
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- In total, 9 Ukrainian oblasts came under Russian fire on February 16. 9 civilians died, and 24 were wounded.
- There are 16,207 officially verified Ukrainian children on the territory of the Russian Federation. Ukrainian Ombudsman estimates the total number at about 150 thousand;
- Ukrainian government makes wartime procurement more transparent to avoid corruption;
- Ukraine does not support the "hybrid tribunal" for the Russian crime of aggression and seeks to punish Russia's top leaders;
- The regular water level at Kakhovka Reservoir is 16 m, while the current water level is 13.83 m. This threatens an environmental disaster.

Military:

- The main efforts of the enemy are concentrated on the offensive in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The Russian missile attacks on objects in Zaporizhzhia Oblast may indicate preparations for offensive actions in this direction;
- Over the past week, the number of sorties by Russian combat aircraft has increased to the level last observed in the summer of 2022;
- A team of instructors from Iran arrived in temporarily occupied Luhansk to train the Russian military in using attack UAVs.
- **Possible operation situation developments:**
- The Russian forces will continue their efforts to capture Bakhmut before February 24, approach the Sloviansk-Kramatorsk agglomeration, and capture Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Vuhledar;
- An offensive should be expected in three directions in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.
- The Russian Armed Forces are unlikely to prepare for the deployment of an air offensive operation in Ukraine due to the lack of properly trained personnel, primarily pilots.

International:

- The US reiterated its support for the "return of all of its [Ukrainian] land within its international borders."
- There's no "help fatigue" after the first year of the war. The leader of the Republican minority in the Senate appealed to the American people, "Defeating Russians in Ukraine is the most important event going on in the world right now."
- A bipartisan group of Representatives called the POTUS to provide Ukraine with modern fighter jets.
- "There is no alternative to Ukrainian victory," Volodymyr Zelensky told the Munich Security Conference and called to speed up the support.
- The French President doesn't "believe a second in regime change" in Russia, while Ambassador Fried suggested it would be a bonus.
- The Estonian PM calls for the necessity to bring Russians to justice.

Humanitarian aspect:

As of yesterday, there are 16,207 officially verified Ukrainian children on the territory of the Russian Federation, Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets said. Those are the children whose names, origins and whereabouts are known. In reality, the number of children is much higher. "We assume that this number is approximately 150,000 children. Russia says that there are 733,000 Ukrainian children they keep on their territory. However, in our opinion, this figure is exaggerated," said Lubinets.

Ukrainians submitted over 325,000 reports about the destruction or damage to housing caused by Russian aggression through the government-issued Diya application. According to Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, the restoration of people's housing is a priority of rapid reconstruction. This is exactly what the funds from confiscated Russian assets should be used for.

Russian attacks

Over the past day, February 16, the enemy fired 41 missiles of various types on the territory of Ukraine. 5 of them, modified S-300 air defense systems, were fired at Kharkiv. Ukrainian defenders shot down 16 missiles, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported on Facebook.

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- In the north, there were 69 attacks on 7 territorial communities in **Sumy Oblast**. **Chernihiv Oblast** was attacked once. No victims are reported.
- In the east, the Russian forces killed 5 **Donetsk Oblast** residents in Bakhmut. Another 10 people in the region were injured, the head of Donetsk OMA Pavlo Kyrylenko reported. The situation in **Luhansk Oblast** remains difficult.
- On the night of February 17, Russian forces attacked **Kharkiv** with seven S-300 missiles. According to the head of Kharkiv OMA, Oleh Synehubov, critical infrastructure was again targeted. It was later reported that non-residential buildings in two city districts were hit, and nobody was injured. 1 person died, and 6 were injured in the oblast over the past day.
- Over the past day, February 16, Russian troops attacked **Kherson Oblast** 76 times, three people were killed, and seven were wounded, the Kherson Oblast military administration reported.

Russian crimes in Ukraine

President Zelensky's office publicly declared that the idea of creating a so-called "hybrid tribunal" as a tool for investigating the crime of aggression by the Russian Federation is not acceptable. Ukraine seeks to punish the leadership of the Russian Federation for the decision to commit armed aggression against Ukraine, the Head of the President's Office, Andriy Yermak, stressed. The hybrid tribunal does not guarantee that it will lead to the removal of immunity from Putin, Lavrov and Mishustin.

Based on the SBU materials, the Ukrainian court sentenced Russia Today propagandist Anton Krasovsky in absentia to 5 years in prison with confiscation of property. The Russian propaganda TV channel director was found guilty of public calls for genocide and violent change or overthrow of the constitutional order.

Energy

All electric transport in Kyiv returned to its routes on February 17. "Currently, 286 units of transport are operating on 46 trolleybus routes, and 195 on 32 tram routes," Kyiv city Administration said, stressing that the worst times of the energy crisis have been overcome. On December 23, 2022, the operation of the capital's ground electric transport (trams and trolleybuses) was stopped due to a shortage of electricity. Buses operated on ground electric transport routes. In total, Kyiv lived without electric transport for 56 days.

Environment

There is a colossal drop in the water level in the Kakhovka Reservoir. The regular level is 16 m, while the current water level is 13.83 m, said the Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Ruslan Strilets. In the future, this may lead to more than 1 million Ukrainians being left without drinking water. If the level goes below 12 m, it will lead to an ecological disaster, as many fish species and biodiversity will be lost.

Occupied territories

According to the [legally elected] Mariupol City Council, "The occupiers started an open mobilization in Mariupol. There was information that a mobilization order was received in one of the educational institutions of the occupied city. Now men who worked as teachers and were the first to receive a Russian passport will be sent to the trenches."

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The main efforts of the enemy are concentrated on offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The missile attacks the Russian military inflicts on objects in Zaporizhzhia Oblast may indicate preparations for offensive actions in this direction.

Battleline:

- Units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled Russian attacks in the areas of Hryanykivka and Synkivka, Kharkiv Oblast; Stelmakhivka, Kreminna, Dibrova and Bilohorivka, Luhansk Oblast; and Rozdolivka, Fedorivka, Paraskoviivka, Bakhmut, Ivanovske, Severne, Vodyane, Maryinka, Novomykhailivka and Vuhledar in Donetsk Oblast;
- Fierce fighting continues in Paraskoviivka; the Russian military is trying to capture the village from two sides. "Wagner" PMC mercenaries advanced west of Soledar, advanced to Zaliznyanske and resumed the offensive on Ivanivske.
- The Russian forces made a slight advance towards Pervomaiske. The 5th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 1st army corps of the 8th army slightly changed tactics in

Maryinka, focusing on bypassing the village from the south through Pobyeda and Novomykhailivka.

Enemy disposition:

- The Russian command is preparing to transfer some fire weapons to the Bilohrudy, Velykyi Potemkin and Kruhly islands (in the Dnipro River), aiming to create mobile firing groups in these areas, capable of active fire impact on targets in the southern part of Kherson (Hydropark district) and Veletenske, Dniprovske and Kizomyys districts. To support them, artillery was deployed in the Hola Prystan area (up to a division, particularly an MRLS battery).
- The "South" command of the Russian Armed Forces continues preparations for an offensive in the direction of Orihiv, Zaporizhzhia Oblast.
- The preparation for the deployment of the "army corps" level reserve unit of the Southern Military District of RF Armed Forces (similar to the 3rd army corps type of the Western Military District) has been completed on the territory of Crimea.
- The Russian military command disbanded the 1444th rifle regiment, which suffered losses in Makiyivka due to the HIMARS strike. The personnel were transferred to the 362nd motorized rifle regiment of the 3rd motorized rifle division of the 20th Army.
- The 465th missile brigade of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus (permanently deployed at Osypovychy) received the "Iskander" operational-tactical missile systems from the Russian Federation.

Escalation indicators:

- Over the past week, the number of sorties by Russian combat aircraft has increased to the level last observed in the summer of 2022;
- A team of instructors from Iran arrived in temporarily occupied Luhansk to train the Russian military in using attack UAVs.

Possible operation situation developments:

- The Russian forces will continue their efforts to capture Bakhmut before February 24, enter the approaches to the Sloviansk-Kramatorsk agglomeration, and capture Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Vuhledar;
- In Zaporizhzhia Oblast, an offensive should be expected in three directions: by a motorized rifle regiment forces in Pyatykhatka - Mali Shcherbaky; by two battalions in Robotyne - Novodanylivka; by a reinforced regiment in Novopokrovka - Mala Tokmachka.
- The auxiliary strikes by the forces of one or two battalions in the area Novopil area and in the direction of Neskuchne – Velyka Novosilka are possible;
- The Russian Armed Forces are unlikely to prepare for the deployment of an air offensive operation in Ukraine due to the lack of properly trained personnel, primarily pilots.

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 Russian fleet has 11 surface ships at sea performing tasks south of the Crimean Peninsula. Of them, two corvettes of the Buyan-M type and a project 1135.6 frigate are carriers of Kalibr missiles. Together, they have up to 24 missiles on board.
- One patrol boat was on duty in the Sea of Azov waters.
- Russian aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saky, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea. During the day, 20 sorties of Russian aircraft over the Black Sea were recorded.
- The intensity of the military equipment movement from Crimea to Kherson Oblast by road and rail transport remains steady, with freight trains arriving to unload military equipment and ammunition at the stations of "Kalanchak", "Brylivka" and "Novooleksiyivka".
- After a powerful storm that raged in the Black Sea for several days in a row, on February 16, a mine torn from its mounting was carried to the shores of Odesa. The special demining group of the Navy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine decided to destroy the mine by a controlled detonation.
- On February 16 and 17, loud explosions took place in the city of Sevastopol. According to reports from the occupation authorities, the city was attacked by drones. The event was reported on a local television channel.
- **"The Grain initiative":**
- The fifth ship with food to help African countries is being loaded in Odesa Oblast. Bulk carrier VALSAMITIS is loaded with Ukrainian wheat in the port of Chornomorsk and will soon leave for Africa. 25 thousand tons of grain will go to Kenya and another five thousand tons to Ethiopia as part of the Grain From Ukraine state charity program.
- Over the past week, 25 ships left Ukrainian ports as part of the grain initiative, carrying almost a million tons of grain and other food products.
- As part of the "grain initiative", from August 1, 2022, 746 ships with food left Ukraine, delivering 2.5 million tons to the countries of Asia, Africa and Europe.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 17.02.23

Personnel - almost 141,260 people (+800)

Tanks - 3,298 (+2)

Armored combat vehicles – 6,520 (+3);

Artillery systems – 2,322 (+16);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 467 (+1);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 241 (+2);
Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,187 (+20);
Aircraft - 298 (0);
Helicopters – 287 (0);
UAV operational and tactical level – 2,013 (+1);
Intercepted cruise missiles - 871 (+14);
Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

The list of procurement data published in the Prozoro system will be expanded, PM Denys Shmyhal said. After the outbreak of full-scale war, some procurements became less public due to national security concerns. "However, we must return to transparent procedures to minimize corruption risks. We are reducing the number of cases when purchases can take place without using the electronic system," Shmyhal said.

International diplomatic aspect

While answering the question about the US weapons supplies in connection to the liberation of Crimea, Victoria Nuland said, "Ukraine is fighting for the return of all of its land within its international borders. We are supporting them, including in preparing the next hard push to regain their territory." Though she didn't mention Crimea directly, her message is important in the foreground of recent articles that argue that the Biden Administration shifted its policy and didn't believe Ukraine should try to recapture the peninsula this time. "I can imagine that you would not be satisfied to have pieces of your country bitten off by another country and expect the international community not to stand with you," the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs concluded.

She has rejected the notion of "help fatigue" after this first year of the war. On the contrary, she said that "far from being fatigued, we see countries around the world understanding, particularly after Putin's escalation against civilians and against heating and water supplies over the winter, that this has to be stopped, and it's only going to be stopped if the Ukrainians are enabled to fight the fight." Though a dozen Republican Representatives Introduced the "Ukraine Fatigue" Resolution to Halt US Aid to Ukraine, Mitch McConnell's message is bold "Defeating Russians in Ukraine is the most important event going on in the world right now... we're also monitoring very carefully the money being spent... We should stay together on a bipartisan basis in our country and defend these people who are bravely fighting for freedom and democracy in Ukraine."

"The provision of such aircraft [F-16 or an analog] is necessary to help Ukraine protect its airspace, particularly in light of renewed Russian offensives and considering the expected increase in large-scale combat operations," a bipartisan group of Representatives argued to the POTUS. "F-16s or similar fourth generation fighter aircraft would provide Ukraine with a highly mobile platform from which to target Russian air-to-air missiles and drones, to protect Ukrainian ground forces as they engage Russian troops, as well as to engage Russian fighters for contested air superiority," the lawmakers wrote.

"There is no alternative to Ukrainian victory," Volodymyr Zelensky told the Munich Security Conference. "We need to hurry up. We need speed — speed of our agreements, speed of our delivery... speed of decisions to limit Russian potential. There is no alternative to speed because it is the speed that life depends on," the President stressed.

"I don't believe a second in regime change," said the French President at the Munich Security Conference. "We have to find a way to force Russia to come back to the table under the conditions of Ukraine." Emmanuel Macron may not wish for a regime change as a goal of his strategy, but "it's a bonus, though," as Ambassador Daniel Fried put it at the Lennart Meri Conference last May. The world would be much better with Vladimir Putin behind bars after a tribunal.

"So that history does not repeat itself, we need to prosecute the crime of aggression," the Estonian Prime minister urged. A small Baltic nation knows too well that impunity encourages a criminal regime to revisit crimes. Estonia was illegally annexed in 1940 and underwent the full spectrum of the Kremlin care – murders, suppression, deportations, and Russification.

Russia, relevant news

In Russia, Lieutenant General Andriy Mordvichev was appointed as the new commander of the Central Military District with headquarters in Yekaterinburg. According to the Security Service of Ukraine, it was General Mordvichev who gave the order to capture Mariupol and storm Azovstal. He has been charged in absentia under three articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

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