
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- On the night of February 16, the Russians again massively shelled Ukraine; 16 of the 32 rockets fired at the critical infrastructure were shot down. The night attack by the Russian Federation did not lead to the need to limit electricity consumption.
- Russia has lost the ability to cause significant damage to Ukrainian energy facilities, says the head of Ukrenergo.
- 100 Ukrainian soldiers and one civilian returned from Russian captivity in the POW exchange.
- Ukraine nationalized the property of Oleg Deripaska for 10 billion hryvnias (approximately 253 million euros)

Military:

- The enemy concentrates on conducting offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Shakhtarsk directions.
- **Change in enemy disposition:** the enemy command is conducting a large-scale regrouping of units north of Bakhmut.
- **Possible operation situation developments:** the enemy have exhausted their reserves, which slows down the start of a large-scale offensive in the east of Ukraine; the inability to restore battle-damaged military equipment in the short term will further limit the enemy's ability to conduct mobile operations at a high pace and wide scope.

International:

- With a \$7.4 billion pledge, Norway will become one of the world's biggest donors to Ukraine.
- Gen. Mark Milley doesn't believe "Russia is going to overrun Ukraine." At the same time, though it is "extraordinarily difficult," Ukraine's success isn't something "to say that it can't happen." Secretary Austin assured the allies are doing everything for the Ukrainians to be "decisive on the battlefield."
- Oleksii Danilov believes the Ukrainians will demolish Russia as they had done with the Soviet Union.
- The Slovak Parliament has designated Putin's regime as a terrorist and Russia as a "state supporting terrorism."
- Alexander Lukashenko engaged in demagogy by talking about Belarus joining the Russian war if a Ukrainian soldier crossed the border.

Humanitarian aspect:

Russian attacks

On the night of February 15-16, the Russians again massively shelled Ukraine. The Russian military fired 32 rockets at the critical infrastructure of Ukraine; 16 of them were shot down.

"Part of the Kh-22 cruise missiles achieved their goals, hitting critical infrastructure facilities. Currently, there are no weapons capable of destroying this type of missile," the Air Force of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported.

There were hits in the North and West of Ukraine and the Dnipropetrovsk and Kirovohrad regions, noted the head of the President's Office, Andriy Yermak. According to him, the Russians have changed their tactics: they conduct active reconnaissance, using false targets before the strike.

Eight Caliber-type missiles were shot down over **Mykolaiv Oblast** and two over **Kherson Oblast**.

In **Poltava Oblast**, two enemy missiles hit a critical infrastructure facility in Kremenchuk. The region was also attacked by drones.

Five enemy rockets were shot down over **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast** at night, and the sixth exploded in the air. One missile was shot down over Zaporizhzhia **Oblast**, Operational Command "East" reported.

In **Pavlograd**, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, the enemy targeted the private sector and an industrial facility. The type of missiles is being clarified. According to updated information, one person was killed, and eight were wounded. Seven private houses were destroyed in the city, and more than 60 were mutilated.

In **Lviv Oblast**, three rockets hit a critical infrastructure facility. However, as the head of the Lviv OMA noted, this is not an object on which the power supply in the Lviv region depends.

Today, around 10:30 a.m., the occupiers shelled **Vovchansk in Kharkiv Oblast**. Enemy aircraft fired two missile strikes, injuring 6 people. Among them is an employee of "Kharkivoblenergo". The victims were specialists who were repairing communication lines. The building of one of the enterprises and a private residential building were also damaged. After 14:00, the Russians shelled Vovchansk again, 1 person was killed.

In **Bakhmut, Donetsk Oblast**, on February 16, five civilians were killed, nine were injured due to enemy shelling from barrel artillery and the Grad systems, the Prosecutor General's Office reported in Telegram.

Energy

A night attack by missiles and drones will not lead to large-scale power outages, said Ukrenergo. Tonight's missile and drone attack was unsuccessful for the Russians; the Ukrainian power plants continue to produce enough electricity to cover the required consumption.

Russia has lost the ability to cause significant damage to Ukrainian energy facilities, said the head of Ukrenergo in an interview with Bloomberg on the eve of the last large-scale shelling on February 16. According to Vladimir Kudritsky, the power system's burden is weakening with

spring and warming, and repair teams have learned to repair and replace transformers faster. "Currently, we have reached a plateau - there is no further deterioration of the situation," he noted. Nowadays, replacing damaged transformers takes four times less time than in the fall. The head of Ukrenergo also praised Ukraine's missile defense. At the same time, Kudritsky added, "we should not relax and think that Russia's airstrike campaign is over." He is sure that by next winter, Ukraine will accumulate a sufficient supply of transformers, both domestically produced and from foreign donors.

POWs

Today, 100 Ukrainian soldiers and one civilian returned from Russian captivity. Ninety-four of them are defenders of Mariupol, including 63 soldiers from "Azovstal". Among the freed are national guardsmen, border guards and soldiers of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Andriy Yermak stated.

The civilian is Ivan Samoydyuk, the first deputy mayor of Energodar. He refused to cooperate with the enemy and was kidnapped by the Russian occupiers on March 19 last year at a checkpoint near Blagovishchenka.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The enemy concentrates its primary efforts on conducting offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Shakhtarsk directions, in the areas of Hryanykivka, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Vuhledar.

Battleline:

- The Defense Forces units repelled enemy attacks in the areas of more than 15 towns and villages, in particular, near Bilohorivka and Serebryansk Forestry in Luhansk Oblast and Fedorivka, Bakhmut, Dyllivka, Avdiivka, Vodyane, Pervomaiske, Maryinka, Novomykhailivka, Vuhledar, Prechystivka, and Novosilka in Donetsk Oblast.
- The enemy achieved tactical success near Ploschanka and tried to develop success in the direction of Zarichne and Nevske; episodic battles continued near Yampolivka and Zhuravka creek. Russian artillery units of the Central Military District inflicted damage on units of the Defense Forces near Dibrova.
- The Defence Forces are holding positions on the western outskirts of Krasna Hora, counterattacked near Ivanivske and are moving freely along the T0504 Kostyantynivka - Bakhmut road, the enemy was forced to retreat 2.5 km from the highway.
- Fighters of the "Wagner" PMC tried to advance in the direction of Vesele and successfully advanced in the direction of Rozdolivka. Russian troops broke through to Novobakhmutivka and captured it. Units of the 11th separate motorized rifle regiment of the 1st Army Corps captured the heights near Novoselivka Druga.
- The Defense Forces pushed back the enemy from positions to the south and southeast of Vuhledar. Units of the 155th and 40th separate marines brigades, the 29th Army of the Eastern Military District, the 3rd Army Corps and the "Cascade" battalion of the 1st Army

Corps continue to conduct offensive actions in the area of the city. Still, the open terrain around it makes it difficult for the Russians to advance.

Change in enemy disposition: the enemy command is conducting a large-scale regrouping of units north of Bakhmut.

Escalation indicators: not indicated.

Possible operation situation developments:

- The Russian Armed Forces have exhausted their reserves of personnel and military equipment, which slows down the start of a large-scale offensive in the east of Ukraine;
- The inability of the enemy logistics system to restore battle-damaged military equipment in the short term will further limit the ability of the Russian Armed Forces to conduct mobile operations at a high pace and with a wide scope.

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.

- The enemy has 7 surface ships in the sea, which perform tasks south of the Crimean Peninsula. Of them, two corvettes of the Buyan-M type are carriers of Kalibr missiles. Together, they have up to 16 missiles on board. Last night, the *project 1135.6* frigate launched 8 Kalibr missiles at targets in Ukraine.
- One patrol boat is on duty in the Sea of Azov waters.
- Enemy aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saki, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea. During the day, 28 sorties of enemy aircraft over the Black Sea were recorded.
- The intensity of the movement of military equipment by road and rail transport from Crimea to the Kherson region remains stable, and freight trains unload military equipment and ammunition at the stations "Kalanchak", "Brylivka", and "Novooleksiyivka".
- In the Kherson direction, the enemy continues constantly shelling populated areas along the right bank of the Dnipro River with mortars, rocket and barrel artillery. On February 15, Kherson, Beryslav, and up to 10 towns and villages on the Dnipro banks were under enemy artillery fire. Velykiy Potyomkinsky and Bilohrudy islands continue to be in the so-called "grey zone", from the territory of which the occupiers conduct artillery and mortar

attacks on Kherson. Therefore, the Kherson city center and Korabel, Naftogavan, Richport, KhBK, and Tavriysky neighborhoods are constantly in the zone of enemy fire.

- In Crimea, the enemy is preparing for the offensive of the Armed Forces: they are ordering to strengthen control over the movement of transport and people, to provide places for "temporary accommodation of people", to prepare special equipment and facilities for providing emergency aid and medical evacuation.
- There are currently two ferries operating on the Kerch crossing. By the beginning of February, three vessels were on the line, but due to strong storms, one of the ferries became unfit for further use.
- In the countryside areas of Crimea, Russian soldiers hand out lists of medicines to local entrepreneurs that they need to purchase for the needs of the Russian army. The situation demonstrates the shortage of resources in the Russian army, even at the level of providing regular soldiers with mandatory medicines.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 16.02.23

Personnel - almost 140,460 people (+690)

Tanks - 3,296 (+6)

Armored combat vehicles – 6,517 (+10);

Artillery systems – 2,306 (+3);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 466 (0);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 239 (+3);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,167 (+6);

Aircraft - 298 (0);

Helicopters – 287 (+1);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,012 (+1);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 857 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

Ukraine nationalized the factories of the sanctioned Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska with a total cost of over UAH 10 billion (approximately 253 million euros), the Security Service of Ukraine reported in Telegram.

According to Prosecutor General Andrey Kostin, 350 objects, including the Nikolaev Alumina Refinery, as well as the non-mining companies Glukhovsky Quartzite Quarry, Khustsky Quarry and Zhezhelovsky Quarry, passed into state ownership. "It has been established that Deripaska, who is part of the inner circle of the military-political leadership of Russia, managed enterprises through controlled commercial structures in different regions of Ukraine. Thus, the Russian oligarch tried to hide his attitude towards Ukrainian assets," the SBU said in a statement.

International diplomatic aspect

Norway has announced a five-year military and humanitarian assistance package to Ukraine worth \$7.4 billion, making itself one of the world's biggest donors to Kyiv.

"It will be almost impossible for the Russians to achieve their political objectives by military means. It is unlikely that Russia is going to overrun Ukraine. It's just not going to happen," the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff believes. Meanwhile, Gen Mark Milley doesn't rule out Ukraine's success, "it's not to say that it can't happen ... But it's extraordinarily difficult. And it would require essentially the collapse of the Russian military." While Russian strength is in numbers, "our goal is to make sure that we give Ukraine additional capability so that they can be, not only be marginally successful, they can be decisive on the battlefield and their upcoming offensive," US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said at the NATO defense ministerial.

The Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine believes that as Ukrainians demolish the Soviet Union, the same will happen to Russia. "The West must prepare for this. They believe that Russia should remain within the same borders. This is a big mistake. We will definitely demolish it, and it will be dismantled in the form in which it is today," said Oleksii Danilov. So instead of drafting a new "Chicken Kyiv" speech, it's better to work out a contingency plan on the highly likely start of Russia's disintegration.

The Parliament of the Slovak Republic has designated the "current Russian regime as terrorist and Russia as a state supporting terrorism."

"I'm ready to wage war, alongside the Russians, from the territory of Belarus. But only if someone - even a single soldier - enters our territory from there (Ukraine) with weapons to kill my people," Alexander Lukashenko engaged in demagoguery again. His assurances are as nauseous in essence. He ignores the fact that since February 24, 2022, Belarus has been an aggressor state along with Russia and, as such, is a legitimate military target. Moreover, the Lukashenko illegal regime falls under Article 3 of the UN General Assembly's Resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 1974, which defines acts of aggression, in his particular case, as "The action of a state in allowing its territory, which it has placed at the disposal of another state, to be used by that other State for perpetrating an act of aggression against a third state."

Centre for Defence Strategies (CDS) is a Ukrainian security think tank. We operate since 2020 We publish this brief daily. If you would like to subscribe, please send us an email at cds.dailybrief@gmail.com

*The CDC Daily Brief is produced with the support of the **Kyiv School of Economics** <https://kse.ua>*

Please note, that we subscribe only verified persons and can decline or cancel the subscription at our own discretion

We are an independent, non-government, non-partisan, and non-profit organisation. More at www.defence.org.ua

Our Twitter (in English) - https://twitter.com/defence_centre Our Facebook (in Ukrainian) - <https://www.facebook.com/cds.UA>

Our brief is for information only and we verify our information to the best possible extent