
Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- Russian military continued to attack residential areas; 8 Ukrainian Oblasts came under Russian fire over the past day. At least 4 civilians were killed and 14 injured;
- In the occupied parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson Oblasts, the Russian occupation forces turn educational institutions into military hospitals;
- Russian occupation forces limit the civilian population's access to mobile communications in the villages of the temporarily occupied Kherson Oblast;

Military:

- The capture of Bakhmut does not grant the Russian forces an operational advantage to pursue further offensives or establish a strong defensive position against potential counterattacks by the Ukrainian Defense Forces.
- The frequency of Russian assaults on the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line has decreased from 5-7 daily attacks to one;
- A change in the enemy missile and air strike tactics is noted, with the utilization of reconnaissance UAVs in each strike to scout targets and assess the results of strikes.
- **Possible operation situation developments:**
- The enemy will announce the capture of Bakhmut in the coming days and will transition to a defensive stance in the Kupyansk, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Maryinka directions.
- The Russian military command is unable to form a new grouping to replace the "Wagner" PMC and maintain their flanks within the corridor for troop rotation without the need to redeploy forces from other directions.

International:

- POTUS reveals an agreement to join the international fighter jet coalition on condition that "Russian geographic territory" won't be attacked with Western-made jets, provided to Ukraine.
- The U.S. has announced another \$375 million security package, including additional ammunition for HIMARS, artillery rounds, anti-armor capabilities, laser-guided rocket system and demolition munitions, armored bridging systems, and more.
- Ukraine's Peace Formula is accepted by the G7 and several Global South nations as the only feasible ground for talks aimed at just and lasting peace in Ukraine.
- G7 thought to send PRC a clear signal that it should exercise its power to make Russia stop the war. Meanwhile, Chinese officials expressed their disregard for the Group of Seven, calling on them to "focus on addressing the various issues they have at home," stop "creating and stoking bloc confrontation," and "containing and bludgeoning other countries."
- Bakhmut had a devastating effect on the Russian military and had been holding its resources, POTUS stated. "Bakhmut is not occupied by the Russian Federation as of today," Ukraine's President said. Ukraine's positions in the outskirts of Bakhmut will

"provide us with opportunities to enter the city when the operational situation at the front changes," the top military stated.

Russian attacks

During the past day, the Russian military attacked eight Ukrainian Oblasts, killing Ukrainian civilians.

- **Chernihiv Oblast:** Novgorod-Siversky district was shelled 3 times during the day. No victims and destruction were reported.
- **Sumy Oblast:** during the day, the Russians shelled border areas 7 times. 56 explosions were recorded. 4 communities came under fire. 2 private residential buildings were damaged in the Khotyn community.
- **Zaporizhzhia Oblast:** Russian forces shelled 18 front-line villages and towns 84 times. The enemy used prohibited incendiary ammunition in residential areas. 100 reports about the destruction of civil infrastructure were filed. A civilian woman was injured last night in Verkhnya Tersa.
- **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast** was attacked with UAVs, and all of them were shot down. In the morning, the enemy struck the Nikopol district with heavy artillery and hit the Myrivska community. More than 20 shells were fired at Nikopol and the Chervonohryhorivka community on May 20. One civilian was injured. 17 private and multi-story buildings were damaged, and gas pipelines and power lines were affected.
- **Kharkiv Oblast:** the afternoon "Lancet" kamikaze drone attack on the city of Kharkiv damaged one of the airport buildings. No casualties were reported. 25 towns and villages came under artillery fire and air strikes. Two people were injured in Kupyansk. As a result of the shelling of Lyman Pershyi village of Kupyansk district, the railway track and power lines were damaged. Two people were injured due to mine explosions.
- **Luhansk Oblast:** the Russian forces opened fire on Nevske, Stelmakhivka, Makiyivka and Bilohorivka. Airstrikes were carried out in the areas of Bilohorivka and Dibrova. A local resident died in Nevske. During the day, the enemy fired 91 rounds (436 shells).
- During the day, the Russians shelled 15 towns and villages of **Donetsk Oblast** 25 times. 32 residential buildings (of which 11 are multi-apartment), a hangar, 2 shops, a kindergarten, a central railway station, a depot, 3 cars, a boiler house were damaged. 1 civilian died, and 8 were wounded.
- **Mykolaiv Oblast:** Kutsurub community and the water area of the town of Ochakiv came under Russian fire. A private house was damaged. There were no casualties.
- During the day, the enemy launched 63 shellings (314 shells) of 25 towns and villages in **Kherson Oblast**, including 2 artillery shellings of the city of Kherson. Two people were killed and two more were injured.

Occupied territories

According to the Ukrainian General Staff, the Russian occupying forces continue to convert educational institutions in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine into military medical institutions. Specifically, a secondary school in Azov village, **Zaporizhzhia Oblast**, and a preschool in Hladkivka village, **Kherson Oblast**, have been turned into field hospitals. About 50 Russian servicemen are getting treatment there.

According to the Ukrainian General Staff, the Russian occupation forces are restricting the civilian population's access to mobile communications in the villages of the temporarily occupied **Kherson Oblast**. This includes dismantling equipment from substations and relay towers. In addition, they limit the movement of local residents to areas with a stable cellular connection.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The Russian military concentrates its main efforts on offensive actions in the Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Maryinka directions;
- The capture of Bakhmut does not provide the Russian forces with an operational opportunity to continue offensive operations or a solid defensive position against potential counterattacks by the Defense Forces.
- The rate of Russian assaults on the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line decreased from 5-7 daily attacks to one;
- Counterattacks by the Ukrainian Defense Forces to the north, west, and southwest of Bakhmut will complicate any further advance of the Russian Armed Forces beyond Bakhmut in the near future;
- A change in the enemy's tactics of missile and air strikes is noted, with reconnaissance UAVs now being used in each strike to scout targets and assess the results of the strikes.

Change in the line of contact (LoC):

- Units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces repulsed over 53 Russian attacks in different directions.
- Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive actions in the areas of Masyutivka, Bilohorivka, Bila Hora, Novokalynove, Stepove, Avdiivka, Severne, Pervomaiske, Maryinka, Novomykhailivka.
- Russian units carried out an assault in the Serebryansk Forest area and advanced towards Hryhorivka.
- Fighting continues on the northern and southern flanks of Bakhmut in the directions of Ivanivske and Stupochky. The Ukrainian Defense Forces recaptured approximately four square kilometers near Bakhmut, and continue to carry out attacks near Klishchiivka.
- Russian forces advanced to the railway north of Avdiivka from Krasnohorivka.
- Ukrainian Defense Forces attacked the Mariupol airport, where the Russian military base is deployed.

Change in enemy disposition:

- The Russian military command transfers motorized rifle units, airborne units, and special operations forces to reinforce their flanks in Bakhmut.

Escalation indicators: not detected

Possible operation situation developments:

- The Russian military will announce the capture of Bakhmut in a few days and will move to the defense posture in the Kupyansk, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Maryinka directions;
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces will continue to shape the operational space, preparing favorable conditions for a counteroffensive operation;
- "Wagner" PMC will not be able to withdraw its units from Bakhmut in an organized manner;
- The Russian military command is unable to form a new grouping to replace the Wagner PMC and keep its flanks within the corridor for troop rotation without redeploying Russian forces from other areas.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

- During the past week, the Russian navy has consistently rotated a relatively small number of ships at sea. Following the launch of Kalibr missiles from their sea-based firing positions, the surface ships promptly returned to their designated bases. Submarines are continuously deployed at sea, conducting patrols and launching missiles from submerged positions at approximately 50 meters depth. This activity may be a response to potential "Storm Shadow" strikes by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as Russian ships at base points are purportedly safeguarded by air defense systems. As of the afternoon of May 21, there were 4 Russian ships at sea. They patrol the areas near the coast of Crimea and the Russian Krasnodar Krai. Two of them (project 636.3 submarines) carry up to 8 Kalibr missiles. One ship is on duty near the Kerch Strait Bridge.
- The enemy's aviation continues its flights over the sea from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saky, Dzhankoy, and Hvardiyske. Seven fighter aircraft from Belbek and Saki Air Force Bases were deployed to monitor surface and air conditions in the northwestern part of the Black Sea. The A-50U and Il-22 AEW&C aircraft were responsible for overseeing the air situation and managing operational-tactical aviation activities over the waters of the Sea of Azov.

The "Grain Initiative"

Although the "Grain Initiative" has resumed, Russia, within the JCC (Joint Coordination Center), continues to block incoming fleets from reaching the deep-water port of "Pivdenny" (for nearly a month by now). On May 19, three ships destined for the ports of "Odesa" and "Chornomorsk" for loading underwent inspections. However, Russia unilaterally refused to inspect and register vessels at the "Pivdenny" port without providing any explanation. On May 20, the Russian delegation in the JCC agreed to conduct seven inspections of incoming fleets at the ports of Odesa and Chornomorsk but only carried out two. Once again, Russia removed all vessels intended for the "Pivdenny" port from both the registration list and the inspection plan. As of May 21, only four inspections were scheduled, but none for ships bound for the "Pivdenny" port.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 21.05.23

Personnel - almost 203,160 people (+730);

Tanks - 3,783 (+2);

Armored combat vehicles – 7,398 (+16);

Artillery systems – 3,258 (+29)

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 564 (0);
Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 327 (+2);
Vehicles and fuel tanks – 6,115 (+12);
Aircraft - 308 (0);
Helicopters – 294 (0);
UAV operational and tactical level – 2,822 (+21);
Intercepted cruise missiles - 1011 (0);
Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

On the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Political Repression, President Volodymyr Zelensky honored the memory of the victims of the Great Terror committed by the totalitarian communist regime in 1937–1938 on Ukrainian lands. "investigations and trials by NKVD triads, "children's gulags" - all this fundamentally contradicts normal human nature and the basic principles of a civilized world. "We must do everything to ensure that the revenge of totalitarianism is not allowed, to ensure the consolidation of the efforts of the international community in the matter of restoring and preserving peace, collective security and humanity, neutralizing the terrorist state - the Russian Federation, ensuring a fair trial and accountability for criminals," Zelensky emphasized.

International

"It is for them [the Russians]," POTUS replied to a question whether there's a "colossal risk" related to the provision of F-16s to Ukraine as the Kremlin routinely threatened with unspecified actions. "I have a flat assurance from Zelenskyy that they [Ukrainians] will not use it [F-16s] to go on and move into Russian geographic territory. But wherever Russian troops are within Ukraine in the area, they would be able to do that," Joe Biden explained the conditions based on which the U.S. made a decision to join the international fighter jet coalition, an effort to train Ukrainian pilots on fourth-generation fighter aircraft, like the F-16s. "When our pilots know the F-16 and when these aircraft appear in our skies, it will matter not only for Ukraine. This will be a historic moment for the entire security architecture in Europe and the world," Zelensky said.

The U.S. has announced another \$375 million security package, including additional ammunition for HIMARS, artillery rounds, anti-armor capabilities, laser-guided rocket system and demolition munitions, armored bridging systems, and more. When asked about the possibility of Japan and South Korea providing weapons to Ukraine, President Zelensky expressed Ukraine's interest, but acknowledged that legal and constitutional limitations exist in those countries.

"If the level of evil and stupidity in Russia's actions is left unaddressed, the world will inevitably fall into ruin. It is only a matter of time before other criminals in public office want similar wars. If Russia is allowed to keep even a fragment of the territory it occupies, international law will never apply again," Zelensky said in his address at the Hiroshima atomic bomb museum.

"Ukraine's security is our security," the U.K.'s PM stressed. "Ukraine must not only win the war but win a just and lasting peace," Rishi Sunak said. "If we do not show a willingness to listen to

the voices of countries and people and cooperate on a wide range of urgent issues, our claim to uphold a free and open international order based on the rule of law could become futile," Japan's PM Fumio Kishida said.

One of the top Ukrainian diplomats revealed that the most important part of the G7 summit for Ukraine was the consensus of G7 and several countries of the Global South (India, Brazil, and Indonesia) that the "Peace Formula can only be Ukrainian - because the war is taking place on Ukrainian soil and it is Ukrainians who are choosing their right to independence, territorial integrity, a safe and successful future." The final document states that all states must adhere to the principles of the U.N. Charter, first of all, such as respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; conflicts must be resolved exclusively peacefully and on the basis of dialogue; unilateral attempts to forcefully change the status quo anywhere in the world should be prevented; the international order should be based on the rule of law.

"We would hope that President Xi extracts from what they've been seeing here ... is that there's an awful lot of resolve to continue to support Ukraine, as the G7 continues to say, for as long as it takes, and that China could have a meaningful role in helping end this war," U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said.

Chen Weihua, a Chinese propaganda media chief columnist, tweeted, "the U.S. has 6,000 nukes and is the only country which used nukes, against civilians, right in Hiroshima where G7 is meeting. China has 300 nukes and is the only country pledging no first use of nukes. G7 leaders want to express concern about China's nuke arsenal. Quite shocking!" He got a reply from Han Yang, a former Chinese diplomat, that the "U.S. dropped two atomic bombs on Japan as an ally of China in the war against Japan, the country brutally invading and occupying China at the time."

Chen Weihua failed to mention China's recent efforts to enhance its nuclear arsenal with unfound urgency. Moreover, he omitted the fact that Russia, China's partner "without limits," detonated an atomic bomb not against their enemies but their own people. In 1954, the Soviet communists, in preparation for a nuclear war, conducted the Totskoye nuclear exercise to assess the effects of a nuclear explosion on personnel, weaponry, animals, and fortifications. More than 45,000 military personnel and 10,000 civilians were affected.

The Chinese MFA spokesperson outlined his country's reading of the G7 summit: "Gone are the days when a handful of Western countries can just willfully meddle in other countries internal affairs and manipulate global affairs. We urge G7 members to catch up with the trend of the times, focus on addressing the various issues they have at home, stop ganging up to form exclusive blocs, stop containing and bludgeoning other countries, stop creating and stoking bloc confrontation, and get back to the right path of dialogue and cooperation."

"Bakhmut is a discussion about whether or not it's been lost or whatever. And, well, the truth of the matter is the Russians have suffered over 100,000 casualties in Bakhmut. That's hard to make up," the POTUS said. "I clearly understand what is happening in Bakhmut. I can't share the tactics of the military, but a country even bigger than ours cannot defeat us. A little time will pass, and

we will be winning. Today our soldiers are in Bakhmut. Bakhmut is not occupied by the Russian Federation as of today. There are no two or three interpretations of those words," Zelensky said. "Despite the fact that we now control the outskirts of the city, the importance of its defense remains. In the future, this will provide us with opportunities to enter the city when the operational situation at the front changes," Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, the commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, said while visiting troops in the outskirts of Bakhmut.

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