

Ukrainian advances north of Lyman. Day 1651 of the war

Andrzej Wilk, Krzysztof Nieczypor, Jacek Tarociński

The situation on the frontline

Counterattacks by Ukrainian forces north of Lyman, combined with supply problems caused by drone strikes, have resulted in the withdrawal of some Russian forces from areas west of the Netrys River and, consequently, a reduction in the encirclement of Sloviansk from the north. Ukraine also regained control of some of the territory north and east of Sviatohirsk that had previously been lost or remained in a grey zone. The Russian flank remains at risk of being fragmented and cut off from the main forces, and consequently of being completely eliminated. Depending on the source, since July this year Ukrainian operations have led to this area contracting by as much as 200 km², with most of the territory abandoned by Russia now falling within the grey zone. Vasyl Denysiuk, spokesperson for the Ukrainian 66th Mechanised Brigade, reported that approximately 30% of Russian forces in the Lyman area are mercenaries.

Russian forces continued their advance east and south of the Sloviansk-Kramatorsk conurbation. According to some sources, they have captured Novoandriivka on the road running west from Druzhkivka, which threatens to outflank that town. The Russians have also reached the road linking Dobropillia with Kramatorsk, which significantly hinders the supply of the former (this is currently possible via a detour through Oleksandrivka). The southern and eastern outskirts of Dobropillia are currently the scene of fighting, the outcome of which will determine whether Ukrainian forces can hold onto the town. The Russians are also reported to have widened the breach east of Orikhiv in Zaporizhzhia Oblast, once again intensifying their infiltration of its eastern part. The entire area of the neighbouring Mala Tokmachka has become a theatre of operations, and Ukrainian forces are likely now holding out only in its northern part.

Russian air attacks

On 27 August, the Russians launched an unprecedented series of attacks on Kyiv and Kyiv Oblast. Until 1 September, these occurred daily, totalling several dozen times. A record number of 13 air raid alerts was recorded on 27 August, when they lasted for over half the

day in total (the previous record of 12 air raid alerts for Kyiv within a 24-hour period had stood since 1 March 2022). On two occasions – 27 August and 1 September – the attacks were on a massive scale, involving missiles and drones. Between these attacks, Kyiv and Kyiv Oblast were most frequently struck by jet-powered unmanned aerial vehicles. According to OSINT sources, the missile attack on 27 August was intended to deplete Ukraine's recently acquired stock of missiles for the Patriot systems, with Russia exclusively using the cheaper and less powerful – and easier to shoot down – RM-48U missiles. Depending on the source, seven or eight out of eight to nine missiles of this type were shot down. On 1 September, the Russians mainly used Iskander-M missiles; of the 22 fired, two were shot down. The Ukrainians reportedly used nine PAC-3 MSE interceptors to repel each of the attacks. Within a few days, however, Ukrainian forces managed to limit the effectiveness of attacks using Geran-4 and Geran-5 jet drones. To achieve this, all available forces and resources were deployed in the Kyiv area, including F-16 and Mirage-2000 fighter jets, which resulted in a weakening of air defences in the other regions under attack.

The main targets in Kyiv and its surroundings remained logistics infrastructure and industrial facilities supplying components for drones and missiles. On 1 September, ten Iskander-M missiles were reported to have struck Ukrainian Railways 'Ukrzaliznytsia (UZ)' facilities in Darnytskyi District, including a rolling stock repair depot. Seven of the eight people killed that day in the attack on Kyiv died there (in addition, four people were killed in Kyiv Oblast, and at least 20 were injured across both locations). In the attacks carried out since 27 August, at least 30 warehouse complexes belonging to various companies were destroyed or seriously damaged, located primarily in the Boryspil and Brovary areas, and to a lesser extent in Bucha, Fastiv and Vyshhorod. In addition to the casualties from the attack on 1 September and the strike on the ammunition depot, a two-year-old girl was killed and at least 23 people were injured.

On 28 August, a Russian Geran-4 drone struck an ammunition depot in the village of Myla, near Kyiv. Contrary to regulations, the depot was located in a residential area, resulting in the deaths of 38 civilians and 52 injuries (including five children), and nearly 400 people were evacuated. Around 300 structures were destroyed or damaged, including 200 private homes. Secondary explosions brought traffic to a standstill for over 24 hours on a 17-kilometre stretch of the M06 Kyiv–Chop motorway. According to OSINT sources, the explosions were most likely caused by missiles (the most frequently mentioned were interceptors for Patriot systems or Flamingo cruise missiles). President Volodymyr Zelenskyy admitted that the depot belonged to the Ukrainian Defence Forces and that it should not have been there. The Prosecutor General's Office has launched an investigation, and the Ministry of Defence has announced that it will carry out a "full review" of the locations of arms and ammunition depots.

The Russians continued to strike at logistics and energy infrastructure in Odesa Oblast. Attacks on the ports of the so-called 'Greater Odesa' and those located in the Danube Delta took place daily from 26 August to 1 September. These resulted in further damage to transshipment facilities, warehouses and fuel tanks. At least three ships were also damaged. On 28 and 29 August and on 1 September, there were intermittent cuts to electricity and water supplies for some residents of Odesa and the oblast. Furthermore, on 1 September, the Orlivka border crossing with Romania (south-east of the port of Reni) was damaged, resulting in its closure. On 26 August, Reuters reported that a queue of 50–70 ships had

formed at Ukrainian ports in the Danube Delta, whilst these ports are only able to handle a total of 5–7 vessels per day.

Zaporizhzhia remains one of the most frequent targets of Russian attacks in the frontline zone. Enemy air strikes hit the area daily from 26 to 30 August, mainly damaging logistics infrastructure. On 27 August, ballistic missiles – likely five North Korean KN-23s – struck the Zaporizhstal steelworks, which had been out of operation since 11 August. On the same day, and again on 31 August, the ArcelorMittal plant in Kryvyi Rih was also attacked; the plant had already reduced production following earlier damage. Guided air strikes on 26 and 27 August completely put the thermal power station in Kherson out of action, and the local authorities urged residents to leave the city, offering assistance with the evacuation. On 29 August, as a result of a strike on a 330 kV substation, electricity supplies were cut off to over 300,000 customers in Mykolaiv and Mykolaiv Oblast. A transshipment terminal at the port and warehouses there were also damaged. A day later, 70,000 customers in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast were cut off from the electricity supply. Fuel and energy infrastructure, industrial facilities, and warehouses and/or transport were the targets of further attacks on Kharkiv (25, 27 and 28 August), Chernihiv (25 and 26 August), Kremenchuk (27 August), Sumy (27 and 28 August), Pavlohrad (28 and 30 August) and Poltava (1 September).

Russian forces have significantly increased their use of jet-powered attack drones, as reported on 31 August by Yuriy Ihnat, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian Air Force Command (UAFC). Of the more than 1,500 drones used between 27 and 30 August, 800 were jet-powered, which are considerably faster and more difficult to shoot down than piston-engined drones. The figure given by Ihnat is significantly higher than that suggested by the UAFC's statements, according to which, from the evening of 25 August to the morning of 1 September, Russia was reported to have used a total of 1,797 attack drones and their decoys (including 1,286 between 27 and 30 August), and 1,537 were neutralised. Depending on the source, Russia used 66–69 missiles, of which 12–18 were shot down.



Ukrainian operations against Russia

On 26 August, Ukrainian drones struck the Lukoil refinery in Kstovo, in Nizhny Novgorod Oblast, causing a fire there. This was the fifth attack on this refinery since April this year and resulted in it suspending operations. Fires also broke out at refineries on 28 August in Yaroslavl and on 30 August in the town of Kirishi in Leningrad Oblast. However, an attack on oil industry facilities in Bashkortostan on 27 August ended in failure. On 28 August, Bloomberg reported that August had seen the highest number of Ukrainian attacks on Russian refineries to date. A total of 21 hits were recorded (22 including the attack on the refinery in Kirishi), some of which resulted in damage to facilities and the suspension of production.

A drone attack led to the complete destruction of the Wildberries logistics centre in Kotovsk, Tambov Oblast, on 26 August. Three days later, warehouses belonging to Ozon and DNS were damaged in Rostov-on-Don, and on 30 August, an Ozon warehouse in Belgorod was also damaged. A heat and power station and a power substation were also hit

during the strike on that city. However, attacks on Wildberries' warehouses in Lipetsk Oblast on 26 August and in Yekaterinburg on 31 August were unsuccessful.

On 27 August, Ukrainian missiles struck targets in occupied Donetsk, where Ukraine claims the main and backup command posts were located. According to some sources, a briefing by the command of the 51st Combined Arms Army – formerly the so-called People's Militia of the Donetsk People's Republic – may have been taking place there. The OSINT project KIU (Russian Officers killed in Ukraine) confirmed the death of a colonel from the staff of another operational formation – the 41st Combined Arms Army. There is no information regarding other potential military casualties. However, eight civilians were injured near the targeted facilities at the time of the strike.

On 30 August, Ukrainian forces attacked Millerovo Air Base in Rostov Oblast and Yeysk Air Base in Krasnodar Krai. Fires broke out and infrastructure was damaged at both sites, whilst in Yeysk, one of the ammunition depots was destroyed. A day later, a fire broke out at a fuel depot near Dzhankoi Air Base in occupied Crimea, and on 25 August, an ammunition depot in Luhansk Oblast was hit. On 28 August, at Engels-2 airfield in Saratov Oblast, a Ukrainian drone damaged a non-operational (no propulsion) Tu-95MS strategic bomber. As it remains within range of Ukrainian weapons, the Engels base is used exclusively as a so-called 'stopover' airfield, whilst the bombers are stationed in Murmansk Oblast (Olenya base) and Amur Oblast (Ukrainka base).

The Unmanned Systems Forces continued to strike energy infrastructure and air defences in the occupied territories, as well as Russian shipping in the Seas of Azov and the Black Sea. On 1 September, their commander Robert Brovdi "Magyar" presented a report for August, in which Ukrainian drones were reported to have struck 168 'energy hubs' (a total of 349 since the start of Operation 'Crimea Shutdown' ('Кримський рубильник off') on 6 July), 54 vessels (from a total of 260 as part of the concurrent Operation MoLoCHKa / Молочка) and 33 air defence installations, mainly radar stations (bringing the total to 263 in 2026).

Russian operations against Ukraine

On 25 August, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) reported the arrest in Lviv of a Russian intelligence agent who had been gathering data on military facilities and infrastructure. A day later, a conscripted soldier from the Armed Forces of Ukraine was arrested in Odesa Oblast; he had been passing on data used to adjust Russian artillery strikes. On 28 August, a woman from Cherkasy Oblast was detained on the same charge, suspected of collaborating with the Russian FSB.

On 26 August, the SBU reported that it had foiled an assassination attempt in Kyiv Oblast on the head of one of Ukraine's defence industry companies. The Russian FSB was reportedly planning the assassination using an improvised explosive device placed in the victim's car. The would-be assassin, who was attempting to travel from Poland via Belarus to Russia, was detained by the Polish security services.

On 27 August, the SBU reported that Russian intelligence services had stepped up their attempts to recruit the relatives of Ukrainian prisoners of war. According to the SBU, the

Russians are contacting families, sometimes in the presence of the detained soldier, urging them to provide information on the locations of military facilities and units, the routes taken by equipment and personnel, and the details of other military personnel. In some cases, they also suggest they carry out acts of sabotage, promising better treatment for the prisoner of war or inclusion on an exchange list in return.



Western support for Ukraine

On 25 August, during a joint press conference with the President of Estonia, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, stated that **Ukraine had received deliveries of AIM-9 and AIM-120 air-to-air missiles and for the Patriot air defence systems, and also confirmed the handover of several French Crotale air defence systems and ammunition for them.**

On 26 August, the Lithuanian company LDS announced that it had completed repairs to two Leopard 2 tanks previously donated by Sweden and Germany and handed them over to Ukraine, after they had been damaged in combat.

On 26 August, the Italian daily *La Repubblica* reported **that Rome was preparing its 13th military aid package for Ukraine, which would include interceptor missiles for the SAMP/T air defence system.**

On 27 August, **the Swedish government announced a further support package for Ukraine worth a total of 270 million Swedish kronor (\$22.5 million).** This includes \$14 million under the US arms procurement mechanism (Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List, PURL), ammunition and ten motorboats.

On 31 August, the Ukrainian National Guard announced that it had received ten Protector RRC unmanned vehicles purchased with funding from the German government. In total, Berlin has pledged to purchase 100 such vehicles.



Ukraine's military potential

On 28 August, the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Kyrylo Budanov, said that to maintain the current defence capability, it is necessary to mobilise at least 30,000 people per month. According to him, this is the minimum number required to meet current needs, and the announced change to the mobilisation process – involving a change in the operating methods of recruitment centres and a reduction in incidents of violence – will not significantly affect the required scale of mobilisation.

On 30 August, Ukraine's Defence Minister Yevhen Khmara stated that his priority was to ensure the continuity of projects currently being implemented by the ministry. For this reason, he intends to retain the deputies appointed by his predecessor, Mykhailo Fedorov: Mykola Shvydkyi will continue to be responsible for matters relating to the front line, Lyubov Halan for the development and maintenance of the Defence Forces' human capital, and Serhiy Boiev for cooperation with Ukraine's foreign partners. Khmara also announced the

return of Hanna Hvozdyar to the post of deputy minister responsible for the defence industry and exports.

On 31 August, *the *Financial Times** reported that Elon Musk was prepared to agree to the use of the Starlink system by Ukrainian drones outside Ukrainian territory, including during operations over Russia, provided that the US administration took the appropriate political decision. On the same day, **The Kyiv Independent** reported that Musk personally opposes solution, and that negotiations between the SpaceX chief and Mykhailo Fedorov had reportedly ended in failure. this solution, and that negotiations between the SpaceX chief and Mykhailo Fedorov had reportedly ended in failure.

Russia's military potential

On 25 August, the Belarusian editorial team of *Radio Svaboda* reported that railway infrastructure designed to handle military transports is being built in Homyel Voblasts in Belarus, near the village of Yakimauka. The project involves the construction of a separate siding capable of accommodating up to 60 wagons, as well as a platform with a ramp enabling the unloading of wheeled and tracked vehicles. The infrastructure will form part of a larger military complex under construction near Homyel since late 2023, where the 37th Independent Airborne Assault Brigade of the Belarusian Special Operations Forces, formed in 2025 with the aim – according to the authorities in Minsk – of ‘strengthening the southern front’.

On 27 August, the Office of the President of Ukraine published data compiled by the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defence (HUR) and the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine (SZRU) which claim the Russian General Staff has drawn up a plan for the additional mobilisation of 600,000 people – 300,000 in both 2026 and 2027. This is justified by mounting losses and a decline in the effectiveness of contract recruitment: between January and July 2026, Russia is said to have lost around 240,000 soldiers, including at least 140,000 killed in action, whilst 232,000 contract soldiers were recruited into the army. The most likely date for a new wave of mobilisation is after the State Duma elections on 18–20 September.

On 27 August, the SZRU reported that Russia is recruiting Indonesian citizens. In order to do this it is employing the same scheme used in other countries, offering potential recruits high pay, work outside the combat zone, and fast-track Russian citizenship, after which some of them are then sent directly to the front line without adequate preparation.

The war and the internal situation in Ukraine

On 28 August, Ukraine's Minister for Agrarian Policy, Taras Vysotskyi, reported that Russian attacks have led to approximately 90% of the storage infrastructure used by retail chains for food distribution being destroyed. However, this does not pose a threat of famine or a systemic shortage of goods, and the retail chains will be forced to switch to

alternative logistics models, including direct deliveries from producers to shops. Vysotskyi emphasised that the range of products on offer may be limited, but essential goods will remain available to consumers.

Arms Deliveries Monitor

See more 

