



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



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Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 172

It has been 3,090 days since Russia occupied Crimea on February 27, 2014.

In northeast Donetsk, a Russian Special Operation Force (SOF) reconnaissance in force team attempted to advance on Serebrianka, came under fire from Ukrainian forces, and retreated.

Elements of the 2nd Army Corps of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR), supported by the Russian Federation Armed Forces, attempted to advance into Ivano-Darivka, Vesele, and Spirne using reconnaissance in force and were unsuccessful.

The headquarters for Private Military Company Wagner Group was hit by rockets fired from High Mobility Rocket Artillery Systems (HIMARS), causing significant damage and reportedly causing dozens of casualties.

Ukrainian SOF made a reconnaissance mission in Brusivka. They came under machine gun fire, attempted to flank the Russian positions, and withdrew.

In the Bakhmut area, Russian airborne forces (VDV) attempted another reconnaissance in force push on the edge of Soledar and were unsuccessful.

PMC Wagner, supported by LNR separatists, tried to advance on Yakovlivka and Vershyna without success. Russian VDV forces assaulted Bakhmut and, according to the General Staff, had "partial success." After the attack, Bakhmut experienced the worst shelling since the war began.

Russian forces attempted to advance on Zaitseve, 10 kilometers southeast of Bakhmut and were unsuccessful. In the Svitlodarsk bulge fighting for control of Kodema and Zaitseve, north of Horlivka continued.

West of Donetsk, the 1st Army Corps of the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) continued its offensive to capture Pisky. They remained unsuccessful in pushing Ukrainian forces out of the northern part of the village.

On the south side of Pisky, DNR forces attempted to advance on Pervomaiske and were unsuccessful.

In southern Ukraine, Russian forces made another attempt to advance on Pavlivka and tried to improve their position near Vremivka without success.

Insurgents in Melitopol destroyed a railroad bridge south of the city and reportedly caused major damage to the structure.

South of Izyum, pictures by Ukrainian forces confirm that the settlement of Brazhivka has been fully liberated. Russian forces attempted to advance in the direction of Dolyna and were unsuccessful.

Russian forces fired S300 anti-aircraft missiles in a ground-to-ground capacity for the first time in almost a week into Mykolaiv. The main port was hit, causing damage to the facilities.

Russian and Ukrainian forces continue to trade accusations of shelling the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. The Russian-controlled city of Energodar, where the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is located, was shelled, killing one person. Russian forces fired 20 Grad rockets into

Nikopol and shelled Marganets. There were no injuries reported.

Dmytro Zhivyt'sky, Sumy Regional Administrative and Military Governor, reported Yunakivka, Esman, Khotin, and Billopillia were shelled and hit by mortars. There was a border skirmish north of Billopillia at the now closed international border crossing into Russia.

In Chernihiv, the settlement of Senkivka was shelled.

In Zareche-Vtore, Russia, a loitering munition (aka kamikaze drone) crashed into the base of a large communications tower, destroying it.

DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

1. The 2nd Army Corps of the Luhansk People's Republic is combat ineffective, with multiple reports that it is on the brink of being combat destroyed.
2. Volunteer fighters in Russia are starting to return home from their contracts and complain of poor equipment, terrible treatment, and going unpaid.
3. Russian proxy forces suffered another embarrassing and preventable defeat due to terrible operational security, resulting in dozens of mercenaries being killed and wounded in a confirmed HIMARS attack.
4. Ukrainian forces continue to gain ground south of Izyum, and the condition of Russian defenses is reaching a point where a counteroffensive is a target of opportunity.
5. Russian troops in Kherson city have started looting civilian garages and homes, indicating deepening concern about being cut off from the rest of Ukraine or a possible prelude to a withdrawal.
6. The Kremlin may move forward with the sham referendum for the Donbas to become part of the Russian Federation, even though almost half of

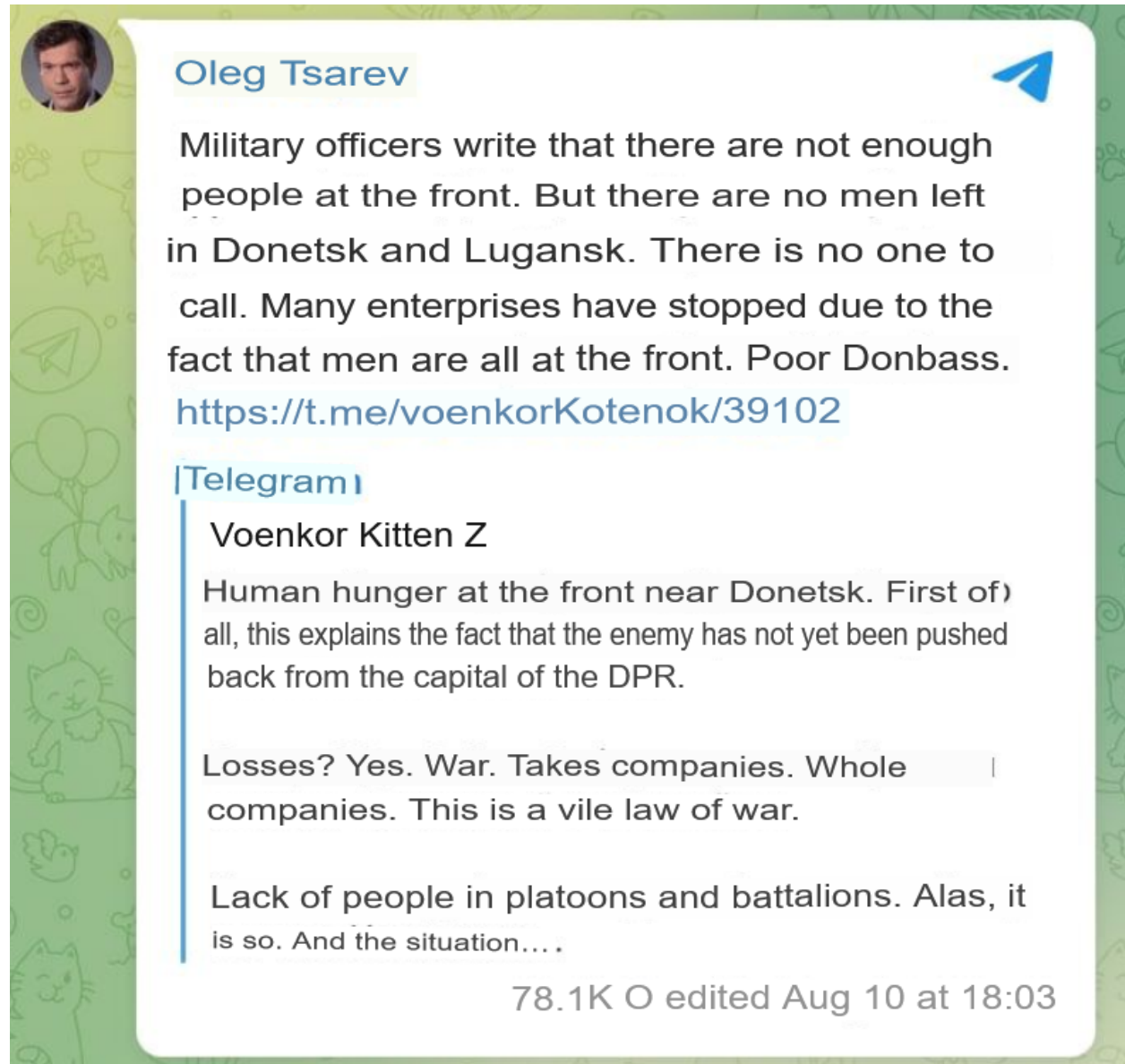
Donetsk is not secured and 80% of the population has fled.

SPECIAL REPORT

The Russian Ministry of Defense and its proxies continue to struggle to fill its military ranks. Professional soldiers and mercenaries are becoming increasingly vocal about the condition and training of replacement troops and arriving newly formed units.

Within the Donbas, the biggest complaints come from the separatist militias of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR). Frustrated conscripts [made a video showing the equipment](#) they had been issued.¹ One conscript was given no boots, torn pants, no helmet, and no body armor. Another conscript showed how the backpack they had been issued had so much dry rot from improper storage that it was crumbling apart. A third conscript showed that the boots they had been issued had worn soles, were poorly repaired, and had no waterproofing. An officer appealed at the end of the video for body armor, wet weather gear, and boots.

¹ <https://twitter.com/TpyxaNews/status/1558017084788989952>



Pro-Russian social media accounts are constantly reporting a lack of personnel in the LNR and the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR). Oleg Tsarev, a former Ukrainian government official, became a separatist leader in May 2015. He resigned from the Novorossiia Confederation because the DNR did not comply with the Minsk II accords.

He wrote on Telegram that LNR and DNR military officers are writing there are not enough people on the front. He claimed there was “no one else to call” because all eligible men were already on the front. He closed his Telegram post with “poor Donbas.”

On August 8, we shared a report by the exiled Luhansk Administrative and Military Governor, Serhiy Haidai, that Russian occupation officials in the oblast were force conscripting coal miners.^{2 3}

“Almost everyone who could be sent to the front from the mines of these settlements was already mobilized at the beginning of the invasion. Now each summons is another step to the complete shutdown of enterprises. There are not enough people. Everyone knows that they don't come back from the front, so they learn new specialties, work part-time, go on additional shifts,” Haidai wrote on Telegram.

² <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/4843>

³ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/4848>

Nine days later, an LPR battalion staff commander made a video appealing for equipment and the condition of the “mobilized reservists” that had arrived in his unit.^{4 5}

“One battalion was given 18 armored vests. Eighteen armored vests, and for your understanding, these are the people who couldn’t run away from commandant patrol when mobilization was announced. These are people with chronic diseases; these are miners, everyone with professional diseases, they are asked to do the impossible. They are demanded to maneuver 20 kilometers in two hours. There are no vehicles in the battalion at all. We are on self-provision [need to buy their own equipment]. We are begging for communication methods [radios].

“The boys are holding with their last effort. I have riots in these battalions. [They say] ‘We aren’t going, we won’t go.’ The treatment is such that...of course, everyone feels sorry for us. Thank God groceries and fuel still arrives.”

ASSESSMENT: There have been reports that forced conscripts in the occupied territory get a week of training before being sent to the front. The timeline of Haidai’s

⁴ [War Translated](#)

⁵ <https://t.me/insiderUKR/38761>

report of forced conscription of coal miners and the battalion commander reporting his fresh reservists are sickened coal miners align for the region and timeline.

Pro-Russian milblogger Murz also reported forced mobilization and the gutting of critical services and industries to send men to the front lines.⁶

"In the LPR, recently, they started taking ambulance drivers to the army. The cost [of bribes] has jumped to 100,000 roubles."

Editor's Note: 100,000 roubles is approximately \$1,650 using the "official" exchange rate from Moscow, which is more than two-months salary for the average person living in the occupied territories.

"In the DPR, 18 of those [replacements] arrived into a unit. Out of them all, of those who turned out to be fit fighters were just two. Some of those who arrived were convalescents, still with rods in their injured limbs. One of

⁶ [War Translated](#)

them, the “recruiters,” took from a psychological care facility, quickly becoming clear, and he was sent back.”

On August 14, an LNR unit rebelled and refused to continue to fight in the Donetsk People’s Republic.⁷ The [video statement they made is shocking](#), with a few unit members visibly malnourished or very ill, wearing poorly fitting and torn uniforms, if they had one to wear and boots in poor condition.

Recruiting efforts for Private Military Company Wagner Group aren’t going much better. In July, the first penal unit from St. Petersburg #6 Prison in Obukhovo arrived in Ukraine. Of the 200 members of the Wagner convict group, only two were still alive and uninjured on August 10.⁸ Professional mercenaries in Wagner now refuse to fight with the penal units due to their poor training, low quality, and disregard for command structure. Wagner is scrambling to reconfigure their units so individuals recruited from prison aren’t in hybrid units with professional mercenaries.

⁷ <https://twitter.com/girkingirkin/status/1558997616003895298>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/MrKovalenko/status/1558289798686801920>

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported that reservists and volunteers are complaining online that they aren't getting paid or the equipment they were promised when they signed up to fight in Ukraine.

In an interview with Radio Free Europe, a contracted fighter from Tartarstan complained about going unpaid for a two-month deployment.

"They paid us 205,000 rubles (\$3,365) a month," said Aleksandr. "They didn't give us our combat pay – 8,000 rubles (\$130) a day. They didn't pay any bonuses either."

"We were nothing to them. Zero. It was shameful," he said.

Editor's Note: It is important to note that 410,000 roubles are approximately nine months' salary for the average citizen in Russia. The 8,000 a day salary that went unpaid would be equivalent to another 480,000 roubles. Had he been paid his full salary, it would be equivalent to two-thirds of the annual salary of a recruit in the United States army. In monthly terms, the salary plus bonus would have been equal to the base pay of an E8, the second highest achievable enlisted pay grade in the US Army.

Others reported that upon returning from Ukraine, they were dumped in a field outside of Rostov, Russia, given plastic bags, their passports, phones, and other documents, and told to walk to the highway. They had to hitchhike to Rostov, and many found their bank accounts were empty. Dozens in the volunteer unit were never paid at all or only received 20,000 roubles (\$300).

The members were fighting in a reserve unit, where members reported the average age was between 45 to 50 years old. Some reserve units are attached to the Union of Donbas Volunteers, run by a Russian Duma deputy, Aleksandr Borodai.

ASSESSMENT: Corruption. That's it. That's the whole assessment.

The training was only seven days on the Russian-Ukrainian border. They reported they received disused uniforms, some with stains. They were given rusty weapons they had to fix themselves as part of their training. From there, they went straight to the trenches.

Volunteers are told they are not employed by the Russian Ministry of Defense but are "partisans." An added benefit

for the Kremlin is their deaths don't count in official casualty statistics. The volunteers aren't fighting for the Ministry of Defense. They are fighting for a quasi-organization run by a politician.

This has significant legal implications, potentially making the volunteer units illegal combatants under international law without protections from the Geneva Convention. Due to the poor equipment, many volunteers turned to looting. Under international law, as illegal combatants, volunteer units are at the mercy of their captors if caught committing war crimes.

Another common complaint in Russia is volunteers, and regular Russian military families are not being paid survivor benefits. While a news report of a family buying a brand new Lada using the money from their son's death was derided outside of Russia, many families get nothing beyond burial costs.

Russia is moving forward with asking 85 districts to form volunteer battalions to form the 3rd Army Corps. So far, twenty regions have produced 40 groups of volunteers, but few are in numbers that can be called a battalion – which

typically has 800 to 1200 members.⁹ In some districts, the volunteer units are barely fielding a platoon, with 50 volunteers being sent to training. Each district is responsible for equipping and paying its volunteers. In wealthy areas, salaries as high as 300,000 roubles (\$5,000 a month) are being offered. In other regions, pay is 100,000 roubles.

For the newly forming volunteer battalions, the Kremlin claims they will be attached to the Ministry of Defense.¹⁰

“The Ministry of Defense is responsible for procedural formalities in all regions: volunteers sign contracts with it for a period of several months with the possibility of extension and receive the official status of contract soldiers.”

However, these were the same promises made to previous contract soldiers. Moscow hopes to muster 34,000 recruits that will undergo the same simplified training and receive low-grade equipment. For many, they will arrive in Ukraine at the start of mud season or worse, when the first snow is

⁹ [Meduza](#)

¹⁰ <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5501970> – Russian State Media Site

beginning to fall. Winter combat in arctic conditions is not something you learn in a week.

In Russia-occupied Kherson, where concern among Russia's occupying forces of a Ukrainian counteroffensive is growing, the Rosgvardia has already turned to looting.¹¹ Insurgents report that up to 1,000 garages and sheds were broken into over the weekend under the guise of "security searches." Locks were cut, and doors were torn open even if residents weren't home. Many reported missing items.

The situation isn't much better for Ukraine, but that isn't a fair comparison. On February 22, 2022, many believed that Russia was the world's second most powerful military, with an army of up to three million people. Our team had reported a year before the invasion that Russia's conventional military was a regional power at best. We had assessed it was poorly equipped and trained, with most using aged equipment. We had concluded that the nation would be irrelevant on the world stage if Russia didn't have a nuclear arsenal.

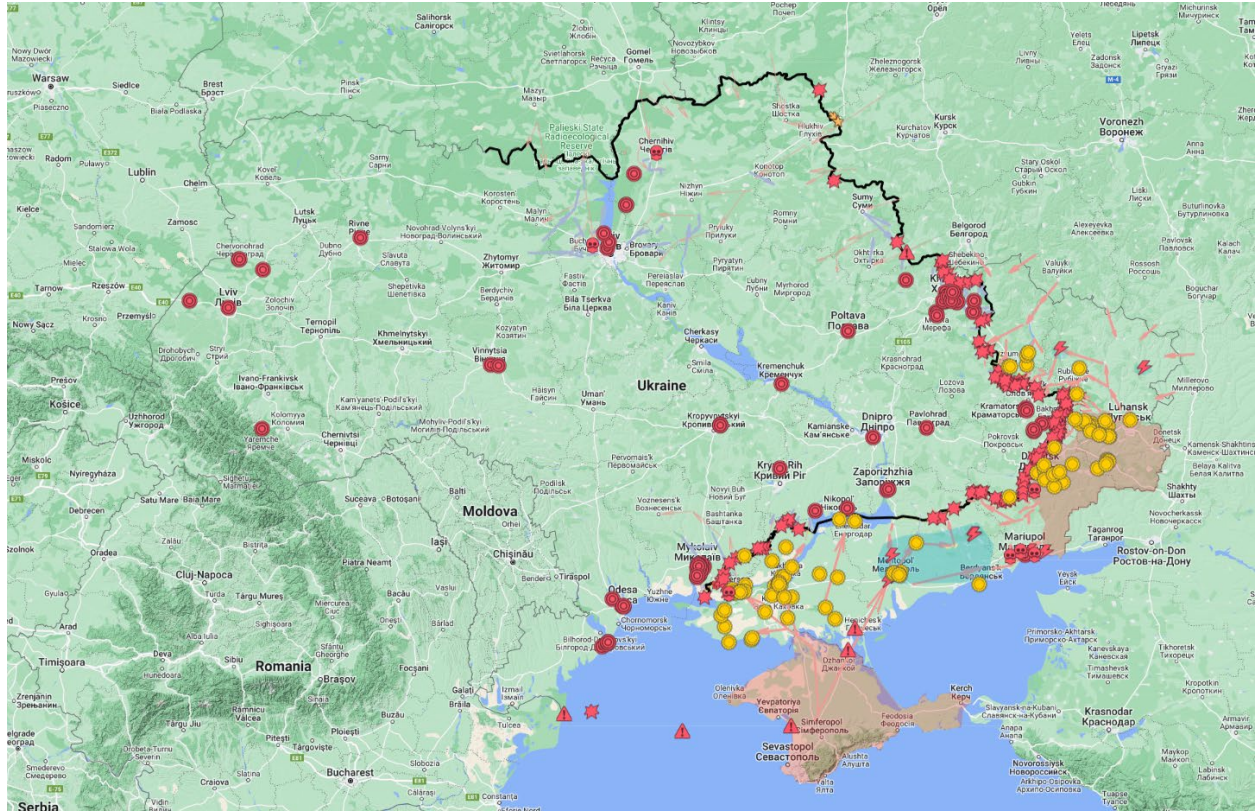
¹¹ https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1558875749725118467

It is critical not to rewrite history to fit a narrative. It is undeniable western weapons have altered the course of the war, but Ukraine repelled Russian from Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, and Kharkiv on its own.

Six months later, the world's second most powerful military is sending 45 to 50-year-old volunteers to fight an attritional war in places where casualty rates can be as high as 30% a month. In our final assessment, it is an embarrassment that the Russian military has had to turn to criminals, mercenaries, and middle-aged men desperate for a paycheck to fill their ranks. It is a disgrace that they receive only a week of training, can't even be adequately equipped, and go unpaid.

The narrative is Ukraine is a nation riddled with corruption and incompetence. Yet 25 weeks later, the second-most powerful military on the planet controls 21% of its neighbor. Ukraine and its military have demonstrated many traits since February – but incompetence and corruption have not been two of them.

TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP

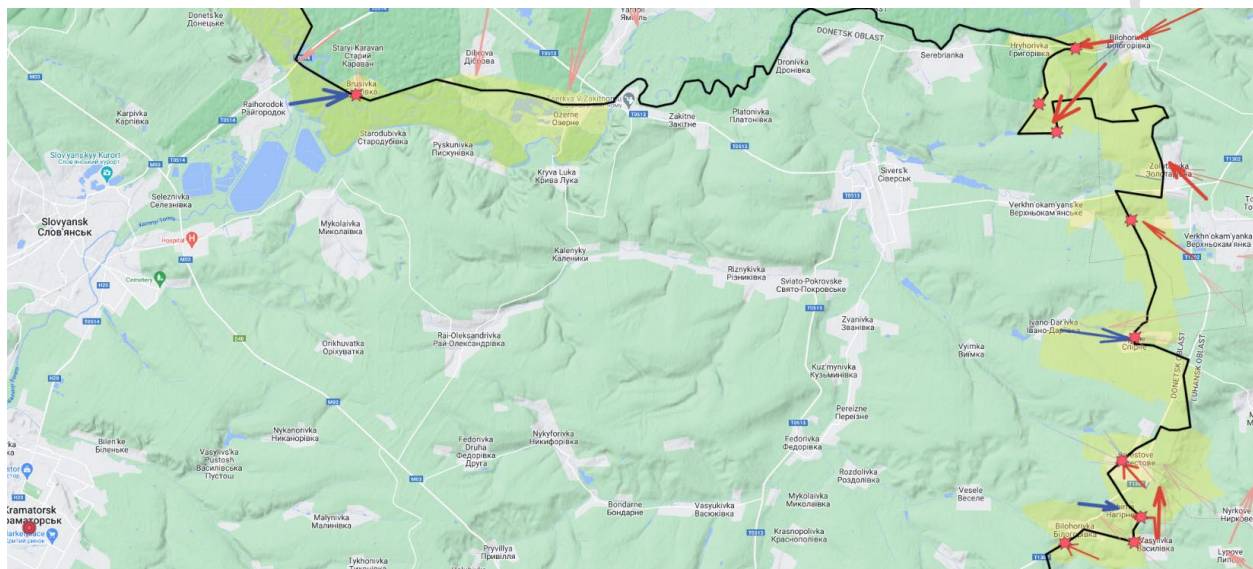


Information about changes made to the map: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgency, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at Saky Naval airbase. Based on your feedback, we have moved the “flags” into the category of “Archived Offensives.” The 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 [Kherson](#), the link will take you to the exact location explained in the Situation Report.

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

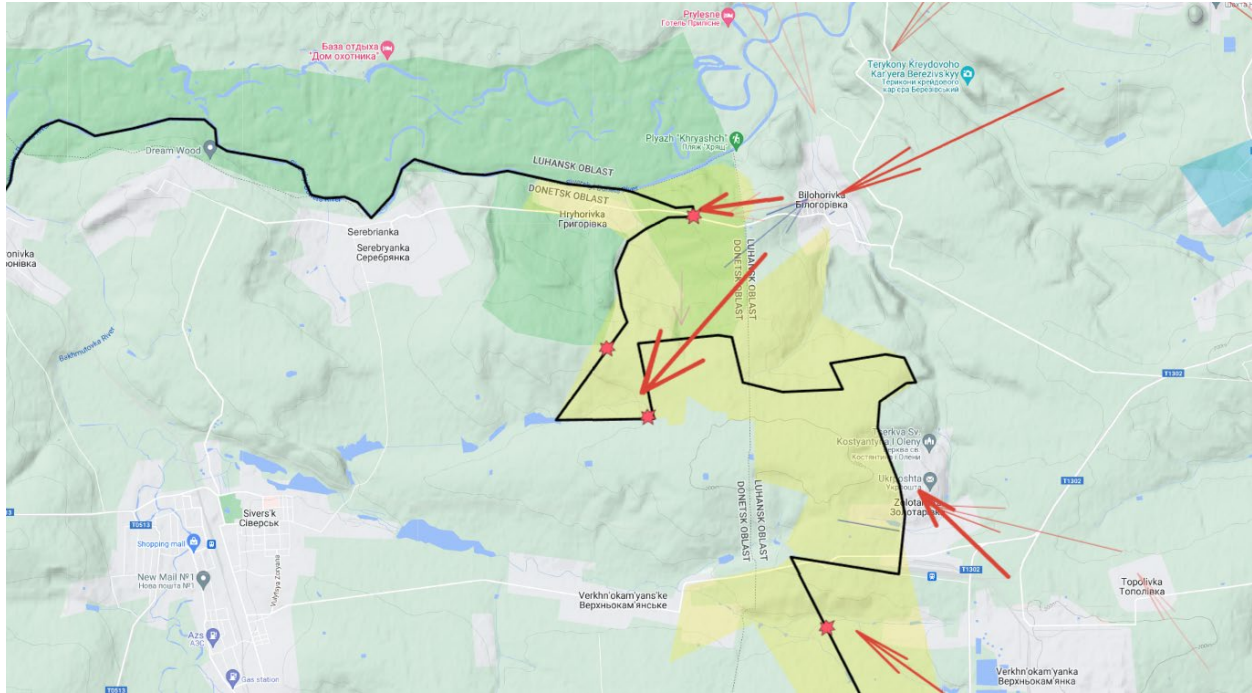
DONBAS REGION

SLOVYANSK-BILOHORIVKA-BERESTOVE TRIANGLE



Russian Objective: Maintain territorial control and Ground Lines of Communication, control insurgency, and integrate captured territory into Russia

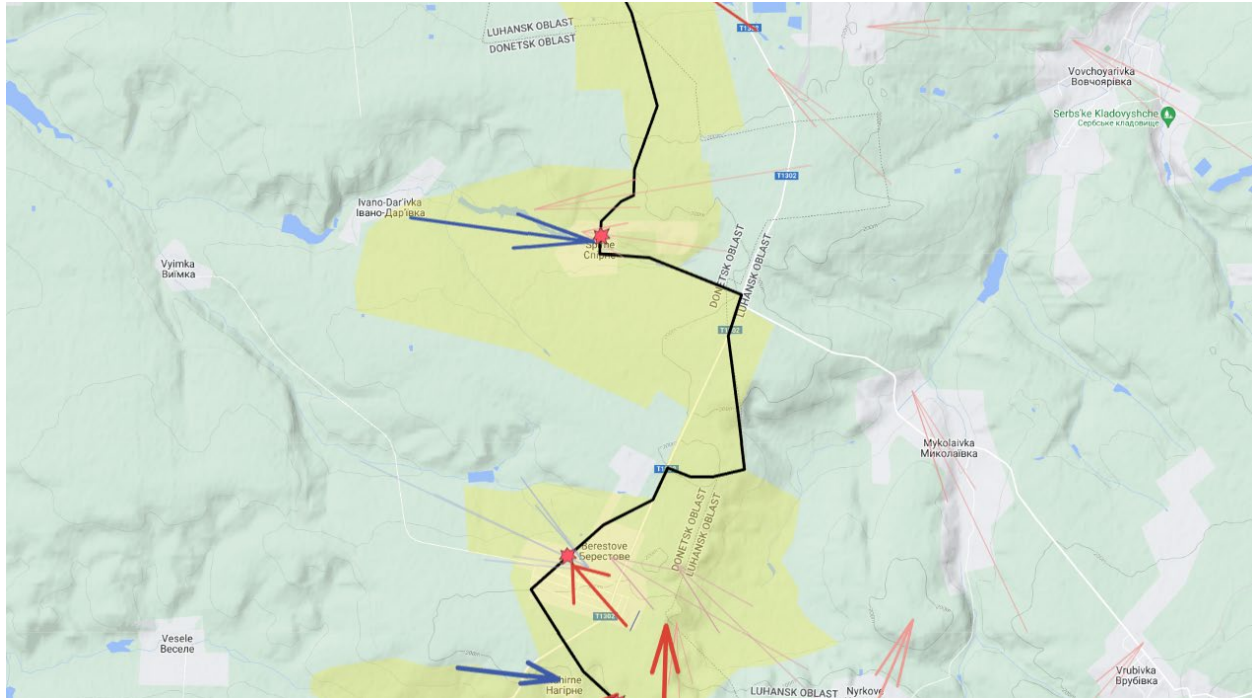
Ukrainian Objective: Prevent advances on Siversk, Slovyansk, and Kramatorsk, support insurgents, exploit weaknesses, interdict supplies



A Russian Special Operation Force (SOF) reconnaissance in force team attempted to advance on [Serebrianka](#), came under fire from Ukrainian forces, and retreated.^{12 13}

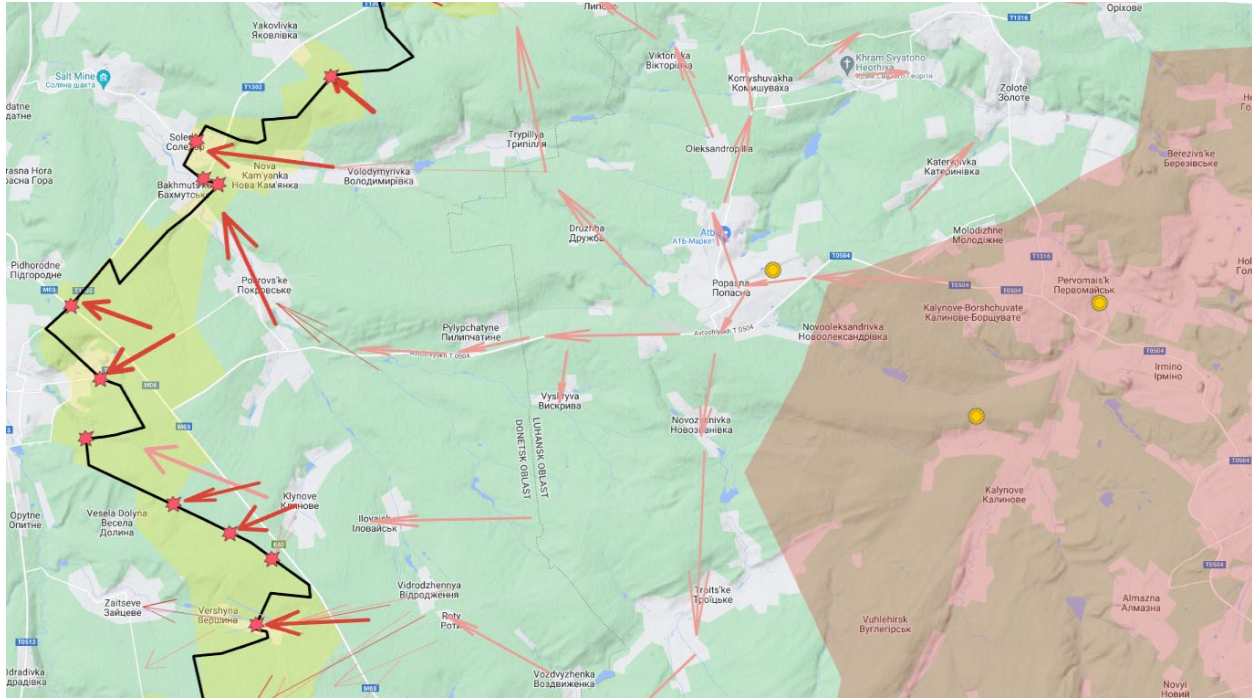
¹² https://twitter.com/TCG_CrisisRisks/status/1558685229581156352

¹³ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine - Facebook](#)



Elements of the 2nd Army Corps of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR), supported by the Russian Federation Armed Forces, attempted to advance into [Ivano-Darivka](#), [Vesele](#), and [Spirne](#) using reconnaissance in force and were unsuccessful.

The settlements east and south of [Siversk](#) were shelled, including [Verkhnokamyanske](#), Serebrianka, and [Hryhorivka](#).



On August 8, Private Military Company Wagner Group aligned Telegram channel Grey Zone, shared detailed pictures of the Wagner command and control base in Popasna.¹⁴ One of the photos a Russian journalist took during the visit included the address of the building where the base was located. Yevgeny Prigozhin, the founder of Wagner and a close Putin ally, was in one of the pictures.¹⁵

¹⁴ https://t.me/grey_zone/14670

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/kromark/status/1558862957664247809>



On August 14, the base was hit by rockets fired from High Mobility Rocket Artillery Systems (HIMARS), causing significant damage and reportedly killing 12 and wounding 13. Despite social media rumors, we find it unlikely that Prigozhin was still at the base.

Wagner Telegram channel Reverse Sid of the Medal shared pictures of the destroyed base and the wounded and dead being removed.¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/KyivPost/status/1558909728922689538>



Another post-attack video was recorded by an insurgent or Ukrainian SOF [showing Wagner loading](#) some of the dead into a van.¹⁷ Pro-Russian social media accounts, Russian state media, and Wagner have widely reported the attack. They are attempting to spin the operational security (OPSEC) fail as not that harmful, claiming that only one rocket struck the facility and members of Wagner were alerted before the strike and were in a bomb shelter.¹⁸ Pictures shared by Wagner Group show at least two impacts on the building, including one that would have penetrated the basement area.

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/wartranslated/status/1558886005737930753>

¹⁸ <https://t.me/rybar/37194>



Private chats for Russian soldiers and PMC Wagner claimed 25 to 50 casualties, depending on the source.

Ukrainian SOF made a [reconnaissance mission in Brusivka](#), on the north bank of the Siverskyi Donets River, northeast of Raihorodok.¹⁹ They came under machine gun fire, attempted to flank the Russian positions, and withdrew. Russian forces were using civilian homes as firing points.

ASSESSMENT: If it weren't for bad OPSEC Russian state media and Russian forces wouldn't have any OPSEC. The war in Ukraine is reaching the six-month mark, and security blunders continue to occur. It is unlikely Ukraine

¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/PaulJawin/status/1558712270385037312>

was specifically targeting Prigozhin. Despite his commitment to privacy and security, the wide distribution of pictures showing his visit indicates that Russian proxy forces have a significant sense of overconfidence.

It is unknown if this attack will impact ground operations in the region – particularly further south in Bakhmut.

The video from Brusivka indicates it is likely that Ukrainian SOF and experienced territorial guard are operating in the forested areas and the National Park north of the Siverskyi Donets River on the Luhansk-Donetsk administrative border.

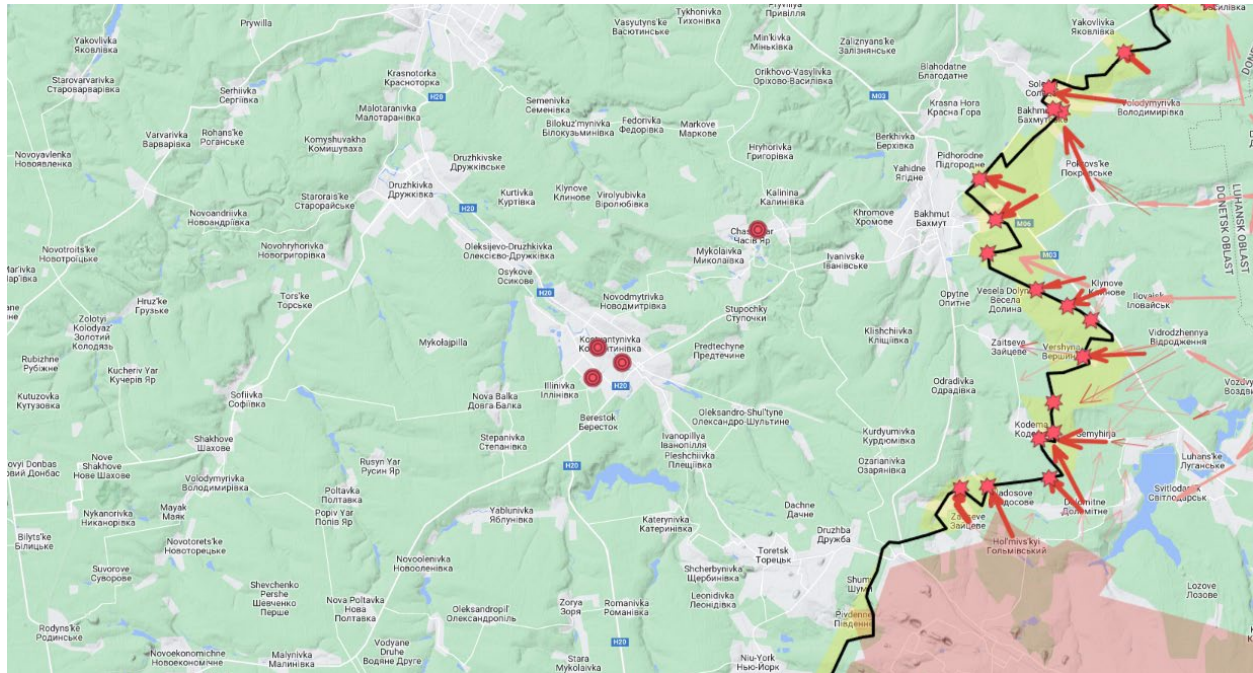
We believe there will continue to be sporadic fighting in this region, but we don't anticipate renewed significant combat operations before the fall mud season begins. The Russian offensive to capture Soledar and Bakhmut has stalled out. We reported yesterday that Private Military Company Wagner Group was rotating out of Soledar after suffering 50% losses and becoming combat destroyed.²⁰

²⁰ [Malcontent News Russia-Ukraine War Situation Report for August 12, 2022](#)

In our assessment, the small Russian offensives are an attempt to pull Ukrainian combat resources away from other axes. Troop movements and the intensity of artillery fire will be monitored. A significant increase of artillery fire will precede a more considerable offensive effort.

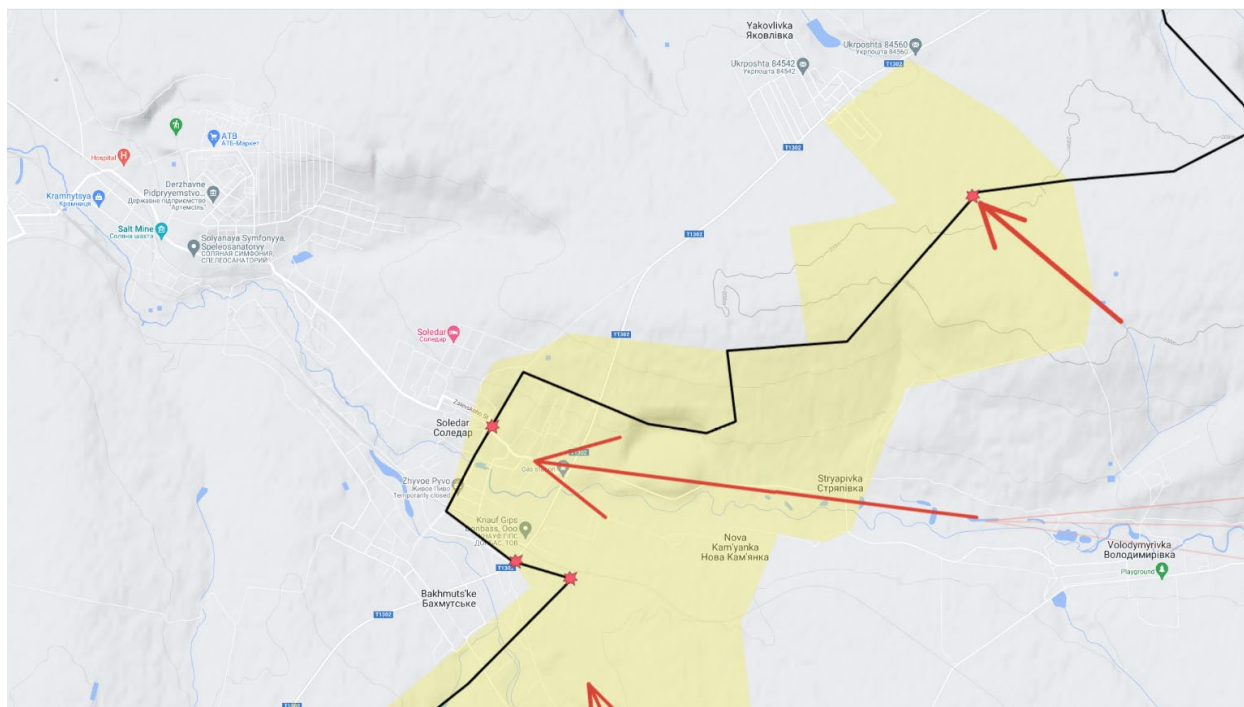
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BAKHMUT



Russian Objective: Capture the Bakhmut-Soledar complex and collapse the Svitlodarsk salient before August 31, interdict the Bakhmut-Siversk T-5013 Highway GLOC

Ukrainian Objective: Defend Bakhmut-Soldar while managing equipment and personnel losses, minimize civilian casualties, and defend GLOCs



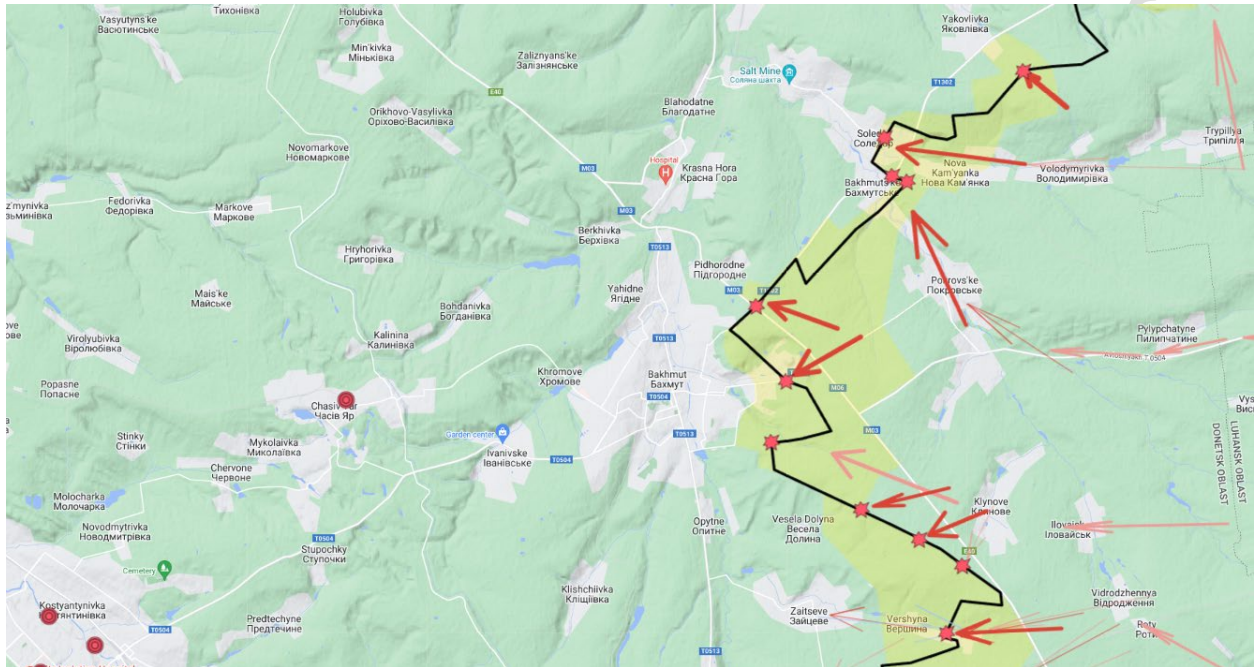
Pictures and [a video on social media](#) emerged today, showing the destruction in [Soledar](#) and indicating the Wagner Group does not fully control the KNAUF-GIPS sheetrock factory.^{21 22} Russian forces entered close to the southeastern corner of the facility, but the video showed it was a small reconnaissance force attempting a sweep of only one section of the large complex.

Russian airborne forces (VDV) attempted another reconnaissance in force push on the edge of Soledar and were unsuccessful. Our map likely overstates Russian

²¹ <https://twitter.com/RedIntelPanda/status/1559014695981416449>

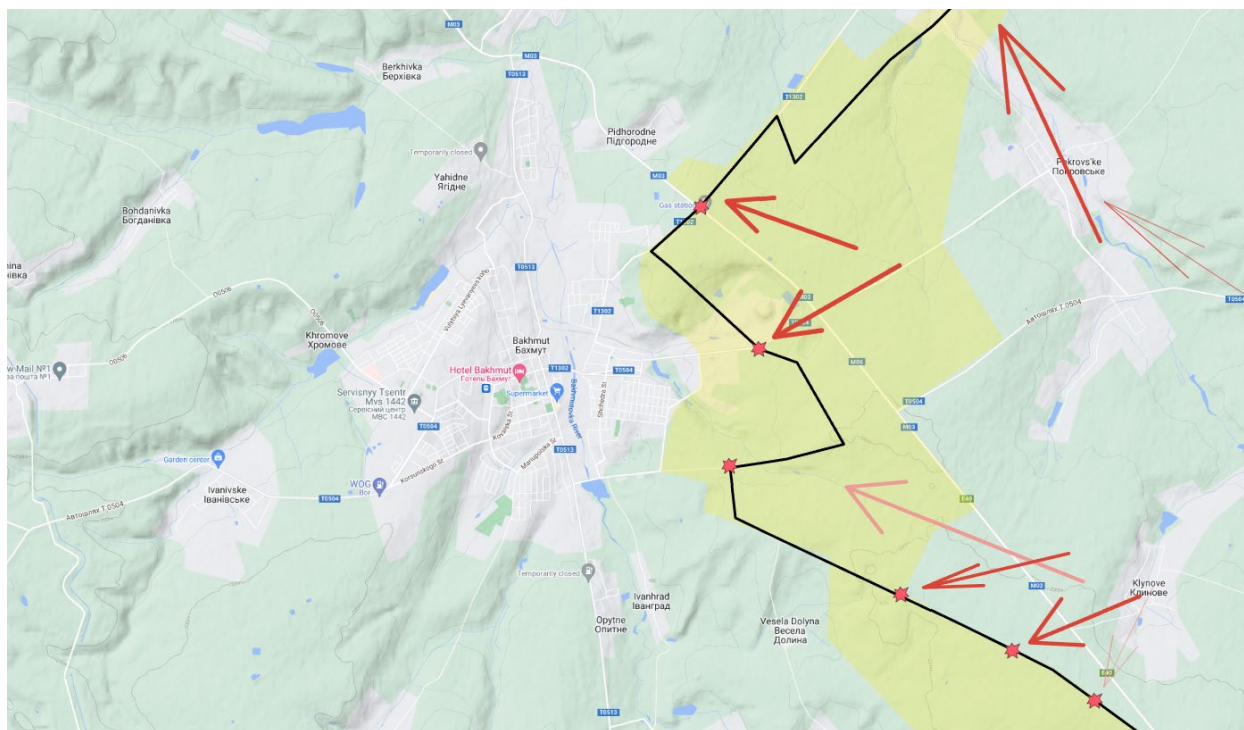
²² <https://twitter.com/RedIntelPanda/status/1559019488644923392>

gains, but we will hold the line of conflict in its current position.



PMC Wagner, supported by LNR separatists, tried to advance on [Yakovlivka](#) and [Vershyna](#) without success. Pro-Russian social media account Rybar claims that Russian forces captured Vershyna, but there weren't any supporting pictures or videos.²³ Military leaders of the LNR have consistently overstated territorial gains, amplified by Pro-Russian accounts without fact-checking. The General Staff reported continued fighting.

²³ <https://t.me/rybar/37181>

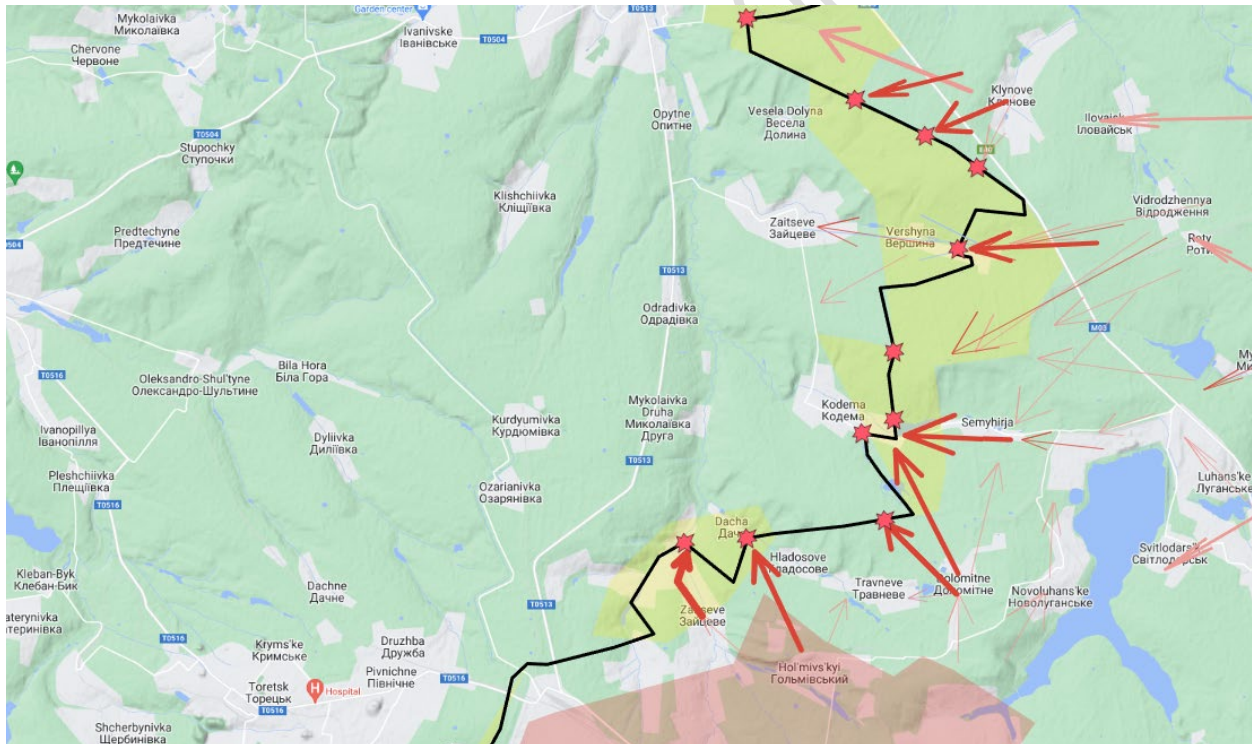


Russian VDV forces assaulted [Bakhmut](#) and, according to the General Staff, had “partial success.” Pro-Russian social media account Rybar’s map of the Bakhmut advance shows Russian forces have less control than we indicate, even after today’s “partial success.”²⁴ Based on social intelligence, we moved the line of conflict further east and tightened the area of contested control. This does not reflect new territorial gains but an improvement in the quality of available social intelligence.

²⁴ <https://t.me/rybar/37181>

Bakhmut was experiencing the worst shelling since the war began.²⁵ Typically, this is a precursor of a large-scale Russian offensive. Another possibility is the bombardment is a punitive strike for the HIMARS attack on Popasna.

Our assessment that [Vesela Dolyna](#) would come under attack was incorrect. Russian forces did not attempt to advance on the settlement, and it did not come under fire.



²⁵ <https://t.me/rybar/37191>

Russian forces attempted to advance on [Zaitseve](#), 10 kilometers southeast of Bakhmut and were unsuccessful. In the Svitlodarsk bulge fighting for control of [Kodema](#) and [Zaitseve](#), north of Horlivka continued.

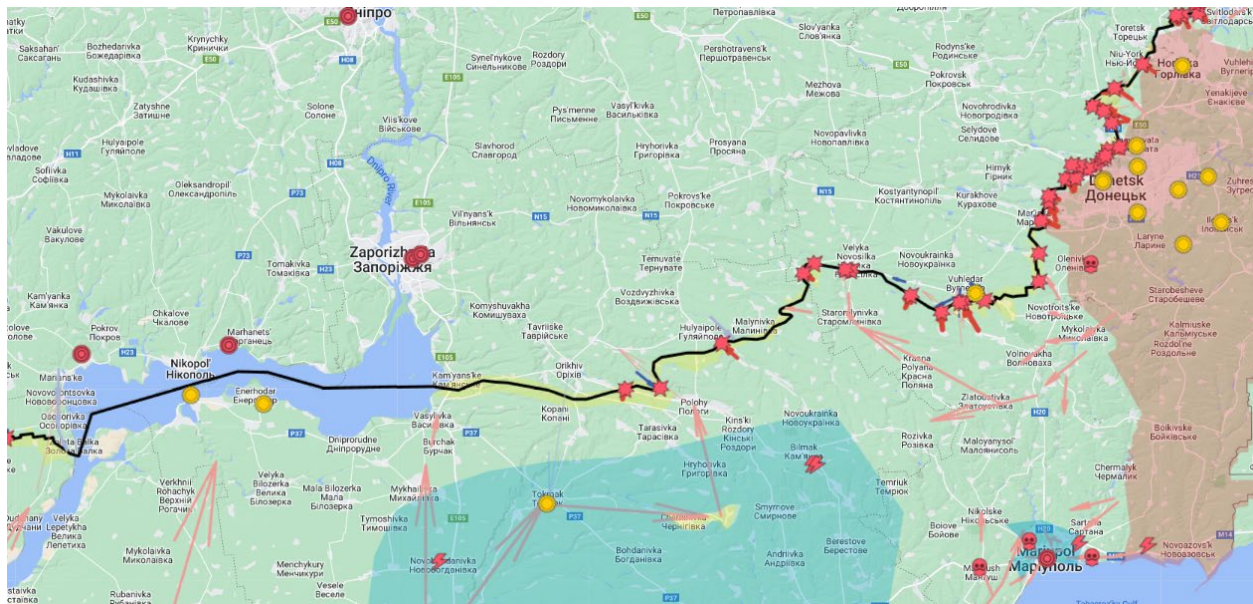
ASSESSMENT: Unchanged from August 8

In simplest terms, grunts with guns take territory, and grunts with guns hold territory. The Russian military doesn't have enough well-trained and well-equipped grunts with guns to support multiple offensive operations near Bakhmut and Donetsk while reinforcing defensive lines in Zaporizhia and Kherson.

The situation east of Soledar and Bakhmut has stabilized, but defending troops eventually must be rotated.

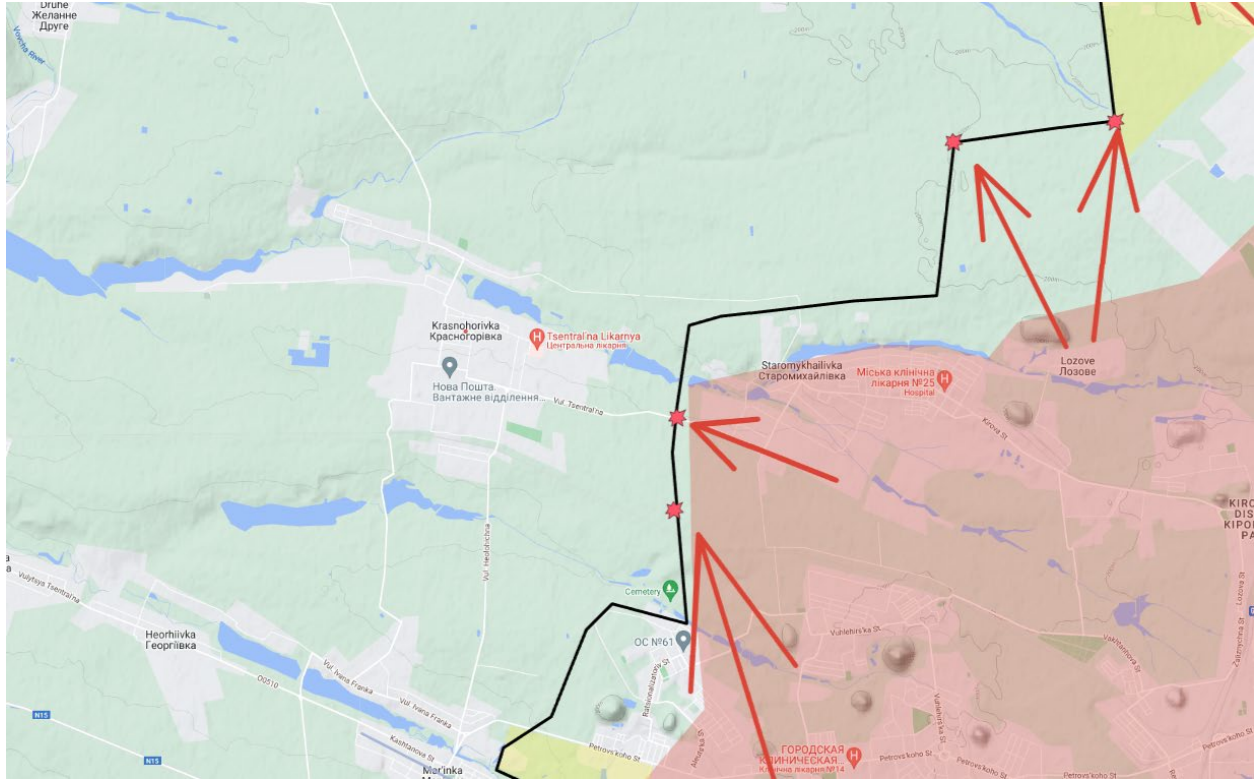
In attritional warfare, Ukraine can't compete. The question is, does Russia have enough troops left to throw at Soledar and Bakhmut and write off the casualties?

SOUTHWEST DONETSK AND WESTERN ZAPORIZHIA

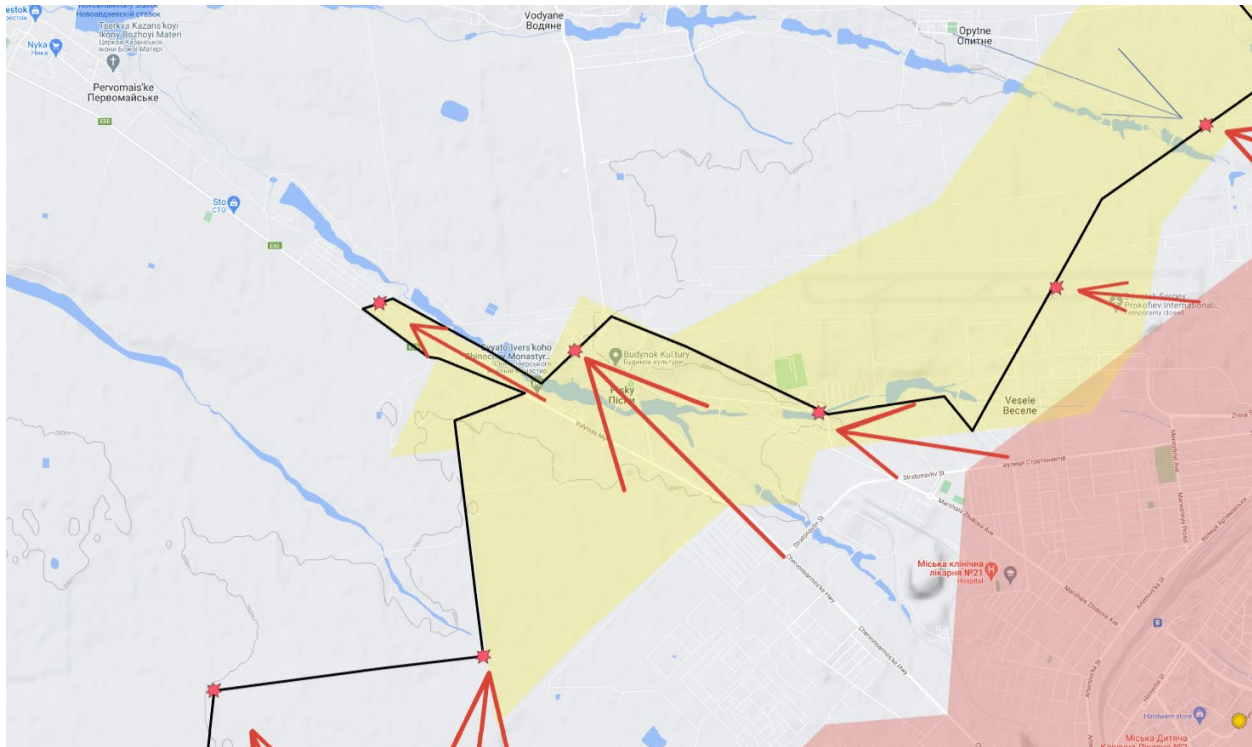


Russian Objective: Capture the Donetsk oblast to its administrative borders before August 31, push Ukrainian forces out of firing range of Donetsk city, defend the existing line of conflict in Zaporizhzhia to the Dniipro River

Ukrainian Objective: Defend the existing line of conflict while finding and exploiting weaknesses, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies and disrupt logistics, and prepare for or convince Russian forces they are preparing for a widescale counteroffensive



Russian forces attempted to advance on [Krasnohorivka](#) from the outskirts of Donetsk for a second time in 24 hours and were unsuccessful.



The 1st Army Corps of the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) continued its offensive to capture [Pisky](#). Pro-Russian social media accounts and the Russian Ministry of Defense didn't mention Avdiivka, Kamyanka, Pisky, or Marinka in their reports today.²⁶ Outed FSB Colonel, wanted war criminal, and likely now a Kremlin pariah, Igor "Girkin" Strelkov, maintained a low profile on social media after his release from custody and forced return to Russia.

Neither belligerent reported additional fighting west of Donetsk.

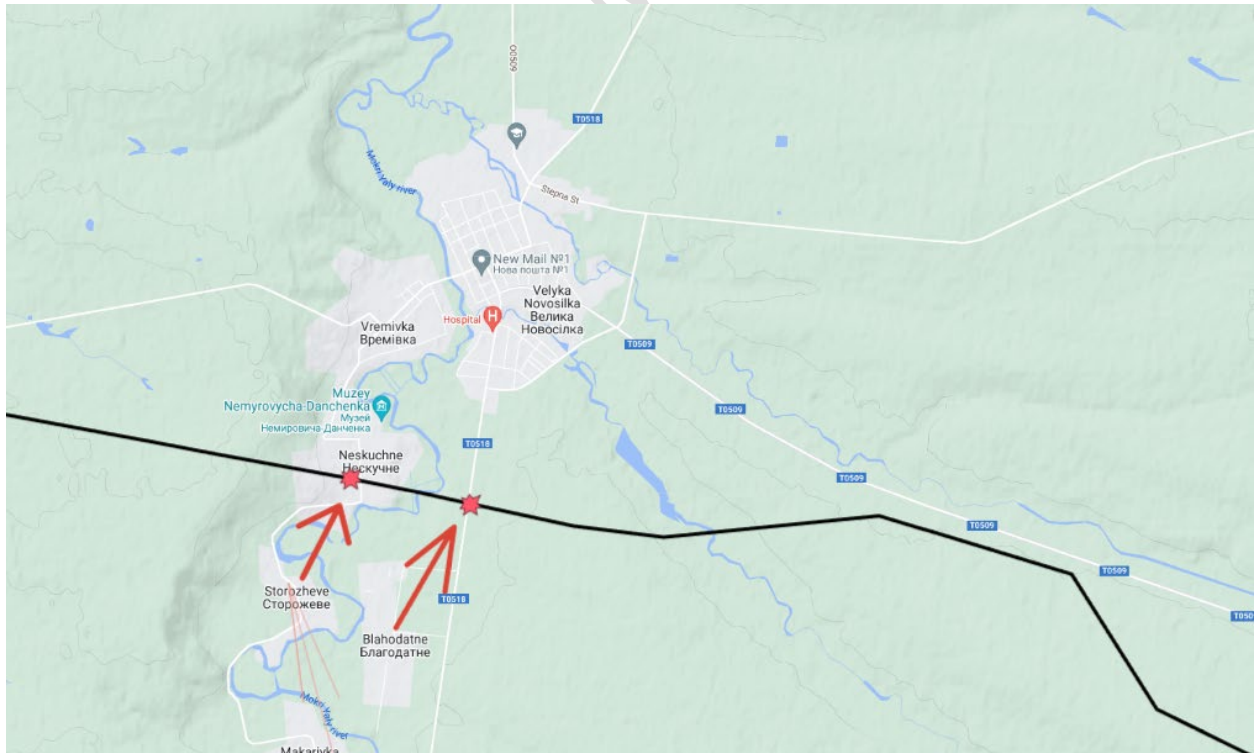
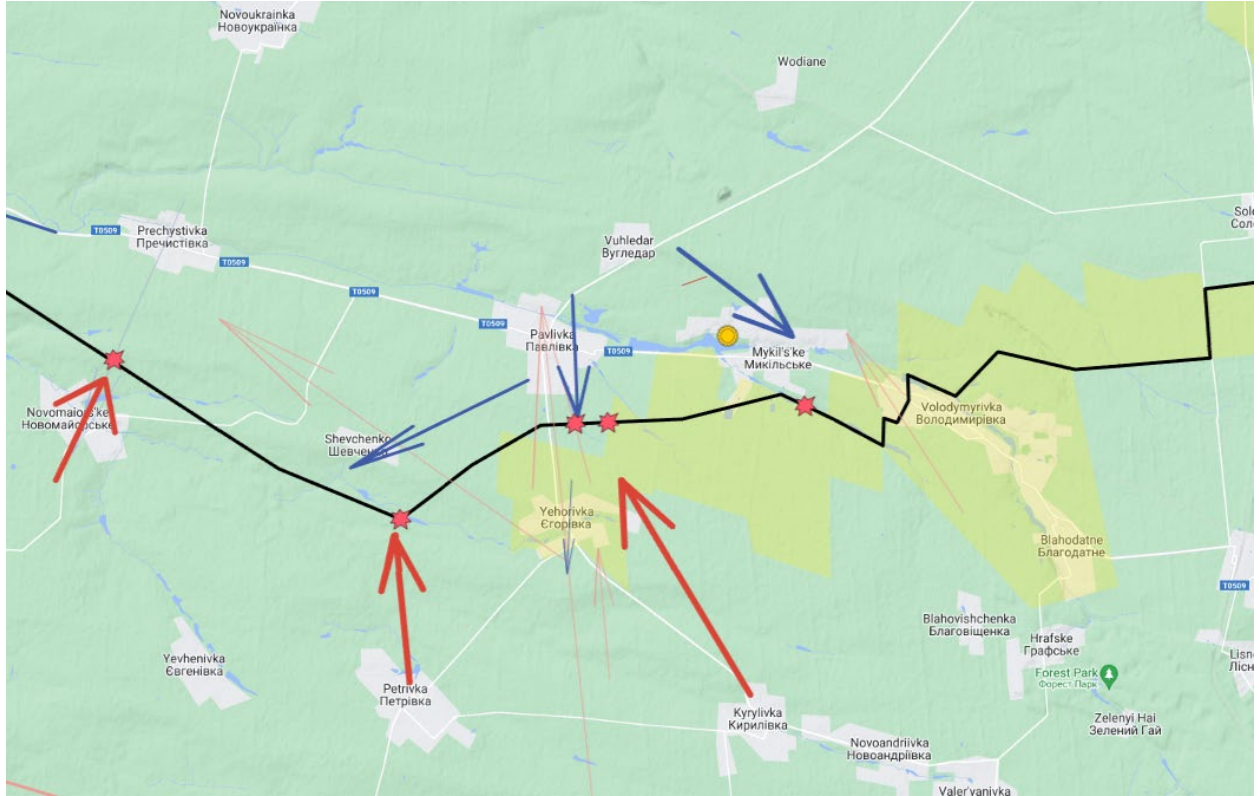
²⁶ <https://t.me/rybar/37167>

On August 13, we reported that there was fighting in the settlement of [Pervomaiske](#), which is northwest of Pisky. Further geographical analysis showed that Pervomaiske is a slender settlement that runs northwest to southeast and connects to the northwest corner of Pisky at the ponds. Ukrainian forces are on the north side of the ponds, and Russian forces are on the southern side. We assess the unsuccessful fighting on the 13th as an attempt to flank Ukrainian positions and cross a small marshy area north of the E-50 loop highway. Russian forces made a second attempt to advance on the settlement on the morning of August 15 local time and were unsuccessful.²⁷

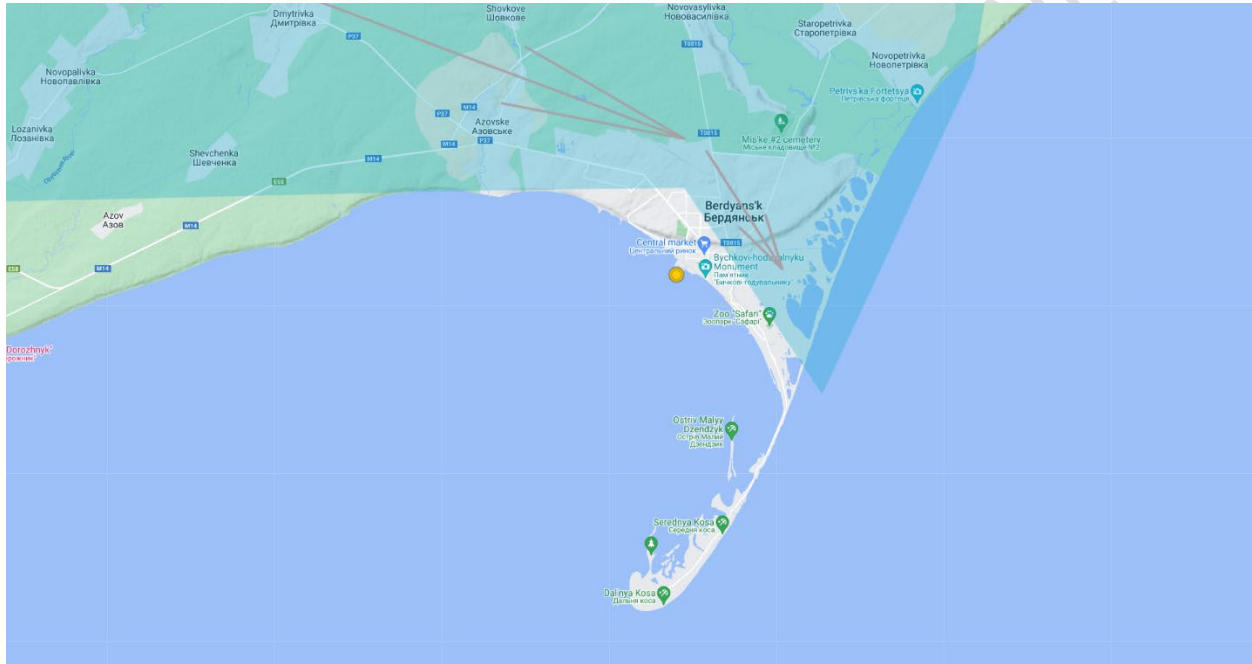
Based on this information, we have updated the map.

Russian and Ukrainian forces fired artillery, mortars, and rockets from multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) from [Horlivka](#) to [Donetsk](#) city to [Velyka Novosilka](#) in the Donetsk oblast and [Hulyaipole](#) to [Orikhiv](#) to [Kamyanske](#) in Zaporizhia.

²⁷ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine - Facebook](#)

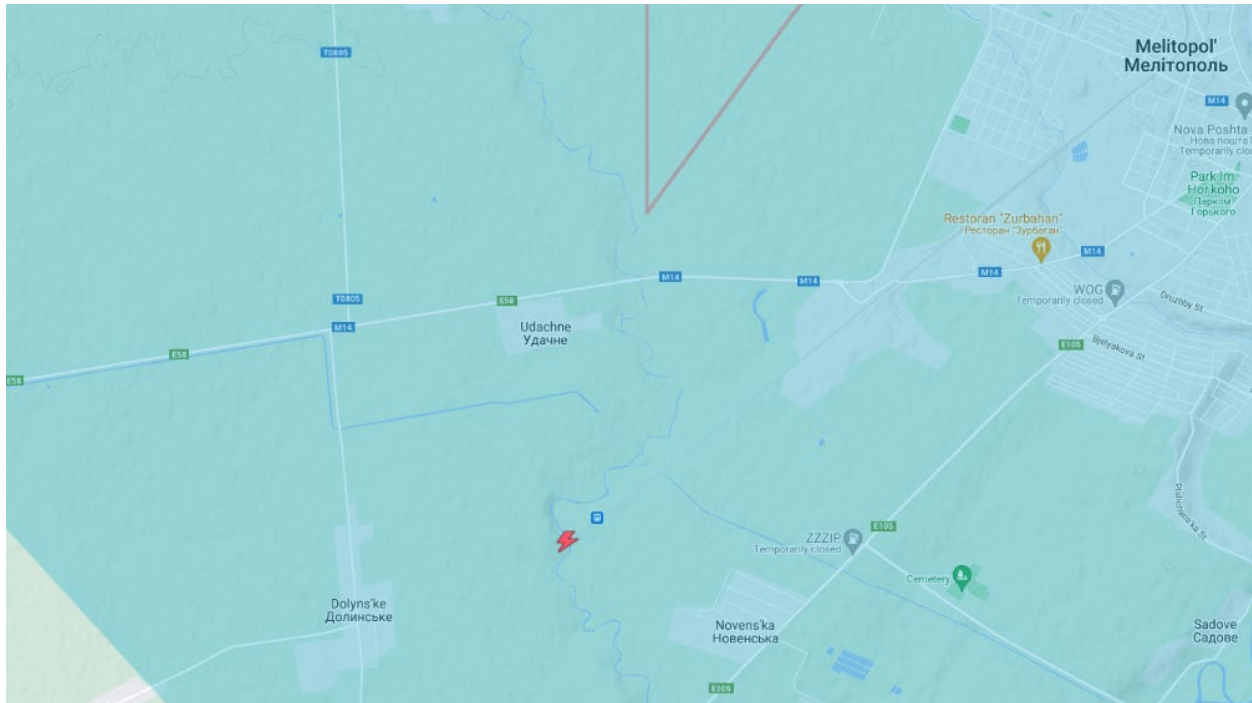


Russian forces made another attempt to advance on [Pavlivka](#) and tried to improve their position near [Vremivka](#) without success.



Social media pictures showed a large fire at the port in Berdyansk.²⁸ The exiled mayor of the port city reported the fire was caused by a “violation of safety requirements” during welding work that ignited fuel and oil storage.

²⁸ https://t.me/info_zp/13393



Insurgents in Melitopol destroyed a railroad bridge south of the city and reportedly caused major damage to the structure.²⁹ Local officials are reporting one of two main rail lines out of Crimea has been closed for two days, and the bridge will require extensive repairs. We cannot verify the veracity of this report.

ASSESSMENT: Unchanged from August 11

We believe that DNR forces will capture Pisky and use the tactical victory as propaganda. We don't believe the

²⁹ https://t.me/info_zp/13399

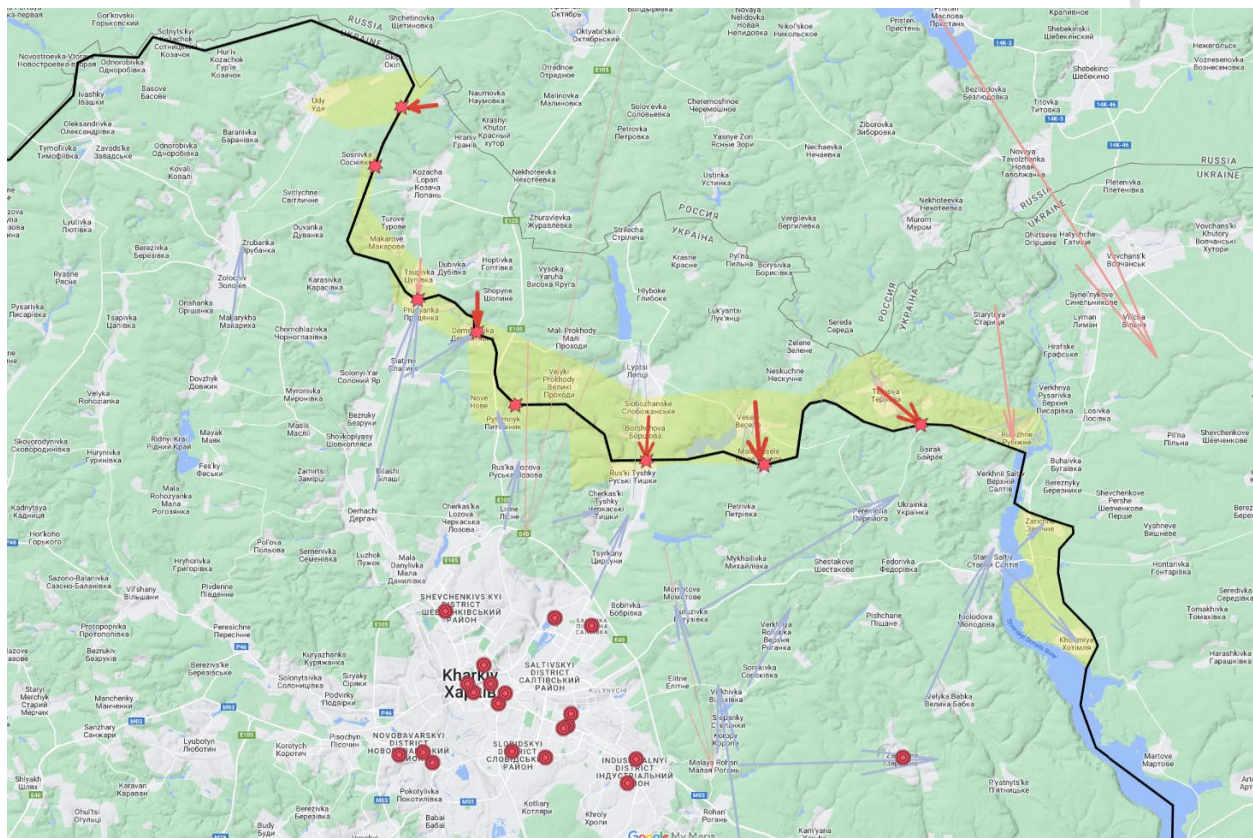
tactical gain can be exploited before the start of mud season.

The goal of securing the Donetsk oblast by August 31 is unattainable.

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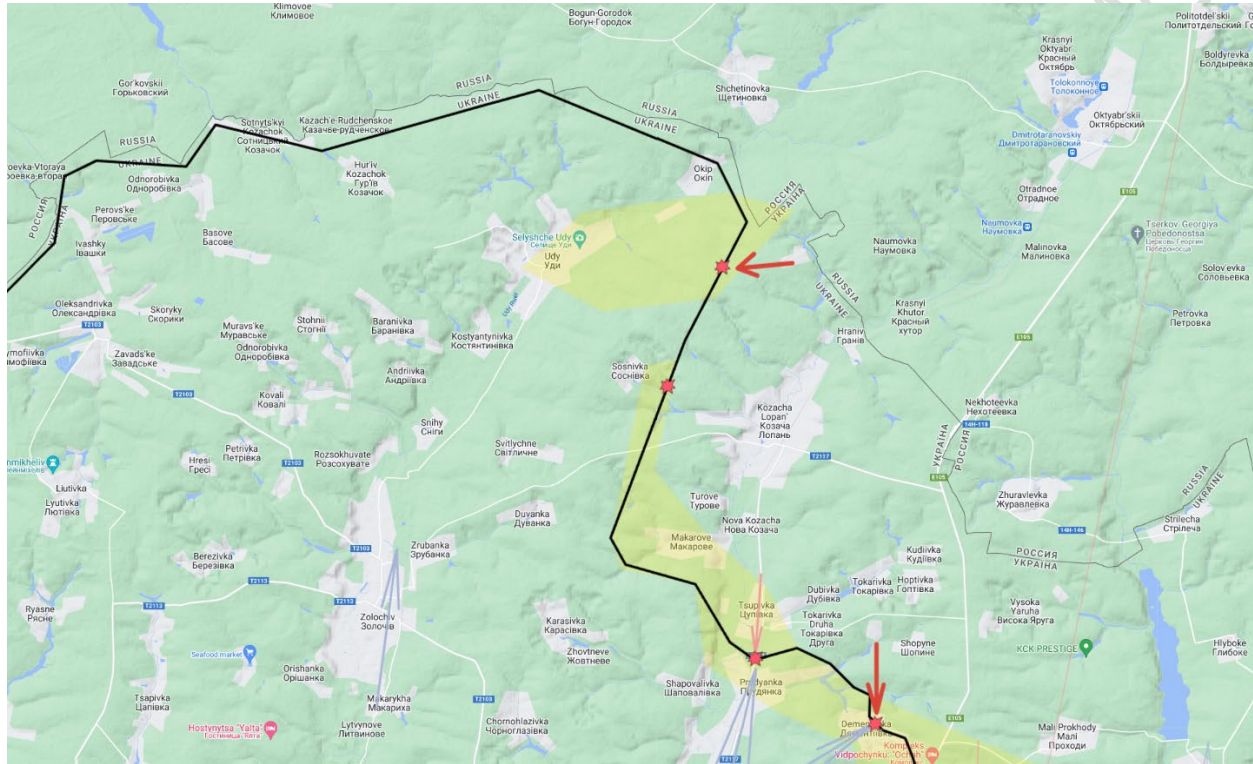
KHARKIV REGION

NORTHWESTERN KHARKIV



Russian Objective: Prevent Ukraine from reaching the international border with Russia, protect the Belgorod-Kupyansk GLOC, break civilian will with continued terror attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Prevent further Russian advances on Kharkiv, pressure the Russian-controlled Shevchenkove-Izyum GLOC



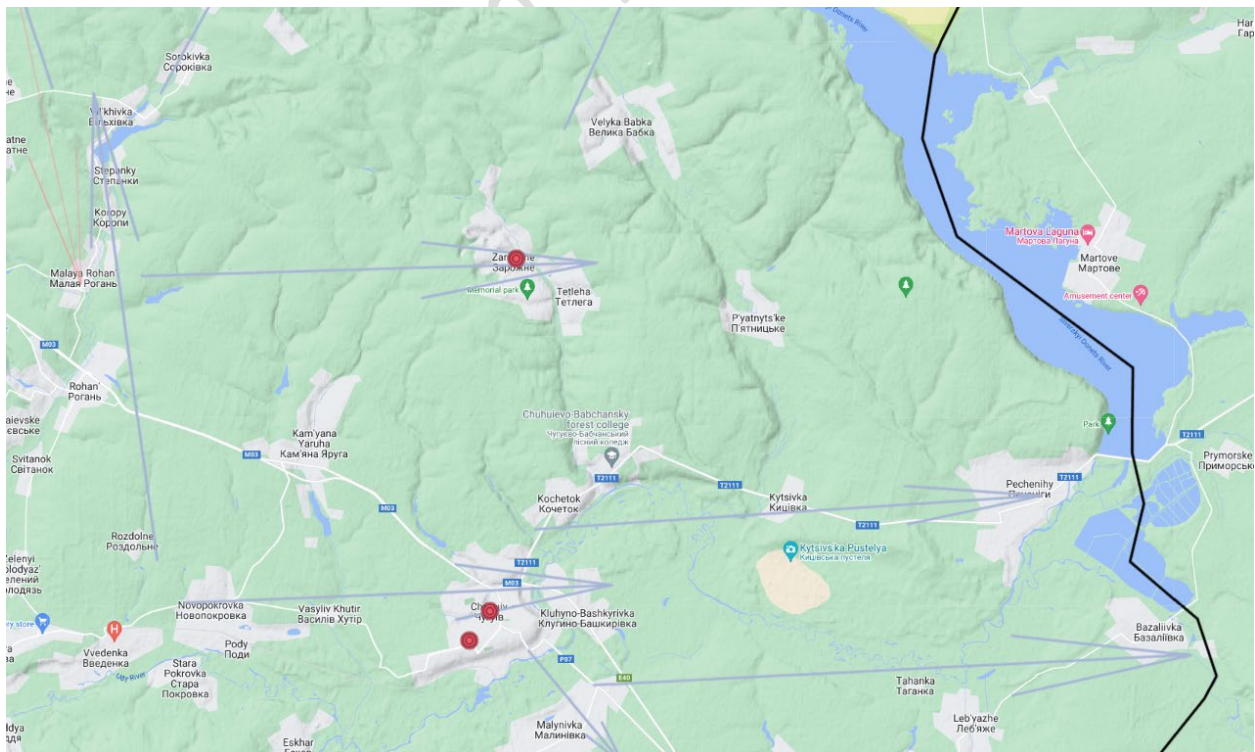
The Russian Ministry of Defense claims that the border settlement of Udy was recaptured but did not provide videos, photos, or other information.³⁰ None of our sources in the Kharkiv region reported fighting near Udy, nor did the General Staff. We have marked the area contested but

³⁰ <https://t.me/rybar/37167>

don't believe the claim made by the Russian MOD is entirely accurate.

ASSESSMENT: It is more likely that Russian forces were able to advance into Udy before being repulsed. By the time the after-action report reached the Kremlin, the level of success had been amplified.

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported airstrikes on Ukrainian positions in [Velyki Prohody](#). This has been an active region with the line of conflict moving 1 to 2 kilometers in either direction daily.



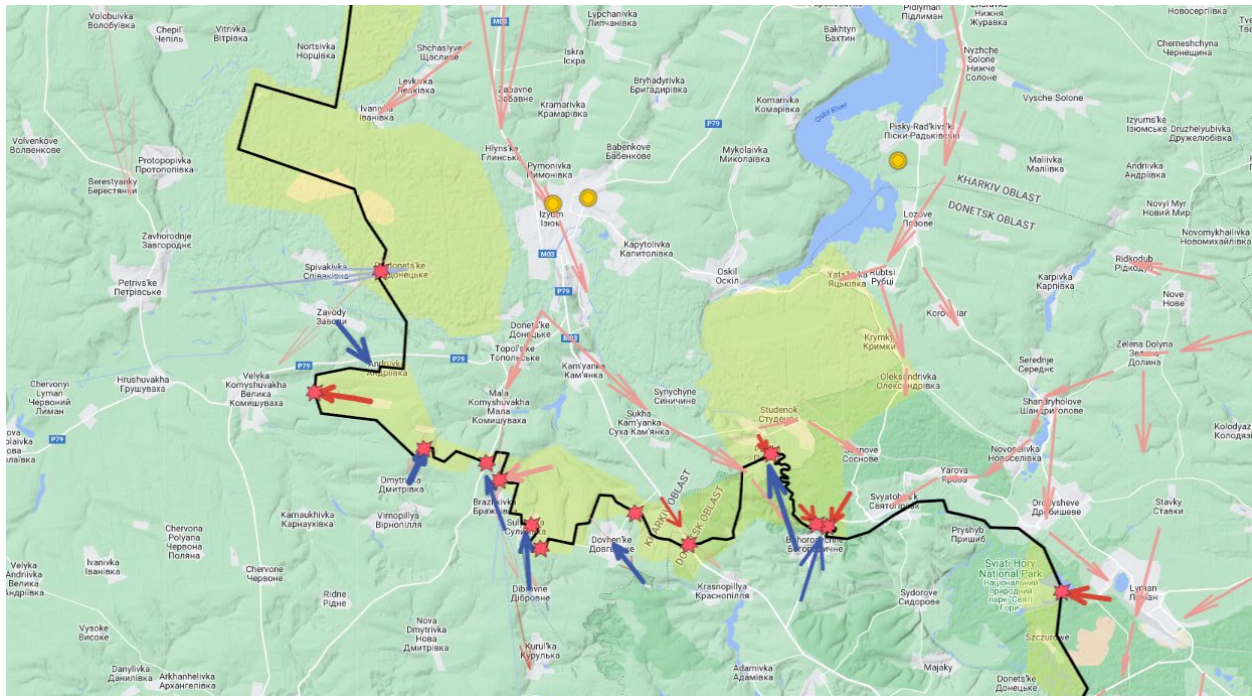
The Russian Ministry of Defense reported they fired two missiles that hit a “military base” in [Zarozhne](#). The settlement north of Chuhuiv does not have a military facility in it.³¹

ASSESSMENT: Unchanged from August 11

Our assessment on August 10 that Russian forces were testing the capabilities of the Ukrainian territorial guard taking over the defense of Izyum was correct. Positional fighting, reconnaissance, and probing for weaknesses will continue to occur.

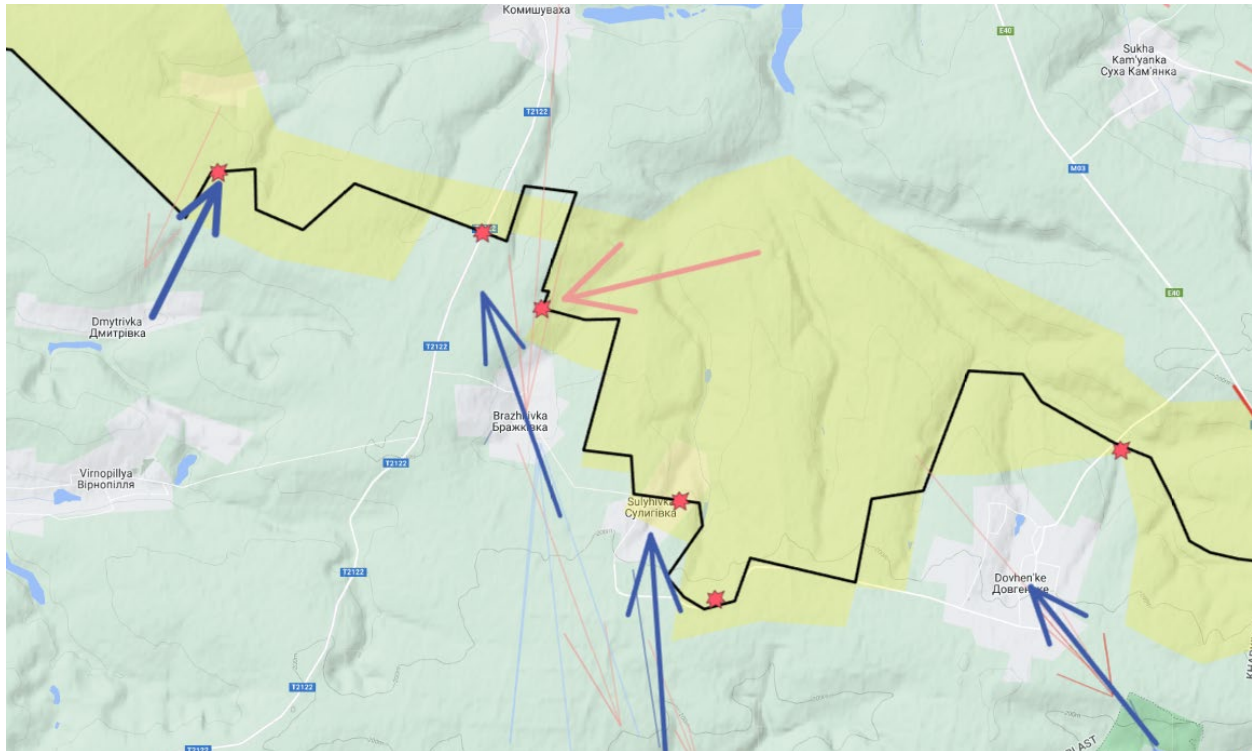
³¹ <https://t.me/rybar/37161>

IZYUM AXIS



Russian Objective: Hold the current line of conflict and prevent further advances by Ukrainian troops toward Izyum

Ukrainian Objective: Defend against advances on Slovyansk and capitalize on weaknesses in Russian defenses, continue to harass and interdict Russian GLOCs, execute Special Operation Forces (SOF) raids on Russian troops located behind the line of conflict



Pictures by Ukrainian forces confirm that the settlement of Brazhivka has been fully liberated.³² Ukrainian forces found vehicles, weapons, and provisions left behind in the settlement. Ukraine is maintaining tight operational security. Brazhivka was likely liberated around August 7.

Based on this information, we have adjusted the line of conflict further north and removed some of the areas of contested control.

³² <https://twitter.com/PaulJawin/status/1558687092267515904>

Russian forces attempted to advance in the direction of [Dolyna](#) and were unsuccessful.

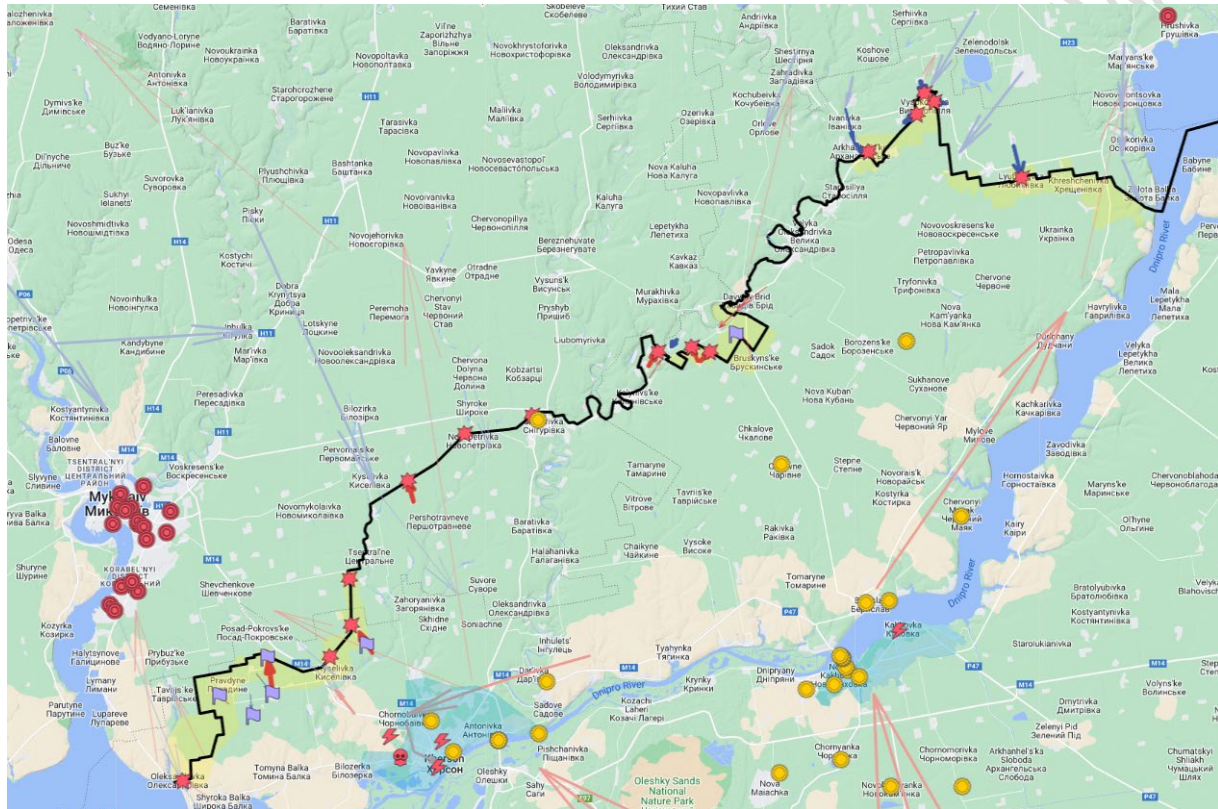
ASSESSMENT: Unchanged from August 7

We remain unwilling to call the ongoing action by Ukrainian forces a counteroffensive. We maintain that Russian forces between Avdriivka and Kopanky are now in a salient and at moderate risk of encirclement if Ukrainian forces were to make a breakthrough.

It is implausible that Russian forces can secure the Donetsk oblast by August 31 without securing Slovyansk as part of that self-declared deadline.

DNIPRO, KHERSON & MYKOLAIV, ZAPORIZHIA REGION

KHERSON



Russian Objective: Prepare for a Ukrainian counteroffensive by building defenses, prevent further advances by Ukrainian troops toward Kherson, repair destroyed GLOCs over the Dnipro River, and prevent the expansion of the insurgency

Ukrainian Objective: Liberate the Kherson oblast west of the Dnipro River, push Russian forces back far enough to end multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) attacks on Mykolaiv and Kryvvi Rih

Russian forces did not attempt any advances in Kherson. Both belligerents [fired artillery](#), rockets from multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), and tanks.³³

ASSESSMENT: Unchanged from August 13

With all four GLOCs severed for Russian troops on the west bank of the Dnipro River, resupply will have to be done by barge, ferry, and helicopter. Carrying fuel, replacement equipment, artillery shells, and rockets will be challenging to sustain and support 25,000 soldiers.

The Russian Ministry of Defense has continued to send reinforcements west of the Dnipro, with 3,000 elite VDV troops arriving in the last week, swelling the number of troops to 25,000.³⁴ That is almost 20% of the entire occupation force in Ukraine, including LNR, DNR, Chechen,

³³ <https://twitter.com/PaulJawin/status/1558927814098927626>

³⁴ [Stars & Stripes](#)

terrorists with the Imperial Legion, and PMC Wagner. Ukraine has been targeting ammunition and supply depots, logistics centers, and GLOCs, although the amount of supplies available in Kherson is unclear.

The first indication of supply issues is already emerging, with complaints online about drinking water shortages in supply drops and only receiving "dry rations" for meals. Another sign that supply issues have already started is the S-300 missile attacks on Mykolaiv have ended. Suppress Enemy Air Defense (SEAD) missions by Ukraine have helped limit the attacks, but a lack of supply of the larger S300 anti-aircraft missiles is likely contributing to the issue.

Russian Battalion Tactical Groups (BTG) are designed to operate for three to five days independent of resupply. Signs that the supply situation is getting more severe won't appear for weeks but would include abandoned vehicles, increasing complaints about a lack of resources on Telegram, VK, and Live Journal, looting for food and fuel, and a reduction in artillery fire among front line units.

With mud season 30 to 45 days away and the first snow in 60 to 75 days, complaints about a lack of cold weather gear, hypothermia, and low morale from living in the mud

would be another indicator that the supply situation is worsening.

There remain significant questions on when and if there will be a counteroffensive, and Kyiv has become increasingly contradictory on what will be next. Some officials have told the press that the counteroffensive has already started, including President Zelenskyy earlier in the week. An anonymous source close to the Ukrainian government told the Washington Post there would be no counteroffensive because Ukraine doesn't have the resources.

"We have to be honest – for now, Ukraine doesn't have a sufficient number of weapons systems for a counteroffensive. It's still possible to get a result, but if so it will be the result of smart Ukraine strategy more than of countering Russia with equal power."

The appearance of Czech hedgehogs in Kherson, Russian forces fearful of moving on the streets due to partisan activity, Russian commanders leaving the region, and local government and junior military officers occupying Kherson hospitals and schools to avoid HIMARS attacks all point to the same fact.

Regardless of what we may assess or think or what the Ukrainian government is saying – the Kremlin believes a counteroffensive is coming, and it will fight to hold the western half of the Kherson oblast.

MYKOLAIV

Russian Objective: Lock Ukrainian military resources in places, break civilian will with continued terror attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Maintain enough force strength to prevent a renewed Russian offensive, protect Mykolaiv through air defense, and supply interdiction

Russian forces fired S300 anti-aircraft missiles in a ground-to-ground capacity for the first time in almost a week into Mykolaiv.³⁵ The main port was hit, causing damage to the facilities. Other missiles impacted the electrical grid. There was one injury. A Russian aircraft fired a Kh-31 anti-ship missile in an air-to-ground capacity at an unknown target. Anti-ship missiles have low accuracy against non-naval

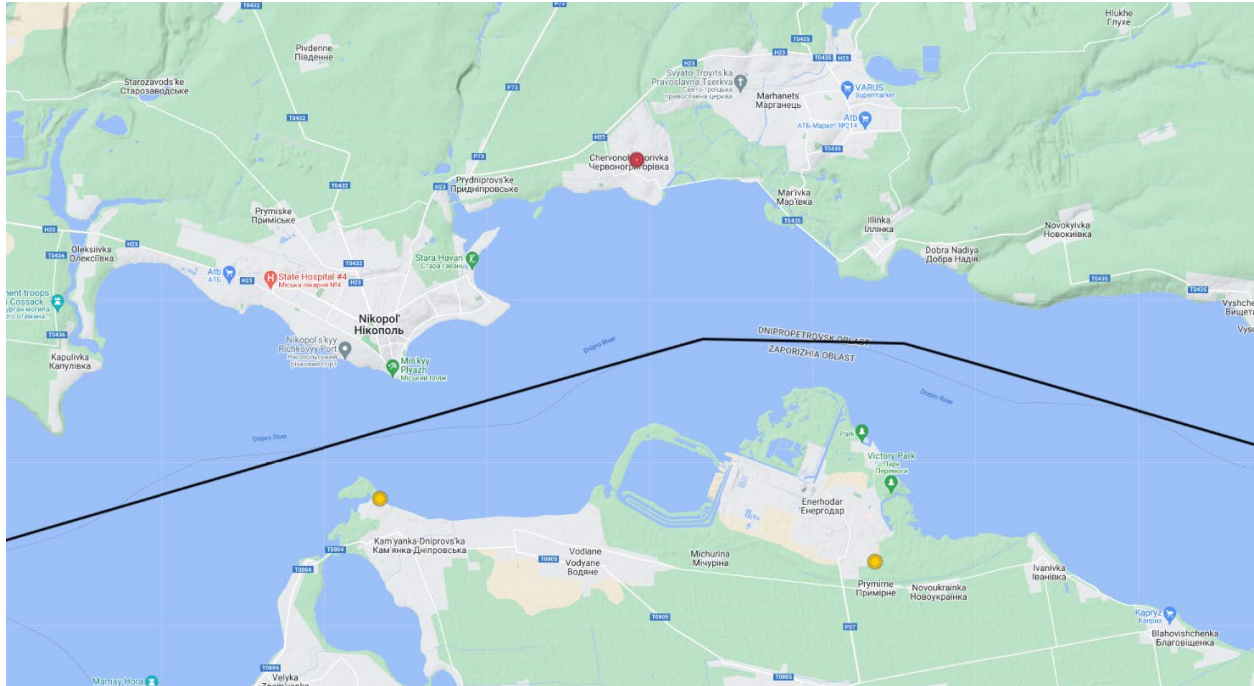
³⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/okPivden/videos/1206792250115652/>

targets, and the missile reportedly landed in a wheat field, causing crop damage.

DNIPROPETROVSK

Russian and Ukrainian forces continue to trade accusations of shelling the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. The Russian Ministry of Defense is now claiming that the barrages on Nikopol and Marhanets are counterbattery on Ukrainian positions firing on the nuclear power plant.

ASSESSMENT: Nikopol has been under intense rocket attack for five weeks, with drone video confirming Russian forces are using the area around the cooling towers as a firebase for BM-21 MLRS vehicles that fire Grad rockets. In our assessment, it is preposterous to claim that continued attacks on the two towns are in response to artillery fire on the station. The Russian Ministry of Defense didn't make the first claim that Ukraine was shelling the plant until three weeks after they started daily attacks on Nikopol, killing dozens of civilians.



The Russian-controlled city of Enerhodar, where the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is located, was shelled, killing one person.³⁶ Russian forces and collaborators accused Ukraine of the strike. Another attack, which Dmytro Orlov, the exiled mayor of Enerhodar, reported, killed a workshop foreman on the grounds of Zaporizhzhia.³⁷ Orlov claims the shelling was done by Russian forces, who fired from the edge of the yacht club into the power plant.

³⁶ https://t.me/info_zp/13381

³⁷ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/08/14/7363214/>

Russian forces fired 20 Grad rockets into Nikopol and shelled Marganets.³⁸ There were no injuries reported.³⁹

We cannot verify the veracity of any of these reports but are reporting them due to the safety and security issues the ongoing crisis is causing.

Valentyn Reznichenko, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Administrative and Military Governor, reported that Ukrainian air defenses shot down a Russian Kh-59 air-to-sea cruise missile over the oblast.⁴⁰

CHERNIHIV & SUMY REGION

Russian Objective: Lock Ukrainian military resources in places, break civilian will with continued terror attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Maintain enough force strength on the border with Russia to prevent Russian troops from crossing

³⁸ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/08/15/7363246/>

³⁹ https://t.me/Yevtushenko_E/525

⁴⁰ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/08/15/7363269/>

Dmytro Zhivytsky, Sumy Regional Administrative and Military Governor, reported [Yunakivka](#), [Esman](#), [Khotin](#), and [Billopillia](#), were shelled and hit by mortars.⁴¹ There was a border skirmish north of Billopillia at the now closed international border crossing into Russia.

In Chernihiv, the settlement of [Senkivka](#) was shelled.

KYIV REGION

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

BLACK SEA & ODESA REGION

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

WEST REGION

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

⁴¹ <https://t.me/Zhyvytskyy/3871>

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Zareche-Vtore, Russia, a loitering munition (aka kamikaze drone) crashed into the base of a large communications tower, destroying it.⁴² The tower was geolocated just across the Ukrainian border between Sumy and Kharkiv.

Slovakian Minister of Defense Jaroslav Nad' denied that the Eastern European nation had already shipped its fleet of Mig-29s to Ukraine. Nad told reporters that the airplanes would participate in celebrations on August 27 and be on public display, representing their "last day" with the Slovakian air force.

Family members reported the death of Lieutenant Colonel Nikolay Gorban, head of the 4th Department of the Special Operations Department of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), on August 2 in Ukraine. Gorban is the 99th Russian Lt colonel/colonel to die in combat since February 24 and was believed to be within Putin's inner circle.⁴³

⁴² <https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1559090416565329921>

⁴³ <https://www.newsweek.com/senior-commander-russia-elite-special-forces-dead-ukraine-1731874>

Russian President Vladimir Putin will travel to Tehran on Tuesday after making a deal to purchase hundreds of combat drones from the Middle Eastern nation.⁴⁴ No timetable was given for the deployment of the Iranian drones, but there were multiple reports that the training of drone operators had already begun. An employee of the United States State Department told CNN on August 11, "During the last several weeks, Russian officials conducted training in Iran as part of the agreement for UAV transfers from Iran to Russia."

Family members reported the death of decorated Ukrainian air force pilot Anton Lystopad.⁴⁵ Lystopad was awarded the best pilot in Ukraine in 2019 and received the Order for Courage, 3rd Class from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy just days before his death. Lystopad was a Mig-29 pilot. No details were provided on when or how he died.

⁴⁴ <https://news.yahoo.com/un-monitor-ukraine-war-violations-080022182.html>

⁴⁵ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/08/15/7363265/>



*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air*

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue

*I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark nor ever eagle flew—
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.*

John Gillespie Magee, Jr. - 1941

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Two civilians were killed in Zatoka when a drifting sea mine exploded just offshore at a resort beach. All Ukrainian beaches are closed for safety and security. The warnings often go unheeded by residents living far from the front lines and suffering from war fatigue.⁴⁶

The Marshall Island-flagged Star Laura left the Ukrainian port of Pivdennyi with a cargo of 60,000 tonnes of corn, bound for Iran.⁴⁷ The cargo left the port after Iran announced it had a deal to sell combat drones to Russia.

⁴⁶ <https://twitter.com/TpyxaNews/status/1558926624380289026>

⁴⁷ <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202208126692>

The bulk carrier Brave Commander left Pivdennyi on Sunday, carrying 23,000 tonnes of wheat to Ethiopia, the first African nation to receive a renewed shipment of Ukrainian grain.⁴⁸ The charter ship arrived on Friday as part of the United Nations World Food Program.



⁴⁸ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2022/08/14/7363217/>

GEOPOLITICAL

The United States announced it was providing \$1.7 billion in cash assistance to Ukraine for August, so the Ukrainian government could continue to provide vital services.⁴⁹ This is in addition to a one-billion euro commitment made by the European Union that will also be paid this month. The United States has provided \$4 billion in cash assistance since March and \$11.4 billion in military assistance since 2014.

The European Space Agency announced they were withdrawing support from the ExoMars Rover and Surface Platform mission and terminating their partnership with Roscosmos.⁵⁰ Josef Aschbacher reported on Twitter, “[The] council mandated me to officially terminate the currently suspended cooperation with Roscosmos on the ExoMars Rover and Surface Platform mission.”

“New insights on the way forward with other partners will come at a media briefing on 20 July, details to come.”

⁴⁹ <https://news.yahoo.com/un-monitor-ukraine-war-violations-080022182.html>

⁵⁰ <https://twitter.com/AschbacherJosef/status/1546899245998948354>

Russian citizens traveled to Estonia, where they held a flash mob, condemning the looming visa ban and threatening a Russian invasion of Europe. The police detained the members and gave them a 3-day deportation notice. Some of the flash mob then took to social media accusing Estonia officials of being fascists.⁵¹

ECONOMIC

Sanctions that prevent Russian airlines from getting aircraft parts from Boeing and Airbus are reaching a critical point. On August 3, Aeroflot pilots were given verbal instructions to use reverse thrusters more during landing to preserve the brake linings on jet airliners.⁵²

"If the pilots are more relaxed to stop with the help of the engines, this is not prohibited because it does not affect the safety of the flight," Viktor Gorbachev, general director of the Association of Civil Aviation "Airport" stated in a conversation with the Telegram channel Radiotochka NSN.

⁵¹ <https://twitter.com/PutinHasNoPenis/status/1558903370450182146>

⁵² [European Times](#)

Less than two weeks later, Reuters reported that Aeroflot is now stripping multiple jetliners for parts.⁵³ Airplanes being torn down include a Russian-made Sukhoi Superjet 100, an almost brand new Airbus A350, several Boeing 737s, and several Airbus A320s.

The rouble is set to open flat in trading on Monday, with a premarket exchange rate at the time of publication of 61 roubles to 1 US dollar.

Oil is set to open lower in trading on Monday. WTI dropped to \$91 a barrel while Brent crude is trading in European markets at \$97 a barrel. United States RBOB wholesale gasoline for spot market delivery is set to open at \$3.00 a gallon (79 cents a liter).

SRW Chicago wheat futures are also down over the weekend, with pre-opening trading at 79 cents a bushel for December 2022 delivery.

⁵³ [Reuters](#)