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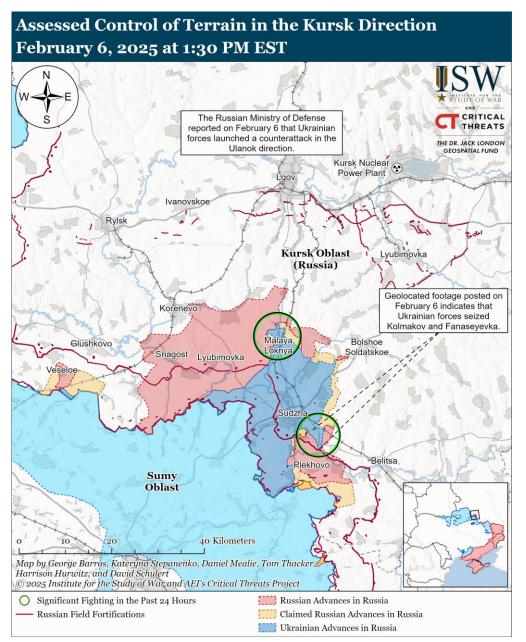
February 6, 2025, 6:30 pm ET

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:15pm ET on February 6. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the February 7 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian forces launched a new series of battalion-sized mechanized assaults in Kursk Oblast and advanced up to five kilometers behind Russian lines southeast of Sudzha, Kursk Oblast on February 6. Geolocated footage published on February 6 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced southwest of Makhnovka (southeast of Sudzha) and north and east of Cherkasskaya Konopelka (southeast of Sudzha) along the 38K-028 Sudzha-Oboyan highway and seized Kolmakov (north of Cherkasskava Konopelka) and Fanasevevka (just southeast of Cherkasskava Konopelka).[1] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Ukrainian forces attacked in several waves in the direction of Cherkasskava Konopelka and Ulanok (southeast of Cherkasskava Konopelka along the 38K-028 highway) with up to two mechanized battalions' worth of armored vehicles and that Russian forces repelled the attack.^[2] Russian milbloggers estimated that Ukrainian forces attacked with 30 to 50 armored vehicles and claimed that one group of Ukrainian forces successfully attacked from Makhnovka towards Cherkasskava Konopelka, Fanasevevka, and Ulanok and that Russian forces repelled another Ukrainian group that attacked from Dmitriukov (just east of Makhnovka) towards Russkaya Konopelka (east of Sudzha).[3] A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces seized Cherkasskava Konopelka, but two other milbloggers denied this claim.[4] Some Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces broke through to or even seized Ulanok, but other sources also denied these claims.[5] ISW has not yet observed geolocated evidence to assess that Ukrainian forces are operating in Ulanok. The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on February 6 indicating that Russian forces recently marginally advanced in a forested area southwest of Kurilovka.[6]

A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that there are unconfirmed reports that Ukrainian forces also attacked near Kruglenkoye (northwest of Sudzha), but ISW did not observe additional claims of Ukrainian activity in this area or north of Sudzha near Berdin where Ukrainian forces attacked in early January 2025.[7] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces launched the attacks southeast of Sudzha during poor weather conditions that complicated Russian drone operations in the area.[8] Some Russian milbloggers expressed concern that further Ukrainian advances in Kursk Oblast could threaten rear areas of the Russian force grouping attacking Guyevo (south of Sudzha) and complicate Russia's ability to interdict Ukrainian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) within the Ukrainian salient.[9] Russian sources acknowledged that elements of the Russian 11th Airborne (VDV) Brigade, 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet), 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]), and 177th Naval

Infantry Regiment (Caspian Flotilla) and Chechen Akhmat drone operators are the main forces defending against the Ukrainian attacks southeast of Sudzha.[10]



Russian President Vladimir Putin praised elite Russian VDV and naval infantry formations defending in Kursk Oblast on February 5, highlighting the fact that the Ukrainian incursion has pinned about a combined arms army's worth of Russian troops in Kursk Oblast since August 6, 2024. Putin stated during a meeting with acting Kursk Oblast Governor Alexander Khinshtein that elements of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet), 810th Naval Infantry Brigade, 106th VDV Division, 76th VDV Division, and other Russian forces are still operating in Kursk Oblast and will be rewarded for their service in the future.[11] Putin's statement underlines the fact that the Ukrainian incursion has pinned elements of these relatively elite formations

in Kursk Oblast for the last six months, depriving Russia of the opportunity to redeploy these forces to higher priority areas of the frontline in Donetsk Oblast.[12] ISW recently noted that the Russian military command has gathered around 78,000 troops, including 11,000 North Koreans and elements of most of Russia's elite VDV and naval infantry formations, to expel Ukrainian forces from Kursk Oblast.[13] Putin has yet to prioritize expelling Ukrainian forces from Kursk Oblast over continuing his gradual advances in Donetsk Oblast and continues to drag out the liberation of Kursk's border areas, despite domestic discontent.

Ukrainian officials provided additional details about Ukraine's operation in Kursk Oblast in honor of the six-month anniversary of the incursion. Ukraine's Special Operations Forces (SSO) commemorated the milestone on February 6 by acknowledging that small SSO units infiltrated Russia's rear in Kursk Oblast as early as June 2024 - two months before the main incursion began in August 2024.[14] The SSO forces advanced behind Russian lines in Kursk Oblast to prepare for the Ukrainian incursion, conducting reconnaissance and targeted strikes to dismantle key elements of Russia's border defenses. The SSO noted that Ukrainian forces systematically destroyed Russian air defense and ammunition depots, limiting Russia's ability to respond to the Ukrainian incursion. The SSO also provided a detailed account of the operation and the technological adaptations the Ukrainian forces employed during the Kursk incursion. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also awarded honors to the Ukrainian personnel involved in the Kursk incursion for the anniversary, offering the first official Ukrainian statement regarding a comprehensive composition of Ukraine's force deployment in Kursk Oblast.[15] Zelensky reiterated that the incursion aimed to prevent a new Russian offensive against Sumy and Kharkiv cities. Zelensky noted that the Kursk incursion reinforced his "peace through strength" principle, provided Ukraine with a significant replenishment of POW "exchange funds," and forced Russia to divert elite military units to Kursk Oblast - impairing Russian operations elsewhere along the front. Ukrainian officials have previously noted that the Ukrainian incursion spoiled several Russian plans to attack northern Ukraine and complicated Russian efforts to intensify offensive operations northern Kharkiv, Donetsk. and Zaporizhia oblasts.[16] in

A Russian state-run poll suggests that the Russian public maintains a high level of support for the war in Ukraine despite mounting challenges. The Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM) released results on February 6 of a survey of 1,600 Russians conducted from January 28 to February 2, showing that 67 percent of the people polled support Russia's war in Ukraine and that 65 percent believe that the war is "going well" for Russia.[17] VCIOM's Political Research Director Mikhail Mamonov stated that the public demands a swift, favorable conclusion to the war and supports measures that advance these goals while resenting Russian setbacks like the Ukrainian Kursk Oblast incursion, slow territorial gains, and economic hardship. VCIOM's findings likely reflect Kremlin views and narratives and likely inflate the level of public support for the war, however. These results come amid rising casualties, Russian command controversies, and immense economic strain on the Russian economy during the war.[18] Successful renewed Ukrainian counterattacks in Kursk Oblast may also negatively impact the Russian public's view of the war in the coming weeks.

North Korea appears to be using its alliance with Russia to leverage the war in Ukraine as a testing ground to refine its missile technology and broader military capabilities.

Reuters, citing two Ukrainian military-affiliated sources, reported on February 6 that North Korean ballistic missiles fired by Russian forces since December 2024 have shown significantly improved accuracy.[19] These North Korean missiles, previously accurate within 1 to 3 kilometers, can now strike within 50 to 100 meters of their intended targets. One Ukrainian source noted that Russia has launched over 20 North Korean missiles in recent weeks, all demonstrating enhanced precision. *Reuters'* sources speculated that North Korea may have upgraded the navigation systems of its missiles, incorporated new steering mechanisms, or received improved targeting data and guidance components from Russia, although the exact modifications remain unclear. The North Korean missiles not only serve to bolster Russia's arsenal but also likely allow North Korea to refine its capabilities for possible future military operations elsewhere. Other Russian allies, such as Iran, likely can improve their strike systems' performance by leveraging Russia's lessons learned from operations in Ukraine.

Ukrainian forces conducted a strike against an air base in Krasnodar Krai on the night of February 5 to 6 as a part of an ongoing strike campaign against Russian defense industrial enterprises and oil refineries. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian Unmanned Systems Forces (USF) and other Ukrainian forces conducted a drone strike against the Primorsko-Akhtarsk Air Base, causing an explosion and resulting in a fire at the facility.[20] The Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian forces use the Primorsko-Akhtarsk Air Base to store, prepare, and launch Shahed drones against Ukraine and to conduct maintenance for aircraft operating over occupied Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts. Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation Head Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko amplified footage of the explosion at the Primorsko-Akhtarsk air base.[21]

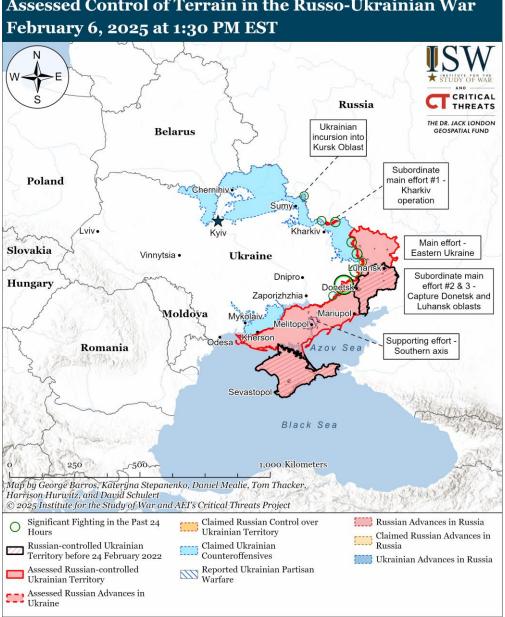
Ukraine's Western partners continue to provide military assistance to Ukraine. French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu announced on February 6 that France transferred an unspecified number of French Mirage 2000-5 fighter jets to Ukraine — the first batch of Mirage jets Ukraine has received.[22] French President Emmanuel Macron announced on June 6, 2024 that France would provide Ukraine with an unspecified number of Mirage 2000-5 fighter jets and equip and train several pilots to operate the jets.[23] Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov stated on February 6 that the Netherlands recently delivered an unspecified number of US-made F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine.[24]

Russian President Vladimir Putin appointed Deputy Minister of Transport Dmitry Bakanov to replace Yuri Borisov as head of the state-owned Russian space agency Roscosmos on February 6.[25] Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated on February 6 that Bakanov's appointment is part of a regular personnel rotation.[26] Several Russian milbloggers characterized the reshuffling, however, as a result of Kremlin officials' dissatisfaction with Roscosmos's underperformance under Borisov's leadership, including Borisov's inability to accelerate the development of a full-fledged portable satellite communications system for the Russian military by 2026.[27] A Russian insider source noted that Borisov served as Deputy Minister of Defense under former Russian Defense Minister and Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu from 2018-2022 and was one of the last remaining nodes of Shoigu's patronal network that controlled the Russian Ministry

of Defense prior to widespread arrests of Ministry of Defense officials in Summer 2024.[28] Bakanov previously served as the head of Russia's Gonets communication satellite program from 2011-2019.[29] Gonets is a possible civilian analogue to Western Starlink terminals.[30]

Key Takeaways:

- Ukrainian forces launched a new series of battalion-sized mechanized assaults in Kursk Oblast and advanced up to five kilometers behind Russian lines southeast of Sudzha, Kursk Oblast on February 6.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin praised elite Russian VDV and naval infantry formations defending Kursk Oblast on February 5, highlighting the fact that the Ukrainian incursion has pinned about a combined arms army's worth of Russian troops in Kursk Oblast since August 6, 2024.
- Ukrainian officials provided additional details about Ukraine's operation in Kursk Oblast in honor of the six-month anniversary of the incursion.
- A Russian state-run poll suggests that the Russian public maintains a high level of support for the war in Ukraine despite mounting challenges.
- North Korea appears to be using its alliance with Russia to leverage the war in Ukraine as a testing ground to refine its missile technology and broader military capabilities.
- Ukrainian forces conducted a strike against an air base in Krasnodar Krai on the night of February 5 to 6 as a part of an ongoing strike campaign against Russian defense industrial enterprises and oil refineries.
- Ukraine's Western partners continue to provide military assistance to Ukraine.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin appointed Deputy Minister of Transport Dmitry Bakanov to replace Yuri Borisov as head of the state-owned Russian space agency Roscosmos on February 6.
- Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast and recaptured lost positions near Kurakhove.
- Russian forces recently advanced near Kupyansk, Chasiv Yar, and Kurakhove.
- Russian authorities continue efforts to increase social benefits for Russian military personnel likely to support ongoing recruitment efforts.



Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

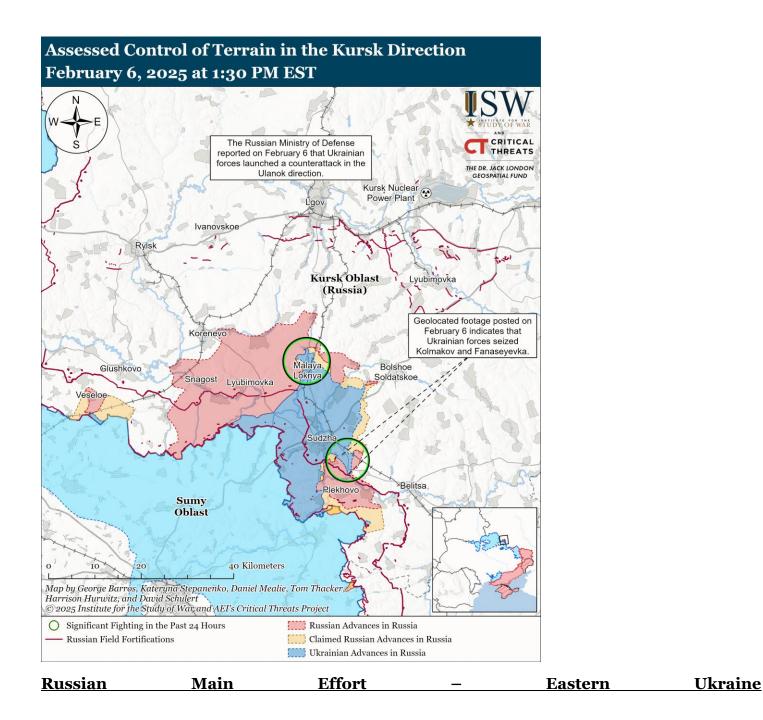
We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are wellcovered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military 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.

- 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 Fe</u>	ederation
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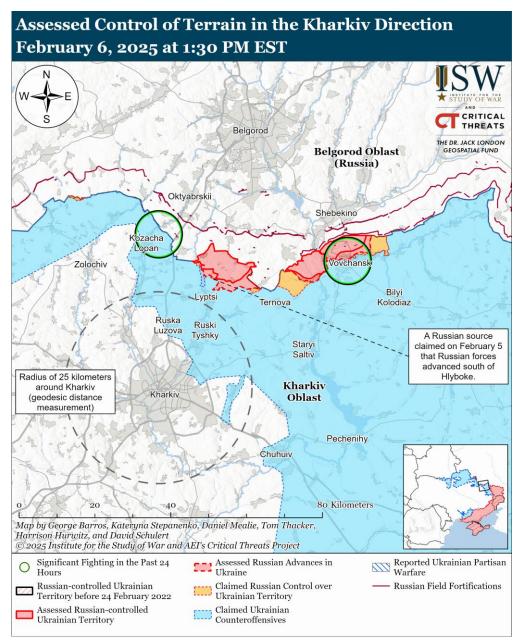
See topline text for reports of battlefield activity in Kursk Oblast and Ukrainian strikes in Russia.



<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 continued offensive operations north of Kharkiv City along the international border near Kozacha Lopan and northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on February 5 and 6 but did not make any confirmed advances.[31] A Russian milblogger claimed that positional fighting is ongoing in Vovchansk itself and east of Vovchansk near Tykhe.**[32]** The milblogger claimed that Russian forces are amassing forces north of Kharkiv City near northern Lyptsi to prepare for future Russian attacks.

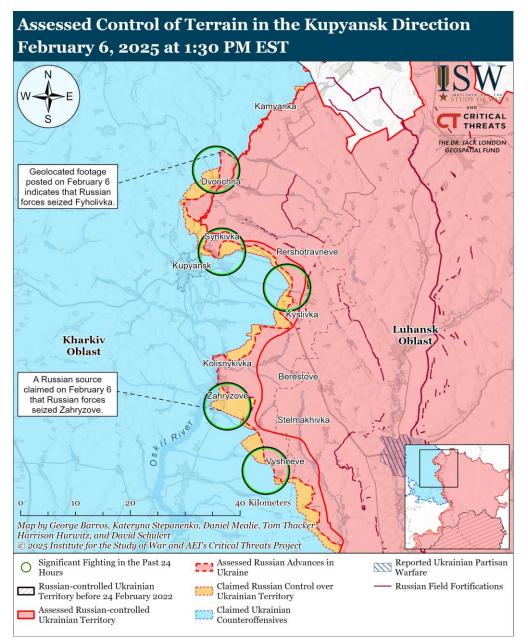
Russian-claimed advances: A Russian milblogger claimed on February 5 that Russian forces advanced the fields south of Hlyboke (northeast of Kharkiv City).[33] ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim, however.



<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 recently advanced in the Kupyansk direction amid continued offensiveoperations in the area on February 6. Russian forces continued attacking east of Kupyansk nearPetropavlivkaonFebruary5and6.[34]

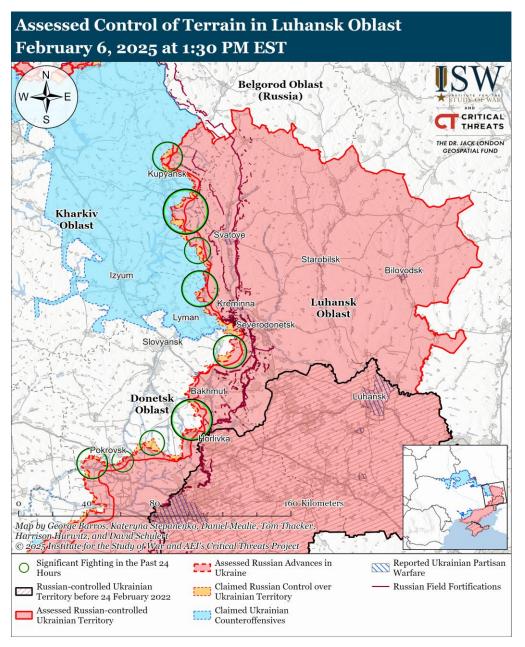
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 6 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced on the west bank of the Oskil River along the O-210921 highway, into Fyholivka (northeast of Kupyansk and north of Dvorichna), and seized the settlement.[35]



Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed on February 5 and 6 that Russian forces advanced north, northwest, and south of Zapadne (north of Kupyansk); crossed the Oskil River near

Topoli (northeast of Kupyansk and along the international border) and consolidated positions on the west (right) bank of the river; and advanced south and southwest of Topoli.[36] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however.

A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces are developing an offensive south of Zapadne alongside the Oskil River.[37] The milblogger claimed that small groups of Russian forces are attempting to encircle Ukrainian forces in Dvorichna (north of Kupyansk). A Ukrainian brigade commander operating in the Kupyansk direction stated that Russian forces are attempting to create a bridgehead on the banks of the Oskil River but have failed to make significant advances in the brigade's area of responsibility (AoR) thus far.[38]



Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 25th Motorized Rifle Brigade (6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) reportedly continue to attack near Dvorichna.[39] Elements of the Russian 1st Guards Tank Army ([GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly operating near Kupyansk.[40]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on February 6 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian forces continued attacking northeast of Borova near Pishchane, Zahryzove, Kolisnykivka, Nova Kruhlyakivka, and Lozova; east of Borova near Zelenyi Hai and Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Novoyehorivka, Novoserhiivka, and Hrekivka on February 5 and 6.[41]

Russian-claimed advances: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized Zahryzove and advanced west of Lozova and south and west of Zelenyi Hai.[42] ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim, however.

Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces reported that Ukrainian forces damaged a Russian tank and two armored vehicles transporting Russian infantry to forward positions near Zahryzove.[43] The Khortytsia Group of Forces also stated that Ukrainian forces destroyed four tanks and two armored vehicles involved in a Russian assault near Kopanky.[44]

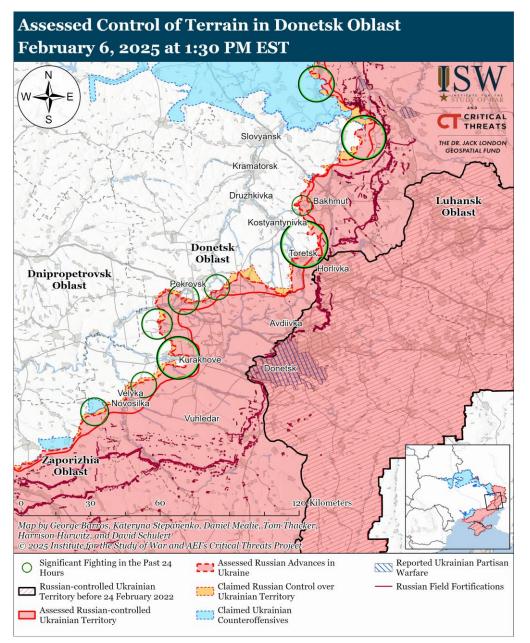
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on February 6 butdid not make any confirmed advances.Russian forces continued attacking north of Lyman nearNove and Zelena Dolyna; northeast of Lyman near Novolyubivka, Yampolivka, and Kolodyazi; and eastof Lyman near Torske on February 5 and 6.[45]

A Ukrainian battalion officer operating in the Lyman direction stated that Russian forces use a large number of drones, including fiber-optic drones, in the Lyman direction in order to complicate Ukrainian logistics routes. The battalion officer stated that Russian forces bring in reinforcements of 30 to 40 personnel weekly in the direction, which the officer stated suggests that Russian forces may be preparing for a larger-scale offensive operation in the area.[46] The officer noted that Terny, Ivanovka (northeast of Lyman), and the Serebryanske forest area (east of Lyman) are the most active areas of the frontline in this direction.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 144th Motorized Rifle Division (20th CAA, MMD) and Chechen Akhmat Spetsnaz "Shram" Group reportedly continue operating in the Lyman direction.[47]]

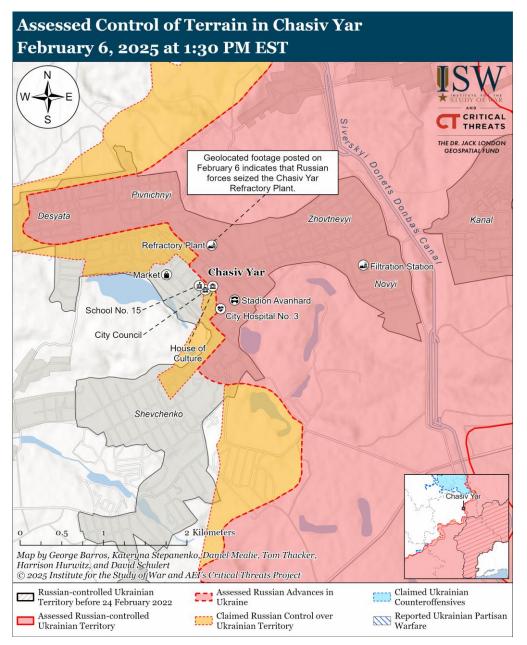
<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on February 6 but did not advance. Russian forces attacked near Siversk itself, northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka, east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyanske, and southeast of Siversk near Spirne on February 5 and 6.[48] Ukraine's Khortytsia Grouping of Forces reported that Russian forces are using armored vehicles, civilian vehicles, and motorcycles to transport personnel near Verkhnokamyanske.[49]



Order of Battle: Reconnaissance elements of the Russian 2nd Guards Artillery Brigade (3rd CombinedArms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People's Republic Army Corps [LNR AC], Southern MilitaryDistrict[SMD])arereportedlyoperatingnearVerkhnokamyanske.

Russian forces recently advanced in Chasiv Yar amid continued offensive operations near Chasiv Yar itself and to the south near Stupochky on February 5 and 6.[51]



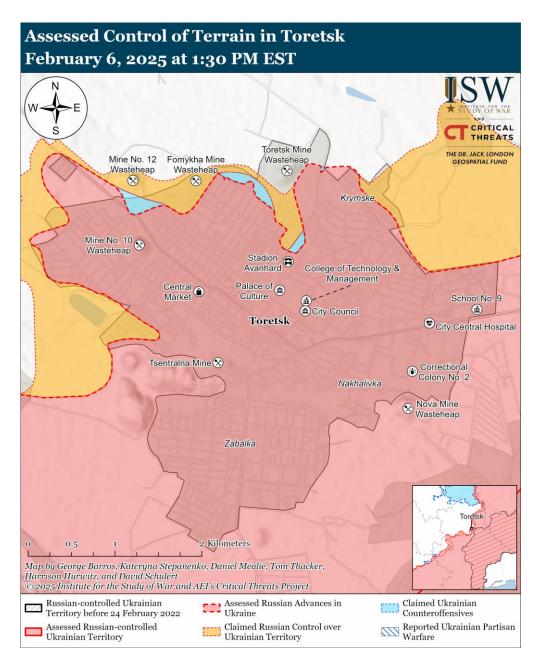
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 6 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced west of the central Refractory Plant in Chasiv Yar and likely seized the remainder of the Refractory Plant.[52]

Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northward to the fields north of Pivnichnyi Microraion in Chasiv Yar and westward to the fields south of Chasiv Yar.[53] Another Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces forced Ukrainian forces out of the Avanhard Stadium in central Chasiv Yar.[54] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however.

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets stated on February 6 that Russian forces are accumulating forces in northern Chasiv Yar and noted that Russian forces are concentrating manpower in the Pivichnyi Microraion and no longer have to move through the Siverskyi Donets Donbas Canal's pipes.[55] Zaporozhets stated that Russian forces are using more four-wheelers and buggies in the area and noted that Ukrainian forces destroyed at least 10 units of Russian armored vehicles in January 2025. Successful and costly Ukrainian strikes against Russian armored vehicles in the area may have prompted Russian forces to use less-costly, alternative modes of transport more frequently. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are attacking Ukrainian forces defending the T-05-04 highway and preparing to attack along the highway toward Stupochky.[56]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 217th Airborne (VDV) Regiment and of the 215th Reconnaissance Battalion (both of the 98th VDV Division) reportedly continue to operate near Chasiv Yar.[57]

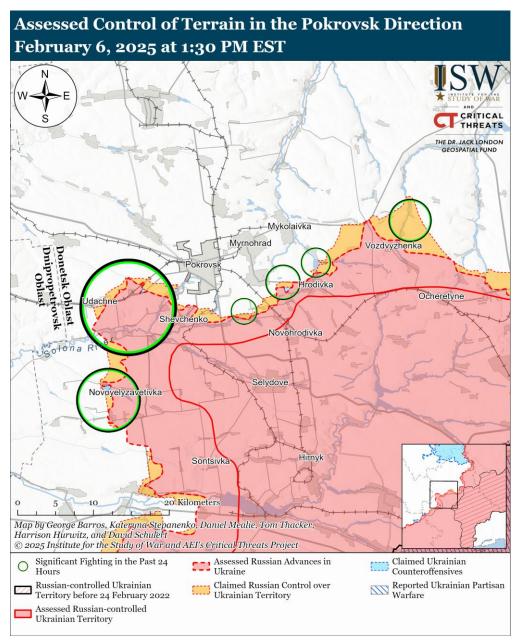
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Toretsk direction on February 6 but did not advance. Russian forces attacked in Toretsk itself, north of Toretsk near Dyliivka, and southwest of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka on February 5 and 6.[58] A Russian milblogger claimed that fighting is ongoing for the waste heap west of the Toretska Mine in northern Toretsk.[59]



Order of Battle: Elements of the "Maksim Krivonos" volunteer detachment, allegedly formed by former members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces who defected to fight for Russia, are reportedly operating near Toretsk.[60]

Russian forces continued offensive operations near Pokrovsk on February 6 but did not advance. Russian forces continued assaults east of Pokrovsk near Tarasivka, Vodyane Druhe, Yelyzavetivka, Myrolyubivka, and Promin; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Pishchane and Zvirove; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Udachne, Nadiivka, Kotlyarivka, Uspenivka, Sribne, and Zaporizhzhia on February 5 and 6.[61] Russian milbloggers claimed that

Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked with armored vehicle support near Pishchane and Nadiivka.[62]



Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Kotlyne towards Hryshyne (northwest of Pokrovsk), northeast of Pishchane and Udachne, north and south of Nadiivka, and in the fields north of Arkhanhelske (east of Pokrovsk) and Vidrozhennya (south of Porkovsk, formerly Novyi Trud).[63]

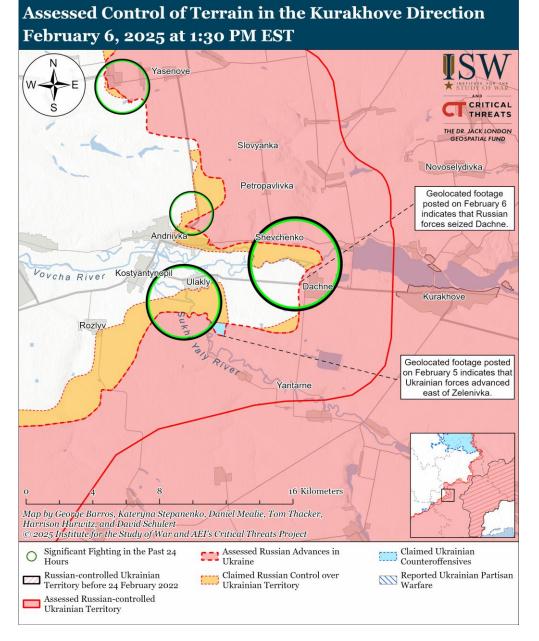
Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Major Viktor Trehubov reported that Russian forces lost 7,000 killed in action (KIA) and 15,000 wounded in action (WIA) in the Pokrovsk direction

in

January

Order of Battle: A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the 90th Tank Division (41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) are attacking towards Zaporizhzhia (west of Sribne).[65]

Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced west of Kurakhove amid ongoing offensive operations in the area on February 6. Russian forces continued attacks northwest of Kurakhove near Shevchenko and Andriivka, west of Kurakhove near Dachne and Kostyantynopil, and southwest of Kurakhove near Ulakly on February 5 and 6.[66] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are attacking towards the H-15 Kurakhove-Pokrovske highway and Bahatyr (further west of Kurakhove) while trying to seize positions along the highway, but that Ukrainian forces have thus far repelled these attacks.[67]



Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 6 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced east of Zelenivka (southwest of Kurakhove).[68]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 6 indicates that elements of the Russian 68th Tank Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) recently advanced into northwestern Dachne, seized Dachne, and likely pushed Ukrainian forces from positions in the fields immediately north and south of the settlement.[69]

Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are advancing in central and northern Andriivka, southeast of Kostyantynopil, and along the T-0515 Kostyantynopil-Pokrovsk highway between Andriivka and Kostyantynopil.[70] Another Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized a bridge (likely the bridge over the Vovcha River near Andriivka) along the T-0515 highway.[71]

Russian forces continued assault northeast of Velyka Novosilka near Rozdolne and westof Velyka Novosilka near Novopil on February 5 and 6 but did not advance in thearea.[72]Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked nearNovyiKomar(northofVelykaNovosilka).[73]

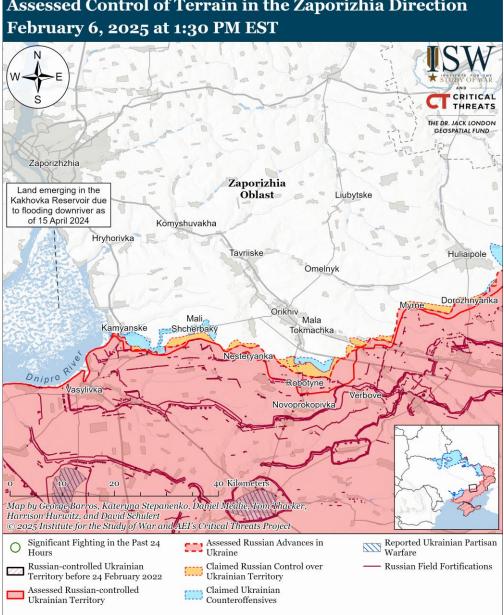
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 5th Tank Brigade (36th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD])arereportedlyoperatinginVelykaNovosilka.[74]

<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported fighting in the Polohy direction on February 6.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 38th Motorized Rifle Brigade (35th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating in the Polohy direction.[75]

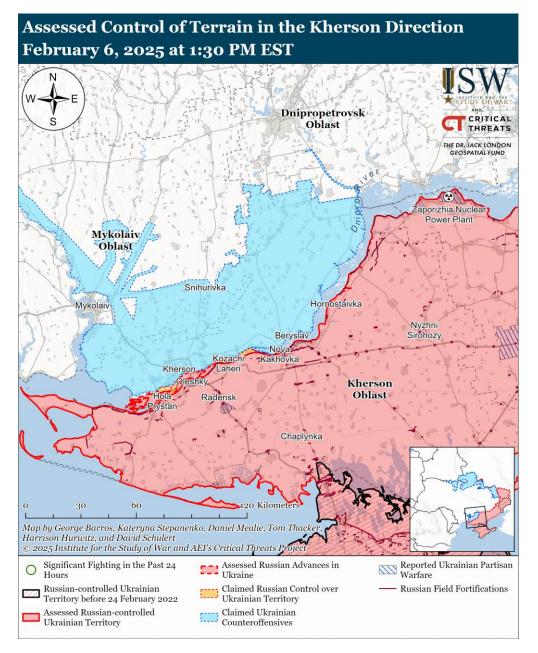
Positional fighting continued in western Zaporizhia Oblast on February 6, but Russian forces did not advance.[76]



Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction

The Ukrainian Unmanned Systems Forces published footage on February 5 of Ukrainian forces destroying a Russian Buk-M3 air defense system in an unspecified location in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast, likely referring to the same strike that the Ukrainian General Staff reported on February 5.[77] A Russian milblogger claimed on February 6 that Russian forces are targeting Ukrainian Starlink terminals Oblast.[78] Zaporizhia in

Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported fighting in the Kherson direction on February 6.



Russian Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Habr" drone detachment are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Antonivka (immediately east of Kherson City).[79]

<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 on the night of February 5 to 6. The Ukrainian Air Force stated that Russian forces launched 77 Shahed and decoy drones from Oryol, Kursk, and Bryansk oblasts; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and Shatalovo, Smolensk Oblast and two Iskander-M ballistic missiles from Rostov Oblast.[80] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian

forces downed 56 drones over Kharkiv, Poltava, Sumy, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Zhytomyr, Cherkasy, Zaporizhia, Dnipropetrovsk, and Vinnytsia oblasts; that 18 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference; and that Russian drones struck Kharkiv, Cherkasy, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts. Ukrainian officials stated on February 5 and 6 that Russian drones struck a market in Kyivskyi raion, Kharkiv City, causing a fire at a nearby pavilion and that a Russian drone struck a residential building in Saltivskyi raion, Kharkiv City.[81] *BBC Russia* reported on February 5 that a Russian missiles strike struck a residential building in Odesa raion, Odesa Oblast.[82]

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

Russian authorities continue efforts to increase social benefits for Russian military personnel likely to support ongoing recruitment efforts. Russian State Duma deputy Igor Antropenko proposed simplifying the process for relatives of Rosgvardia personnel to obtain military service certificates recognizing their relatives' service in Ukraine in a document addressed to Rosgvardia Director Viktor Zolotov on February 6.[83] Russian personnel must have these certificates to receive social benefits as veterans of the war. The Russian State Duma adopted a bill in its first reading on February 6 that improves social benefits to veterans who served in the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republic (DNR and LNR) militias, including pensions for personnel wounded in combat, disability pensions without applications, paying pensions relatives of deceased personnel.[84] and to

Russian milbloggers complained on February 6 that Russian personnel first mobilized during the Fall 2022 partial reserve call up have low morale. A milblogger complained that allowing Russian mobilized personnel to take temporary leave would improve their morale and claimed that Russia has enough contract personnel to completely demobilize these personnel but that Russia will not demobilize these troops until after the war.[85] A second milblogger and former Storm-Z instructor disagreed, claiming that the Russian military command wants to get rid of all mobilized personnel in costly, infantry assaults in Ukraine.[86] The second milblogger claimed that the Russian "Dnepr" and Southern groupings of forces ordered frontline commanders to "agitate" these personnel to persuade them to sign contracts with the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) to inflate recruitment numbers and avoid paying mobilized personnel for injuries and deaths.

Russian opposition outlet *Vazhnye Istorii* reported on February 6 that it analyzed Russian dog tag numbers with the prefix "AB" and determined that the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) recruited roughly 30,000 penal recruits for "Storm-Z" units from roughly 108 penal colonies from February to August 2023.[87]

<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.



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