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April 27, 2025, 6:15pm ET

Click <u>here</u> to see ISW's interactive map of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Click here to see ISW's interactive map of Ukraine's offensive in Kursk Oblast.

Click <u>here</u> to see ISW's 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

Click <u>here</u> to access ISW's archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 11am ET on April 27. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 28 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian and Russian forces' constant technological and tactical battlefield innovations continue to transform the character of warfare in Ukraine. A non-commissioned officer (NCO) in a Ukrainian unmanned systems battalion, likely operating in the Chasiv Yar direction, reported on April 27 that continuous technological innovations and battlefield adaptations have increasingly transformed the character of modern conventional warfare in Ukraine into a war that primarily features "long-range, remote combat" over meeting engagements between infantry and armored vehicles.[1] The NCO noted that Ukrainian and Russian forces' intensifying drone usage has expanded the area of contested gray zones and kill zones at the forward edge of the battle area. The NCO noted that in 2024, contested gray zones were roughly 500 meters to two kilometers in depth, but more intense drone usage since then has expanded the gray zone up to five to seven kilometers in some areas of the frontline. The NCO reported that Russian forces' tactics of using drones to intercept enemy drones and conduct remote mining. Ukrainian forces have successfully leveraged superior drone capabilities to defend critical sectors of the frontline while also mitigating manpower and materiel constraints.

Ukraine maintains over 100 brigades that must defend a frontline (both within Ukraine and along Ukraine's international border with Russia) currently over 2,100 kilometers long and significantly leverages drone capabilities, in tandem with traditional capabilities, to deny Russian attacks across the

frontline.[2] Ukraine has demonstrated an ability to rapidly upscale domestic drone production and foreign drone procurement that is conducive for defending the frontline as well as executing a sustained long-range strikes campaign targeting Russian critical energy and defense industrial facilities deep within Russian territory that disrupts and degrades the Russian military's production and logistics.[3] Both Ukrainian and Russian forces have more regularly been using fiber-optic drones to strike each other's frontline positions and have successfully used first-person view (FPV) drones to intercept larger reconnaissance drones over the past several months.[4]

ISW has observed the rapid rate at which both Ukraine and Russia have managed to conceptualize, field, and implement near-continuous technological innovation and battlefield-adjusted tactics to optimize combat dynamics.[5] Ukrainian and Russian forces field new adaptations over the course of months rather than years and are constantly experimenting, further driving the feedback loop of increased reliance on technology and tactical innovation to maintain battlefield advantages. The innovation and operational concepts being forged in Ukraine will set the stage for the future of warfare.

Russian forces are attempting to offset Ukrainian technological adaptations and drone operations by integrating motorcycles and civilian vehicles into offensive operations along the entire frontline. The NCO in the Ukrainian unmanned systems battalion stated that Russian forces are increasingly using infantry assaults and motorized assaults on motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and light vehicles to advance in areas where Ukrainian forces leverage drone usage to maintain frontline positions.[6] The non-commissioned officer reported that Russian forces leverage motorcycles and other light vehicles to disperse forces to more easily avoid drone strikes. A Ukrainian soldier operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated on April 27 that Russian forces have conducted 13 motorized assaults on motorcycles since March 20.[7] A Ukrainian servicemember operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated on April 27 that Russian forces in the Pokrovsk direction cannot drive heavy armored vehicles to frontline positions due to disrupted Russian ground lines of communication (GLOCs), resulting in Russian forces shifting tactics to prioritize daily infantry assaults supported by motorcycles.[8]

ISW has observed Russian forces throughout the entire theater struggling to operate heavy armored vehicles close to the line of fire without being struck by Ukrainian drones. Russian forces are likely leveraging the speed, maneuverability, and small profiles of motorcycles and other light civilian vehicles to mitigate the efficacy of Ukrainian drone capabilities and are likely developing a tactical doctrine for systematic offensive motorcycle usage and preparing to integrate motorcycle usage into Summer and Fall 2024 offensive operations.[9] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and military command previously responded to Ukrainian drone innovations by attempting to formally integrate and centralize Russia's drone operations and production.[10] The Ukrainian and Russian defense industrial bases (DIBs) continue to compete in the innovation of new, cost-effective systems that enhance assault and battlefield capabilities and counter each other's innovations. Russian forces likely see a tactical opportunity in leveraging motorcycles and civilian vehicles to advance and seize as much Ukrainian territory as possible despite Ukraine's drone defenses.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reaffirmed Russia's long-standing position against making any forms of territorial concessions, undermining the US President Donald Trump's efforts to broker a lasting peace. Lavrov stated in an interview with CBS News conducted on April 24 and aired on April 27 that "Russia does not negotiate its territory" when asked about the status of Russian-occupied Crimea in ongoing negotiations.[11] Lavrov also stated that he does not "think any change is conceivable" when asked about whether the Kremlin is willing to consider transferring control over the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) - reportedly one of the terms in the Trump administration's seven-point conflict termination plan.[12]

Russian officials adopted constitutional amendments that declared Crimea, Kherson, Zaporizhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk oblasts as Russian territories and have since relied on a pseudo-legal framework that claims occupied Ukrainian territories are now part of Russia "constitutionally" to reject ceding any area in Russian-occupied Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson Oblasts and Crimea to Ukraine as part of a peace deal to end the war.[13] Russian officials also use this pseudo-legal framework to demand that Ukraine cede additional territory within Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson Oblasts to Russia that Russia does not currently occupy.[14] Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Spokesperson Maria Zakharova similarly stated on April 26 that Russian forces will seize all "territory of Russia," which she claimed includes Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts.[15]

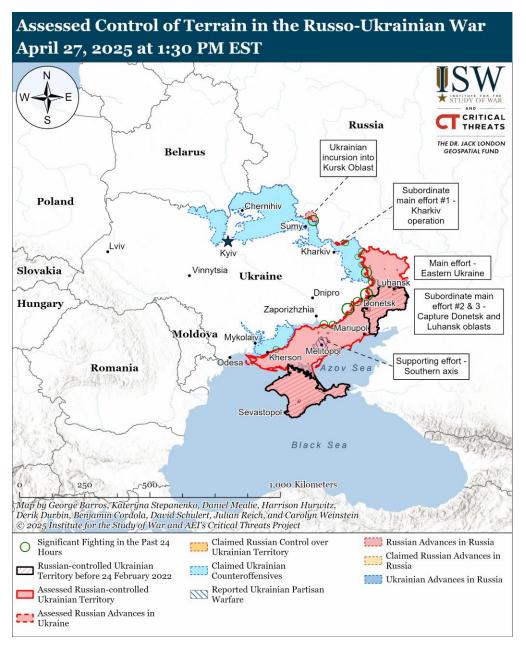
Lavrov and other Russian officials' recent statements directly contradict the Trump administration's proposed peace framework, which reportedly includes mutual territorial concessions, including Ukraine regaining territory in Kharkiv Oblast and the ZNPP.[16] ISW continues to observe that Ukraine remains open to good-faith dialogue with Russia and is willing to consider territorial issues, while Russia fails to offer any concessions of its own and insists on terms tantamount to Ukraine's surrender.[17]

Russian law enforcement announced on April 26 the arrest of Ignat Kuzin, the suspect whom Russia accused of planting the improvised explosive device (IED) that killed the deputy head of the Russian General Staff's Main Operational Directorate, Lieutenant General Yaroslav Moskalik, on April 25.[18] The Russian Investigative Committee and Federal Security Service (FSB) claimed that Kuzin purchased a car and installed the IED, which the Ukrainian State Security Service (SBU) detonated from Ukraine. BBC Russia, citing Kremlin newswire TASS, reported that Turkish authorities detained and extradited Kuzin to Russia after he allegedly attempted to flee from Moscow to Turkey.[19] ISW was not able to identify any Turkish confirmation of this claim, and Ukrainian officials have not commented on the attack as of this publication.

Key Takeaways:

- Ukrainian and Russian forces' constant technological and tactical battlefield innovations continue to transform the character of warfare in Ukraine.
- Russian forces are attempting to offset Ukrainian technological adaptations and drone operations by integrating motorcycles and civilian vehicles into offensive operations along the entire frontline.
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reaffirmed Russia's long-standing position against making any forms of territorial concessions, undermining the US President Donald Trump's efforts to broker a lasting peace.

- Russian law enforcement announced on April 26 the arrest of Ignat Kuzin, the suspect whom Russia accused of planting the improvised explosive device (IED) that killed the deputy head of the Russian General Staff's Main Operational Directorate, Lieutenant General Yaroslav Moskalik, on April 25
- Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Borova. Russian forces recently advanced in Sumy Oblast and near Chasiv Yar and Toretsk.



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are wellcovered 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.

- Alleged Ceasefire Violations
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Supporting Effort Northern Axis
- 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, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Alleged Ceasefire Violations

There are no active ceasefires in Ukraine.

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Russian forces did not make confirmed advances in Kursk Oblast on April 27 amid continued fighting.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and other senior Ukrainian military officials reported on April 27 that Ukrainian forces continue defensive operations in Kursk Oblast and that fighting continues in the Kursk direction, contrary to Russian officials' April 26 claims that Russian forces recaptured the entirety of Kursk Oblast.[20]

The acting commander of the Russian 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) reported to Russian President Vladimir Putin on April 27 that Russian forces will destroy all remaining Ukrainian troops in Kursk Oblast in the near future.[21] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces continue to conduct clearing operations near Gornal and Oleshnya (both southwest of Sudzha), while another claimed that Russian forces still need to push Ukrainian forces across the last few meters to the international border.[22] Another Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults in Kursk Oblast and that Russian forces do not have full control of the oblast.[23]

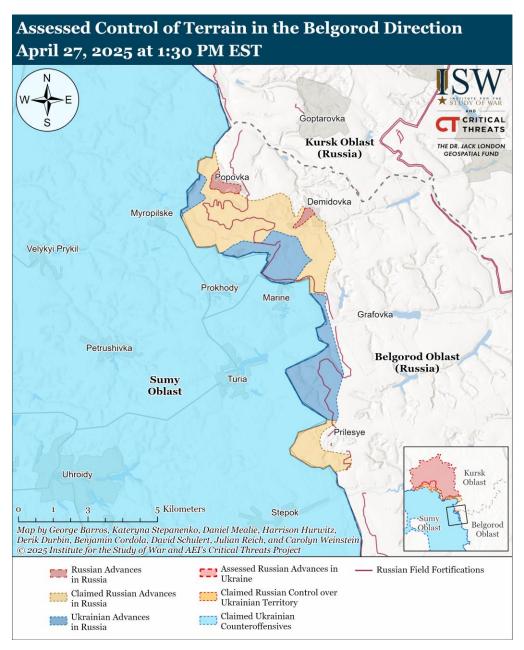
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 51st VDV (Airborne) Regiment (106th VDV Division) and elements of the 11th VDV Brigade are reportedly operating near Oleshnya.[24]

Russian forces did not make confirmed advances in Belgorod Oblast on April 27 amid continued fighting.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced southwest of Demidovka (northwest of Belgorod City).[25]

A Russian milblogger claimed that fighting continued near Popovka (northwest of Belgorod City).[26] Zelensky stated on April 27 that Ukrainian forces continue defense operations in Belgorod Oblast.[27]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Kara" detachment of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Demidovka.[28]

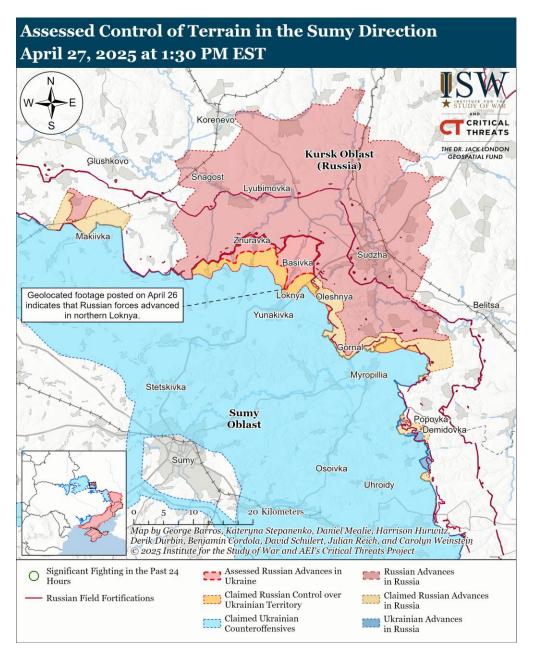


<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border and approach to within tube artillery range of Sumy City)

Russian forces recently advanced in northern Sumy Oblast.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 26 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along the C-191503 highway in northern Loknya (northeast of Sumy City).[29]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on April 27 that elements of the Russian 51st Airborne (VDV) Regiment (106th VDV Division) advanced into Sumy Oblast from Oleshnya, Kursk Oblast (southwest of Sudzha).[30]



<u> Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine</u>

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast</u> (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 attacked northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on April 27 but did not advance.[31]

<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 April 27 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced to Doroshivka (northwest of Kupyansk).[32]

Russian forces attacked north of Kupyansk near Mala Shapkivka and northeast of Kupyansk near Krasne Pershe on April 27.[33]

Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Viktor Trehubov reported on April 27 that Russian forces are attacking on motorcycles and buggies instead of using heavy armored vehicles such as tanks in the Kharkiv and Kupyansk directions.[34] Trehubov noted that Russian forces are increasingly using motorcycles to conduct motorized assaults in the Kupyansk direction.

Ukrainian forces recently advanced in the Borova direction.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 26 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced to the southwestern outskirts of Zahryzove (northeast of Borova).[35]

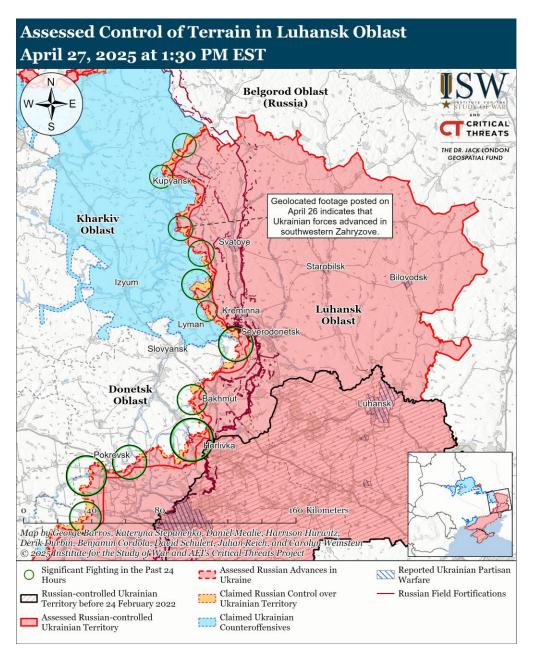
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced toward Hrekivka (southeast of Borova).[36]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Nova Kruhlyakivka; east of Borova near Nadiya, and Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Novoserhiivka, Olhivka, and Hrekivka on April 26 and 27.[37]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on April 27 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced near Nove and Torske (both northeast of Lyman).[38]

Russian forces continued ground attacks north of Lyman toward Lypove and northeast of Lyman near Novomykhailivka, Nove, Ridkodub, Yampolivka, and Kolodyazi, and toward Novyi Mir and Zelena Dolyna on April 26 and 27.[39]



<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, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on April 27 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Sivesk near Bilohorivka and Hryhorivka and east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyanske on April 26 and 27.[40]

Russian forces recently marginally advanced in the Chasiv Yar direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 26 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced south of Ozaryanivka, although this advance likely did not occur within the past day.[41]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced within central Chasiv Yar and on the northern outskirts of Stupochky (south of Chasiv Yar).[42]

Russian forces continued attacking near Chasiv Yar itself; south of Chasiv Yar near Stupochky, Predtechyne, and Bila Hora; and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Kurdyumivka and Ozaryanivka on April 26 and 27.[43] A Russian milblogger claimed on April 27 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Stupochky.[44]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 217th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (98th VDV Division) reportedly continue operating near Chasiv Yar.[45] Elements of the Russian 1442nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (6th Motorized Rifle Division, 3rd Army Corps [AC]) reportedly continue operating near Stupochky.[46]

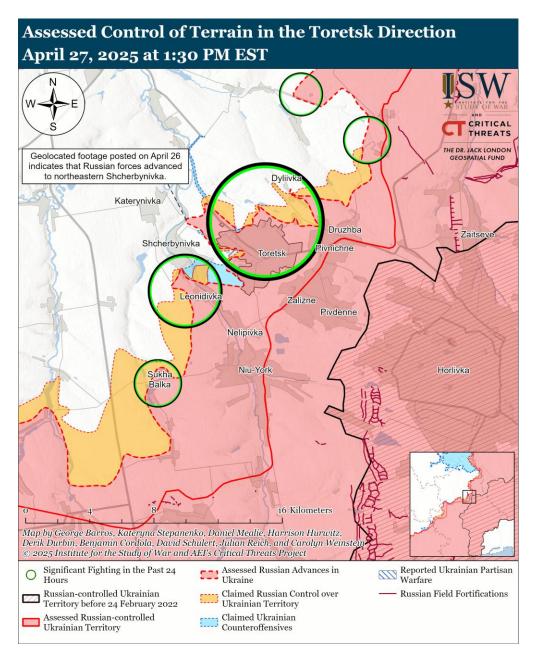
Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 26 and 27 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to the railway line in northeastern Shcherbynivka (west of Toretsk) and within central Berezivka (southwest of Toretsk).[47]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced to the northern outskirts of Shcherbynivka and seized Berezivka.[48]

Russian forces continued attacking near Toretsk; north of Toretsk near Krymske, Dachne, Dyliivka; east of Toretsk near Druzhba; and southwest of Toretsk near Leonidivka, Sukha Balka, and Yelyzavetivka on April 26 and 27.[49] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in southwestern Toretsk and near Novospaske (west of Toretsk), Shcherbynivka, Zelene Pole (southwest of Toretsk), and Berezivka.[50]

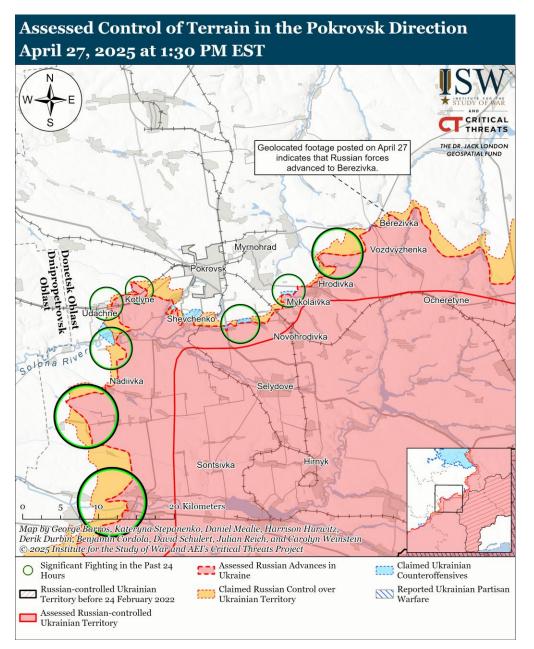
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 346th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Shcherbynivka.[51] Elements of the Russian 20th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) reportedly continue operating near Stara Mykolaivka (southwest of Toretsk), and elements of the 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th CAA) reportedly continue operating near Sukha Balka.[52]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Pokrovsk direction on April 27 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked east of Pokrovsk near Promin, Myrolyubivka, and Novotoretske; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka and Dachenske; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne and Udachne on April 26 and 27.[53]

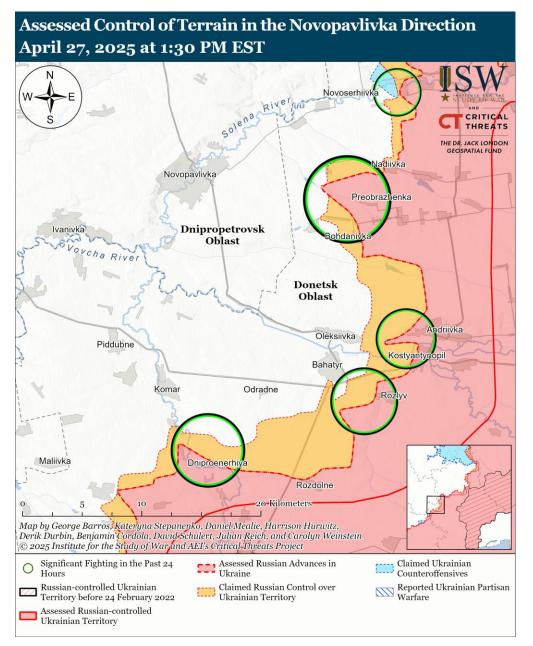
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 74th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) are reportedly operating in the Pokrovsk direction.[54] Elements of the 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Novoukrainka (south of Pokrovsk).[55]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction on April 27 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced between Uspenivka and Novooleksandrivka (northeast of Novopavlivka).[56]

Russian forces attacked near Novopavlivka itself; northeast of Novopavlivka near Uspenivka, Novooleksandrivka, and Novoserhiivka; east of Novopavlivka near Kotlyarivka; and southeast of Novopavlivka near Preobrazhenka, Bohdanivka, and Troitske on April 26 and 27.[57]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on April 27 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces recently advanced south of Bahatyr (southwest of Kurakhove).[58]

Russian forces attacked west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Andriivka, and Oleksiivka, and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozlyv, Bahatyr, and Odradne on April 26 and 27.[59] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Bahatyr and Odradne.[60]

Russian milbloggers claimed on April 26 and 27 that Russian and Ukrainian forces operating in the Kurakhove direction conducted several mechanized assaults.[61] It is unclear whether Russian

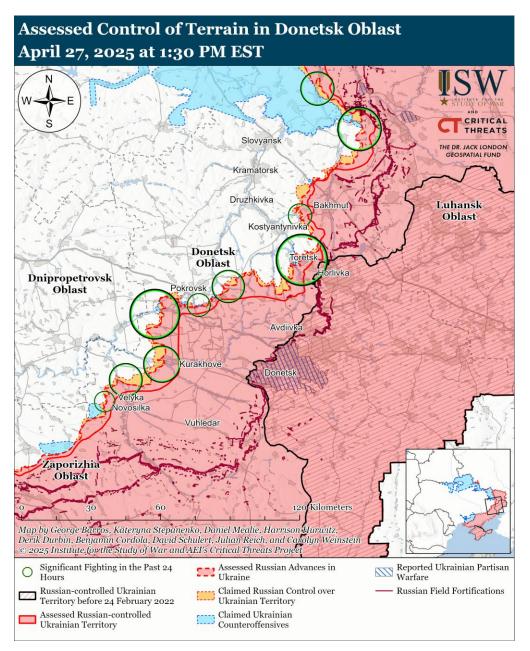
mechanized assaults in the Kurakhove direction are supported by armored vehicles or an amalgamation of motorcycles and other light vehicles.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army are reportedly operating near Bahatyr.[62] Drone elements of the 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Odradne.[63]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on April 27 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Vesele, Vilne Pole, Pryvilne, and Dniproenerhiya on April 26 and 27.[64] A Russian milblogger claimed on April 27 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked northeast of Dniproenerhiya.[65]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 57th Motorized Rifle Brigade and 305th Artillery Brigade (both of the 5th CAA, EMD) reportedly continue operating in the Velyka Novosilka direction.[66]



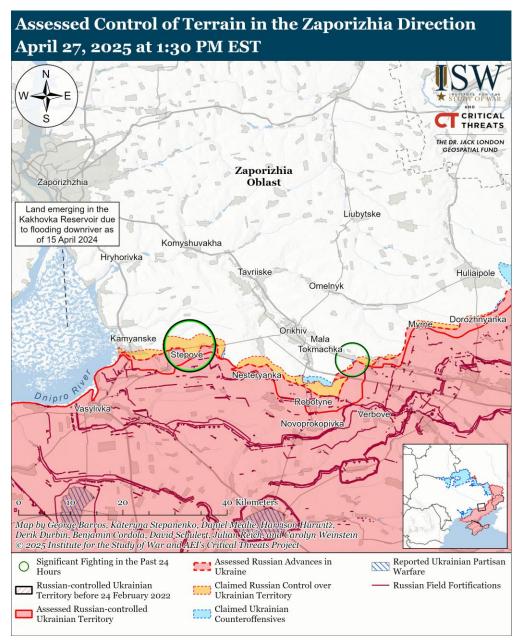
<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on April 27 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked southeast of Orikhiv near Mala Tokmachka and southwest of Orikhiv near Stepove and Mali Shcherbaky on April 26 and 27.[67]

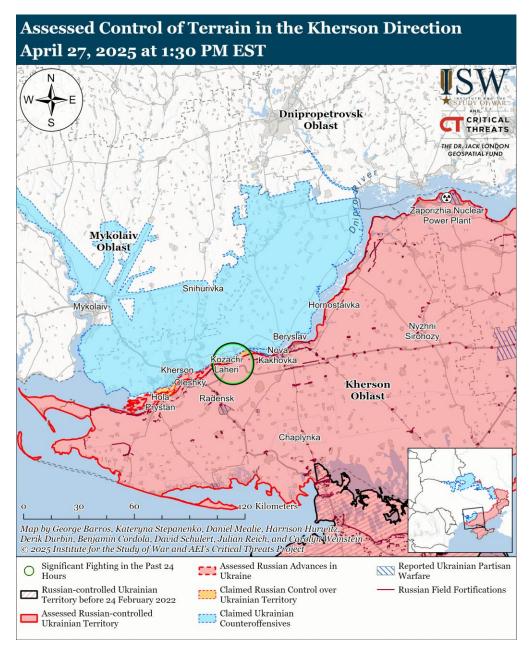
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 70th Motorized Rifle Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]), 503rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (19th Motorized Rifle Division, 58th CAA), and BARS-Sarmat Unmanned Systems Special

Purpose Center (formerly BARS-Sarmat Detachment, Russian Combat Army Reserve) are reportedly operating in the Orikhiv direction.[68]



Russian forces conducted limited ground assaults in the Kherson direction on April 26.[69]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 328th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (104th VDV Division) are reportedly operating on the east (left) bank of the Dnipro River in Kherson Oblast.[70]



<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 strikes against Ukraine overnight on April 26 to 27. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 149 drones from the directions of Kursk, Bryansk, and Oryol cities; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai.[71] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 57 drones over northern, eastern, southern, and central Ukraine and that 67 Russian decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drones struck commercial and residential infrastructure in Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, and Odesa oblasts.[72]

Donetsk Oblast officials reported on April 27 that Russian forces conducted three guided glide bomb strikes against Kostyantynivka, killing and injuring civilians.[73]

<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.

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