
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- The UN reports that civilian casualties in Ukraine have reached a recent high, with 23,600 people killed or injured. Nearly 3.6 million people received humanitarian aid in Ukraine during the first quarter of this year. Still, Russia does not allow the delivery of humanitarian aid to communities along the front line in the occupied territories.
- The Russian military shelled nine regions of Ukraine on May 14, resulting in civilian casualties and injuries.
- At around midnight, four enemy strike drones "Shahed-136/131" and one reconnaissance drone "Orlan-10" were destroyed by Ukrainian air defense.
- Russian occupation authorities in Zaporizhzhia Oblast are actively carrying out forced passportization, setting a "deadline" of September 1 to be ready for the previously announced "elections" set for September 10.
- The agricultural sector has shown greater resilience during the war compared to the overall job market.

Military:

- The Ukrainian Defense Forces have successfully launched counterattacks on the flanks north and south of Bakhmut, relieving pressure on their rear communications and posing a threat of encirclement to the enemy forces in Bakhmut.
- The enemy's main effort is concentrated on missile strikes targeting military-industrial facilities in Kyiv and components of the material-technical support system of the troops in the rear areas of Ukraine. However, the scale of these strikes is limited compared to the winter campaign that targeted Ukraine's infrastructure.
- During missile strikes deep into Ukraine, the enemy uses UAVs to detect and overload the Ukrainian air defenses while using cruise missiles from air and sea-based platforms to strike their targets.
- The Russian Aerospace Forces have significantly reduced their use of precision-guided missiles in their last 10 strikes on Ukraine, suggesting a possible shortage of this type of weapon.
- The Ukrainian Air Force utilized ADM-160 MALD air target simulators as a deception tactic against the enemy's air defense systems during the missile strike on military targets in Luhansk.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces successfully employed electronic warfare during their attack near Klishchiivka, disabling the enemy's use of UAVs.
- The Defense Forces in the area of Bakhmut will continue to exert pressure on the enemy's flanks north and south of Bakhmut, forcing the enemy to retreat from the city under the threat of encirclement.

International:

- The U.K. will send Ukraine air defense missiles and long-range attack drones and launch a pilot training program.

- Volodymyr Zelensky concluded his overseas tour, announcing that Ukraine would receive "more new and powerful weapons for the front, more protection for our people, more political support."
- NATO Secretary-General expects that "NATO Allies will say that Ukraine will become a member of the Alliance" at the forthcoming summit. Yet it will happen "only if Ukraine prevails as a sovereign independent nation in Europe that there's any meaning in discussing when and how Ukraine can become a member of the Alliance."
- The European Commission President has confirmed that the next restriction measures will target third countries, who assist Russia in circumventing sanctions.
- While the PRC sentenced a U.S. citizen to life imprisonment for "spying," Russia has taken another hostage on the same charges.
- The Russian government is reportedly modifying history textbooks to include propaganda and disinformation about Russia's war against Ukraine, as well as propaganda about NATO's policies.

Humanitarian:

According to Martin Griffiths, the Deputy Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations, civilian casualties in Ukraine have reached a recent high, with 23,600 people killed or injured. Griffiths noted that the actual numbers are likely much higher. He also brought up the rocket attacks by the Russian military on humanitarian aid warehouses in Odesa and a mobile hospital of the Red Cross Society in Mykolaiv, which destroyed critical medical equipment and humanitarian goods.

According to Griffiths, in the first quarter of 2023, nearly 3.6 million people received humanitarian aid in Ukraine, such as cash payments, food, and medical services. Around 280,000 people received various forms of humanitarian aid in the frontline areas. Nevertheless, the most significant challenge is the difficulty in accessing all areas in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts, which are under the military control of the Russian Federation. He pointed out that Russia has never permitted the delivery of humanitarian aid to communities along the front line in the occupied territories.

Russian attacks

According to a summary report by Ukrainian regional military administrations as of 9:00 am on Monday, May 15th, the Russian military shelled nine regions of Ukraine throughout the previous day, resulting in civilian casualties and injuries.

The Eastern Air Command reported that four "Shahed-136/131" enemy attack drones and one "Orlan-10" reconnaissance drone were destroyed around midnight.

Some of the consequences of enemy attacks:

- The enemy carried out two rounds of shelling in the Koryukivskyi district of **Chernihiv Oblast** using self-propelled artillery and mortars on May, 14. Several houses and a transformer on the outskirts of the border village of Yeline were damaged.

- The Russians carried out 8 shelling attacks on border communities of **Sumy Oblast** on May 14. 109 explosions were recorded. Populated areas of the Yunakivska and Bilopillia communities were shelled.
- The enemy launched 84 strikes on populated areas of **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** close to the front line: 77 from artillery, three from aviation, three from MLRS, and one from a UAV. Nineteen towns and villages were shelled. A woman was injured during the shelling of Novoyakivka. Six people were injured during a massive strike on Prymorske village, including a 7-year-old girl. A 24-year-old man died in hospital from his injuries. At night, the enemy shelled the center of Orikhove. During the day, 26 objects of civilian infrastructure were destroyed.
- Yesterday, in **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**, the enemy carried out multiple attacks, including strikes on the Nikopol district and two shelling attacks on the Marhanets community, resulting in two people being hospitalized. The attacks also caused damage to seven private residential buildings, an outbuilding, a car, and two power lines.
- In **Kharkiv Oblast**, the Russian military carried out shelling attacks on at least 15 towns and villages. Yesterday afternoon, the enemy targeted Starytsia village in the Chuhuivskiyi district with artillery, killing two civilians. The shelling of Podoly village in the Kupyansk district caused damage to two private houses and resulted in a fire. On May 15, two people were killed, and one man was hospitalized with shrapnel wounds due to the shelling of Dvorichna village.
- On May 14, the enemy carried out 97 shelling attacks (with 396 shells) in **Luhansk oblast**: 33 with mortars, 7 with MLRS, 34 with artillery, 13 with tanks, 6 with UAVs, and 5 aerial strikes.
- In **Donetsk Oblast**, Russian forces carried out 19 shelling attacks on populated areas, resulting in damage to 58 residential buildings (including 12 apartment buildings), two buildings of the Donbasenergo company, two cars, two gas pipelines, a gas distribution point, and a school. As a result of these attacks, seven people were injured throughout the day. On the morning of May 15, the Russians shelled a hospital in Avdiivka. Four people were killed.
- In **Mykolaiv Oblast**, the Russian military carried out a rocket attack on the Ochakiv community overnight. The Snihyryivka community was also under attack yesterday.
- The Russian forces carried out 86 attacks at **Kherson Oblast** over the course of a day, firing a total of 381 shells. Of these attacks, 42 were artillery, 22 were mortar, six were tank, 15 were from drones, and one was from an aviation attack. The city of Kherson was attacked four times, with nine shells being fired. In Myroliubivka, an unexploded shell at an agricultural enterprise exploded, killing five people. In Respublikantsi village, a residential building was hit by artillery, resulting in the death of a 64-year-old man. Two enemy drone strikes damaged the Academy of Continuous Education in Kherson early Monday morning. Additionally, 56 people were evacuated from the region's territory that had been liberated from the Russian forces.

Occupied territories

Russian occupation authorities in **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** are actively carrying out forced passportization, setting a "deadline" of September 1. According to the mayor of Melitopol, Ivan

Fedorov, the invaders have resumed the work of "migration services" even in recently evacuated front-line territories and have intensified filtration at checkpoints. Mobile teams for issuing Russian passports are also working in places of temporary residence for evacuated residents in Berdiansk. Fedorov believes that the Russians aim to involve as many people as possible in their crime before the Russian pseudo-elections and sow propaganda about "protecting Russian citizens." It was previously reported that the invaders on the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine are preparing for "elections," with a preliminary date for their holding being September 10, 2023.

Energy:

As of May 15, 2023, electricity generation in Ukraine is meeting consumption needs, but due to Russian aggressors' shelling, some consumers in six regions (Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson, and Chernihiv) remain without electricity, according to the Ministry of Energy's Telegram. Specialists are working to restore electricity in areas affected by fighting or enemy shelling. Over the past day, 8.3 thousand consumers have had their power restored, with the majority being subscribers in the Zaporizhzhia region.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The enemy is concentrating its main efforts on conducting offensive operations in the Kupyansk, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Maryinka directions;
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces have successfully launched counterattacks on the flanks north and south of Bakhmut, relieving pressure on their rear communications and posing a threat of encirclement to the enemy forces stationed in Bakhmut.
- The enemy concentrates the main effort of missile strikes on military-industrial facilities in Kyiv and components of the material-technical support system of the troops in the rear areas of Ukraine. The strikes are limited in scale compared to the winter campaign that targeted Ukraine's infrastructure.
- During the missile strikes on targets deep within Ukrainian territory, the enemy is using UAVs to detect and overload the air defenses of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, while also utilizing cruise missiles from air and sea-based platforms to strike their targets.
- The Russian Aerospace Forces have significantly reduced their use of precision-guided missiles in their last 10 strikes on Ukraine, suggesting a possible shortage of this type of weapon in the hands of the enemy.

Change in the line of contact (LoC):

- Units of the Defense Forces repelled more than 46 enemy attacks on various fronts. Bakhmut and Maryinka remain in the epicenter of hostilities.
- Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Masyutivka, Synkivka, Novoselivske, and on the eastern outskirts of Stelmakhivka. There are ongoing "low-intensity" battles between Novoselivske and Kuzemivka. The enemy unsuccessfully attempted to attack in the city of Bakhmut itself, near Orikhovo-Vasylivka, Hryhorivka, Bohdanivka, Khromove, and southwest of Bakhmut near Bila Hora and Predtechyne.

- The Ukrainian Defense Forces successfully attacked in the area of Kuzemivka. Units from the 60th, 92nd, and 93rd separate mechanized brigades pushed back the enemy in the Berkhivka area by 2-3 km. They also succeeded in the west of Minkivka, Novomarkivka, and Hryhorivka. The 80th separate airborne assault brigade, along with the 3rd and 5th separate mechanized brigades, attacked the positions of the Russian 4th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 2nd Army Corps, which replaced the defeated 72nd separate motorized rifle brigade of the 3rd Army Corps, in the Klishchiivka area. They captured at least ten enemy strongholds and advanced towards Yahidne from the direction of Bohdanivka.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces successfully defended against multiple Russian attacks near Maryinka. Fighting is ongoing in the areas of Novobakhmutivka and Kruta Balka, but the front line from Avdiivka to Donetsk remains unchanged.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces' artillery effectively targeted a series of enemy strongholds, including the destruction of positions belonging to the 1st and 4th motorized rifle brigades of the 1st and 2nd army corps, respectively.
- In the airspace over the Bryansk region, the Russian Aerospace Forces lost two Mi-8MTPR-1 electronic warfare helicopters out of approximately 20 being in service.

Change in enemy disposition:

- The military units of the 1st Tank Army of the Western Military District have created the first defensive lines along the eastern side of the road near Novoselivka.

Escalation indicators:

- The Ukrainian Air Force utilized ADM-160 MALD air target simulators as a deception tactic against the enemy's air defense systems during the missile strike on military targets in Luhansk.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces successfully employed electronic warfare during their attack near Klishchiivka, disabling the enemy's 4th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 2nd Army Corps from using their UAVs.
- The 127th mechanized rifle division of the 5th Army of the Eastern Military District launched an attack with incendiary ammunition in the vicinity of Hulyaipole.

Possible operation situation developments:

- The enemy will not cease their efforts to capture Bakhmut and gradually transition to a defensive posture on the Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Maryinka fronts. They may prepare an offensive operation to capture Kupyansk, which they could potentially launch simultaneously with the start of the Defense Forces' counteroffensive.
- Ukrainian Defense Forces will continue to shape an operational space, preparing favorable conditions for counteroffensive operations.
- The command of the Defense Forces in the area of Bakhmut will continue to exert pressure on the enemy's flanks north and south of Bakhmut, forcing the enemy to retreat from the city under the threat of encirclement.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

- As of May 15, there were eight enemy ships patrolling areas near the coast of Crimea and Krasnodar Krai. One ship was on duty near the Kerch Bridge, but there were no ships carrying "Kalibr" missiles in the Black Sea. However, a carrier of "Kalibr" missiles with up to eight missiles on board was spotted in the Azov Sea.
- On May 13, 2023, the "Mercury" corvette of Project 20380 was officially commissioned into the Russian Federation's Black Sea Fleet in the city of Baltiysk (Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia). This vessel is the fifth of its kind built at the "Severnaya Verf" shipyard in St. Petersburg and took 8 years to construct. The ship is similar in size (displacing 2500 tons) and autonomy (15 days) to a frigate and is equipped with 8 "Kalibr" missiles, medium-range anti-aircraft missile systems, 100mm artillery, anti-submarine weapons, and a helicopter. Three more ships of this project are planned for the Black Sea Fleet. Russia has been manufacturing these vessels since 2001 and aims to construct 29 by 2035. The "Amur Shipbuilding Plant" is also involved in producing these ships. Currently, the Russian Navy has 9 such vessels (four for each the Baltic and Pacific fleets and one for the Black Sea Fleet). The cost of each corvette of Project 20380 is approximately \$400 million. Notably, this project uses Russian-made diesel engines from "Kolomna Diesel" as the primary engine, with a guaranteed service life of 50,000 hours, which is a vast improvement compared to previous engines (which lasted no more than 3-4 thousand hours). However, ship engines (including gas turbines) remain problematic in Russian shipbuilding. In 2020, there were reports of Algeria's interest in purchasing six corvettes of this project from Russia.
- The enemy's aviation continues to fly from Crimean airfields Belbek, Saky, Dzhankoy, and Hvardiyske over the sea. Seven fighter jets from the Saky and Belbek airfields were involved in controlling the surface and air situation in the northwestern part of the Black Sea. Control of the air situation and management of operational-tactical aviation over the Azov Sea was carried out by the A-50U and Il-22 AWACS planes.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 15.05.23

Personnel - almost 199,460 people (+580);

Tanks - 3,759 (+3);

Armored combat vehicles – 7,336 (+11);

Artillery systems – 3,137 (+21)

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 562 (0);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 316 (+2);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 6,034 (+16);

Aircraft - 308 (0);

Helicopters – 297 (+3);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,720 (+24);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 970 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

According to a joint study by Agrohub and Work.ua, the agricultural sector has shown greater resilience during the war compared to the overall job market. In February 2022, Work.ua had

advertised 2,745 job openings from agribusinesses, but by March, the number had decreased to 445, a six-fold drop. In contrast, the job market as a whole had declined by more than 10 times at the time of the invasion.

International diplomatic aspect

The U.K. has again proven to be the most forward-leaning partner in providing Ukraine with capabilities that other nations may be hesitant to consider. "We must not let Ukraine down. That's why we're accelerating our support: More missiles; Long-range attack drones; New U.K. flying school; Conference to support Ukraine's recovery," Rishi Sunak tweeted. In the coming months, the U.K. will send Ukraine "hundreds of air defense missiles and further unmanned aerial systems including hundreds of new long-range attack drones with a range of over 200km." It becomes the first nation to launch a pilot training program. "One thing we will be doing, starting actually relatively soon, is the training of Ukrainian pilots, and that's something we've discussed today, and we're ready to implement those plans in relatively short order," the PM said. The Kremlin spokesperson played fooled when faced with the inability to deter the U.K. and knowing the devastating effect of the weapons recently committed by the U.K. and other partners to Ukraine, "Great Britain qualifies to be able to take the first place among those countries that continue to pump Ukraine with weapons. This cannot have any significant impact on the course of the special military operation, but it will lead to further destruction and retaliatory actions. For Ukraine, this makes the situation more difficult."

In his traditional short video address, Volodymyr Zelensky summed up his oversea tour, which secured Ukraine will receive "more new and powerful weapons for the front, more protection for our people, more political support." The Ukrainian President thanked all the partners: France — for a new powerful military package, additional armored vehicles, and political agreements, for help in consolidating partners; Italy — for help in protecting the lives of Ukrainians — "from protecting the sky to preparing for the full reconstruction of Ukraine"; Germany — for the largest defense package in the amount of €2.7 billion, IRIS-T air defense systems, many missiles for them, guns, shells, and armored vehicles, as well as €11 billion for long-term defense support; the U.K. — for an agreement on the training of Ukrainian pilots and the formation of a coalition for the training of pilots for Western jets, long-range capabilities for the defenders of Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is reported to announce an additional security package. The President of Czechia called the Allies to hurry up with the security assistance. "Ukraine has a chance to launch a significant counteroffensive this summer, and the "window" is narrowing. The later the aid arrives, the less useful it will be... In order to use this temporary window, which is still available, we should provide Ukraine with everything necessary - equipment and ammunition already in the spring," Petr Pavel said. These words are in contrast to the analysis of a senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation. "Ukraine's Armed Forces will pose a permanent threat to undisputed Russian territory," Samuel Charap, a longstanding promoter of Russia's "greatness" and the necessity of "compromise" at the expense of Ukraine, said at the Lennart Meri Conference.

NATO Secretary-General expects that "NATO Allies will say that Ukraine will become a member of the Alliance" at the forthcoming summit. He also expects the adoption of a multi-year program to modernize the Ukrainian military so it "becomes fully interoperable with NATO. And, of course, to do that also helps them to move towards NATO membership." Yet Jens Stoltenberg believes that the "most urgent task now is to ensure that Ukraine prevails, that President Putin does not win in this war. Because it is only if Ukraine prevails as a sovereign independent nation in Europe that there's any meaning in discussing when and how Ukraine can become a member of the Alliance."

The European Commission President has confirmed that the next restriction measures will target third countries, who assist Russia in circumventing sanctions. The measures are "basically a warning that we are serious about our sanction that we could ban these goods from going to that third country if there is clear evidence that this is a circumvention of sanctions and deliveries to Russia," Ursula von der Leyen said. However, there are a number of articles worth \$20 billion annually that Western countries still buy in Russia. In 2022, the U.S., U.K., and the E.U. bought platinum worth \$4 billion, nickel - \$3.8 billion, aluminum - \$3.7 billion, and copper - \$3 billion. Belgium continues to buy Russian diamonds, and the final embargo on Russian steel has been postponed until 2024.

While the PRC sentenced a U.S. citizen to life imprisonment for "spying," Russia has taken another hostage. The FSB has charged Robert Shonov, a former employee of the U.S. Embassy in Russia, with "conspiracy."

The Russian government is rushing to turn history textbooks into even more propaganda pamphlets. The textbooks for 10 and 11 grades will include a "story about the current situation in the world, in particular around Ukraine in the international context. The reasons for the current situation are analyzed, and the characteristics of NATO's policy are given," Alexander Chubaryan, scientific director of the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, said. Meanwhile, he criticized the West for "introducing a modern political context into the history." "We were together during the war. Together with the United States and Great Britain, we won. Together we saved humanity from Nazism and fascism. And this does not fit into the current political agenda of Western countries. For this reason, there is a hyperactive refutation of history," the Russian "historian" said.

Russia, relevant news

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree enabling foreign citizens who sign contracts to serve in the Russian Armed Forces during military operations to acquire Russian citizenship through a simplified process.

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