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Russia-Ukrainian War 2022: Battle of Hostomel

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Russia-Ukrainian war 2022. Battle of Hostomel

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation began an active phase of a full-scale invasion of the territory of sovereign Ukraine. However, before the invasion of Ukraine, Russia practiced an amphibious operation in Kazakhstan, when in January 2022 it deployed "peacekeeping" forces to suppress an armed uprising against the power of Nursultan Nazarbayev. The invasion of Ukraine was preceded by the recognition of the independence of the quasi-republics in the occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (located in the east of Ukraine) and the introduction of a large group of troops into their territory.

The invasion itself began with a massive missile and air strike against critical infrastructure, military units, civilian facilities and air defense positions. At the same time, Russian ground forces crossed the border in all border regions in the northern and eastern parts of Ukraine. The invasion army consisted of unofficial numbers of approximately 200 - 250 thousand soldiers. The main task was blocking large cities, bypassing defense points and moving into central Ukraine. Along with the ground operation, the airborne operation began. Elite units of airborne troops and special operations forces carried out landings in the area of Hostomel airport, which is 30 kilometers from Kyiv - the capital of Ukraine

At first, the development of the operation went according to plan. Landing troops crossed the border with Belarus and started moving to the landing zone. However, the defense forces of the armed forces of Ukraine shot down the first helicopters on the approach to the airfield in the area of Kyiv HPP (Hydroelectric Power

Plant) - this was one of the first signals of the failure of the operation. Despite this, the Russian landing party arrived at the Gostomel airport and began an operation to clear the landing zone for the control of the runway, which was supposed to receive IL-76 heavy transport aircraft with heavy weapons, armored vehicles and the rest of the personnel.

The situation was collapsing, but ground troops from Belarus still managed to come to the aid of the landing force and consolidate their positions. Despite this, the aggressor lost precious time to cover Kyiv and capture it. The Russian army machine came into motion and was able to bring the main forces into battle only in the evening, which in turn allowed the Ukrainian side to successfully mobilize the resources of the territorial defense and other types of troops. Various units of the special operations forces, in cooperation with the special forces units of the Main Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine, the "Alfa" unit of the Security Service of Ukraine, and the rest of the special units were deployed in the battles for Kyiv and successfully conducted combat operations against the invasion forces.

On the very first day of the invasion, the Russian commander of Kadyrov's units, Akhmat Tushaev, was killed. According to preliminary information, he was killed by a Javelin shot at his armored car. Ukrainian special operations forces successfully conducted operations to destroy the command resource of the Russian army. Opposition to the Russian troops only grew over time, but so did the Russian offensive. The disorganization of the Ukrainian command lasted for the first few days, but later the situation improved and organized planning to counter the advancing troops began. The loss of time by the Russian army to encircle Kyiv led to the fact that the armed forces of Ukraine were able to prepare an echeloned defense of the city of Kyiv, mobilize territorial defense reserves from among volunteers in the number of more than 50 thousand people. It is

worth noting that the number of invading troops was approximately 50-60 thousand soldiers.

Opposition to the Russian troops only grew over time, but so did the Russian offensive. It became clear that the capital of Ukraine could not be taken just like that, so the Russians continued to encircle Kyiv from the West. Having cut off the Kyiv-Zhytomyr highway, the Russians found themselves surrounded and in a full-fledged fireball. Due to the powerlessness to penetrate the defense of Ukraine, the rear units staged a large-scale massacre of the civilian population, thousands of civilians were killed in Buch and Irpen, located in the very suburbs of Kyiv. The general retreat of Russian troops began on March 30 after an unsuccessful offensive attempt. The Ukrainian army launched a full-scale counteroffensive and was able to return the lost territories in the north of the country.

In this battle, the Russian army demonstrated a number of critical mistakes that led to the failure of the plan to seize Kyiv and the country. Among them, it is worth noting the complete disorganization of the units (except for the most combat-capable units of the type of landing troops and special operations forces of Russia), the underestimation of the mobilization potential of Ukraine, the level of combat readiness of the units of the invasion army remained at a rather terrible level, the coordination of the troops was almost completely absent (except for the elite units), the operation plan is still difficult to understand logically.

The Ukrainian troops demonstrated high-quality training and effective resistance to the advance of the invading troops. The Air Force of Ukraine withstood the first missile strikes and, together with the air defense forces, prevented the enemy from capturing the airspace of Ukraine. The forces of special operations, supported by the forces of the National Guard, took the landing party under fire

control and forced it to stop at the occupied positions. The Ukrainian Artillery began the gradual destruction of the offensive potential of the Russian troops.

In general, the battle for the Hostomel airport is rich in examples of troop landings and useful experience that can be used for further planning of similar operations. The final figures of the number of units involved are still unknown and are classified. However, it is subject to study and discussion regarding the analysis of the actions of the aggressor in the face of the Russian state.