

WAR ON UKRAINE - Media Insights #15

The issue offers all topics of the day presented in our Telegram channel "Россия в медиа фокусе" (Russia in Media Focus, @glasnost2022) from 1 to 11 September 2022.

Welcome to the 15th issue of our regular newsletter, featuring an independent review of media coverage of the war in Ukraine. Our previous newsletters have offered a unique perspective on two different perspectives - the Russian state media's perspective and how they interpret the ongoing "special military operation" in Ukraine, and how the same events are covered by the independent media. You can find all previous issues on our [website](#).

The current issue offers a summary of the topics of the day presented in our Telegram channel "Россия в медиа фокусе" (Russia in Media Focus). If you enjoyed our previous weekly Media Insights - War in Ukraine and would like to receive more regular daily updates, please subscribe to our Telegram channel 'Россия в медиа фокусе' (@glasnost2022) [here](#).

The current issue offers the following stories, topics and events covering 1-11 September 2022.

[1 September 2022]



Topic of the day:

EU countries will completely suspend the simplified visa regime for Russians. EU countries during a two-day meeting of foreign ministers in Prague failed to agree on a visa ban for Russian citizens - instead, they decided to terminate the agreement on simplified visa issuance.

Why it matters:

Canceling the simplified visa regime would make tourist travel from Russia to the EU more difficult and lead to tougher security checks, and some eastern bloc member states would be able to impose additional restrictions. Russian passports issued in Ukraine's occupied territories will not be recognized in the EU.

The very decision to suspend the agreement on a simplified visa regime between the EU and Russia shows that due to the indifferent attitude of Russian citizens to the war against Ukraine and to the war crimes of Russian troops, they themselves are increasingly perceived as a threat, and there is even a general opinion about this among EU countries.

It should be noted that the EU has not yet gone for a complete visa ban on Russians only out of concern not to deprive those who have the courage to oppose Putin's regime of the opportunity to leave Russia.

What the independent media report:

EU-Russia: Bloc tightens visa regime, but no visa ban. ([BBC](#))

EU foreign ministers have agreed to cancel the visa agreement with Russia, but have not imposed a total ban on tourist visas. ([Euronews](#))

German politician: "EU tourism ban will wake Russians up". ([Deutsche Welle](#))

What the Russian media write:

Peskov called the EU's decision to make it harder for Russian citizens to get visas ridiculous Russia. ([RG.ru](#))

Visas in six months and piles of documents: what awaits tourists in Russia after abolition of simplified visa regime with Europe? ([Lenta.ru](#))

Travelling to Europe will become harder and more expensive: simplified visa regime abolished. ([MK.ru](#))

[2 September 2022]

G-7 IMPOSE OIL PRICE CAPS SHOWING UNITY, WHILE RUSSIA CONTINUES TO MAKE THREATS



"It's time for the EU to introduce a price ceiling on pipeline gas from Russia," Aunty von der what's-her-name Leyen declared. It will be like with oil. There will simply be no Russian gas ☐ in Europe.

[TG of D.Medvedev, rferl.org]



Topic of the day:

G7 finance ministers agreed to set a ceiling on the price of Russian oil in order to limit Moscow's oil revenues. This was said in a statement issued Friday in Berlin at the end of a meeting of G7 finance ministers. The G7 also announced its intention to ban sea transportation services for Russian oil if it is sold above a ceiling determined by the West.

Why it matters:

The effects of Western sanctions have hit the Russian economy hard, depriving Russia of access to its own foreign exchange reserves, financial markets and advanced Western technology, which has significantly affected the Kremlin's ability to wage war in Ukraine. The only stable source of income that fuels Russia's economy is the sale of oil and gas. In addition to the oil price ceiling, the head of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has announced plans to impose similar price caps on gas transported through pipelines from Russia in order to mitigate the market manipulation of the Putin regime. The price ceiling could lead to a complete collapse of the Russian economy in the medium term.

What the independent media report:

The G7 countries have agreed to a price cap on Russian oil despite Kremlin threats. ([The Guardian](#))
EU spokesman von der Leyen supports price caps on Russian pipeline gas. ([Reuters](#))
Russia was warned about oil price limits. ([BBC](#))

What the Russian media write:

The Kremlin called the possible imposition of price caps on Russian oil absurd. ([1TV](#))

Peskov: Russia will stop selling oil to G7 countries if they introduce a price ceiling. ([News.ru](#))

An oil price cap would only destabilize the balance in the market, an expert said. ([RIA](#))

[3-4 September 2022]



Topic of the Weekend:

According to British intelligence, Russian military forces involved in a special military operation in Ukraine are suffering from a lack of morale and discipline, war fatigue and heavy casualties. Russian commanders have failed to meet the basic needs of the troops stationed in Ukraine, including proper uniforms, weapons and rations, as well as salaries. This has almost certainly contributed to low morale among much of the military, the U.K. Ministry of Defense claims.

The main dissatisfaction of Russian servicemen is probably still related to pay, including the high probability of non-payment of substantial bonuses for participation in military operations. This may be due to outright corruption among commanders as well as ineffective military bureaucracy.

Why it matters:

British intelligence reports run counter to reports in the Russian propaganda media that emphasize the "high morale, selflessness, and heroism of the military" involved in the special military operation

in Ukraine. However, truthful assessments of the situation can be found not only in Western intelligence reports, but also in the revelations of the military itself. For example, the independent media previously wrote about the diaries of Russian soldier Pavel Filatiev, in which he denounced the chaos in the Russian army, the lack of food, fuel, and medicine, and the widespread corruption. His diaries, framed in a book called "ZOV," can be read here.

What the independent media report:

The Russian military is suffering from a lack of morale and discipline. According to British intelligence, the main complaint is the lack of promised high pay. ([The Guardian](#))

A Russian soldier's diary of the Ukrainian campaign reveals that chaos reigns in the Russian army. Pavel Filatiev, a former Russian army paratrooper, published his diary on a Russian social media site (in a 141-page testimony posted on his VKontakte page) detailing what he experienced in Ukraine. He then fled the country. ([France 24](#))

"We had no moral right to attack another country." A Russian paratrooper wrote a book about the first days of the war. He himself participated in the invasion of Ukraine. ([Meduza](#))

What the Russian media write:

The Defense Ministry spoke about the courage and heroism of the Russian military. ([Channel One](#))

Russian servicemen were awarded on the front lines for their successes in special operations. The awards were given to servicemen who showed courage, heroism and bravery, showing high professional and personal qualities during the special operation. ([Ren TV](#))

The Russian Ministry of Defense published a video of the combat work of the Airborne Troops, which stopped the breakthrough of the AFU. ([TASS](#))

[5 September 2022]

NOVAYA GAZETA newspaper was killed today
Moscow Basmanny Court revoked its printing license



[Deutsche Welle]



Topic of the day:

Moscow Basmanny Court stripped Novaya Gazeta of its license to publish a print version.

Roskomnadzor attributed the suit to the failure to submit the editorial board's charter within the deadline set by the media law. In addition, the newspaper was accused of disseminating material mentioning a foreign agent without proper labeling on its website.

Novaya Gazeta editor-in-chief Dmitri Muratov claimed that the court ruling is "petty, ordered, and political. "Our position has been clearly formulated. We submitted all the documents, and many years ago. We will appeal. We will go all the way to the end, that's for sure," he stressed. Dmitry Muratov is a 2021 Nobel Peace Prize laureate "for his efforts to defend freedom of expression, which is a prerequisite for democracy and lasting peace."

Since the start of the special military operation in Ukraine, Novaya Gazeta has received six notices from the Prosecutor General's Office and Roskomnadzor, demanding the removal of materials with "unreliable information of public significance. In March, after the law on criminal liability for spreading fakes about the actions of the Russian Armed Forces was passed, the newspaper removed materials related to the war in Ukraine and stopped covering it. After March 28, after receiving two warnings from Roskomnadzor for not labeling foreign agents in a story, Novaya Gazeta suspended its paper and online versions until the end of the military operation in Ukraine. In early April, to avoid censorship, a European edition of the newspaper, Novaya Gazeta Evropa, was launched from

Riga; the site was blocked in Russia later that month.

Why it matters:

"Novaya Gazeta is one of Russia's oldest independent media outlets. The court ruling came a week after the death of former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who helped a group of journalists who decided to create Novaya Gazeta in April 1993. The former head of state owned a stake in the publication.

During Novaya Gazeta's existence, six of its staff members were killed. Among them was Anna Politkovskaya, who was shot to death in the entryway of her Moscow apartment building in 2006. The person who ordered this crime has never been identified. The Committee to Protect Journalists estimates that 42 journalists and media workers were killed in Russia between 2000 and 2022 (Vladimir Putin became president in 2000).

A statement from the editorial board was published on the newspaper's website, which reads: "Today a newspaper was murdered. They stole 30 years of life from its staff. Deprived its readers of their right to receive information. But not only that. Today our colleagues who have already been murdered by this state for fulfilling their professional duty - Igor Domnikov, Yury Shchekochikhin, Anna Politkovskaya, Stanislav Markelov, Anastasia Baburova, Natalia Estemirova, Orkhan Dzhemal - were murdered again.

What the independent media report:

Today Novaya Gazeta, Russia's leading independent newspaper, whose editor-in-chief was one of last year's Nobel Peace Prize winners, had its license revoked. ([The Guardian](#))

A Russian court has revoked the license of a newspaper critical of the Kremlin. ([Blick](#))

Novaya Gazeta: Moscow revoked license of last free voice. ([Repubblica](#))

What the Russian media write:

Court revoked Novaya Gazeta's media license. ([Ren TV](#))

The court revoked Novaya Gazeta's media license at the suit of Roskomnadzor. The reason for the lawsuit was the failure to submit the editorial board's charter within the deadline set by the media law. ([TASS](#))

The court stripped Novaya Gazeta of its media license. ([KP](#))

[6 September 2022]

IS THE NEW TSAR PREPARING FOR A THRONE? Kadyrov intends to break the record of 27 years and become the new long man in power



[[Telegraph.co.uk](https://www.telegraph.co.uk)]

MEMO 98

Topic of the day:

The head of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov said that he intends to become the new "long-liver" among Russia's regional leaders and "cannot leave his post so easily." He wrote about it in his Telegram channel. This is how Kadyrov commented on a high-profile video in which he said that he "lingered" in office and "deserved an indefinite and long vacation."

Why it matters:

There are a few little-noticed but interesting points in the story of Kadyrov's announcement of his resignation and his imminent retraction of his own words. There have been no recent publications about the head of Chechnya as a long-lived leader in the media; the announcement of his imminent departure comes amid problems with the mobilization of contract soldiers into the Russian army after a series of failures in the war against Ukraine; and the Kremlin's reaction, via Peskov, to the announcement of Kadyrov's possible departure was rather indifferent: "Indeed, we have seen these reports, but let's just say, as long as I understand correctly, these messages have not materialized in any way," Peskov said. "So far, we assume that he continues to lead the Chechen Republic," he said.

We can assume that Kadyrov was referring to the words of some Kremlin officials by the publication about the longtime leader. According to reliable allegations, Kadyrov's units in Ukraine avoid direct combat and suffer far fewer casualties than other units of the Russian army. In terms of their own interests, this approach makes sense for Kadyrov, who is saving his combat reserve for a power

struggle in post-Putin Russia. In a similar vein, he proposed the deployment of air defense systems in Chechnya to supposedly prevent attacks from Ukraine. Such a proposal is more evidence of hidden signs of weakness of the ruling regime in Russia and possible preparations for Kadyrov to declare independence for Chechnya after Putin's departure.

What the independent media report:

Chechen leader Kadyrov declined to comment on his resignation. ([Reuters](#))

'Let's leave talk of indefinite leave for the future. Ramzan Kadyrov explains his words about 'overstretching' as head of Chechnya. ([Meduza](#))

Chechen leader Kadyrov said he deserved an 'indefinite' leave of absence, sparking speculation about the future. ([RFE/RL](#))

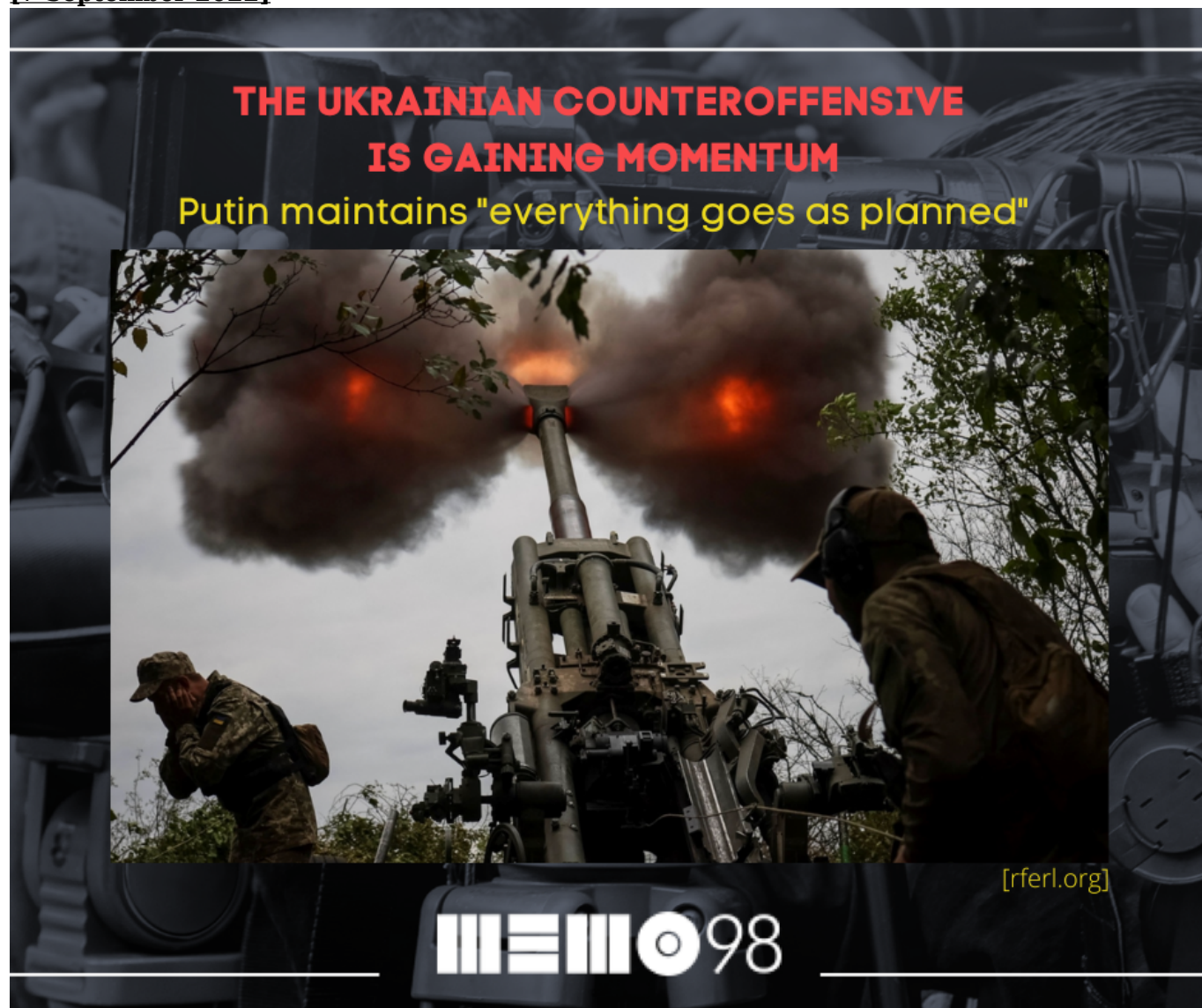
What the Russian media write:

Kadyrov explained his words about an "indefinite and long vacation". ([RBC](#))

Kadyrov commented on his words about indefinite leave. ([RIA](#))

Peskov: the Kremlin has seen Kadyrov's reports on his possible resignation. ([TASS](#))

[7 September 2022]



Topic of the day:

The Ukrainian Armed Forces lead a counteroffensive in the Kharkiv region. On September 6,

Ukrainian troops dislodged elements of the Russian army from Balakleya, blockading some of them in the city itself, and continued their offensive toward Kupyansk, advancing to the settlements of Volokhov Yar and Shevchenkovo. There are brutal battles going on.

Why this is important:

By entrenching themselves in these three settlements, the AFU will be able to encircle and defeat a grouping of more than 10,000 Putin's troops. The Russian army faces the choice of retreating or being completely defeated near Kharkov, as most Russian battalion-tactical groups are thrown into the Kherson direction. The Ukrainian armed forces are also very likely to be able to establish full fire control of the Russian troops' supply lines near the towns of Kupyansk and Izyum, cutting off their escape routes. Against the background of problems with replenishing the Russian army's combat reserves, an AFU counteroffensive on the Kharkiv front ensures that Russian forces will not be able to launch an attack on Sloviansk in the Donetsk region, equally as the counteroffensive in the Kherson region has made it impossible to launch an attack on Mykolaiv. According to some claims, Putin personally gave orders on the number and deployment of Russian troops in various directions.

What the independent media report:

"We may get a large-scale cauldron like in 1942." Colonel of the AFU in the reserve Roman Svitan on Ukraine's offensive in the Kharkiv direction. ([Insider](#))

Ukrainian troops launched a surprise strike on Balakleya. ([BBC](#))

Ukrainian forces launched a surprise attack in Kharkiv region. ([Telegraph](#))

What the Russian media write:

Kharkiv authorities denied reports of partial surrender of Balakleya. ([RIA](#))

The Kharkiv VFA denied reports of the partial surrender of Balakleya. ([RBC](#))

Battle for Kharkiv: Kiev is now betting on Balakleya. ([Svpressa.ru](#))

[8 September 2022]

APPLE HALTED THE SALE OF ITS PRODUCTS IN RUSSIA DUE TO THE WAR.

Will Russians be able to buy the new iPhone 14?



[Handellsblatt]



Topic of the day:

Russians will be able to buy the new Apple iPhone 14 thanks to a parallel import scheme, even though the American technology company has left the country. A high-ranking government official told RIA Novosti news agency on Thursday. Russia's MTS mobile network was already selling new pre-order iPhone 14 models on Thursday morning. Prices start at 84,990 rubles (\$1,398) for the 128GB version.

Russia announced the parallel import scheme in March, when it allowed retailers to import products from abroad without permission from the trademark owner. Under this mechanism, Russian retailers can buy foreign products without the permission of the manufacturer or trademark owner by going through non-Russian intermediaries who purchased the goods legally.

Asked whether the new iPhone unveiled by Apple on Wednesday would be imported under this scheme, Trade and Industry Minister Denis Manturov said: *"Why not? If consumers want to buy these phones, yes. There will be such an opportunity."*

Why it matters:

Apple stopped selling new products in Russia in March, a week after Russia invaded Ukraine. iPhones, MacBooks and other Apple products are still available in Russian stores as retailers sell off leftover older models and purchase newly released devices through an import scheme. Thus, the latest model of the iconic phone will be sold in Russia without the consent of the manufacturer.

On the eve of Apple unveiled the basic iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Plus with a larger screen. Phones will be available in five colors, they are equipped with screens of sizes 6.1 and 6.7 inches. The standard versions are scheduled to go on sale on September 16, while the Pro versions will be available on October 7.

What the independent media report:

The new iPhone 14 will be available in Russia, the Commerce Secretary says. "If buyers want to buy these phones, welcome," Denis Manturov said. ([Politico](#))

Russians will be able to buy iPhone 14. ([CNN](#))

The new Apple iPhone will be available in Russia, the Commerce Secretary said. ([Reuters](#))

What the Russian media write:

iPhone 14 will be supplied to Russia through parallel imports. ([РИА](#))

The new iPhone 14 will be shipped to Russia through parallel imports. Apple devices are on the list of goods imported without the consent of companies. ([RBC](#))

In a different angle: iPhone 14 may appear in Russia the night after the start of global sales. ([Izvestia](#))

[9 September 2022]



Topic of the day:

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II died Sept. 8 at 97. She began her reign during the premiership of Winston Churchill and confirmed 14 other British prime ministers. Elizabeth II has been on the throne the longest of any British monarch - seventy years and seven months. Prime Minister Liz Truss called Elizabeth II "the rock on which modern Britain was built.

After her death, her son, Charles III, immediately became king. He declared seven days of mourning in Britain before the queen's funeral. Thousands of people lay flowers at the gates of Buckingham Palace.

Why it matters:

With the death of Queen Elizabeth II, an entire era is gone. Her reign epitomized fidelity to duty, tradition, respect for traditional values, rejection of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, and respect for partners.

From Germany to Canada, from the United States to Australia, leaders of many nations pay tribute to the British monarch. In a moving speech, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called the Queen "thoughtful, wise, curious, funny." And Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said her reign "will be remembered for centuries.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said, *"We mourn the death of Queen Elizabeth II. She was a role model and an inspiration to millions of people, including here in Germany. Her commitment to reconciliation after the horrors of World War II will remain in our memory. She will be missed, not least because of her wonderful humor."*

What the independent media report:

Our hearts are broken: it's just unthinkable. Gone is the wisest and most unwavering of women, our guiding light in the darkest of nights. ([Daily Mail](#))

Queen Elizabeth II's long reign was marked by her strong sense of duty and determination to devote her life to the throne and her people. ([BBC](#))

What made Queen Elizabeth II so special and irreplaceable? She dedicated her life to duty and did so until her last days. ([Telegraph](#))

What the Russian media write:

"The Woman Who Shaped a Century. How Elizabeth II is remembered. ([TASS](#))

BLM representatives called for not mourning the death of Elizabeth II. Some representatives of the Black Lives Matter movement and the Green Party believe that black people should not, on principle, mourn the queen because of the racism that flourished during her reign. ([Ren TV](#))

Putin has no plans to attend Elizabeth II's funeral, Peskov said. ([RIA](#))

[10-11 September 2022]

IT WAS THE 200th DAY OF THE WAR.
Ukraine returns the territories, and meanwhile the propagandists change the tone



"In a hot war we will defeat Ukraine in two days. Why should it be defeated, for God's sake?"

Margarita Simonyan, RT

11 April 2021

10 September 2022

[smotrim.ru, TW feed of M.Simonyan]



Topic of the Weekend:

In a matter of days, the Russian front in the Kharkiv region, which the Russian army had held for months since the start of a full-scale war in late February, has collapsed. The Russian Defense Ministry, after a long silence, announced a planned withdrawal of the Russian army from the towns of Balakleya, Kupyansk, and Izyum southeast of Kharkiv in order to regroup troops and build up efforts in the Donetsk direction. The Ukrainian military estimates that control of more than 3,000 square kilometers of territory has been regained.

Why it matters:

The Russian army's massive retreat from the Kharkov direction marks another major setback in Putin's war against Ukraine. The Russian Defense Ministry gave similar justifications for withdrawing troops from the Kiev, Sumy, and Chernihiv directions after the unsuccessful campaign to seize Kiev.

From September 6 to 10, the Russian army lost control of more territory than it had been able to conquer since early April 2022 after announcing new "SVO" targets for "liberating" territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

During this week, researchers at Oryx (a Dutch defense analytics and warfare research website), which collects information from open sources, visually confirmed Russian army losses in military equipment, including those captured by Ukrainian forces in the past few days, at the level of three to

four battalion and tactical groups (BTGs). Hundreds of Russian soldiers have been captured.

By comparison, according to some estimates, Russia is currently waging war in Ukraine with 105 BTGs. At the start of the full-scale war in February this year, Russia was deploying up to 150 BTGs against Ukraine, about 75% of all combat-ready units in the Russian army.

What the independent media report:

Ukraine's lightning advance near Kharkov led to a disorderly retreat of Russian forces. ([FT](#))

Kharkiv offensive: Ukrainian army claims to have tripled the territory it has seized. ([BBC](#))

Russia abandons key fronts in the Kharkov region amid Ukraine's rapid advance. ([France 24](#))

What the Russian media write:

Ministry of Defense reported regrouping of troops in Balakleya and Izyum areas. ([РИА](#))

We have broken out of the encirclement in Izyum and are holding the defense along Oskol.

([Komsomolskaya Pravda](#))

The Russian Defense Ministry told about the situation near Mykolaiv and Kharkiv. ([AiF](#))

For more information on daily news, please visit our Telegram channel "Россия в медиа фокусе" ([@glasnost2022](#))