



## Malcontent News Russia-Ukraine War SITREP 6/24/22 23:59\* PDT

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### **SUMMARY – DAY 121**

It has been 3,039 days since Russia occupied Crimea on February 27, 2014.

The news that Ukrainian military leaders ordered the evacuation of Severodonetsk and the collapse of the Zolote-Hirske pocket came as we were writing the June 23 Situation Report. Today's report is quieter than other analysts because we have already covered most of the activity during the overnight hours and the morning of June 24, local time.

Ukrainian forces are engaged in a tactical withdrawal from Severodonetsk, with fighting continuing. Troops are moving across the Siverskyi Donets River by boat and zipline. It is likely any heavy equipment in the city will be lost.

The withdrawal includes the Severodonetsk suburbs on the east bank of the Siverskyi Donets – Synetskyi, Pavlohrad, Lisna Dacha, Syrotyne, and Voronove.

Russian forces captured Bila Hora, coming to the edge of Lysychansk. Russian forces also captured Vovchoyarivka.



The Russian Ministry of Defense claims 2,000 Ukrainian troops are surrounded in Zolote, with 41 surrendered. In our assessment, this is unlikely as Russian officials previously claimed the garrison in Zolote was between 2,000 and 2,200, then reported that many Ukrainian troops withdrew starting on June 20. On June 21, withdrawing troops pushed into Komyshuvakha, possibly to widen the evacuation route west of Hirske. There are likely Ukrainian forces still in Zolote, Hirske, and Komyshuvakha.

The Bakhmut-Lysychansk T-1302 Highway Ground Line of Communication (GLOC — aka supply line) continues to be interdicted by Russian forces at Vasylivka. A video showed a Russian command vehicle east of Nahirne and Bilohorivka [Donetsk], indicating that Russian forces were in the immediate area.

Russian forces launched an offensive at Marinka near Donetsk, the first in weeks. It was unsuccessful.

Ukrainian forces continued their offensive south of Pavilivka, securing Vehorivka and Shevchenko.



Ukrainian SOF is operating as far south as Ozherelne, southwest of Polohy. A video made by Russian forces showing at least one vehicle ambushed was geolocated 12 kilometers south of the previously known line of conflict.

Russian troops were forced to retreat from their stronghold in Vysokopillya and retreated to Olhyne in the Kherson Oblast after suffering heavy losses.

Ukrainian officials have called for the total evacuation of Mykolaiv because the city is under constant missile and rocket attacks, and officials cannot assure the safety of civilians.

Russian forces attempted offensives on the Izyum axis toward Slovyansk from Bohorodychne and Dolyna. Neither advance was successful. Russian forces also attempted to advance on Kurulka and tried to recapture Virnopillya in the Barvinkove direction. Neither attempt was successful. Ukrainian forces destroyed a Russian command post and fuel depot in Izyum.

Russian state media agency RBC announced that military exercises in the Kaliningrad enclave have started and will continue for a week. Russian forces are using aircraft and



helicopters to drop combat-ready paratroopers into the region as part of the exercises.

The Russian Air Force flew bombers into Belarusian airspace and fired missiles at Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Zhytomyr Oblasts. Up to 24 cruise missiles were fired from aircraft that took off from the Russian Federation and flew to the Ukrainian frontier.

#### **DAILY ASSESSMENT**

We assess the following:

- 1. Ukrainian forces will continue a tactical withdrawal from Severodonetsk over the next two to four days.
- 2. We can not determine when Russian forces will take full administrative control of Lysychansk.
- 3. Ukrainian forces in Lysychansk risk having the remaining GLOCs that run through Siversk severed.
- 4. We maintain Russia's capability for offensive warfare in Ukraine has become deficient due to a lack of light infantry forces.
- 5. Outside the Luhansk Oblast, Russian forces have been put on a defensive posture.



- 6. Russian forces are starting to show multi-axis weakness in Kharkiv, Izyum, Kherson, and Velyka Novosilkva.
- 7. Russia's actions in Kaliningrad, Belarus, and cruise missile strikes on the Polish border are pushing the limits for a military misunderstanding with dire consequences.

We maintain Russia does not have enough resources to control and hold territorial gains in the medium and long term without a significant pause in combat operations or a formal declaration of war against Ukraine, coupled with additional mobilization.

We continue to have concerns about Ukraine's ability to take the initiative in late July or August. Ukraine needs to manage its combat losses, and western allies need to accelerate arms shipments to make this possible.

We maintain our concern we are in the Mutual Assured Destruction Instability Paradox, given Russia's unyielding view on Ukraine and its diminishing capabilities through conventional warfare. Military exercises in Kaliningrad are almost certainly a show of force but create an environment where misinterpretation can occur. Given the border

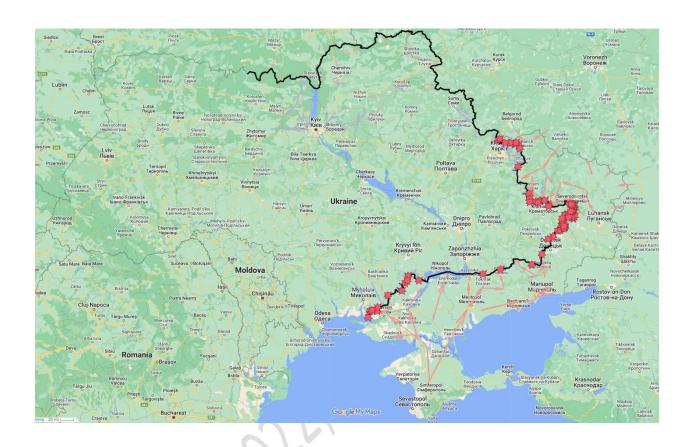


tensions with Lithuania and Poland, launching highaltitude missile strikes from Belarusian airspace was highly provocative. The decisions emanating from the Kremlin are not geopolitically or militarily sound.

Finally, despite our concerns about the expansion of conflict outside of Ukraine, the Kremlin has repeatedly made it clear its long-term ambitions extend to all of Ukraine and beyond its borders. NATO and Western-allied nations would be well served to assure a true military victory that leaves Ukraine capable of economic and political stability in a post-war environment.



## **TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP**

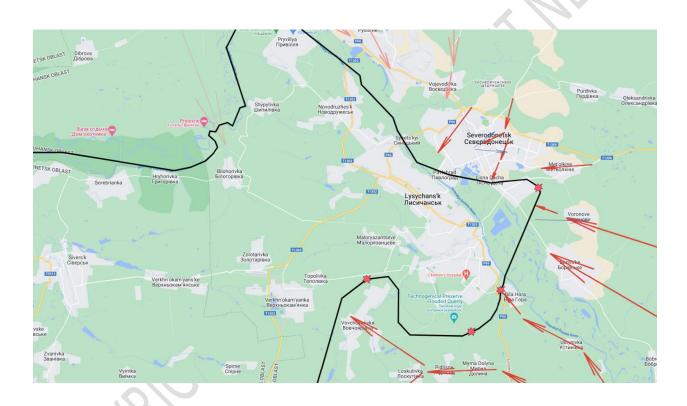




### **DONBAS REGION**

### **LUHANSK**

## Severodonetsk Salient



The Ukrainian military is continuing the withdrawal from Severodonetsk, which will take several days, according to Roman Valesenko in a CNN interview.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> CNN



There remain 568 civilians in the Azot Chemical Plant who do not want to evacuate to Russia-controlled territory. Ukrainian officials indicated they would evacuate them during periods of reduced artillery fire by Russian forces, but the process is hazardous. Ukrainian forces in Syrtoyne, Voronove, Lisna Dacha, and Pavlohrad will also be withdrawing.

Oleksandr Motuzianyk, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, stated there would be no further specific details released about the Ukrainian withdrawal from the beleaguered city.<sup>2</sup>

"Information on whether units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are in a certain area, including Sievierodonetsk, is confidential. We are not talking about it. I would ask everyone to focus on the information provided by the General Staff and the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine."

"I would urge both journalists and government officials to allow the Armed Forces of Ukraine to report on the actions of the Ukrainian army, using the information that is publicly available."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/24/7354435/



"It is not necessary to harm the conduct of a defense operation."

Journalist Yurii Butusov withdrew from Severodonetsk with a group of Ukrainian forces on June 24.3 "Without the bridges and the pontoons, each day of resistance was purely heroic." He promised to share details later.

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported continued fighting in Syrtoyne, Voronove, and Metolkine.<sup>4</sup>

Pro-Russian account Rybar confirmed our evaluation that fighting in the "industrial districts" in Lysychansk was at a gelatin factory in a remote location.

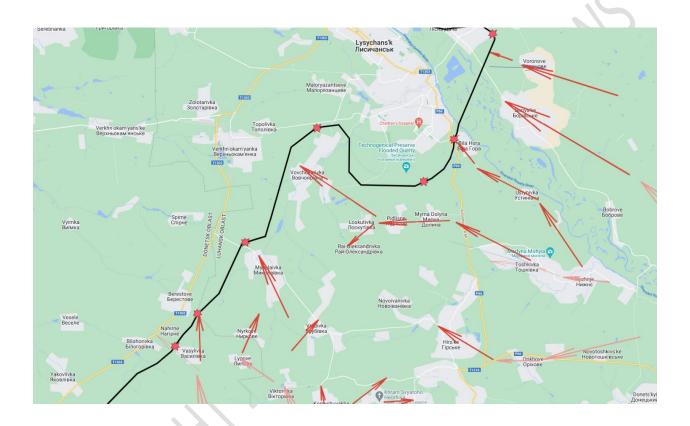
Ukrainian lines of defense at Vovchoyarivka failed to hold, with Russian forces capturing the suburb of Lysychansk. Russian forces fired artillery and executed airstrikes on the Bakhmut-Lysychansk T-1302 Highway GLOC, including the settlements of Berestove, Spirne, and the northwestern

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/24/7354401/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine - Facebook



region of Mykolaivka.<sup>5</sup> It was also reported that Russian forces fired artillery at Ukrainian positions in Loskutivka, indicating the settlement is contested.



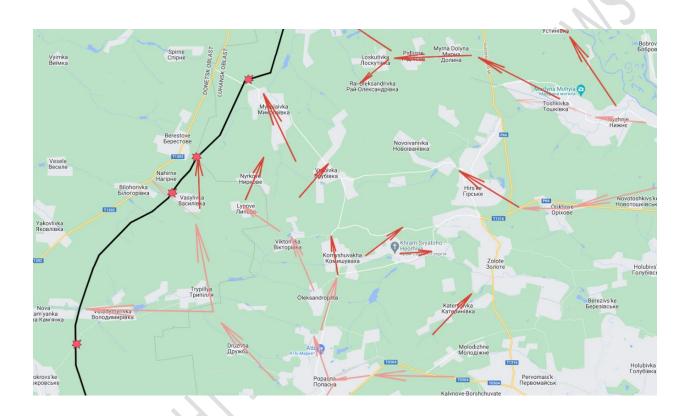
**ASSESSMENT:** Based on the reports, Ukrainian forces may still be in the western half of Loskutivka but will almost certainly be forced to withdraw.

Luhansk Regional State Administration Head Serhiy Haidai reported that Russian forces shelled Bilohorivka [Luhansk].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3737



Russian forces continue to attempt to advance on Bakhmut. Fighting continued east of Pokrovske and Klynove.



A Russian ammunition depot in Svatove, Luhansk Oblast, was hit by a Ukrainian missile early on June 25 local time. NASA FIRMS data and satellite imagery confirm the report.

<sup>6</sup> https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1540546144958402562



On June 23, a Russian antiaircraft system located on the eastern edge of <u>Alchevsk in Luhansk had a catastrophic</u> <u>malfunction</u>. One of the Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM) returned to the launch site, destroying the launcher and remaining ammunition. Sentinel EO Browser showed significant fire damage on the eastern edge of Alchevsk on June 24.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1540148820897435648

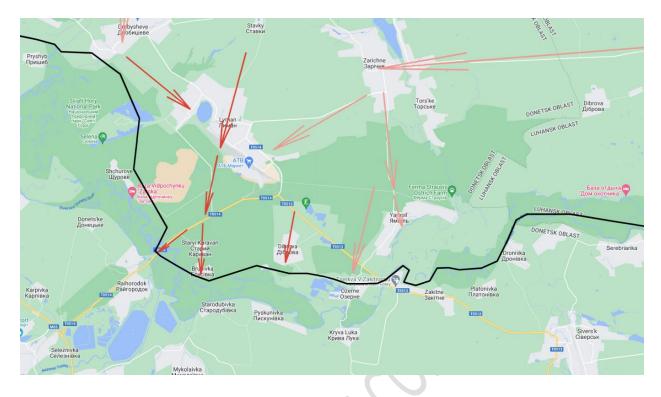




## Lyman Axis

There weren't any major combat operations around Lyman on June 24. Russian forces have intensified the shelling of Siversk in an attempt to interdict the Siversk-Lysychansk GLOC.

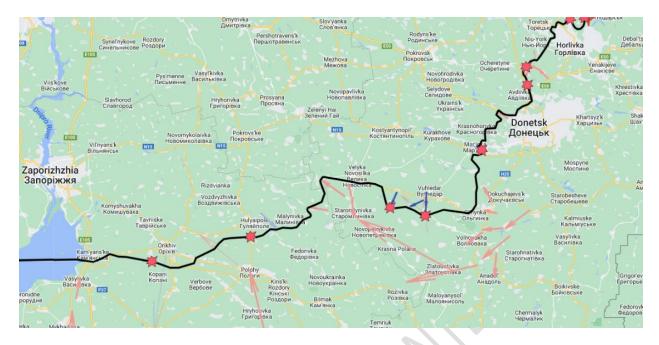




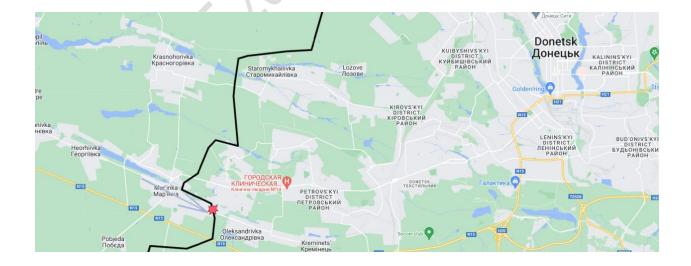
### **SOUTH DONBAS AND WESTERN ZAPORIZHIA**

Errors and Omissions: Yesterday, we reported that Russian forces had attempted an attack on the settlement of Shevchenko. We had indicated the settlement was west of Velyka Novosilka in the Donetsk Oblast. The settlement that Russian forces attacked was Shevchenko, southeast of Velkya Novosika, also in the Donetsk Oblast. The two settlements that share the same name in the same oblast are about 40 kilometers apart. We appreciate your understanding as we try to interpret the ongoing situation through the fog of war.



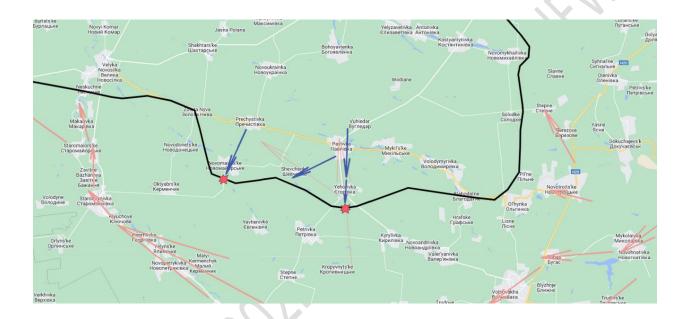


There were scattered artillery exchanges and airstrikes from Horlivka to Velkya Novosilka in Donetsk. Russian forces attempted an offensive on Marinka but were unsuccessful.





Ukrainian forces expanded their offensive from Pavilivka, liberating the settlements of Shevchenko [Donetsk, southeast of Velyka Novosilka], Yehorivka, and Novomairoske.8



There was a report that the elite Ukrainian 1st Tank Brigade, 1st Tank Battalion has been deployed to Zelene Pole, northwest of Rivnopil.<sup>9</sup>

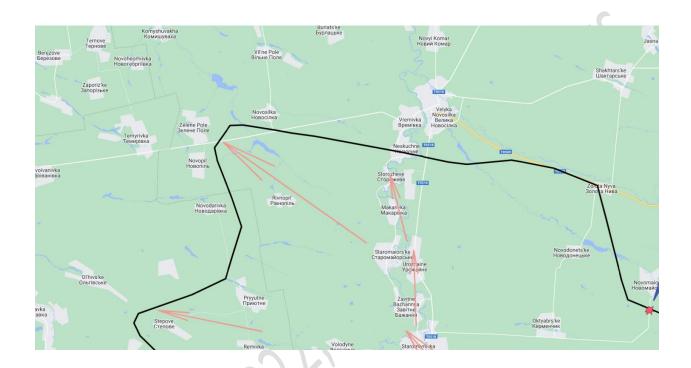
**Editor's Note:** There is a second Zelene Pole in the Donetsk Oblast west of Niu York. In our assessment, the 1st Tank Battalion was deployed to the Rivnopil area due to

<sup>8</sup> https://twitter.com/mhmck/status/1540295539249610752/photo/1

<sup>9</sup> https://twitter.com/militarylandnet/status/1540323311208599556



potential weakness in the Russian line of defense and significant evidence the settlement is contested.



A Russian convoy was ambushed in the northwestern part of Ozherelne, southwest of Polohy. 10 (some viewers may be troubled by the video, discretion is advised) The video was geolocated [47°28'19.0"N 36°07'16.4"E].11

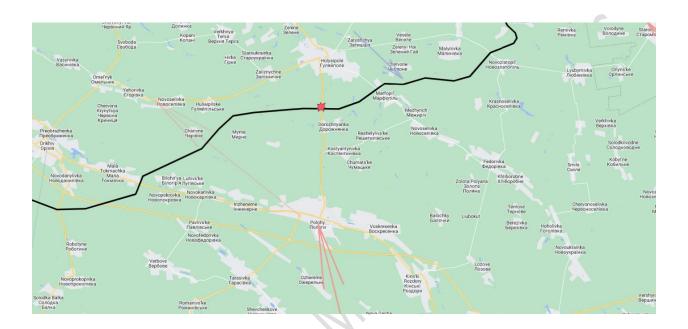
**ASSESSMENT:** A small group carried out the ambush using light weapons. This assault does not indicate a more extensive military operation is happening to liberate

<sup>10</sup> https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1540426630627221506

<sup>11</sup> https://goo.gl/maps/G7p7roJvbyg3KHyU6



Polohy. The video indicates that Ukrainian SOF or coordinated Ukrainian insurgents are operating 12 kilometers south of the known line of conflict.



There were artillery exchanges in Zaporizhia from Hulyaipole to Orikhiv.

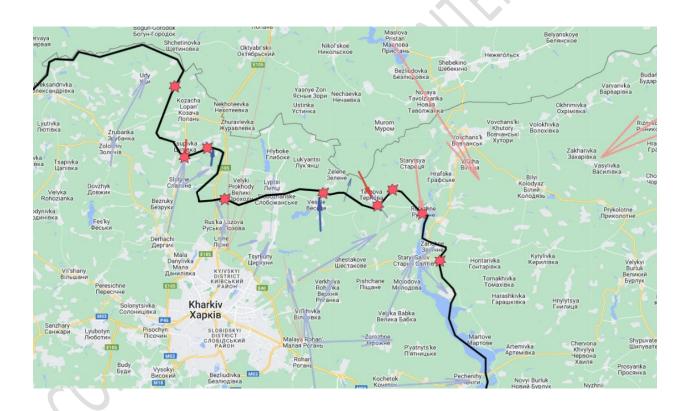
We have recoded Rivnopil as contested again due to our geographical error on June 23. We continue to code Pyatkhatky as contested.



### **KHARKIV REGION**

### **NORTHERN KHARKIV COUNTEROFFENSIVE**

Russian forces attacked the restive settlement of Udy on the Russian border, northwest of Kharkiv city. The attack was not successful.<sup>12</sup>



Russian forces continue to shell civilians and civilian infrastructure north of Kharkiv and within the city itself.

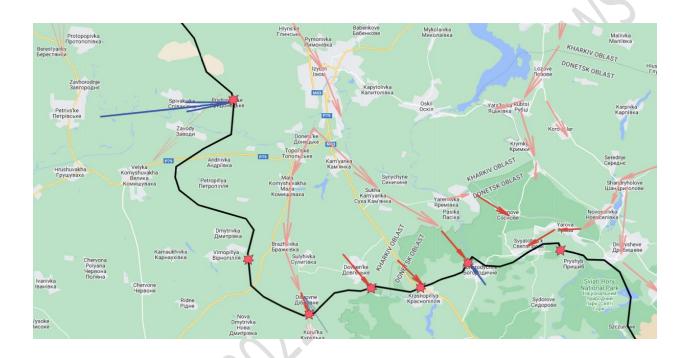
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<sup>12</sup> Ukrinform



## There is additional information in the **War Crimes and Human Rights** section.

#### **IZYUM AXIS**



Russian forces made another attempt to advance into the settlements of Dolyna and Bohorodychne and were unsuccessful. Additionally, Russian forces attempted to advance on Kurulka and recapture Virnopillya and were unsuccessful.

**ASSESSMENT:** We do not believe the attacks on Kurulka and Virnopillya are renewed attempts to advance on Barvinkove. Russian forces are having an increasingly



challenging time west of Izyum and are seeking to spread Ukrainian units along the western axis.

Ukrainian forces operating west of Izyum are becoming increasingly successful at interdiction of the western GLOC that enables Russian supplies to reach the southern front. Ukrainian forces destroyed a significant number of fuel trucks east of Izyum and the Russian command post within Izyum itself.<sup>13</sup>

Editor's Note: We have additional information about the destruction of the fuel trucks. Oleksiy Arestovych's report of "several dozen fuel trucks" destroyed does not accurately assess the strike. However, losses were significant, just not as large as claimed. Due to Operational Security (OPSEC) and to protect our contacts, we will not provide additional details.

# DNIPRO, KHERSON & MYKOLAIV, ZAPORIZHIA REGION

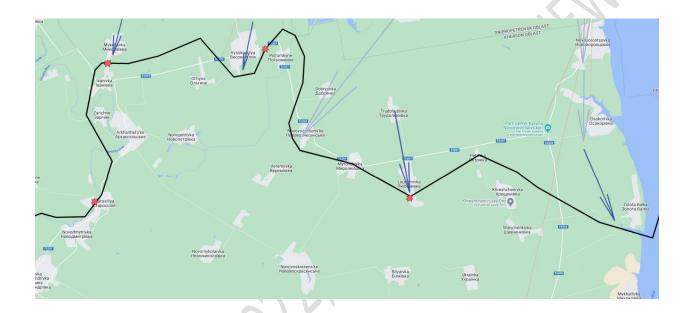
The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported that a counteroffensive in the northern part of the Kherson

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<sup>13</sup> TCH



Oblast caused Russian forces to retreat to Olhyne. 14 On June 25, local time, it was confirmed that Russian forces had retreated from their stronghold in Vysokopillya, and the settlement had been liberated.

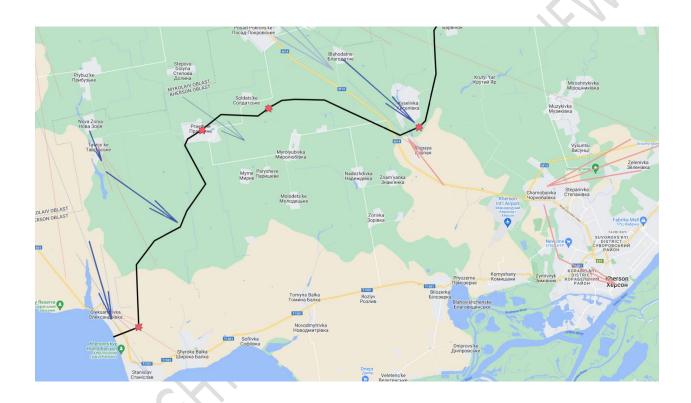


ASSESSMENT: The Russian forces retreat from the Vysokopillya salient it is unlikely caused only by Ukrainian forces advancing from the north. If the Russian GLOC from Velkya Oleksandrivka were unimpeded, Russian forces would likely want to continue maintaining the stronghold north of there.

<sup>14</sup> https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/347169520929466



Insurgents destroyed the car of Russian collaborator Dmytro Savluchenko. Savluchenko, part of the puppet government in Kherson, was killed in the attack. (viewer discretion is advised)



A video was widely circulated on Instagram and Twitter suggesting that Ukrainian forces had entered the city of Kherson. We are electing not to share the video or provide it as a footnote to prevent the spread of disinformation. Sergey Khlan, the Kherson Regional Military Administration chairperson, reported the video is fake. 16

<sup>15</sup> https://twitter.com/mhmck/status/1540283747345498112

<sup>16 &</sup>lt;u>TCH</u>



"A video has appeared in the media where our Armed Forces enter Kherson. I would like to say this is the case, but, unfortunately, this is not the case — yet. Only objective information will help make the right decisions. Therefore, we will not spread fakes. we are waiting for our Armed Forces and a counteroffensive."

**Editor's Note:** We spent significant time attempting to geolocate the video after it was released. To the best of our ability, we tentatively identified Pravdyne in the Kherson Oblast as the likely location.

Oleksandr Sienkevych, the Mayor of Mykolaiv, has called for the complete evacuation of the city. "We are being shelled every day with different types of munitions. Around 80% of those munitions are cluster munitions. This means they are fired from Smerch or Uragan multiple-launch rocket systems."

"I advise everyone to leave the city — everyone who wants to survive because it's [unclear] when all of this will be over."



Almost half of Mykolaiv residents have fled the city since hostilities started on February 24.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expressed deep concern for the welfare and safety of Ukrainian workers at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). It demanded the organization be allowed to inspect the facility.<sup>17</sup>

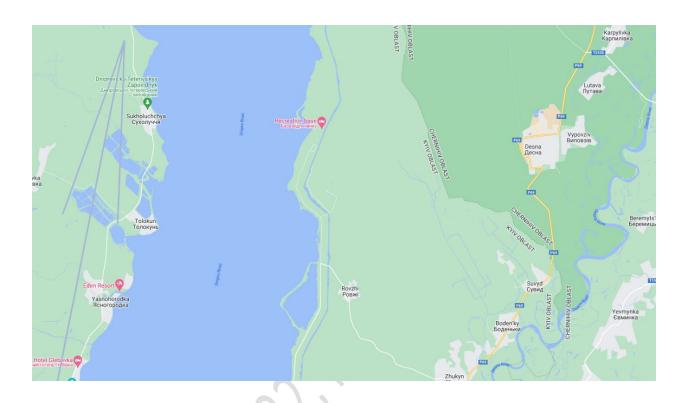
"The situation at this major nuclear power plant is clearly untenable. We are informed that Ukrainian staff are operating the facility under extremely stressful conditions while the site is under the control of Russian armed forces. The recent reports are very troubling and further deepen my concern about the well-being of personnel there," he said.

The Director General noted that the seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security in Ukraine that he outlined at the beginning of the military conflict include one stating that NPP staff "must be able to fulfil their safety and security duties and have the capacity to make decisions free of undue pressure."

<sup>17</sup> IAEA



### **CHERNIHIV & SUMY REGION**



A Russian cruise missile hit the Ukrainian military base at Desna in Chernihiv. Due to OPSEC, no additional information has been released. Viacheslav Chaus, head of the Chernihiv Oblast Military Administration, indicated additional details would be released.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/25/7354549/



### **KYIV REGION**

There were reports that cruise missiles fired into the Kyiv oblast were successfully intercepted by antiaircraft systems. We cannot confirm the veracity of these reports; however, there are no reports of damage or casualties in the Kyiv metropolitian area at this time.

## **BLACK SEA & ODESA REGION**

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

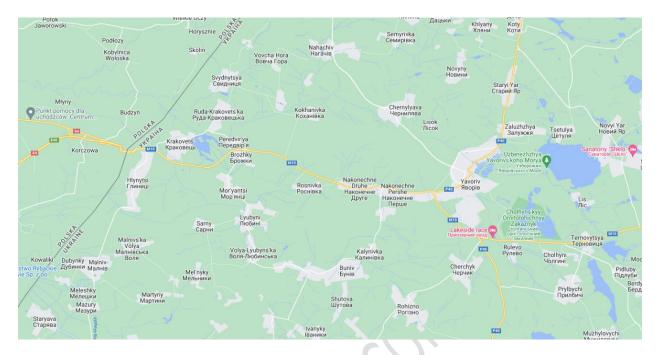
## **WEST REGION**

The Yavoriv Military base and joint NATO training facility were attacked for the third time since March 12 and hit by four Russian cruise missiles early on June 25. Two missiles were intercepted, according to Maxim Kozytsky. <sup>19</sup> The base is located 10 kilometers from the Polish border.

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<sup>19</sup> https://twitter.com/EuromaidanPR/status/1540578236203257856





**ASSESSMENT:** We believe the chances that Belarus will invade Ukraine remain extremely remote.

## **THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS**

The British Defence Intelligence Agency confirmed our assessment of a purge of Russian generals leading the invasion efforts in Ukraine.<sup>20</sup>

Belarusian journalists reported that the Russian military is emptying ammunition depots in the nation and loading the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1540571414050312192/photo/1



munitions onto trains for export.<sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> We cannot confirm the veracity of these reports due to the secretive nature of the Baltic nation run by a dictator.

ASSESSMENT: This could indicate that Russian forces are running out of ammunition due to their artillery units' extremely high operational tempo. It also could indicate that Russia is working to demilitarize Belarus for a future occupation. It further indicates that Belarus has no intention of invading Ukraine, Poland, or Lithuania.

The United States Department of Defense indicated the second shipment of four High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) would arrive by mid-July.<sup>23</sup> The first use of the HIMARS medium-range missiles by Ukraine occurred on June 24.<sup>24</sup>

Rhetoric directed at NATO over road and rail restrictions enforced by Lithuania reached a new level on June 25. Andrey Gurulyov, an MP in the Russian Duma, stated that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> https://twitter.com/JayinKyiv/status/1540353289690267649

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> https://twitter.com/Flash43191300/status/1540357360161636352

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1540398589024894976

<sup>24</sup> https://twitter.com/mhmck/status/1540306258191732736



London would be the first city bombed if the "blockade" of Kaliningrad led to a war with NATO.<sup>25</sup>

Further raising tensions, Russian strategic bombers flew into Belarusian air space and launched 24 cruise missiles into Ukraine in two separate attacks. <sup>26</sup> The Belarusian Gayun reported, "The scheme used to be as follows: takeoff of aircraft from Russian airfields, entry into the airspace of Belarus, approach close to the border with Ukraine, launch missiles while the plane over Belarus (so as not to shoot down), reversal. And they are also returning to the Russian Federation."

ASSESSMENT: The Russian Black Sea fleet has been forced to positions approximately 100 kilometers from the Ukrainian coastline. Cruise missiles launched by the naval vessels travel over open water for five to seven minutes. This has enabled Ukrainian officials to more accurately calculate firing solutions for antiaircraft systems and send aircraft on intercept routes. These attacks became less effective in June after Russian naval vessels pulled back from the Snake Island area. The Russian Air Force likely attempted to improve the effectiveness of their airstrikes by firing from Belarusian air space. In our assessment,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1540418212373925888

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Espreso TV



Russian officials used the tension with Poland and Lithuania as a screen. This attempted to create the illusion that the bombers were flying as a show of force to NATO with no intention of firing. This was potentially perceived as a threat to Lithuania over the enforcement of EU trade limitations.

Following Lithuania's footsteps, Ukrainians started a crowdsource funding project to buy an additional Bayraktar TB-2 combat drone from Turkey.<sup>27</sup> In three days, enough money was raised to purchase four UAVs, with almost enough funds for a fifth. The purchase would include munitions and advanced avionics to improve the TB-2 effectiveness.

A Russian Il-76 transport plane, or possibly an Il-78 aerial refueling plane, <u>suffered a catastrophic engine failure</u> during takeoff from Dyagilevo Air Base in Ryazan, Russia.<sup>28</sup> The plane lost altitude and crashed in a park between apartment blocks, exploding in a fireball. The Russian Ministry of Defense reports nine onboard, with four deaths in the crash.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1540437164000952320

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1540245206649303041



The Russian Ministry of Defense did not report the cargo or cause of the crash. There were no reports of casualties on the ground.



A fire erupted at the hydroelectric plant in Buryatia, Russia.<sup>29</sup> The fire started for unknown reasons and caused major blackouts across parts of Siberia.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> https://twitter.com/Flash43191300/status/1539932676886597633



### **WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

In the Kharkiv Oblast, an ambulance responding to an emergency call in the Zmiiv District came under fire from Russian forces.<sup>30</sup> The paramedic suffered shrapnel wounds in the attack but continued to transfer the patient. Both are hospitalized and in satisfactory condition.

A Russian soldier will face trial in Ukraine on charges they tortured nine prisoners in Irpin.<sup>31</sup> The Prosecutor's General's Office accuses the soldier of taking nine civilians hostage, beating them, and refusing to give them food or water.

### **GEOPOLITICAL**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was on a roll today accusation that Moldovian officials are "banning everything Russia" was met with derision.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/24/7354495/

<sup>31</sup> https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1540398943326052353

<sup>32</sup> https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/24/7141967/



Moldovan President Maia Sandu responded, "This bill is a sovereign decision of our country's parliament and office of the president. We needed the bill to fight disinformation. We are fighting it and will continue to do so to provide an objective information space. So that citizens can analyze the facts based on objective information, not propaganda and unreliable sources."

Lavrov accused the European Union of turning Moldova into a second Ukraine and alleged that a majority of its citizens don't want a stable currency, free travel to 27 nations, tariff-free trade, and better opportunities to become members of the EU.

Lavrov wasn't done today, and we can safely assess that it has been zero days since Lavrov has evoked Hitler and Nazis.<sup>33</sup>

"We have few illusions that the EU's Russophobe mood will somehow dissipate or change in the long term. But this is the path the Europeans have chosen."

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<sup>33</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/24/7354408/



"When World War II started, Hitler gathered a significant number – if not the majority – of European countries under his flag in order to wage war on the USSR."

"Right now, the EU and NATO are building a contemporary coalition, essentially in order to wage war on Russia."

Editor's Note: Foreign Minister Lavrov conveniently forgets the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the USSR allyship with Germany during the 1939 invasion of Poland. Additionally, he ignores the Katyn Massacre, where Soviet troops executed 22,000 Polish military officers and government officials after securing the country's eastern half. The Russian government released documents in 1992 that proved the NKVD carried out the massacre under direct order from the Soviet Politburo. In 2010, The Russian Duma officially declared the massacre was the responsibility of Joseph Stalin, the Politburo, and other military leaders. It is critical to understand that Russia not only collaborated with Germany at the start of World War II but was an ally.

Whether it was a difference of opinion in the Kremlin or an attempt at damage control, spokesperson Dmitry Peskov



took a softer tone about EU candidacy for Moldova and Ukraine.<sup>34</sup>

"Firstly, these are, of course, internal European issues. It's very important for us that all these processes do not cause more problems for us and more problems in these countries' relations with us. There are already enough problems."

### **ECONOMIC**

Germany declared an energy crisis as the Russian Federation restricts natural gas deliveries to European nations. Additionally, Russia announced the looming closure of the Nordstream 1 pipeline for "repairs" in July. European officials are concerned that Russia, days away from defaulting on its sovereign debt payments, won't turn the gas back on.<sup>35</sup>

The pipeline is scheduled to be completely shut down from July 11 to July 21. Nations have reserve supplies and, during the summer months, won't face a high demand.

<sup>34</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/06/24/7354406/

<sup>35</sup> US News and World Report



Germany's Economy Minister Robert Habeck says it is heading for a gas shortage if Russian gas supplies remain as low as they are now, and certain industries would have to be shut down if there is not enough come winter.

Western Europe's natural gas reserves are at 55% capacity, with a target of 80% by November 1. If the flow does not increase from its current 60% reduction when the pipeline restarts, Europe won't reach that target.

The rouble "official" exchange was steady at 54 to 1 US dollar.

Oil prices climbed on Friday, with WTI crude increasing to \$108 a barrel and Brent rising to \$113. United States RBOB wholesale gasoline jumped to \$3.88 a gallon (\$1.03 a liter).

Chicago SRW Wheat futures dropped to 94 cents a bushel for September 2022 delivery.