



**DIGEST OF THE UKRAINIAN
NEWS and THE SITUATION
UPDATE IN THE AREA OF THE
JOINT FORCES OPERATION (JFO)
AGAINST RUSSIAN ARMED
AGGRESSION**

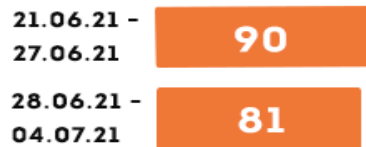
Week 28 JUN – 04 JUL 2021

THE SITUATION UPDATE IN THE AREA OF THE JOINT FORCES OPERATION

**Russian occupation troops
81 times committed
provocative firing
1 Ukrainian service member
were KIA and 3 WIA**

DYNAMICS OF UKRAINIAN BATTLE CASUALTIES AND HOSTILE ATTACKS

SHOOTING ATTACKS



KILLED



WOUNDED



On July 4, Russia-backed militants violated the ceasefire six times, the Joint Forces command said in a morning report on Monday. A Ukrainian serviceman was killed in action. He was identified as the chief of a battalion aid station of the 93rd mechanized brigade Yuriy Pysmennyi who went by the call sign Feofan. One more serviceman incurred a shrapnel wound.

<https://uacrisis.org/en/weekly-update-on-ukraine-24-28-june-04-july-2021>

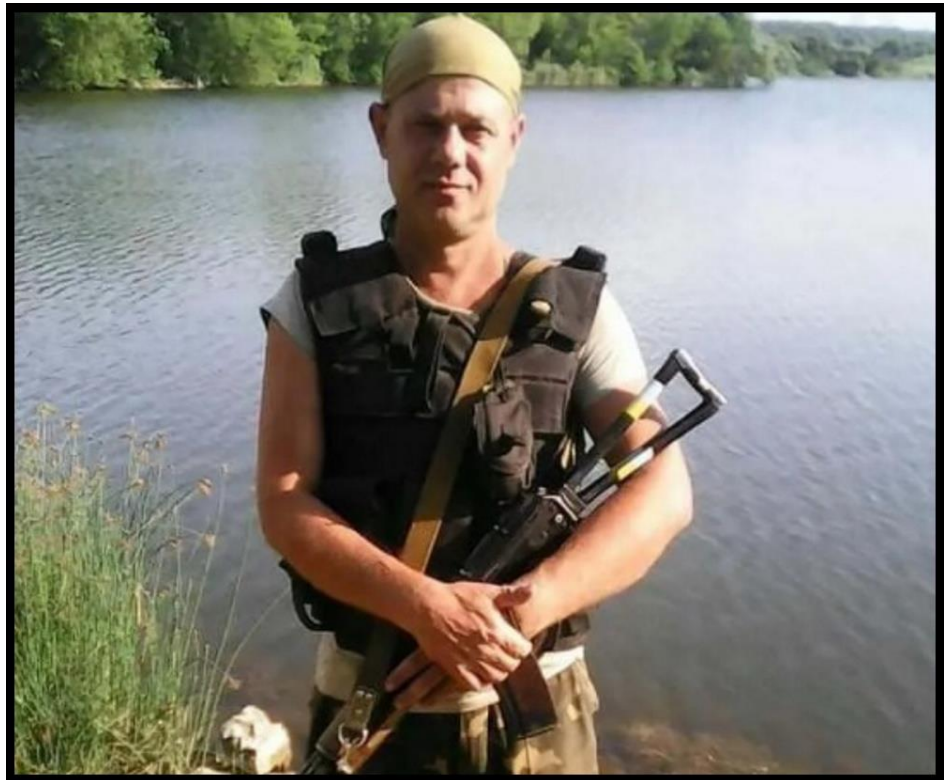
Fallen Defenders of June 2021

The war continues. During June, the Russian occupants fired 196 shelling attacks on the Ukrainian Armed Forces positions in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The Joint Forces Headquarters recorded 16 other violations of the “ceasefire regime” – flights of enemy UAVs. Two Ukrainian soldiers were killed and nine received battle injuries. The number of dead and wounded is the lowest since the beginning of 2021. But the grief of deaths is enormous, despite their number. For families, friends, colleagues, for all who knew the two warriors and respect their heroic act.



Sergeant **Volodymyr Bielov** was born on July 28, 1984, in Kazakhstan. In 1993, he moved with his parents to Ukraine, to the village of Zabiria, Fastiv district of the Kyiv region, where he later lived. He entered the Aviation University, then worked in the housing and public utility sector, and was fond of electronic music. And since 2015, the fronts of the Russian-Ukrainian war have become the place of Volodymyr's permanent "residence". He survived many flashpoints of this conflict: Mykhailivka, Pisky, Zaitseve, Hranitne, Chermalyk, Vodiane. Volodymyr Bielov, a serviceman of the 128th Separate Mountain Zakarpattia Brigade, professionally approached the performance of combat missions. No wonder he was appointed as senior at the platoon stronghold.

Sergeant Bielov died on June 11 at about 3:45 p.m. near the village of Vodiane in Pryazovia. On that day, Russian hybrid forces opened fire four times on the positions of the Armed Forces – from grenade machine guns, hand-held anti-tank, rifle-attached grenade launchers, and large caliber machine guns. Volodymyr received a fatal shrapnel wound... The soldier was buried in Zabiria. His father, brother and sister remain behind.



Senior soldier **Andrii Honar** was at war since 2015 – he was first mobilized, and later signed a contract with the Armed Forces. Andrii was born on August 14, 1969 in Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region. He worked as a driver at various enterprises – at the bus depot, at the plant “Communist” and more. He was fond of cars and hunting. And he loved fishing so much that even at the front he found time for his favorite hobby. His comrades say that they often treated themselves to fried fish, just caught by Andrii Mykolaiovych.

Andrii Mykolaiovych had about a day or two before the end of his contract, when early in the morning of June 11, enemy troops fired mortars and other weapons on Ukrainian positions near the village of Pisky in the Donetsk region. A 51-year-old fighter died on the spot from a shrapnel wound. He is buried in Kryvyi Rih. Andrii is survived by three children and a sister.

<https://uacrisis.org/en/fallen-defenders-of-june-2021>

THE UKRAINIAN NEWS

28 JUN – 04 JUL 2021

During a working visit to the Odesa region, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy took part in solemn events on the occasion of the Day of the Naval Forces of Ukraine, which took place at the Odesa Maritime Station.

"Today as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, as a patriot and first of all as a citizen of Ukraine, I am happy to be here, with you - the guardians of our state! And I'm happy to congratulate you on this great holiday - the Day of Naval Forces," said the President during a speech.

According to tradition, solemn events began with a moment of silence honoring the memory of military sailors who defended the homeland at the cost of their own life.

The Head of State noted that the Navy of the Armed Forces are gradually becoming a powerful force that combines professional skills, high morale of personnel, effective weapons and techniques.

"The power of the national fleet, along with other troops of Ukraine, is a support for our diplomacy on the way to the restoration of peace and territorial integrity of Ukraine," Volodymyr Zelenskyy emphasized.

According to him, against the backdrop of Russian armed aggression, the combat capable naval forces are one of the most important components of Ukraine's defense capability and security and an important factor in military-political reality in the Black Sea Region.

"Therefore, one of my major priorities at the post of President of Ukraine is to build powerful naval forces equipped with modern ships and modern weapons, ready to respond adequately to challenges and threats to our national security," the President said.

According to the Head of State, in order to revive the Ukrainian Navy, the reform of the Naval Military Office bodies under NATO standards was held in recent years.

"Ukraine, along with the USA, Great Britain, Turkish Republic and many other countries - our friends, actively implements joint large-scale projects on the renewal of our fleet, the development of modern naval infrastructure, personnel training," he said.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy emphasized that the Naval Base "East" in Berdyansk on the northwest coast of the Sea of Azov increases capacity and actively builds its infrastructure, and the Navy on the Azov is reinforced by two more combat boats.

In addition, in the Pivdennyi port of the Black Sea coast, an infrastructure for basing patrol boats is formed, the management of the division of ships was deployed, two boats of Island type are based. Reinforcement is also expected - at least three boats that are currently being upgraded in the United States.

"Next year, the American side will begin transferring high-speed combat boats "Mark-6" to Ukraine," said the President.

Also, according to him, the Memorandum of Cooperation between Ukraine and Great Britain signed in 2020 is being filled with concrete actions. And shortly, the Ukrainian fleet will be reinforced by anti-mine ships and modern missile boats.

"Strengthening of our maritime aviation is also successful. We expect to get modern and effective unmanned aerial vehicles "Bayraktar" shortly. Ukrainian crews for them are already completing training in the Republic of Turkey," said the Head of State.

In addition, in Turkey, the first corvette framework for the Navy of Ukraine was built. It will be completed in the Ukrainian shipyard by the end of 2023, added the President.

Also, an active increase in the combat capabilities of the Ukrainian military fleet will be continued due to domestic weapons and military equipment.

Marine infantry in cooperation with international partners continues to improve combat training, increases the landfill infrastructure and permanent dislocation points infrastructure.

"Today, the personnel of our naval forces jointly with the warriors of partner countries continues to increase the maritime power during the international exercises "Sea Breeze 2021". This year they are the largest in their history," Volodymyr Zelenskyy noted.

According to him, in these exercises, except Ukraine and the United States, representatives of the United Kingdom, Turkey, Germany, France, Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Canada, Australia, Israel, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, UAE, Japan and many other NATO and partner countries of Ukraine take part.

"I'm glad to welcome all of you - all of our friends - on today's holiday! These exercises are a regular exam for Ukrainian military sailors in terms of interoperability with the best fleets of the world and the quality of their actions in a multinational team," the President said.

He emphasized that "Sea Breeze - 2021" demonstrates unity in confronting military threats being increased in the Black Sea Region due to its militarization and aggressive actions of the Russian Federation.

"This shows everyone that we will not allow the restriction of freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and usurpation of the sovereign right of Ukraine as a sea, coastal state," said the President.

Charge d'affaires a.i. of the United States in Ukraine Kristina Kvien noted that the "Sea Breeze" is a manifestation of cooperation in

the field of maritime security of Ukraine, the USA and 32 other participating countries.

"The ships we see here are only one of the manifestations of what the United States does to help Ukraine in ensuring its safety," she emphasized.

Kristina Kvien said that last week she visited Berdyansk, where she took part in the opening of a new deployment area for the division of rapid response of the Maritime Security Service of Ukraine.

She reminded that in Ochakiv, Mykolaiv region, the construction battalions of the US Naval Forces built operative, auxiliary, as well as repair facilities for the Ukrainian fleet and work on an increase in the quality of infrastructure on this base.

<https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/v-odesi-volodimir-zelenskij-vzyav-uchast-v-urochistih-zahoda-69297>

Why Ukrainians and Russians are not one people, and why Russians are not Ukraine's indigenous people

Lately, Russian President Putin has mentioned Ukraine frequently. He recently said that Ukrainians and Russians are one people, and expressed indignation over a fresh law on the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, initially introduced to the Parliament by the President. President Zelenskyi and Ukraine's Foreign Ministry responded sharply. Here is what's key in this exchange of words between Ukraine and Russia.

What did Putin say about being "one people"? *Speaking at the televised call-in show "Direct Line", Putin said Ukrainians and Russians are one people. Ukraine is not an unfriendly state, he added. Ukrainians and Russians were divided by external forces, Putin said. He also said his analytical article on the history of Russia and Ukraine will soon be out.*

Ukraine, like Russia, is full of "narrow-minded people" that "are ruining the country" particularly by pressuring the opposition, Putin said. He brought an example of his crony Viktor Medvedchuk, a pro-Russian politician who is "unjustly persecuted", Putin labelled him as "Ukraine nationalist".

Zelenskyi answers Putin on Ukrainians, Russians being "one people". *Zelenskyi was quick to respond to Putin's statement. He said that Ukrainians and Russians are not one people. Even if they were one, the flag that flies above the State Duma in Moscow would be yellow-and-blue, he added.*

“Let’s finally sort things out. Clearly, we are not one people. We have much in common. We share part of history and memory, we are neighbors, we have mixed families, we share the victory over fascism as well as tragedies. But, I repeat, we are not one people. If we were one people, in Moscow, the currency in circulation would most likely be hryvnia, and the flag that flies above the State Duma would be yellow-and-blue. We are definitely not a single people. Each one of us has their own way forward,” Zelenskyi said.

Ukrainians and Russians need to share the goal of ending the war in Donbas and restoring Ukraine’s sovereignty over its territories, the Ukrainian President said. “Also, that’s not possible to say that we are ‘one people’ while seizing our territories and proceeding with the slaughter in Donbas at the same time. That’s obvious,” Zelenskyi said.

Putin’s statements on Ukraine’s “external governance” are a “purely propagandist mantra” crafted for domestic use in Russia, Zelenskyi noted.

“In the real world, all issues concerning Ukraine are decided upon by the Ukrainian government in Ukraine. Those decisions are definitely not made in a neighboring country, or by the ‘shadow mediators’ that are under house arrest or on the wanted list,” the President said.

The recent U.S.-Russia summit has demonstrated that “even the direct talks” between the U.S. and Russian leaders have no authority to decide upon the Ukraine questions, Zelenskyi said.

“We say: ‘nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine’. That’s how our state works. Developments on the global political arena only prove that. What’s more, on July 12, I will have an in-person meeting with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. My direct talks with the U.S. President Joe Biden are scheduled for late July,” Zelenskyi said.

Ukraine’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs fights back. *Russian President Vladimir Putin holds responsibility for the abyss between Ukrainians and Russians, Ukraine’s Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said responding to Putin’s words on the two nations “being one people”.*

“Ukrainians and Russians are two separate nations. We could live as good neighbors had Russia not attacked Ukraine in 2014, killing thousands of people, occupying our lands. Full responsibility for the abyss between our nations lies with Putin who launched the aggression,” Dmytro Kuleba tweeted.

Why Putin is irritated at the bill on Ukraine's indigenous peoples

On May 18, 2021, the Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Deportation of the Crimean Tatar People, President Zelenskyi introduced the draft law on indigenous peoples to the Parliament. The bill does not say a word about Russians. On July 1, the Parliament passed the bill. At the time of this writing, the President has not yet signed it into law.

The bill defines Crimean Tatars, Karaites, and Krymchaks as the indigenous peoples of Ukraine. By legal definition they are "an indigenous ethnic community native to the territory of Ukraine, they have their unique language and culture, traditional, social, cultural, or representation bodies, they self-identify as an indigenous people of Ukraine," and they do not have a state of their own outside Ukraine. The law is also to foster "the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, as well as the development of ethnic, cultural, language, and religious uniqueness of all the indigenous peoples of Ukraine."

Putin's reaction: "a hit on the Russian people". Putin's reaction to the bill was unexpectedly strong. In early June, he called the draft law on Ukraine's indigenous peoples "a strong and serious hit on the Russian people overall." To speak of Russians as a non-indigenous people of Ukraine is "not just incorrect, but also ridiculous and stupid, it contradicts historical facts," Putin said. "Division into indigenous, first-class, second-class categories of people and so on – this completely smacks of the theory and practice of Nazi Germany," the Russian President proceeded.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry: Russians are a national minority, not an indigenous people. Commenting on Putin's statement, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba said that the bill is "fully in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Constitution of Ukraine, and has nothing to do with the subjective interpretations of the Russian President Vladimir Putin."

"'Indigenous peoples' is a universally accepted definition in international law and in the law of many states. It was cemented by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007. The draft law introduced by the President actually implements those provisions of international law into the domestic law," Kuleba told "Interfax Ukraine" agency.

The Constitution of Ukraine guarantees that all citizens of Ukraine are equal, regardless of ethnicity. It also assigns the responsibility for protection of indigenous peoples and national minorities to the state, Kuleba added.

Russians are a national minority in Ukraine. "Pressure referred to as a result of passing of the bill on indigenous peoples is not true. Rights of the Russian national minority have never been limited in Ukraine. Protection and support to the functioning of the Ukrainian language as the official language is normal. Protecting the right to speak Ukrainian in Ukraine cannot threaten the use of other languages by definition," the Foreign Minister of Ukraine underscored.

Mejlis: bill on indigenous peoples is key to de-occupation of Crimea. *Putin consciously manipulates the terminology in order to promote the notorious narrative of the Russian propaganda, dismantled many times on the alleged persecution of Russians and Russian-speakers in Ukraine, said head of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people Refat Chubarov in an interview with Radio Liberty. Kremlin's statements saying that Poles, Hungarians, Jews, and other nations were not recognized indigenous peoples of Ukraine despite "living here a long time, and having the right to be called indigenous peoples" aim to sow discord in the Ukrainian society, Chubarov said.*

Russians are worried as the summit of the Crimean Platform nears, the head of the Mejlis explained. Speaking on the Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Genocide of the Crimean Tatar People, President Zelenskyi said that restoring and protecting the rights of Crimean Tatars as an indigenous people is at the heart of the strategy for de-occupation and reintegration of the temporarily occupied Crimea and Sevastopol adopted in March, Chubarov reminded.

By adopting the law on the rights of indigenous peoples Ukraine will be able to access another stratum of international legislation, that on the rights of indigenous peoples to reinforce its right to restore its sovereignty over Crimea, Chubarov said.

<https://uacrisis.org/en/ukrainians-russians-not-one-people>

Our contacts:

Mission of Ukraine to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Address: Manfred Wörner Building, NATO HQ,
Leopold III, 1110 Brussels, Belgium.

phone: [+ 32 \(2\) 707-27-24](tel:+3227072724)

fax: [+32 \(2\) 707-27-28](tel:+3227072728)

email: pm_nato@mfa.gov.ua

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