
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- Russian troops attacked Ukraine with Iranian-made "Shahed-136/131" drones on the night of April 20, with Ukrainian forces shooting down 10 out of 11 drones in the southeastern direction. Nine regions of Ukraine were under attack from the Russian Federation's military forces during the past day.
- There are children remaining in Bakhmut, where heavy fighting is taking place, and evacuating them is becoming increasingly difficult.
- According to the mayor of Melitopol, Ivan Fedorov, occupation authorities in some settlements of Zaporizhzhia Oblast recommend evacuation to Crimea or Melitopol, but no mass evacuation has started.
- Since the de-occupation of Kherson Oblast began, more than 310 civilians, including a child, have been killed, and another 312 people, including eight children, have been injured due to Russian shelling.
- The Kyiv City Council terminated the land lease agreement with the Russian embassy on April 20.

Military:

- The enemy is concentrating their primary efforts on offensive operations in Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Shakhtarsk directions.
- The enemy 20th Motorized Rifle Division and the 98th Airborne Division do not have sufficient fire support in Bakhmut, so they have practically stopped their advance.
- The losses of tanks and armored vehicles significantly limit the ability of the Russian Armed Forces to conduct maneuverable combat operations.
- The Russian Aerospace Forces maintain the capability to establish air superiority in their chosen directions. In addition to Avdiivka, the intensity of the use of aviation by the Russian Federation is increasing in the Bakhmut area. The enemy is deploying strategic Tu-22M3 bombers for carpet bombing of the front edge of the Defense Forces.
- The use of the "Shahed-136" UAV on the night of April 19-20 was aimed at detecting the Ukrainian air defense system in the southern direction.

International:

- The NATO Secretary-General stated that Ukraine's membership in the Alliance and security guarantees would be a priority topic at the upcoming NATO summit in Vilnius in July.
- The U.S. Treasury Secretary warned China against helping Russia. Sen. Lindsey Graham again called on the Biden Administration to designate Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism, which would allow the government to enact the most severe sanctions and deter China from helping it.
- The U.S. will provide Ukraine with an additional \$325 million security package, and Estonia will deliver 155mm shells. Denmark and the Netherlands will send fourteen Leopard 2 MBTs to Ukraine, in addition to their earlier promise of support. However, Ukraine's

Foreign Minister expressed frustration with the E.U. for delays in delivering promised artillery rounds.

- The Dutch envoy appointed to promote the country's involvement in Ukraine's reconstruction was forced to step down after making comments that denied Ukrainians agency.

Humanitarian aspect:

Evacuation:

According to Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk, there are still children in Bakhmut, where heavy fighting is taking place. She noted that reaching them is becoming increasingly difficult and reminded that forced evacuations are ongoing from 21 settlements in Donetsk Oblast. Vereshchuk stated that Ukrainian authorities are doing everything possible to evacuate as many children, women, and elderly people as possible from villages near Bakhmut.

Russian attacks

On the night of April 20, Russian troops again attacked Ukraine with Iranian-made "Shahed-136/131" drones, according to the command of the Ukrainian Air Force. Ukrainian military forces shot down 10 out of 11 drones in the southeastern direction. Six of them were shot down over the Dnipropetrovsk region, said the head of the military administration, Serhiy Lysak. According to the estimates of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Ukrainian servicemen destroyed 21 Russian drones out of 26 launched in the past day.

Nine regions of Ukraine were under attack from the Russian Federation's military forces during the day, according to the consolidated information of regional military administrations as of 9:00 am on Thursday, April 20.

Consequences of enemy shelling as of the morning of April 20:

- Over 30 shelling attacks were recorded in Vuhledar, **Donetsk Oblast**; the consequences are being established. One person was killed in Kostiantynivka. Two two-story buildings, eight private houses, and eight cars were damaged in the city. Two buildings were damaged in the Toretsk community.
- Six kamikaze drones were shot down over **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast** overnight.
- Enemy drones were shot down over **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** overnight (the number is not specified). A private residential building was destroyed in Hulyaipole. In total, 20 new destructions were recorded over the past day. No casualties.
- The enemy continued to shell the Kharkivskyi, Kupyanskyi, and Chuhuivskyi districts of **Kharkiv Oblast**. A private residential building was damaged in Kupyansk.
- Russian forces struck Ochakiv, **Mykolaiv Oblast**, with MLRS overnight. The details of the damage are being specified. No casualties were reported.
- The Russian occupiers shelled **Kherson Oblast** 60 times, resulting in 6 wounded. They targeted a critical infrastructure building and the territory of a car enterprise in Kherson.

- In the morning, the Russians shelled the border areas of **Chernihiv Oblast** (Mykolaivka and Yanzhulivka) with artillery and mortars, 7 impacts. No casualties or destruction were reported.
- The Russian occupiers shelled the Bilopillia community of **Sumy Oblast** twice overnight and in the morning; 12 impacts were recorded. Yesterday, the Russians shelled border communities throughout the day. 52 hits were recorded from mortars, artillery, and grenade launchers. According to preliminary information, there were no consequences.

According to a report by the Suspilne Kherson (with reference to Deputy Chief of the Military Civil Administration, Serhiy Oryekhov), 310 civilians, including one child, have been killed and 312 others, including eight children, have been injured as a result of Russian shelling since the beginning of the de-occupation of **Kherson Oblast**, with the Russian occupiers having shelled the area more than 3,600 times.

Occupied territories

According to Vitaliy Kim, the head of the **Mykolaiv** regional military administration, the situation on the Kinburn Spit, occupied by Russian troops, is difficult and there is no communication with the local residents, making it challenging to determine the situation accurately. However, satellite images are being used to monitor the situation, and he noted that the situation improves when the shelling decreases.

According to the mayor of Melitopol, Ivan Fedorov, [Russian] occupation authorities in some settlements of **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** recommend evacuation to Crimea or Melitopol, but no mass evacuation has started. "Cars with loudspeakers are driving around the villages around Tokmak and Molochansk, announcing that they recommend leaving for Crimea or Melitopol. They also say that forms for children, whom they plan to evacuate on May 5-7, should be submitted. However, we cannot say that mass evacuation has begun from the temporarily occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia Oblast," Fedorov said. He noted that the occupiers are also taking equipment and supplies from banks, kindergartens and removing air conditioners, while "nationalizing" the property of residents.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The enemy is concentrating its main efforts on conducting offensive operations in the direction of Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Shakhtarsk.
- The 20th motorized rifle division and the 98th airborne division do not have sufficient fire support in Bakhmut, so they have practically ceased their advance.
- Losses of tanks and armored vehicles significantly limit the ability of the Russian armed forces to conduct maneuverable combat operations.
- The Russian Aerospace Forces maintain the ability to establish air supremacy in their chosen directions.
- In addition to Avdiivka, the Russian Aerospace Forces is increasing the intensity of aviation use in the Bakhmut area.

- The use of the "Shahed-136" UAV was intended to detect the Ukrainian air defense system in the southern direction.

Change in the line of contact (LoC):

- Units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled over 55 enemy attacks in various directions. The fiercest battles are taking place near Bakhmut and Maryinka.
- The enemy attempted to improve its tactical position; conducted unsuccessful offensive operations in the southern outskirts of Kreminna and Serebryansk forestry. Units of the 76th Airborne Division of the Russian Airborne Forces carried out unsuccessful offensive actions near Kreminna and Dibrova. The enemy unsuccessfully attacked in the area of Kupyansk near Synkivka. The Ukrainian Defense Forces control Spirne, and battles are ongoing to the east of the village.
- Heavy fighting is ongoing in Bakhmut, with 34 clashes occurring in the past day. The enemy attacked with isolated assault groups of 5-6 fighters. The enemy controls approximately 88% of the city. High-explosive bombs FAB-500 are widely used to destroy centers of resistance of the Ukrainian Defense Forces in the city. The Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled enemy attacks near Stupochky.
- Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive in the areas of Avdiivka, Stepove, Berdychi, Severne, Vodyane, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, near Maryinka, Pobieda, Prechystivka, and Vuhledar. The enemy advanced to the west of Novobakhmutivka, near Keramik; they achieved some success near Pervomaiske and Nevelske. Positional battles are ongoing in Maryinka, with the Russian occupiers advancing along Druzhba Avenue.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces attacked near Orikhove and in the direction of Robotyne. Enemy units of the 291st Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 42nd Motorized Rifle Division of the 58th Army of the Southern Military District repelled the attacks.

Change in enemy disposition:

- The Wagner Private Military Company units have been practically withdrawn from Bakhmut and replaced by units of the 20th Motorized Rifle Division and the 98th Airborne Division.

Escalation indicators:

- The Russian Aerospace Forces have adapted guided rotary motor complexes with guidance using the GLONASS system for ODAB-500tm (vacuum) high-explosive bombs;
- The enemy is preparing to use ZB-500gd incendiary bombs;
- The enemy is removing stored Kh-55 missiles for restoration and further use.

Possible operation situation developments:

- The Defense Forces, in the short-term perspective, will adhere to their chosen strategy of inflicting maximum losses on the enemy in close combat on the directions where the main forces are concentrated, partially due to the lack of ammunition for artillery;
- The enemy is deploying strategic Tu-22M3 bombers for carpet bombing of the front edge of the Defense Forces.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

- There are 11 enemy ships in the sea patrolling areas near the coast of Novorossiysk and Crimea. Among them are one corvette and two *Project 636.3* submarines, which are

carriers of Kalibr missiles in the area of the firing position near Crimea and Novorossiysk. Together, they can carry up to 16 Kalibr missiles.

- The main carriers of the Kalibr missile system are currently located in Novorossiysk.
- The enemy's aviation has significantly increased its flights over the sea from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saky, Dzhankoy, and Hvardiyske. Nine fighter aircraft from the Belbek and Saky airfields were involved in controlling the surface and air situation in the northwestern part of the Black Sea. Control of the air situation and operational-tactical aviation over the Azov Sea was carried out by the A-50U and Il-22 AWACS aircraft.

"Grain Initiative".

- During a meeting, representatives from Ukraine and Turkey reached an agreement to resume registering and inspecting vessels that enter Ukrainian ports. Oleksandr Kubrakov, the Vice Prime Minister for Community Development, Territories and Infrastructure, pointed out that since April 10, Russia has ceased registering new fleets for entry into the Black Sea and has refused to cooperate with the plans of Ukrainian ports. This has made it impossible to develop inspection plans and has effectively halted the entry of new vessels under the "Grain Initiative." Over the last two days, April 17-18, no ship inspections were conducted in Istanbul, and no inspection plan was even created. Kubrakov noted that on Tuesday, April 18, the Ukrainian side suggested conducting at least 2 inspections of the outgoing fleet and 2 inspections of the incoming fleet. The Turkish side supported the proposal, but it was not carried out due to Russia's opposition. The Vice Prime Minister emphasized that by regulating the activity of Ukrainian ports and by determining which vessels can participate in the initiative, Russia has violated the official procedures of the Joint Coordination Center and the conditions of the grain agreement in particular.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 20.04.23

Personnel - almost 184,420 people (+670);

Tanks - 3,667 (+2);

Armored combat vehicles – 7,120 (+10);

Artillery systems – 2,825 (+6)

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 539 (+1);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 285 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,707 (+15);

Aircraft - 308 (0);

Helicopters – 293 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,386 (+10);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 911 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

On April 20, the Kyiv City Council terminated the land lease agreement with the Russian embassy with 73 votes. Mayor Vitali Klitschko announced that the city authorities have also appealed to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to "return the property of the Russian barbarians' diplomatic

mission to the ownership of the Ukrainian state". Ukraine has cut diplomatic ties with Russia after the start of the full-scale invasion by Russian forces on February 24, 2022.

International diplomatic aspect

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg is on tour in Ukraine and has already visited the town of Bucha, where Russian savages committed crimes that constitute genocide. The issue of Ukraine's membership in NATO and security guarantees will be "high on the agenda" at July's NATO summit in Vilnius. "Let me be clear, Ukraine's rightful place is in the Euro-Atlantic family," Stoltenberg told a news conference. "The time has come for the (Alliance's) leaders to define the prospects of Ukraine's acquisition of NATO membership, to define the algorithm of Ukraine's movement towards this goal, and to define security guarantees for our state for the period of such movement — that is, for the period before NATO membership," the Secretary-General said.

In outlining the Sino-American relations, U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen expressed concern over China's "no limits" partnership and support for Russia, which she sees as a worrying indication that China is not serious about ending the war. Yellen emphasized the need for China and other countries to avoid providing Russia with material support or assistance with sanctions evasion. "We will continue to make the position of the United States extremely clear to Beijing and companies in its jurisdiction. The consequences of any violations would be severe," Janet L. Yellen said. The Teixeira's leaked documents revealed that the Wagner Private Military Company was attempting to obtain ammunition and equipment from China. Still, there was no evidence to suggest that they were successful in doing so. Sen. Lindsey Graham again called on the Biden Administration to designate Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism, allowing the government to enact the most severe sanctions and deter China from helping it. The U.S. and some of its allies are considering a total ban on exports to Russia, according to Bloomberg. The approach is meant to move from a negative strategy of specific sanctions and export controls to a positive one where everything is prohibited except for a few exceptions.

The U.S. will provide Ukraine with an additional \$325 million worth of defense aid package, including more ammunition for HIMARS and artillery rounds and anti-armor systems, small arms, logistics support vehicles, and maintenance support. Denmark and the Netherlands will also send fourteen Leopard 2 MBTs in addition to the previously announced Leopard 1. Estonia has pledged to send 155mm shells, night vision devices, and 5.56mm ammunition as its share of the one million rounds promised by the E.U. In the meantime, Ukraine's Foreign Minister criticized the E.U. for delaying the purchase and supply of promised rounds. "The inability of the E.U. to implement its own decision on the joint procurement of ammunition for Ukraine is frustrating. This is a test of whether the E.U. has strategic autonomy in making new crucial security decisions. For Ukraine, the cost of inaction is measured in human lives," Dmytro Kuleba tweeted.

The Dutch Foreign Ministry has announced that Ron van Dartel will resign from his position as an envoy promoting Dutch involvement in the reconstruction of Ukraine, effective immediately. Van Dartel, who was appointed less than three weeks ago and is a former Dutch ambassador to Serbia, Poland, and Russia, made a controversial statement suggesting that "Ukrainians are also Russians". The statement has been criticized for displaying a lack of historical knowledge and for

the fact that Van Dartel had previously served in Russia, which could have influenced his views. Historically, many Western diplomats who initially served in Russia may have adopted a pro-Russian view of history. However, following events such as the Orange Revolution and Russia's annexation of Crimea, some countries have adjusted their training and posting schemes to prioritize experience in Central and Eastern European countries before sending diplomats to Russia.

Russia, relevant news

Another high-profile resignation has taken place in Putin's military command. The commander of the Pacific Fleet, Sergei Avakyants, resigned less than a week after the "surprise inspection" of the Pacific Fleet. According to Yuri Trutnev, the envoy of Vladimir Putin in the Far Eastern Federal District, Avakyants will now head the "headquarters overseeing military-sports training centers and patriotic education". The Russian Pacific Fleet includes the 155th separate marine brigade, which reportedly suffered heavy losses during Russia's invasion of Ukraine, including during battles for Pavlivka in Donetsk Oblast in November 2022 and an unsuccessful attempt to attack Vuhledar in February 2023.

The State Duma in Russia has approved a new law that provides the status of "veteran of combat operations" to the Wagner private military company mercenaries. The law states that this status applies to "persons who have signed a contract (had other legal relationships) with organizations assisting in the performance of tasks assigned to the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation during military operations." Furthermore, the law grants the same status to participants of armed groups in the self-proclaimed LPR and DPR since May 11, 2014.

The Russian government commission on foreign investment control has approved the sale of Volkswagen's plant near Kaluga to the local car dealership holding "Avilon." The value of the deal has not been disclosed yet. Volkswagen suspended its operations in Russia after democratic countries imposed tough sanctions against Russia following its invasion of Ukraine. The plant in Kaluga had a capacity of 225,000 cars per year and produced Volkswagen Polo, Volkswagen Tiguan, and Skoda Rapid cars. Volkswagen also had a contract assembly with GAZ facilities in Nizhny Novgorod, where Skoda Octavia, Skoda Karoq, Skoda Kodiaq, and Volkswagen Taos were produced until the spring of 2022. Volkswagen announced the closure of its office in Nizhny Novgorod in the summer of 2022.

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