

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:30 pm ET on March 19. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the March 20 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russia and Ukraine have not formally announced the implementation of the temporary long-range strikes ceasefire. Ceasefires take time to negotiate, execute, and monitor and require both sides to agree to cease attacks on specified targets at a specific time and date. Ceasefires also require both sides to agree to mechanisms to monitor the ceasefire and to address allegations of violations. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on March 19 that if Russia and Ukraine come to a temporary strikes ceasefire agreement, then Ukraine will prepare a list of "civilian objects, energy objects, infrastructure objects" to give to Ukraine's partners — indicating that Russia and Ukraine have not finalized the details of which targets would be off limits or agreed on an implementation date.[1]

Official American, Ukrainian, and Russian statements indicate that the parties to the ceasefire have not yet finalized the details of the agreement. Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated on March 19 that the temporary ceasefire only applies to "energy infrastructure facilities," and Kremlin newswire *TASS* reported that Peskov declined to comment on the White House statement — likely referring to the March 18 White House statement following the call between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin — that the ceasefire applied to "energy and infrastructure."[2] Trump told the *Washington Examiner* on March 18 after his call with Putin that Russia agreed to "an immediate ceasefire on energy and infrastructure."[3] US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff similarly stated on March 18 after the call that the temporary ceasefire covers "energy and infrastructure in general."[4] The Trump administration's statement following Trump's March 19 call with Zelensky stated that Trump and Zelensky "agreed on a partial ceasefire against energy."[5] Zelensky stated on March 19 that Ukraine is "ready to implement" a ceasefire on strikes against "energy and civilian infrastructure."[6]

Russian President Vladimir Putin is adding confusion about the timing and details of the ceasefire in an attempt to falsely blame Ukraine for violating the ceasefire before both countries have officially implemented the agreement. The Kremlin is attempting to posture Russia as already adhering to the temporary ceasefire while claiming that Ukraine is violating the ceasefire — even though both parties have not agreed on the details of the agreement or officially implemented the ceasefire. The Kremlin readout of the March 18 phone call between Putin and Trump stated that Putin "immediately gave the Russian military" an order that "corresponded" with his "positive response" to Trump's temporary ceasefire proposal.[7] The Russian Ministry of Defense

(MoD) claimed that seven Russian drones were en route to striking Ukrainian energy facilities connected to defense industrial enterprises in Mykolaiv Oblast when Putin issued the order to the Russian military.[8] The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces received orders to "neutralize" the drones and that Russian forces used Pantsir air defense systems to down six drones and that a Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) fighter jet destroyed the other. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces launched a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of March 18 to 19, and Zelensky noted on March 19 that Russian drones had struck a hospital in Sumy Oblast and unspecified areas in Donetsk Oblast.[9] The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian drones struck an oil transshipment facility in Krasnodar Krai following the Trump-Putin call and attempted to frame the Ukrainian strike as a violation of the ceasefire agreement.[10] Russian claims that Russia adhered to the ceasefire by abstaining from conducting strikes against Ukrainian energy infrastructure and that Ukraine violated the ceasefire are inaccurate as Russia and Ukraine have not yet officially implemented the agreement. Such Russian claims are attempts to take advantage of the lack of clarity about the details of the ceasefire that the Kremlin is injecting. Putin's attempt to confuse and manipulate the temporary strikes ceasefire and blame Ukraine for violations even before the agreement has come into effect is an indicator of how Putin will likely exploit any future agreements.

The Kremlin continues to contradict Trump's report of his call with Putin on March 18. The Kremlin readout of the call stated that Putin called for a halt to all foreign military aid to Ukraine.[11] Peskov claimed on March 19 that Putin and Trump "touched upon" the topic of continuing military aid to Ukraine in their call.[12] Trump stated on March 18 that he and Putin "did not talk about aid at all."[13]

The Kremlin continues to demand that Ukraine cede Ukrainian territory that Russia does not currently occupy and to set conditions to make further territorial demands. Russian business outlet Kommersant reported on March 18 that its sources said that Russian President Vladimir Putin stated at a private meeting with the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs Congress on March 18 that Russia would not claim "Odesa and other territories" if unspecified countries - likely Ukraine, the United States and/or European countries - recognize Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts and Crimea as part of Russia.[14] Putin and other Russian officials have recently reiterated their ongoing demand that Ukraine surrender the entirety of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts, including areas that Russian forces do not currently occupy.[15] The Kremlin may have intentionally leaked Putin's statement to Kommersant in an attempt to portray Russia's extreme demands to seize the entirety of the four oblasts as reasonable and less extreme than alternatives. Putin recently claimed that "Novorossiya" is an integral part of Russia, and Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov defined "Novorossiya" as all of eastern and southern Ukraine including Odesa Oblast.[16] Putin has repeatedly referred to parts of occupied Ukraine as "Novorossiya," having most recently thanked employees of the Russian Prosecutor General's Office in "Donbas and Novorossiya" during a March 19 address to Prosecutor General's Office's Board.[17] Putin has also claimed that Odesa City is a "Russian city."[18] Putin and other senior Kremlin officials continue to set informational conditions to demand that Ukraine cede more territory to Russia as Russian forces continue to push in areas that Russia has not yet formally demanded. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on March 18 that Russian forces are concentrating in Kursk Oblast on the border with Sumy Oblast and may be preparing new attacks on Sumy, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhia oblasts.[19] ISW continues to assess that Russia would likely leverage attacks into oblasts that Russian forces do not currently occupy to fabricate justifications for demands that Ukraine cede additional territory to Russia.

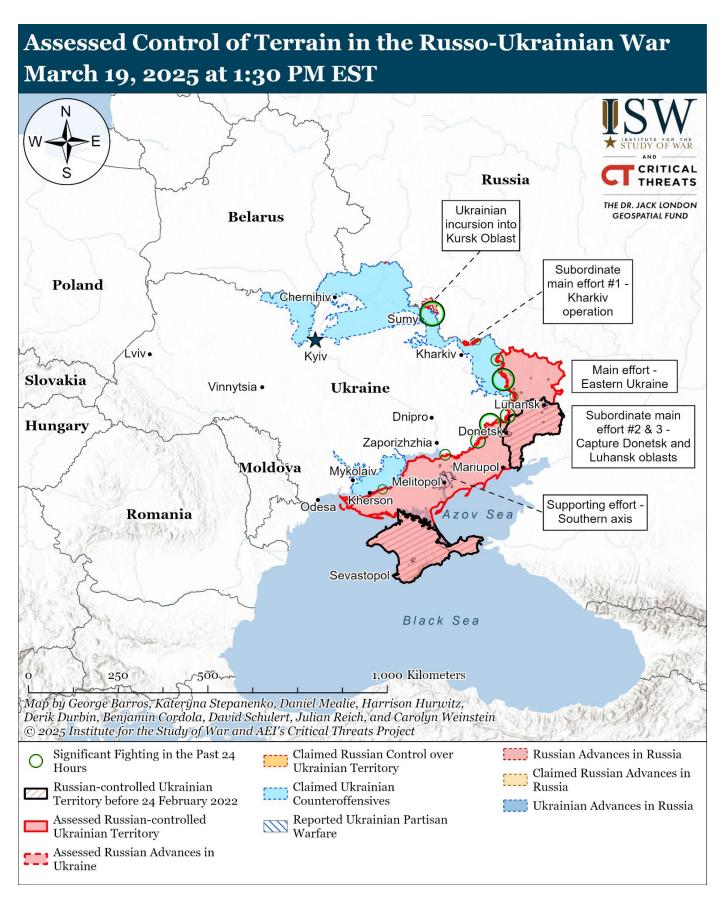
The United States, Ukraine, and Europe continue to agree that Ukraine and Europe must be involved in peace negotiations to end the war, despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's efforts to exclude Ukraine and Europe from such negotiations. Bloomberg reported on March 18, citing people familiar with the matter, that US officials told European officials that the EU must be involved in any future peace agreement since the Kremlin wants the EU to lift its sanctions on Russia as part of a peace deal. The sources stated that the United States told the EU that America's first priority is "to stop the fighting," after which the United States will discuss "potential security arrangements" for Ukraine.[20] US President Donald Trump told the Washington Examiner on March 18 after his call with Putin that both Russia and Ukraine would have to agree to a "full ceasefire and a [peace] deal."[21] Trump's statement rejects Putin's calls for ongoing negotiations about a ceasefire and future peace negotiations to occur in "bilateral mode" between the United States and Russia.[22]

Ukraine and Russia conducted a prisoner of war (POW) exchange on March 19. Ukraine and Russia each exchanged 175 POWs, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced that Russia returned an additional 22 severely wounded Ukrainian soldiers.[23] Zelensky thanked the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for mediating the exchange.[24] The Kremlin initially announced the POW exchange following Russian President Vladimir Putin's March 18 call with US President Donald Trump, during which Putin claimed that Russia would transfer an additional 23 seriously wounded Ukrainian servicemembers in a "gesture of goodwill."[25]

The Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) Main Military-Political Directorate Deputy Head and Akhmat Spetsnaz Commander, Major General Apti Alaudinov, described recent Russian deception tactics that may amount to acts of perfidy — a war crime under the Geneva Convention. Alaudinov claimed in a March 19 interview with Kremlin newswire TASS that Russian forces recently used blue electrical tape identification marks during an operation in which Russian forces used an underground pipeline to covertly attack behind Ukrainian positions in Kursk Oblast and noted that Ukrainian forces also use blue electrical tape.[26] Alaudinov claimed that Russian forces used the blue tape in order to "prevent the Ukrainian military from understanding what was happening" and so that Ukrainian forces "would think that their own units were advancing." Alaudinov noted that Ukrainian drone operators would have "seen people with blue electrical tape" and would have "decided that these were their own units." Alaudinov claimed that Russian forces were attempting to "create panic in [Ukrainian ranks]," allowing Russian force to "inflict maximum damage" while Ukrainian forces "were sorting it out." Alaudinov claimed that Russian forces "were supposed to have blue tape for the first 24 hours of the operation and then change it to red [tape]" — which Russian forces use for identification marks. The Geneva Convention defines perfidy as "acts inviting the confidence of an adversary to lead him to believe that he is entitled to, or is obliged to accord, protection under the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, with intent to betray that confidence."[27]

Key Takeaways:

- Russia and Ukraine have not formally announced the implementation of the temporary long-range strikes ceasefire.
- Official American, Ukrainian, and Russian statements indicate that the parties to the ceasefire have not yet finalized the details of the agreement.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin is adding confusion about the timing and details of the ceasefire in an attempt to falsely blame Ukraine for violating the ceasefire before both countries have officially implemented the agreement.
- The Kremlin continues to contradict Trump's report of his call with Putin on March 18.
- The Kremlin continues to demand that Ukraine cede Ukrainian territory that Russia does not currently occupy and to set conditions to make further territorial demands.
- The United States, Ukraine, and Europe continue to agree that Ukraine and Europe must be involved in peace negotiations to end the war, despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's efforts to exclude Ukraine and Europe from such negotiations.
- Ukraine and Russia conducted a prisoner of war (POW) exchange on March 19.
- The Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) Main Military-Political Directorate Deputy Head and Akhmat Spetsnaz Commander, Major General Apti Alaudinov, described recent Russian deception tactics that may amount to acts of perfidy a war crime under the Geneva Convention.
- Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Belgorod Oblast and near Pokrovsk, and Russian forces recently advanced near Chasiv Yar, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, and Velyka Novosilka.
- Russian milbloggers argued that the Russian government should give military awards and social benefits to military instructors and Russian defense industrial base (DIB) employees.



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

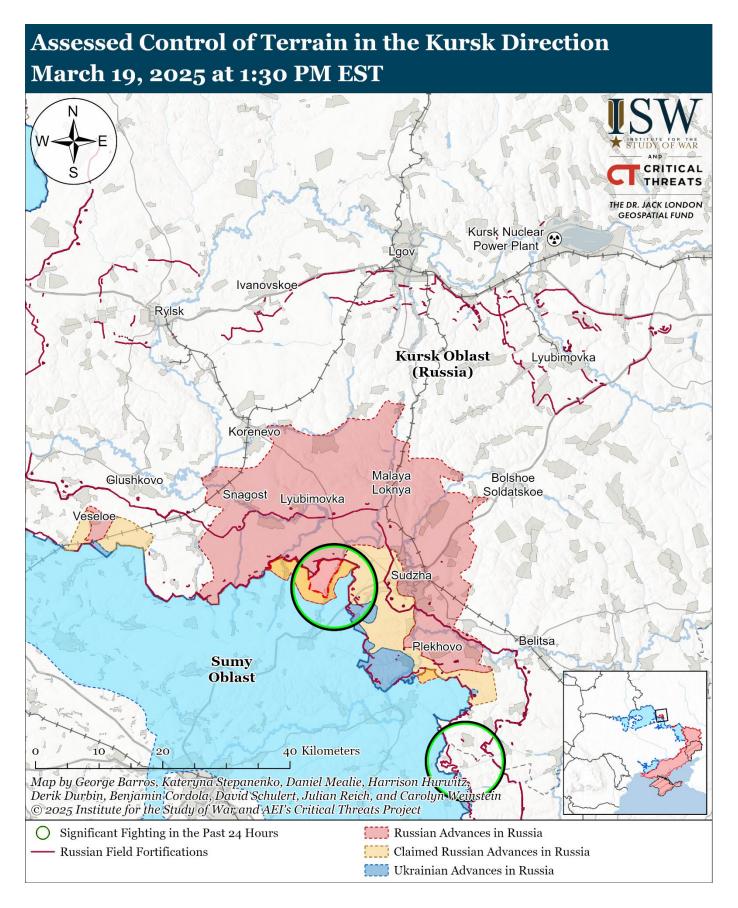
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Main Effort Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Significant Activity in Belarus

<u>Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation</u>

Russian forces continued ground operations to push Ukrainian forces from their remaining positions in Kursk Oblast on March 19.

Russian forces attacked west of Sudzha near Gogolevka, southwest of Sudzha near Oleshnya, south of Sudzha near Guyevo and Gornal, and near the international border in Sumy Oblast near Basivka on March 19.[28]

Ukraine's Unmanned Systems Forces reported on March 18 that Ukrainian forces recently destroyed three North Korean-provided Koksan self-propelled artillery system in Kursk Oblast.[29]

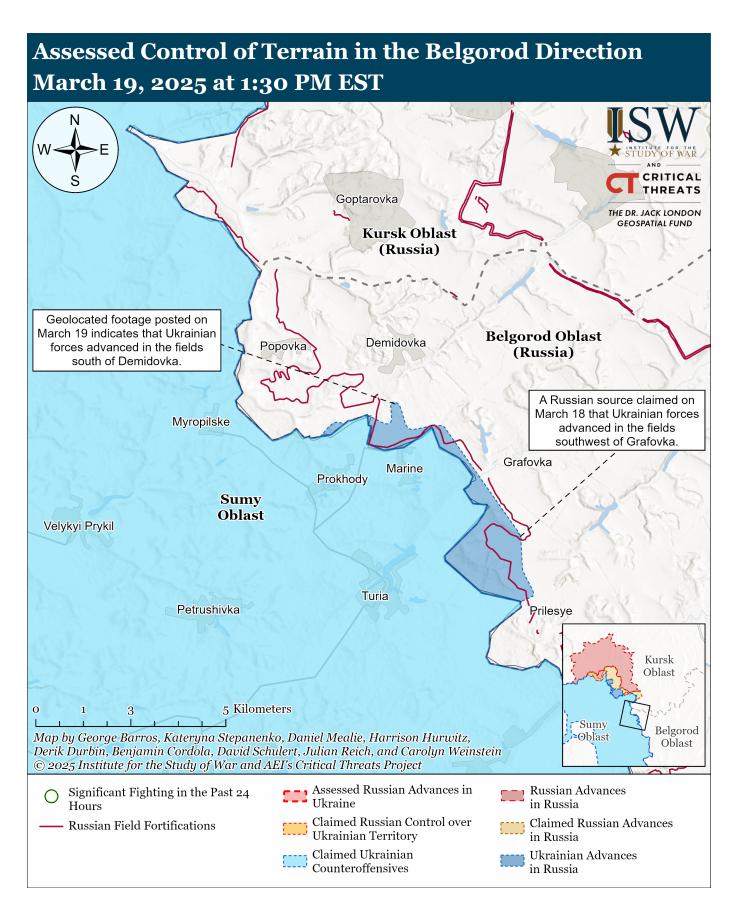


Ukrainian forces recently advanced into Belgorod Oblast, but it is unclear if Ukrainian forces maintain these positions.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 18 and 19 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced south and southwest of Demidovka (along the international border northwest of Belgorod City).[30] A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced southwest of Grafovka (southeast of Demidovka).[31]

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on March 18 that Russian forces successfully repelled Ukrainian attacks near Demidovka and Prilesye (south of Demidovka).[32] Many Russian milbloggers claimed on March 19 that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks toward Demidovka, Grafovka, and Prilesye on the night of March 18 to 19 and on the morning of March 19.[33] A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in forest areas along the Sumy-Belgorod Oblast border, and a Russian insider source claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced near Grafovka.[34]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) reportedly repelled Ukrainian attacks near Demidovka.[35]



Russian Main Effort — Eastern Ukraine

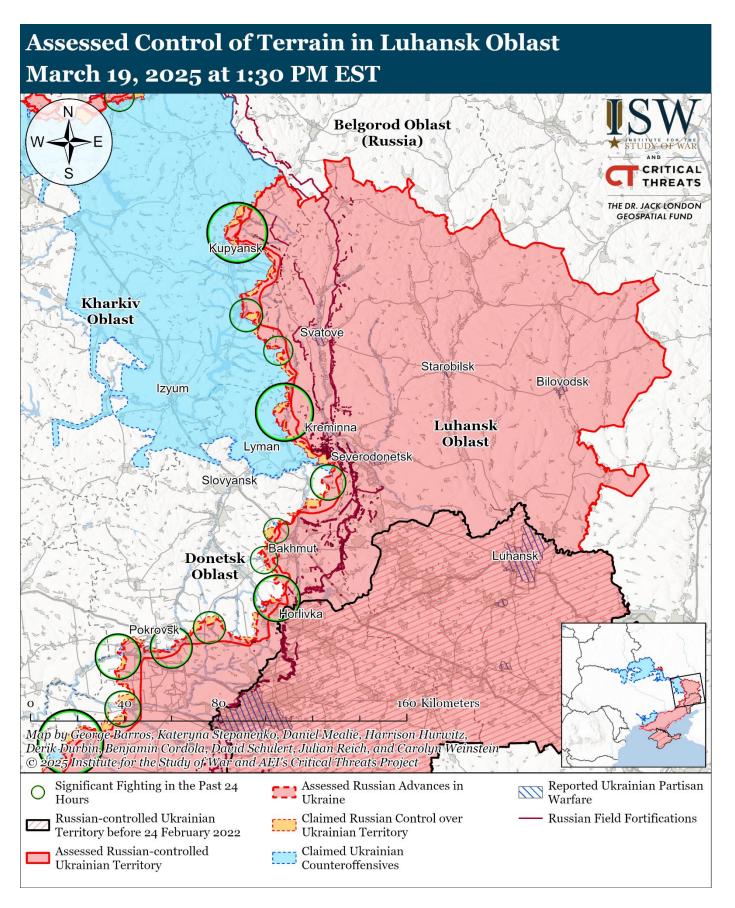
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 — Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kharkiv direction on March 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on March 18 and 19.[36]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz "Vakha" Battalion and artillery elements of the 900th Spetsnaz Regiment are reportedly operating in the Kharkiv direction.[37]

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 — Luhansk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on March 19 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced almost one kilometer near Kamyanka; up to 400 meters along the Oskil River near Dvorichna (north of Kupyansk); up to one kilometer near Petropavlivka (east of Kupyansk); and toward Kindrashivka, Tyshchenivka, and Mala Shapkivka (all northwest of Kupyansk).[38]

Russian forces attacked northwest of Kupyansk near Mala Shapivka, north of Kupyansk near Dvorichna, and east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka on March 18 and 19.[39]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on March 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and east of Borova near Nadiya on March 18 and 19.[40] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked near Nadiya and Novoyehorivka (southeast of Borova).[41]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 752nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (3rd Motorized Rifle Division, 20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) and the 16th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating in the Borova direction.[42]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on March 19 but did not make any confirmed advances.

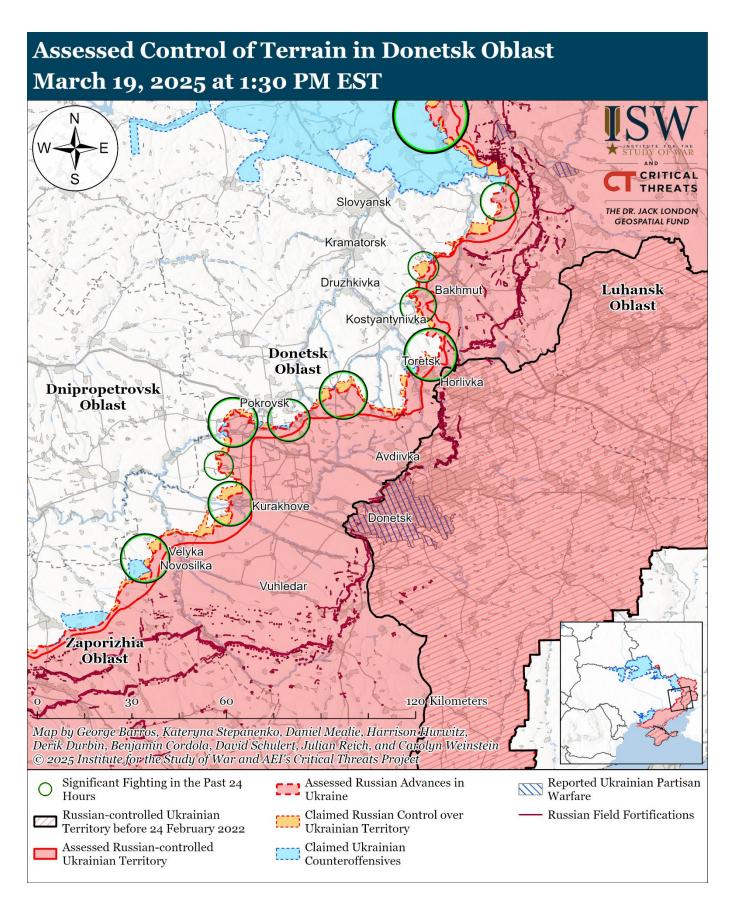
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 19 that Russian forces advanced northwest of Balka Zhuravka (formerly Nevske, northeast of Lyman).[43]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Lyman near Yampolivka and toward Nove and Zelena Dolyna on March 18 and 19.[44]

The artillery reconnaissance head of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction reported on March 19 that Russian forces take several days to weeks to reach frontline positions from the near rear due to Ukrainian strikes.[45]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 144th Motorized Rifle Division (20th CAA, MMD) are reportedly operating in the Lyman direction.[46]

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 — Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas)



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on March 19 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced in a forested area west of Bilohorivka (northeast of Siversk).[47]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka and east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyasnke on March 18 and 19.[48] Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces published footage on March 19 of Ukrainian forces using artillery and first-person view (FPV) drone strikes to repel an at least reinforced platoon-sized mechanized assault in the Siversk direction.[49]

The commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Siversk direction reported on March 19 that Russian forces are conducting assaults consisting of five to 10 personnel on motorcycles and buggies.[50] The commander noted that that the Russian infantry conducting the attacks recently deployed to the front from training grounds and are from occupied Luhansk Oblast.

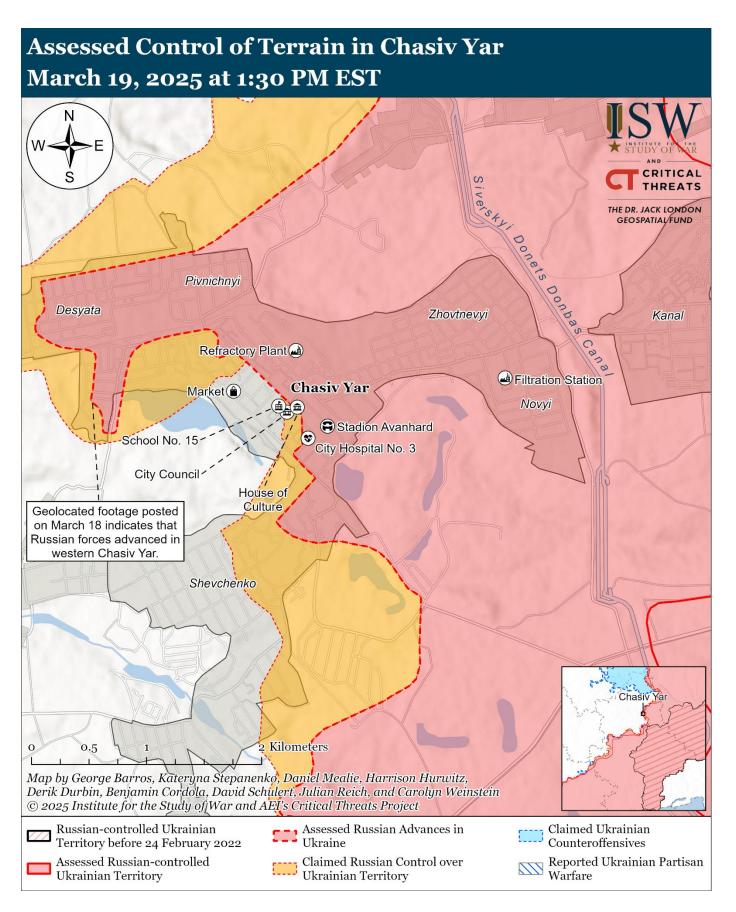
Russian forces recently advanced in the Chasiv Yar direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 18 indicates that Russian advanced along Marii Ulianovoi Street in western Chasiv Yar.[51]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 19 that Russian forces advanced up to 500 meters west of the Refractory Plant in central Chasiv Yar.[52]

Russian forces attacked near Chasiv Yar itself; northwest of Chasiv Yar near Orikhovo-Vasylivka and toward Markove; southeast of Chasiv Yar near Kurdyumivka and Ozaryanivka; and south of Chasiv Yar near Oleksandro-Shultyne and toward Predtechnye on March 18 and 19.[53] Ukrainian military sources posted footage on March 18 showing Ukrainian drone strikes repelling an at least reinforced platoon-sized Russian mechanized assault near Kurdyumivka.[54] The Ukrainian sources reported that Ukrainian forces destroyed and damaged one T-72 tank, one armored personnel carrier, one armored repair and recovery vehicle, and one infantry fighting vehicle. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked near Chasiv Yar.[55]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 215th Reconnaissance Battalion (98th Airborne [VDV] Division) are reportedly operating near Chasiv Yar and drone operators of the Russian 6th Motorized Rifle Division (3rd Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People's Republic [LNR] Army Corps [AC]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Kostyantynivka (southwest of Chasiv Yar).[56]

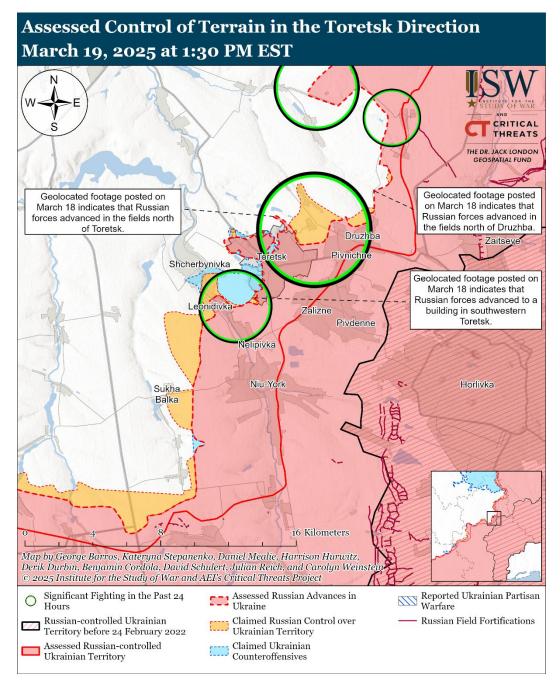


Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 18 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced northeast of Druzhba (east of Toretsk), north of Toretsk, and along Komarova Street in southwestern Toretsk.[57]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 19 that Russian forces advanced near Volynska Street in northern Toretsk and along Kvitkova Street in western Toretsk.[58]

Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself, northeast of Toretsk near Krymske, and east of Toretsk near Druzhba on March 18 and 19.[59]



Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces seized central Lysivka (southeast of Pokrovsk) and advanced to the outskirts of Dachenske (south of Pokrovsk).[60]

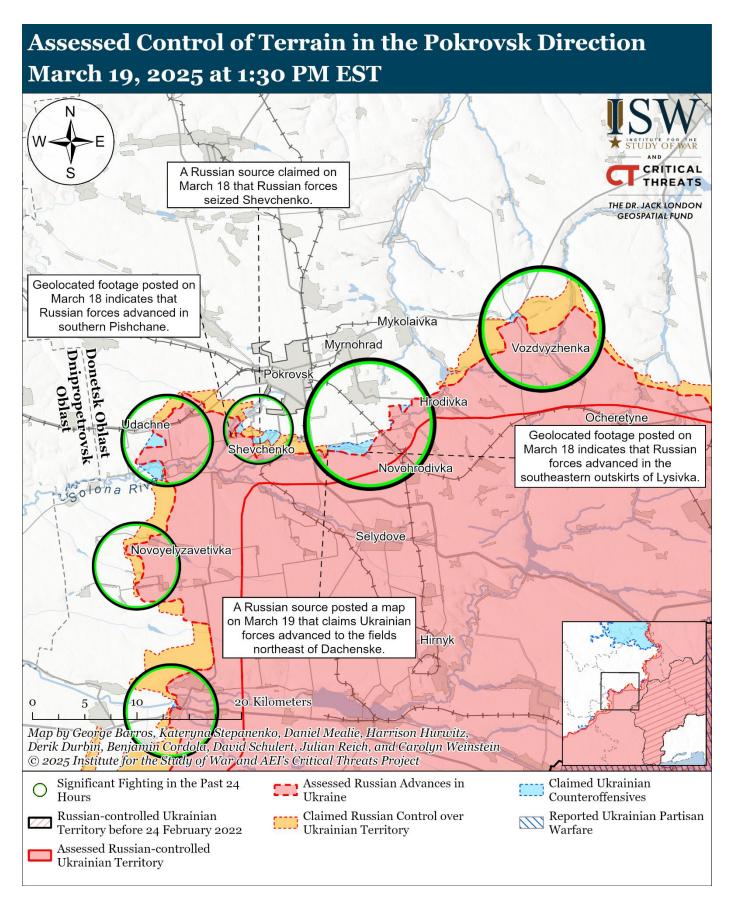
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 16 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to the southeastern outskirts of Lysivka.[61] Additional geolocated footage published on March 18 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southern Pishchane (southwest of Pokrovsk).[62]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces pushed Ukrainian forces out of Shevchenko (south of Pokrovsk).[63]

Russian forces continued offensive operations east of Pokrovsk near Zelene Pole, Yelyzavetivka, Promin, Oleksandropil, and Tarasivka; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Zvirove, Kotlyne, Preobrazhenka, Kotlyarivka, Udachne, Novooleksandrivka, Uspenivka, Novoukrainka, Bohdanivka, Yasenove, and Troitske on March 18 and 19.[64] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking in attempts to enter Pishchane.[65] The Russian milblogger also claimed that Ukrainian forces continue attempts to maintain positions on the outskirts of Shevchenko. Other Russian milbloggers claimed that combat engagements are ongoing near Shevchenko and that Ukrainian forces are attempting to break through to Shevchenko's southern outskirts.[66]

The commander of a Ukrainian drone platoon operating in the Novopavlivka direction (south of Pokrovsk) reported that Russian forces are changing tactics and are no longer conducting large, mechanized assaults due to changing weather conditions and increased visibility, choosing instead to move in small infantry groups.[67] The commander reported that Russian forces recently conducted an unsuccessful mechanized assault consisting of over 40 vehicles.

Order of Battle: Reconnaissance elements of the Russian 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA] (Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly coordinating with unspecified Russian aviation assets operating near Nova Poltavka (northeast of Pokrovsk).[68]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on March 19 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 19 that Ukrainian forces gained a foothold southwest of Kostyantynopil by the H-15 Kurakhove-Zaporizhzhia City highway and pushed Russian forces out of strongholds northwest of Andriivka (both east of Kurakhove).[69] The milblogger also claimed that Russian forces advanced west of Slovyanka (northwest of Kurakhove) along a gully west of the T-05-15 Kostyantynopil-Pokrovsk highway.

Russian forces continued offensive operations east of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Andriivka, and Oleksiivka on March 18 and 19.[70] A Russian milblogger claimed on March 18 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Kostyantynopil.[71]

Order of Battle: Drone elements of Russian 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Bahatyr (northeast of Velyka Novosilka).[72]

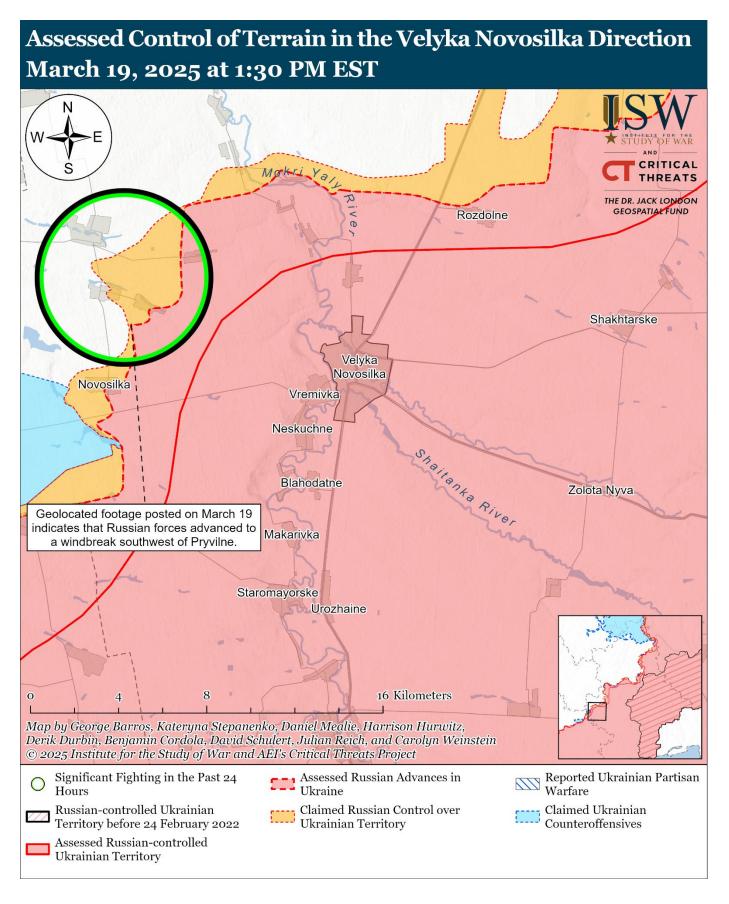
Russian forces recently advanced in the Velyka Novosilka direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 19 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced southwest of Pryvilne (east of Velyka Novosilka).[73]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced two kilometers in the fields northwest of Rozdolne and seized Shevchenko (both northeast of Velyka Novosilka).[74] Russian milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces advanced 600 meters in the Rozlyv direction.[75] Zaporizhia Oblast occupation official Vladimir Rogov claimed that Russian forces recently seized 12 square kilometers of territory at the junction between Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and Zaporizhia oblasts (east of Velyka Novosilka).[76]

Russian forces continued offensive operations northwest of Velyka Novosilka toward Pryvilne and Vilne Pole and west of Velyka Novosilka toward Novopil on March 18 and 19.[77] Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked north of Velyka Novosilka near Dniproenerhiya and northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne, Vilne Pole, Vesele, and Fedorivka on March 18 and 19.[78]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 19th Radiation, Chemical, and Biological Defense Regiment (29th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating in the Shakhtarske (Velyka Novosilka) direction.[79]



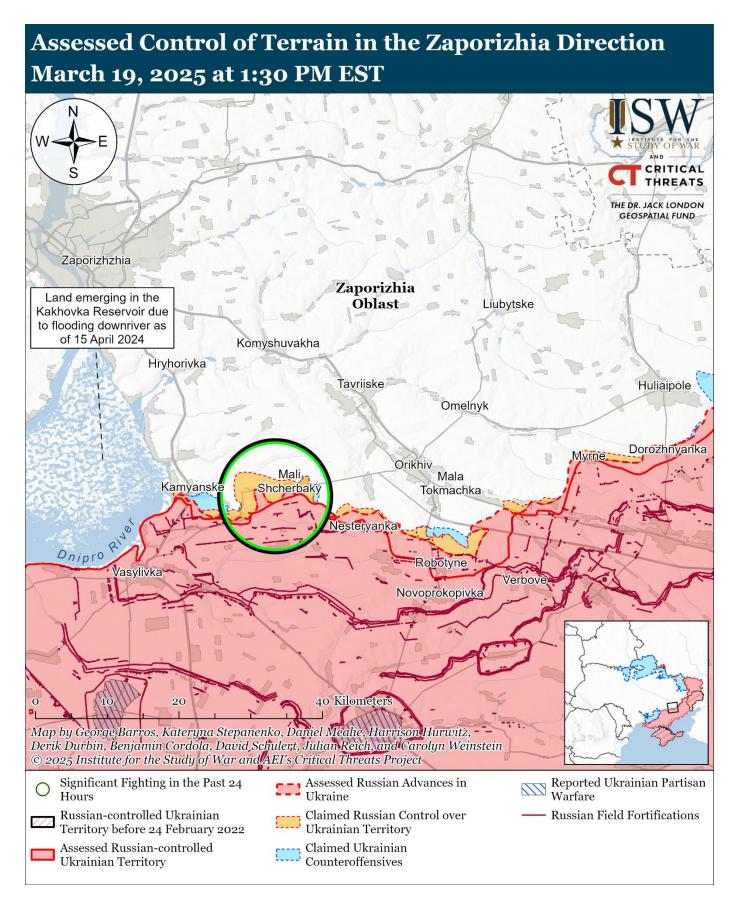
Russian Supporting Effort — Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Russian forces continued ground attacks in western Zaporizhia Oblast on March 19 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 19 that Russian forces advanced near Stepove and Lobkove and northeast of Nesteryanka (all northwest of Robotyne); near Novodanylivka (north of Robotyne); and near Mala Tokmachka (northeast of Robotyne).[80]

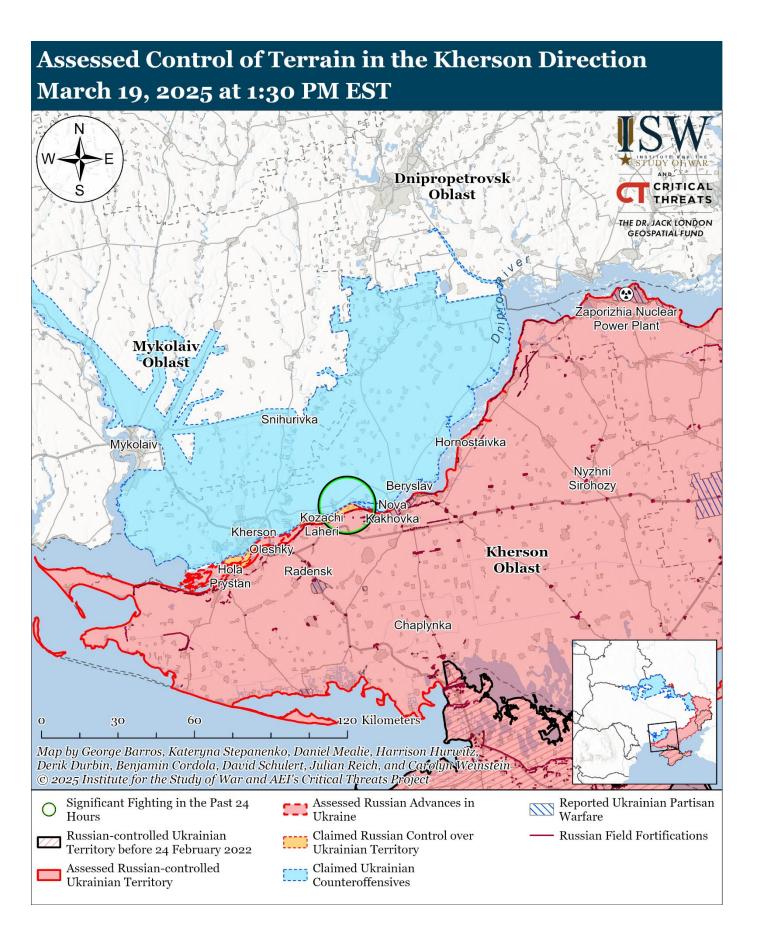
Russian forces attacked northwest of Robotyne near Lobkove, Mali Shcherbaky, and Shcherbaky and toward Stepove; north of Robotyne near Novodanylivka; and northeast of Robotyne near Mala Tokmachka on March 18 and 19.[81]

Ukrainian Southern Defense Forces Spokesperson Colonel Vladyslav Voloshyn reported on March 19 that Russian forces operating in southern Ukraine only use armored vehicles to provide fire support and transport infantry to front line positions. [82] Voloshyn added that Russian forces only use armored vehicles when protected by electronic warfare (EW) corridors but that Russian EW corridors often fail to protect Russian equipment from Ukrainian strikes.



Russian forces attacked in the Kherson direction on March 19 but did not advance.[83]

Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) posted footage on March 19 showing recent Ukrainian strikes against Russian air defense systems, radars, and helicopters in occupied Crimea.[84] The GUR reported that Ukrainian forces struck two 48Ya6-K1 Podlet mobile long-range radar systems, two 1L125 Niobiy-SV long-range radar systems, three 39H6 Kasta-2E2 mobile radar systems, one 9S19M Imbir long-range radar system, one Nebo-SVU early warning/target acquisition anti-stealth radar system, one Nebo-M radar system, one 59N6-E Protivnik-GE radar system, one Mys costal radar system, one ST-68U radar system, one 39N6 Kasta 2E2 3D surveillance radar system, one S-300VM anti-ballistic missile battery system, one S-300SV SAM air defense system, three Pantsir-S1 air defense systems, one S4236 transport tugboat, one Fyodor Uryupin tugboat, and one Mi-8 helicopter. A Russian milblogger claimed on March 19 that Ukrainian forces leveraged the Russian Black Sea Fleet's (BSF) reduced activity and insufficient Russian defenses in occupied Crimea to strike these assets.[85]



<u>Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign</u> (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)

Russian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of March 18 to 19. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched two Iskander-M ballistic missiles, four S-300 air defense missiles, and 145 Shahed and decoy drones from the directions of Bryansk, Kursk, and Oryol cities; Shatalovo, Smolensk Oblast; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai.[86] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 72 drones over Kharkiv, Poltava, Sumy, Chernihiv, Cherkasy, Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, Kirovohrad, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, and Odesa oblasts and that 56 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Official Ukrainian sources reported that Russian missiles and drones damaged civilian infrastructure in Odesa, Poltava, Zhytomyr, Kharkiv, Kirovohrad, Kyiv, and Chernihiv oblasts and that a Russian drones struck a hospital in Sumy Oblast and a railway power system in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.[87]

<u>Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts</u> (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Russian milbloggers argued that the Russian government should give military awards and social benefits to military instructors and Russian defense industrial base (DIB) employees. Several Russian milbloggers, including a Kremlin-awarded Russian milblogger, claimed on March 19 that military and technical instructors and military technology developers should receive military awards and the same social benefits as Russian veterans of the war in Ukraine.[88] Russian milbloggers have previously argued that Russian authorities should provide the same social benefits afforded to Russian veterans to milbloggers.[89]

<u>Russian Technological Adaptations</u> (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)

Nothing significant to report.

<u>Activities in Russian-occupied areas</u> (Russian objective: Consolidate administrative control of annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)

ISW is not publishing coverage of activities in Russian-occupied areas today.

<u>Significant activity in Belarus</u> (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks)

Nothing significant to report.

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.

POWERED BY: BABELSTREET

- [1] https://x.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1902412196304531701; https://suspilne dot media/974197-zelenskij-slova-putina-duze-rozhodatsa-z-realnistu/
- [2] https://tass.dot.ru/politika/23443347; https://isw.pub/UkrWar031825
- [3] https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/white-house/3351860/trump-reveals-speaking-putin-weeks/
- [4] https://www.foxnews.com/video/6370214244112
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