

The Pokrovsk agglomeration in operational encirclement.

Day 1350 of the war

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The situation on the frontline

Russian forces entered the northern and eastern parts of Pokrovsk, cutting off the last supply routes for the defenders of the conurbation. According to unofficial Ukrainian sources, by 2 November, 50–70% of the city may have come under Russian control, and its defences have been broken into several parts. The main fighting is taking place over the “citadel” controlled by the Ukrainian army, which has been transformed into a high-rise housing estate. According to some sources, it has already been flanked by the Russians. Russian advances on the northern and eastern outskirts of neighbouring Myrnohrad are insignificant and are most likely aimed solely at tying down the Ukrainian forces defending the city. The pocket in which the Pokrovsk conurbation finds itself is currently 10–11 km deep and 8 km wide at its base (it consists of the towns of Chunyshyne, Sukhyi Yar and Pomin, which are controlled by Ukraine), while its width at the exit is approximately 2 km. Since the end of October, supplies for Ukrainian forces have been delivered exclusively on foot across the fields between Pokrovsk and Rodynske, located on the main road north of the conurbation. This is currently the only possible route for the withdrawal of Ukrainian soldiers, but it is under constant fire and surveillance by drones.

Ukrainian attempts to unblock the conurbation from the north, with the aim of establishing a connection with Myrnohrad (supplies to this city have for many weeks only been possible via Pokrovsk), **have so far been unsuccessful.** To this end, the Ukrainians brought in additional forces withdrawn from various less threatened sections of the front, which made territorial gains but failed to dislodge the Russians from Rodynske. The helicopter landing operation of Ukrainian military intelligence (HUR) special forces on the north-western outskirts of Pokrovsk ended in complete failure. They were too small in number to provide any real support to the defence and were most likely sent only to demonstrate Ukraine’s presence at the destroyed entrance gate to the city, which had become a symbol.

Several Ukrainian brigades were caught in the operational encirclement. Due to prolonged fighting and a lack of rotation, their strength often dwindled to battalion level, but from Ukraine’s perspective, this is still significant potential. The most experienced units were sent to defend the conurbation. There is a growing number of appeals on the Ukrainian internet,

also signed by lower-level line commanders, to issue a retreat order while it is still possible to carry it out. They criticise the Ukrainian high command, led by the General Staff, for misinforming them about the real situation and emphasise that the only option now is to save the remaining forces. The defenders realise that in the absence of any real possibility of breaking the deadlock – and the actions taken so far indicate that the Ukrainian command does not have the forces necessary for this purpose – the fall of the conurbation is only a matter of time.

Russia has made significant progress in other key areas of Donbas and in the Kharkiv region. It entered Kostiantynivka from the south-east, having previously eliminated the last pockets of Ukrainian resistance between the town and the Donets-Donbas Canal. Russian units cut off Lyman's supply routes from the Kharkiv region and reached its eastern outskirts. They also cut off the city's connection with Siversk, whose last supply line (westward along local roads towards Sloviansk) is now only 3 km away. The Russians have also reached the southern outskirts of Siversk (having previously reached the city from the north and east). They also directly threatened the last crossing over the Oskil River in the Kupiansk-Vuzlovyyi area, which remains under the control of the defenders (the western part of Kupiansk is already mostly under Russian control). They have also made significant progress in Vovchansk, where Ukraine now only controls the south-eastern part of the city.

Russian troops advancing on the border between the Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts crossed the River Yanchur. They are now 5 km away from the Pokrovske-Huliaipole road, which is the main supply route for the Ukrainian forces in the north-eastern part of Zaporizhzhia Oblast, and according to some sources, fighting is already underway for Danylivka, which is located near this road. The Russians also made further advances in the western part of the region, where they entered Prymorsk, located on the Dnipro River.

Russian air attacks

On the night of 29–30 October, the Russians carried out one of the largest concentrated air strikes on Ukraine since the start of the full-scale aggression. According to the Ukrainian Air Force Command (UAFC), they used 400 strike drones (including imitators, the total number was 653) and at least 52 ballistic and cruise missiles. Ukraine reported destroying 592 unmanned aerial vehicles and 31 missiles. As a result of the attack, more than 700 settlements in the Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv, Vinnytsia and Zaporizhzhia oblasts were cut off from electricity. Power outages also occurred in several other regions. Among others, the following thermal power plants were hit: Burshtyn and Kalush in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Dobrotvir in Lviv Oblast and Ladyzhyn in Vinnytsia Oblast. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, several substations crucial to the operation of Ukrainian nuclear power plants were damaged: Khmelnytskyi, South Ukraine and Rivne. Gas infrastructure in Lviv Oblast (near Stryi) and Poltava Oblast, railway infrastructure in Mykolaiv Oblast (train traffic was temporarily suspended), critical and industrial infrastructure in Chernihiv, Dnipro and Zaporizhzhia (the latter city was hit by eight missiles) and Boryspil and Starokostiantyniv airports. On the afternoon of 30 October, a guided aerial bomb struck a thermal power plant in Sloviansk and, in the evening, ballistic missiles again struck Dnipro

and nearby Kamensk.

The attack on 29–30 October was yet another in recent months that highlighted the shortage of Patriot systems in Ukraine's air defence. Ukraine did not report shooting down any of the nine Iskander-M and Kinzhal ballistic missiles used by the enemy. Commenting on this, UASF spokesman Colonel Yuriy Ihnat emphasised that Patriots – deployed in only a few locations in Ukraine – cannot be more than 25 km away from their target in order to effectively repel ballistic missile strikes. And even if this condition were met, there is still no 100% guarantee that all Russian missiles would be intercepted.

Energy and transport infrastructure remain the main targets of Russian air strikes in the immediate rear of the front line and in the oblasts along the Russian border. Facilities were damaged in the following oblasts: Kharkiv (31 October, 2 November), Chernihiv (29 October, 1 and 2 November), Dnipropetrovsk (29 and 31 October, 1 November), Donetsk (29 October, 2 November), Mykolaiv (3 November), Odesa (29 and 31 October, 2 and 4 November), Poltava (1 November), Sumy (31 October, 1 and 2 November) and Zaporizhzhia (2 November). Main substations are regularly attacked, resulting in prolonged power outages and the inability to fully restore power (on 2 November, there was a total blackout in the part of the Donetsk Oblast controlled by the defenders). According to Ukrainian data, from the evening of 28 October to the morning of 4 November (including the massive attack of 29–30 October), Russia used 1,494 drones (including 920 strike "Shaheds") and 93 missiles. The defenders reported neutralising 1,272 unmanned aerial vehicles and shooting down 39 missiles.



Western support for Ukraine

On 2 November, President Volodymyr Zelensky announced that Ukrainian air defences had been reinforced with Patriot air defence systems provided by Germany. The German Aid to Ukraine project announced on 1 November that Germany had delivered two Patriot batteries, as previously promised.

The United Kingdom has decided to supply Ukraine with an additional batch of Storm Shadow cruise missiles, without disclosing how many. This was reported by Bloomberg on 3 November. On the same day, US President Donald Trump once again announced that he was not currently considering the possibility of transferring Tomahawk cruise missiles to Ukraine. On 31 October, CNN reported that the Pentagon had given the "green light" for this.

Italy is preparing a 12th military aid package for Ukraine. This news was announced on 3 November by the country's Defence Minister, Guido Crosetto. The day before, materials from the front line appeared on the internet confirming that previous packages (Italy has not disclosed their contents) included B1 Centauro 105 mm wheeled tank destroyers (their transfer to Kyiv was already announced in May 2023) and Puma wheeled armoured personnel carriers.

Ukraine's military potential

On 30 October, Ukrainian Defence Minister Denys Shmyhal announced that the ministry had allocated an additional 1.9 billion hryvnias (over \$45 million) for the purchase of drones from the DOT-Chain Defence programme. According to the ministry's data, over the past three months, the military has received nearly 100,000 unmanned aerial vehicles with a total value of 3.74 billion hryvnias (approximately \$90 million). The average delivery time for equipment from warehouses to the units is currently about ten days.

On 31 October, Major Robert Brovdi "Magyar", commander of the Unmanned Systems Forces, announced the start of a large-scale recruitment drive for this newly created branch of the military. There are 15,000 vacancies to be filled. According to Brovdi, these forces account for approximately 2% of the total number of Ukrainian defence forces. As part of a special incentive programme called "18-24. Drones", men who are not subject to mobilisation are encouraged to join the service. The programme provides for a one-off bonus of 1 million hryvnia (approximately \$24,000) upon signing a contract.

On 3 November, Zelensky announced **the opening of foreign export offices in Berlin and Copenhagen this year to deal with both co-production and export of weapons**. His adviser, Oleksandr Kamyshin, will handle agreements with EU countries and represent the Ukrainian arms industry in Europe. The president emphasised that the sale of weapons is a tool for strengthening domestic military production and obtaining additional funds for the development of defence technologies, including drones, missiles and artillery systems.

Russia's military potential

On 28 October, the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Moscow had illegally recruited Kenyan citizens to participate in the war against Ukraine. The ministry called on immigration and security services to remain vigilant at border crossings, including airports, in order to identify and detain agents illegally recruiting Kenyans to "work in Russia".

Ukrainian operations against Russia

Ukrainian forces struck further fuel and energy infrastructure facilities on Russian territory and in areas occupied by Russia. On 29 October, unmanned aerial vehicles attacked the NS-OIL refineries in Novospasskoye in the Ulyanovsk Oblast and Mariyskaya in Tabashin in the Republic of Mari El, as well as the fuel depot in Simferopol in occupied Crimea. Fires broke out at the facilities, with the first one reportedly causing damage to the infrastructure. According to the Ukrainian General Staff, an installation at the Budyonnovsk Gas Processing Plant in Stavropol Krai was also hit on the same day. On 31 October, a thermal power plant

in Oryol (according to the Ukrainian Navy, the facility was hit by Neptune cruise missiles) and the Vladimirsk power substation in the Vladimirskaya Oblast were damaged. Ukrainian drones also caused a fire at the Yaroslavl refinery. On 2 November, they struck an oil terminal in the port of Tuapse in Krasnodar Krai, damaging a pipeline and a moored tanker. In addition, substations in the Lipetsk and Kursk oblasts and the occupied Luhansk, part of which was periodically cut off from electricity supplies, were attacked. A day later, a refinery in Saratov was hit (according to the Ukrainian General Staff, the processing facility was damaged) as well as substations in the Kursk and Volgograd oblasts. On 4 November, chemical plants in Sterlitamak in Bashkortostan and in Kstovo in Nizhny Novgorod Oblast were targeted.

On 29 October, HUR reported the **elimination of Veniamin Mazherin, a police lieutenant colonel and officer of the OMON special unit "Obereg"**. According to HUR data, on 25 October, his car exploded in the Kemerovo Oblast in Russia, and the unit in which Mazherin served belonged to the Russian National Guard formation responsible for war crimes and acts of genocide against civilians in Kyiv Oblast in February and March 2022.



Russian operations against Ukraine

On 30 October, **the French Ministry of Defence denied reports by Russian foreign intelligence about the alleged planned deployment of 2,000 French soldiers on Ukrainian territory**. These reports were disseminated by the TASS agency and pro-Russian social media accounts. The aim of this disinformation is to create the impression of an escalation of the conflict. The ministry explained that the increased movement of French troops in Europe was due to their participation in the "Dacian Fall" NATO exercise. As part of these exercises, France sent equipment and personnel to several European countries to temporarily expand the multinational battalion stationed in Romania to brigade level. Paris provided assurances that no French forces are deployed or being prepared for deployment on Ukrainian territory.



The war and the internal situation in Ukraine

On 30 October, The Telegraph reported that nearly 100,000 Ukrainian men aged between 18 and 22 had left for EU countries following the relaxation of regulations on travelling abroad in August this year. The State Border Service of Ukraine did not confirm this information, stating that the vast majority of people leaving the country are still women, children and the elderly. Its spokesman, Andriy Demchenko, admitted that the border service does not keep separate statistics on border crossings by age group, but the number of men aged 18–22 is "small compared to the overall passenger flow". However, Eurostat data for the 27 EU and EFTA countries published in early November show that in September this year, there was an increase in the number of men from Ukraine aged 18 to 34 covered by temporary protection. While in August there were less than 8,000 of these cases, a month later their number increased to nearly 30,000.

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