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**Snapshot of the day:**

**General, humanitarian:**

- During the day, on April 17, eight regions of Ukraine were under the attack of the Russian military. There are wounded and killed civilians.
- Slightly more than 7,000 Ukrainian servicemen are considered missing, about 60-65% are probably in Russian captivity;
- Using the Clearview AI platform, the Crimean Prosecutor's office identified 70 members of the illegal armed group "Self-defense of Crimea" and established the whereabouts of 150 orphans stolen by the RF.

**Military:**

- Russian Forces formed a continuous line of defense on the Zaliznyanske – Sacco and Vanzetti – Mykolaivka – Yakovlivka – Berestove line;
- The "Wagner" PMC requires 6,000 artillery shells per day to advance 100-200 meters;
- "Wagner" PMC is preparing up to three motorized rifle brigades, manned by the mobilized personnel, to reinforce its flanks in Bakhmut.
- Russian airborne units deployed TOS-1A in the Kreminna area; the Russian Air Force has significantly increased the number of aircraft sorties in the Svatove direction.
- **Possible operation situation developments:** The Ukrainian Defense Forces will focus on inflicting maximum losses on the enemy in close combat in the main directions, given the shortage of artillery ammunition. They will also prioritize holding areas and lines that are advantageous for launching an offensive.
- **Sea:** As of the morning of April 18, Russia continues to block ship inspections in the Bosphorus. The negotiations of the Joint Coordination Center members continued late at night but did not yield a positive result.

**International:**

- The G7 Foreign Ministers warned Russia that any use of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons would result in severe consequences. They also supported establishing an international tribunal to ensure accountability for war crimes and other atrocities committed.
- The EU-China relationship is contingent on China's efforts to persuade Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine. President Macron is reportedly working on a peace plan to facilitate a Russia-Ukraine summit with China's assistance. Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov expressed gratitude for Brazilian President Lula's criticisms of the US. Ukraine and the US reiterated that Russia was the aggressor and responsible for the ongoing conflict.
- The U.S. has warned Russia not to touch sensitive U.S. technology at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.
- **Russia:** The United States First Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman confirmed during the NATO conference that there had been no changes in the positions of the strategic nuclear forces of the Russian Federation.

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### **Humanitarian aspect:**

Over 7,000 Ukrainian servicemen are currently missing, with around 60-65% likely in Russian captivity, according to Oleg Kotenko, the Commissioner for Missing Persons.

The prosecutor's office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol used the Clearview AI platform, which utilizes facial recognition technology, to identify 70 members of the illegal armed group "Self-defense of Crimea" and locate the whereabouts of 150 orphans and children, deprived of parental care, who were left on the peninsula after 2014.

### **Russian attacks.**

During the day of April 17th, the Russian Federation launched attacks on eight regions of Ukraine resulting in casualties among civilians.

- In **Sumy Oblast** this morning, the Russians struck the Bilopillia territorial community with artillery. Yesterday, during the day, Russian troops shelled five border communities.
- Communities located on the line of fire in **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** were attacked with two air strikes and 55 artillery strikes recorded, as well as four MRLS rounds. Nineteen towns and villages were targeted, and 12 infrastructure objects were reported damaged.
- In **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**, the Russian military targeted the Nikopol district with heavy artillery fire. As a result, infrastructure and residential buildings were damaged, and a 42-year-old man was wounded. A sports school, a dormitory, two high-rise buildings, nine private houses, two non-residential buildings, farm buildings, cars, cellular communication towers, and a power line were damaged.
- In **Kharkiv Oblast**, at least 10 towns and villages came under Russian fire. Vovchansk in the Chuhuyiv district was subjected to massive shelling. At least eight private residential buildings and commercial buildings were destroyed by enemy fire.
- In **Luhansk Oblast**, three civilians were killed, and one received shrapnel wounds to the neck, arms and legs due to the Russian shelling of Novoyehorivka village in the Svatove area. Stelmakhivka and Bilohorivka were hit by enemy artillery.
- In **Donetsk Oblast**, there were 21 instances of Russian shelling, and six villages were affected. The enemy fire damaged five high-rise buildings, garages, a workshop of the Avdiivka Coke Chemical Plant, a school, a technical school, office premises, and a shopping center. One person was injured in Siversk.
- Russian troops attacked Snigurivka, **Mykolaiv Oblast**, with Shahed-136 kamikaze drones. Seven impacts were recorded on two objects of industrial infrastructure.
- In **Kherson Oblast**, 57 instances of shelling were recorded, 342 shells from heavy artillery, drones and aviation were fired. The Russian invaders hit Kherson six times. Enemy shells hit the residential quarters of the Oblast's towns and villages, the territory and buildings of the children's health camp of the Bilozerka, and the power line in the Chornobayivka village. One person was injured.

### **Occupied territories**

According to Melitopol mayor Ivan Fedorov, the Russian occupation authorities have launched a court in the occupied **Melitopol** where people with pro-Ukrainian positions are tried.

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### **Operational situation**

#### **General conclusion:**

- The Russian military concentrates its main efforts on offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Maryinka directions;
- The 106th airborne division and 2nd Army Corps have established a line of defense on the Zaliznyanske – Sacco and Vanzetti – Mykolaivka – Yakovlivka – Berestove line.
- The "Wagner" PMC requires 6,000 artillery shells per day to advance 100-200 meters;
- The enemy withdrew two airborne units from the Maryinka area to replenish losses.

#### **Battleline:**

- Units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled over 70 Russian attacks in different directions. Bakhmut and Maryinka remain in the epicenter of hostilities;
- The Russian forces attacked unsuccessfully in the areas of Synkivka, Kharkiv Oblast; near Spirne, Luhansk Oblast; Ivanivske, Predtechyne, Novokalynove, Severne, Pervomaiske, Maryinka of Donetsk Oblast;
- Russian troops attacked unsuccessfully near Hryhorivka. The battles took place near Kolomyichikha, Torske, Terny, Nevske, and Bilohorivka. They advanced slightly to the south of Ploschanka; the battles took place in the area of the Serebryansk Forest.
- The detachments of the "Wagner" PMC have advanced north of the T0504 route Kostyantynivka - Chasiv Yar - Bakhmut along the main railway in Bakhmut. They have succeeded in northern Bakhmut; tried to gain a foothold between Bakhmut and Khromove, and conduct positional battles north of Bakhmut.
- Russian troops unsuccessfully attacked near Novokalynove, Severne, Vodyane, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, Maryinka; Avdiivka from the south of Opytne and to the east of Kruta Balka.

#### **Change in enemy disposition:**

- "Wagner" PMC is preparing up to three motorized rifle brigades, manned by the mobilized personnel to reinforce its flanks in Bakhmut.

#### **Escalation indicators:**

- Airborne units of the Russian Armed Forces use TOS-1A in the Kreminna area;
- The number of aircraft sorties of the Russian Armed Forces Air Force in the Svatove direction has increased significantly.

#### **Possible operation situation developments:**

- In the short-term perspective, the Ukrainian Defense Forces will adhere to their chosen strategy of inflicting maximum losses on the enemy in close combat in the directions where the main efforts are concentrated, partially due to a shortage of ammunition for artillery.

- The Ukrainian Defense forces will try to hold areas and lines advantageous for launching an offensive.

#### **Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:**

- There are 11 Russian ships at sea. They patrol the areas near the coast of Novorossiysk and Crimea. Of them, two corvettes and two *Project 636.3* submarines are carriers of Kalibr missiles. They are located in the area of the firing position near Crimea and Novorossiysk. They may carry a total of up to 24 Kalibr missiles.
- The main carriers of Kalibr strike missiles are currently located in Novorossiysk. Two of the latest missile corvettes of the Karakurt type (*project 22800*, each capable of carrying 8 Kalibr missiles) are in Kerch.
- Russian aviation significantly intensified its flights from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saky, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske over the sea. 10 fighter aircraft from Belbek and Saki airfields were involved in monitoring the surface and air conditions in the northwestern part of the Black Sea. The monitoring of the aerial situation and command of operational-tactical aviation over the Azov Sea were conducted by the A-50U and Il-22 AWACS aircraft.
- **"The Grain initiative"**. As of the morning of April 18, Russia is still blocking ship inspections in the Bosphorus, suspending the work of the Greater Odesa ports involved in the Grain Initiative. Negotiations between the Joint Coordination Center members in Istanbul continued until late at night, but without a positive outcome as Russia continued to block inspections. In the morning, negotiations continued, but the inspections remain blocked due to the Russian side's unilateral refusal to register the fleet submitted by Ukrainian ports for further preparation of the inspection plan. Russian representatives are attempting to convince other parties of the JCC to register ships from the list drafted by Russia, violating international norms and provisions of the Grain Initiative. By interfering in the work of Ukrainian ports, Russia is endangering food security and using food as a weapon.

#### **Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 18.04.23**

Personnel - almost 183,130 people (+470);

Tanks 3,661 (+1);

Armored combat vehicles – 7,098 (+11);

Artillery systems – 2,810 (+6)

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 538 (0);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 285 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,676 (+4);

Aircraft - 308 (0);

Helicopters – 293 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,353 (+6);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 911 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

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#### **Ukraine, general news**

President Volodymyr Zelensky visited the advanced positions of Ukrainian defenders in Avdiivka during a working trip to Donetsk Oblast, as reported by the Office of the President. The President listened to the report of the commander of the operational-tactical group "Donetsk" regarding the situation in the area of his responsibility, conversed with the servicemen, and expressed gratitude for their service.

The Cabinet of Ministers has established a Coordinating Headquarters to ensure the realization of the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons (IDPs) as part of the operational plan for implementing the State Policy Strategy for IDPs until 2025. The Coordinating HQ aims to enhance collaboration among executive authorities in integrating IDPs into their new places of residence. This includes developing the capacity of host communities to provide IDPs with the administrative, social, and cultural services they are entitled to by law.

The media literacy level (ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media) among Ukrainians has significantly increased from 2020 to 2022, with the proportion of the audience possessing higher-than-average media literacy skills rising from 55% to 81%. Senior researcher Marta Naumova of the Institute of Sociology, the National Academy of Sciences, stated that the study found that media literacy is higher among younger people aged 18-25, while it is lower among the older age group of 56-65 years old.

### **International diplomatic aspect**

The G7 Foreign Ministers released a communique expressing their concerns about Russia's nuclear rhetoric and its threat to deploy nuclear weapons in Belarus: "Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and its threat to deploy nuclear weapons in Belarus are unacceptable. Any use of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons by Russia would be met with severe consequences." The ministers talked about the sanction pressure and export control measures, "We remain committed to intensifying sanctions against Russia, coordinating and fully enforcing them. We reiterate our call on third parties to cease assistance to Russia's war, or face severe costs." The G7 meeting expressed its support for establishing an international tribunal based on Ukraine's judicial system to prosecute crimes of aggression against Ukraine. "There can be no impunity for war crimes and other atrocities such as Russia's attacks against civilians and critical civilian infrastructure," the document stated.

High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell addressed MEPs, stating that "the relationship between China and the European Union has no chance of developing if China does not push Russia to withdraw from Ukraine." Meanwhile, Emmanuel Macron is reportedly working out a plan with China to bring Russia and Ukraine to the negotiating table "by the summer." However, no details have been provided regarding the plan's substance, nor whether Kyiv agrees with its main ideas.

Brazilian President Lula da Silva failed to accuse Russia of its unprovoked aggression and instead unleashed his criticism on the U.S. "The United States needs to stop encouraging war and start talking about peace," he said. Meanwhile, Russia's Foreign Minister expressed his gratitude to his

"Brazilian friends for their clear understanding of the genesis of the situation." "We are grateful for their desire to contribute to finding ways to settle this situation," Lavrov said.

The Ukrainian Foreign Minister rebutted Silva's comments "It does not correspond to the real state of affairs, the approach according to which the victim and the aggressor are placed on the same scale, and the countries that help Ukraine to defend against deadly aggression, are accused of encouraging war. Ukraine does not need to be convinced of anything. The war of aggression is being waged on Ukrainian soil and is causing untold suffering and destruction." He also extended an invitation for Lula da Silva to visit Kyiv. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken resounded the sentiment: "When the inevitable voices, led by a Russia that is losing its war of conquest, talk about avoiding escalation or call for Ukraine to stop reclaiming its own territory, we will remind the world who is the aggressor and who is the victim – who has 20 percent of its land occupied by enemy forces; whose children are being disappeared, and whose civilians are being killed and left in mass graves."

The U.S. has warned Russia not to touch sensitive U.S. technology at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Ukraine has shifted from Russian nuclear fuel to the one produced by Westinghouse. The U.S. and Ukraine have been cooperating on non-proliferation and civil nuclear energy. Russian invasion forces illegally seized the ZNPP and interfered with the plant's operation. Rosatom, the Russian state-owned company, began to illegally "own" the Ukrainian nuclear power plant.

### **Russia, relevant news**

As of now, there have been no reports of changes in the positions of the strategic nuclear forces of the Russian Federation, including the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons to the territory of the Republic of Belarus, according to US First Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, speaking during the NATO conference in Washington.

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