
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- Russia launched another massive missile attack on Ukraine. Ukrainian air defense shot down 54 of 69 cruise missiles. 28 civilian objects, including 10 of critical infrastructure, were damaged. At least 5 people were wounded.
- There is significant damage to the energy network. Kharkiv, Kyiv, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, and Lviv Oblasts have substantial electricity shortages.
- 90% of Bakhmut residents have been evacuated.
- The police have found 1,116 bodies of civilians, including 31 children, in the recently liberated territories.
- Russia continues to hinder the "grain corridor" operation under various pretexts of inspecting vessels in the Bosphorus.

Polls:

- 60% of Ukrainian citizens do not support negotiations with Russia, even for the sake of saving lives, according to the survey.
- 93% of respondents believe in the victory of Ukraine in the war, 39% of those before summer 2023
- More than half of Ukrainians want the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate to be banned, for it is seen as the "fifth column of the Kremlin," not a Ukrainian Church.

Military:

- There is no significant change in the operational situation.
- Enemy retreat in the Dibrova area creates a further threat for the enemy to retreat from Kreminna.
- The enemy's offensive potential in the Bakmut area is notably depleted.

International:

- Belarus dares to demand punishment for those responsible for a Ukrainian air defense missile falling onto Belarusian territory while intercepting a massive Russian missile attack. Ukraine's Ministry of Defense expressed its readiness to investigate the incident and to invite experts from states not associated with the support of Russia's [actions].
- Vladimir Putin appointed prosecutors to the self-proclaimed DPR and LPR and the annexed parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts.

Humanitarian aspect:

Russian massive missile attack:

On December 29, Russia terrorist state launched another massive missile attack on peaceful Ukrainian cities. According to the updated data, **69 cruise missiles were used. Ukrainian air defense destroyed 54 of them.**

According to preliminary estimates, the territory of Ukraine was attacked by Kh-101/Kh-555, Kalibr, Kh-22 and Kh-32 cruise missiles, Kh-31P anti-radar missiles, and Shahed drones -131/136. In total, more than 11 drones and 69 cruise missiles launched from Tu-95MS strategic bombers, Tu-22M3 aircraft and ships of the Russian Black Sea Fleet were used. In addition, the Russians used S-300 anti-aircraft guided missiles against the infrastructure facilities of the front-line cities.

28 civilian objects, including 10 of critical infrastructure, were damaged in 10 regions of Ukraine. Peaceful people suffered again. At least 5 people were wounded.

In **Kyiv**, due to a rocket attack, two houses, an industrial enterprise, a playground and a railway track were damaged. At least three people were wounded.

10 private homes were damaged in the Bucha district of **Kyiv Oblast**, one in Vyshhorod. One medical institution was also mutilated by debris in the Fastiv district. About 180,000 households lost electricity. According to the decision of Ukrenergo, emergency shutdowns are in effect, said Oleksiy Kuleba, head of Kyiv Oblast Military Administration (OMA).

On December 29, **Kharkiv** was shelled twice. At night, the Russian military attacked the city with 13 kamikaze drones, 11 of which were shot down. Then, in the afternoon, Kharkiv was shelled with rockets. Law enforcement officers have started an investigation into the enemy rocket attack on Kharkiv Oblast, resulting in three people dying.

The enemy targeted 6 missiles at **Lviv Oblast**. Air defense forces shot down 4 of them, and two rockets hit an electrical substation, reported Lviv OMA. As a result, 282 towns and villages of the Oblast were left without electricity. The most difficult is to resume the supply of electricity in Lviv and the nearest territories.

The enemy shelling hit one of the energy facilities in **Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast**. The fire is contained. Another rocket damaged a private residential building.

Air defense shot down 21 missiles over **Odesa Oblast**, but there were still strikes on the energy infrastructure. After Russian shelling, there is no electricity in most of Odesa and Odesa Oblast, stated Oblast Governor Maksym Marchenko.

In **Kherson**, the Regional Cardiology Center was damaged after today's shelling. Two people were injured: a security guard and a boiler room employee.

Energy system:

After the tenth massive missile attack, the power system is being restored as planned, said Volodymyr Kudrytskyi, the chairman of the board of NEC "Ukrenergo". However, there is significant damage to the network and some power plants because it was not a single missile attack but a series of attacks. The first strikes were by drones at night, then rockets in the morning, and S-300 systems in the afternoon in Kharkiv and Mykolaiv Oblasts. Currently, there

are specific difficulties with delivering electricity in Kharkiv, Kyiv, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, and Lviv Oblasts.

Evacuation:

More than 70,000 people, almost 90% of Bakhmut residents, Donetsk Oblast, have been evacuated. However, 8,700 people still remain under shelling, stated Bakhmut Mayor Oleksiy Reva on his Facebook account. He again called on people to evacuate to the safer Oblast, where they would be provided with free housing and humanitarian aid.

De-occupied territories:

The police have already found **1,116 bodies of civilians, 31 children among them, since the de-occupation** of Mykolaiv, Donetsk, Kherson and Kharkiv Oblasts, said the head of the Department of Organizational Analytical Support and Operational Response of the National Police, Oleksiy Sergeev.

Investigators have documented 5,398 war crimes in the de-occupied areas. In total, since the beginning of the full-scale war, **the police have opened more than 53,700 criminal proceedings on the criminal offenses by servicemen of the RF Armed Forces** and their accomplices.

POWs:

During an online meeting with relatives of servicemen of the 60th Separate Mechanized Brigade at the Coordination Headquarters, Dmytro Lubinets, the Human Rights Commissioner of the Ukrainian parliament, said that he is negotiating with the Russian Ombudswoman, Tetyana Moskalkova, to allow prisoners of war to call their relatives.

Expanding the ICRC's access to places of detention [in Russia and occupied territories] is also being discussed. A representative of the Coordination Headquarters noted that the ICRC is not [yet] allowed in all places of detention. Only recently, they were permitted to visit some [detention] colonies in the temporarily occupied territories and in the Russian Federation. As reported by Ukrinform, in December, the ICRC entered the places of detention of Ukrainian POWs. According to the ICRC, about 120 Ukrainian defenders in captivity received warm clothes and hygiene products.

Civilian mine casualties:

Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian aggression in Ukraine, 185 people have died from mines, and 404 have been injured, reported the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

Operational situation

(Please note that this section of the Brief is mainly on the previous day's (December 28) developments)

It is the 309th day of the strategic air-ground offensive operation of the Russian Armed Forces against Ukraine (in the official terminology of the Russian Federation – "operation to protect

Donbas”). Over the past 24 hours, the enemy has carried out 30 air strikes and 7 missile strikes, particularly on the civilian infrastructure of Kostyantynivka in Donetsk Oblast and Kharkiv. It carried out more than 70 MLRS rounds; territorial communities of Chernihiv, Sumy, and Kharkiv Oblasts came under fire.

The enemy once again struck the energy infrastructure of Kharkiv, using Shahed-136 attack UAVs.

The enemy continues offensive actions in the Bakhmut and Avdiivka directions and tries to improve the tactical position in the Lyman direction.

The situation remains stable in the Volyn, Polissia, Siversk and Slobozhansk directions; no signs of the formation of enemy offensive groups have been detected.

During the past day, the Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine made 17 strikes on enemy concentration areas and 4 strikes on the positions of its anti-aircraft missile systems.

Ukrainian rocket and artillery forces' units hit 5 enemy command and control points, 3 manpower concentration areas and the ammunition warehouse.

Kharkiv direction

- *Topoli - Siversk section: approximate length of combat line - 154 km, number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 23-28, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 5.5 km;*
- *Deployed enemy BTGs: 26th, 153rd, and 197th tank regiments (TR), 245th motorized rifle regiment (MRR) of the 47th tank division (TD), 6th and 239th TRs, 228th MRR of the 90th TD, 25th and 138th separate motorized rifle brigades (SMRBr) of the 6th Combined Arms (CA) Army, 27th SMRBr of the 1st Tank Army, 252nd and 752nd MRRs of the 3rd MRD, 1st, 13th, and 12th TRs, 423rd MRR of the 4th TD, 201st military base, 15th, 21st, 30th SMRBr of the 2nd CA Army, 35th, 55th and 74th SMRBr of the 41st CA Army, 275th and 280th MRRs, 11th TR of the 18th MRD of the 11 Army Corps (AC), 7th MRR of the 11th AC, 80th SMRBr of the 14th AC, 76th Air assault division, 106th airborne division, 2nd, 3rd, 14th, 24th and 45th separate SOF brigades of the Airborne Forces, military units of the 1st AC of so-called DPR, 2nd and 4th SMRBr of the 2nd AC, PMCs.*

The enemy command continues their try to detect the possible offensive of the Ukrainian Defense Forces and is preparing for Ukrainian units to cross the Oskil River along the Lyman Pershyi - Dvorichne - Bohdanivske - Lyman Drugyi frontiers. Defensive positions are intensively equipped, and artillery is deployed.

At the same time, in Zhytlivka and Chervonopopivka areas, the Ukrainian Defense Forces firmly hold their positions. In the area of Dibrova, they forced the enemy to retreat. This creates a threat to the enemy of their general retreat from Kreminna. The Russian command is aware of this threat but is unable to choose tactical tools to mitigate it. During the last days, detachment-platoon-level enemy units, which operate with the support of armored vehicles, counterattacked the advanced positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces. These are units of the combined assault

detachment "Storm", which comprised of the units of the 252nd motorized rifle regiment of the 3rd motorized rifle division (20th Army of the Western Military District), the 35th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 41st Army and the 228th motorized rifle regiment of the 90th tank division of the Central Military District.

Donetsk direction

- *Siversk - Maryinka section: approximate length of the combat line - 144 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 13-15, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 9.6 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 68th and 163rd tank regiments (TR), 102nd and 103rd motorized rifle regiments of the 150 motorized rifle division, 80th TR of the 90th tank division, 35th, 55th, and 74th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 41st Combined Arms Army, 51st and 31st separate airborne assault brigades, 61st separate marines brigade of the Joint Strategic Command "Northern Fleet," 336th separate marines brigade of Baltic Fleet, 1st, 3rd, 5th, 15th, and 100th separate motorized rifle brigades, 9th and 11th separate motorized rifle regiment of the 1st Army Corps of the so-called DPR, 6th motorized rifle regiment of the 2nd Army Corps of the so-called LPR, PMCs.*

The enemy is trying to break through the defense of the Joint Forces north of Bakhmut, and attacking Spirne, Bilohorivka, Soledar, Hryhorivka, Bakhmutske, Chasiv Yar, Bakhmut, Kostyantynivka, Mayorsk and New York. The enemy's offensive potential is notably depleted, attacks are becoming less intense, and the intensity of battles has somewhat decreased.

Zaporizhzhia direction

- *Maryinka – Vasylivka section: approximate length of the line of combat - 200 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 17, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 11.7 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 36th separate motorized rifle brigade (SMRBr) of the 29th Combined Arms (CA) Army, 38th and 64th SMRBr, 69th separate cover brigade of the 35th CA Army, 5th separate tank brigade, 135th, 429th, 503rd and 693rd motorized rifle regiments (MRR) of the 19th motorized rifle division (MRD) of the 58th CA Army, 70th, 71st and 291st MRRs of the 42nd MRD of the 58th CA Army, 136th SMRB of the 58 CA Army, 46th and 49th machine gun artillery regiments of the 18th machine gun artillery division of the 68th Army Corps (AC), 39th SMRB of the 68th AC, 83th separate airborne assault brigade, 40th and 155th separate marines brigades, 22nd separate SOF brigade, 1st AC of the so-called DPR, and 2nd AC of the so-called LPR, PMCs.*

The operational situation has not changed and is characterized by the exchange of fire strikes on troops' positions in the Huliaypole, Malynivka, Charivne, and Dorozhnianka areas.

On December 27, in the areas of Tokmak, Tytove, Chernihivka, Polohy, and Berdyansk, the enemy lost 3 pieces of military equipment; the brigade's command and control post and the communications center were destroyed, and about 230 enemy servicemen were wounded.

Tavriysk direction

- *Vasylivka – Stanislav section: approximate length of the battle line – 296 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 39, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 7,5 km;*

- *Deployed BTGs of: the 8th and 49th Combined Arms (CA) Armies; 11th, 103rd, 109th, and 127th rifle regiments of the mobilization reserve of the 1st Army Corps (AC); 35th and 36th CA Armies; 3rd AC; 90th tank division; the 22nd AC of the Coastal Forces; the 810th separate marines brigade of the Black Sea Fleet; the 7th and the 98th airborne division, and the 11th and 83rd separate airborne assault brigades of the Airborne Forces, 10th separate SOF brigade.*

The operational situation is unchanged. The enemy fired at the positions of the Defense Forces and the infrastructure facilities of territorial communities in Respublykanets, Kozatske, Llove, Oleshki and Kherson, injuring civilians.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

The forces of the Russian Black Sea Fleet continue to stay ready to carry out two operational tasks against Ukraine:

- *to project force on the coast and the continental part of Ukraine by launching missile strikes from surface ships, submarines, coastal missile systems, and aircraft at targets in the coastal zone and deep into the territory of Ukraine and readiness for the naval amphibious landing to assist ground forces in the coastal direction*
- *to control the northwestern part of the Black Sea by blocking Ukrainian ports and preventing the restoration of sea communications by carrying out attacks on ports and ships and concealed mine-laying.*

The ultimate goal is to deprive Ukraine of access to the Black Sea and extend and maintain control over the captured territory and Ukraine's coastal regions.

On the morning of December 29, the enemy attacked Ukraine with "Kalibr" missiles from two ships (a frigate and a corvette) and a submarine from the external raid of Sevastopol. There were 20 missiles in the volley. Some of them were shot down by Ukrainian air defense over the Black Sea (it is known that 5 missiles were shot down on the approach to Mykolaiv). Last day, a significant number of ships returned to their base points but then returned to patrolling positions at sea.

There are two patrol boats in the waters of the Sea of Azov on the approaches to the Mariupol and Berdyansk seaports in order to block the Azov coast.

Enemy aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saki, Dzhankoy and Gvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea.

The airport in occupied Simferopol is still closed to civil aviation until January 2, 2023. In occupied Sevastopol, the "yellow" level of the terrorist threat has been extended until January 6, 2023. Also, the "yellow" threat level continues to operate in all 7 districts of the peninsula.

Russia keeps a batch of Iranian Mohajer-6 drones in Crimea and is training operators to fly them. As of December 27, 2022, it became known that at least 239 KIA personnel [of the Russian military formations] are from the occupied Crimea. At least 136 of them probably had Ukrainian citizenship.

"Grain Initiative": 11 ships exported 422,000 tons of agricultural products to Africa, Asia and Europe in [the last] 2 days from the ports of Great Odesa. Among them is the ALANDA STAR bulker with 30,800 tons of wheat for Egypt and the EUROCHAMPION tanker with 45,000 tons of oil for India.

The key obstacle in the operation of the "grain corridor" is the Russian Federation hampering the inspection of vessels in the Bosphorus under various pretexts. This led to a regular queue of 90+ ships, million-dollar losses for cargo owners, and under-export of at least 5-6 million tons during the year.

As of December 27, 96 ships are waiting for inspection, of which 71 are entering ports, and 25 are already loaded with agricultural products. [Only] 6 out of 10 scheduled inspections take place every day. In addition to reducing the number of inspection groups, the Russian side resorted to delaying the inspections due to the requirements to check the parameters of vessels that are not regulated by the JCC documents and have nothing to do with the subject of the inspection.

As a result of such actions, the number of fleets moving to be loaded with Ukrainian agricultural products is decreasing. Thus, the port of Odesa recently sent the bulk carrier BRAVE M with 28,000 tons of grain to Libya. Before that, it waited a month for an inspection in the corridor to go to the port for loading.

Since August 1, 605 ships have left the ports of Great Odesa and exported 15.9 million tons of Ukrainian food to Asia, Europe and Africa.

Russian operational losses from 24.02 to 29.12.22

Personnel - almost 104,560 people (+790);

Tanks - 3,018 (+1)

Armored combat vehicles – 6,047 (+10);

Artillery systems – 2,004 (+5);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 423 (+5);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 212 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 4,675 (+15);

Aircraft - 283 (0);

Helicopters – 268 (+1);

UAV operational and tactical level – 1,717 (+10);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 653 (0);

Boats/ships - 16 (0).

Ukraine, general news

The SBU reported the suspicion to Poltava Mayor Oleksandr Mamay. He is suspected of the unauthorized dissemination of information about the location of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

National Bank of Ukraine reported that Ukrainian banks might additionally lose over UAH 300 million due to power outages. Most of the losses fall on large banks with a significant number of branches, according to the report on the financial stability of the National Bank.

NEC "Ukrenergo" will receive a grant of EUR 70 million from a special EBRD fund to purchase energy equipment. The chairman of the board of Ukrenergo, Volodymyr Kudrytskyi, informed that these funds would be used exclusively for equipment necessary to restore the reliable operation of Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Kudrytskyi also reminded that Ukrenergo has already signed agreements with the EBRD for 300 million euros of credit funds to reconstruct high-voltage infrastructure and increase the company's financial stability.

Polls:

- 60% of Ukrainian citizens do not support negotiations with Russia even for the sake of saving lives, according to the survey conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Foundation "Democratic Initiatives" together with the sociological service of the Razumkov Center. 23% believe that to save lives, it is necessary to negotiate with Russia. And 17% of respondents said that they did not agree with any of these statements.
- According to the survey results, 93% of respondents believe in the victory of Ukraine in the war, and only 3% of respondents doubt it. 39% of those believe in Ukraine's victory, think it will come before the summer of 2023, 22% bet on victory in 1-2 years, and 20% believe it can be achieved in the coming months.
- The survey showed that the most important military event of the year for 39% of Ukrainians was the defense of Mariupol, for 37% - the liberation of Kherson, and 33% named the liberation of Chernihiv, Kyiv and Sumy Oblasts.
- More than half of Ukrainians (54%) want the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) to be banned, according to the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology's poll. While the majority (78%) want the state to do something about the UOC (MP), only twelve percent think no changes are required. The "current results only continue to demonstrate that the steps taken by the UOC (MP) this year did not convince the majority of Ukrainians that it is really a Ukrainian Church, but rather the image of the "fifth column of the Kremlin" is preserved," Deputy Director of the Institute Anton Hrushetskyi writes.

International diplomatic aspect

"The Belarusian side demanded to immediately conduct a thorough investigation into the circumstances of the missile launch [allegedly a Ukrainian S-300 air defense missile launched to intercept the Russian massive missile attack fell on the territory of Belarus], punish those responsible, and take comprehensive measures to prevent such incidents in the future", the Belarusian Foreign Ministry's statement reads.

Minsk dares to demand investigations, punishment, and prevention of such incidents in the future. According to the UN General Assembly's Resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 1974, Belarus has committed numerous acts of aggression ever since February 24 by providing its territory and various support to Russia, another aggressor. The Belarussian territory is constantly used to set

air, missile, and drone attacks on Ukraine. In no way can it demand Ukraine not defend itself from both Russian and Belarusian.

Still, Ukraine's Ministry of Defense made the corresponding statement expressing its readiness to investigate the incident. The Ministry emphasized that they were ready to invite experts from states not associated with the support of Russia [actions] for the investigation. At the same time, the Ministry of Defense did not rule out that the incident could be a "deliberate provocation" on the part of Russia, which could be carried out with the aim of "drawing Belarus into an aggressive war against Ukraine."

Russia, relevant news

Vladimir Putin appointed prosecutors to the self-proclaimed DPR and LPR and the annexed parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts. Their term of office will expire in five years.

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