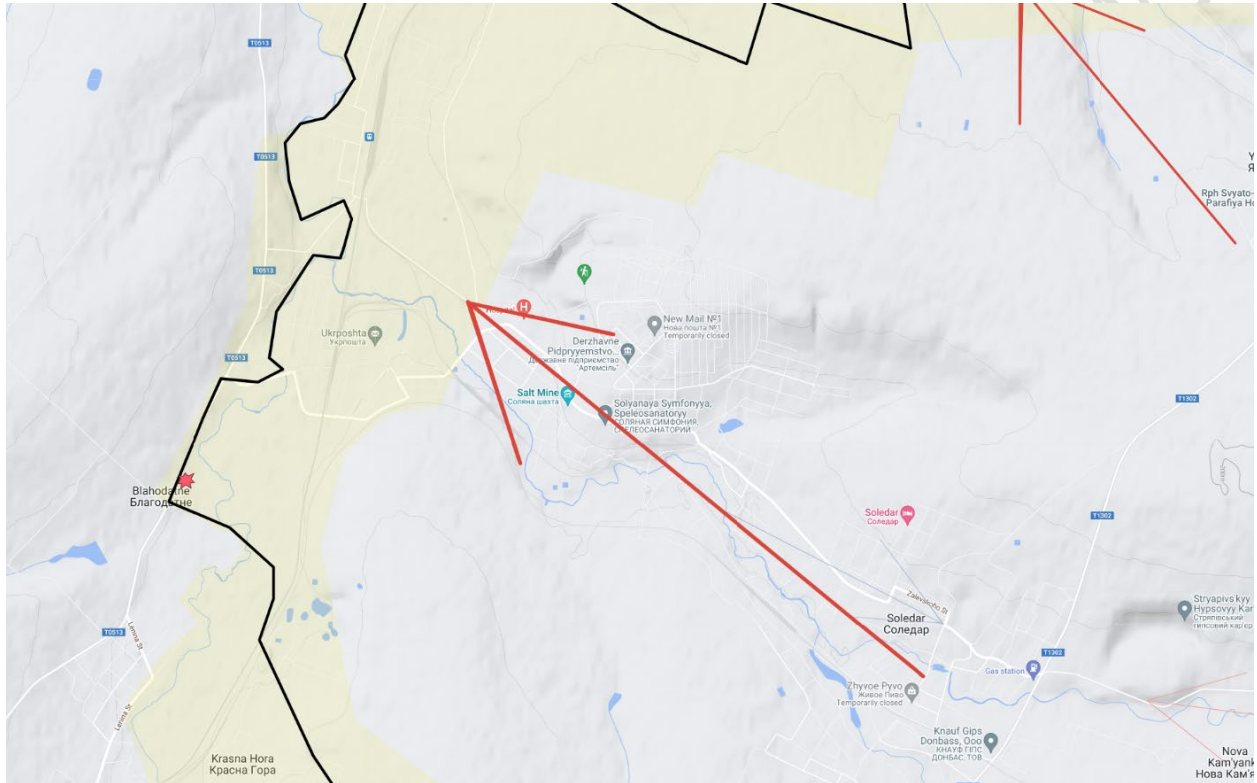
⁷ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>

⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15370>

¹⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

Bakhmutovka River. Ukrainian forces are likely holding defense on the west bank and the highlands that overlook the satellite village of Soledar.

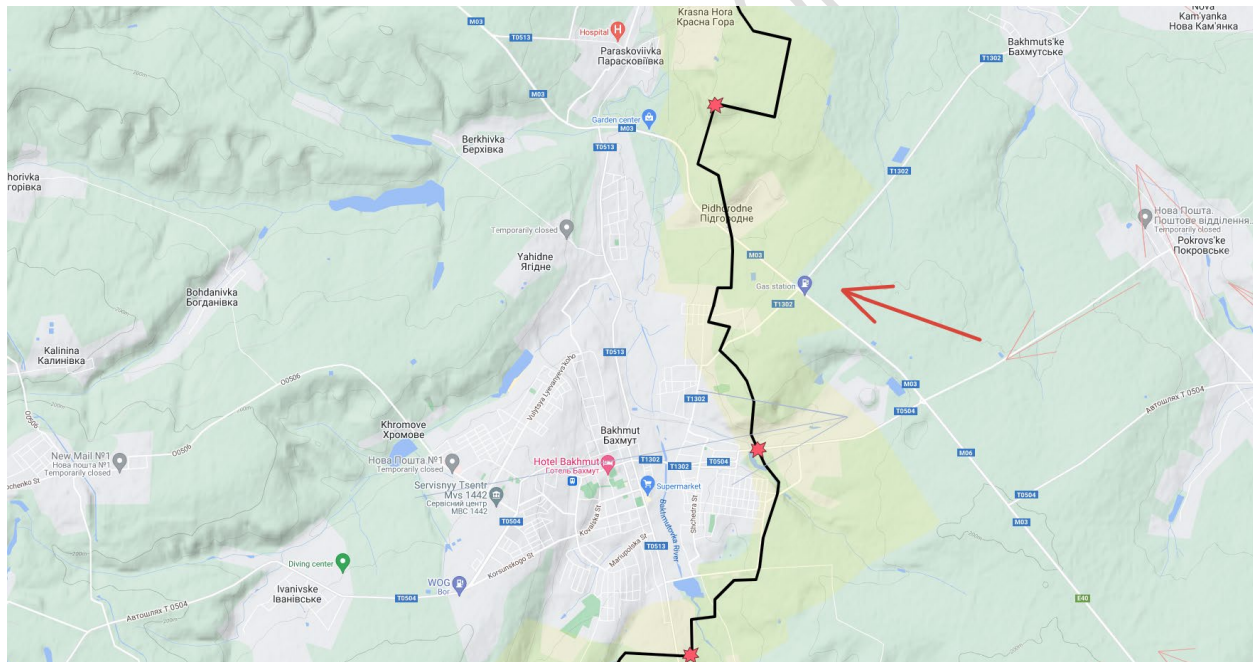


PMC Wagner shared a picture of their mercenary forces in [Blahodatne](#), while GSAFU reported repelling an attack in the area. The defensive line could be west of the Bakhmutovka River or north of Krasna Hora.¹¹ Fighting for

¹¹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

control of Krasna Hora continued, with Ukrainian forces maintaining their defensive lines.^{12 13}

Fighting continued in [Krasna Hora](#) with Ukrainian forces holding their defensive positions, which will be more challenging with the capture of Blahodatne to the north.^{14 15 16}



On the [Bakhmut](#) axis, fighting continued on the city's northern, northeastern, eastern, and southeastern edges


¹² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

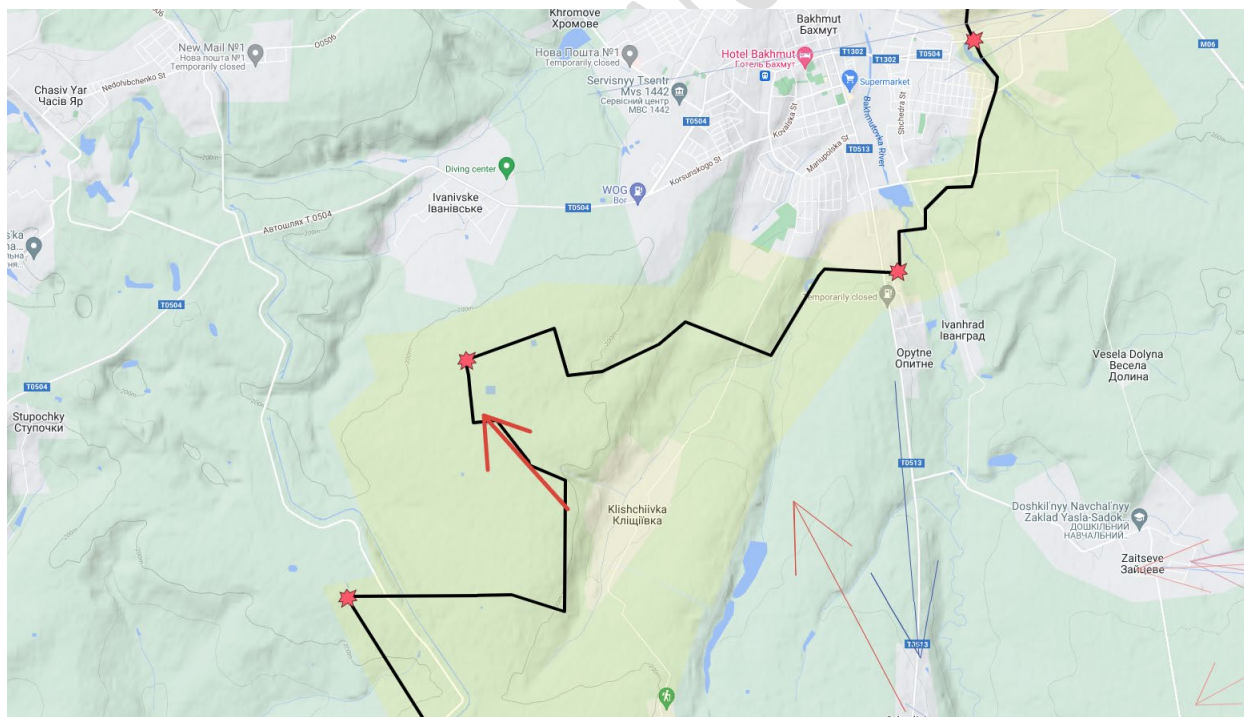
¹³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>

¹⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

¹⁵ <https://t.me/rybar/43074>

¹⁶ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10556>

with no change in the situation.¹⁷ ¹⁸ ¹⁹ Russian forces supported by PMC Wagner continued to attempt to advance on [Paraskoviivka](#) and remained unsuccessful.²⁰ Northeast of Bakhmut, a video that is at least two days old based on weather conditions showed PMC Wagner forces at the radio tower complex  [adjacent to the forest plantation being shelled](#) by drone-directed artillery.²¹ Since late November, Ukrainian and Russian forces have traded control of this location several times.



¹⁷ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

¹⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>

¹⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15370>

²⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

²¹ <https://twitter.com/BarracudaVol1/status/1619725357531435015>

South of Bakhmut, we made more changes to the map based on new intelligence. Video emerged of Ukrainian positions in the highlands just west of [Klishchiivka](#) being [shelled by Russian artillery](#).²² ²³ Based on the geolocation information, we pulled the line of conflict east, much closer to Klischiivka. We took our best-educated guess on where we believe PMC Wagner forces are in the direction of [Ivanivske](#) based on terrain analysis.



January 23 satellite imagery from Sentinel-2 L2A showed the areas west of Klischiivka have been heavily shelled and

²² <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15361>

²³ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

armored vehicle tracks leading from the forested areas east of the canal to Ukrainian defensive positions near the settlement. Clouds obscured the terrain on January 28, and it is unlikely we will get a new image in the next ten days based on long-range weather forecasts.

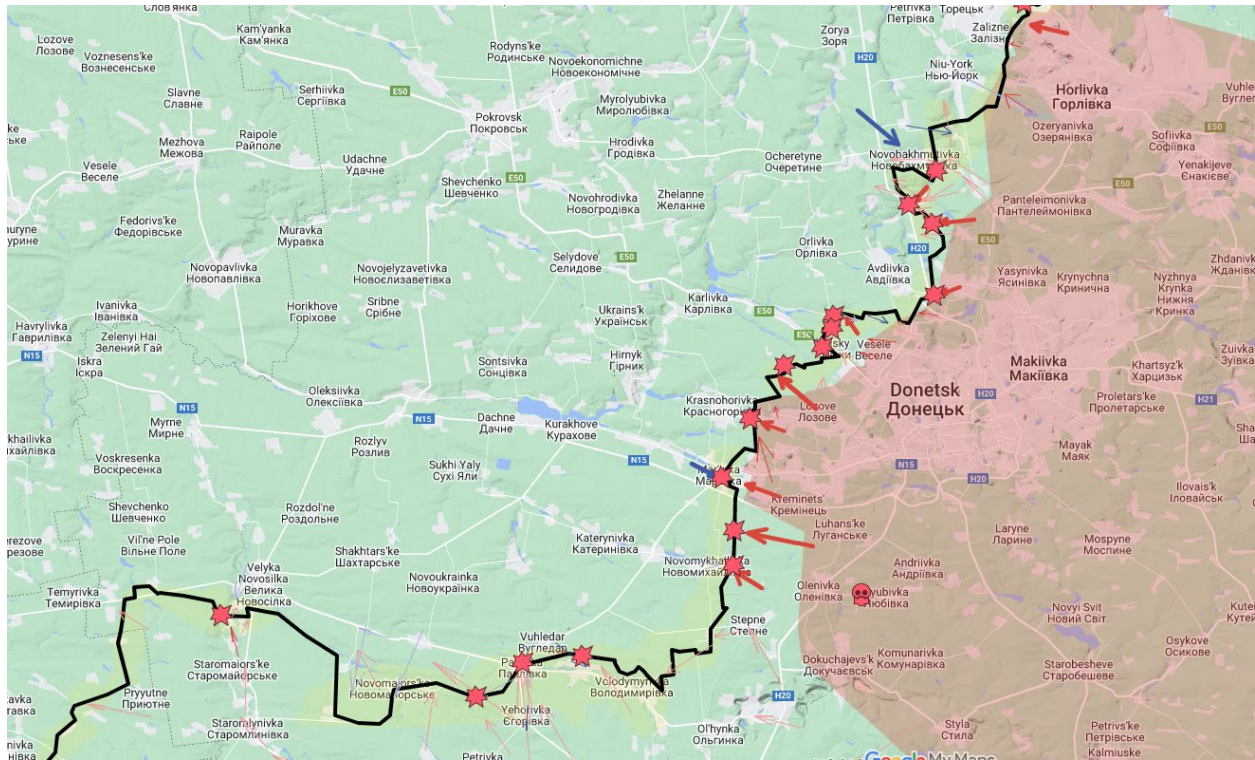
Multiple sources reported fighting near Klishchiivka and Ivanivske.^{24 25 26} PMC Wagner has still not released videos or pictures showing their mercenaries in Klishchiivka, and neither combatant has released much information about territorial control.

²⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

²⁵ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15370>

²⁶ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>

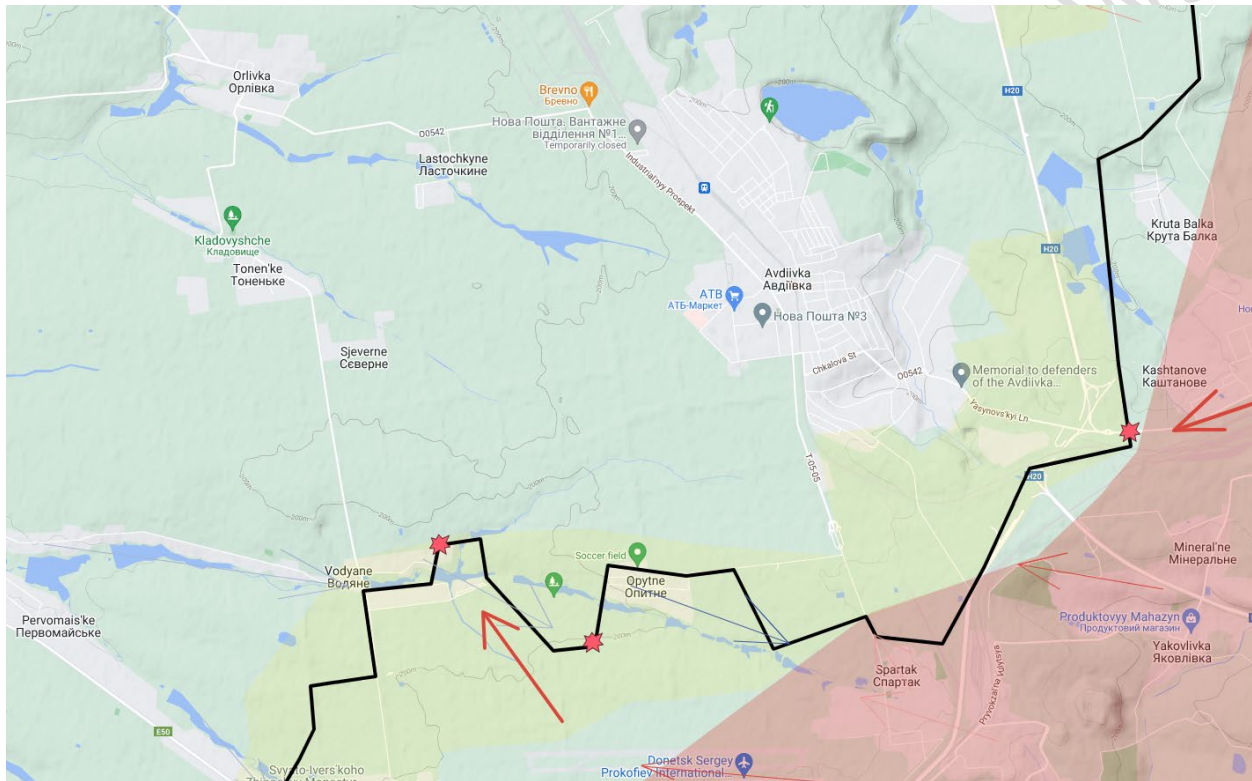
SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Russian Objective: Integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, capture the rest of the oblast, 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

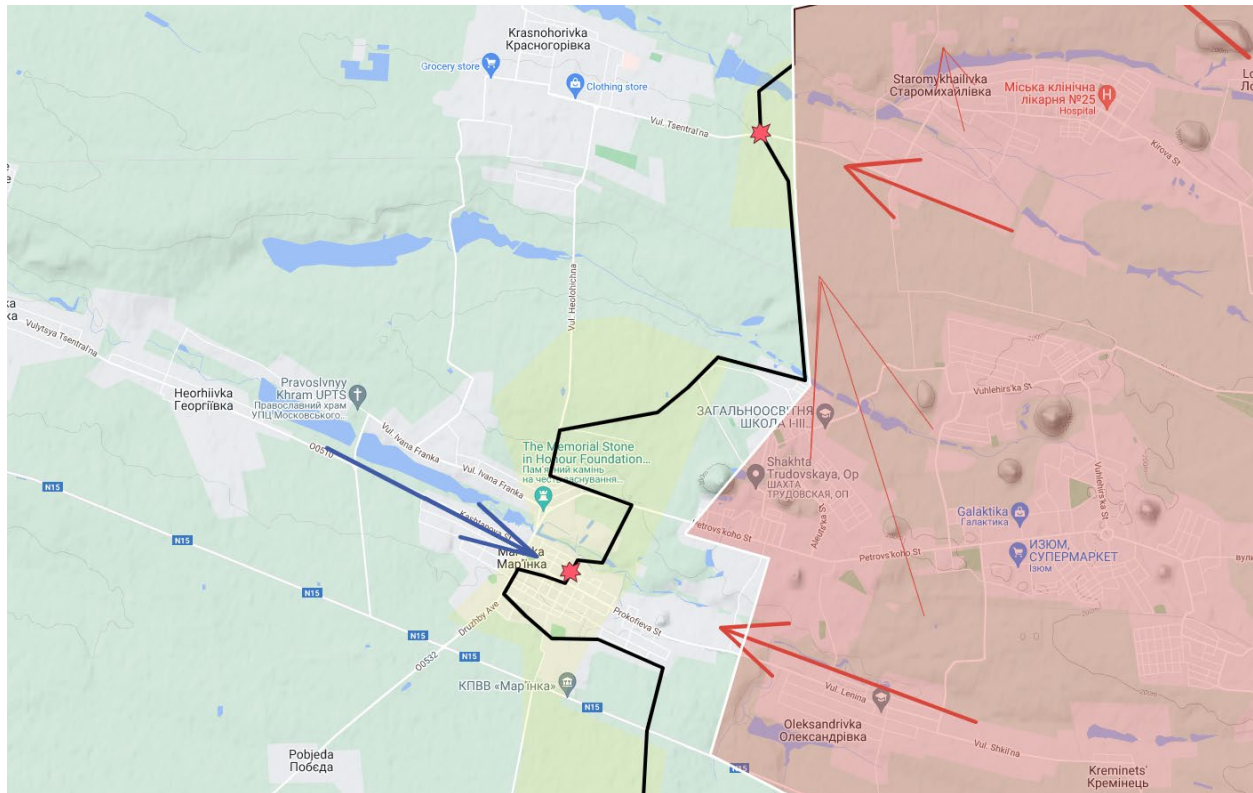
There continued to be only positional fighting on the Avdiivka and Marinka axis, with the intensity of fighting on the Vuhledar axis declining.



GSAFU and mercenaries with War Gonzo reported continued fighting in [Vodyane](#), while War Gonzo reported continued attempts to advance on the Ukrainian firebase at [Nevelske](#).^{27 28}

²⁷ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

²⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>



On the Marinka axis, fighting in the center of [Marinka](#) continued, with War Gonzo moving into “saving face” mode, reporting that Ukrainian forces were countering.^{29 30 31} War Gonzo also reported fighting near Pobjeda after falsing claiming the settlement was captured two weeks ago.^{32 33}

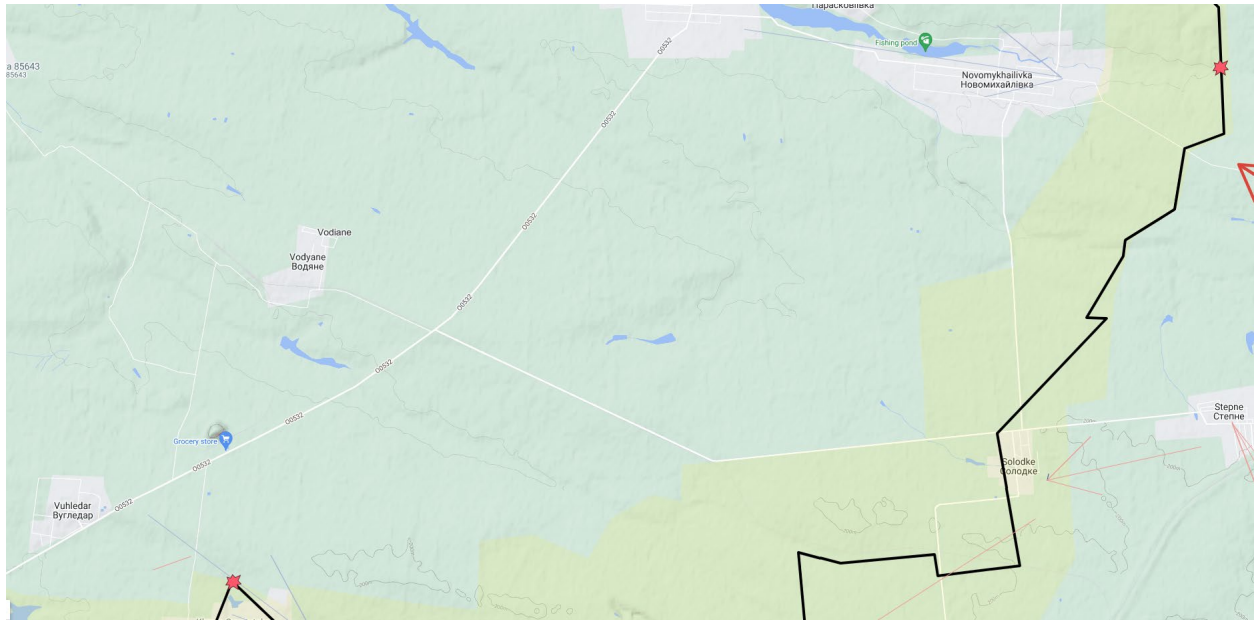
²⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

³⁰ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15370>

³¹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>

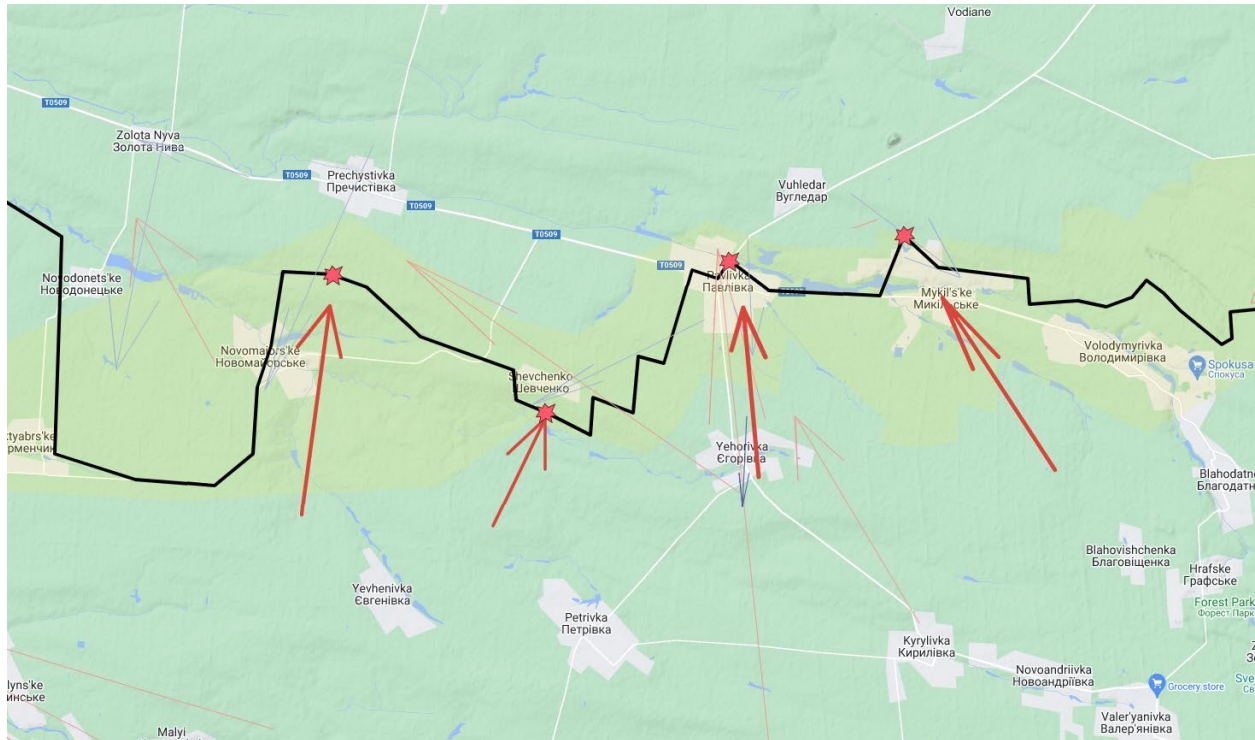
³² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

³³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>



On the Vuhledar axis, the 1st Army Corps renewed attempts to advance on [Novomykailivka](#), which almost nine years later remained unsuccessful.³⁴

³⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)



Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Khodakovsky of the 11th Motor Infantry Brigade of the Russian 1st Army Corps has not released an update about the status of [Vuhledar](#) in two days, with multiple sources reporting that fighting continued but with far less intensity from 48 hours ago.^{35 36}
37 38

The Russian Ministry of Defense [RMOD] reported that Russian forces continued attempts to advance on [Prechystivka](#) and renewed attempts to advance on

³⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

³⁶ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15370>

³⁷ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10569>

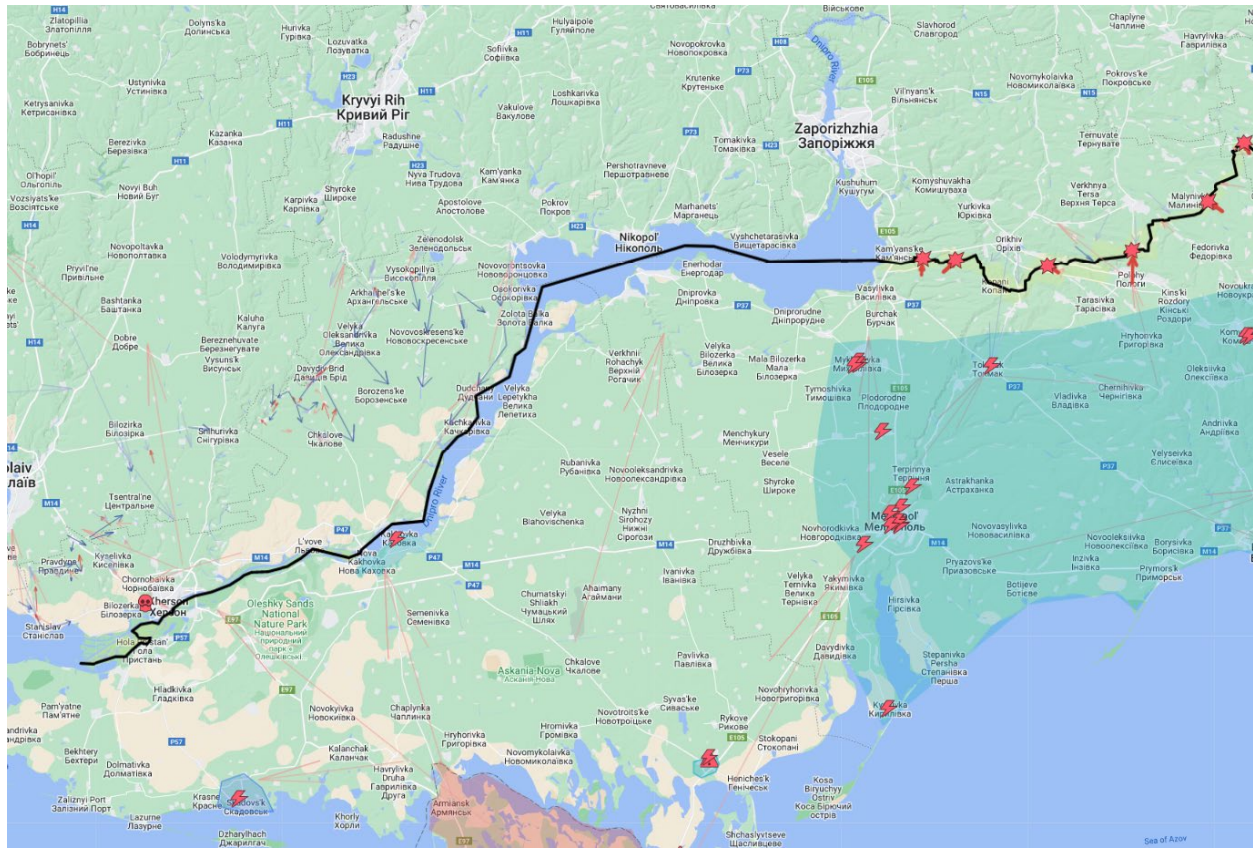
³⁸ https://t.me/mod_russia/23814 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

[Shevchenko](#).³⁹ Based on weeks of claims by RMOD, we moved the line of conflict slightly south of Shevchenko and, based on terrain analysis, adjusted the line northeast to Pavlivka. Although we continue to consider the village contested, we had previously assessed that Russia was holding the cluster of cottages, which now seems unlikely based on their reports.

There were very few news and social media reports from occupied Donetsk for most of the day. The outage started around noon and extended to Russian state media sources, indicating power or Internet and cellular coverage has been impacted in the region.







³⁹ https://t.me/mod_russia/23814 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]


KHERSON AND ZAPORIZHIA



Russian Objective: Prevent Ukrainian offensive into Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, integrate captured territory into the Russian Federation, break civilian will with continued terror attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Liberate Russian-occupied areas, prevent further Russian advances, exploit weaknesses on the line of conflict, and protect civilians

Russian and Ukrainian forces traded claims of intentional strikes on Civilians, with mutual shelling along the Dnipro continuing.^{40 41} Residential areas  [were heavily shelled](#), including strikes at the Central Hospital, which injured at least two people.^{42 43} A graphic image showed the aftermath in the hospital, which many will find disturbing. To view the image, you can   [click here](#).⁴⁴ Another four were wounded and two killed in the shelling, which knocked out power to 9,500 homes. Local journalists captured the shelling in a graphic video that some may find disturbing. If you want to watch the video, you can   [click here](#).⁴⁵ Local officials were  [making emergency repairs](#) to the hospital at the time of publication.⁴⁶

Recent shelling of the river port damaged two foreign-flagged ships, with one having its fuel tanks punctured. The attack didn't cause a fire, but  [oil leaked into the Dnipro River](#).⁴⁷

⁴⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁴¹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

⁴² <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/3399>


⁴³ <https://t.me/hueviyherson/33868>

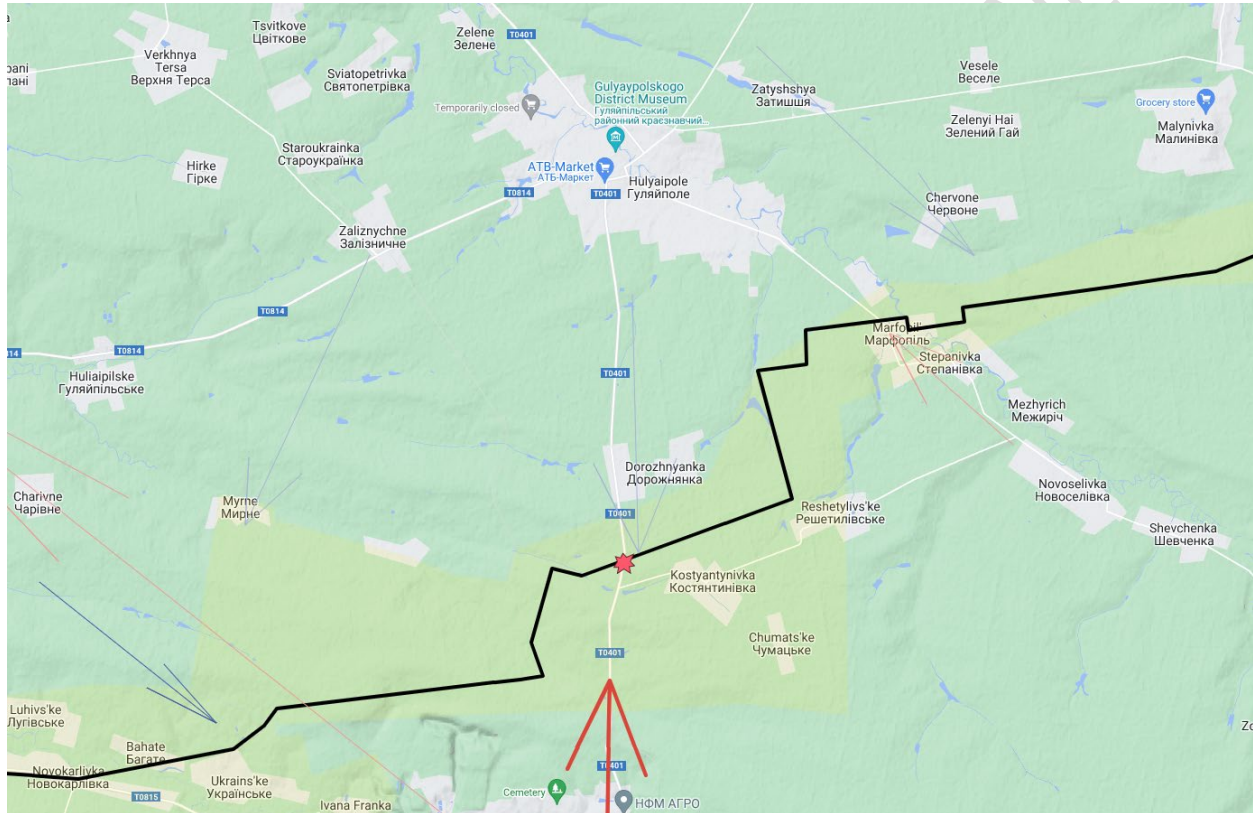
⁴⁴ <https://t.me/hueviyherson/33863>

⁴⁵ <https://t.me/hueviyherson/33907>

⁴⁶ <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/3396>

⁴⁷ <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/3399>

In the evening, Beryslav was attacked by rockets fired by Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS)  [armed with thermite warheads](#), and Stanislav, at the mouth of the Dnipro River, was shelled.⁴⁸



In Zaporizhia on the Hulyaipole axis, RMOD reported that Russian forces had launched an attack on [Dorozhyanka](#).⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <https://t.me/hueviyherson/33920>

⁴⁹ https://t.me/mod_russia/23814 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

Near Russia-occupied Melitopol, a railroad bridge that insurgents and previous HIMARS strikes have damaged was hit again, [according to Russian state media](#).⁵⁰ Five engineers working on repairs were reportedly killed in the strike. The report from Russian State Media violated operational security (OPSEC) and provided both a battle damage assessment and visual confirmation of the ongoing work on the bridge.

The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is unchanged.

Russian and Ukrainian forces exchanged heavy artillery fire from the Zaporizhia-Donetsk administrative border to Hulyaipole, Orikhiv, and west to Stepove (west of Orikhiv).⁵¹

⁵²

Editor's Note: We will separate Zaporizhia from Kherson and move Kherson to the Western and Central Ukraine section in the next report due to changes in activity in southern Ukraine.

⁵⁰ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74375>

⁵¹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁵² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Operational Command South (OCS) reported the Black Sea Fleet had 15 ships on patrol, including three missile carriers capable of launching up to 20 Kalibr cruise missiles.⁵³ With the renewed rotation, ships are likely being brought into port to reload after the January 26 missile strikes, but we are not seeing conditions being set for a new attack.

WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

Russian Objective: Launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to maximize casualties by deprivation of heat, water, and medical services and break morale

Ukrainian Objective: Deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

There weren't any significant developments in this region.

⁵³ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74276>

NORTH AND NORTHEAST UKRAINE

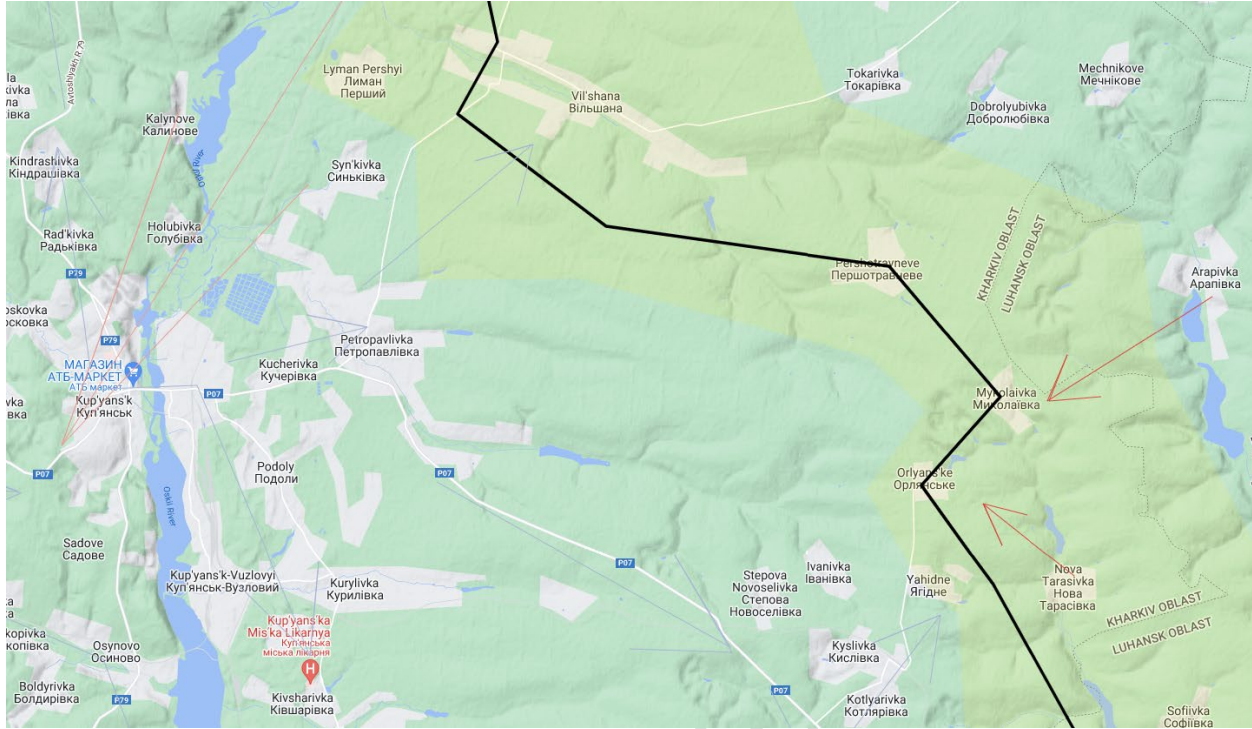
Russian Objective: Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale and maximize casualties by deprivation of heat, water, and medical services

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

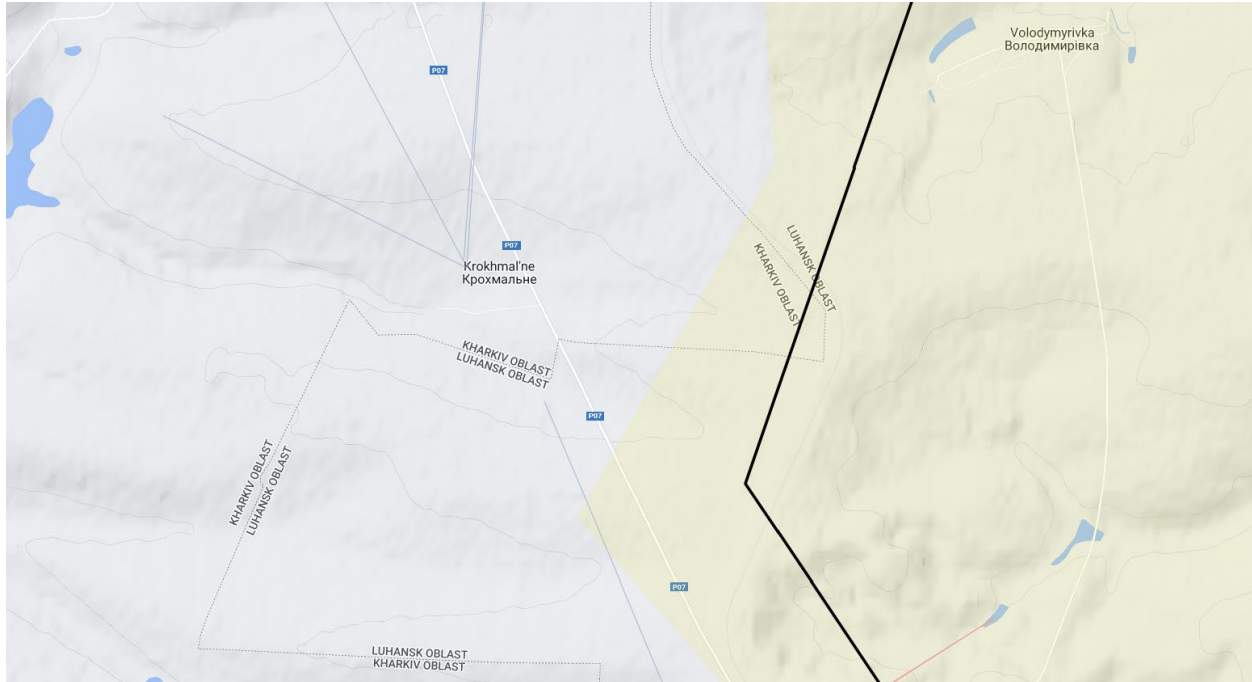
In the Sumy oblast, the hromadas of Yunakivka, Krasnopillya, and the village of Velkya Pysarivka were attacked by drones dropping improvised explosive devices. The hromadas of Myropillia and Bilopillya were hit by drones and rocket-propelled grenades. Bilopillya was struck 72 times, with no injuries reported.⁵⁴

⁵⁴

<https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74439>



On the Kupyansk axis in Kharkiv, RMOD reported that Ukrainian DRG units were engaged near [Lyman Pershyi](#) and [Orlyanske](#).



RMOD also claimed Ukrainian DRG units were operating in the area of [Krokhmalne](#) on the Kharkiv-Luhansk administrative border. GSAFU reported shelling in Vilshana again as well as in Krokhmalne. We believe there is more activity in this region than reported, but both combatants maintain tight operational security.⁵⁵


In Kharkiv, A S-300 missile used for a ground attack struck a four-story apartment building destroying the top floor.⁵⁶ The building was located in the Kyiv District, and one person was killed and three wounded in the strike. A

⁵⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

⁵⁶ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2023/01/30/7387046/>

pensioner died instantly in the strike, while her husband, who was just meters away, was only lightly injured.

RUSSIAN FRONT

There were reports of explosions in Belgorod, with local officials telling residents it was air defense.⁵⁷ A person  [rammed the We love Belgorod sign](#) at the city entrance, heavily damaging it.⁵⁸

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Ukraine ordered 105 Vector drones from Germany. The vector reconnaissance drones have been upgraded based on lessons learned from earlier deployments. The UAVs have a range of 15 or 25 kilometers depending on configuration and can send encrypted real-time 4K video up to 15 kilometers away. The upgrades include software changes to increase resistance to electronic countermeasures (ECM) and the ability to operate without

⁵⁷ <https://t.me/belgorod01/31016>

⁵⁸ <https://t.me/belgorod01/31015>

GPS, GLONASS, and GNSS, enabling the ability to operate without satellite navigation.⁵⁹

In Kyiv, the rules limiting travel of civil servants and government officials outside of Ukraine to government business only were modified. Exceptions have been made for single parents to accompany a child under 18 years of age, the need to travel abroad for medical treatment outside of Ukraine with approval from the Ministry of Health, and to attend the funeral of close family members such as spouse, children, parents, and grandparents.

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION AND MILITARY STATUS

There weren't any significant developments.

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

There weren't any significant developments that weren't previously noted.

⁵⁹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74444>

GEOPOLITICAL

There weren't any significant developments.

ECONOMIC

The rouble is starting the week unchanged, with an exchange rate of 70 for 1 US dollar.

Western oil prices will open down, with WTI crude dropping to \$79 a barrel and Brent falling to \$86. Russian Urals crude had declined in Monday morning trading, falling to an "official" price of \$58 a barrel. United States wholesale RBOB gasoline on the spot market will start the week at \$2.57 a gallon (68 cents a liter), a decline from Friday.

Dutch TTF Natural Gas Futures pricing was unavailable at the time of publication.

Chicago SRW Wheat Futures jumped over the weekend, climbing to \$7.54 a bushel for March 2023 delivery.