



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



March 9, 2023



Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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The assessments and opinions expressed in the Malcontent News SITREP are not representative, endorsed, or reflect the views of the Rondeli Foundation. We are grateful for the foundation's work to assess and verify territorial control changes and their permission to provide maps for our Situation Report.


Notes on Sourcing Information


Malcontent News uses a wide range of sources to create our daily Situation Report, which is 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 real-time 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 he was 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.



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SUMMARY – DAY 379

It has been 3,297 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 14 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

DAILY ASSESSMENT

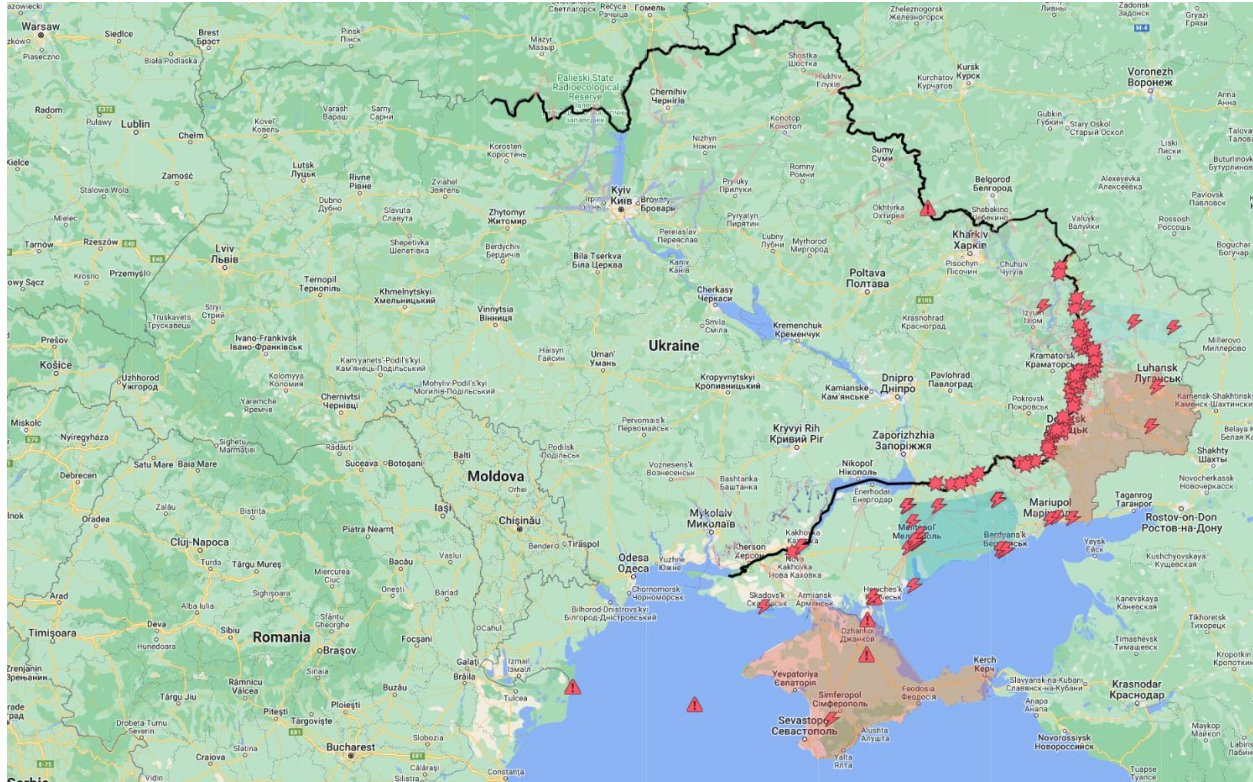
We assess the following:

1. We assess that Russia's largest missile attack of 2023 was disruptive but unsuccessful in causing a long-term impact on Ukrainian infrastructure and was a waste of precision munitions.
2. We maintain that the risk of a nuclear accident due to the de-energized of Ukraine's electrical grid remains a possibility as long as the Russian Ministry of Defense continues to target Ukraine's power industry.
3. We maintain that Russia can no longer tap its strategic reserve of Kalibr cruise missiles and can only launch its monthly production of 25 to 30 missiles a month.
4. We maintain that the Russian Federation Armed Forces are combat ineffective and are only capable of

effective attacks on a small area of the front, such as Bakhmut.

5. We maintain that Russia has committed almost all available ground forces to Ukraine and cannot maintain the current level of personnel and equipment losses.
6. We assess that the public in fighting between Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner Group's leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has reached a dangerous level that threatens to derail the only successful Russian offensive operation since June 2022 in Bakhmut.
7. We maintain that the Russian Ministry of Defense is actively working to eliminate the influence of Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner Group and its leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin, on and off the battlefield.
8. We maintain the Kremlin is actively attempting to topple the legitimate government of Moldova.
9. We maintain the Kremlin is actively interfering with the Georgian government's attempt to join the European Union.

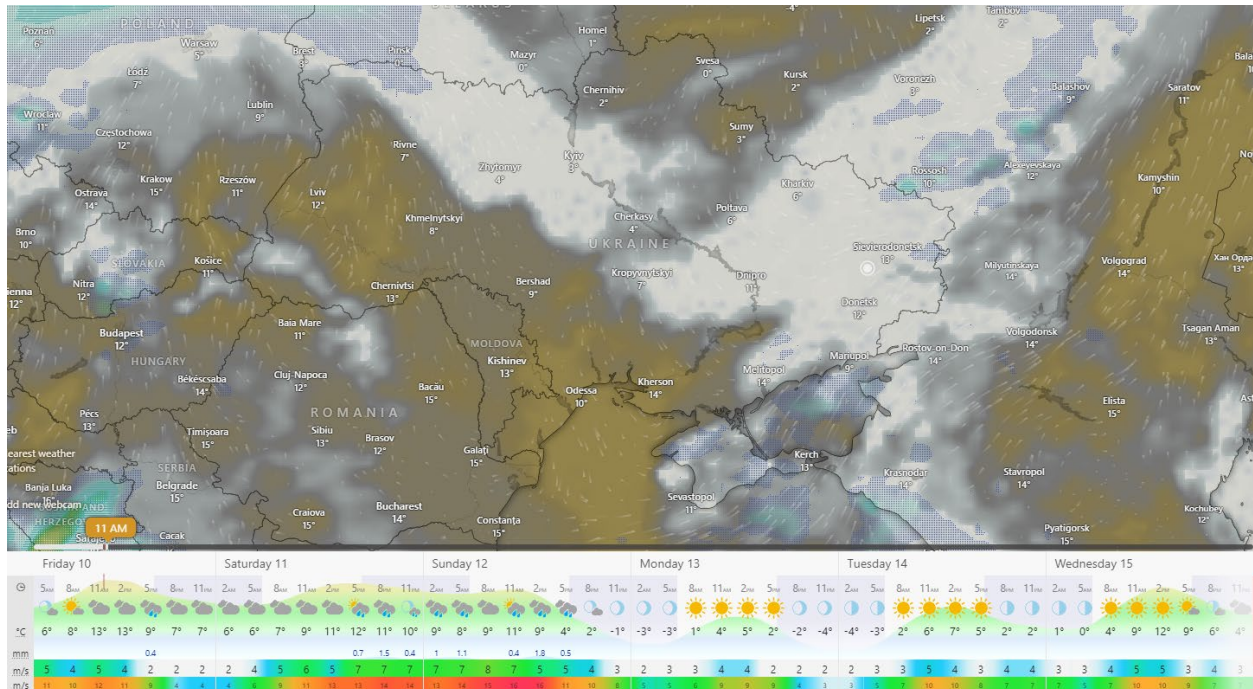
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



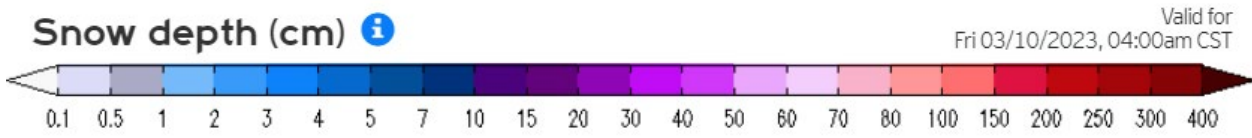
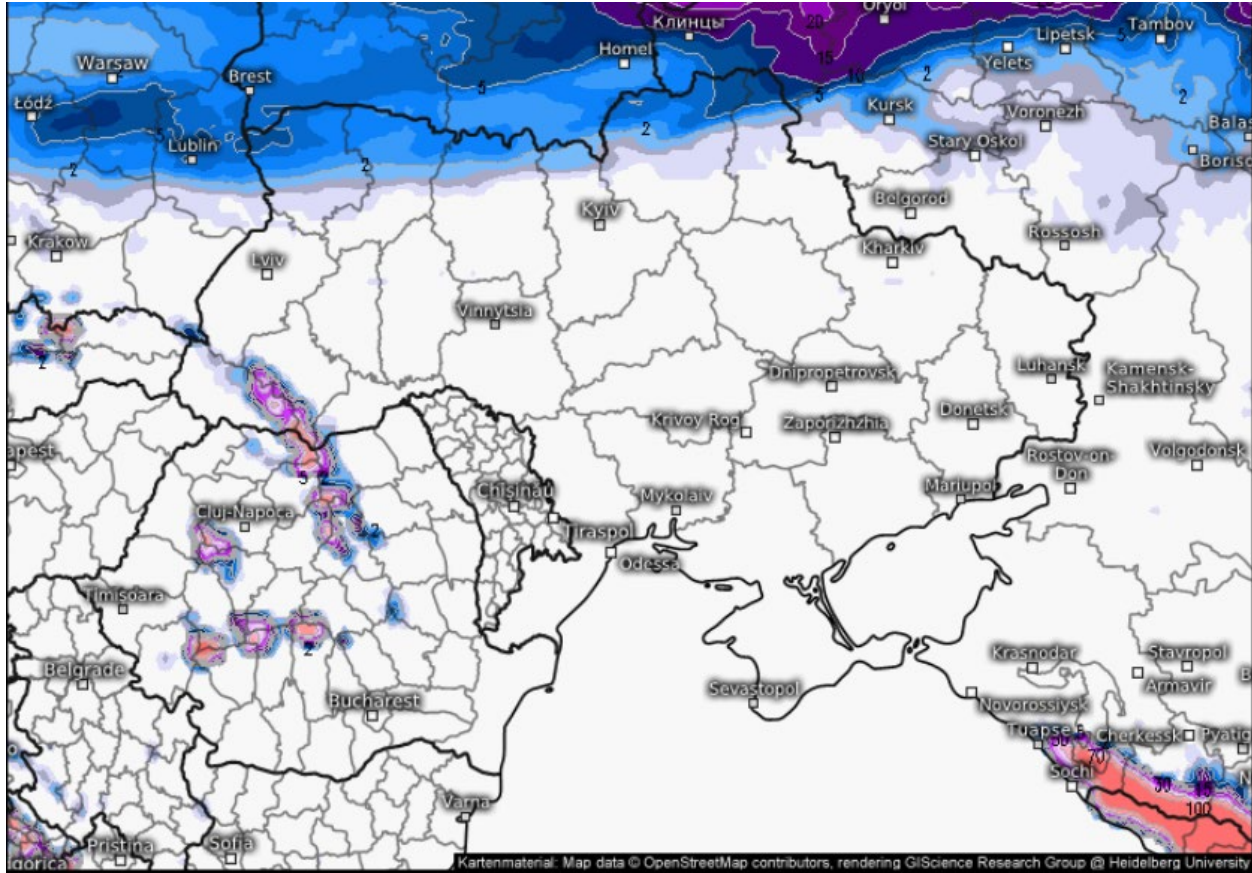
About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The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

UKRAINE WEATHER



Warmer and wet weather has arrived in eastern Ukraine along the line of conflict. Rain showers are expected on Friday, with heavier rain on Sunday and winds to 21 meters per second. (45 mph/75 kph). High temperatures will range from 2° to 17° Celcius, with a brief cooling on Monday. Overnight temperatures will fall below freezing on Sunday and Monday nights. The long-term forecast is dry and sunny for next week.



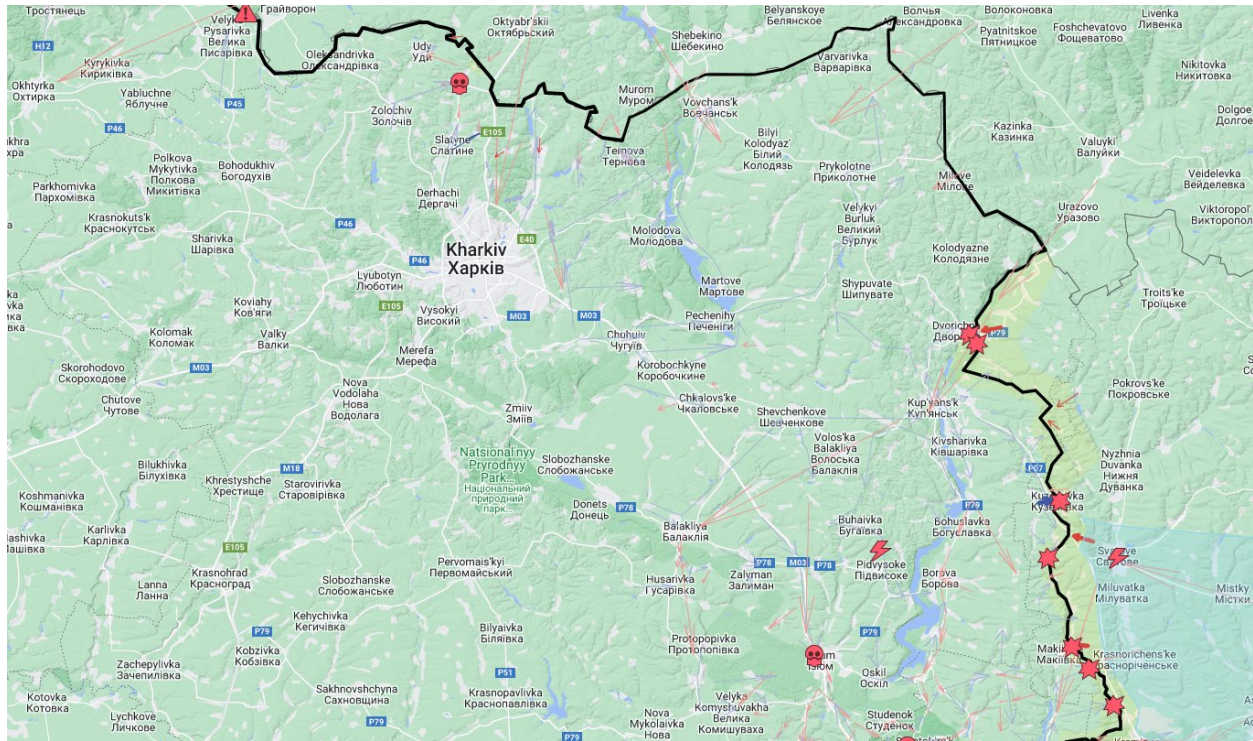
Notable snow cover is in the Carpathian Mountain Range and the length of the Belarus-Ukraine border. Otherwise, the rest of Ukraine is snow free. We will stop reporting snow depth on March 31, 2023.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

On March 9, 2022, the Russian Air Force bombed Maternity Hospital Number 3 in Mariupol. The attack killed four, wounded 16, and contributed to at least one stillbirth. Russia continues to blame Ukraine for the attack.

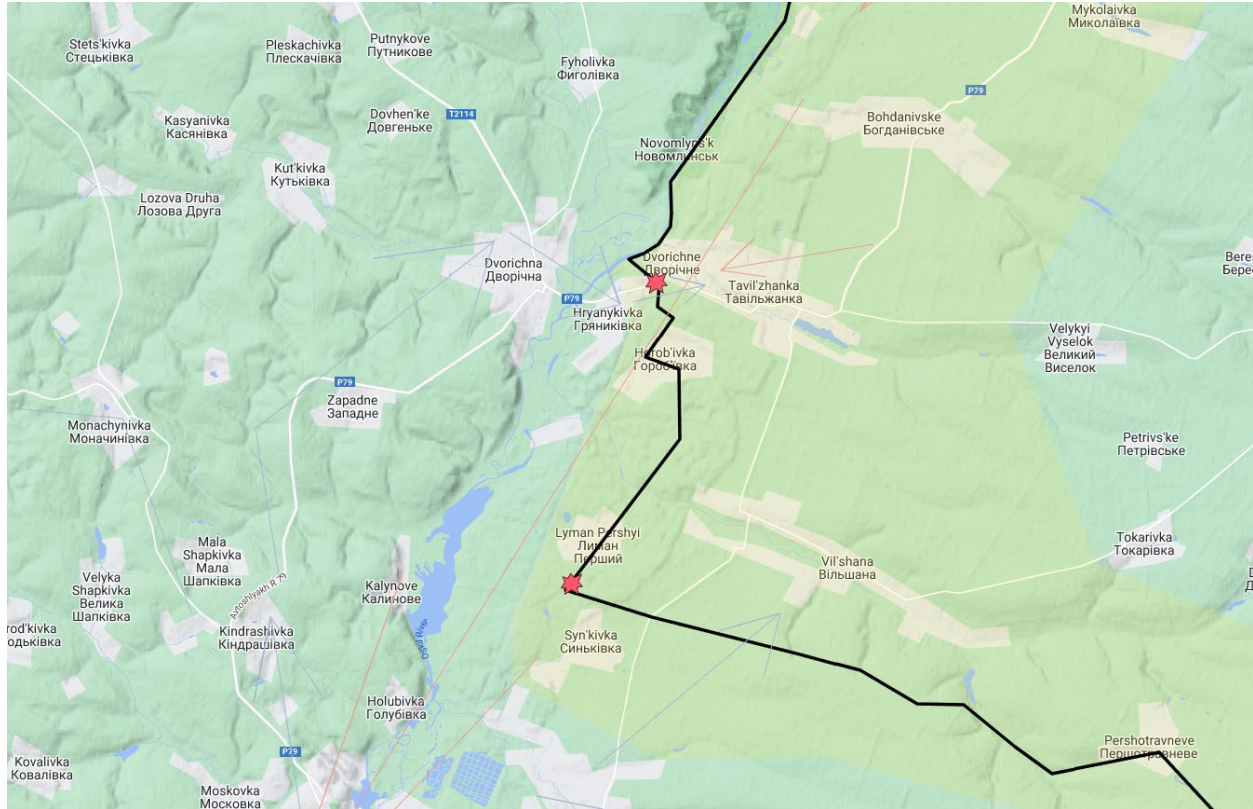


KHARKIV



Russian Objective: Push Ukrainian forces west of the Oskil River and set conditions for a future larger attack

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



In the Dvorichna Operational Area, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU) reported that [Hryanykivka](#) was attacked unsuccessfully by Russian forces, while the Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported their forces attacked Ukrainian positions with artillery and air strikes.^{1 2} GSAFU reported that Vilshana was shelled for the second time in three days.³

¹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

² https://t.me/mod_russia/24711 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

³ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

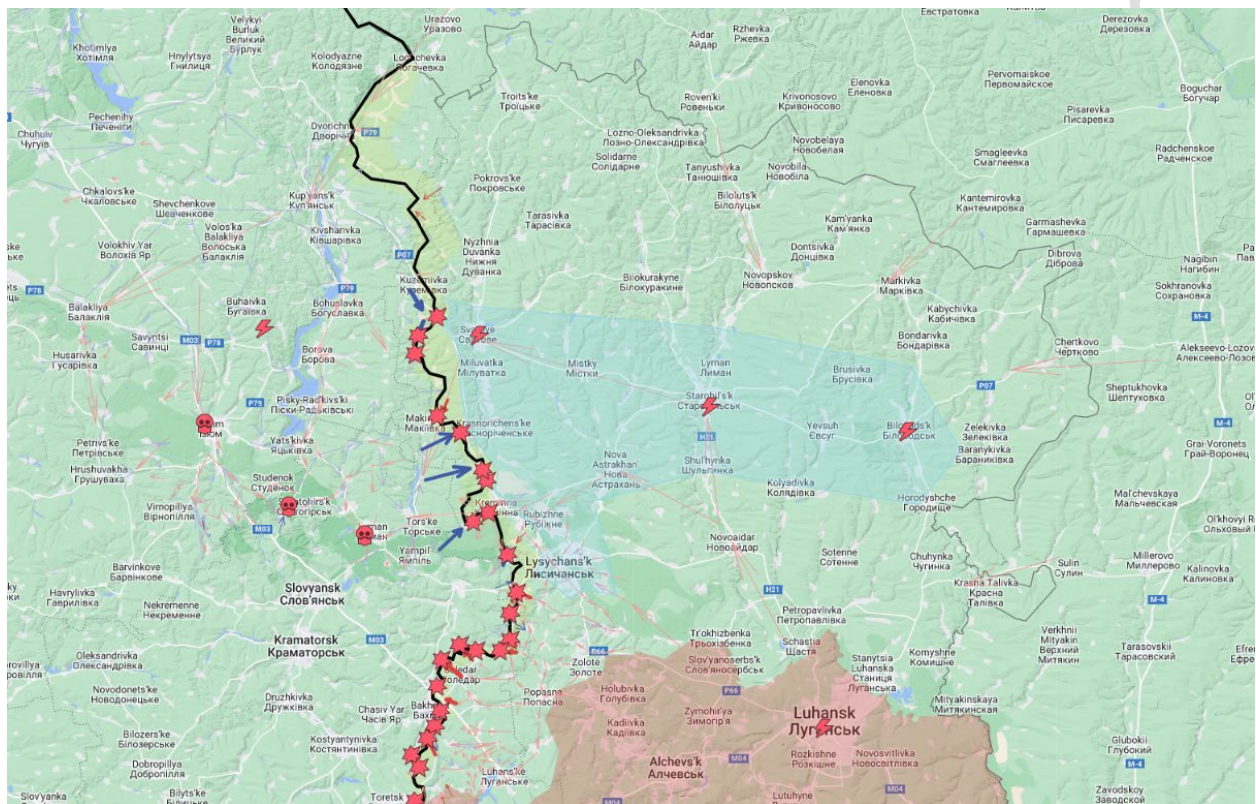
In Kharkiv, power has been restored to 90% of the region, while half of Kharkiv remains without power after the largest missile strike on Ukraine in 2023.^{4 5}

⁴ <https://t.me/synegubov/5675>

⁵ <https://t.me/synegubov/5677>

DONBAS REGION

LUHANSK



Russian Objective: Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, recapture lost territory, and control insurgency

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

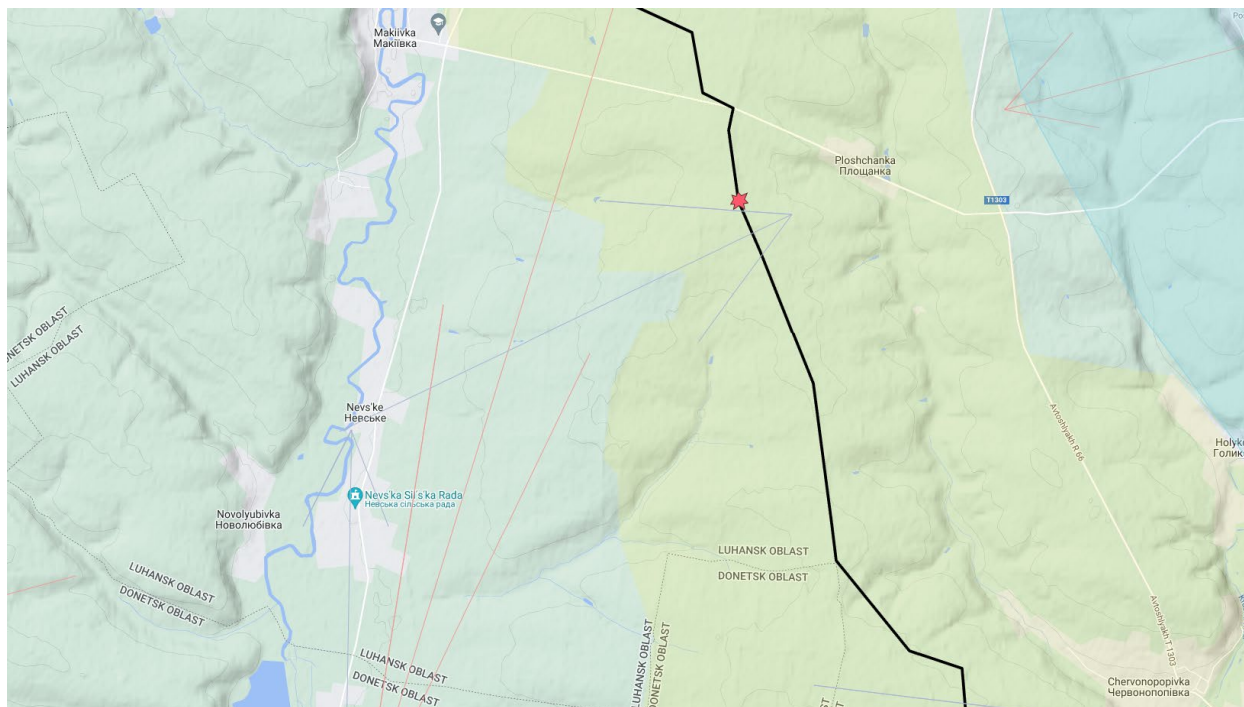
Luhansk Oblast Administrative and Military Governor (OVA) Serhei Haidai reported Ukrainian forces were on “active defense” in the Svatove and Kreminna Operational Areas and tipping over to being on the offensive in the Lysychansk OA.⁶ He described the situation as “relative silence on the frontline” due to Russian forces suffering heavy losses and needing to reconstitute their units.⁷ Our favorite FSB Colonel, convicted war criminal, Kremlin pariah, and failed mobik Igor Strelkov Girkin reported the combatants were engaged only in “positional fighting.”⁸ Russian efforts over the last few weeks to try and coordinate light infantry, armor, artillery, and aviation at the company level had largely failed.

To Haidai’s point, no fighting or significant artillery activity was reported in the Svatove Operational Area.

⁶ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9156>

⁷ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9142>

⁸ <https://t.me/strelkovii/4165>



In the Kreminna Operational Area, light positional fighting continued in the forests and tree lines near the settlements of [Ploshchanka](#), [Makiivka](#), and [Nevske](#).^{9 10 11} A Ukrainian source reported continued light fighting in the area of [Chervonpopivka](#).¹² Governor Haidai said, "It cannot be said that the settlement is completely de-occupied, but the situation there is under control."¹³ South of Nevske, Ukrainian forces have been recorded pushing Russian troops back over the last 7 to 10 days, but we did not adjust the map due to a lack of additional intelligence.

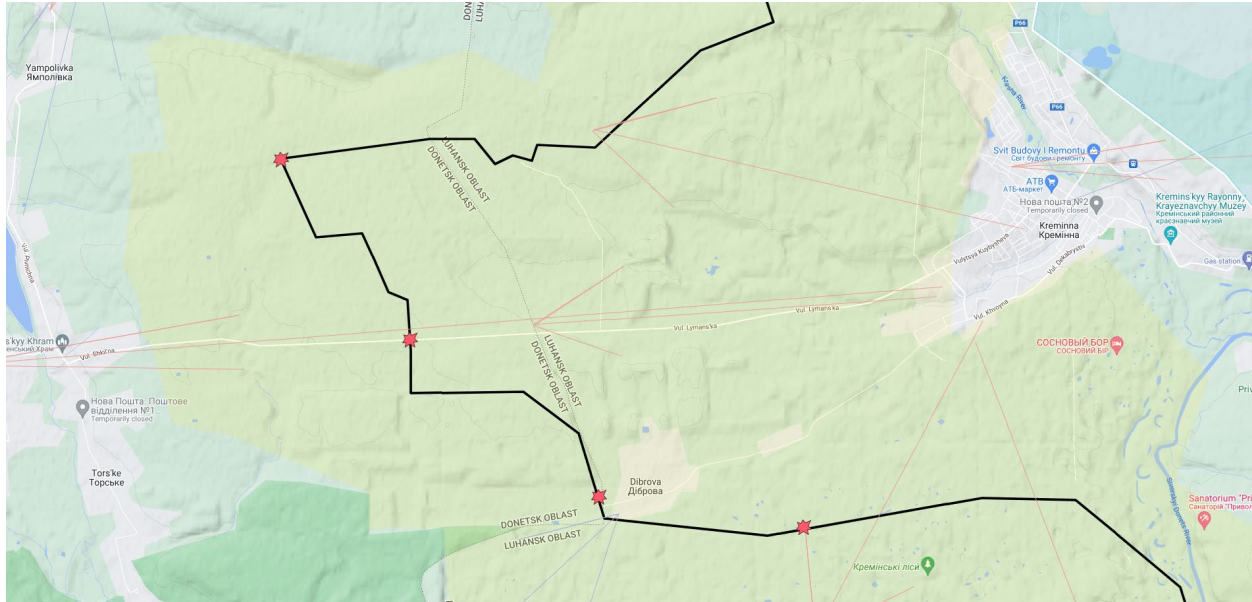
⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15874>

¹⁰ https://t.me/mod_russia/24711 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

¹¹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

¹² <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15874>

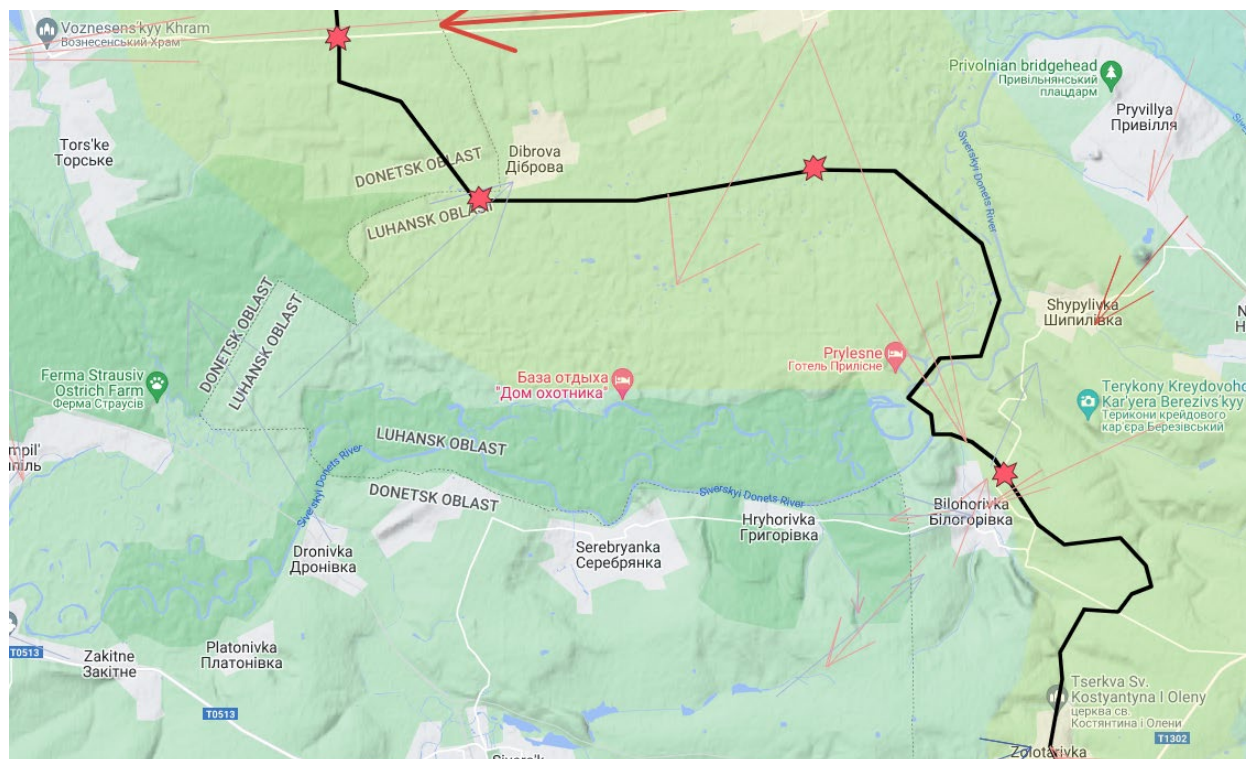
¹³ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9142>



Positional fighting continued in the [forested areas](#) south and west of [Kremienna](#) and near [Dibrova](#), with no change in the situation.^{14 15}

¹⁴ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15874>

¹⁵ https://t.me/mod_russia/24711 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]



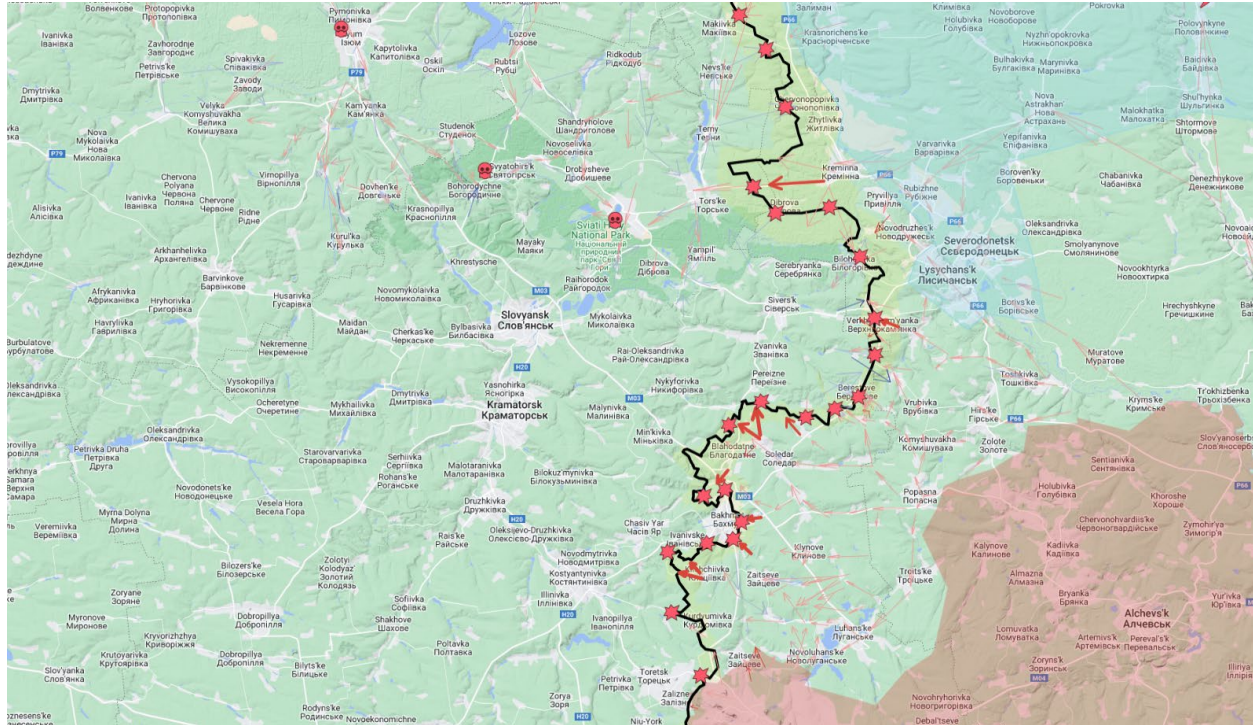
In the Lysychansk Operational Area, It is the 306th day of fighting for control of [Bilohorivka](#) [Luhansk].¹⁶ Mercenary milblogger WarGonzo indicated that the current wave of attacks had culminated, stating, "Units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation have been undertaking campaigns against Belogorovka for several weeks now, which end with a return to their starting point." Governor Haidai reported that Ukrainian forces held their positions "firmly" and "sometimes even moves forward."¹⁷

¹⁶ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

¹⁷ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9156>

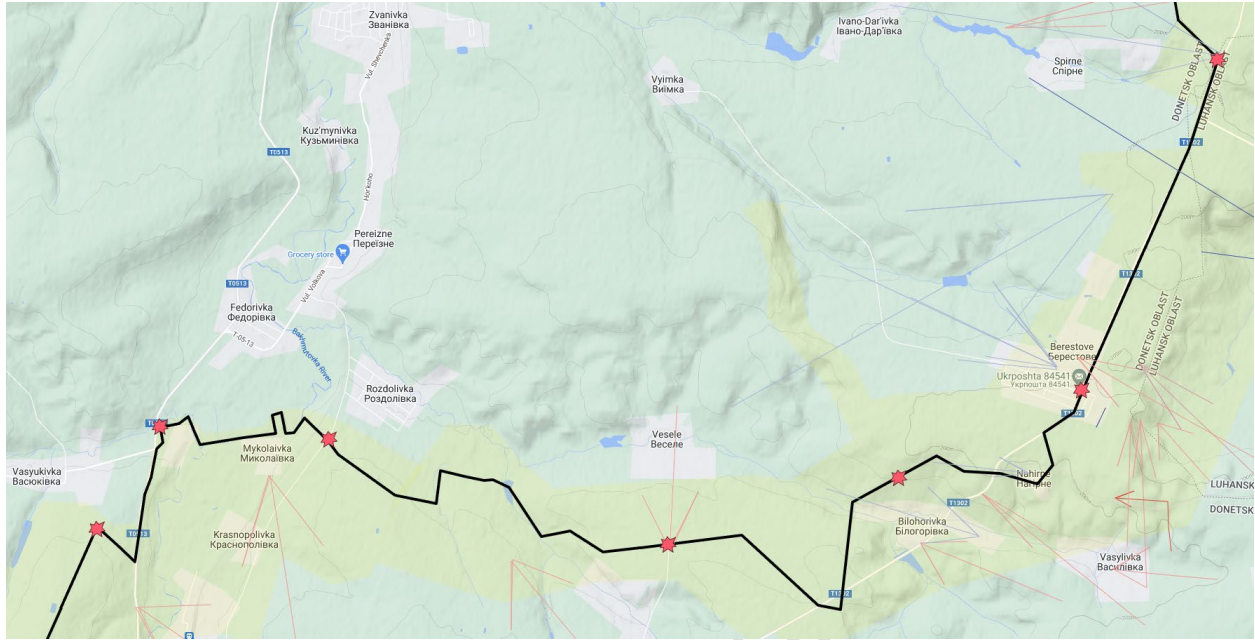
In Russian-occupied Novodruzsk, 9.5 kilometers east of Bilohorivka, mobiks complained about being transferred by the Russian Ministry of Defense to the Luhansk People's Republic 2nd Army Corps as "volunteers," reported there were only eight survivors left in the unit. During their video appeal, in-coming artillery strikes, although distant, could be heard. We stretched the area of uncertainty further east into parts of Novodruzhesk, which has been subject to heavy Ukrainian artillery fire.

NORTHEAST DONETSK



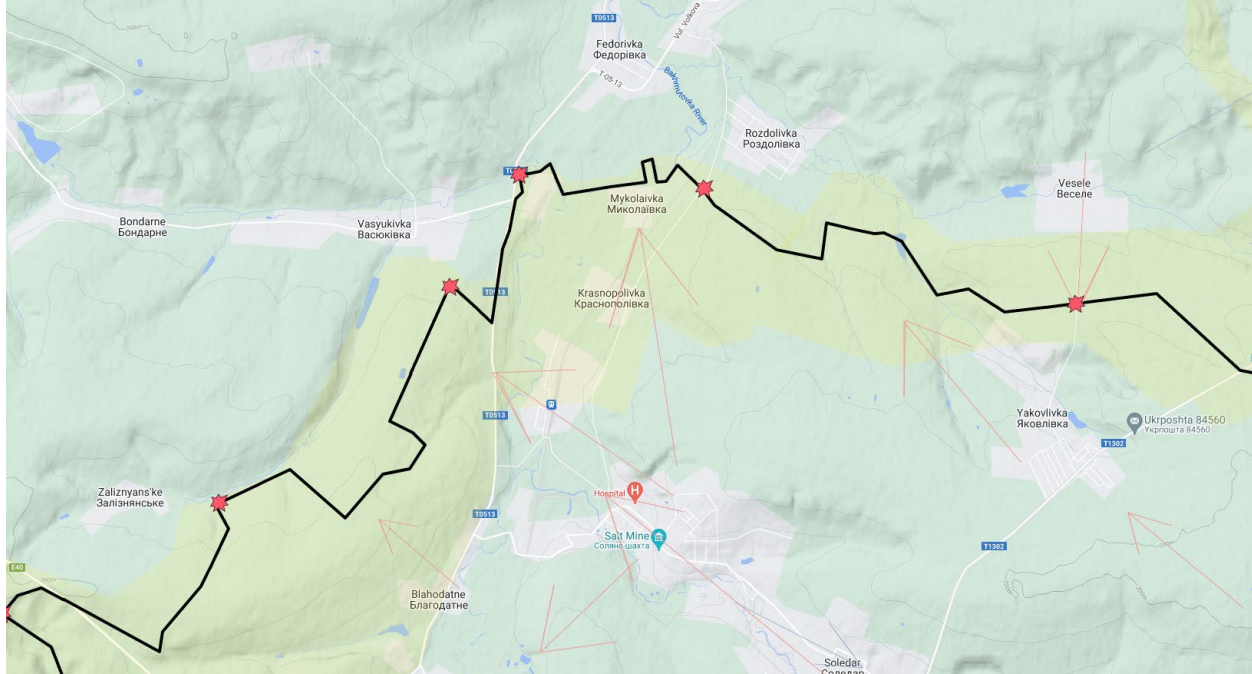
Russian Objective: Capture the entire region and integrate the oblast into Russian Federation

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



In the Siversk Operational Area, elements of the 2nd Army Corps continued their attacks on [Spirne](#) without success.¹⁸

¹⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)



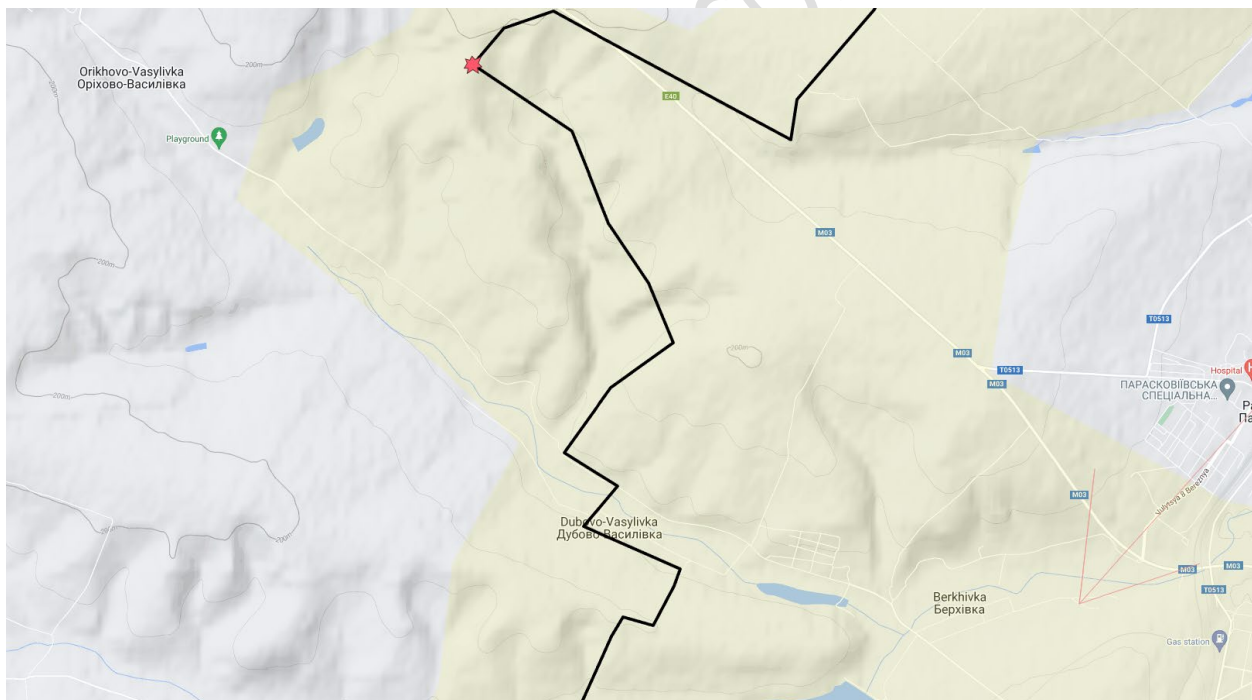
In the Soledar Operational Area, PMC Wagner launched an overnight attack on [Vasylivka](#) but could not advance into the well-defended village.¹⁹

In the Bakhmut Operational Area, Russian and Ukrainian forces continued to trade territory. PMC Wagner advanced westward on the northern flank and pushed further into the city's southeast corner. Ukrainian forces pushed PMC Wagner's forces away from Bohdanivka and continued to have access to the T-506 Highway Ground Line of

¹⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

Communication (GLOC – supply line) through Khromove and  [limited access to the T-504 GLOC](#).²⁰

Oleksandr Syrskyi, Commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, said, "The defense forces [of Ukraine – Ed.] made several tactical actions, which did not allow the enemy to take the city into an operational encirclement by now. But the situation remains very difficult."²¹



²⁰ <https://twitter.com/girkingirkin/status/1634046737819090944>

²¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/03/9/7392715/>

Northwest of the city, fighting continued for control of [Orikhovo-Vasylivka](#).²² ²³ George Barros of the Institute for the Study of War reported that our favorite FSB Colonel Girkin claimed the settlement was captured.²⁴ It's unclear if Girkin edited his Telegram post, with the former Defense Minister of the Donetsk People's Republic only reporting "fierce battles" in the "sector."²⁵ PMC Wagner's social media channels did not claim success in this area.²⁶

Several Russian milbloggers claimed that Wagner mercenaries had reached the village, but at the time of publication, Yevgeny Prigozhin had made no claims of operational success in this or any other direction.

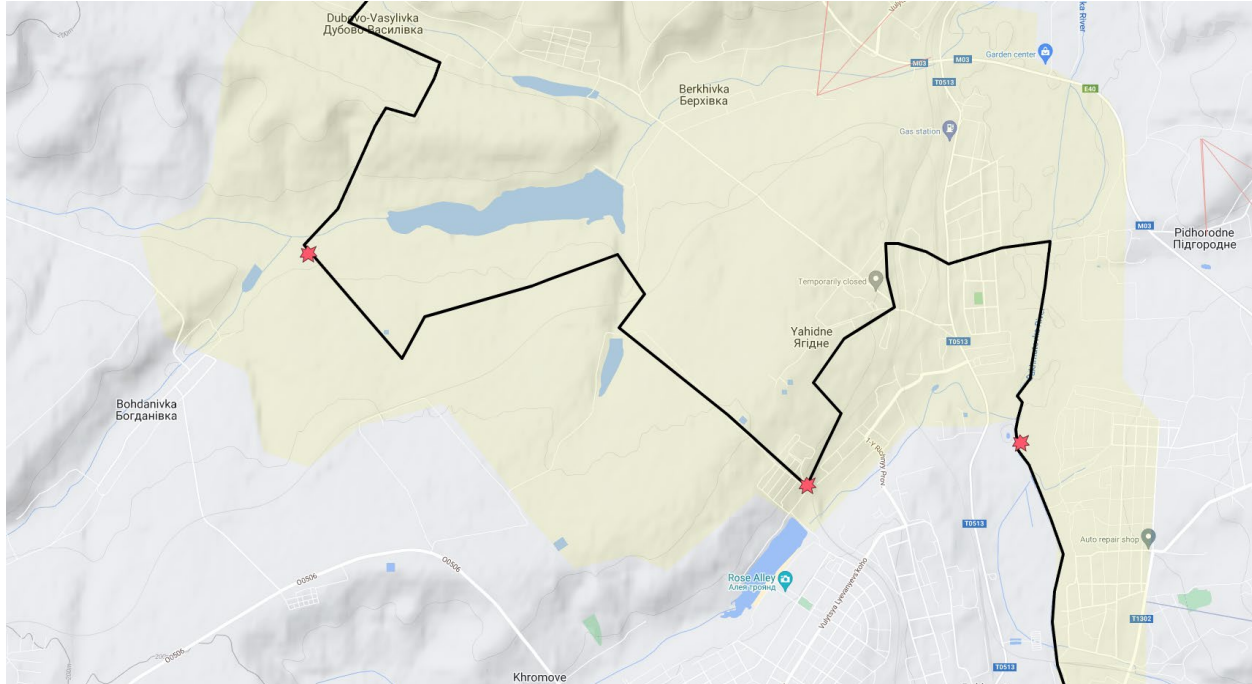
²² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

²³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

²⁴ <https://twitter.com/georgewbarros/status/1633990058712657924>

²⁵ <https://t.me/strelkovii/4165>

²⁶ <https://t.me/brussinf/5736>



PMC Wagner captured the village of [Dubovo-Vasylivka](#), after launching over 100 attacks in the last three days.²⁷ ²⁸
²⁹ Wagner's leader Yevgeny Prigozhin wrote that fighting was still ongoing "on the outskirts" of the settlement, which is supported by a GSAFU report of continued fighting.³⁰ We updated the map based on PMC Wagner's information and a geolocated video that we used to update our map on March 8.

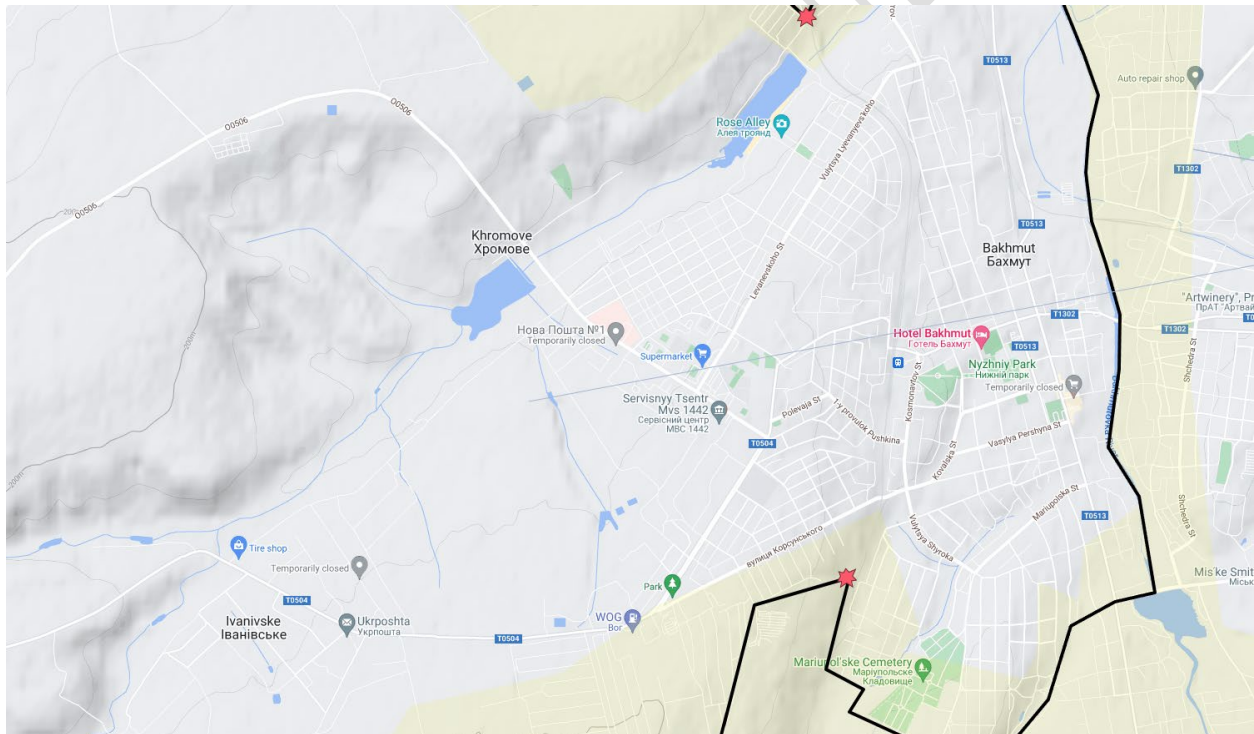
²⁷ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15874>

²⁸ <https://t.me/rybar/44453>

²⁹ https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2816

³⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

PMC Wagner was pushed away from [Bohdanivka](#), with their map showing their forces at the Berkhivske Reservoir's western edge.^{31 32 33} We split the difference and moved the line of conflict to the northeast. We moved the gray area away from [Khromove](#) because Ukrainian forces continue using the T-506 Highway GLOC, and videos showing the road and bridge remain intact.



Within Bakhmut, Russian and Ukrainian forces are trading direct and indirect tank fire, artillery, and mortars along

³¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15874>

³² <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

³³ <https://t.me/brussinf/5736>

the Bakhmutkova River.^{34 35} In the southeastern part of the city, Wagner forces advanced on Myru Street, west of the Danba Reservoir. We adjusted the map to show this advance and expanded the gray area.³⁶

Within [Bakhmut](#), fighting continued to the south, while the Bakhmutkova River separated the combatants in the east.³⁷
^{38 39} Russian forces destroyed the Mig-17 monument in southwest Bakhmut during the overnight hours. The monument was erected as a memorial to the cadets of the Bakhmut Flying Club who participated in World War II.⁴⁰

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

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

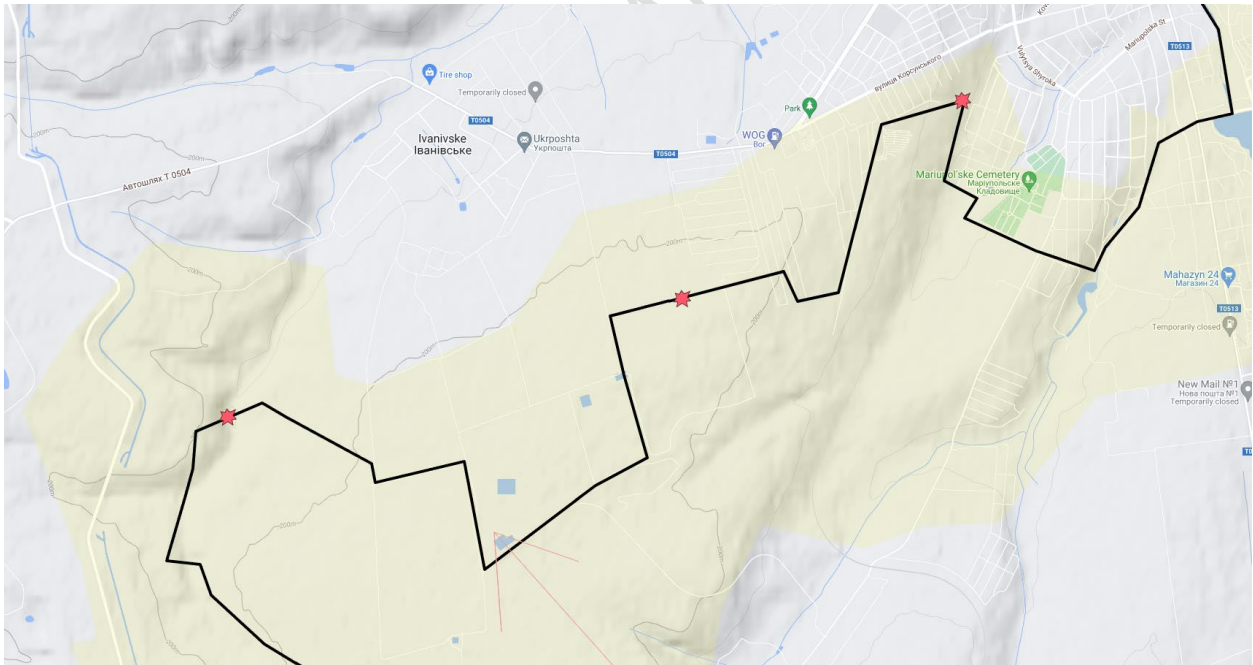
³⁶ <https://t.me/brussin/5736>

³⁷ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

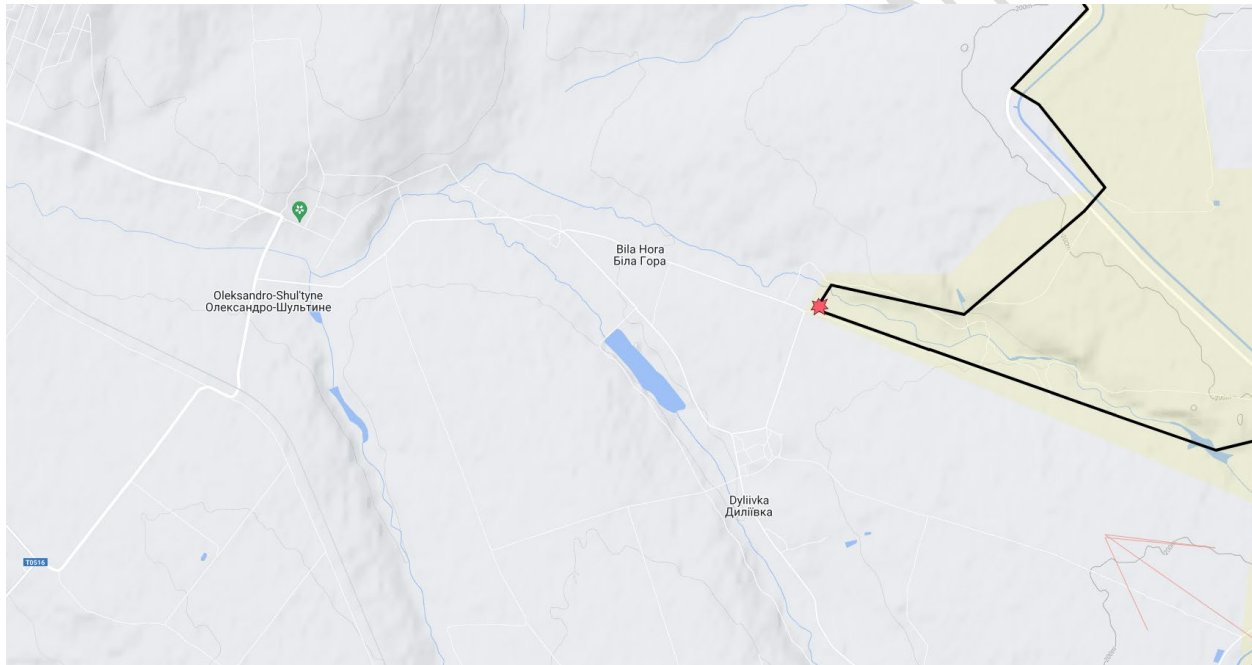
³⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

³⁹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11280>

⁴⁰ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/03/10/7392844/>



Fighting continued south of [Ivanivske](#), with no change in the situation.^{41 42 43 44} The Russian Ministry of Defense made a direct combat claim, saying units from the Southern Military District were leading the fight in this area.



In the Kosyantynivka Operational Direction, Russian forces attempted to advance on the hamlet of [Oleksandro-Shul'tyne](#) and were repulsed.⁴⁵

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

⁴² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)


⁴³ https://t.me/mod_russia/24711 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

⁴⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

⁴⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

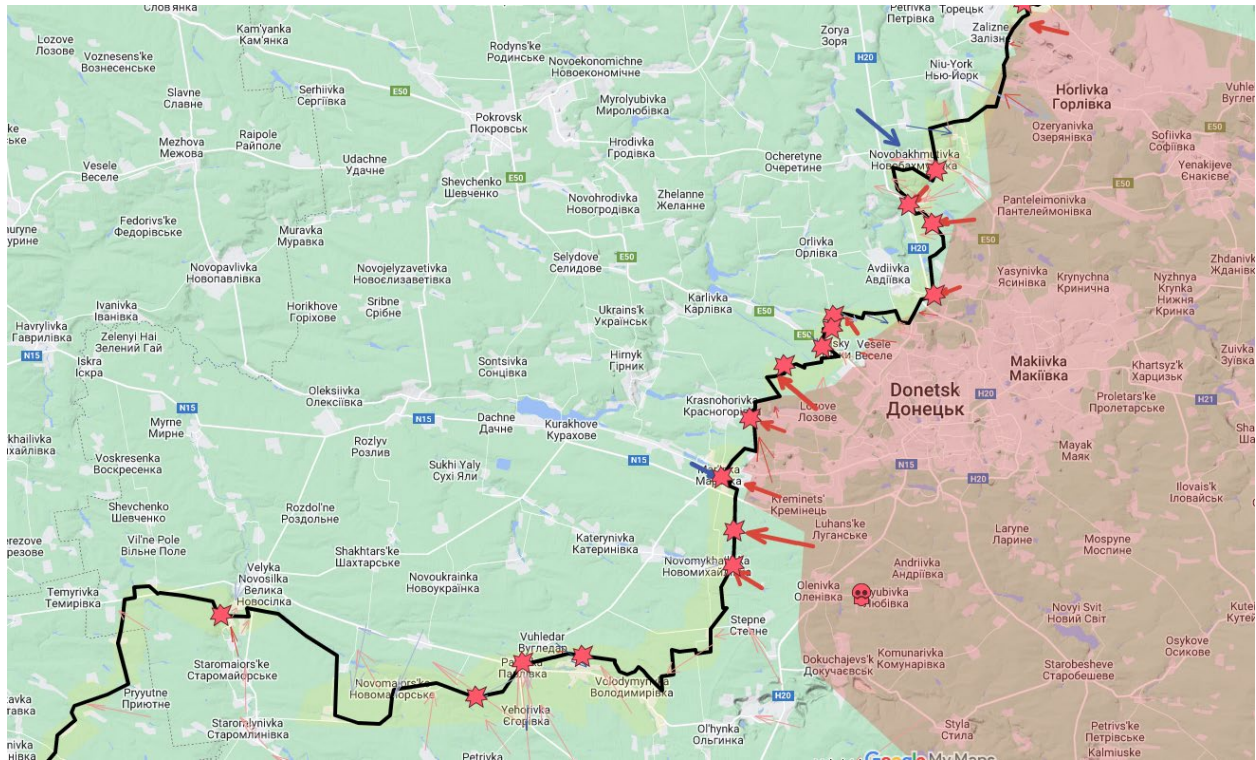
SPECIAL ASSESSMENT: Two misattributed claims are circulating about Bakhmut. Russian sources continue to reuse videos or highlight the same group of destroyed Ukrainian armored vehicles west of Ivanivske and claim the vehicles are newly destroyed equipment. Ukrainian sources are circulating a video of a Russian ammunition depot destroyed in Kurdyumivka, claiming a NATO-provided JDAM bomb destroyed it. The video was recorded in January and resulted from a drone-directed artillery strike.

ASSESSMENT: While Ukrainian forces hold the most critical defensive lines and maintain multiple GLOCs, the situation remains fluid. Russian forces complain about ammunition shortages across the Theater of War, and we continue to see strong evidence that Russian troops and PMC Wagner mercenaries are dealing with a shortage of antitank weapons. We maintain that, short of using chemical, biological, nuclear, or radiological (CBRN) weapons, the Russian military will continue doing everything possible to capture Bakhmut.

In Slovyansk, the Ukrainian government is deploying  [portable bomb shelters at bus stops and public areas](#) and has installed almost a dozen concrete structures.⁴⁶

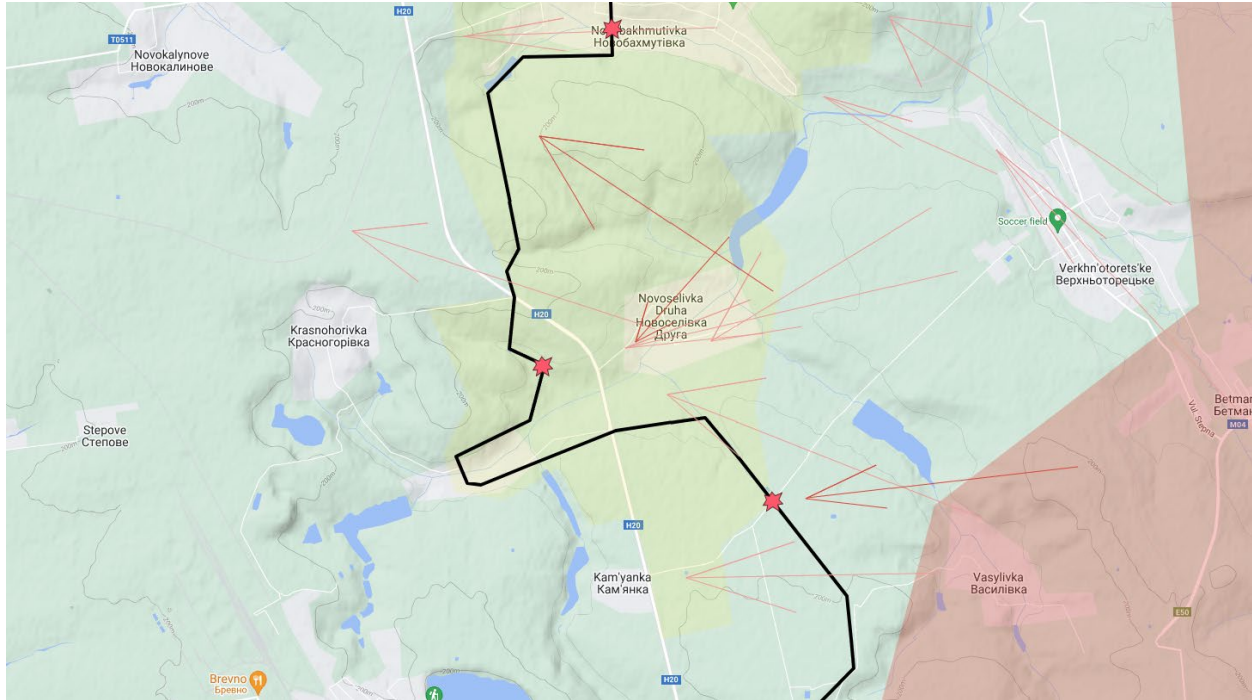
⁴⁶ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83543>

SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Russian Objective: Capture the entire region, integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, 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

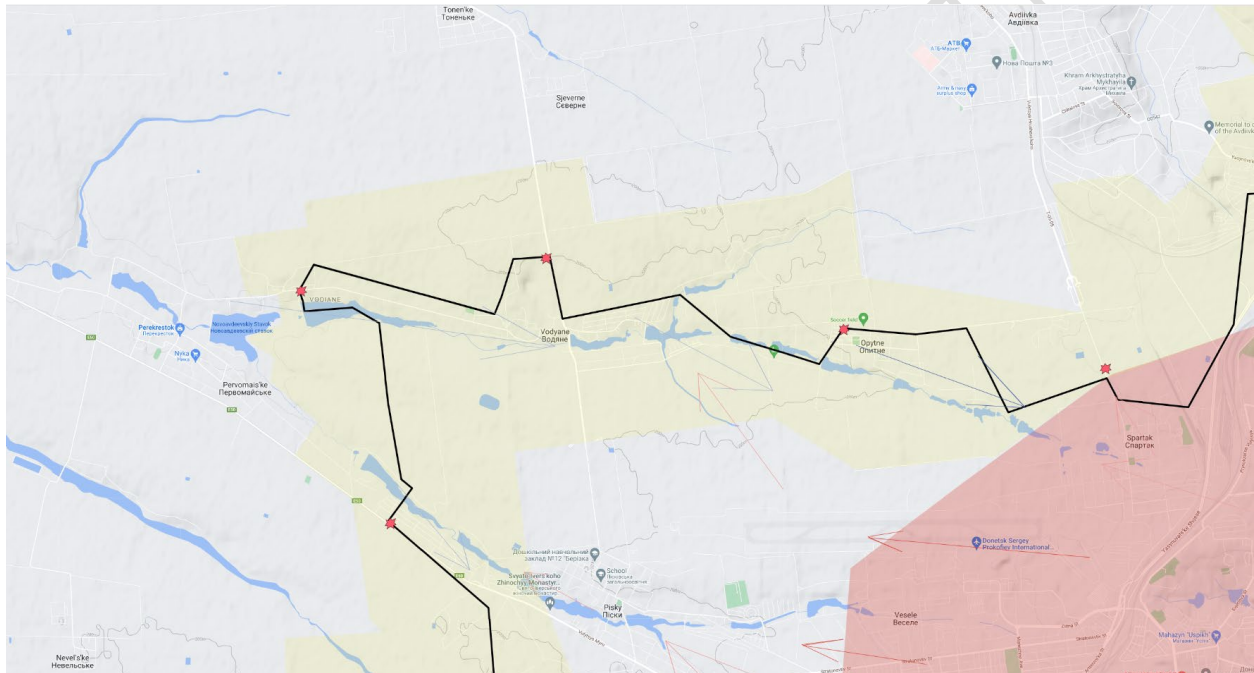


Fighting continued in the usual places with the same results, mostly.

Our favorite FSB Colonel Girkin did drop a surprise, claiming that the fighting around the [Krasnohorivka](#) plateau is being led by the Russian 2nd Army Corps, formerly of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR).⁴⁷ There was no change in the situation. Girkin also added his voice to the chorus of reports that the hamlet of [Vesele](#) was under the control of Russian troops, adding that the area had been captured last year and Ukrainian forces have a very strong second line of defense. Despite the lack of

⁴⁷ <https://t.me/strelkovii/4165>


visual evidence, we have three independent reports and two from trusted sources. Based on the available intelligence and terrain analysis, we updated the map. Russian troops continued their attempts to advance across the H-20 Highway to [Kamyanka](#).^{48 49}



South of Avdiivka, the situation is unchanged. Russian troops attempted another head-on attack on Ukrainian defenses in [Avdiivka](#). Russian forces also continued attacks west of [Vodyane](#) along the northern edge of [Pervomaiske](#)

⁴⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁴⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

and north toward [Sjeverne](#).^{50 51 52 53} In Vodyane, an armored platoon mustered on the earthen dam in the center of the village, with their movements exposed to drone activity. The formation got very lucky, with an air burst 155 mm artillery shell missing the center of the grouping by 10 to 15 meters.  [Despite the near miss](#), the platoon was likely rendered combat ineffective.⁵⁴ Russian forces continued sustained attacks on the Ukrainian firebase at [Nevelske](#) and remained unsuccessful.^{55 56 57}

⁵⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

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

⁵² https://t.me/mod_russia/24711 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

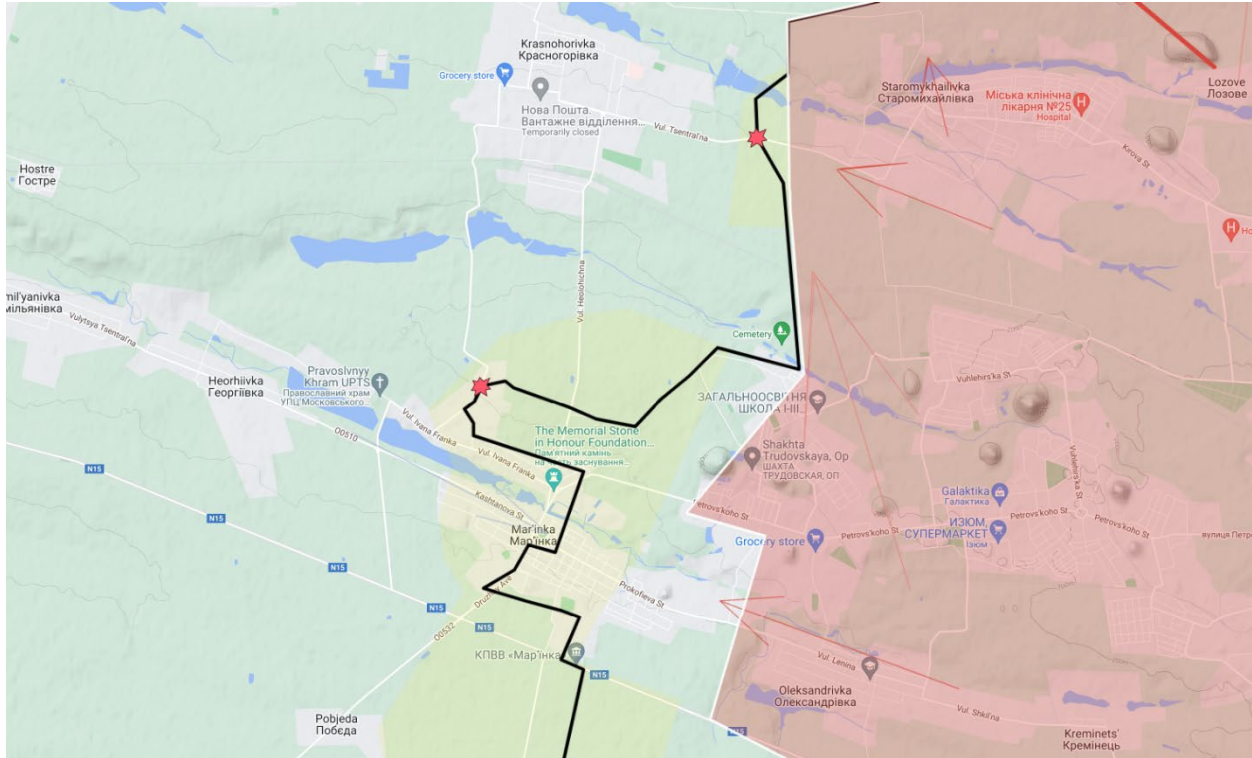
⁵³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

⁵⁴ <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/15492>

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

⁵⁶ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

⁵⁷ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>



In the Marinka Operational Area, fighting in the ashes of [Marinka](#) continued, with favorite FSB Colonel Girkin criticizing the Ukrainian active defense, reporting that Russian troops had been pushed back 100 to 150 meters but at great cost.^{58 59 60 61} Attacks on [Pobjeda](#) in the direction of the pig farm were repulsed.⁶²

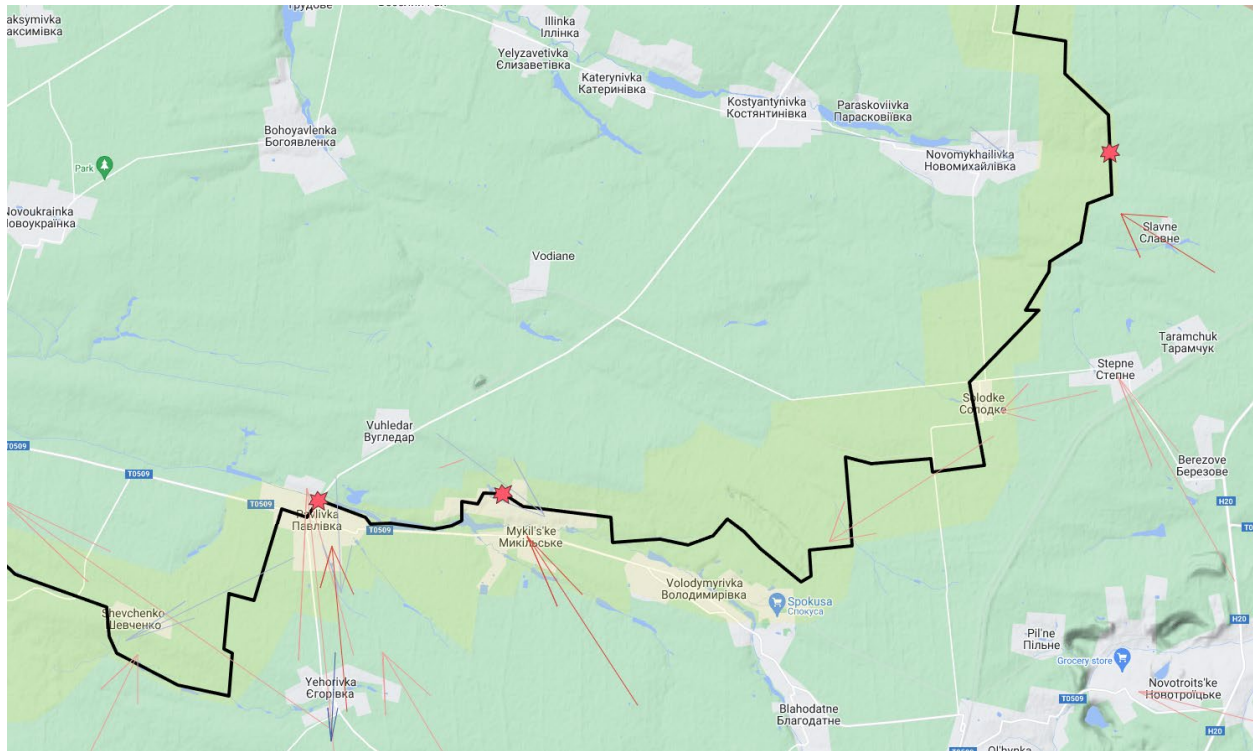
⁵⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁵⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

⁶⁰ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

⁶¹ <https://t.me/strelkovii/4165>

⁶² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)



In the Vuhledar Operational Area, Russian commanders woke up on March 9 and decided that another attack on [Novomykhailivka](#) would be a good use of their military resources.^{63 64}


Was it successful?

⁶³ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁶⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

No, with WarGonzo writing, "Good logistics make it possible for the Armed Forces of Ukraine to maintain the positions here."⁶⁵

Members of the Russian 136th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade restarted attacks on [Vuhledar](#). Due to a lack of artillery and armor support, they suffered heavy losses and retreated to their defensive lines.

In occupied-Volnovakha, Russian occupation administrators claimed rockets fired by HIMARS struck a  [large facility that held dozens of buses](#) in a town with a pre-war population of 20,000.⁶⁶

ASSESSMENT: Volnovakha is a major logistics and transit hub for Russian troops. In our assessment, the number of buses at the facility far exceeds what would be needed to support the local population.

In occupied Donetsk, the acting self-declared leader of the DNR, Denis Pushilin, dismissed Oleg Vitalievich Makarenko from his post as commander of the internal troops of the

⁶⁵ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11294>

⁶⁶ https://t.me/nm_dnr/9987

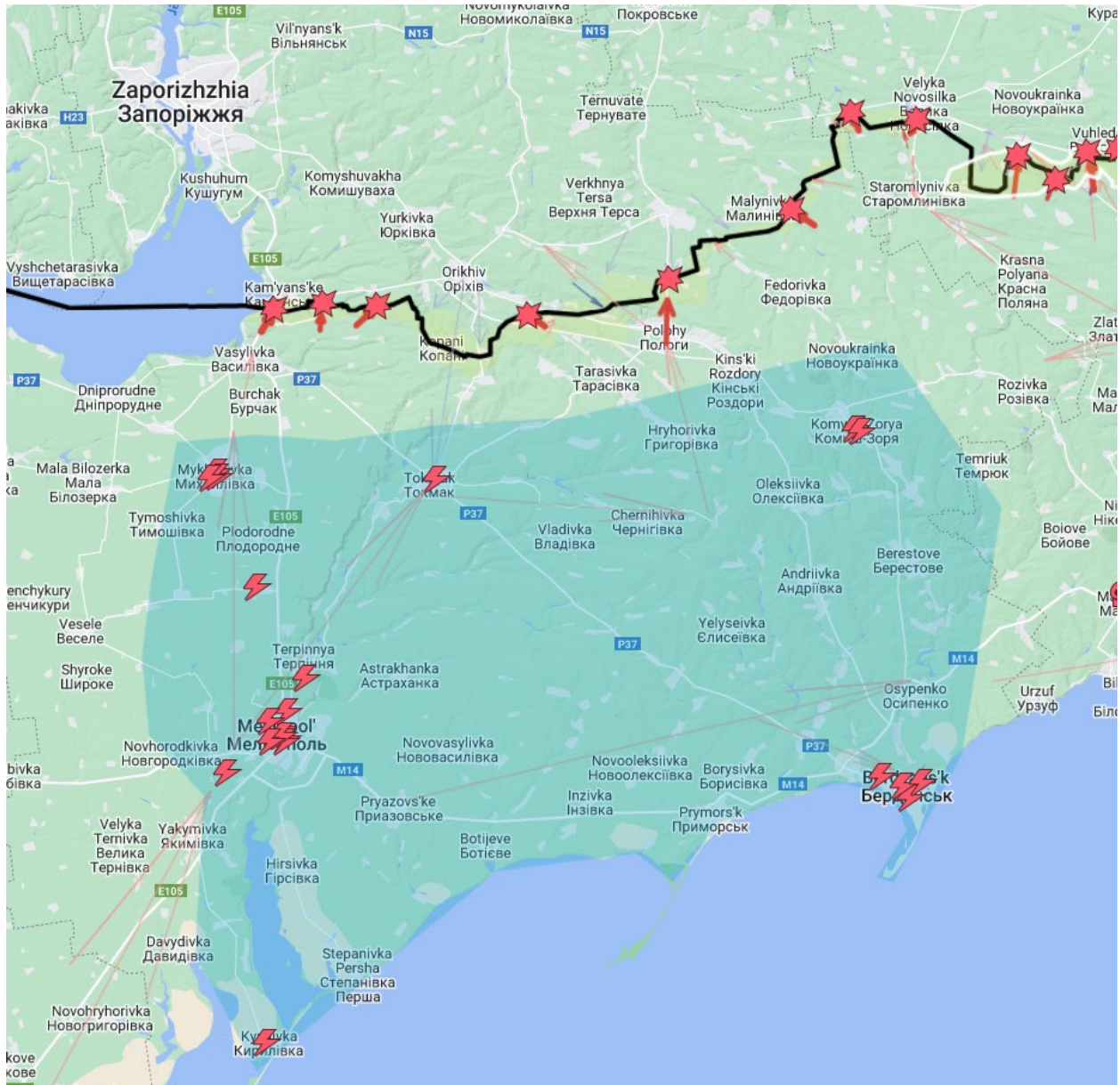
Ministry of Internal Affairs.⁶⁷ No reason was given in the terse two-sentence letter.

Six months after the illegal annexation of the Donetsk Oblast and promises that the border between Russia – the pre-2014 Russia – and occupied Ukraine would be erased, the Governor of the Rostov federal district announced tighter border restrictions. “Entry into the territory of the Rostov region from the territory of the DNR, as well as exit from it, can only be carried out through three automobile checkpoints, one railway checkpoint at Uspenskaya, and two pedestrian checkpoints. Entry and exit into the LNR are possible through 11 checkpoints. Entry and exit into the Rostov federal district is otherwise prohibited, despite the LNR and DNR being annexed by Russia in October 2022.”⁶⁸

⁶⁷ <https://t.me/vladlentatarsky/19851>

⁶⁸ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/61864>

ZAPORIZHIA



Russian Objective: Prevent a Ukrainian offensive into Zaporizhzhia, integrate captured territory into the Russian Federation, capture the remainder of the oblast

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

Errors and omissions: *Yesterday, we reported a brush fire erupted in Enerhodar that burned four acres. That should have been reported as four square kilometers, and we appreciate your understanding.*

After 11 hours of being disconnected from the power grid, engineers restored the 750 kilovolt (kV) power connection to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and brought Reactors 5 and 6 to hot shutdown.^{69 70 71} "Today's loss of all external power once again demonstrated how fragile and dangerous the situation is for the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant," International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Grossi said. "That very much remains the case...after the 750 kilovolt line was reconnected yet again. Experience tells us that this will most likely happen again and again unless we do something to prevent it."

⁶⁹ [International Atomic Energy Agency](https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83538)


⁷⁰ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83538>

⁷¹ <https://t.me/znppatom/1539>

After Russian missile attacks in the pre-dawn hours of March 9, Ukrainian engineers had mostly reconnected power, water, and heat to residents of the Zaporizhzhia region, except for the settlement of Skvortsov.⁷² Hours later, Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack struck infrastructure facilities in Zaporizhzhia again, knocking out power to almost one-third of the city.⁷³

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Operational Command South (OCS) reported 8 Black Sea Fleet vessels on patrol, including two frigates capable of launching up to 16 Kalibr cruise missiles.⁷⁴ The pre-dawn attack involved three frigates that launched 20 Kalibrs.⁷⁵

Repair work on the rail section of the Crimean Bridge over the Kerch Strait continues, with the first  [new span of the railway section installed](#), while repair work continues on one of the badly damaged bridge supports.⁷⁶ The rail section is not expected to reopen until Summer 2023.

⁷² <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83620>

⁷³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/03/10/7392757/>

⁷⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83470>

⁷⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83469>

⁷⁶ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24846>

Russian troops started building a defensive line on the western border of the Leninsky District in occupied Crimea. The dragon teeth being installed divides the Kerch Peninsula from the rest of Crimea.

In Odesa, repair work to the power grid continued. Public transit and railroad service have already restarted, with consumer users experiencing rolling blackouts to load balance the system.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ https://t.me/our_odessa/44961



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


Errors and omissions: *Ana Ras, our Spanish editor-in-chief, found a typographical error about the status of the Kakhovka Dam. The audio version was correct, but the written Situation Report read, "The uncontrolled water flow is **now** permitting the Kakhovka Reservoir to capture spring melt," when it should have read, "The uncontrolled water flow is **not** permitting the Kakhovka Reservoir to capture spring melt." We thank you for your understanding.*

Did we forget to tell you that Ana Ras will provide a weekly written summary of the Situation Reports in Spanish?

In Kherson, Russian and Ukrainian forces traded artillery strikes across the Dnipro River.^{78 79} Russian forces carried out 79 fire missions, firing over 400 artillery shells, mortars, Grad and Smerch rockets, indirect tank fire, and drone-delivered IEDs, killing four and wounding three.⁸⁰ The city of Kherson was shelled nine times, targeting the  [residential areas of Ship](#) and  [Korabelnaya Square](#).⁸¹

82

A video circulating on social media and multiple reports that a Ukrainian special operation force (SOF) unit had infiltrated Russian-occupied Nova Kakhovka and was  [engaged in a firefight with Russian troops](#).⁸³ The video is reportedly authentic, but we cannot confirm if the fighting is between Russian and Ukrainian troops, Russian troops fighting among themselves, or is misattributed.

Social media reports and pictures indicated  [a Russian ammunition depot](#) in Tavriysk was destroyed.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁷⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

⁸⁰ <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/4229>

⁸¹ <https://t.me/hueviyherson/36100>

⁸² <https://t.me/hueviyherson/36090>

⁸³ https://t.me/kherson_non_fake/6088

⁸⁴ https://t.me/kherson_non_fake/6086

Engineers had restored power in the Kirovohrad Oblast after Russian cruise missile strikes damaged regional infrastructure.⁸⁵

In the village of Pidgayets in the Ternopil Oblast, debris from a Russian cruise missile intercepted on March 9 damaged five buildings, including a private home. No injuries or power outages were reported.

In the Zhytomyr Oblast, rolling blackouts were instituted due to the damaged electrical infrastructure.⁸⁶



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


⁸⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83434>

⁸⁶ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83569>

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

Officials reported that  [the electrical supply in Kyiv had been restored](#) 12 hours after missiles struck the city, wounding three.⁸⁷ In Sumy, debris from an Iranian-sourced  [Shahed-136 kamikaze drone that was shot down was found](#).

RUSSIAN FRONT


Across the border of Sumy  [in the Russian village of Plekhovo](#), Russian opposition partisans operating from Ukraine claim they crossed the border and urged residents "not to go to work" for the next two weeks due to planned "surprises."⁸⁸ They also said it was time for Russians to rise up and join the fight against Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In Belgorod, local officials claimed construction of the Belgorod Ditch was completed. The border defenses

⁸⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83550>

⁸⁸ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24874>

combine half-height concrete dragon teeth, barbed wire, steel cable, antitank ditches, and berms. As we reported earlier in the year, the concrete dragon teeth were already crumbling. The project cost the oblast 10 billion roubles.⁸⁹

Television and radio stations were hacked in Russia – again – broadcasting a warning of an imminent nuclear strike and  [advising residents to prepare](#) and seek shelter.⁹⁰

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Russian propagandist Readovka called the ongoing attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure a failure and said that Ukraine has adapted, writing, "Today's attack was the most powerful in recent times: almost all regions of Ukraine were hit. The real results do not reach the success of November. The Ukrainian energy system has adapted: they...use batteries and generators [and] brief outages do little to no harm. Disabling military and civilian installations requires blackouts lasting weeks, not hours...Despite all the local successes, country 404

⁸⁹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83576>

⁹⁰ <https://t.me/informnapalm/16136>

[Ukraine] still has the Internet; trains run, and military factories work. What goals do we want to achieve?"⁹¹

Ukrainian officials responded to accusations by Transnistria officials that the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) was planning assassinations and terrorist attacks.⁹² "Any statements by the representatives of the so-called 'Ministry of State Security' of the fake 'Transnistrian People's Republic' regarding the participation of the SBU in the preparation of the terrorist attack should be considered exclusively as a provocation orchestrated by the Kremlin." The statement added, "Lies and provocations are one of the weapons actively used by the Russian Federation. But today, the whole world sees the true face of the aggressor country and does not believe the statements of Russia or its satellites."

ASSESSMENT: Our review did not find many Russian milbloggers or influential social media accounts repeating the accusations.

Poland began to build antitank fortifications along its border with Belarus matching the same structures erected

⁹¹ <https://t.me/readovkaru/2642>

⁹² <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83499>

on the border of the Russian enclave Kaliningrad in February. "This is part of the protection and deterrence strategy," Minister of Defense of Poland, Mariusz Blaszczak said.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, praised Ukraine's progress with anti-corruption measures, including appointing the head of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU). Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, "This is important for our further progress with European integration before the start of negotiations on Ukraine's membership in the European Union."⁹³

Hours after Russia's missile strikes - Slovakia and Poland agreed in principle to transfer Mig-29 fighter aircraft to Ukraine. The Minister of Defense of Slovakia, Jaroslav Nagy, said their nation is ready to transfer 13 units, but Parliament must first approve it. We had previously reported that the transfer would require an amendment to the Slovakian Constitution, which currently prevents the transfer. Theoretically, up to 52 aircraft (including 2-seat military trainer versions of the Mig-29) could be transferred. The Slovakian and Polish fighter planes are in

⁹³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/03/9/7392759/>

an airworthy state, with the Slovakian fleet retired on August 27, 2022, and the Polish aircraft still in use. The conversation to provide Ukraine with Polish Mig-29 aircraft has been ongoing for a year with repeated stumbles.⁹⁴

The European Union will allocate an additional 2 billion euros for the European Peace Fund, which finances the purchase of weapons for the Armed Forces. "This decision is a clear signal of the EU's unwavering commitment to military support for Ukraine," commented Sweden's representative to the EU, Lars Danielsson. According to the proposal of the high representative of the EU, Josep Borrell, 1 billion euros will be allocated for the supply of ammunition to the Armed Forces from the existing stocks. They plan to purchase 155 mm and 152 mm artillery shells with additional funds.⁹⁵

The EU announced that the training of 11,000 Ukrainian troops to NATO standards would be completed by the end of March, the equivalent of three brigades. The EU also plans to train another 30,000 Ukrainian soldiers through the rest of 2023.⁹⁶


⁹⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83597>

⁹⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83336>

⁹⁶ <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/15487>

Russian milbloggers report that Ukraine is receiving 15 technicals (modified pickup trucks) with twin coaxial 14.5 mm machine guns to shoot down kamikaze drones by the end of March, and the Netherlands is funding the construction of 150 more.⁹⁷

In Poland, the first Ukrainian battalion had completed training in operating and maintaining the Leopard 2A4 main battle tank (MBT).⁹⁸ German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said 18 German and three Portuguese Leopard 2 tanks would be sent to Kyiv by the end of March. That would increase the number of Leopard 2 tanks in Ukraine to 35, factoring in the 14 MBTs Poland has already transferred. This is enough armor to support three companies, equal to one battalion.⁹⁹

Germany also announced the transfer of 13 more  [Bieber \(Beaver\) armored bridge layers](#).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ <https://t.me/alexparkerlives/4828>

⁹⁸ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83528>

⁹⁹ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/61602>


¹⁰⁰ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/29681

Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the Oryx Database from February 24, 2022, to March 7, 2023.

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
Main battle tanks	1742	472	3.69:1	↑
Medium duty tanks	65	0	65:0	—
Armored fighting vehicles	799	269	2.97:1	—
Infantry fighting vehicles	2162	499	4.33:1	↓
Armored Personnel Carriers	301	232	1.30:1	—
MRAPs	46	43	1.07:1	New
Infantry mobility vehicles	183	291	0.63:1	—
Command and communications vehicles	233	9	25.78:1	—
Engineering vehicles	286	46	6.22:1	↑
Towed artillery	182	110	1.65:1	↓
Self-propelled howitzers and mortars	357	121	2.95:1	↓
MLRS	179	40	4.48:1	↑
SAMs	96	87	1.10:1	—
Mobile radars	24	51	0.47:1	—
EW/ECW	28	1	28.00:1	New
Winged aircraft	77	61	1.26:1	—
Helicopters	79	31	2.54:1	↑
Naval Vessels	12	25	0.48:1	—

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION AND MILITARY STATUS

The self-declared acting leader of the DNR, Denis Pushilin, signed a decree creating military commanders in Mariupol and the district entered into the armed forces of the Russian Federation 1st Army Corps. In addition, the decree orders the registration with the commissariat of all boys born in 2006.¹⁰¹


We reported on March 3 about mobiks from Mordovia and Mari El that arrived in the LNR on January 22, 2023, and appealed to President Putin to stop the transfer of their forces to the LNR. The surviving members  [made a follow-up video](#), reporting only eight survivors were remaining from a platoon of 38.¹⁰² The wife of one of the men said the unit was being sent to the front "in groups of eight to ten." After a March 1 attack, only three of the eight men returned, dragging a dead comrade back. Another four soldiers who were killed remain on the battlefield.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/7493>

¹⁰² https://twitter.com/ChrisO_wiki/status/1633957191206989829

¹⁰³ https://twitter.com/ChrisO_wiki/status/1633957200455430145

In occupied Donetsk, 70% of positions for city bus drivers are unfilled because so many people have been mobilized.¹⁰⁴

Complaints of ammunition shortages are spreading across Russian units. Russian milblogger  [Yuri Mezinov made a video saying](#), "In one way or another, the situation is the same on all fronts. I just don't understand what's going on. But whatever the reason is, as for me, it is **sabotage!**"¹⁰⁵


ASSESSMENT: Today's missile attack cost the Russian people between \$438 and \$581 million just in munitions, and it will take 30 to 45 days for the Russian defense industry to replenish.¹⁰⁶ Had those 81 missiles and eight drones been used against Ukrainian defensive positions, logistics hubs, and GLOCs supporting Bakhmut, the situation today may be very different. The growing complaints about ammunition shortages are self-inflicted by the Russian Ministry of Defense and extend beyond logistical issues. Countless tens of thousands of weapons have been used purposefully against Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure that could have been used against valid military targets. These are not the actions of


¹⁰⁴ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/61793>

¹⁰⁵ <https://t.me/MezinoYuri/1079>

¹⁰⁶ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24860>

liberators, which is rhetoric the Kremlin dropped months ago. These are the actions of a nation on a genocidal mission. While it is a cynical viewpoint, every mortar, artillery shell, rocket, bomb, and missile against a civilian is one more Ukrainian soldier that lives to fight on. Every wounded civilian creates ten motivated Ukrainian troops, and every civilian killed creates 100.

The 155th Naval Infantry Brigade was withdrawn from Vuhledar and replaced with the 136th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade, made up mostly of mobiks. The unit  [recorded a video appealing for more ammunition](#) and blamed PMC Wagner and its leader Yevgeny Prigozhin for receiving more than their fair share.¹⁰⁷ As previously reported, the 136th attacked Vuhledar on March 9 and, as they predicted, suffered heavy losses due to insufficient armor and artillery support.

For those doubting the losses suffered by the 155th, a video from a recent widow  [showed the military cemetery in Vladivostok](#) filled with fresh graves from unit members killed in late January and early February.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83463>

¹⁰⁸ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83464>

Not content with one war in Ukraine and military engagements in Syria and six African nations, Russian propagandist Margarita Simonyan wrote on her Telegram channel that Russia would soon be at war on two more.¹⁰⁹ The head of the Russian State Media Agency RT, formerly Russia Today, suggested that Russia needed to attack Moldova and Georgia because things are going so well in Ukraine. She feels a compelling need to add to the list of more successful three-day "special military operations."

The war of words between the Kremlin and PMC Wagner has reached a critical point. One of Prigozhin's news channels, which is just a front for disinformation operations, asked, "The head of the ground forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said that PMC Wagner is the driving force of the Russian troops, and the task of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is to grind it down on Bakhmut before the next counteroffensive. Do you agree with his opinion? Is PMC Wagner really the main combat-ready unit of the Russian troops today?"¹¹⁰

Prigozhin, escalating his war with the Kremlin, wrote, "Yes, the fighters and commanders who fight in the PMC Wagner are the most combat-ready, but this does not mean that in


¹⁰⁹ <https://t.me/gistapapapa/61811>

¹¹⁰ https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2820

other military units, the commanders are dumber and the fighters are less brave. This is due to the fact that in PMC Wagner they do not kill the initiative of the commander and do not humiliate the bravery of the fighter. And in this case, they are able to crush the enemy and carry out the most outstanding victories. This is the difference between PMC Wagner and other military units. We treat every fighter and every commander as an individual, as a person who is of great value to the team. Of course, if such a structure ceases to exist, it is not just bad; it is a collapse. It is a catastrophe, and it is a direct path to total shameful defeat."

Editor's Note: *This is some toxic corporate America human resources talking points. When PMC Wagner executes those who wash out of training, shoots troops who retreat against orders, and video records the sledgehammer execution of a former POW, is that treating "every fighter and every commander as an individual" and "a person who is of great value to the team?"*

The war over ammunition also escalated, with Prigozhin reporting he and his liaisons have been completely cut off from the Kremlin, Putin, and the Russian Ministry of Defense. "In order for me to stop asking for ammunition, they turned off all special telephones in all offices in all

divisions. Another important point: they blocked all passes to all departments that should make decisions," Prigozhin  [said in a recorded statement](#).^{111 112}

Thomas Grove of the Wall Street Journal asked Prigozhin via e-mail, "Are you aware of a coordinated attempt by Kremlin officials to limit your influence? Do you have enemies in the ranks of the Russian government?" In a public response, the head of PMC Wagner wrote, "I simply cannot answer...for ethical and wartime reasons."¹¹³

Smelling the blood in the water, our favorite FSB Colonel Girkin went after the increasingly embattled PMC leader hard. "Some people tend to make a circus out of everything. And to act in this bloody circus as a black clown, which no one laughs at, and it's not at all funny [but] rather scary [as] he grimaces. But it fascinates many. So [Prigozhin]...created his own personal black circus and realizes his ambitions, grimacing in the arena against the background of skulls, which are very reminiscent of the emblem of the Totenkopf SS division [of Nazi Germany] and other accessories of his own gloomy Cult Of death. At the moment, [liquidating] the only army corps capable of

¹¹¹ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24872>

¹¹² https://twitter.com/ChrisO_wiki/status/1633942899179270144

¹¹³ https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2818

successfully advancing would really be another step towards defeat in the war but not at all fatal, even in the current...conditions. It would be fatal for the political ambitions of the black clown Prigozhin."¹¹⁴

Editor's Note: The term "black clown" refers to a scary clown, such as Pennywise from the Steven King novels, and is not a racially tinged reference. While this might seem obvious to many readers and listeners, given Girkin's overt racism, we believed it was necessary to add the explanation.

All is going to plan.

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, condemned Russia's missile attack, saying "Russia's deliberate targeting of the civilian population and the energy network is a war crime. This strengthens our joint determination to continue promoting reforms in Ukraine on their behalf."¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ <https://t.me/strelkovii/4162>

¹¹⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83614>

Dmytro Kuleba, Foreign Minister of Ukraine wrote, "Russia launched a massive missile and drone attack on Ukraine overnight, leading to loss of lives and damaging civilian infrastructure. No military objective, just Russian barbarism."¹¹⁶

In Velyka Vilshanytsia, Lviv, an injured small dog refused to leave the debris of its destroyed home after a Russian missile struck the neighborhood, killing its owners.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/03/9/7392670/>

¹¹⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83504>



Did the PMC Wagner channel Gray Zone go woke on March 8? Addressing the execution of POWs by Russian troops, the Russian-aligned milblogger wrote, "What precedes these very war crimes is not...maniacal units, as well as their commanders, but state propaganda. If we hear calls from all [the talking heads] for strikes on cities, on civilian life support facilities, about nuclear ashes, and also that the inhabitants of some neighboring country are somehow not like that. That they [Ukrainians] need to be reflashed with "calibrations," then you should not be surprised at the cruelty at the front from ordinary soldiers."

While PMC Wagner is essentially saying, "it's the media's fault," they continued with their real motivation.

"If our State Duma adopted in the first reading a decree exempting from criminal liability for crimes in the LNR, DNR, Kherson...and Zaporizhia, but with an interesting caveat. 'If the act was aimed at protecting the interests of the Russian Federation.' So we [soldiers and mercenaries who commit war crimes] sit smeared with jam, hiding a jar behind our backs. But at the same time, we stubbornly [try to] prove to our mother that we did not eat it."¹¹⁸

ASSESSMENT: With a lot to unpack in that long statement, there is more than a nugget of truth that the Russian population has been fed a steady diet of propaganda for 20 years. History has repeatedly shown that using the tactics perfected by Joseph Goebbels in World War II, ordinary people can be led to do horrific acts willingly, gladly, and unquestionably. However, this does not absolve the perpetrators of those crimes. "I was just following orders" is not a defense in The Hague if those orders were immoral or illegal.

¹¹⁸ https://t.me/grey_zone/17626

The author of Gray Zone misses the point in another example of a Russian milblogger being so close to understanding the real problem. The language in the martial law decree of September 2022 that states, "If the act was aimed at protecting the interests of the Russian Federation," provides enough vaguery to cause pause on who decides what protects the interests of the Russian Federation. Six months ago, Prigozhin could do no wrong. Today Prigozhin has higher odds of taking a short walk out of a tall office building than Girkin. The jam in that jar they're hiding behind their back is rotten.

Russian milblogger Vladlen Tatarsky presented a more enlightened point of view about the execution of POWs that goes beyond "don't get caught" and "the media made me do it." Tatarsky wrote, "Regarding the execution of prisoners, I will say this. I really want to kill anyone dressed in the uniform of the Ukrainian army, but I know from life experience that if you kill a person in a defenseless state, karma will kick you. Definitely f*** you up, 100%. Because [doing] this is not right."¹¹⁹

Deep breath.

¹¹⁹ <https://t.me/vladlentatarsky/19841>

The Kherson raccoon being held as a furry POW made another appearance, and we are happy to report the trash panda was 📺 [doing everything possible to escape](#) from its handler, who now has to wear thick gloves.¹²⁰


On another light note, we maintain the scariest force on the planet is an angry Slavic, Ukrainian, or Russian babushka. In this video clip, a Ukrainian babushka from Kherson, the most fearsome on the planet, 📺 [expresses her opinion](#) of the remains of a Russian Grad rocket cluster munition cassette.¹²¹

GEOPOLITICAL

The Georgian Parliament withdrew the repressive laws that would declare any NGO or media source that got more than 20% of its funding outside of Georgia a foreign agent. Citizens were unimpressed, with protests expanding, although there were fewer clashes with police. Protesters don't believe the Georgia Dream political party will keep its

¹²⁰ <https://t.me/informnapalm/16127>

¹²¹ https://t.me/Nazars_look/13138

word to table the measure permanently.¹²² Protesters are also demanding  [the release of 133 people in custody](#).¹²³

Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orban, said that Europe and his nation must prepare for a future with Russia playing a smaller role.¹²⁴ "I understand the need to restore Russian-European relations after the war, but this is far from realistic. That is why Hungary's foreign and economic policy should seriously think about what kind of relations we can establish and maintain with Russia in the next 10-15 years," Orban said at an economic forum in Budapest.

United States Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, the third person in the line of succession in the United States government, rejected Ukrainian President Zelenskyy's invitation for him to visit Kyiv amid growing concerns the GOP leader will drive the United States to default over continued aid to Ukraine.¹²⁵

Zelenskyy had invited the Congressperson to see firsthand where United States tax dollars were going. In an interview with the United States network CNN, McCarthy said, "Let's

¹²² <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24845>

¹²³ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24911>

¹²⁴ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24969>

¹²⁵ [Business Insider](#)

be very clear about what I said – no blank checks, OK? So, from that perspective, I don't have to go to Ukraine to understand whether there's a blank check or not. I will continue to get my briefings and others, but I don't have to go to Ukraine or Kyiv to see it. And my point has always been, I won't provide a blank check for anything."

In China, Xi Jinping was unanimously re-elected as President and Chairman of the Central Military Council for the third consecutive time.¹²⁶ He is the first Chinese leader in the modern era to be elected to a third term, after vowing earlier he wouldn't seek one.

ECONOMIC

Binance, the largest crypto exchange, has banned Russians from buying and selling dollars and euros. A representative of the exchange explained that the ban is in response to the tenth round of EU sanctions, saying, "The Russians used the site to transfer money abroad." Residents of Russia and any individuals located in Russian territory will not be able to

¹²⁶ <https://t.me/kommunist/16292>

buy and sell dollars and euros. In addition, the exchange banned EU citizens from buying and selling roubles.^{127 128}

In a surprise move, Turkey closed its border to the transit of more than 10,000 sanctioned items from the EU to Russia. On March 8, the ability for shippers to process the transit of goods on the sanctions list in the customs systems of Turkey, where the destination was Russia, was suspended. Valeria Savenkova, the commercial director of Transasia Logistics, said the list included "electronics, spare parts, equipment...a lot of chemicals... [and] consumer goods costing more than 300 euros each."^{129 130} The ban impacts over \$3 billion worth of cargo but does not extend to products made in Turkey.

Turkey is negotiating with the United Nations, Ukraine, and Russia to extend the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The current framework is set to expire on March 18, 2023.¹³¹

The rouble held an exchange rate of 76 for 1 US dollar.

¹²⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83523>

¹²⁸ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/61786>

¹²⁹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/83552>

¹³⁰ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24915>

¹³¹ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/24863>

West Texas Intermediate crude slid to \$76 a barrel, and Brent dropped to \$82. Russian Urals crude fell to an “official price” of \$60 a barrel.

United States wholesale RBOB gasoline also declined, with the price on the spot market dropping to \$2.62 a gallon (69 cents a liter).

Dutch TTF Natural Gas Futures remain stable and in a narrow trading range, with April and May contracts climbing to 47 euros per megawatt hour. We will stop reporting European natural gas futures pricing on March 30 due to the end of winter and ongoing price stability.

Chicago SRW Wheat Futures declined, trading at \$6.68 a bushel for May 2023 delivery – the lowest price since January 2021 when COVID restrictions battered world markets.