



MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR SITUATION REPORT



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Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 342

It has been 3,260 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on February 27, 2014, and there were no notable territorial control changes today.

There is significant chatter that Russian forces will launch a counteroffensive out of Kreminna in the next 24 to 72 hours. At the time of publication, we have not seen signs that the critical steps needed to launch a large offensive have happened on the axis.

The situation north and south of Bakhmut stabilized again but remained challenging for Ukrainian forces, particularly to the south.

Russian commanders are expressing frustration with the lack of progress on the Vuhledar axis, and for a second day in a row – nothing happened in Zaporzhia.

The United States is expected to announce a \$2.2 billion military aid package, including longer-range Rockets for the HIMARS system.

The conflict between the Russian Ministry of Defense and Private Military Company Wagner Group continued.

DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

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

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

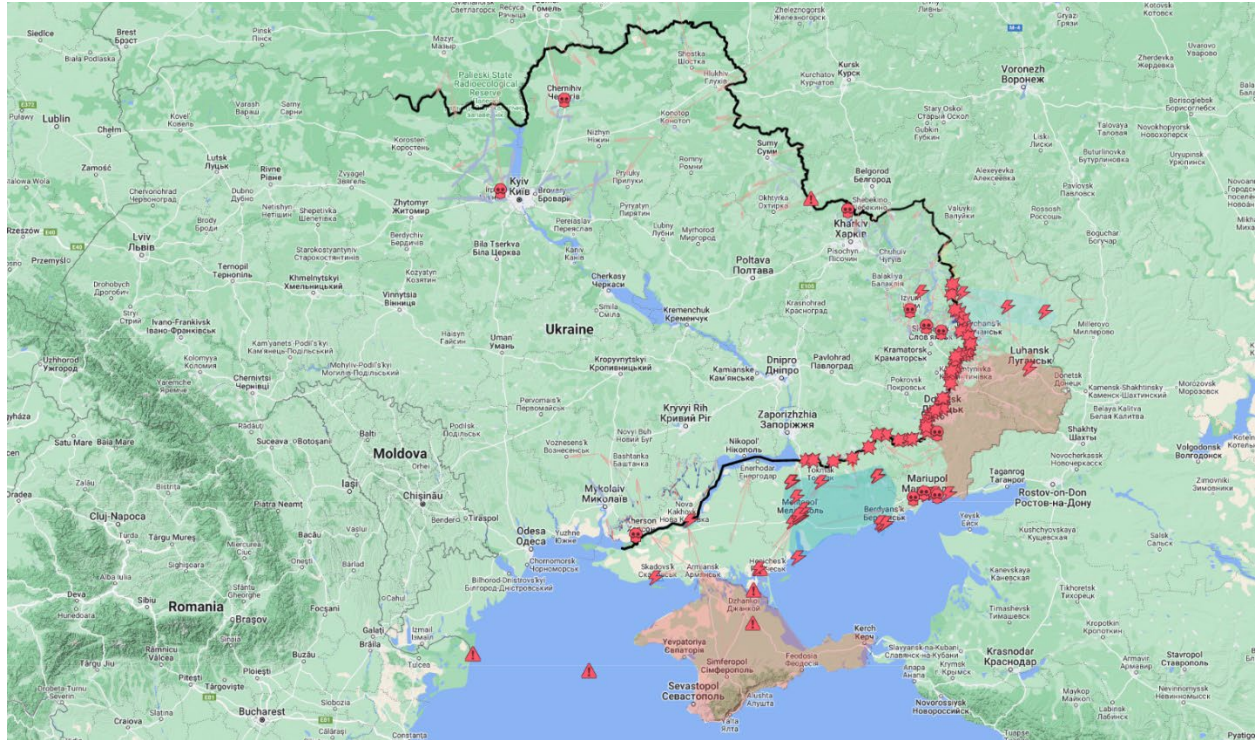
5. We maintain that the Russian military within Ukraine remains combat ineffective and is relying on World War II tactics that Field Marshal Georgy Zhukov would recognize to move the line of conflict.
6. We maintain that the power struggle between military leaders aligned with Russian Minister of Defense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

duty troops deployed in Ukraine and mobilization requests from the Kremlin in the occupied territories.

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

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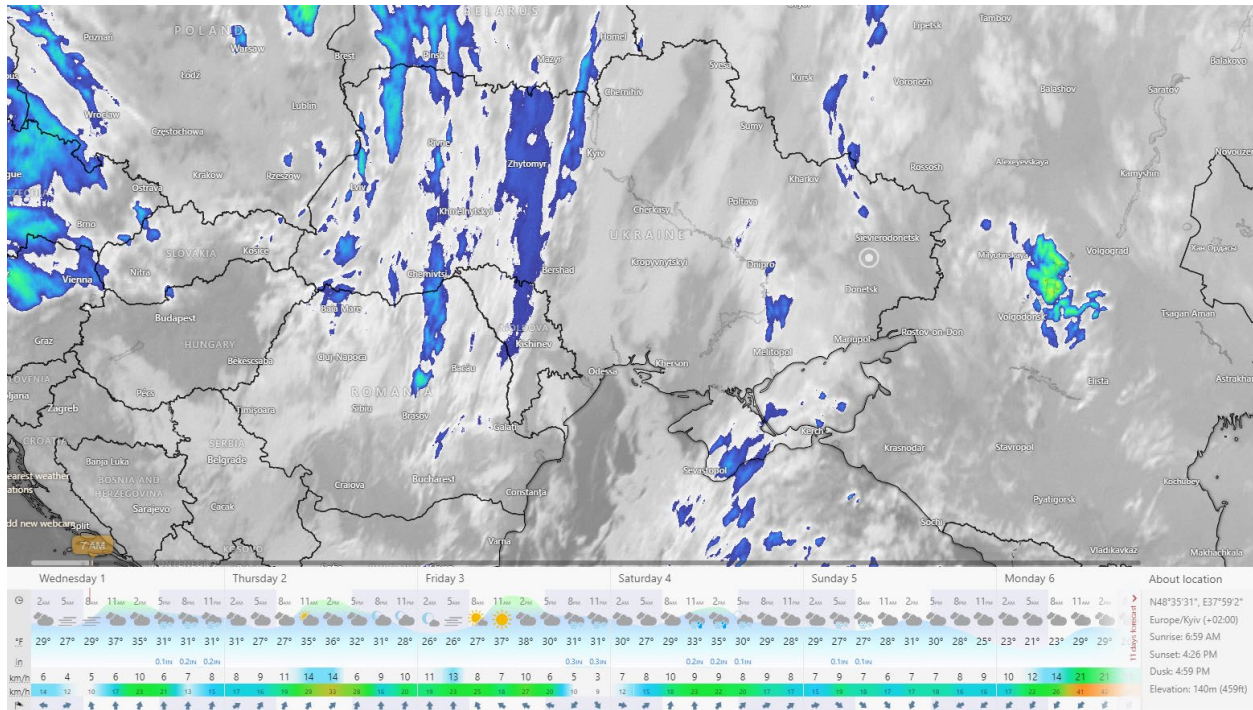
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. If you see a settlement name highlighted [like this](#), it is a link to our war map that will take you to the location explained in the Situation Report.

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

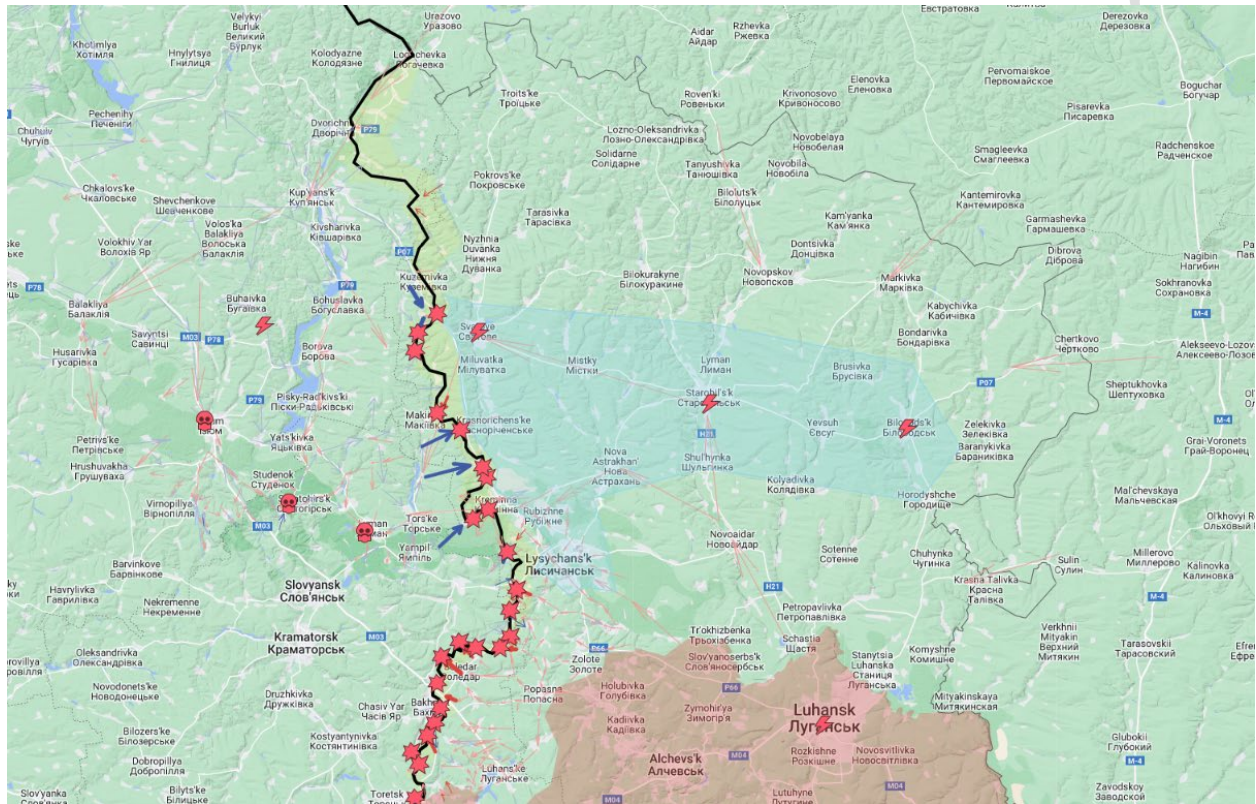
UKRAINE WEATHER



Most of Ukraine was cloud-covered, with bands of snow in the western regions, Crimea, and Zaporzhia, with conditions preventing data acquisition from NASA Fire Information for Resource Management Systems (FIRMS). The European Center for Medium-Range Weather Forecast predicts temperatures to remain below freezing for most of the week ahead, with extensive cloud cover and occasional light sleet and snow. The model has moderated temperatures for the weekend.

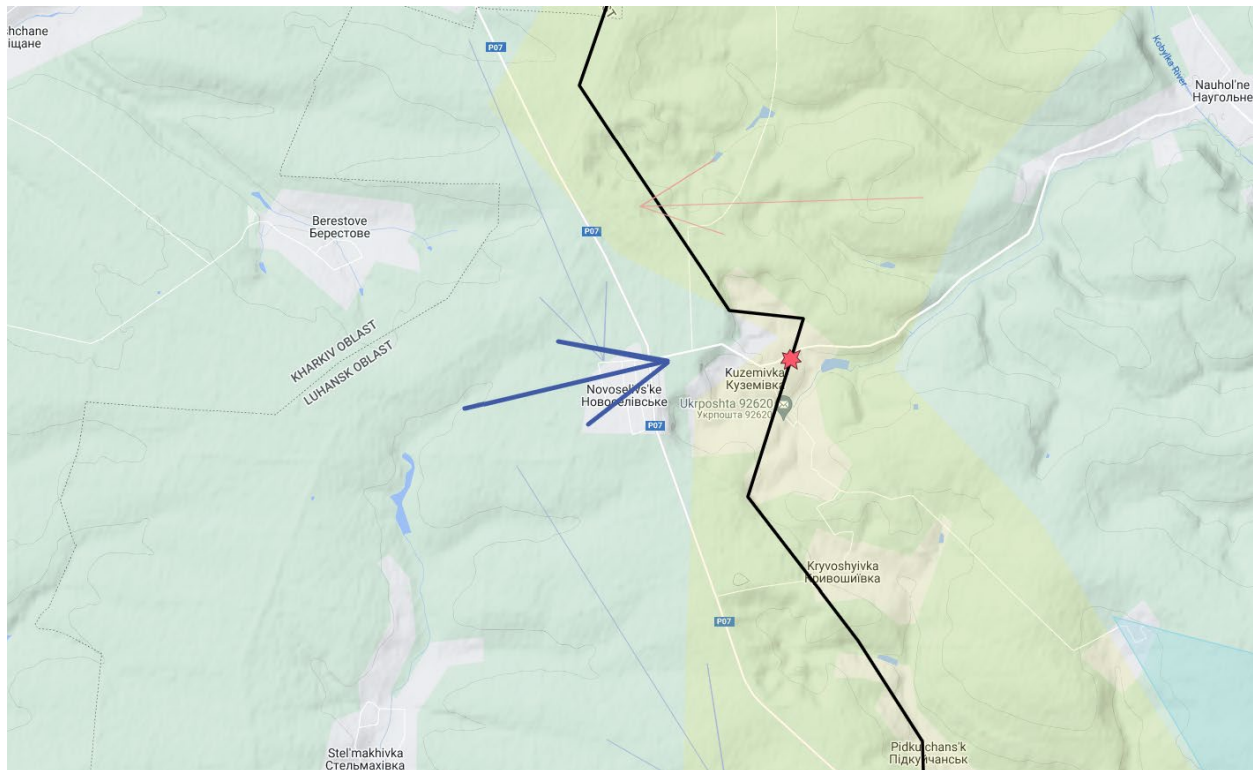
DONBAS REGION

LUHANSK



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

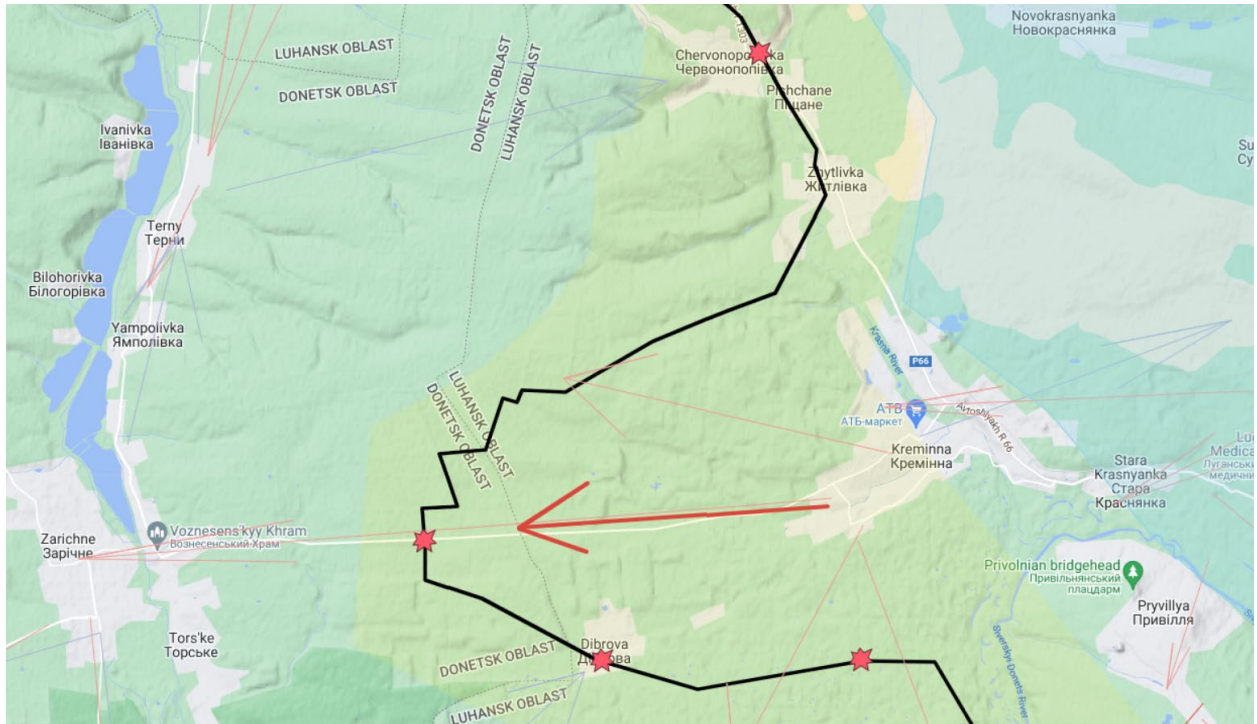
Ukrainian Objective: Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents



On the Svatove axis, Russian forces tried to push Ukrainian troops out of [Novoselivske](#) and were unsuccessful.^{2 3}

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

³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>



On the Kreminna axis, The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU) reported [Chervonpopivka](#) was shelled throughout the day.^{4 5} GSAFU reported that Ukrainian positions in the area of Kreminna were shelled, while the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Joint Center for Control and Coordination (JCCC) reported that Ukrainian forces shelled Kreminna.^{6 7 8}

⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

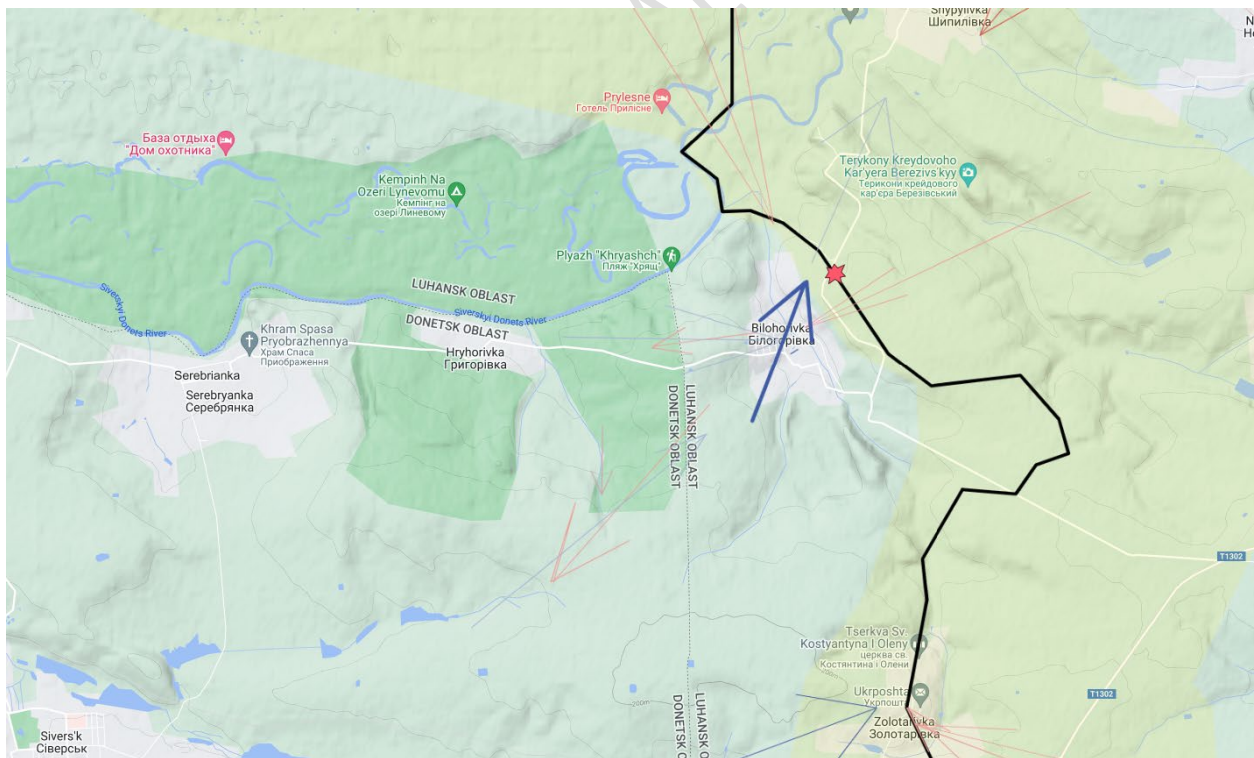
⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

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

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

⁸ https://t.me/LPR_JCCC/8031

South and southwest of Dibrova, mercenaries with Rybar reported there was positional fighting in the Serebryansky Woods, while GSAFU reported [Dibrova](#) was shelled.^{9 10 11} Mercenaries with War Gonzo claimed Russian forces had recaptured Dibrova, which we found odd because a series of videos on January 27 and 28 already indicated that Russian forces were west of the village.¹² The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported continued fighting in the region.¹³



⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

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


¹¹ <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

¹² <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

¹³ https://t.me/mod_russia/23853 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

On the Siversk axis, Russian forces continued attacks on [Bilohorivka](#) without changing the situation.^{14 15}

Russian-occupied Kadiivka was struck by at least  [two rockets fired by HIMARS](#), according to the LNR JCCC.^{16 17}

Luhansk Oblast Administrative and Military Governor Serhei Haidai said that Russian forces were preparing for an offensive push  [during a television interview](#) on January 31.¹⁸ GSAFU has been hinting an offensive push was coming in this region, and the claims took a life of their own in the social media space. It was reported that a localized offensive started late on January 31 led by the 76th Guards Air Assault Division (VDV) in a matter of hours.^{19 20 21}

ASSESSMENT: While there was an increase in artillery activity on January 31, it was not indicative of a major

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

¹⁵ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

¹⁶ https://t.me/LPR_JCCC/8030

¹⁷ https://t.me/LPR_JCCC/8025

¹⁸ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/8272>

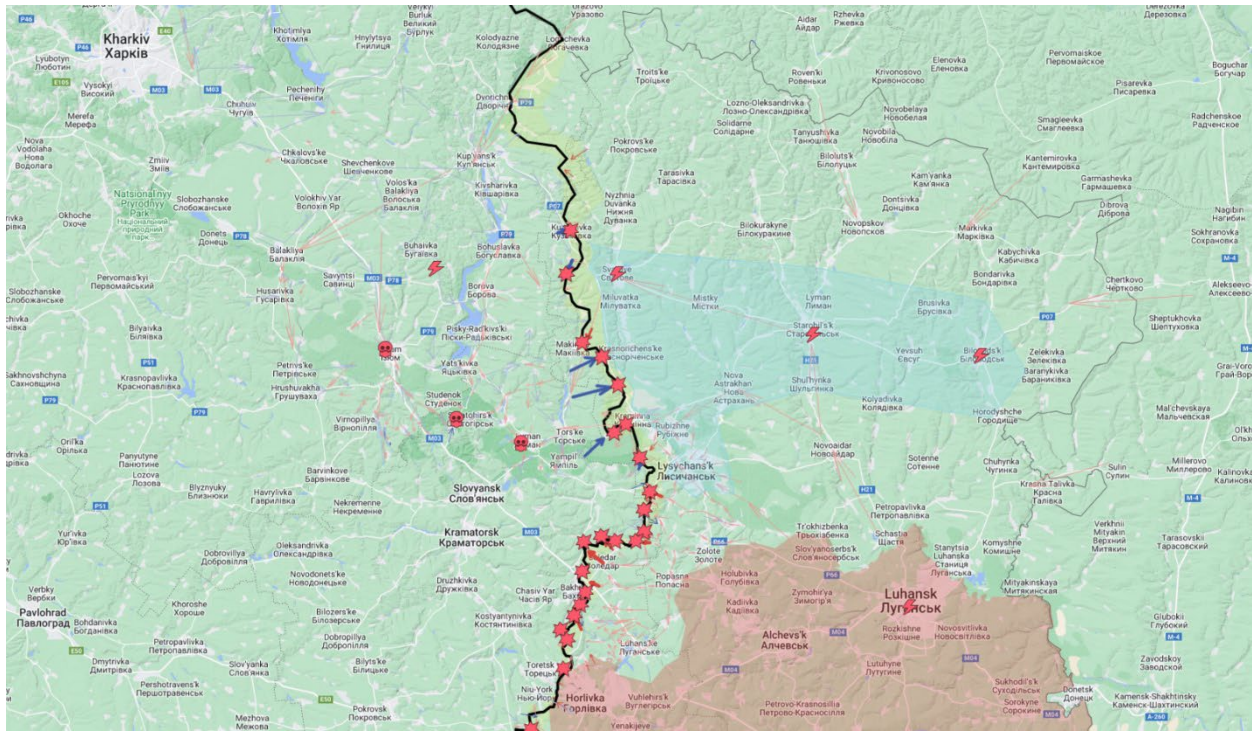
¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/sentdefender/status/1620629257318961152>

²⁰ https://twitter.com/Tatarigami_UA/status/1620616498095226881

²¹ <https://twitter.com/WarrenRisks/status/1620646683356049408>

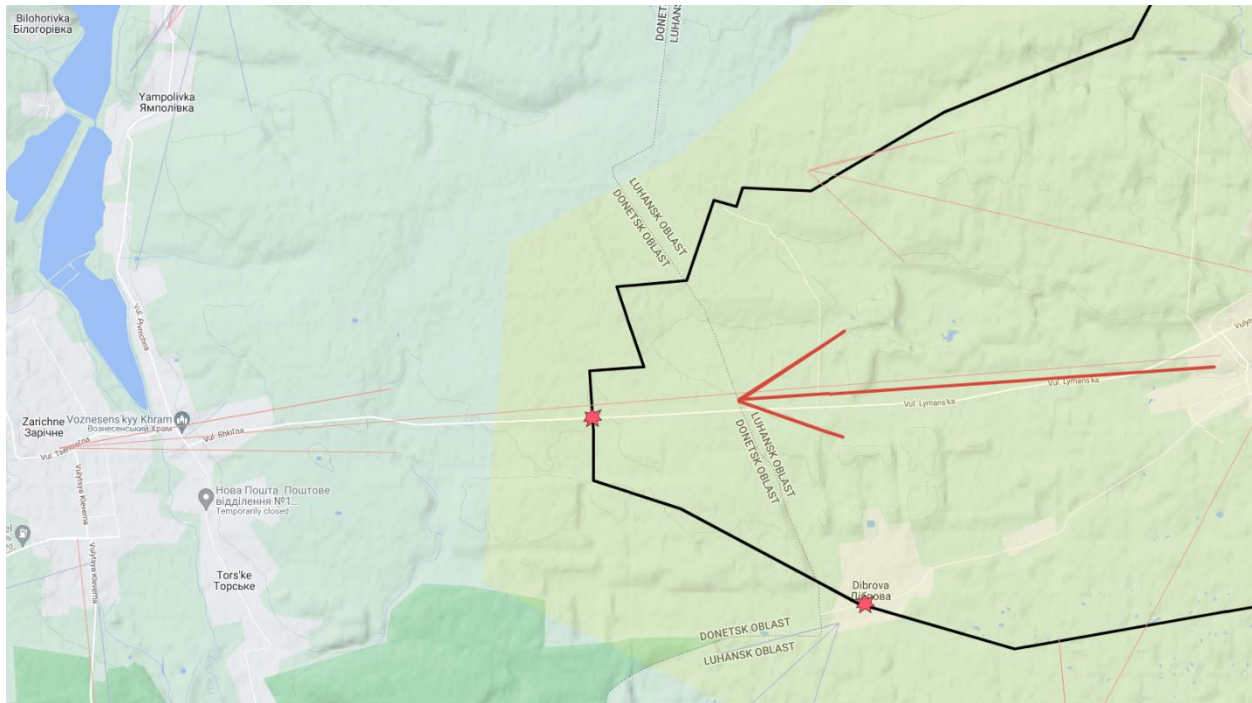
offensive operation to advance on a broad front back into Donetsk. GSAFU did report that the area of Yampil was shelled, but there isn't a viable Ground Line of Communication (GLOC – supply line) toward Dibrova from the village. Our team has not seen evidence of condition setting before a major offensive, including supply interdiction, remote mining of GLOCs, and significant suppress and destroy enemy air defenses (SEAD/DEAD) activity. Further, the 76th VDV has suffered repeated losses since March 2022 in Bucha and Irpin, Izyum, and Davydiv Brid and is not at full strength. We believe this is a localized effort meant to take pressure off Kreminna, and Ukrainian forces are prepared for this push.

NORTHEAST DONETSK



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

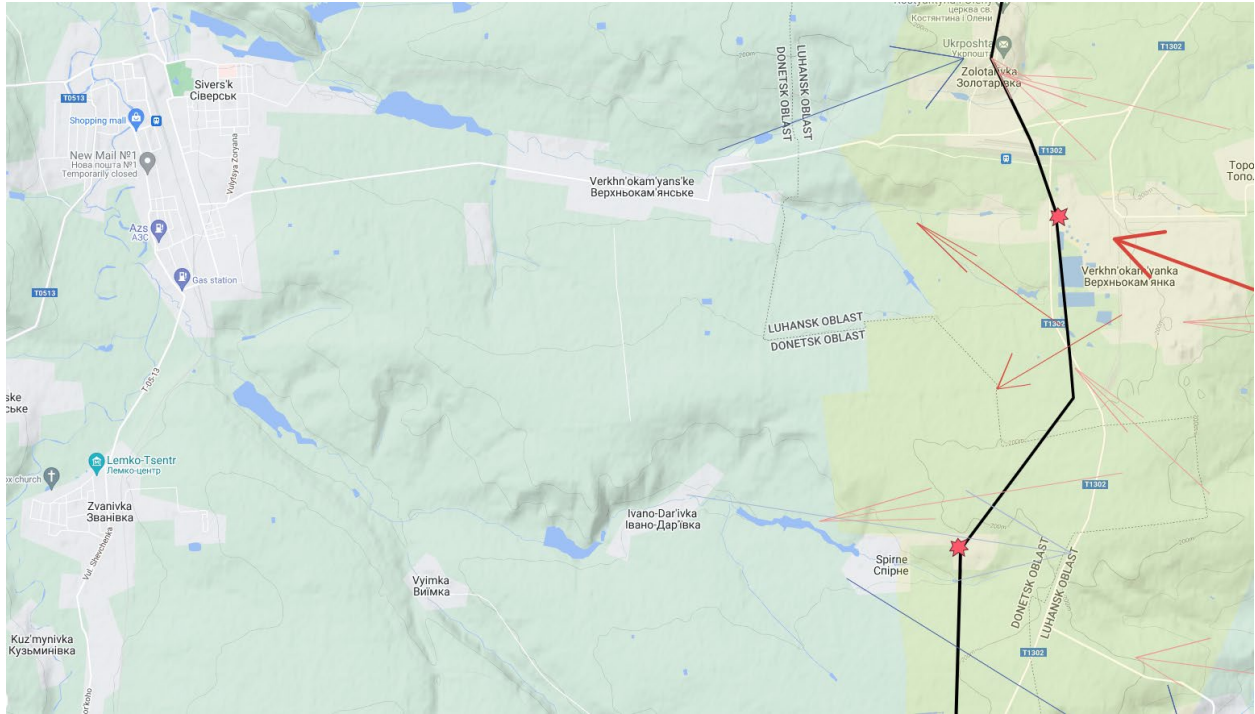
Ukrainian Objective: Defend Siversk and Bakhmut, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties



On the Kremynna axis, Russian forces led by the 2nd Army Corps of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) continued attempts to advance in the direction of [Yampolivka](#), according to the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU).²² RMOD did not report fighting in this area but claimed that Russian forces shelled the settlement.²³

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

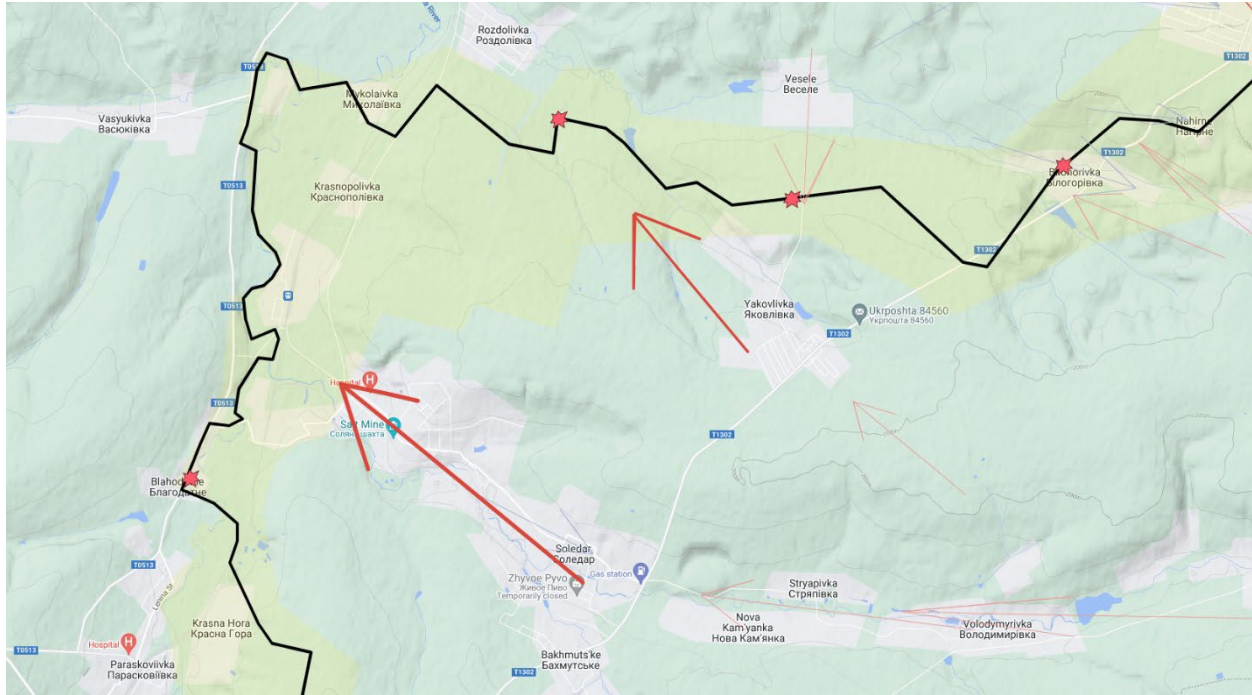
²³ https://t.me/mod_russia/23853 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]



On the Siversk axis fighting east of [Spirne](#) intensified, with GSAFU reporting a Russian attack was repulsed while a Russian source claimed Ukrainian forces were attempting to move east toward the T-1302 Highway.^{24 25}

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

²⁵ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>



The situation was stable on the Soledar axis after Russian mobiks and VDV forces supported by PMC Wagner made territorial gains on January 30. Fighting continued near [Vasyukivka](#) with no change in the situation.^{26 27}

RMOD claimed that [Blahodatnye](#) was captured, and sharp-eyed readers may wonder, "Wait, didn't they claim that over a week ago, and didn't PMC Wagner claim it on January 28?"²⁸

²⁶ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15391>

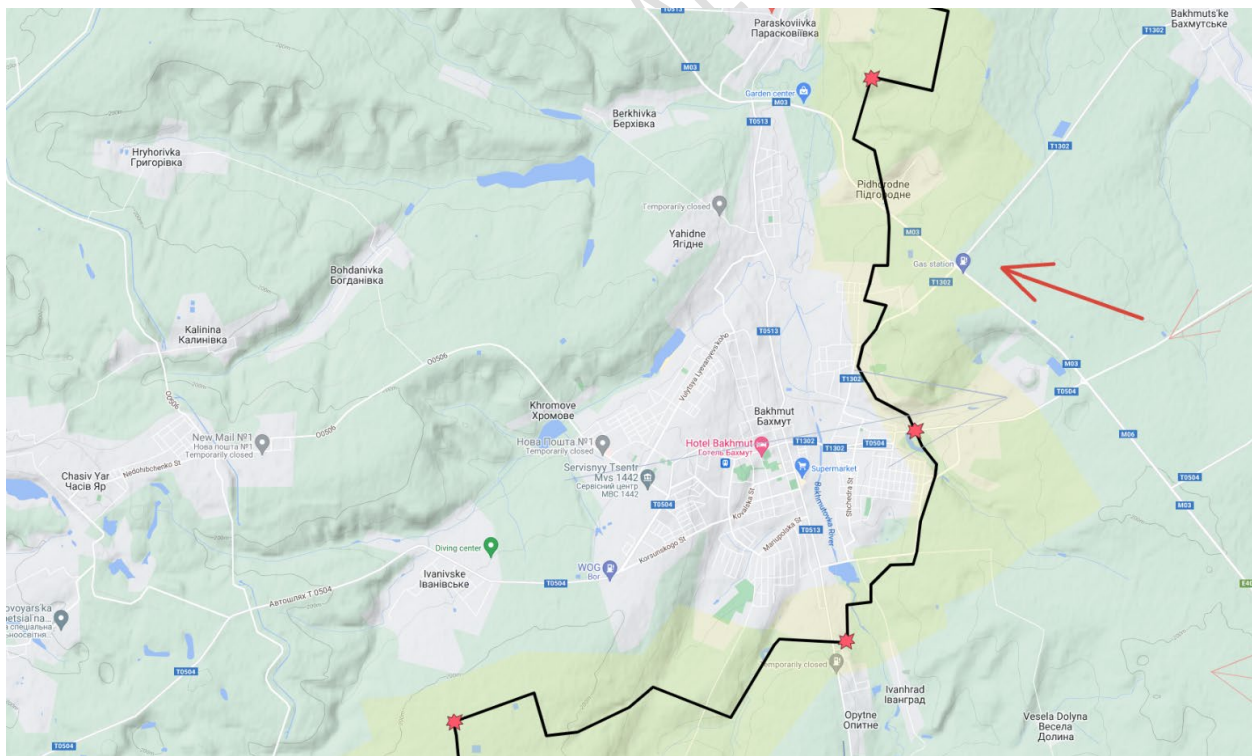
²⁷ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

²⁸ https://t.me/mod_russia/23853 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

Yes.

RMOD again minimized PMC Wagner's role, writing that "volunteers of assault detachments" supported by Russian troops captured the village without mentioning the PMC.²⁹

Fighting continued for control of [Krasna Hora](#), with Ukrainian forces holding their defensive positions.^{30 31 32 33}



²⁹ https://t.me/mod_russia/23853 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

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



³¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15391>

³² <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

³³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

On the [Bakhmut](#) axis, fighting continued on the city's northern and eastern edges.^{34 35}

The composite forces of Russian troops and PMC Wagner continued attempts to advance on [Paraskoviivka](#), with Ukrainian forces maintaining defensive lines.^{36 37 38}

In separate incidents, Russian shelling killed two civilians in Bakhmut – a 12-year-old and a 70-year-old. There are graphic pictures that are NSFW, and some may find them disturbing. You can view the pictures by   [clicking here](#).³⁹ Residents of Donetsk were ordered to evacuate in early August and had to sign a waiver of self-responsibility if they refused to leave. It is estimated that around 6,500 civilians remain in the city, which was once home to 70,000 people. The remaining people are civil servants, such as firefighters, stubborn pensioners born and raised in the area, the disabled and poor who believe they have nowhere to go, and pro-Russians who passively await what they believe will be a better life.

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

³⁵ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

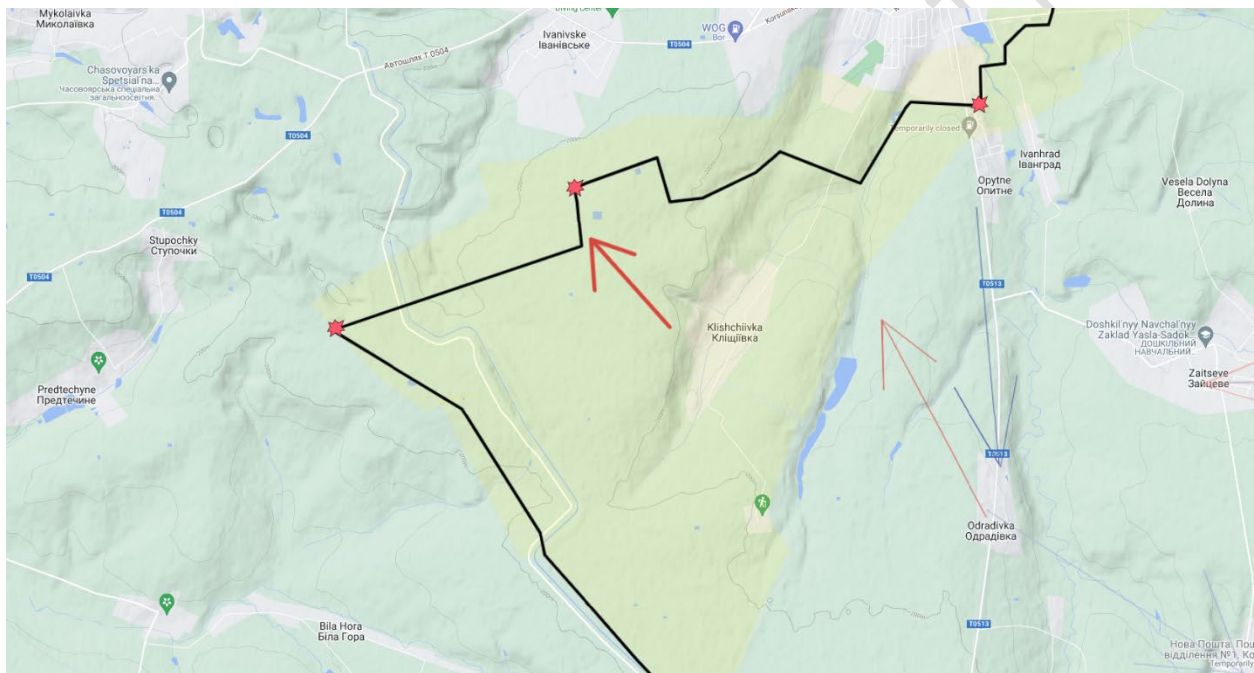
³⁶ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

³⁷ <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

³⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

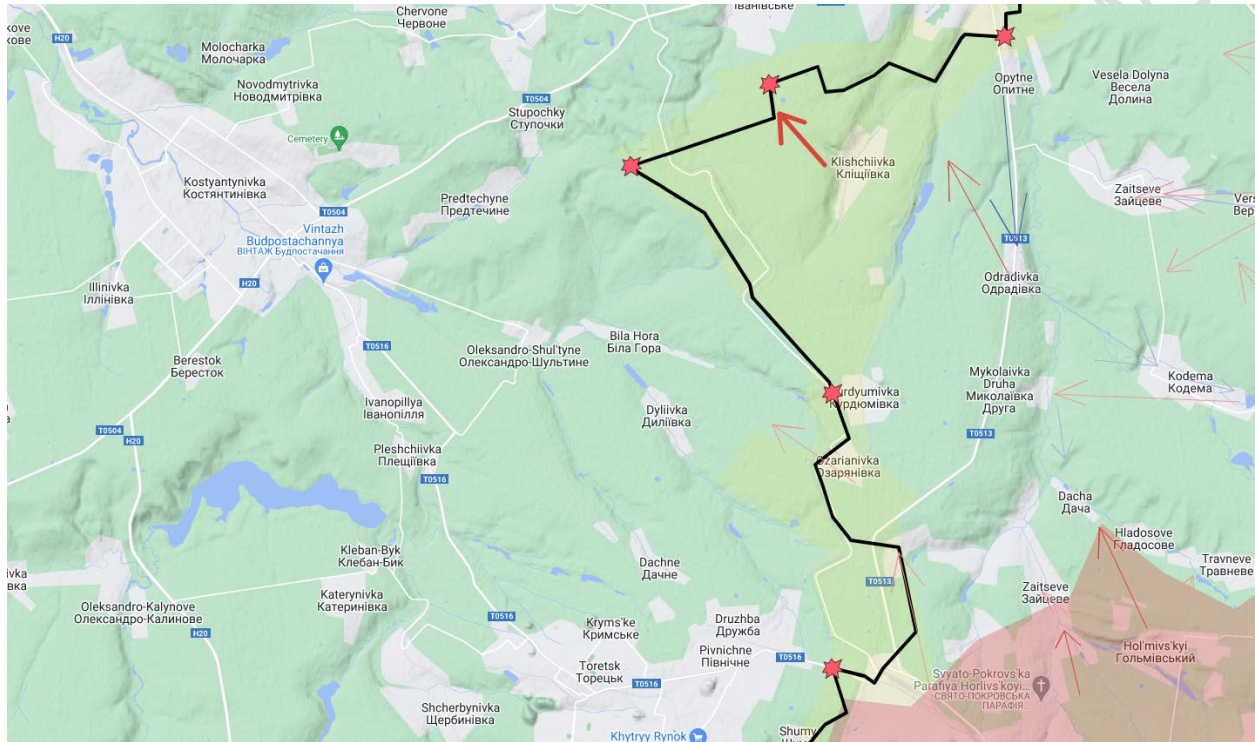
³⁹ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54896>

ASSESSMENT: Our assessment is unchanged from January 30, and we believe that the siege of Bakhmut has reached a critical phase. We do not assess that Bakhmut is at imminent risk of encirclement or that Ukrainian forces will be pushed out of the city in the short term.



On the Kostyantynivka axis, the situation was unchanged. The most intense fighting in Ukraine was west and north of [Klishchiivka](#), with Ukrainian forces holding defensive lines

at the canal to the west and 2.5 to 3 kilometers south of [Ivanivske](#).^{40 41 42}



On the Toretsk axis, War Gonzo claimed that Russian forces attempted an advance toward [Dyliivka](#).⁴³

Geolocated video confirmed War Gonzo's reports that  [Russian forces in Kurdyumivka were heavily shelled](#).⁴⁴ The

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

⁴¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15391>

⁴² <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

⁴³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

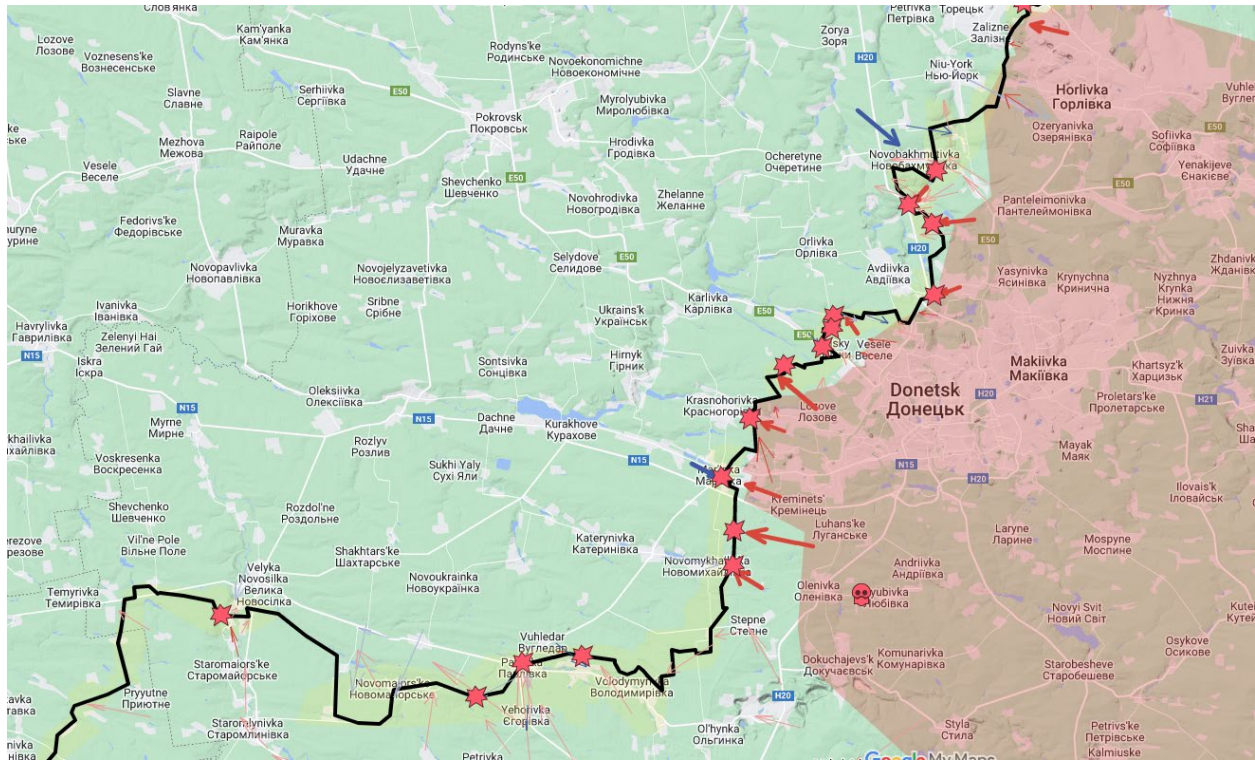
⁴⁴ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1620515706503856130>



third segment in the short video shows a Russian ammunition depot and command post being destroyed just outside of Zelenopillya.

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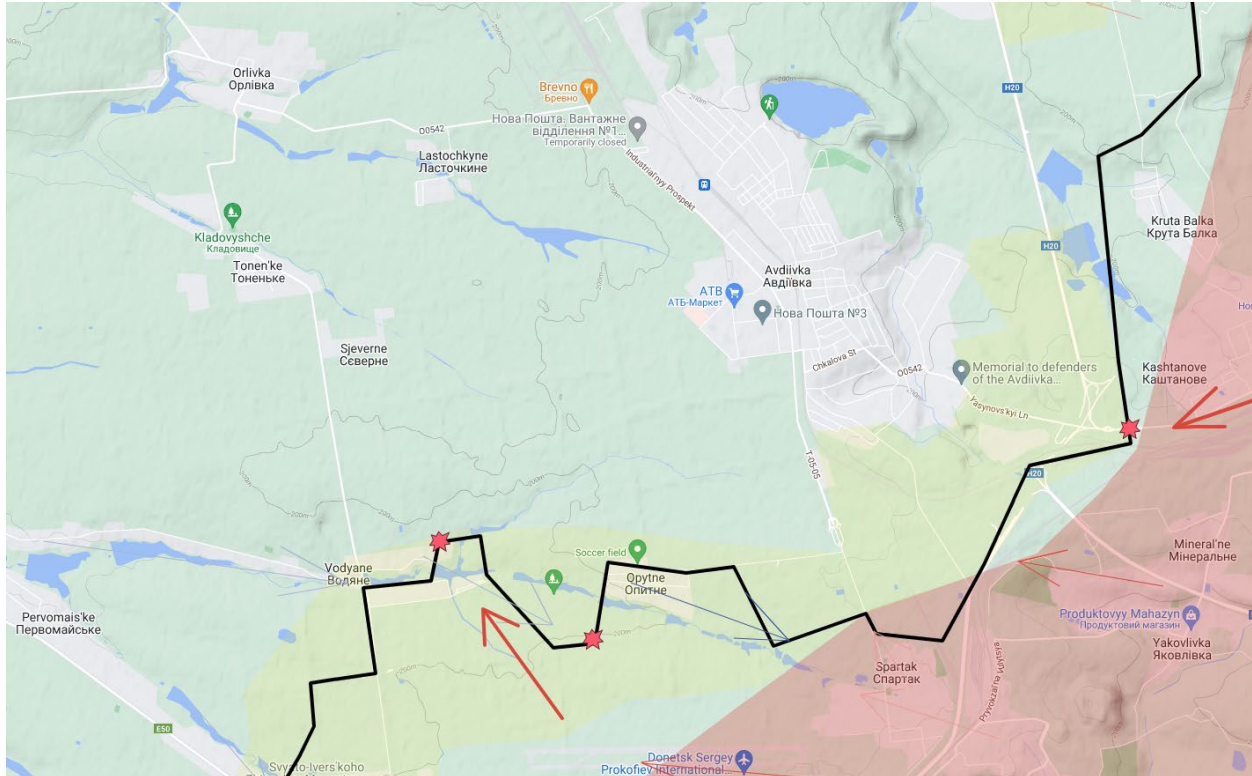
SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Russian Objective: Integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, capture the rest of the oblast, and bring the insurrection across southwestern Donetsk under control

Ukrainian Objective: Lock Russian military assets in place, defend the existing line of conflict while finding and exploiting weaknesses, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies and disrupt logistics

There was only positional fighting across southwest Donetsk.

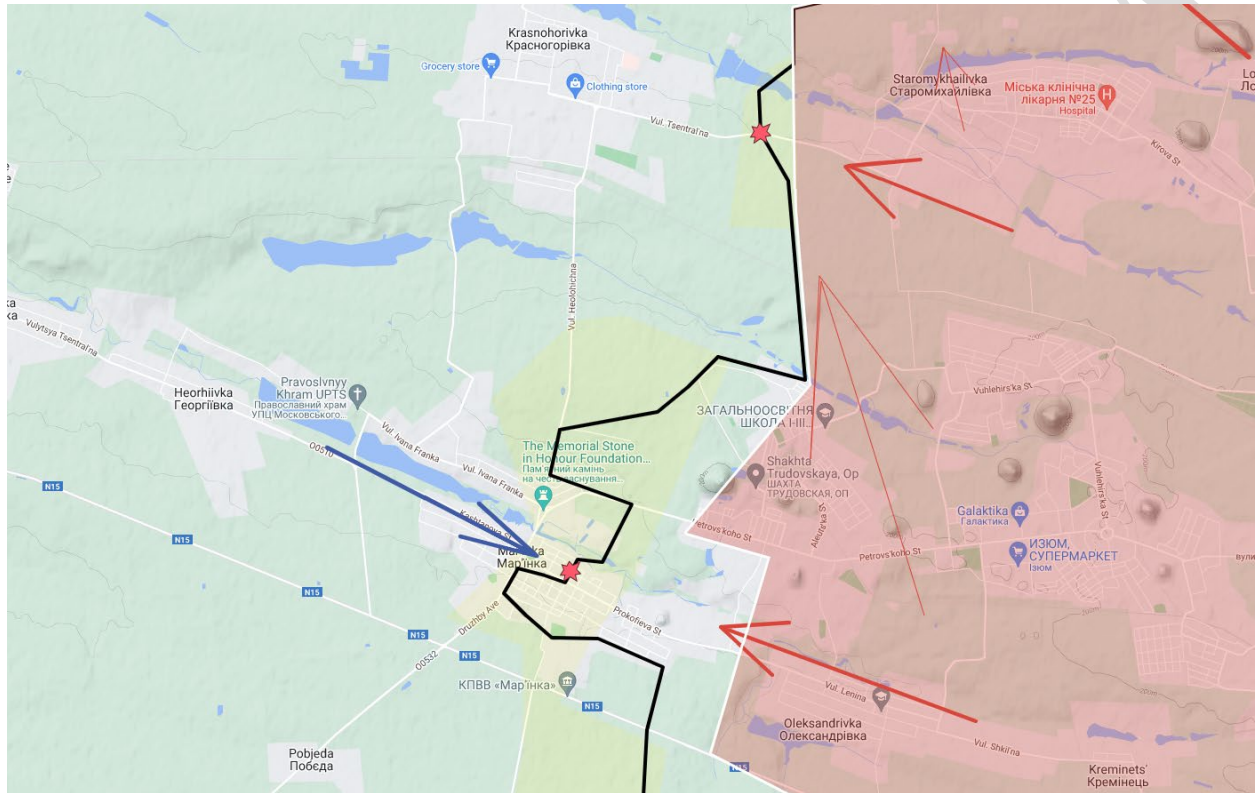


On the Avdiivka axis, elements of the Russian 1st Army Corps attempted another frontal attack on Ukrainian positions in [Avdiivka](#) after several days of periodic intense shelling. It went about as well as the previous 100-plus attempts since February 24.⁴⁵ ⁴⁶

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

⁴⁶ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15391>

Ukrainian forces repelled attacks on [Vodyane](#) and [Pervomaiske](#).⁴⁷




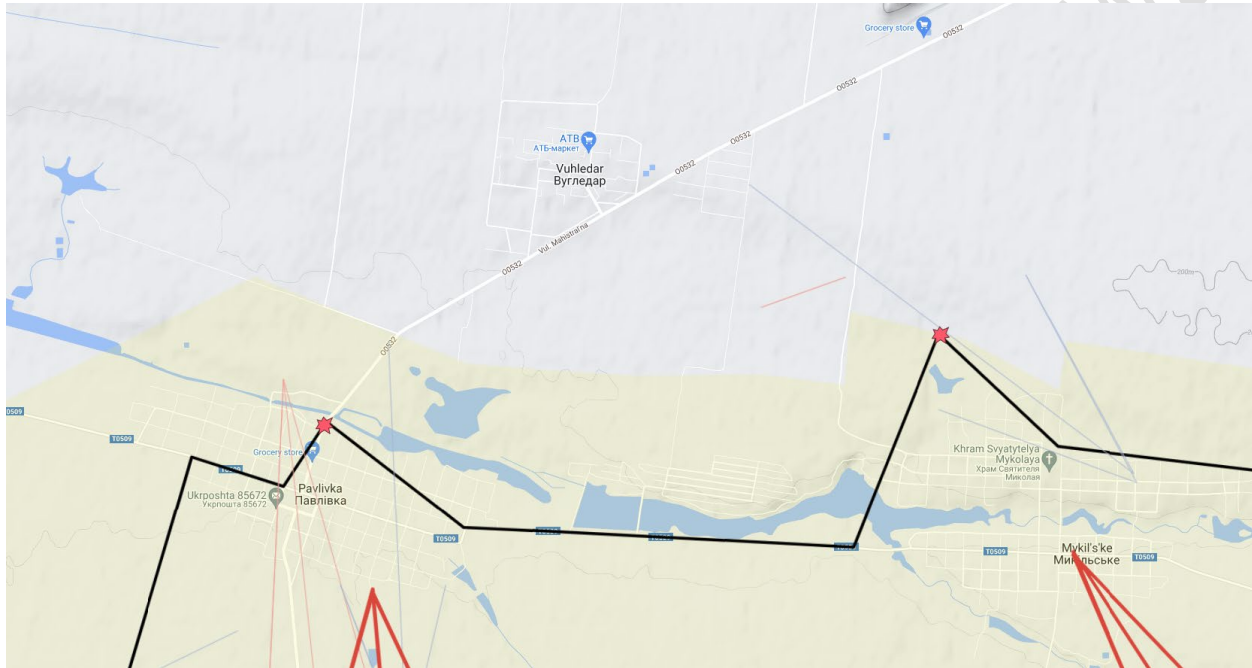
On the Marinka axis, the self-declared leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic (DNR), Denis Pushilin, made new claims that [Marinka](#) would be captured soon, which weren't based in fact. That didn't prevent Russian milbloggers from amplifying his report.⁴⁸ ⁴⁹ Another video

⁴⁷ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁴⁸ <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

⁴⁹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/10605>

appeared of a  [Russian tank operating in the rubble of Marinka](#), firing on Ukrainian positions in the city's center.



On the [Vuhledar](#) axis, the Russian offensive toward the city and the northwest corner of [Pavlivka](#) remained stalled out for a second day.^{50 51 52 53} GSAFU reported that the [Mykilske dachas](#) were shelled, reinforcing reports that the Russian 155th Naval Infantry and the 11th Motor Infantry Brigade were pushed across the Kashlahach River.⁵⁴


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

⁵¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15391>

⁵² https://t.me/mod_russia/23853 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

⁵³ <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

⁵⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

A Russian video recorded on the first day of the assault based was released and geolocated, showing Ukrainian positions in northwest Pavlivka  [being hit by a TOS-1A multiple launch rocket system](#) (MLRS), providing additional confirmation that Ukrainian forces held the northern part of the village before Russia launched the Vuhledar offensive.⁵⁵

Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Khodakovsky of the 11th Motor Infantry Brigade expressed frustration over the situation and slow progress on his Telegram channel, writing, "Maybe it's time to return to talking about tactical nuclear weapons?"⁵⁶

Someone change the sign – it's been zero days.


Insurgents in Mariupol reported several loud explosions over the left bank region of the city, with Russian officials claiming it was air defense activity.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1620495492353507328>

⁵⁶ https://t.me/Khodakovsky_m/305

⁵⁷ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/6338>

ASSESSMENT: While Mariupol is technically within range of HIMARS, it would require bringing a launcher to the line of conflict. Ukraine has been risk-averse with bringing M142, M270, MARS II, and LRU equipment close to an active front.

In an indication that Russian forces are concerned about missile and air strikes on Mariupol, insurgents shared  [videos of Buk-1 air defense systems](#) being brought into the city. It was reported that air defense was set up by the city port, which is still closed, and the new helicopter Forward Operating Base (FOB) at Azovstal.⁵⁸

Self-declared DNR leader Pushilin said that the Don-Donbas pipeline, meant to bring drinking water to all occupied territories, won't be able to meet the intended goal. Due to the deplorable state of the region's limited water infrastructure, engineers estimate that 40% of the water brought from the Don River will be lost due to ~~corruption~~ leaks.⁵⁹

Pushilin also finally admitted that Ukrainian pensioners living in the occupied territories had not received promised

⁵⁸ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/6337>

⁵⁹ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54946>

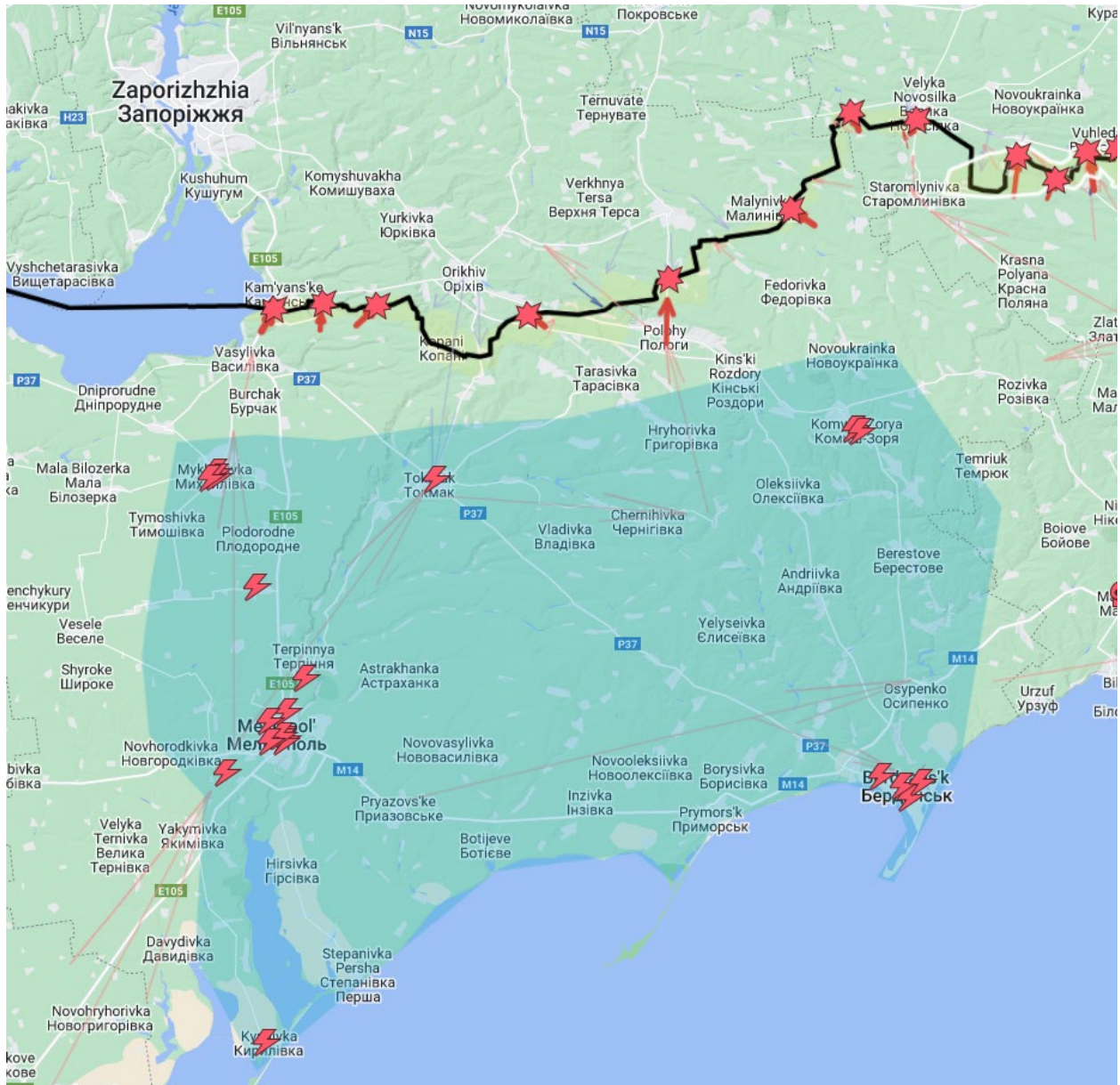
pension payments from the Russian Federation. Some have gone without for seven to eight months with no other income source. Pushilin promised that their pensions would be “recalculated” by March 1.⁶⁰

Phone calls from Donetsk to Luhansk between regional carriers will now be treated as “long distance” and will cost 6 roubles per minute while remaining free if someone calls from Luhansk to Donetsk.⁶¹ If you don’t understand what a long distance call is, find someone who is Xennial or older, and they can explain.

⁶⁰ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54947>

⁶¹ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54937>

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

It is the second day of the Zaporizhia section, and no reports of ground combat or major activity.

Heavy shelling was reported along the axis from the Zaporizhia-Donetsk administrative border to Hulyaipole to Orikhiv to Kamyanske.^{62 63 64}

The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is unchanged.

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION


Operational Command South (OCS) reported the Black Sea Fleet had 12 ships on patrol, including three missile

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

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

⁶⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74959>

carriers – two surface vessels and a Kilo-class submarine – capable of launching up to 20 Kalibr cruise missiles.⁶⁵

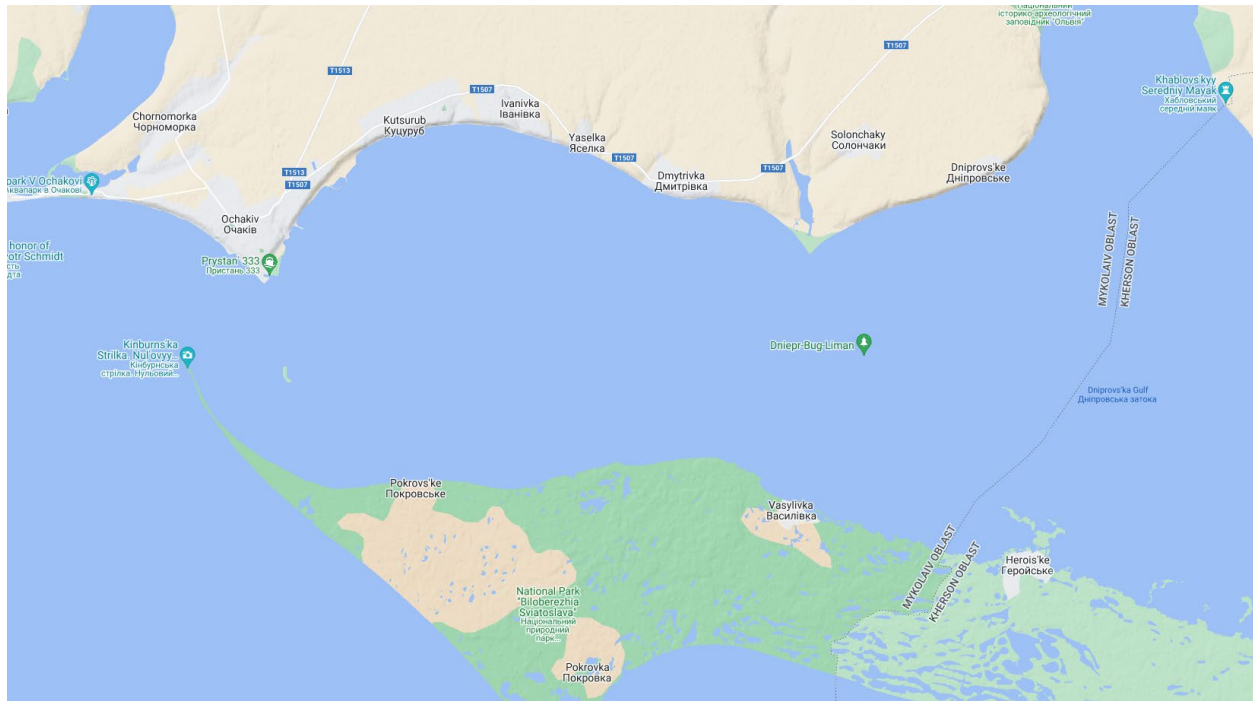
In the first report of its kind from Crimea since February 24, the insurgency has turned violent. The ATESH movement claimed responsibility for  [ambushing a car on the highway](#) between Sevastopol and Simferopol, killing two Russian military officers.⁶⁶

In Odesa, the newly formed Ukrainian 11th Brigade of the National Guard was deployed. The unit was created to track and intercept Shahed-136 kamikaze drones and subsonic cruise missiles, with unit members demonstrating their  [World War II-style searchlights](#).⁶⁷

⁶⁵ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74783>

⁶⁶ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21464>

⁶⁷ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74911>



In Mykolaiv, [Ochakiv](#) was attacked with S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack, striking residential areas and damaging a city administration building. Russian forces fired anti-aircraft guns in the direction of [Kutsurub](#), with munitions falling short on the beach areas, causing no damage.

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

In Kherson, Russian and Ukrainian forces continued mutual shelling across the Dnipro River.^{68 69} Russian forces launched 42 fire missions on free Ukraine, targeting the city of Kherson eight times, killing one and wounding another.⁷⁰

Ukrainian forces conducted another amphibious-based reconnaissance mission near Russian-occupied Hola Prystan. Our favorite FSB Colonel, wanted war criminal, Kremlin pariah, Wagner target, and failed mobik, Igor "Girkin" Strelkov, wrote it was a small force of six to eight soldiers and not a large assault as other some other Russian social media channels claimed.⁷¹

GSAFU reported that five repurposed civilian motorboats with Russian DRG troops were destroyed in the network of marshy islands at the mouth of the Dnipro River. No additional information was provided.⁷²

⁶⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

⁶⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

⁷⁰ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74954>

⁷¹ <https://t.me/strelkovii/3842>

⁷² <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387299/>

NORTH AND NORTHEAST UKRAINE

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


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

In Sumy, five hromadas, including Shostka, Krasnopillia, Unakivka, SeredynaBuda, and Bilopillia, were hit by mortars, missiles, shells, and were attacked by drone-delivered IEDs.⁷³ A business was struck in Shostka by an S-300 missile used for a ground attack, wounding two.⁷⁴ More than 20 mortars were fired from across the border at Krasnopillia.

⁷³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/02/1/7387380/>

⁷⁴ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387363/>

RUSSIAN FRONT

Local reports from the Belgorod federal district reported  [air defense was active over the city](#), with local officials reporting two “objects” were shot down.⁷⁵

Despite poor weather, work on the Kerch Bridge went according to plan on January 30, with the fourth section of the replacement bridge moved into place.⁷⁶ Additional closures are planned in February to add the road deck, with partial repairs of the road bridge slated to be completed in March 2023. Once done, the bridge will only support car and bus traffic.

Fog suspended service on the Kerch Straight Ferry, complicating transit to Russian-occupied Crimea due to the bridge closure for construction.⁷⁷

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree striking the requirement to review the yellow terror alert status every 15 days and giving himself the power to keep the

⁷⁵ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54943>

⁷⁶ <https://t.me/readovkanews/51721>

⁷⁷ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21491>

alert level indefinitely.⁷⁸ The Russian leader signed a second decree permitting the random searches of any vehicle without cause operating in an area under the yellow terror alert status.⁷⁹ ⁸⁰ Nationalists welcomed the news, while residents in Crimea cautiously asked on social media if this meant the yellow alert would go on forever.

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Ukraine announced it was creating 25 new rifle battalions, one from each Oblast and one from Kyiv and Dnipro.

Editor's Note: While Ukraine has 24 oblasts, Crimea is under total Russian occupation, preventing battalion formation.

Each battalion will have 601 members – 449 soldiers, 105 non-commissioned officers, and 47 officers. The units will be comprised of volunteers, reservists, and conscripts.⁸¹

⁷⁸ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21479>

⁷⁹ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21448>

⁸⁰ <https://t.me/voenkototenok/44888>

⁸¹ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/8276>

The United States Treasury Department reported there was no evidence that U.S. funds are being misused in Ukraine.⁸²

"We have no indications that U.S. funds have been misused in Ukraine," said Megan Apper, spokesperson for the Treasury Department. "We welcome the ongoing efforts of the Ukrainian authorities to work with us to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place that U.S. assistance reaches those for whom it is intended."

An unnamed U.S. official said that "there has been no serious, high-level discussion about F-16s" when asked after U.S. President Joe Biden gave a curt "no" to the question on January 30.⁸³ Late in the day, Deputy National Security Adviser Jon Finer said the U.S. would discuss fighter jets for Ukraine "very carefully" with Kyiv and its allies.

Days after an Iranian ammunition factory experienced a smoking incident that resulted in a clap and cotton and accusations that Israel was behind the strike, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the Israeli government

⁸² <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387352/>

⁸³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387330/>

was studying other options to support Ukraine beyond humanitarian aid.⁸⁴

American weapons manufacturer General Atomics offered two Reaper MQ-9 combat drones to Ukraine for \$1, according to a report in the Wall Street Journal.⁸⁵ Ukraine would still need to spend \$10 million to prepare the drones for shipment and around \$8 million yearly for maintenance and service. The United States government would have to approve the transfer, and the White House did not comment on the proposal made by Linden Blue, CEO of General Atomics.

French Ministry of Defense Sebastien Lecornu announced that Paris was transferring 12 more CEASAR 155 mm self-propelled howitzers to Ukraine.⁸⁶

On January 19, we estimated the maximum number of tanks Ukraine would receive after the Ramstein working group meeting on January 20 was 165, and we expected the final number to be lower. Dmytro Kuleba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, reported that the first wave of

⁸⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74944>

⁸⁵ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/02/1/7387383/>

⁸⁶ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54905>


main battle tanks from NATO nations would number between 120 to 140 – not including ten French AMX-10 RC light tanks (or armored scout vehicles or tank destroyers) which are expected to enter service in Ukraine in the coming days.⁸⁷

The United States is expected to announce a new military aid package for Ukraine valued between \$2 and \$2.2 billion. Up to \$1.725 billion in funds is earmarked for the purchase of Ground Launch Small Diameter Bomb (GLSDB), which have a range of 150 kilometers and are delivered using M142, M270, MARS II, and LRU Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (GMLRS), more commonly known as HIMARS. The GLSDB has almost double the range and flies like a cruise missile with an accuracy of +/- 1 meter. Foundationally the GLSDB uses the Mk.81 120 kilogram small diameter bomb and M26 rocket, which the United States already has a large supply of, and turns them into a 227 mm rocket with foldable wings. You can read more information about GLSDB [on our Patreon](#).⁸⁸

⁸⁷ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387302/>

⁸⁸ <https://www.patreon.com/posts/russia-ukraine-78037685>

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION AND MILITARY STATUS

We know someone is destined for the front in Ukraine! On Russian state media, a Kremlin spokesperson let it slip that since February 24,  [50% of all Russian VDV forces have been killed](#) or permanently disabled in combat.⁸⁹

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Denise Brown, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Ukraine, believes that a physical inspection of the Oenivka prison camp to investigate the death of 54 Ukrainian POWs in an explosion could still happen.⁹⁰ It's unclear how that would happen with the UN mission disbanded in December and the International Committee of the Red Cross still blocked from accessing the site.⁹¹

GEOPOLITICAL

Former President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, was transferred from prison to a hospital where he is in critical

⁸⁹ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21451>

⁹⁰ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387291/>

⁹¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387291/>

condition. Saakashvili's supporters allege he was poisoned in prison and became critically ill after catching COVID-19, which was inadequately treated. The EU warned weeks ago that if Saakashvili were to die in custody without being hospitalized, Georgia's application to join the economic bloc would be automatically dismissed without further consideration.⁹²

Austria and Hungary formed an alliance after Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand, sorry wrong century. Austria and Hungary formed an alliance and agreed not to send weapons to Ukraine, Austrian Defence Minister Klaudia Tanner and her Hungarian counterpart Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky said at a meeting in Budapest.⁹³ Austrian Defence Minister Klaudia Tanner opened his mouth and inserted foot when he said the biggest danger is that "the war could spread to Europe."

Hey! Does anyone have a map? Can you check it for me? Is Ukraine on the European continent? How about Belarus? How about the enclave of Kaliningrad?

Thank you.

⁹² <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21454>

⁹³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/31/7387265/>

Our January interview with former Estonia President Toomas Hendrik Ilves came to mind when he discussed how  [Eastern European nations are perceived as the "little ones"](#) by Western European leaders.⁹⁴ While both nations pledged to support Ukrainian refugees and Austria extended registration for displaced peoples for another year, Hungary has registered 46.⁹⁵ Last week Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán told journalists in Budapest that he believed that Ukraine couldn't win the war and is unmanageable as Afghanistan.

Hungarian ambassador to Kyiv, István Ljádártó, was going through some things after the foreign ministry summoned him. "It was emphasized to the Hungarian diplomat that the anti-Ukrainian rhetoric, which has been heard from the Hungarian leadership for a long time, is absolutely unacceptable and causes serious damage to Ukrainian-Hungarian relations," the ministry said in a released statement, adding, "The Hungarian side was urged to stop this negative trend in order to avoid irreparable consequences for the relations between the two countries."⁹⁶

⁹⁴ <https://www.russiaukrainewarpodcast.com/2020397/11990567>

⁹⁵ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2023/02/1/7387384/>

⁹⁶ [Reuters](#)

Czech Republic president-elect and former NATO Secretary-General Petr Pavel said that Ukraine should be automatically entered into NATO at the end of the Russia-Ukraine War.⁹⁷ "The Ukrainian army will probably be the most experienced army in Europe. Ukraine deserves to be part of the community of democratic countries," Pavel said, later clarifying to the BCC that he was speaking about NATO membership.

Welcome to NATO. My name is Sergeant Serhei Shevchenko of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. I will be your lead instructor for the next ten weeks on operating main battle tanks. Yes, you have a question.

Which tank will we be learning?

All of them. You will be learning all of them, just like the Ukrainian military.

NATO tanks?

⁹⁷ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2023/02/1/7387398/>

NATO, Soviet, Russian, South Korean, all of them.

In ten weeks?

Hey, no one will be shooting at you the whole time. Let's get started.

ECONOMIC

Roman Abramovich is closing the sale of the Chelsea FC British football club (that's soccer for our American readers) for an estimated \$3 billion. Abramovich has pledged to transfer all proceeds to provide humanitarian aid to Ukrainians. The announcement has sparked a torrent of anti-Semitic rage on Russian social media channels and accusations that Abramovich is a traitor.⁹⁸

Russian citizens completely freaked out when they thought Russia or the United States had blocked their access to the spicy content available on Only Fans.

⁹⁸ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/54869>

Come on, America! Give us back our porn.

A few hours later, Only Fans announced that blocking Russian IP addresses was an error, and access was restored. Kremlin nuclear forces stood down, and there was much rejoicing.

The rouble ticked upward, with an exchange rate of 70 for 1 US dollar.

Western oil prices climbed upward, with WTI crude reaching \$79 a barrel and Brent creeping up to \$86. Russian Urals crude fell, with an "official" price of \$56 a barrel. United States wholesale RBOB gasoline on the spot market rebounded a dime, climbing to \$2.57 a gallon (68 cents a liter).

Dutch TTF Natural Gas Futures dropped, with March 2023 falling to 57 euros per megawatt hour and April 2023 futures trading at 58 euros.

Chicago SRW Wheat Futures were volatile, reaching \$7.66 a bushel for March 2023 delivery.