

First of the Year SITREP - Hypersonic Strikes, Disasters, War, and More Global Trends



SIMPLICIUS THE THINKER

3 JAN 2024



254



64



15

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2024 has exploded off the sprinting blocks—in some cases literally.

Just in the first two days of the new year, we've had a huge Japanese earthquake and tsunami, with attendant scares of radioactive ocean spills, the top pro-Russian-and-Chinese South Korean politician get stabbed in the neck in an assassination attempt, airliners catching on fire—also in Japan—a massive Russian missile barrage on Ukraine, and more. The pace has been set for an explosive year.

Elon Musk predicted 2024 to be 'even crazier' than 2023. On the same tack, Medvedev gave his own tongue-in-cheek predictions for the new year, which was quite entertaining to read:

The year is drawing to a close. Time to make predictions? There is nothing more meaningless and hopeless than this. A year ago I wrote this: I want to contribute to the most absurd and ridiculous predictions for the future. No, they still write with indignation, but why isn't anything being done? For mercy, how can it not be fulfilled?

Didn't Scholz say that Germany is paying ten times more for gas than before? Didn't Elon Musk become the President of the United States, if not by position, then by influence (despite the fact that he does not have the right to be elected to the presidency, because he was born in Africa)? Isn't Poland preparing to seize part of Ukraine, and Northern Ireland to break away from Foggy Albion? And so on and so forth... In short, everything absurd in our lives has almost come true and continues to come true.

Therefore, catch a new portion of forecasts, already for 2024 (and these are not the glamorous ideas of Saxo Bank):

1. *The creation of two new parties in Russia - the Party of Boys and the Party of Chushpans, which will subsequently be banned by the Russian Ministry of Justice due to illegal election campaigning directly on the asphalt.*
 2. *Nationalization of the military-industrial complex of the countries of the European Union, the USA and Canada with a view to subsequently donating all defense production to the offended Kyiv regime to maintain its military potential. Allocation to Ukraine of a loan syndicated by Western countries in the amount of 25.5 trillion US dollars (corresponding to the size of US GDP at PPP). The theft of this loan within 24 hours by the ruling regime in Kyiv with the participation of Hunter Biden.*
 3. *Dissolution of regular police forces in all EU countries with the transfer of their functions to German and Ukrobander police, taking into account their joint historical experience.*
 4. *Putting Joe Biden on the international wanted list in connection with his careless departure from the stage during a speech and the persistent loss of the US President behind the scenes by his assistants.*
 5. *A sentence in criminal cases brought against Donald Trump in the form of a 99-year prison sentence, a ban on Trump being elected in all states of America. His election as the new US President instead of Biden, who was lost behind the scenes.*
 6. *Massive sinister revival of alien mummies hidden on US military bases, their entry into American politics with the subsequent acquisition of more than half of the seats by aliens in the US Senate and House of Representatives.*
 7. *Godzilla's seizure of power in Japan and his proclamation as 天皇 (Emperor of Japan) ゴジラI (Godzilla I). The beginning of the reign of the Reptilian Dynasty in Japan.*
- So, the new year 2024 will bring us a lot of interesting things. Look forward to!*

Interestingly enough, the alien prediction of #6 is already fulfilling, as on cue the US Congress is rolling out more of its diversionary fare, with secret briefings around “UAPs”—as they’re now being called—scheduled for the coming week:

Congress members will receive secret UFO briefing next week from top spy chief amid growing demands for greater transparency

- Members of the House Oversight Committee are scheduled to undergo a classified briefing next week on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP)
- Growing interest among lawmakers from both parties has led to increased calls for government transparency on this matter
- Bipartisan group of members sought additional information about UFOs, including potential programs to reverse engineer or recover crashed UFOs

FULL COMMITTEE MEMBER BRIEFING NOTICE

January 2, 2024

TO: Members, Committee on Oversight and Accountability
FROM: Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member
SUBJECT: Full Committee Classified Member Briefing on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAPs)

On **Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. E.T.**, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability will hold a classified Member only briefing with the Office of the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community regarding UAPs.

This Member briefing is being held in Room HVC 301 in the Office of House Security and will be at the **TS/SCI level**.

Ironically, the agenda of aliens appears to be higher on the Congressional priorities list than Ukraine, as there's still no real mention of when Congress might begin to toe that topic again.

The US enters 2024 in a state of unprecedented, historical disarray. The much-vaunted—if unintentionally humorously named—"Operation Prosperity Guardian" has already fallen apart:

Maersk suspends shipping through key maritime route Red Sea 'until further notice'

By Hanna Ziady, CNN

🕒 4 minute read

Updated 12:20 PM EST, Tue January 2, 2024



Rene van Quekelberghe/Handout/Reuters

Allies went their separate ways and MAERSK again has suspended all passage through the Red Sea now “indefinitely”, after feigning a stiff upper lip earlier, hoping the problem would go away. This represents an unprecedented loss of prestige for the Empire.

The Mideast—let alone the whole world—is shifting drastically. As of yesterday, January 1st, 2024, BRICS officially inaugurates 5 new members: Ethiopia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.



On top of that, Russia chairs the BRICS presidency this year, and has already outlined intentions to speed up some of the key initiatives. Things just keep getting darker for the now-isolated West.

As if that wasn't bad enough, Israel's war is not going swimmingly at all. We've been witness to countless new videos showing Merkavas, Namers, and everything in between getting blown away. There have been continued leaks from the Israeli side pointing to mounting casualties being far higher than reported. For instance:



Israeli reserve lieutenant colonel Aharon Masos told the Knesset about the large number of Israeli soldiers' bodies in Re'im, and expressed remorse for hastily gathering and piling the bodies onto a cart, in fear of the bodies being kidnapped.

In fact, Israel has now withdrawn several of its battered top brigades from Gaza—including the most elite Golani—for the purpose of reconstituting them from serious losses; at least that's what some believe. All while making the statement that fighting will likely last through 2025:

As 2024 begins, IDF releases 5 brigades from Gaza, but says fighting likely all year

Military says rocket launches down to average of 14 per day; 'We are adjusting the fighting methods,' spokesman says

By **EMANUEL FABIAN** ✓

31 Dec 2023, 11:06 pm | 4



<https://www.timesofisrael.com/as-2024-begins-idf-releases-5-brigades-from-gaza-but-says-fighting-likely-all-year/>

2025? Woah, where are all those analysts who boldly predicted a swiftly decisive and rousing IDF victory? In fact, there doesn't appear to be any appreciable loss in Hamas' manpower at all. This all while a far larger potential war against Hezbollah now looms ever closer.

In fact there have been reports of the US sending an emergency tranche of some of its remaining critical artillery stock, leading some of Ukraine's brightest analysts to begin questioning key foundational principles of the West's military approach:



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The White House just bypassed Congress to greenlight a \$147.5 million **emergency sale** of fuses, chargers, and primers for 155mm shells to Israel. Despite Israel's complete air supremacy, what happened to talks about the irrelevancy of artillery due to Western military air power?

5:46 PM · Dec 29, 2023 · 264.4K Views



His point is that, the Western military analyst community has always founded their philosophy on the principle that as long as air superiority can be established, the paradigmatically 'Western' army will easily defeat any foe. They used this as argument for why NATO would so easily "crush" Russia if it were in Ukraine's stead. However, here the theory has had its first true test in recent years. The most powerful airforce in the entire Mideast is going against a tiny and shabby force without even a single anti-air capability to speak of—and what is the result?

This flies in the face of beliefs that NATO's putatively superior 'airforce' would instantly translate into some type of battlefield victory against Russia—that's simply not how war works, particularly not in an age where manufacturing in the West has declined to the point where precision systems cannot possibly be built in large enough numbers to sustain a long-endurance campaign against a real peer-level threat.

That's not to mention what this portends for Ukraine. If the Israeli conflict is truly being steered into a long term attritional war where the airforce can no longer solve the problems, and much of the load has to be transferred to artillery and other conventional means, that implies grim tidings for Ukraine's replenishments; even if an agreement for a new aid budget is managed, the West will have an exceedingly difficult time supplying both of their 'first sons' in equal measure.

Alarms are being sounded internally in Israel. Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant echoed my own existential slant for the conflict when he admitted today that Israel will not survive if they cannot win a decisive victory:

“The feeling that we will stop soon is incorrect. Without a clear victory, we will not be able to live in the Middle East,” he said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/02/gaza-death-toll-passes-22000-as-israel-steps-up-war-against-hamas>

The economic pressure is mounting as well, not only from the Houthi's blockade, but the sheer scale of the war's costs:



And just like Netanyahu is in trouble, so is his European cohort, as it's now being said Germany's Scholz may be on his way out:



Pistorius instead of Scholz?

Wild rumor about chancellor exchange



Chancellor Olaf Scholz (65) with the most popular member of his cabinet, Federal Minister of Defense Boris Pistorius (63, both SPD)

Photo: ANNEGRET HILSE/REUTERS

02.01.2024 - 15:09

la Repubblica

@myLordBebo



Germany, the chronic government crisis and the Russian shadows on Scholz: in 2024 the chancellor could be forced to leave the leadership of the country

The 'traffic light' coalition does not work, the executive in constant difficulty has trembled from the rejection of public accounts by the Constitutional Court. Now it is whispered that the Wirecard case and relations with Russian spy Jan Marsalek can give the coup de grace to the Social Democratic leader...

by our correspondent Tonia Mastrobuoni

by our correspondents from across the globe

26 December 2023

Olaf Scholz may leave the post of German Chancellor early in 2024, writes Bild.

According to journalists, Scholz may retire early in 2024, and he will be replaced by Defense Minister Boris Pistorius, who recently topped the ranking of the most popular German politicians.

"The reason for the Chancellor's resignation may also be the 2020 scandal associated with Wirecard and its boss Jan Marsalek (he is now hiding in Moscow). At that time, it was Scholz who headed the Federal Ministry of Economics and "did not notice" the greatest fraudulent scheme in German history since World War II," the article says.

Meanwhile, things continue to go poorly—or outright collapse—for Ukraine. In the last report I had conveyed how much of their Western equipment no longer works; Ukrainian soldiers themselves complained that Western artillery systems are not built for war, their barrels have all worn out, etc. This extends to Abrams tanks, which were said to be useless as their filters clog up within minutes of fighting, forcing mechanics to constantly change them to prevent the engine suddenly dying.

Now we have new confirmation from German MP Sebastian Schafer that very few of the delivered Leopards even function anymore, as they've all "worn out" and Ukraine has no way to repair them:

2 Jan, 2024 15:44 / [Home](#) / [World News](#)

Most German tanks given to Ukraine no longer working – MP

A lack of spare parts has left Kiev's Leopard 2A6 tanks stuck in a repair shop, Green Party politician Sebastian Schafer said

*Very few of the Leopard 2A6 battle tanks given to Ukraine by Germany remain in service, Green Party MP Sebastian Schafer has claimed. Many of the tanks are battle damaged and spare parts are reportedly in short supply, he added. In Ukraine, only a small number of Leopard 2 tanks of the modern A6 modification are used, **since independent attempts by Ukrainians to repair them end in even greater breakdowns**, and there is a shortage of*

spare parts in Lithuanian repair shops, said Sebastian Schäfer, a member of the Green party.

While these woes mount, Russia has begun what appears to be its long-awaited infrastructure disabling season with a massive series of strikes all over the country yesterday—though mainly in Kiev and Kharkov. Over a hundred missiles were said to be used, with many more drones as well.

A Ukrainian official recently stated that Kiev is currently the most protected city in the world from air attack. It has, according to him, the highest concentration of air defense, particularly of any European nation. The following statistic underlined this point:

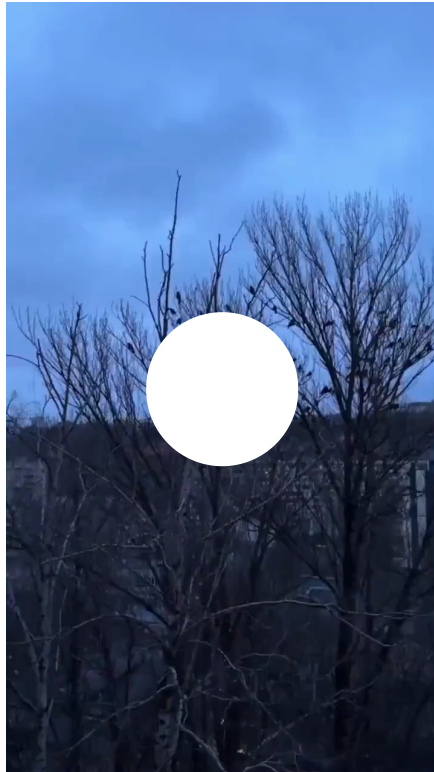
According to this, Ukraine now has the most powerful air defense in all of Europe, and Russia regularly penetrates it. Imagine what Russia would do to actual Europe and US

Almost a third of European air defense systems are concentrated in Ukraine According to The Wall Street Journal, Kiev now has approximately 564 complexes, while the rest of Europe has about 1.6 thousand. Therefore, the partners are in no hurry to transfer them to Ukraine, despite Zelensky's constant and persistent requests. It could take years to create new ones, the newspaper writes.

7200 missiles fired, ukraine has 1/3 air defense of europe, so compare to how US with its 4000 tomahawks would fare against Russia and its far superior air defense to UA+Europe combined

Yet yesterday we saw Russian missiles penetrate the city with ease, with nearly nothing being shot down. Of course Ukraine claimed a 90%+ shoot-down rate as usual, but we now know this is a laughable joke, particularly owing to their claim that 10/10 hypersonic Kinzhals were downed.

But the world was stunned to see what appeared to be the first ever genuinely authentic footage of a Kinzhal coming in to hit its target. Don't blink or you'll miss it:



How do we know that was a Kinzhal? Besides its mind-melting speed, the freeze-frame bears striking resemblance to the Iskander-M during terminal descent:



Note the Iskander on the right—taken from a test strike video—has its front half charred from the high-temperature re-entry burn, but it's not glowing red-hot like the Kinzhal. The Iskander is said to reach Mach 6-7 at burnout phase, while the Kinzhal goes over Mach 10, which could explain the disparity.

However, neither one likely is at hypersonic speed at terminal phase, by the time they hit the target. I explained all this before in a very long and detailed writeup at the bottom of this article, which you can peruse if you'd like more information on how hypersonics work:

Anatomy of MIM-104 Patriot Destruction + Primer on Kinzhal Hypersonic Missile

SIMPLICIUS THE THINKER • 18 MAY 2023



Let's break down in depth exactly what happened on the night of the Patriot attack and catch up on the known facts and speculations. Here's what is known so far: Russia was said to have conducted a layered, multi-vectored attack which came from various sides including north, east, and south, which included both Geran drones as screening cover, Kalibr mi...

[Read full story →](#)

However, here is one recent writeup from a Ukrainian 'expert' who does echo much of what I said in the above article:

Regarding some aspects of the Russian scum's air strikes.


1. It takes about 5 minutes for an Iskander-M to fly to Kyiv from the BNR. Not 1.6 minutes, as some are trying to tell you.

Keep in mind that the missile flies in a parabola, gaining speed at first and then slowing down at the peak.

2. The Kinzhal is an airborne version of the Iskander-M, which is additionally accelerated by a carrier (MiG-31K) and takes off at maximum speed, after which the missile slows down and has the speed of a classical ballistic missile (3-4 thousand km/h) on approach. It takes 7-8 minutes to fly from the Savasley area to Kyiv. It takes about 4-5 minutes to reach the state border.

3. *For ballistic targets (Iskander-M, surface-to-surface missiles for the S-400), we have Patriot (PAC-3 missiles) and S-300V systems. In addition, we have also received SAMP/T.*
4. *As for cruise missiles (Iskander-K, X-101/555, Kalibr), we operate conventional S-300, Buk, Iris-T, Nasams and mobile fire groups (MFG) with MANPADS. Cheetahs are also in service.*
5. *Gepard, Skynex, Avenger, mobile fire groups with large-calibre machine guns, and man-portable air defence systems are operating against the Shahed.*
6. *If a version of the Shahed with a jet engine appears, it will have a several times shorter range, and it will be able to be shot down by MVGs with MANPADS, which will be a tasty morsel for them. Because a jet engine leaves a large heat trail.*
7. *According to the means of destruction, our air defence system is differentiated. There is no point in wasting "golden" missiles for Patriot on "Shahed", as well as missiles for Iris-T/Nasams on ballistic targets. All means of destruction are used according to the type of target.*
8. *Accordingly, it is impossible to overload the entire air defence system with Shahedis. For more details, see paragraph 7.*
9. *The enemy relies on ballistic missiles against Kyiv because other types of targets are successfully shot down in full.*
10. *The enemy does not have many Iskander-M ballistic missiles and/or surface-to-surface missiles for the S-400. The enemy has sufficient capabilities to produce X-101, Kalibr and Iskander-K (cruise) missiles, but not ballistic missiles.*
11. *Since any target over Kyiv can be successfully shot down in its entirety, the enemy's goal is more psychological. Nighttime strikes with ballistic missiles, which are shot down in 30-40 seconds, are not about the effectiveness of an air attack. It is about intimidation.*
12. *In view of the above, I do not see the point in announcing a nationwide alert because of the take-off of the MiG-31K. If there is a missile take-off, then the alarm should be raised. Otherwise, we will be waiting for that fucking "moment" for 3 hours a day until the end of the war.*

You have to admit that it is better to have 5 minutes to spare to run to the bathroom or the nearest shelter than to wait for 3 hours for the alarm to go off. This is in every way better than air defence operations/arrivals before the alarm is sounded.

 Ukrainian Post

According to him, Iskanders and Kinzhals pose no special problem for their mighty Patriot to shoot down. Firstly, while it's true that Kinzhals likely hit the target at Mach 3-5, give or take, it's clear by the video that it's going much faster than an Iskander owing to its red hot glow.

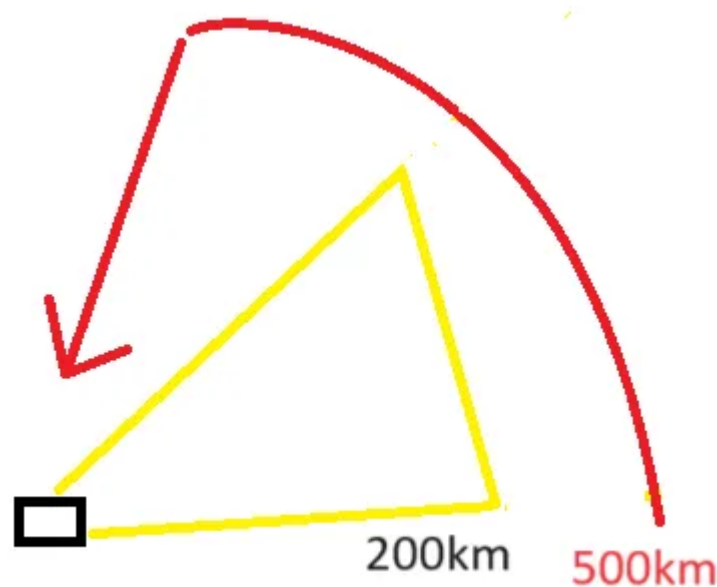
Iskanders—and presumably Kinzhals too—come with counter-measures which are released, if needed, during the terminal approach. They are jammers that eject from the rear of the missile. If the missiles were totally invincible, they would not require jammers to help them out. So while it's conceivable they could *theoretically* be shot down, there are myriad other real world challenges that preclude it from being a realistic and *probable* quotient.

For instance, ballistic missiles use a high parabolic arc which actually goes far above the standard air defense radar beam elevation coverage arc. This Patriot AN/MPQ-65, for example, can't see directly “above” it:



You need other specialized radars placed in particular arrangements to cover ballistic missile tracks—however doing so would likely preclude that radar from covering other low flying objects. If you have an excess of high end radars, then you might have the luxury to do this—but not if all your radar units need to cover other more critical directions: you don't want to waste one by pointing it at the sky when the *majority* of the threats are flying low from lateral sectors.

You might wonder: well if a Patriot radar simply points toward Russia, wouldn't it track an Iskander on the ascent, long before the missile gets high enough to be “above” the radar, in its blind zone? A crude diagram:



The problem is, the Patriot's radar—seen in yellow—maxes out around 150-200km give or take. The Iskander and Kinzhal have a reported range of over 500km if not more. That means they can technically get very high in their parabolic arc, above the radar's beam, long before the radar's range is even able to detect them.

Of course if you *know* that ballistic missiles are going to hit your capital, you'd likely have some radars pointing up, but like I said—if you only have two or three of these enterprise billion dollar systems, you've just locked one of them into a vector that will miss the vast majority of threats, which are cruise missiles and drones coming in low.

For those that think radar beams can magically just see everywhere, there are some publicly available figures of each radar system's maximum beam azimuth and elevations. Here's one example for a random radar:

SPECIFICATIONS •

BAND D

RANGE 11.9 nm (13.7 mi; 22 km) HEIGHT COVERAGE 0-10,000 ft
(3,054 m)

ACCURACY

azimuth +/-3°RMS

range +/-345 yd (300 m)

POWER

peak 1,000W

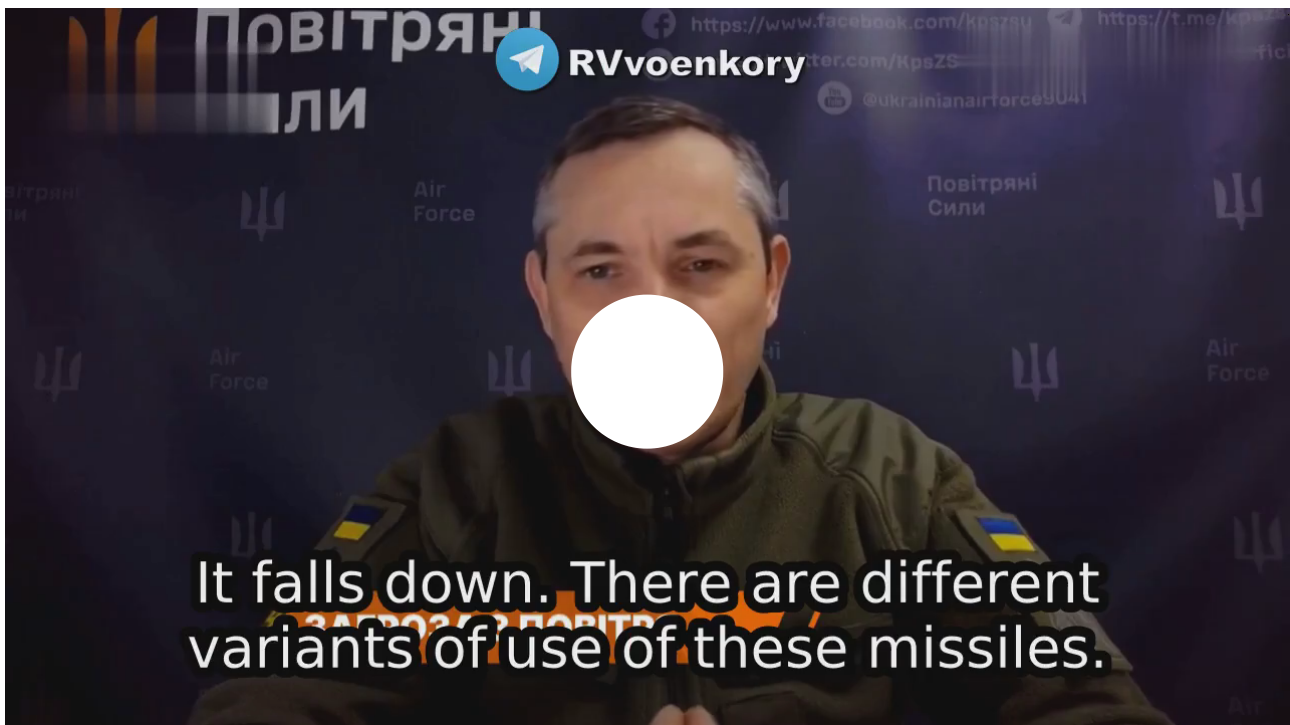
average 50 W SYSTEM WEIGHT approx 300 lb (137

kg)

ANTENNA SCAN RATE 10 rpm BEAM ELEVATION —5°/ +30°, adjustable over — 5°/+5° range

This is all to say that, while it's theoretically possible for Kinzhals to be shot down, given Ukraine's limitations it's highly implausible they are able to do so. That's not to mention that there are rumors that a Patriot was hit and taken out yesterday by one of these Kinzhals, which is a far likelier scenario.

Recall that their own airforce spokesman Yuri Ignat stated unequivocally that in over 300+ Kh-22 missiles fired by Russia since the start of the SMO, they have not been able to down a single one as this missile travels 4,000 km/h (Mach 3+):





RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES AIR DEFENSES WAR IN UKRAINE

Russia's Kh-22 – the Missile Ukraine Has Yet to Shoot Down

In 2000, Ukraine transferred 386 Kh-22 missiles to Russia as an installment against the gas debt. These have since be used to target Ukrainian cities in attacks like the one this morning.

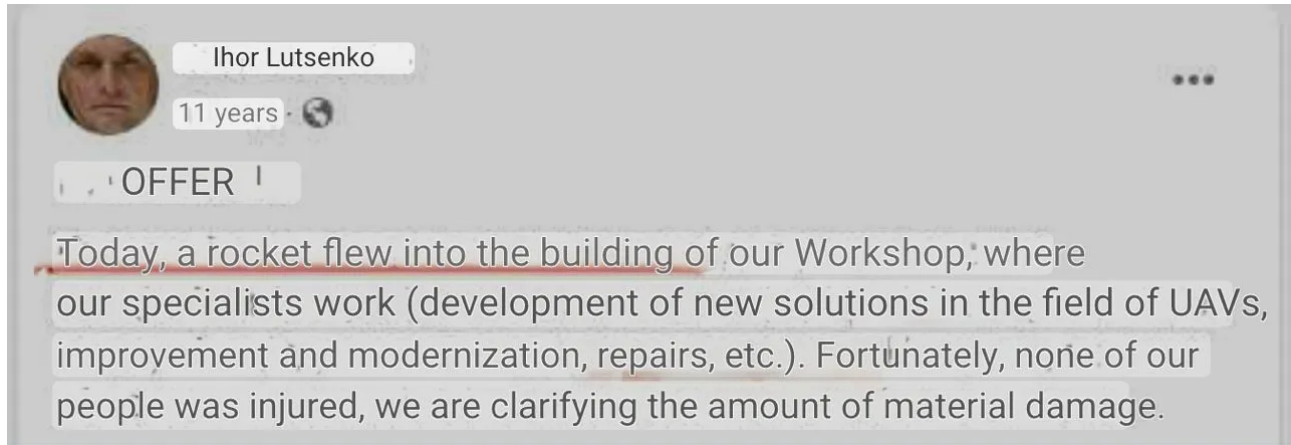
by Kyiv Post | December 29, 2023, 1:51 pm | Comments
(7)



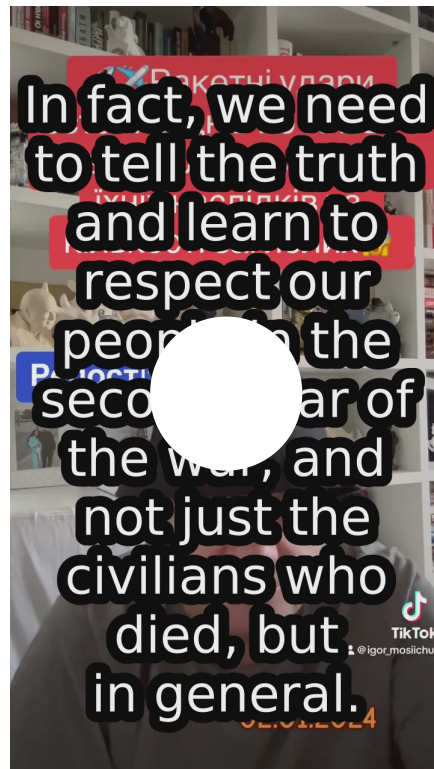
So Ukraine's most authoritative source on the matter says they're incapable of taking out Mach 3+ missiles, but somehow they get a 10/10 100% kill ratio on a 12,000km/h

Mach ~11 missile. Doesn't add up, does it?

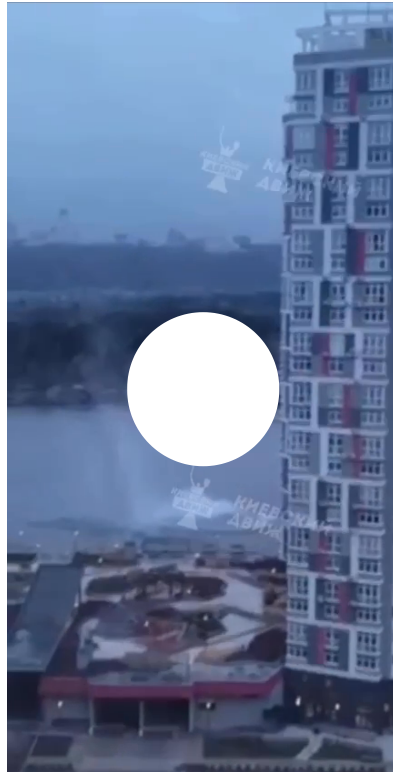
Either way, Rada Deputies like the one below are beginning to clarify the type of military production warehouses that were hit in last night's strikes:



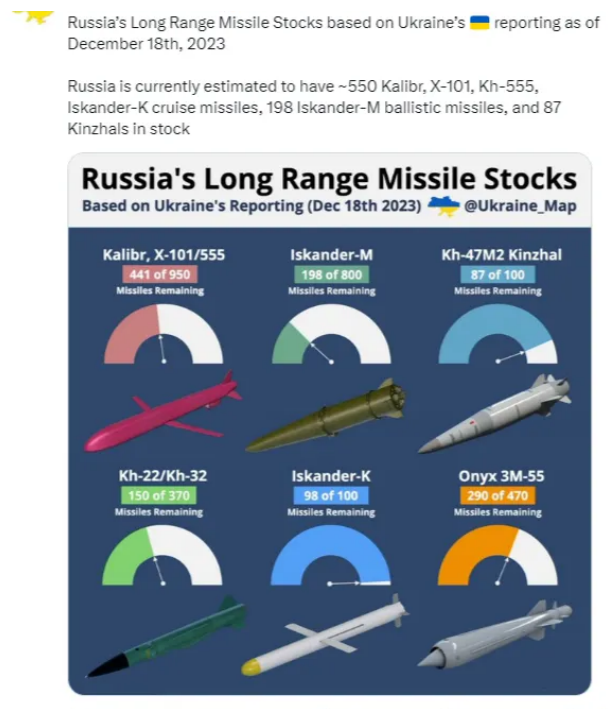
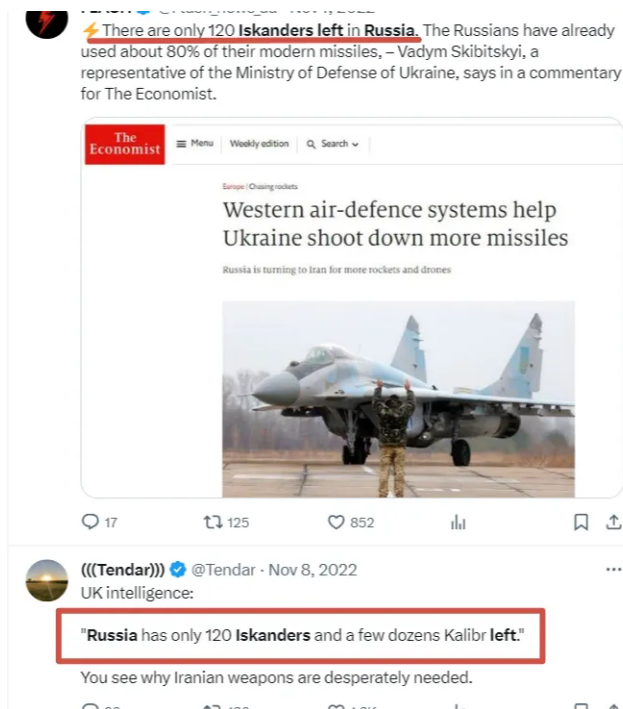
Not to mention ex-Aidar deputy commander Mosiychuk likewise admitted that Zelensky's authorities are hiding the fact that Kiev's major military enterprises of Artem and Luch Design Bureau were destroyed with huge casualties to the personnel:



And anyway, NATO's vaunted IRIS-T missiles were seen falling out of the sky in Kiev, after failing to intercept Russian strikes:



Speaking of total missile numbers, Ukraine now finds consolation in the fact that, after yesterday's strikes, Russia has again expended much of its stock. But need I remind them how Russia's stock has continued to grow despite constant claims they'll run out any minute? On the left, Russia has "only" 120 Iskanders and a few 'dozen' Kalibrs left in November 2022—on the right, those numbers have all magically gone up by the end of 2023:



In fact, Ukrainian ex-general Krivonos just complained days ago that a single Russian missile corporation, according to his sources, has produced a massive 1,321 cruise missiles just this year alone:



Ex-General of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Krivonos calls on the Kiev authorities to tell the truth "Just one corporation, Tactical Missile Armament, in the city of Korolev in the Moscow region, has produced 1,321 cruise missiles this year, although we were told that they could no longer produce anything," he lamented. The nationalist and Russophobe

realized that he, like the entire population of Ukraine, had been fooled, and Russia, it turns out, is professionally prepared and knows when and how to strike.

And one other thing: recall that the US is claimed to have a total stockpile of 3000-4000 Tomahawks, and has fired a *total* ~2000 Tomahawk cruise missiles in the entire lifespan of the missile, stretching from the 80s, through Desert Storm, Yugoslav wars, Iraq, to now.

Russia's total missile fires have again been updated at the end of 2023 by MSM. Check the dates of each post below to get the full timeline:

Total number of cruise missiles Russia launched at Ukraine approaches 3,500 - Zelenskyy

23 august, 2022 tuesday 10:49

NEWS FEED

Zelensky: Russia has fired over 5,000 missiles at Ukraine since Feb. 24, 2022

Share    

by The Kyiv Independent news desk

March 11, 2023 12:18 AM

1 min read



REUTERS | Reuters

Russia has fired 7,400 missiles, 3,700 so far, Kyiv says



Reuters

21 December 2023

2-min read

Russia has now fired more cruise missiles than all of NATO including the US combined likely have total in inventory and have fired in the entire existence of their

armed forces. The above revelation seems to corroborate the Ukrainian general's manufacturing numbers. And Russia is only just starting to heat up; the head of Rostec promises much bigger numbers in 2024 than even the previous two years.

It's no wonder Wall Street Journal greets the new year with the same old downer mood:

OPINION | POLITICS & IDEAS

Ukraine May Have to Accept a Cease-Fire

The good news is it would open the door to eventual EU and NATO membership.

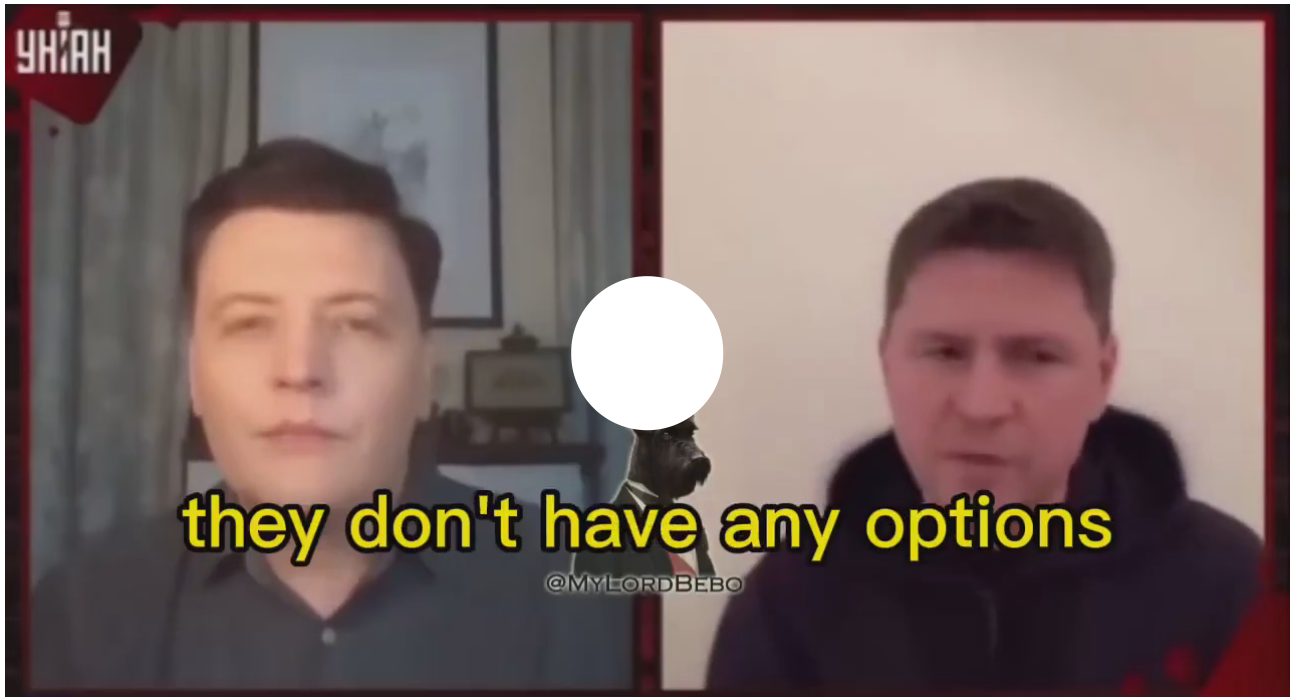
By William A. Galston

Jan. 2, 2024 12:55 pm ET



<https://archive.li/Rn7YP>

But don't worry, according to presidential office head Podolyak, Russia is actually *already dead*—they just don't know it yet:



The new mobilization is going no better. Zelensky and co. continue dragging their feet at the highly contentious issue of societal call-ups:

Opinion **Global Insight**

Army conscription becomes toxic issue for Ukraine's leaders

Neither the Ukrainian president nor his top military commanders want to take responsibility for drafting reluctant fighters

BEN HALL

+ Add to myFT



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, front left, and other military and political leaders stand during a memorial site commemoration in Kyiv © ABACA/Reuters

Ben Hall, Europe Editor YESTERDAY

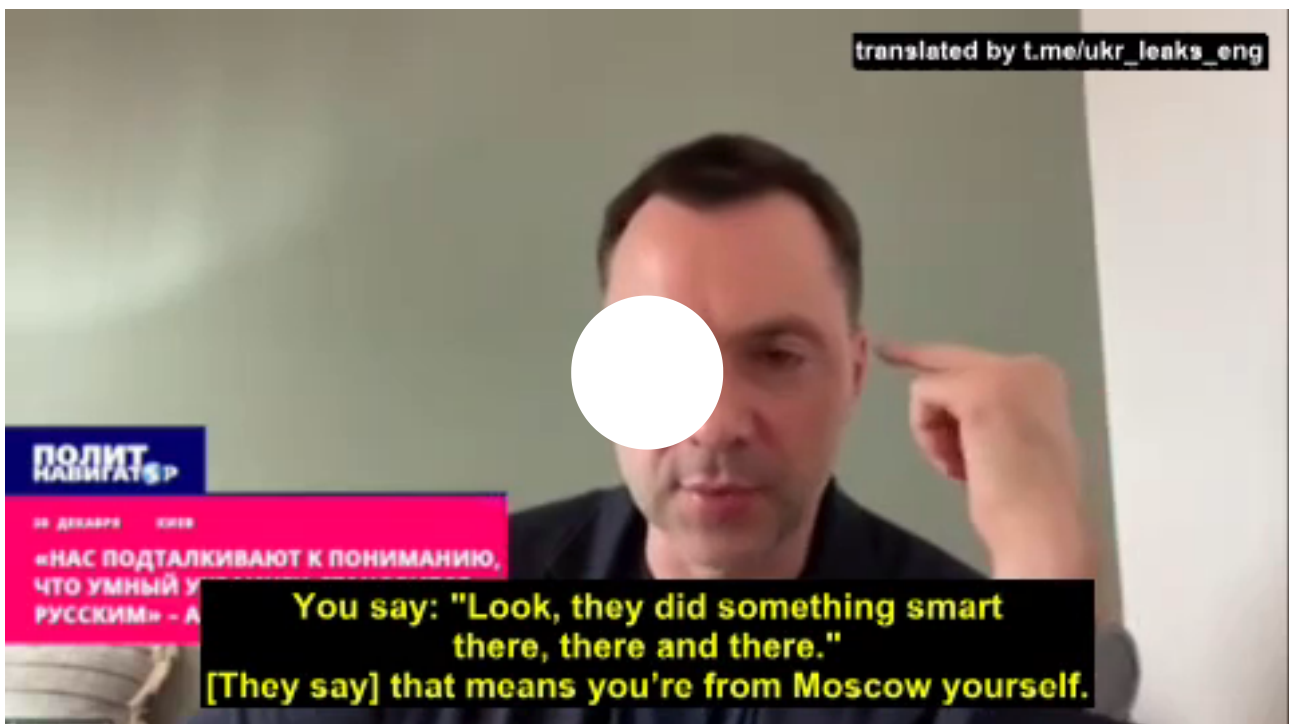
514



Here a Rada Deputy confirms they still haven't pulled the trigger on the actual mobilization bill and that a "compromise" of some sort will be necessary, as the sides wrangle a way to "look good" in front of the populace in preparation for the coming storm they know will bring their eventual tribunals:



Arestovich continues to go “full Monty” in his quest to rebrand himself as Ukraine’s savior. Now he says smart Ukrainians are turning into Russians:



And in the meantime, the trend of exasperated Ukrainian servicemen continues. I’ve posted a slew of videos in recent weeks of AFU soldiers who are fed up to the gills of society downplaying the threat of the Russian army. Ukrainian soldiers are sick of being perceived as losers who can’t even beat the “totally useless orc hordes.”

This new video is particularly emblematic of this, as the soldier has clearly had enough and proceeds to disabuse the ignorantly smirking audience member in epic fashion:



A couple last items for the road:

In light of the flood of revelations about how poorly adapted Western equipment is to the real war front, here's another exemplary case. The vaunted American Stryker, clearly too heavy, overladen and generally poorly-designed for this type of theater:



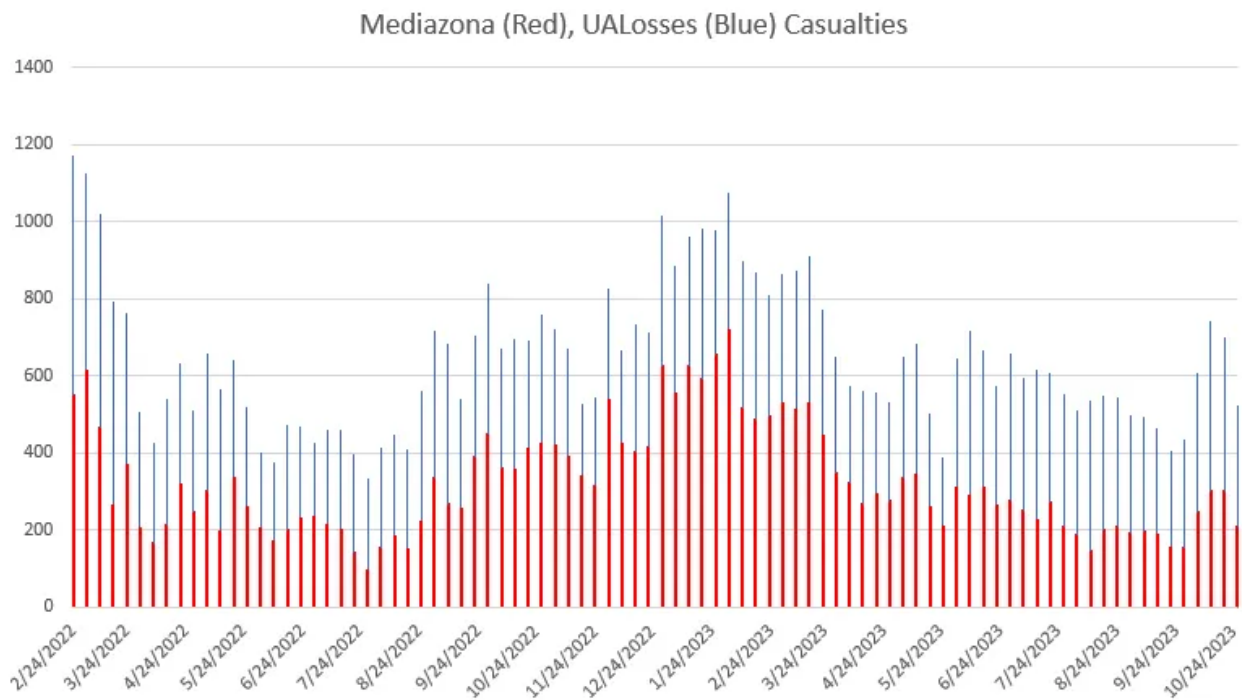
I want to clearly note here for the record that I don't just blanketly make fun of all Western gear on principle. I think there are many good systems. In fact, as much as it's the red-headed stepchild everyone loves to beat on, I actually think the M2 Bradley is by far one of the greatest assets the AFU has been given. The Bradley has proven itself—from what I've personally seen thus far—as a pretty good vehicle, whose advantages appear to outweigh its disadvantages.

However its design philosophy is totally different to that of Russian IFV/ICVs so it's not quite comparable. I believe the BMP-3 is superior to it in every way, but by no means is the Bradley total garbage despite its long-running reputation, even within the US army itself, as being a punching bag or lightning rod for criticism.

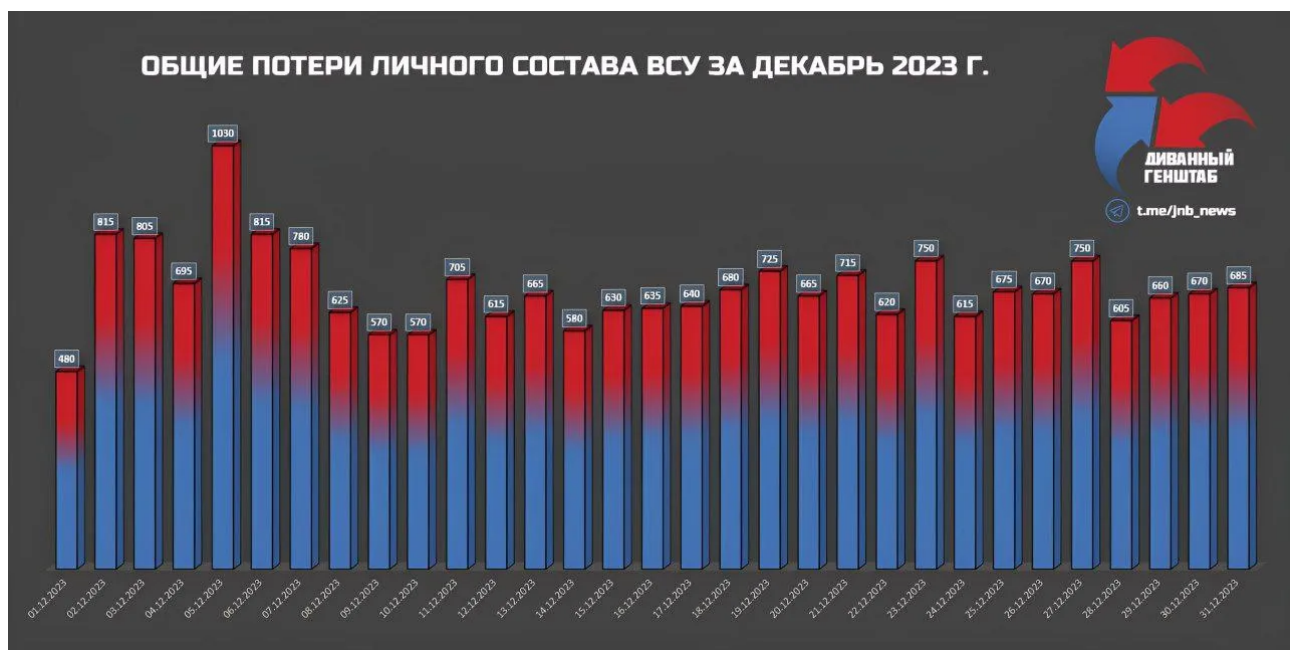
However some systems like the Stryker are clearly total grotesques, and the product of unrestrained MIC ego and hubris. A giant monstrosity like that with a laughable pea-shooter for a gun: there aren't many redeeming qualities.

Lastly, one final 'numbers' related item for those interested in keeping track of losses. A **new project** has sprouted up which purports to tally all known Ukrainian casualties—those whose names and/or information is actually verified. They have 400 pages of 100 names/DOBs/etc. each, which amounts to ~45,000 confirmed thus far. They've been criticized for reportedly taking information primarily from official Ukrainian sources, which means that this data obviously represents a tiny 'managed'

fraction of total losses. However, it's still interesting to see their chart of UA losses superimposed on MediaZona's chart of Russian 'confirmed' losses, at least from the angle of the dynamics over time:



Meanwhile, here's what Russian MOD had for Ukraine's daily casualty count for the month of December:



Also, a Ukrainian minister has at least admitted on video that **Ukraine's official MIA count** is at 16,000 soldiers.

And lastly, to give an idea of Russia's recent offensive initiative and slow-but-steady forward motion, here's a map of all the territorial gains made by the Russian army just in the last month of December, shown in red below:



» in the Kupyansky direction, the Russian Armed Forces took up new positions on the outskirts of Sinkovka and southwest of Pershotravnevoy +1.6 (+13.8) km²

» in the Kremennaya area, active offensive actions of the Russian Armed Forces north of the Torsky ledge and in the Kremen forests +10.2 (+0) km²

» Soledarsky section of the front - attacks by the Russian Armed Forces in the direction of Sporny and near Vesoly +4.39 (+0.8) km²

» north of Artyomovsk, the Russian Armed Forces advanced to Bogdanovka and near Artyomovsky (Khromovo) +10.3 (+0.37) km²

» south of Artyomovsk, oncoming battles along the entire section of the front +0.1 (-0.1) km²

» near Gorlovka, the Russian Armed Forces returned under their control the waste heap of the mine named after Yu. Gagarin +0.23(-0.23) km²

» north of Avdeevka numerous attacks by the Russian Armed Forces in the direction of Petrovsky, Ocheretino, Novokalinovo and the AKHZ treatment plant +4.26 (+6.19) km²

- » in Avdeevka and in the southern coverage of Avdeevka, the RF Armed Forces increased the area of control near the Industrial Zone, in a quarry near Opytnoye, left part of the positions near Nevelskoye -1.39 (+0) km²
- » the city of Maryinka completely came under the control of the RF Armed Forces with adjacent territories from the north and south +6.46 (+0) km²
- » near Novomikhailovka, the Russian Armed Forces continued offensive operations south and north of the settlement +4.43 (+1.26) km²
- » in the Orekhovsky direction, the Russian Armed Forces carried out several counterattacks in the direction of the Ukrainian Armed Forces' position in the south and east of the fire pocket +2.73 (-4.79) km²
- » area controlled by the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the Krynok area (not included in the general statistics) about -1.0 km²
- » in other sectors of the front, the line of combat contact was adjusted based on references from archival data, or the changes were insignificant
- » General territorial changes for December (November) 2023: +43.31 (+15.95) km²

That's all for today's inaugural first-of-the-year post. I hope everyone had a good new year and that you've all fortified yourselves for the sure-to-be wild ride ahead, as this year promises to be one for the record books.

If you enjoyed the article and want to support me for the new year, be sure to sign up for a paid subscription to help ease those slumping holiday doldrums numbers—I'll be much appreciative!

Until next time.

Your support is invaluable. If you enjoyed the read, I would greatly appreciate if you subscribed to a **monthly/yearly pledge** to support my work, so that I may continue providing you with detailed, incisive reports like this one.

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Rickrick 10 hrs ago
First

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3 replies



HBI 9 hrs ago

1) The Bradley is a piece of shit. You still haven't watched "The Pentagon Wars". It points out all its deficiencies, more or less unmitigated to this day.

2) You're singing my tune about the West's inability to sustain war. They expect years to be able to turn up their production. They won't get that.

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6 replies by Simplicius The Thinker and others

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