
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- The Russian forces attacked 9 Oblasts of Ukraine on March 22. As a result, there are damages and civilian casualties.
- All children were evacuated from Vuhledar, Velyka Novosilka and Chasiv Yar in Donetsk Oblast. There are difficulties with evacuating 32 children remaining in Bakhmut, but the work is ongoing.
- Volodymyr Zelensky visited Kherson Oblast today after yesterday's visit to Donetsk and Kharkiv Oblasts.
- 49.5% of Ukrainians expect their families' well-being to improve over the next 2-3 years, and 10% expect it to change for the worse.

Military:

- The Russian troops grouping "West" does not stop trying to reach the outskirts of Kupyansk by attacking from the north and east. They act with two tactical groups in directions converging in the Petropavlivka area.
- The probable enemy offensive in the Kupyansk direction will be of local nature and would inhibit active actions in all other directions due to a lack of resources.

International:

- Slovakia has already handed four out of pledged thirteen MiG-29 fighter jets over to Ukraine. Finland sent three Leopard 2 MBTs, and the Swedish Parliament voted for a €554 million assistance package.
- Dmitry Medvedev believes in 1,500 modern MBTs in 2023, though the overall capacity to modernize and produce new tanks is way more modest.
- Russia paints delivery of armor-piercing rounds containing depleted uranium as "escalation", though it has been using them for months and previously stated that it violates no international treaties. Chinese propaganda spins the theme of pretending to be a peacemaker while portraying the West as warmongers.
- Iceland recognized the Holodomor of 1932-1933 as the genocide of the Ukrainian people.
- While Antony Blinken believes all signatories to the Rome Statue should arrest war criminal Vladimir Putin on their territory, Hungary rules it out. Meanwhile, Dmitriy Medvedev threatens with nuclear weapons in case of a hypothetical arrest of his boss.

Humanitarian aspect:

The head of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, Oleksandr Tkachenko, called on the PACE to recognize the cultural genocide by Russia, arrest the assets of "rossotrudnichestvo" [Russian federal agency managing state property abroad] and promote the return of cultural values to Ukraine. Tkachenko emphasized that the confirmation of cultural genocide is "numerous evidences of crimes collected by Ukrainian and international partners during 2014-2023".

A representative office of the International Criminal Court will be opened in Ukraine. The Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin signed the corresponding agreement in the Hague with the Secretary of the International Criminal Court, Peter Lewis.

Russian attacks

Overall, the Russian forces attacked 9 Oblasts of Ukraine on March 22. As a result, there are damages and civilian casualties.

- **Donetsk Oblast:** In the middle of the night, the Russians shelled Kramatorsk and the city's outskirts; at least 3 houses, a boiler room, and garages were damaged. In Avdiivka, 2 people were killed; three rockets were aimed at the Avdiivka Coke Chemical Plant territory. At least 7 houses were damaged in Ocheretynska hromada. 4 residential buildings were damaged in Chasiv Yar.
- Yesterday, the enemy shelled the border settlements of the Kupyansk, Chuhuyiv, Izyum and Kharkiv districts of **Kharkiv Oblast**. A church building was damaged in Cherneshchyna, and at least 4 residential buildings were damaged in Vilcha.
- The occupiers attacked **Kherson Oblast** 54 times; 1 killed and 2 wounded civilians. In Kherson, private and apartment buildings and the Kherson Regional Cardiology Center were damaged.
- Yesterday, the enemy hit the water area of the Ochakiv community of **Mykolayiv Oblast**. There are no casualties.
- On March 22, the Russians targeted a high-rise building in **Zaporizhzhia**; 1 killed and 32 injured civilians were reported. The service station was also damaged. Over the past day, the law enforcement officers of the Zaporizhzhia Oblast received 89 reports about the destruction of houses and other peaceful objects in the Zaporizhzhia, Polohy and Vasylivka districts.

The rescue operation was completed on the ruins of a destroyed house in Rzhyschiv, **Kyiv Oblast**. The death toll from the enemy's drone attack on the night of March 22 has risen to nine people; 7 people were injured on the territory of the Rzhyschiv Vocational Lyceum. The State Emergency Service has finished clearing the debris.

Evacuation

All children were evacuated from Vuhledar, Velyka Novosilka and Chasiv Yar in **Donetsk Oblast**, reported the National Police of Ukraine. "There are 6 of them [children] left in Avdiivka, 18 in Siversk, and more in other populated cities," the message reads. The police also noted that the evacuation is ongoing.

Currently, less than 3,500 residents remain in Bakhmut, Donetsk Oblast, including 32 children, and the work to evacuate them from the city continues, the head of the Donetsk regional military administration, Pavlo Kyrylenko, stated at a briefing. "Bakhmut is a city that had about 84,000 inhabitants as of February 24, 2022. Now, according to our calculations, less than 3,500 people are left in the city. These are the people who, and I can say this with all responsibility, do not want to leave the city "at all"..." He emphasized that a colossal work was carried out to evacuate

Bakhmut residents safely, but people who remain in the city not only refuse to leave but even hide from the police and volunteers.

Kyrylenko noted that children deprived of parental care, children from orphanages and boarding schools were evacuated in full; there were about 12 thousand of them in the territory of Donetsk Oblast. And those 32 children still staying with their parents in Bakhmut are in shelters. They are "provided with more than enough food and hygiene kits, even in those terrible conditions. But these are children whose parents refuse to leave with them, hiding" He stressed that there is a [Cabinet of Ministers] resolution with an amendment that allows for the forced evacuation of children, but there are difficulties in implementing it.

Ukrainians in the temporarily occupied **Kherson Oblast** are urged to evacuate, said Nataliya Gumenyuk, head of the joint press center of the "South" operational command, on the air of a nationwide telethon. "In particular, we stress on the clearing of a 20-30-kilometer strip for a reason. This suggests that our work here will be as active as possible. Therefore, it is necessary to evacuate. If there is no such possibility, set up shelters and try to place your shelters as far as possible from those places the enemy concentrates," Gumenyuk said. She noted that the invaders try to hide their equipment among the houses of civilians. At the same time, the Resistance Movement in the Kherson region organizes work so that local residents leave the places where the Defense Forces will work, Gumenyuk emphasized.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The enemy concentrates its main efforts on conducting offensive operations in the Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The command of the Russian troops grouping "West" does not stop trying to reach the outskirts of Kupyansk by attacking from the north along the left bank of the Oskil River and east along the highway R-07 Kupyansk - Svatove. They act with two tactical groups in directions converging in the Petropavlivka area.

Battleline:

- Units of the Defense Forces repelled more than 83 enemy attacks in various directions. Bakhmut remains the epicenter of hostilities.
- The enemy unsuccessfully attacked in the areas of Makiyivka, Bilohorivka, and Verkhnyokamianske in Luhansk Oblast; Bakhmut, Bohdanivka, Predtechne, Novokalynove, Stepove, Berdychi, Avdiyivka, Lastochkine, Severne, Vodyane, Pervomaiske, Maryinka, and Pobieda in Donetsk Oblast.
- The enemy units of the 25th and 138th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 6th Army and the 347th motorized rifle regiment of the territorial forces repeatedly tried to attack the advanced positions of the Defense Forces from the Hryanykivka-Horobyivka line, trying to advance to the left bank of the Oskil River in the area of Masyutivka and Dvorichna villages. They attacked in the directions of Kuzemivka-Stelmakhivka, Lyman First-Synkivka. Enemy attacks were detected at the stage of advancing to the frontiers and thwarted by the Defense Forces' artillery fire.

Change in enemy disposition:

- In the Pershotravneve village area, units of the 15th motorized rifle regiment of the 2nd motorized rifle division of the 1st Tank Army were reinforced by two "Storm" assault units (presumably from the BARS-5 detachment).
- In the area of the Urazove village (Russia), the command of the 138th separate motorized rifle brigade deployed an additional brigade's ammunition depot.
- In the area of Yakovlevka village (Belgorod Region, Russia) is a deployed field center for storage, repair and supply of weapons and military equipment with 360 units of equipment, including about 80 tanks.
- The command of the enemy's troops grouping "West" has completed the transfer and deployment of four rifle battalions to the "Bryansk" operational grouping.

Escalation indicators:

- The enemy moves to the Kupyansk direction two divisions of self-propelled mortars 2c4 of the 45th artillery brigade of the Western Military District.

Possible operation situation developments:

- In the short term, the enemy will concentrate its efforts in the areas between Bakhmut and Bilohorivka and in the Kreminna-Lyman direction;
- If the Ukrainian Joint Forces fail to stop the further advance of the Russian Armed Forces in the western direction, or if they do not push them to the eastern side of Krasnohorivka, the position of their units in the Avdiivka area may become critical.
- The enemy is preparing for active offensive actions in the Kupyansk direction;
- In the event of success in the Kupyansk direction, the enemy's command will introduce the "Belgorod" operational group into the operation;
- The probable offensive in the Kupyansk direction will be of local nature and would hinder active actions in all other directions due to a lack of resources.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

- The number of enemy ships at sea during the last day has decreased due to weather conditions. 13 ships and vessels of the Russian Navy are patrolling the Black Sea region off the coast of Crimea. Among them, two corvettes, "Vyshnyi Volochyok" and "Grayvoron" (type "Buyan-M"), and two submarines *project 636.3* are carriers of Kalibr missiles (up to 24 missiles on board). There is information that the ships did restock with Kalibr missiles, which were delivered by rail.
- Enemy aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saki, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske. A total of 28 combat sorties were made over the past day. 9 aircraft and two helicopters were involved in the control of the surface and air situation in the northwestern part of the Black Sea water area (three Su-27/30 aircraft from Belbek airfield, three Su30 CM and two Su-24M aircraft, one MiG-29K from Saki airfield and two Ka-31R helicopters from Kacha airfield). Control of the air situation and the enemy's operational-tactical aviation over the waters of the Sea of Azov was carried out by the A-50U and Il-22PP AEW&C aircraft.

- During the day, the work of the RQ-4B reconnaissance UAV of the US Air Force was observed over the waters of the Black Sea.
- On March 22, 2023, at 4:30 a.m., enemy's air defense equipment was activated in the area of the city of Sevastopol by an unidentified UAV. At the same time, a breach of the boom barrier at the entrance to the Sevastopol naval base by 3 unidentified unmanned sea attack boats was recorded.
- **"Grain Initiative"**: the 17th vessel chartered by the UN World Food Program left the port of Odesa. Bulk carrier DENIZ M will deliver 30 thousand tons of humanitarian wheat to Ethiopia. Under the auspices of the UN WFP, more than half a million tons of Ukrainian wheat have already been delivered to countries in Africa and Asia. Today, three ships with 112.4 thousand tons of agricultural products for Africa and Asia left the ports of Great Odesa. Among them is the bulk carrier BC CALLISTO with 30.5 thousand tons of wheat heading to Algeria. Bulk carrier IOANNIS THEO will deliver 52 thousand tons of wheat to Vietnam. Four vessels loaded with 122,000 tons of agricultural products move along the "grain corridor". Since August 1, 833 ships have left the ports of Great Odesa, exporting 25.3 million tons of Ukrainian food to the countries of Asia, Europe and Africa.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 23.03.23

Personnel - almost 168,150 people (+660);

Tanks - 3,570 (+13);

Armored combat vehicles – 6,898 (+11);

Artillery systems – 2,608 (+19)

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 511 (+2);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 273 (+1);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,452 (+18);

Aircraft - 305 (0);

Helicopters – 290 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,203 (+20);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 909 (+2);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

Volodymyr Zelensky visited Kherson Oblast today. He visited Posad-Pokrovske village, where many houses and social infrastructure facilities were damaged. Now the residents are gradually returning home, and the electricity and water supply are being restored. Zelensky also visited one of the region's energy facilities.

The First Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy, Taras Vysotsky, emphasized that despite many challenges this year's sowing campaign has already adapted to work under martial law; the agricultural sector is working and even developing as much as possible. He identified many government initiatives aimed at helping farmers, particularly the soft credit program, which was extended until March 31, 2024. Another vital aspect of support, according to Vysotskyi, is the implemented government grant program launched in 2022.

More than 10,000 unemployed people in 14 regions of Ukraine participated in the implementation of socially useful works within the framework of the "Recovery Army" project. The leader among the regions is Poltava Oblast, where almost 3,000 people are involved in such works. "Each region can establish a different list of necessary works - from weaving camouflage nets, disassembling rubble and restoring structures damaged due to hostilities, to unloading humanitarian aid," said Deputy Minister of Economy of Ukraine Tetyana Berezhna. Berezhna also emphasized that the payment people receive for performing socially beneficial work is higher than unemployment benefits.

49.5% of Ukrainians expect their families' well-being to improve over the next 2-3 years, and 10% expect it to change for the worse, according to the survey "Socio-economic well-being of citizens of Ukraine: results of the war year". "Such optimism looks somewhat paradoxical in view of the assessment of real income changes," Andriy Bychenko, director of the sociological service of the Razumkov Center, said. Bychenko noted that a little more than a third of respondents believe that the level of well-being of their family is very bad (8.3%) or rather bad (26.5%), and 12% believe that it is good or very good. Also, half of the respondents (49.7%) believe their well-being is neither good nor bad. According to the survey, after February 24, 2022, 53% of Ukrainians noted that their incomes decreased, while only 6% of respondents reported increased incomes.

International diplomatic aspect

Slovakia has already handed over four pledged thirteen MiG-29 fighter jets to Ukraine. There was no immediate Armageddon, as some had voiced their fears about such a possibility after sending tanks and jets to Ukraine. "This is absolutely not a surprise for us. It's just that new figures will be added to our statistics of downed aircraft," Russia's deputy foreign minister said before repeating the propaganda mantra that such actions by NATO and the E.U. confirm the course towards the escalation of the Ukrainian conflict. The Swedish Parliament voted to provide Ukraine with €554 million in assistance, including Leopard 2 MBTs and Archer self-propelled howitzers. Finland will deliver three Leopard 2 MBTs.

Dmitry Medvedev is quoted to say that the Russian military-industrial complex will produce 1,500 modern battle tanks in 2023. Pavel Luzin, a Russian military expert, suggested that there's no need to "focus on the words of a deeply ill person," for "Russia modernizes 150-180 previously produced T-72, T-80, and T-90 tanks annually, and the net production of new T-90 tanks is 20-30 units."

At the joint press conference with Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin threatened to "respond accordingly, given that the collective West is starting to use weapons with a 'nuclear component.'" It is a clear overstretch, for the armor-piercing rounds containing depleted uranium the U.K. is set to provide Ukraine is not a nuclear weapon. Moreover, according to OSINT, Russia has been using depleted uranium rounds for months. Back in 2018, Russia's defense ministry announced T-80BV MBT upgraded to feature the capability of firing depleted uranium shells. At that time, Russian experts insisted that "the use of depleted uranium ammunition does not violate any international treaties." The U.S. reaction to the recent accusation was expressed by John Kirby, who said, "make no mistake, this is yet another straw man through which the Russians are driving a stake."

At the same time, Chinese mouthpieces picked up a theme and tried to spin it. After presenting the so-called peace plan, Beijing is doubling down a propaganda narrative that it is the West that is fueling the conflict, while China tries to offer good services and Russia accepts Chinese proposals with minor objections.

The Parliament of Iceland recognized the Holodomor of 1932-1933 as the genocide of the Ukrainian people. Iceland joins the list of 26 nations that have already recognized this tragic event.

"I think that anyone who is a party to the [ICC] court and has obligations should fulfill their obligations [to arrest Putin]," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in response to a question from Sen. Lindsey Graham at a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing. However, Viktor Orban's chief of staff ruled out the possibility of a war criminal's arrest in Hungary. "We can refer to the Hungarian law, and based on that, we cannot arrest the Russian President ... as the ICC's statute has not been promulgated in Hungary," Gergely Gulyas said.

Former Russian president Medvedev routinely turned to nuclear blackmail. "Clearly, such a situation is never going to happen, but still, let's imagine that it has happened. The incumbent head of a nuclear country arrives in, say, Germany, and is arrested. What does it mean? A declaration of war against Russia," Dmitriy Medvedev said. Sergei Ryabkov, a hopeful to replace Sergey Lavrov, doubled down on nuclear saber-rattling, "I would not like to indulge in a discussion whether the probability of a nuclear conflict is high today, but in any case, it is higher than anything that we have seen over the past decades, let's put it this way."

Russia, relevant news

The Metro company condemns the invasion of Ukraine. Still, it will continue its activities in Russia, as it "is responsible for 10,000 of its colleagues in the Russian Federation," according to the company's statement. Ukraine's National Agency on Corruption Prevention included the popular chain of hypermarkets in the list of "international war sponsors". It also includes, in particular, the American Procter & Gamble and the French Auchan.

Russian online cinemas have lost up to half of Western films and series. The number of content from the largest foreign producers on Russian video services has decreased by one and a half to two times, according to a study by the TelecomDaily agency. The experts analyzed the content of Russian online cinemas as of March 16, 2022, and March 16, 2023. The most significant drop in content volume was recorded at the Kinopoisk service owned by Yandex. Over the year, the number of films and series from major studios Disney, Warner Bros., Sony Pictures, Paramount and Universal on the Russian video service has halved to a thousand titles. After the start of a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, the largest international media companies announced the cancellation of the distribution of their films in Russia and began revoking the rights to their movies from Russian services. As a result, Russian video services are trying to replace European and American films with films and series from South Korea, Turkey, India and China.

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