

Prolonged Russian air strikes against Ukraine. Day 1505 of the war

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The situation on the frontline

The heaviest fighting is taking place in the area north of Pokrovsk, where Russia continues its offensive to seize control of Hryshyne. The Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) – using small groups of airborne assault troops – continue to hold certain positions between the northern part of Pokrovsk and Rodynske, whilst Russian forces are attempting to push them back. The defence of the northern fringes of Pokrovsk by Ukrainian soldiers is demonstrated by the 425th Independent Assault Regiment ‘Skela’'s attempt to break through there. This regiment's failed assault on 31 March along the Pokrovsk–Pavlohrad route led to sharp criticism of the assault units' command. Some military circles and activists have accused them of disregarding casualties and carrying out pointless operations.

Contrary to statements of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Oleksandr Syrskyi, who once again in recent weeks highlighted the scale of Ukrainian counter-offensive successes in the Huliaipole area (286 km² at the end of February and as much as 480 km² on 5 April), **Ukrainian military operations in this direction have most likely come to a near-complete standstill**. This is shown by data presented on 1 April by the DeepState group, which estimates actual gains in this direction at around 200 km².

Nonetheless, even if Ukrainian advances were more than half as modest, this would mean that in March **Russian forces captured less territory than Ukraine recaptured**, only 160 km², which is 27% more than in February, when Russian advances reached 126 km². The largest share of all Russian assaults fell on the Pokrovsk sector – 29%, followed by the Kostiantynivka sector – 20% – and the Huliaipole sector – 19%. Together, these three sectors accounted for around two-thirds of all attacks in March. Analysts also noted that, if the pace of the first three months of this year were maintained, the capture of the entire Donetsk Oblast would not occur until December 2029.

Russian air attacks

On 1 April, the Russian army carried out another large-scale daytime air strike (see: '[Ukraine strikes Russian fuel terminals on the Baltic coast. Day 1497 of the war](#)'). Including the night-time attack that began on 31 March, Russia deployed over 700 attack drones within 24 hours. The massive attack targeted, among others, Lutsk and Khmelnytskyi, whilst critical infrastructure facilities were damaged in the Cherkasy, Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia oblasts. Its aim was to disperse and exhaust Ukrainian air defence resources.

During the night of 2–3 April, Russia carried out a massive combined strike on critical infrastructure using drones, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. One of the main targets was Kharkiv, where four ballistic missiles struck multi-storey residential buildings. Attacks were also reported in Zaporizhzhia, Chernihiv and Odesa, where port infrastructure was among the targets (further attacks occurred on 4, 5 and 7 April). On 3 April, drones struck Sumy, hitting a shopping centre and a veterinary clinic in Fastiv, amongst other targets. In the following days – 5, 6 and 7 April – intense strikes were carried out on Kharkiv and Odesa, where several people were killed (a day of mourning was declared in the city on 6 April).

On 4 and 5 April, Russian drones attacked Naftogaz Group infrastructure in the Poltava and Sumy oblasts (since the start of 2026, the company's facilities have been attacked more than 40 times). The following night, they struck energy infrastructure in Chernihiv Oblast, causing power cuts (a total of over 340,000 customers were left without electricity there). In total, from the evening of 31 March to the morning of 8 April, according to the Ukrainian Air Force Command, the Russians deployed 2,200 attack drones (including 1,430 Shahed-type drones) as well as ten ballistic missiles and 27 cruise missiles. Ukraine managed to shoot down or neutralise 1,978 unmanned aerial vehicles and 26 missiles.

In March, Russia launched at least 6,462 long-range drones against Ukraine (AFP data based on figures from the Ukrainian Air Force), the highest monthly total since the start of the full-scale invasion. During the same period, it used 138 missiles, representing a decrease of approximately 52% compared to the previous month. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Air Force achieved an interception rate of almost 90% in March – the highest percentage since February 2025.

In March, for the first time since the start of the full-scale war, Ukraine launched more drones against Russia than Russia did against Ukraine (according to ABC News on 6 April). According to an analysis based on statements from the Russian Ministry of Defence and the Ukrainian Air Force, in March Russia reported shooting down 7,347 Ukrainian drones, which equates to an average of 237 drones per day. Meanwhile, during the same period, Russia attacked Ukraine with 6,462 drones and 138 missiles of various types.

The state railway operator (Ukrzaliznytsia) reported that the number of attacks on railway infrastructure rose from 134 in January to 166 in February, reaching 206 in March. In total, since the start of this year, Russian forces have carried out 472 attacks on the Ukrainian rail network, damaging 1,128 facilities. Since the end of 2025, attacks have focused on rolling stock, including moving trains – among others, 40 passenger carriages, 81 locomotives and 145 freight wagons have been attacked. According to Ukrzaliznytsia data, the Russians carry out attacks on railway infrastructure on average about six times a day.

On 1 April, the Ukrainian General Staff reported a strike on the Strela plant in Russia's Bryansk Oblast, which produces components for cruise missiles. The extent of the damage is unknown. The following day, Ukrainian drones struck the Bashneft-Novoil refinery in Ufa, the capital of Bashkortostan, located approximately 1,400 km from the border with Ukraine. According to the local authorities, all the drones were shot down, and the damage was caused solely by their debris.

During the night of 4–5 April, drones struck the Lukoil refinery in Kstovo in Nizhny Novgorod Oblast and oil infrastructure in Leningrad Oblast. The governor of the former region confirmed damage to two refinery facilities. The authorities in the latter region, meanwhile, reported damage to an oil pipeline near the port of Primorsk.

The following night, drones struck the port and the 'Sheskhari's' oil terminal in Novorossiysk – one of Russia's most important oil export hubs on the Black Sea. According to Kyiv, six out of seven loading bays for tankers were damaged, as well as key onshore infrastructure, including the pipeline control centre and the oil metering station. The attack also targeted the "Admiral Makarov" frigate in the port, which, as can be seen in published satellite images, appears to have been hit at least twice. Damage to the vessel would be a significant success for Ukraine: following the sinking of the "Moscow" cruiser in 2022, this vessel serves as the flagship of the Russian Black Sea Fleet – it is equipped with the Kalibr cruise missile launchers used to strike Ukrainian cities and infrastructure. The ship has previously been the target of attacks, including in Sevastopol in October 2022 and – according to Ukrainian reports – last month.

On 7 April, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported a strike on the Ust-Luga oil terminal in Leningrad Oblast. According to preliminary data, three storage tanks belonging to the Transneft-Baltika company were damaged. The statement emphasised that strikes on key enemy facilities, both in occupied territories and within the Russian Federation, would continue. This statement was published following a report by the head of the Presidential Office, Kyrylo Budanov, that some Western countries are pressing for a reduction in attacks on Russian oil refineries due to the global rise in fuel prices.

On 31 March, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) reported that a Russian spy network planning attacks on Ukrainian military personnel had been dismantled in Kyiv. The group had planned to assassinate the commander of one of the territorial defence units in the capital, as well as to carry out attacks on commanders of National Guard units, military intelligence and Special Operations Forces. The arrests were made during the final stages of preparations for the assassination.

On 2 April, the SBU detained a woman from Fastiv who had been using the Telegram messaging app to pass on geolocation data of Ukrainian military units and defensive fortifications to Russian coordinators. A similar arrest took place a day later in Volyn Oblast, where the SBU arrested a resident of Poltava who was conducting reconnaissance on military transports. On 6 April, an FSB collaborator was arrested in Donetsk Oblast; he was alleged to have been coordinating Russian air strikes.

On 7 April, the SBU reported the arrest in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast of an employee at one of the strategic defence plants who was alleged to have been spying for the FSB and the Russian military intelligence service GRU. The man had been recruited by the Russian services through his son, who was serving a prison sentence in Russia. In exchange for the promise of amnesty, the father would pass on classified information regarding the fulfilment of defence contracts.

Ukraine's military potential

According to statements made by Defence Minister Mykhailo Fedorov on 3 April, in March 2026, as part of the "Drone Army. Bonus", footage has established Russian losses at 35,351 killed and seriously wounded, which is said to be the highest monthly figure since the programme began. Fedorov emphasised that for the fourth month in a row, Russian losses have exceeded the rate at which the Russian Federation's army is replenishing its ranks.

Russia's military potential

On 31 March, General Aleksandr Otroshchenko, commander of the Northern Fleet's Air Corps, was killed in the crash of an An-26 military transport aircraft. The Russian Ministry of Defence reported that the aircraft crashed in mountainous terrain and that all 29 crew members were killed. The ministry maintains that no signs of external impact on the aircraft were found. Kyiv has also not claimed any involvement in the incident.

Western support for Ukraine

On 1 April, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence announced **joint efforts with Bucharest aimed at transferring part of the production of selected drones to Romania**, where they are to be manufactured for the needs of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and for export. The entire project is expected to cost around €200 million and will be financed by Bucharest using the EU's SAFE programme.

On 1 April, the Czech daily *Hospodářské noviny* reported that **the 2026 budget for the Czech ammunition initiative for Ukraine is short by around €5 billion**. This is said to be the result of a reduction in contributions from donor countries, following the new government in

Prague's decision to suspend its own contributions. The funding shortfall is expected to result in a reduced volume of supplies as early as this month.

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