
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- Over the past day, the Russian forces attacked 10 oblasts of Ukraine; at least 9 people were killed and 11 injured.
- About 7000 people have returned to Izyum, Kharkiv Oblast, liberated in September 2022. It used to have almost 50 000 residents; now, the number is about 22 000.
- 84% of working-age Ukrainians who arrived in Poland after February 24 have already found work.
- More than 6,000 children aged 4 months to 17 years went through Russian institutions engaged in the "re-education" of Ukrainians;
- "Government" employees in the occupied Mariupol must submit their personal phones to the occupation authorities and install a special app for listening to conversations.
- The Verkhovna Rada Chairman, Ruslan Stefanchuk, called on pro-Russian MPs to resign from the parliament.

Military:

- The Russian military focus on offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The Russian authorities intensify the information operation, trying to divert attention from the lack of tangible gains on the battlefield and to slow down the provision of Western tanks and other aid in advance of the Ukrainian counteroffensive;
- The Russian forces have the initiative in Luhansk Oblast but lack the reserves to intensify their efforts.
- **Possible operation situation developments:**
- The Russian forces are trying to break the sturdy defense of the Joint Forces in the Bakhmut area;
- The Russian military command will intensify its efforts in the Kupyansk, Lyman, and Bakhmut directions.
- **Sea:** Ukraine seeks to extend the grain deal for at least one year (starting March 18) and bring additional ports in Mykolaiv Oblast into the initiative.

International:

- The US Defense Department constantly runs accountability procedures regarding US assistance to Ukraine. "We don't see any evidence of diversion in our reporting," Colin H. Kahl said.
- Russia accuses Ukraine of drone strikes deep into its territory, while Ukraine says it doesn't strike but "is waging a defensive war to de-occupy all its territories."
- China calls [implicitly] Russia and the United States to negotiate a political solution to the Ukrainian "crisis." Alexander Lukashenko supports Xi Jinping's proposals and claims he supports peace, though Belarus is an aggressor country according to international law.
- The US diplomats say the war must end in "strategic failure for Russia," and there shouldn't be impunity.

- The overwhelming majority of Russians (83%) approve of Vladimir Putin's actions and believe the country is going in the right direction (68%).
- The Russian communists want the red "victory flag" to be raised at schools on Mondays. The "chief Russian mercenary" Prigozhin wants an exemption from the law to "publicly and constructively criticize" the Special military operation.

Humanitarian aspect:

Residents have been returning to **Izyum**, Kharkiv Oblast, after its liberation in September of the last year, the Head of Izyum City Military Administration Valery Marchenko said. Almost 50,000 people lived in Izyum before the war. After liberation, 15,000 remained, and currently, there are nearly 22 thousand. According to Marchenko, 80% of high-rise buildings were destroyed or damaged, and the low-rise section of the town was 30% destroyed. Currently, one of the biggest problems in the city is the lack of utility equipment - it is stolen or broken by the occupiers. Only 3 out of 10 garbage trucks remain, and the simple task of taking out the garbage has become problematic.

In 2022, 7 cases of human trafficking were registered in **France** among Ukrainian refugees, the Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine, Oksana Zholnovych, said. However, in reality, there may be more victims. Zholnovych explained that cases of human trafficking are confirmed only after the victim returns and files a complaint with Ukrainian authorities.

The vast majority of Ukrainians of working age (84%) who arrived in **Poland** after February 24 have already found work. More than a quarter of them (27%) did it in the first month of their stay in the Republic of Poland, and 34% - in the first three months, according to the survey "Military refugees from Ukraine. A Year in Poland", held by the EWL Migration Platform and the Center for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw, commissioned by the Office of the Prime Minister of Poland.

Russian attacks

According to British intelligence, Russia began launching Iranian Shahed UAVs from the Russian Bryansk Oblast, hoping to shorten the distance to Kyiv and stretch Ukrainian air defense forces.

On February 28, the Russian forces attacked 10 Ukrainian Oblasts. Some of the consequences include.

- At least 5 Russian UAVs were shot down over **Poltava Oblast** in the center of Ukraine.
- During the past day, the Russians shelled 7 territorial communities of **Sumy Oblast**. Two explosive shells of the VOG type were dropped from a Russian UAV on a private residential building in Oleksandrivka village. The house is damaged.
- Civilian infrastructure came under Russian fire in 16 towns and villages of **Zaporizhzhia Oblast**. 15 reports of damaged property were filed.
- Nikopol, Marhanets, Myrove and Chervonohryhorivka communities of **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast** were shelled by heavy artillery. No victims are reported.
- At least 24 towns and villages were shelled in **Kharkiv Oblast**. The building of a nursery school and 2 residential buildings were damaged in Kupyansk, and the building of the 44th

fire and rescue unit was also damaged. A 63-year-old man died from a shrapnel wound in the stomach at Kupyansk City Park.

- Heavy fighting is underway in **Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts**. Towns and villages along the contact line get constantly shelled. The Russians killed 3 residents of Donetsk Oblast, and another 4 people were injured.
- In **Kherson Oblast**, the Russian army fired artillery at the civilian homes in Kherson and neighboring villages. In total, five people died, and seven were injured to varying degrees of severity. In the evening in Kherson, Russian artillery damaged power lines, causing several substations to lose power. A part of the city remained without light.

Occupied territories

According to the Ukrainian General Staff, servicemen of the Russian occupation forces stationed in Perevalne, **Crimea**, started sending their families back to Russia.

According to the National Resistance Center of the Ukrainian MOD, in the occupied city of **Tokmak, Zaporizhzhia Oblast**, the Russian occupation authorities made it obligatory for all schools to play the Russian national anthem in the morning and instituted "an hour on important issues" where they teach the local children the Russian version of the war. Attendance is obligatory. Children are also forced to write letters of support to the Russian soldiers. If they refuse, their parents are called in for "preventive conversations".

More than 6,000 children aged four months to 17 years went through Russian institutions engaged in the "re-education" of Ukrainians, the Center of National Resistance said. It has been established that scientific, cultural, patriotic and/or military education oriented toward Russia is imposed on children. In the Russian Federation, this is referred to as an "integration program". Some parents claim that elements of the consent they gave were breached, including the length of stay and procedures for reunification with their children. In 10% of the camps, the return of children to Ukraine was suspended. In two - for an indefinite period.

In order to strengthen control over communication and prevent the transfer of information to Ukraine, the occupying authorities informed "government" employees in **Mariupol** about the mandatory and continuous wiretapping of phones, the advisor of the Mariupol mayor Petro Andryushchenko said. Everyone must submit their personal phones to install a special app for listening to conversations. He noted that the occupying "authorities" also reported that they had installed equipment to monitor Internet traffic.

The Russian occupation administration in **Luhansk Oblast** blocks all local farmers from selling last year's grain both on the domestic and foreign markets. Also, the so-called "occupation authorities" unofficially banned all local bakeries from accepting grain from local farmers. Ukrainian farmers are in despair due to large losses of the harvested crop," the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The main efforts of the Russian military are concentrated on offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The Russian authorities intensify the information operation, trying to divert attention from the lack of tangible gains on the battlefield and to slow down the provision of Western tanks and other aid in advance of the Ukrainian counteroffensive;
- The Russian forces have the initiative in Luhansk Oblast but lack the reserves to intensify their efforts.

Battleline:

- Units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled 85 Russian attacks in different directions;
- The Russian forces carried out unsuccessful offensive actions near Makiyivka, Nevske, Chervonopopivka, Shipylivka and Bilohorivka of Luhansk Oblast, Orikhovo-Vasylivka, Dubovo-Vasylivka, Bohdanivka, Bakhmut, Chasiv Yar, Bila Gora, Kamianka, Avdiivka, Vodyane, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, Maryinka and Pobieda of Donetsk Oblast.
- Units of the 3rd motorized rifle division of the 20th army attacked Ukrainian positions in the Kreminna area.
- Units of the "Wagner" PMC advanced in the northern part of Bakhmut and control the Stupky railway station. Russian troops advance on Bohdanivka to cut off the Khromove-Bakhmut highway.
- The Ukrainian joint forces conducted a successful counterattack in the Maryinka area.

Enemy disposition:

- The arrival of units of the 254th motorized rifle regiment of the 144th motorized rifle division of the 20th army was noted in the Kreminna area.

Escalation indicators: not detected.

Possible operation situation developments:

- The Russian forces are trying to break the sturdy defense of the Joint Forces in the Bakhmut area;
- The Russian military command will intensify its efforts in the Kupyansk, Lyman, and Bakhmut directions.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

- The enemy has built up its forces at sea. The Russian fleet has 17 surface ships and two submarines at sea performing tasks south of the Crimean Peninsula. Up to 32 Kalibr missiles are on board three surface ships and two submarines. Most of the missiles on board were probably just manufactured by the Russian Military Industry and delivered to Sevastopol (the Mekenzivi Gory base).
- Russian ships are scattered at the bases of Sevastopol, Feodosia, Kerch, Novorossiysk and Novoozerne.
- During the night of March 1, 2023, there was a massive UAV raid on military facilities in western and northern Crimea: Chornomorsk, Yevpatoria, and Sevastopol. There are reports of loud explosions and the operation of air defense systems.

- One patrol boat was on duty in the waters of the Sea of Azov.
- Russian aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saki, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea. Two Su-34 attack aircraft were used from the Belbek military airfield, which launched a missile attack on the territory of Zaporizhzhia Oblast. More than 30 Ka-52/Mi-8/Mi-24/Mi-28 combat helicopters were detected at the Dzhankoy airfield.
- After the air strike on the Yeisk military airfield in the Krasnodar Territory, Russia, the use of tactical aviation from the waters of the Azov and Black Seas was temporarily stopped.
- In the Kherson direction, the enemy continues constant shelling from mortars, rocket and barrel artillery, tanks and UAVs at Ukrainian positions and towns and villages along the right bank of the Dnipro River. Over the past day, Kherson, Antonivka, Zelenivka, Komyshany (Kherson district), Zmiivka, and Mykolaivka (Beryslav district) were under Russian fire. 86 attacks on peaceful towns and villages of the Oblast were recorded, and the enemy attacked Kherson 9 times. As a result of the shelling, five civilians were killed, and seven local residents were wounded.
- The de facto "head" of the Crimean occupation authorities, Serhiy Aksyonov, announced that the Moscow-Simferopol train might be launched through the occupied territories of mainland Ukraine. This may be related to the repair of the Kerch Strait Bridge railway branch damaged in October 2022.
- **"The Grain initiative"**. The Ukrainian authorities sent Turkey and the United Nations a request to start negotiations on extending the grain export agreement from Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea. Ukraine seeks to extend the "grain agreement" for at least one year, as well as to include additional ports in Mykolaiv Oblast into the initiative.
- The Agreement expires on March 18 and has to be extended. Currently, Ukraine manages to export about three million tons of agricultural products per month within the framework of the grain initiative. However, if the number of ship inspections in the Bosphorus is increased, Ukraine can ship up to six million tons from the ports of Odesa Oblast. In case Mykolaiv Oblast is involved, monthly exports may increase to eight million tons.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 01.03.23

Personnel - almost 149,890 people (+650)

Tanks - 3,395 (+7)

Armored combat vehicles – 6,638 (+8);

Artillery systems – 2,393 (+10);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 479 (+1);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 247 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,257 (+5);

Aircraft - 300 (0);

Helicopters – 288 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,055 (+4);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 873 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

On March 1, 2023, Putin suffered his fifth major defeat since the day of the full-scale invasion – Ukraine defeated his winter terror, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said. "We endured the hardest winter in our history. It was cold and dark for us, but we were indomitable." Kuleba emphasized that partners stood alongside Ukraine: "The EU also won, which, despite Moscow's laughter, also did not freeze without Russian gas."

The Verkhovna Rada Chairman, Ruslan Stefanchuk, called on pro-Russian parliamentarians to resign from the parliament. He addressed the pro-Russian politicians: "I will be very grateful if all those who have chosen a different side than to be with Ukraine or to abide by the oath of the people's deputy of Ukraine say goodbye to their mandate in a legal way." The Speaker emphasized that it's important for the premature termination of the deputies' powers to be carried out in a legal manner because these politicians should not be given the opportunity to challenge any potentially illegal decisions in courts.

In February 2023, the indicator of business confidence in the industry increased by 2.4 percentage points compared to January 2023 and amounted to minus 12.4%; in the processing industry, this indicator increased by 3.5 percentage points compared to the previous month and was minus 10.7%, the State Statistics Service reports.

International diplomatic aspect

"Even as we focus on getting Ukraine what it needs, we've always prioritized accountability, and Ukraine has, too. We have adapted our accountability practices for the combat environment to address the risk of illicit diversion, using mechanisms that go above and beyond our standard practices," the US Undersecretary of Defense for Policy told during the House Armed Services Committee hearing. Talking about the fight against corruption, Colin H. Kahl said that there have been "improvements over time, especially in the defense sector." The Defense Department's Office of Inspector General has 90 professionals engaged in oversight of security assistance to Ukraine and has already conducted two dozen audits and evaluations. "We don't see any evidence of diversion in our reporting," Colin H. Kahl said, meaning that the Ukrainian side properly applies the military assets tracking system.

"Ukraine doesn't strike at Russian territory. Ukraine is waging a defensive war to de-occupy all its territories. This is an axiom. Panic and disintegration processes are building up in Russia, reflected by an increase in internal attacks on infrastructure facilities by unidentified flying objects," was a reply of an advisor to the Ukrainian President in response to Russia's accusations over a drone attack deep inside Russia. Traditionally, Russian officials claimed the drones caused no injuries and did not inflict any significant damage. Once again, Vladimir Putin ordered stepped-up protection at the border. "The fighting shows that Russia's air defense is one of the best in the world," Putin said during a meeting with the governor of the Belgorod Region in January. The neighboring Ukraine Belgorod Region started to experience explosions on its territory just a week after the all-out invasion began.

"The core of China's position is to promote peace and talks. We must stick to the direction of political settlement, abandon all Cold War mentality, respect the legitimate security concerns of all countries, and build a balanced, effective, and sustainable European security architecture," President Xi Jinping told the so-called President of Belarus. Xi urged abstract "involved countries" to "stop politicizing and instrumentalizing the world economy," meaning the United States and Russia. "Belarus has been actively proposing peace and fully supports your initiative on international security," Alexander Lukashenko replied. The Lukashenko regime provided its territory for the land invasion in February 2022 and is now engaged in air and missile attacks on behalf of the Russian forces from its territory. Though there were no recorded facts of the Belarussian army's participation in the war on Ukrainian territory, Belarus is still an aggressor state, for the UN General Assembly's Resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 1974 defines aggression, among other things, 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."

"This [Russia's war] has to end in a strategic failure for Russia, that no aggressor looking at this across the world thinks, 'Oh that's a good idea, I'm going to get what I want and not pay any price,'" the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, told the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. Celeste Wallander added that any negotiations must be "a Ukrainian-led process because they've earned it." "If we allow [core international principles] to be violated with impunity, that does open the prospect that Russia itself will continue to consider further aggression against other countries if it sets its sights on them, or other countries will learn the wrong lesson and would-be aggressors in every part of the world will say' well, if Russia can get away with this, then we can too,'" Antony Blinken said while meeting leaders of Central Asia. "That's a recipe for a world of conflict, a world of instability, a world that I don't think any of us want to live in."

The overwhelming majority of Russians (83%) approve of Vladimir Putin's actions, while six times less a number of Russians disapprove of it, according to a Levada Centre poll. More than two-thirds of Russians (68%) believe the country is going in the right direction, just a percent less than in the first month of the all-out invasion. One-fifth of Russians think that the country is heading in the wrong direction. Putin leads general public trust (43%) and is followed by PM Mishustin (17%), Foreign Minister Lavrov (15%), and Defense minister Shoigu (12%).

Russia's Communist Party tabled a draft bill on the obligatory hoisting of the red "victory flag" (the Soviet Red Army's flag) together with the flag of the Russian Federation in schools every Monday. Meanwhile, the owner of Wagner PMC appealed to the parliament speaker to review the bill on discrediting (revealing truth or criticizing) the members of the Special military operation (Russia's war against Ukraine) and exempt from punishment the Wagner mercenaries and the Ministry of Defense. Evgeniy Prigozhin believes those two should be allowed to "publicly and constructively criticize" the operation. Last week, the Institute for the Study of War concluded that in December, Putin allowed the "Russian MoD to reassert control over all Russian forces in Ukraine." The chief mercenary and minister of defense have been publicly criticizing each other.

Russia, relevant news

The Finnish supplier of pipeline systems Uponor left Russia. Its business in Russia was sold to the company's local management, the Finnish publication Yle reports. The value of the transaction is not disclosed. The publication notes that withdrawing the business from Russia began as early as June 2022, but the transaction took longer than expected due to local regulations.

Russia's oil and gas export earnings fell nearly 40% in January as price caps, and Western sanctions reduced receipts, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said. According to IEA data provided to Reuters, Russia's revenues from oil and gas exports in January amounted to \$18.5 billion, which is 38% lower than the \$30 billion that Moscow received in January 2022, a month before the invasion of Ukraine.

Russia does not intend to sell oil at any price just for the sake of volume; this principle is embedded in the reduction of the country's production in March, said First Deputy Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation Pavel Sorokin.

According to the Russian newspaper Izvestia, the mobile Internet speed in Russia fell by 7% due to equipment problems.

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