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Announcements of new Western military support for Ukraine. Day 1098 of the war

Andrzej Wilk, Piotr Żochowski

The situation on the frontline

Russian forces continue to advance in most directions, leading to the seizure of more smaller settlements, but the overall situation remained unchanged. Russia made the greatest advances north and north-west of Velyka Novosilka, west of Kurakhove and in the vicinity of the road junction on the road from Pokrovsk to Kostiantynivka (according to some sources, it was temporarily recaptured by Ukraine). After a prolonged hiatus, Russia became active in the Siversk area, where they captured, among others, the symbolically important Bilohorivka, the last Ukrainian-controlled village in Luhansk Oblast on the border with Donetsk Oblast, over which fighting had been underway intermittently for nearly two years.

The expansion of Russian bridgeheads is underway – one on the right bank of the Zherebets River towards Lyman and two on the right bank of the Oskil near Kupiansk. In Kursk Oblast, in the Russian Federation, the Russians have advanced towards Sudzha from the north-west, where they have entered Sumy Oblast in Ukraine at least one place, and from the south, where they have cleared the remnants of a breach made by Ukrainian troops two weeks earlier.

Russian air attacks

On 20 February, Russia launched another attack on Ukraine's gas production infrastructure – striking Kharkiv Oblast installations with missiles. According to Ukraine, it used 17 cruise and ballistic missiles during the strike (none were reported to have been shot down), which severely damaged 'production capacities'. A day later, Reuters reported that as a result of this year's Russian strikes on Ukrainian gas facilities, gas production had fallen by 40%. On 25 February, Zhytomyr Oblast was the target of a relatively large missile attack. The Ukrainian side reported that six of the seven Russian cruise missiles were shot down.

The number of drones which Russia is using continues to rise. Between the evening of 18 February and the morning of 25 February**, a total of 1,315 are thought to have been used – almost 400 more than a week earlier**. The defenders declared 739 drones shot down and 548 were described as locally lost. In contrast, six of the 37 missiles used by Russian forces were declared destroyed. For two consecutive days (19 and 20 February), the Odesa thermal

power station, which supplies Odesa, was attacked. As a result of the damage, part of the city was without energy, water and heating, the supply of which was restored two days after the first strike. The Odesa area, including the port infrastructure, was also attacked on 22 and 24 February. Sumy (18, 20, 23, 24 and 25 February), Zaporizhzhia (18 and 23 February), Kharkiv (19 and 24 February), Mykolaiv (19 February), Kyiv (22, 23 and 25 February; damage was reported daily from Kyiv Oblast) and Kryvyi Rih (22 February) also suffered as a result of air strikes.

Russia is allegedly using the Ukrainian-controlled part of the Kherson Oblast as a training ground for FPV drone operators. This was reported on 25 February by the chairman of the Kherson Oblast council, Oleksandr Samoylenko. Every day, dozens or even hundreds of drones of this category are to be used by Russia for attacks – often on random civilian targets.

Ukrainian operations against Russia

On 20 February, the Ukrainian media reported that **Ukrainian military intelligence (HUR) was behind a series of explosions of goggles used by Russians to control FPV drones.** Russian sources said there had been dozens of similar incidents in February. The delivery of the modified equipment, which contained explosives, took place as part of a 'charity collection' controlled by the Ukrainian services and conducted inside the Russian Federation.

On 24 February, Ukrainian drones once again struck the Rosneft refinery in Ryazan. Production was halted as a result of the fires. According to the Ukrainian General Staff, drones also attacked a fuel depot in Tula Oblast on that day, and the Novovichevskaya oil pumping station in Krasnodar Krai on 20 February. In turn, on 19 February, they are thought to have caused a fire at a refinery site in Syzran in the Samara region.

Western support for Ukraine

At the 'Support Ukraine' forum in Kyiv on 24 February, representatives from Canada, Spain and Denmark presented information on further military assistance. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the handover of 25 LAV III wheeled armoured personnel carriers (the local version of the Swiss KTO Piranha III) and, "in the coming months", four F-16 fighter aircraft trainers. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced the delivery of €1 billion worth of military aid this year. Danish Defence Minister Troels Lund Poulsen, meanwhile, announced that Copenhagen had already shipped 12 of the planned 19 F-16 fighter jets, with the remainder to arrive in Ukraine in 2025.

In an interview with the Svenska Dagbladet newspaper, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson pledged the transfer of RBS 70 anti-aircraft mobile missile sets and 40 mm Tridon Mk2 self-propelled anti-aircraft guns worth $113 million to Kyiv. Ireland intends to deliver decommissioned Giraffe Mark IV radar stations, The Irish Times reported. A day earlier, Estonian Prime Minister Kristen Michal announced the delivery of, among other things, 10,000 artillery shells.

On the occasion of the forum, the Ukrainian company Ukroboronprom and the Canadian company Roshel concluded an agreement for the joint production of armoured vehicles. The Canadians will provide technical documentation and components to build the vehicles.

Russian operations against Ukraine

On 21 February, the Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation (CPD) warned that the Russian special services, under the supervision of deputy head of the Vladimir Putin administration Sergei Kiriyenko, were intensifying information operations against Ukraine and Europe. With regard to Europe, their main elements involve supporting politicians who call into question the current EU structure and who are in favour of cutting aid to Kyiv. In Ukraine, the Russians are undermining government policies and inspiring divisions between the military and those in power. The CPD mentioned that the enemy is spreading disinformation about Kyiv's alleged preparation of terrorist attacks in EU countries in order to "disrupt peace negotiations".

Russia's military potential

On 19 February, HUR reported that **around 1,000 North Korean soldiers are training in Russia in the use of military equipment, including drone tactics.** According to the service, North Korea has lost around 4,000 soldiers (killed and seriously wounded), yet North Korean soldiers continue to actively participate in joint operations with Russian troops.

On 24 February, **the independent Russian ¦Meduza and Mediazona published estimated losses of Russian forces in the war with Ukraine.** Approximately 160,000–170,000 soldiers have been killed since 2022 (approx. 20,000 in 2022, approx. 50,000 in 2023, and approx. 100,000 in 2024).

Ukraine's military potential

Large scale of smuggling of men evading service. The General Prosecutor's Office indicated that 3,106 criminal proceedings under Article 332 of the Criminal Code – 'Illegal transportation of persons across the state border' – were registered in 2024. A year earlier, this figure was a third lower, at 2,301. In January 2025, the number of these offences increased to 391, compared to 385 in the same period of 2024. The number of cases referred to the courts and convictions of persons who earned money by illegally transporting men across the border since the beginning of the aggression is also increasing. In 2022, the courts handed down 129 of these sentences, in 2023 there were 269, and in 2024 341.

This year, the Ukrainian defence ministry will spend more than 44 billion hryvnia (more than $1 billion) on the purchase of FPV drones. One of the main problems to be solved is the lack of regulations to shorten the delivery time of drones from the manufacturer to military units.

On 21 February**, Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal stated that Ukraine's defence industry was producing around a third of the armaments the state needs** (according to President

Volodymyr Zelensky – 30%). The aim is to increase production to at least half of current demand.

On 23 February**, Deputy Prime Minister Mykhailo Fedorov assured that the government intends to involve private sector companies in the production of explosives and ammunition, providing them with financial support.** One of the main tasks is to ensure the safe location of these companies, far from populated areas.

President Zelensky said at a press conference on 23 February that around $350 bn had been allocated for military spending since 2022. Of this, $120 bn came from Ukraine's budget, about $100 bn from the US and a further $100 bn from the EU and Japan.

