

The Russians are surrounding Siversk. Day 1315 of the war

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The situation on the frontline

Russia continued its offensive on the border between the Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, where it reached Verbove, 15 km from the junction of Pokrovske (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast) and 10 km from the road connecting this town with Huliaipole. Thus, the northern supply route of the Ukrainian group in the north-eastern part of Zaporizhzhia Oblast came within the range of the massive impact of Russian FPV drones. Operations in the Pokrovsk conurbation (the heaviest fighting is taking place in the direction of Dobropillia, where both sides have made slight territorial gains) and in the vicinity of Kostiantynivka have not brought any major changes.

The situation of the defenders in the Siversk area has deteriorated. Russia approached the city from the north, having previously approached it from the east. From the south, access to it is now defended by only one settlement – Zvanivka, less than 3 km away. Further advances on the south-western outskirts of the Serebriansk forest meant that the route connecting Siversk with Lyman came under Russian fire control. Ukraine also failed in its fight for the key town of Shandryholove, north-west of Lyman.

The Russians reached the centre of Kupiansk and, according to some sources, cut off the road connecting it with Kharkiv in its western part. The Ukrainian command imposed a total ban on civilian traffic to the city. Russia also made further advances on the border between the Kharkiv and Belgorod oblasts, entering the centre of Vovchansk and expanding their border bridgehead between the towns of Milove and Odradne.

Russian air attacks

On 28 September, Russia carried out another massive air strike, targeting mainly Kyiv and Kyiv Oblast. Damage was reported in seven districts of the capital, with four people killed and 13 injured. Energy and industrial infrastructure was hit, and parts of the city were temporarily cut off from electricity supplies. Among the damaged buildings were the Institute of Cardiology and the Consular Section of the Polish Embassy. In Kyiv Oblast, 27 people were injured, and in Bila Tserkva a thermal power plant and mechanical plants were damaged. Russia also attacked Zaporizhzhia, where 31 people were injured, as well as Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy, Ochakiv, Sumy and Konotop. According to Ukrainian data, the Russians used a total of 595 strike drones and their imitators, including two new Banderol

jet-powered drones, as well as 50 ballistic and cruise missiles, including at least two Kinzhal hypersonic missiles. Ukraine reported neutralising 564–568 drones (including both Banderols) and shooting down 43 cruise missiles.

On 25 September, Shahed drones damaged six substations supplying power to rail traffic in the Kirovohrad, Mykolaiv, Odesa and Vinnytsia oblasts, resulting in the suspension of train traffic on routes to Kharkiv, Dnipro, Odesa and Zaporizhzhia. Vinnytsia was also partially cut off from power supplies, as was Nizhyn as a result of an attack on a substation in Chernihiv Oblast. On the same day, Russian drones also struck facilities in Sumy. In the following days, Russia repeated its attacks on facilities supplying power to rail traffic in the Odesa (26 and 27 September) and Vinnytsia (27 September) oblasts, resulting in the temporary paralysis of train traffic. Damage to energy infrastructure also occurred in Zaporizhzhia (26 September) and in Chernihiv Oblast (26, 27 and 30 September), where several key energy facilities were hit (according to unofficial sources, the Chernihiv thermal power plant and three power substations) – on 27 September, 177 localities lost access to electricity and water.

On 23 September, industrial infrastructure in Kharkiv was the target of a massive attack. It is thought that 17 unmanned aerial vehicles struck the city. On the same day, drones struck Zaporizhzhia (including the Motor Sich plant), and Konotop on 29 and 30 September. On 24 September, ballistic missiles struck Dnipro, and two days later, 14 guided aerial bombs fell on Kherson. In total, between the evening of 23 September and the morning of 30 September, the Russians reportedly used 1,289 drones and 57 ballistic and cruise missiles. Ukrainereported neutralising 1,134–1,138 unmanned aerial vehicles and shooting down 43 missiles.

Ukrainian operations against Russia

On 24 September, Ukrainian drones once again struck Gazprom's petrochemical complex in the city of Salavat in Bashkortostan. Two days later they struck the Afipsk refinery in Krasnodar Krai. A fire broke out at the latter facility. Reuters reported that as a result of the 22 September attack on Gazprom's Astrakhan gas processing plant, motor fuel production was halted and could take up to a month to resume. The Tyngovatovo pumping station in Chuvashia, which was attacked by drones on 27 September, has also temporarily suspended operations.

On 24 September, the Ukrainians carried out a combined attack with sea and air drones on Crimea and Krasnodar Krai, targeting, among others, the ports of Novorossiysk and Tuapse and the infrastructure of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium. For the first time, some surface vessels were used as platforms to carry unmanned aerial vehicles. The strike did not cause significant damage to infrastructure, but resulted in the death of two civilians and the injury of seven others in Novorossiysk. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian military intelligence (HUR) special unit "Prymary" claimed success, saying that on that day it had destroyed two An-26 transport aircraft in Crimea and damaged a radar station. In turn, the Special Operations Forces announced that on the night of 30 September, they damaged the S-400 air defence system radar there. These reports have not yet been confirmed by other sources.

On the evening of 28 September, Ukrainian missiles struck a thermal power plant and a power substation in Belgorod, partially cutting off the city's electricity and water supplies. According to some sources, HIMARS launchers were used in the attack. On the night of 29 September, the Elektrodetal plant in Karachev, Bryansk Oblast, was attacked. According to the commander of the Ukrainian Navy, Vice Admiral Oleksiy Neizhpapa, it was hit by a Neptune cruise missile.

On 24 September, **HUR hackers gained access to the IT systems of the occupying authorities in Crimea.** Over 100 TB of data was seized. This includes official correspondence from Sergey Aksyonov, the "head" of the occupying administration of Crimea, documentation from local "ministries" and internal correspondence between structures. Materials were obtained concerning the illegal export of Ukrainian children from the temporarily occupied territories of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. HUR obtained lists of minors, details of their guardians and information about their places of residence and education. This information was forwarded to the national law enforcement agencies and international partners for the purpose of documenting and prosecuting war crimes related to the deportation of children.

On 25 September, **HUR carried out a cyberattack on the Russian Central Bank's SBP fast payment system.** The DDoS attack paralysed the system and the telecommunications infrastructure of TransTeleCom, a strategic digital service provider in the Russian Federation. As a result of the attack, hundreds of thousands of Russians were unable to make fast transfers and online payments, residents of many cities (including Yekaterinburg) complained about the inability to pay for public transport and purchase fuel at petrol stations, and a significant number of local suppliers lost Internet access. The estimated economic losses to the state amounted to approximately \$30 million. Since the beginning of the invasion, the SBP system has been used, among other things, for quick collections and transfers to structures supporting the Russian army in Russia.

On 29 September, **HUR presented a list of 13 Russian commanders responsible for planning and carrying out missile attacks on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure.** The list included Generals Sergei Kobylash (commander of long-range aviation and deputy commander of the Russian Air and Space Forces), Sergei Kuvaldin (commander of long-range aviation) and Oleg Pchela (deputy commander of long-range aviation). The intelligence revealed the full identification details of the individuals listed, including their home and registered addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, tax identification numbers and insurance policy numbers.

 Western support for Ukraine

Denmark will provide Ukraine with a 27th military aid package. It is worth 2.7 billion Danish krone (\$407 million). Of this, 1.6 billion Danish krone will be allocated to orders in the Ukrainian arms industry under the so-called Danish model, and 1.1 billion Danish krone will be allocated to other types of support, the nature of which has not been disclosed. The information was announced on 26 September by the Danish Ministry of Defence. In total, Copenhagen will allocate more than \$920 million under the Danish model between 2024 and 2027, and together with funds obtained from allies, mainly from the EU, arms production in

Ukraine will be subsidised with \$2.9 billion.

Tallinn will allocate €10 million for purchases in the US under the Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List mechanism, as announced on 28 September by Estonian Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna.

According to Ukrainian Deputy Defence Minister Ivan Havryliuk, Ukraine will receive Swedish Gripen fighter jets and additional F-16s and Mirages “in the near future”. Havryliuk made this statement on 29 September in an interview with the BBC, but did not reveal when, in what numbers and from where the aircraft would be obtained. A day later, the Swedish Ministry of Defence confirmed that talks were underway with Ukraine on the possible transfer of Gripen aircraft, but that no decision had yet been made on the matter.

Ukraine's military potential

Ukraine plans to create a new type of military unit within its Air Force – unmanned air defence systems. These will include units equipped with interceptor drones. This was announced on 26 September by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, General Oleksandr Syrskyi. He added that interceptor drones acquired from the West and manufactured in Ukraine are 70% effective in combating “Shaheds”.

Since the beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion, Ukrainian courts have dismissed 19,671 criminal cases due to the defendant being mobilised. These figures were revealed on 24 September by the investigative news website NGL.media based on an analysis of the court register. This year alone, the judiciary has dismissed 4,724 criminal cases. Under the law in force since April 2022, courts may do so for defendants who have been drafted into the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

On 25 September, **the former commander of the 155th Mechanised Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Dmytro Ryumshyn, presented the main reasons for desertion in the army.** In his opinion, the most important reason for soldiers abandoning military service is a lack of trust in the higher command. He stated that this step is partly influenced by the lack of real responsibility for unauthorised absence from service, especially for the first time, the mobilisation of people with low motivation or who have previously tried to avoid service, the transfer of motivated personnel to other units, which weakens morale, and sending soldiers to the front line without preparation. According to the Prosecutor General’s Office, since the beginning of the invasion, more than 250,000 proceedings have been initiated in connection with desertion and unauthorised absence from military units.

Russia's military potential

On 29 September, Vladimir Putin signed a decree on autumn conscription, under which 135,000 people will begin basic military service. It will take place between 1 October and 31 December and will affect people aged 18–30. On 24 September, the State Duma passed the first reading of a bill on year-round conscription. The changes would affect the organisation of military and medical commissions, while conscripts would continue to be assigned to units as before, during the spring (from 1 April to 15 July) and autumn (from 1

October to 31 December). According to the authors of the bill, this move is intended to allow for an even distribution of the commissions' work. However, it cannot be ruled out that the changes will be used to transfer some of the positions from military recruitment offices to frontline units, including those fighting in Ukraine.

Russian operations against Ukraine

According to sociological research published on 25 September by the Rating Group, **81% of Ukrainians believe that Russia is intensifying hybrid threats**. As many as 42% of respondents indicate online recruitment by the Russian secret services as a threat, 32% point to the harmfulness of Russian disinformation activities, and 23% consider cyberattacks to be the primary tool of hybrid warfare. It is worth mentioning that 67% of respondents rated the Ukrainian authorities' measures to counter hybrid warfare as moderate. The results show a growing public awareness of the information and digital threats that Russia actively uses as a means of psychological pressure and internal destabilisation.

The war and the internal situation in Ukraine

According to data from the Polish Border Guard, between 28 August and 19 September this year, nearly 53,000 Ukrainian men aged 18–22 crossed the border into our country. Of these, 40,000 entered Poland and 13,000 returned to Ukraine. The Border Guard points out that this refers to the number of checks carried out, not specific individuals, so it is possible that some were checked more than once.

