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Ukrainian attacks on Russian fuel infrastructure. Day 1532 of the war

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The situation on the frontline

A slow Russian advance is underway in Donetsk Oblast. Russian forces have made further minor territorial gains south and east of Dobropillia, in Kostiantynivka, east of Sloviansk – where fighting has begun for the key town of Rai-Oleksandrivka – and on the outskirts of Lyman and to the west of that town. The Russians have also expanded their holdings on the eastern bank of the Oskil River, according to some sources approaching the currently unused Kupiansk-Vuzlovyi railway junction, where Ukraine controls one of the main crossings in the Kupiansk area. They have also captured further settlements in the border regions of the Kharkiv and Sumy oblasts. Ukrainian forces, in turn, launched a counter-offensive in Zaporizhzhia Oblast, regaining, according to some sources, some positions in the Stepnohirsk area.

On 4 May, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced a two-day (8–9 May) ceasefire to mark Victory Day, citing a decision by Vladimir Putin. It is unclear whether this applies to all military operations or solely to air strikes deep into Ukrainian territory. The latter is suggested by the simultaneous threat that "Russia will carry out a retaliatory massive missile strike on the centre of Kyiv if Ukraine attempts to disrupt Victory Day celebrations". In response, President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that Ukraine had received no official information regarding the terms and conditions of the ceasefire. He announced that Ukraine would introduce a "regime of silence" at midnight on 5–6 May.

Russian air attacks

In the first days of May, the Russians intensified their attacks on gas extraction and transmission infrastructure. Damage to facilities occurred almost daily (with the exception of 4 May), mainly in Kharkiv Oblast, but also in the Dnipropetrovsk, Sumy, Poltava and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. According to Naftogaz, the most serious damage to extraction facilities occurred as a result of two consecutive attacks on 5 May in the Kharkiv and Poltava oblasts (the second took place whilst rescue operations were already underway).

Five workers and rescue personnel were killed, and 37 were injured.

Between 29 April and 3 May, Russia carried out further strikes on port infrastructure in Odesa Oblast. The most severe attack was on 30 April, which, in addition to the port of Odesa, also targeted industrial facilities and warehouses within the city, as well as the main railway station. Furthermore, strictly civilian facilities were destroyed, and 18 people were injured. The day before, a ship of unspecified affiliation was damaged there. On 2 May, Russian drones struck a ship repair yard in Izmail, and a day later the port of Chornomorsk where, among other things, vegetable oil tanks were destroyed.

From 29 April to 3 May, the Russians carried out a series of strikes on the energy infrastructure of Mykolaiv Oblast. Five power substations were damaged there. On 30 April and 1 and 2 May, the attacks directly affected Mykolaiv, causing a partial blackout and also damaging transport infrastructure. Further damage, including to three more substations, was also reported from the Kharkiv, Kherson, Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. Transport infrastructure facilities, mainly railway-related, were in turn targeted in the Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk (twice – on 2 and 5 May – in Kryvyi Rih) and Poltava oblasts.

In Kharkiv, Russia targeted petrol stations. On 1 May, five of these were damaged, and six the following day. On 4 May, Russian missiles struck Merefa, near Kharkiv, resulting in the deaths of seven people and leaving 30 injured. Ukrainian logistics facilities, including petrol stations, were also attacked in Dnipro and Zaporizhzhia (on 30 April and 3, 4 and 5 May). A total of two people were killed and 37 injured in both cities.

On 1 May, a massive daytime attack took place on Ternopil, where industrial infrastructure was the main target. Twelve people were injured, and the Orion radio factory, among other facilities, was damaged. According to data from the regional military administration, nine of the 36 drones struck the city. The local authorities, meanwhile, reported over 50 Shaheds and 20 explosions. Damage and injuries were also reported that day from Rivne Oblast, and on 5 May from Brovary near Kyiv.

From the beginning of May, Russian drone strikes, which had previously been conducted mainly at night, became round-the-clock, and the number of unmanned aerial vehicles being used increased. This led to changes in the reports from the Ukrainian Air Force Command (UAFC), which began to be issued twice a day. Furthermore, from 2 May onwards, these reports no longer specify the number of attack drones (Shaheds) within the total number of unmanned aerial vehicles used by the Russians. From the evening of 28 April to the morning of 5 May, they are reported to have used a total of 2,295 attack drones or their imitators, with the defenders neutralising 2,044. This means that **over 250 Shaheds may have struck targets within Ukraine** (the UAFC generally reports a lower number of hits, but in recent days it has not provided full statistics in this regard). Russia is also said to have deployed 22 missiles, of which Ukraine claimed to have shot down five or six. Once again, the shortage of resources needed to effectively counter Iskander-M ballistic missiles – namely Patriot systems and the missiles for them – has made itself felt. Of the 17 Iskanders, only one was successfully shot down or had its flight disrupted (information on this point is unclear). On 1 May, President Zelensky announced the reinforcement of air defences in Dnipro and Odesa, but in this context he mentioned only additional crews, as well as radars and electronic warfare systems.

Ukrainian operations against Russia

Ukrainian drones have struck further Russian fuel infrastructure targets. In Perm, facilities at the Transneft oil pumping station and the Lukoil-Permnefteorgsintez refinery were damaged (on 29 and 30 April respectively). On 29 April, the Orsknefteorgsintez refinery in Orsk, Orenburg Oblast, was attacked, and one of the drones heading towards it crashed in Kazakhstan. On the same day, in the Tuapse area, a maritime drone struck the Cameroonian-flagged tanker 'Marquise', and on 1 May, the local transhipment terminal was attacked once again, where a fire broke out again (the previous one, resulting from the attack on 28 April, was extinguished after two days). The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) also reported that a refinery in Tuapse had been hit. On 3 May, the Transneft terminal in Primorsk was attacked again, resulting in fires.

President Zelensky announced that in Primorsk, a Karakurt-class missile corvette carrying Kalibr cruise missiles, a patrol vessel and a tanker had been hit, and in Novorossiysk two tankers were hit, which was reportedly the result of a joint operation by the SBU, military intelligence (HUR), the Unmanned Systems Forces and the Special Operations Forces. Zelensky's reports have not yet been confirmed. On 5 May, strikes were reported in Kirishi in Leningrad Oblast (the target was most likely the local refinery) and in Cheboksary in Chuvashia (a Ukrainian FP-5 Flamingo cruise missile was said to have struck the area of the WNIIR-Progress plant).

On 4 May, a falling Ukrainian drone struck a skyscraper in Moscow, approximately 6 km from the Kremlin, marking a spectacular outcome of the sustained attacks on the Russian capital that have been ongoing since the start of this month. This was the first instance since March 2025 that an unmanned aerial vehicle had breached the air defences on the outskirts of Moscow to crash within the city limits. Since the summer of 2023, when Ukrainian drones struck buildings in the Russian capital on several occasions, Russia has managed to build a relatively tight shield around it. According to Russian data, between 1 and 4 May, the Ukrainians used over 2,000 drones to attack Russian territory and occupied areas (excluding the frontline zone). A record number – at least 740 (according to the Russian Ministry of Defence, this is how many Ukrainian drones were reportedly neutralised) – were reportedly used on 3 May, with around 500 each on 2 and 4 May. **If the figures provided by both sides regarding the number of aerial attack assets used by their enemy are taken as reliable, this would mean that Ukrainian attacks on targets in Russia are significantly less effective than Russian strikes on Ukraine.** It should be emphasised that Ukrainian air defence is operating under conditions of a shortage of munitions, primarily missiles for the Patriot systems.

On 1 May, Ukrainian military sources reported the success of an attack carried out on 25 April against the Russian military airfield at Shagol in Chelyabinsk Oblast. According to a statement from the General Staff, several fifth-generation Su-57 fighters and a Su-34 frontline bomber were reportedly hit, and the extent of the damage is still being assessed. Meanwhile, the commander of the Unmanned Systems Forces, Robert "Madyar" Brovdi, reported that two Su-57 fighters, one Su-34 and one unidentified aircraft had been damaged

to varying degrees. Reports of the Ukrainian attack on Shagol airfield have not yet been confirmed by any other sources.

Western support for Ukraine

On 28 April, the Latvian Ministry of Defence announced that it would supply Ukraine with additional CVR(T) tracked armoured reconnaissance vehicles; no further details were disclosed. To date, Riga has supplied over 12 of these vehicles.

On 28 April, **the Pentagon signed a contract with Northrop Grumman to provide technical support for the APG 66/68 radars of F-16 fighter jets until 2036 for 21 countries, including Ukraine**. The contract is worth $488 million.

On 30 April, **the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence announced the receipt of the first F-16 fighter jet training simulator**. The donor remained anonymous. On 30 April, Bloomberg reported **that the Pentagon had decided to release $400 million in aid to Kyiv. These funds were allocated in the budget for the 2026 financial year under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI)**, but had not been spent until now. Kyiv will now be able to use them to purchase American weapons and military equipment.

On the same day, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence also announced the formation **of the** international **Coalition for Resilient Procurement and Unified Support (CORPUS)**. This initiative brings together defence procurement agencies from Ukraine, Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom, and aims to improve coordination and extend cooperation.

On 1 May**, Finland's** defence minister **announced that his country would join an international drone coalition formed to support Kyiv. Finland is also set to allocate $300 million in aid for Ukraine's air defence.**

On 4 May**,** the **Canadian** Prime Minister **announced that his country would provide US$200 million as part of the so-called Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL)** to strengthen air defence.

Ukraine's military potential

The border with Romania remains the most popular route for those attempting to leave Ukraine illegally. In the first quarter of 2026, approximately 2,900 people were apprehended for breaching border regulations. According to data from the Ukrainian border service, 80 criminal groups involved in organising the illegal smuggling of people across the border were also detected during the quarter, including as many as 40 in March alone. In 2025, 520 groups were identified. Since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, the Ukrainian border service has detained a total of around 67,000 people attempting to cross the border illegally.

On 30 April, **Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Oleksandr Syrskyi signed an order introducing mandatory rotation for soldiers carrying out duties on the front line**.

Under the new guidelines, they should not remain on the so-called 'zero line' (the immediate front line) for longer than two months. Commanders are required to plan rotations in advance, taking into account the operational situation and available forces and resources. The order also introduces mandatory medical examinations following the completion of combat missions, guarantees soldiers time to rest, and requires the timely supply of ammunition and food to units on the front line. This move is a response to real problems – Olha Reshetylova, the Ombudsman, had previously pointed out that after around 40 days of continuous deployment in combat positions, soldiers' mental condition deteriorates significantly, which negatively affects their effectiveness.

On 1 May**, President Zelensky announced that key decisions regarding army reform would be made by the end of the month**. He emphasised that intensive work is underway to improve the functioning of combat brigades and that the programme for their direct funding, which has been in place since last year, is proving effective. He also announced measures being prepared to ensure the regular replenishment of personnel in units, the simplification of transfer procedures between units, and changes to the payments system. Soldiers serving in rear areas are to receive no less than 30,000 hryvnias per month (over $750), whilst pay for combat roles will increase significantly depending on the combat tasks performed and may range from 250,000 hryvnia (approx. $6,500) to 400,000 hryvnia (approx. $10,000).

Russia's military potential

On 29 April**, the Ukrainian Coordination Headquarters for Prisoners of War reported that citizens from 48 countries who had fought on the side of the Russian Federation were being held in Ukrainian captivity**. The largest numbers come from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan. Data from Ukrainian military intelligence (HUR) indicates that at least 5,149 foreigners fighting on Russia's side have been killed during the war. The day before, HUR reported that the Russian army plans to recruit around 18,500 foreigners this year, and that the Russian military authorities have been instructed to recruit between 0.5% and 3.5% of the foreign nationals residing in each region of Russia. Recruitment activities are also being conducted outside the Russian Federation, including in Bangladesh, Chad, Sudan and Burundi. According to HUR, in addition to official recruitment centres, paramilitary structures operating under the control of the Russian secret services are involved in the recruitment process. These include the groups 'Redut', 'Konvoy', 'Wagner-2', 'Potok', 'Russian Combat Brothers', 'Fakel', 'Patriota', 'Plamia', 'Sokol' and 'Veterans'.

On 29 April**, the State Border Committee of Belarus announced that Russian citizens subject to a ban on leaving the country due to a call-up for military service would not be able to travel abroad via Belarusian territory**. Efficient verification is facilitated by a shared database of conscripts, to which both Minsk and Moscow have access. This points to deepening cooperation between Belarus and Russia in the enforcement of compulsory military service, including the exchange of data from electronic conscription registers and call-up systems.

On 29 April, the Public Anti-Corruption Council attached to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence called for Rustem Umerov to be dismissed from his post as Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council. The reason cited is his conversations (revealed by the media) from when he was Minister of Defence in regard to the sale of shares in the arms company Fire Point and unclear financial dealings with businessman Timur Mindich. In the council's view, investigative materials and media reports suggest that Mindich may have been the actual beneficiary of Fire Point, which allegedly provided false information about its real ownership structure and secured a contract worth 300 billion hryvnias for the production of drones as a result of collusion between the owner and Umerov. The council has appealed to President Zelensky to consider the partial nationalisation of the company.

On 5 May, the State Bureau of Investigation of Ukraine announced that it was conducting investigations into crimes against state security committed during the full-scale war. According to this bureau, since the start of the Russian invasion, a total of 3,012 criminal proceedings have been initiated in cases such as treason, collaboration with the enemy or aiding the aggressor state.

On 1 May, **Vladyslav Vlasiuk, the Ukrainian President's representative for sanctions policy, pointed out that new foreign components manufactured in 2025 in Germany, Japan, Switzerland, the US, Taiwan and the UK are still being detected in Russian drones**. He added that the latest Russian drone designs now contain virtually no components from the Netherlands, which demonstrates the effectiveness of Ukraine's cooperation with its foreign partners. Kyiv emphasises the need to further tighten sanctions and to close off channels

