



And must have whiskey  
Oh, you know why

## « New York Times Readers Are The Least Informed Ones | Main

**March 22, 2024**

### **Russia. Is. At. War.**

Due to a flurry of western support for Ukraine, now escalating to ground troop insertions, Russia had to move its special military operation in Ukraine into the bigger scope of a full fledged war.

Over the last month the Ukrainian military intelligence directorate GUR and its civilian secret service SBU have attempted to disturb the recent presidential election in Russia. They did this [by](#):

- a. sending forces, with U.S. made equipment (Bradleys), to attack Russian border villages in the direction of Belgograd,
- b. by launching missiles from Czech Vampire (RM-70) multiple launch rocket systems towards Belgograd,
- c. by launching somewhat successful drone strike against Russian oil refineries.

The election in Russia saw a record turnout. As expected President Putin did win by a very large margin. His legitimacy is a [geopolitical reality](#):

If Nato expansion is about the perpetuation of US hegemony and de-dollarisation is about the burial of the western financial system that underpins that hegemony, Putin is playing a pivotal role in that historical process. If Putin remains in power till 2030 and fulfils even one half of the ambitious blueprint of social and economic programme for Russia that he outlined in his [landmark speech at the Federal Assembly](#) of the parliament, **the global strategic balance will have shifted irrevocably and cemented a multipolar world order as the anchor sheet of 21st century politics.**

The West knows it, the Russian people know it, the vast majority of nations realise it. That said, it must be understood as well that this is not only Putin's victory personally but also a consolidation of Russian society around him. And that accounts for the last week's election turning into such a high-stakes affair.

With the election out of the way Russia was free to hit back.

Moon of Alabama @MoonofA - [13:24 UTC · Mar 20, 2024](#).

Ru Ministry of Defense claims 1725 Ukrainian casualties over the last day (650 in Belograd direction alone)  
[https://function.mil.ru/news\\_page/...](https://function.mil.ru/news_page/...)

Over the last six days the Russian MoD reports claimed no less than nine hits on the Czech Vampire systems which targeted Belograd.

The Ukrainian incursion towards Belograd has thus been defeated.

On Wednesday Jake Sullivan, the U.S. National Security Advisor, had visited Kiev. He was noticed for what **he did not say**:

Jake Sullivan, US National Security Adviser, has said that Ukraine will win if it comes out of the war as a sovereign, democratic and free country. At the same time, **he did not mention restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity** among the conditions of victory.

It is believed that Sullivan delivered a warning to Kiev. As the *Financial Times* **reported (archived)**:

The US has urged Ukraine to halt attacks on Russia's energy infrastructure, warning the drone strikes risk driving up global oil prices and **provoking retaliation**, according to three people familiar with the discussions.

The repeated warnings from Washington were delivered to senior officials at Ukraine's state security service, the SBU, and its military intelligence directorate, known as the GUR, the people told the Financial Times.

Both intelligence units have steadily expanded their own drone programmes to strike Russian targets on land, sea and in the air since the start of the Kremlin's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

The U.S. concern is not about Ukraine but about Biden's chance for reelection:

Russia remains one of the world's most important energy exporters despite western sanctions on its oil and gas sector. Oil prices have risen about 15 per cent this year, to \$85 a barrel, pushing up fuel costs just as US President Joe Biden begins his campaign for re-election.

...  
The US objections come as Biden faces a tough re-election battle this year with petrol prices on the rise, increasing almost 15 per cent this year to around \$3.50 a gallon.

"Nothing terrifies a sitting American president more than a surge in pump prices during an election year," said Bob McNally, president of consultancy Rapidan Energy and a former White House energy adviser.

The Ukrainian government **denied and confirmed** the *FT* report (machine translation):

Earlier, Deputy Prime Minister Olga Stefanashina actually confirmed the information to the Financial Times, saying that "we understand the calls of American partners," but Ukraine responded to such calls by "achieving its goals" and "very successful operations" on the territory of the Russian Federation.

Sullivan's warning about provoking retaliation was too late.

Yesterday, for the first time in 44 day, Russia launched [a missile attack against Kiev \(archived\)](#):

The Ukrainian Air Force said that air defense systems had intercepted all 31 of the Russian missiles that targeted Kyiv. Still, debris from the downed missiles fell in various parts of the city, causing the injuries and damage. No deaths have been reported so far.

...

In the Podilskyi district, which is home to industrial facilities that Russia has targeted in the past, a plume of black smoke was rising early in the morning, suggesting a hit. Mr. Klitschko said a fire had broken out at a power substation in the area. Ukrainian officials rarely confirm strikes on strategic industrial and military targets.

...

Thursday's attack on Kyiv echoed a strategy used by Russia during air assaults in late December that consisted of overwhelming Ukraine's air defenses with multiple launches of various types of missiles, including ballistic and hypersonic ones.

Russia has launched relatively few large-scale missile attacks in recent months, despite a capacity to produce more than 115 long-range missiles per month, according to Ukrainian officials.

Yesterday's Russian MoD report [said](#):

Last night, the Russian Aerospace Forces delivered a strike by long-range precision weaponry including Kinzhal hypersonic missiles at **AFU decision-making centres**, logistic bases, temporary deployment areas of special operations forces and foreign mercenaries.

The goal of the strike has been achieved. All the targets have been engaged.

Such Russian strikes are complex. Drones are sent first to reveal Ukrainian air defense systems. Then follows a wave of attacks against those systems. A third strike is then launched against the real targets of the attack. In this case those were a drone factory in Kiev as well as a headquarter of the military intelligence service GUR.

Another large scale strike followed today. The primary targets were [elements of the electricity infrastructure](#):

Large areas of Ukraine are suffering blackouts after Russian missiles targeted energy infrastructure.

There is no electricity in the second-largest city of Kharkiv, says regional head Oleg Synehubov.

Fifteen blasts were reported in Kharkiv, while more than 53,000 households in Odesa were without power.

Ukraine's energy minister, German Galushchenko, accused Russia of trying to provoke "a large-scale failure of the country's energy system".

A power line feeding the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant had been cut, he added.

Regional head Ivan Fedorov said the power station was "on the verge of a blackout", adding that seven buildings in the region had been destroyed and 35 others damaged.

President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia had launched more than 60 Shahed drones and about 90 missiles into Ukraine

during the wave of overnight attacks.

Internet access in Ukraine has [dropped significantly](#).

This was again a complex attack:

Lord Bebo @MyLordBebo - [9:42 UTC · Mar 22, 2024](#)

UARU 🚨!! Russian missile attack on Ukraine during March 22nd, 2024.

-> Notice the flight patterns of the missiles.

Aviation:

At 01:12, the takeoff of 3 x Tu-95ms from the Olenya air base was noted.

At 02:30, information on the movement of 13 Tu-95ms to the launch lines was clarified.

At 03:34, the launch of the KRPB Kh-101/555/55 was carried out from the Volgograd region.

At 04:18, the takeoff of 5 Tu-22m3s from the Mozdok air base was noted.

During the attack, a total of 10 MiG-31Ks were raised (7 were used before the attack).

Armament:

55/63x "Shahed-136/131" Type Shock Unmanned Aerial Vehicles;

0/12x OTR "Iskander-M";

35/40 X-101/X-555 cruise missiles;

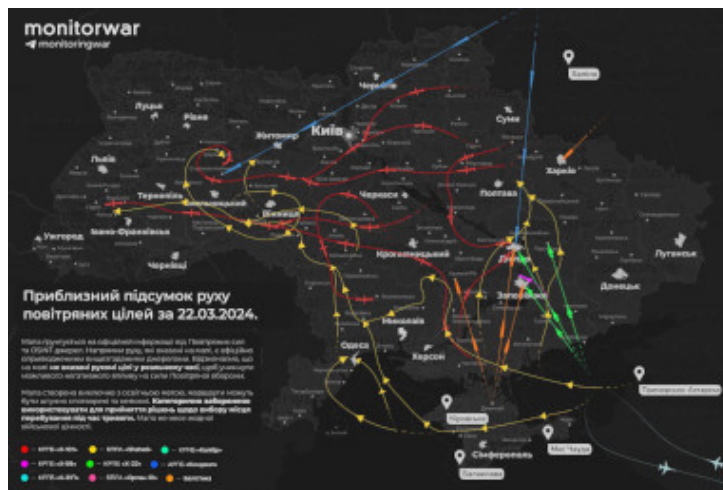
0/5x NKR Kh-22;

0/7x ARPB Kh-47M2 "Dagger";

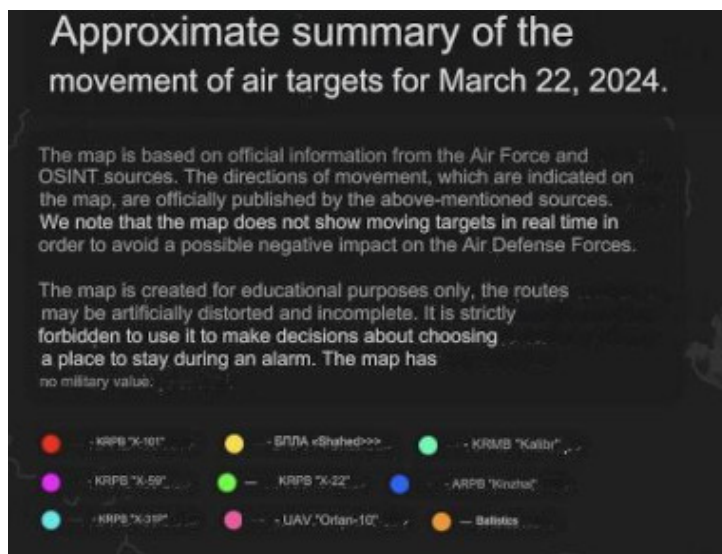
2/2x CAR X-59;

0/22x ZKR S-300/S-400.

The targeted air attack vector during today's day is marked on the map.



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The Ukrainian air defense claimed to have shut down 55 of 63 Shahid drones. But the Iskander, Dagger and S-300 fired against it all came through.

The Russian MoD [reports](#) (machine translation):

Today, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation delivered a massive strike with high-precision long-range weapons of air, sea, land-based and unmanned aerial vehicles against energy facilities, military-industrial complex, railway junctions, arsenals, places of deployment of formations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and foreign mercenaries.

As a result of the strike, the functioning of industrial enterprises for the production and repair of weapons, military equipment and ammunition was disorganized.

In addition, foreign military equipment and weapons delivered to Ukraine from NATO countries were destroyed, transfers to the front line of enemy reserves were disrupted, and units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and mercenaries in the areas of restoring combat capability were hit.

All the goals of the massive strike have been achieved.

Some European politicians are eager to join the fight.



[bigger](#)

As demonstrated today, Russia is ready for it. But unlike a still training Macron Russia has taken [its gloves off](#) (machine translation):

**Peskov: Russia is in a state of war, everyone should understand this**

Russia will continue to act in such a way that the military potential of Ukraine could not threaten the security of its citizens and its territory, he said in a conversation with reporters.

"What is the president talking about? We have four new regions of the Russian Federation. And the main thing for us is to protect people in these regions and liberate the territory of these regions, which is currently de facto occupied by the Kiev regime," Peskov said.

According to the presidential press secretary, **Russia cannot allow the existence of a state on its borders that has documented the intention to use any methods to take Crimea from it**, not to mention the territory of new regions.

**"We are at war.** Yes, it started out as a special military operation, but as soon as this little group was formed there, when the collective West became a participant in this on the side of Ukraine, it already became a war for us. I am convinced of this. And **everyone should understand this for their internal mobilization,**" Peskov added.

In parallel to Peskov's declaration of war talk, Russias [announced](#) the mass production of the three ton heavy FAB-3.000 aerial bombs with 1,400 kg of explosives. These will be fitted, like the currently used FAB 500 and FAB 1.500, with the universal planning and correction module (UMPC) which allows the bombs to glide some 40 miles after being launched to then hit its planned target with high precision. There is little that can survive such a strike.

In his (highly recommendable) book ["The Russian Art of War"](#), the former Swiss military intelligence officer Jacques Baud described the reason why the current fighting in Ukraine started out as a "Special Military Operation" within a larger context:

The use of the word "war" would imply a different structure of conduct than that envisioned by the Russians in Ukraine, and would have other structural implications in Russia itself. Moreover - and this is a central point - as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg himself [acknowledges](#), "*the war began in 2014*" and should have been ended by the Minsk Agreements. The SMO is therefore a "military operation" and not a new "war", as many Western "experts" claim.

That was then. Now Russia is at war.

This will have, as Baud says, a different structure of conduct and other structural implications in Russia and beyond.

Those 'western' politicians who are dreaming of fighting Russia have no idea of what will hit their troops the moment they try to join the war.

NATO however, and especially the United States, will not go to war. At least not yet.

President Biden has his hands full with the genocidal war the Zionists are waging against the Palestinian population. There is also a chance for a war to suddenly start in Asia. (Could North Korea be asked to flex its muscles?)

Neither the U.S. nor Europe are in the shape of winning a multi-front war of global dimensions. The military leaders in the relevant countries know this well.

In consequence 'Western' politicians will have to bite [the bitter pill of a decisive strategic defeat](#).

Posted by b on March 22, 2024 at 13:10 UTC | [Permalink](#)

## Comments

After this reading of B's latest production, it feels like B too has cranked up his reporting quality a notch :- ) I'm impressed. Thanks B !

Posted by: Stephane | Mar 22 2024 13:21 utc | [1](#)

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Long overdue but the intelligentsia in the West are in complete denial about the reality of what is going on and the inevitable defeat for Ukraine. That, combined with the return of Trump is going to lead to levels of hysteria that are off the charts.

Posted by: Gonzo | Mar 22 2024 13:21 utc | [2](#)

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I may be channeling a certain poster here, but in reading about these strikes, why would Russia wait so long to do this?

That Motor Sich plant should have been turned into rubble a long, long, time ago. It's not like its location was some great mystery. You could probably bring in up on Google maps.

Silly stupid Ukrainians were boasting about their grain corridor. Why not hit all the grain elevators? Or better yet, figure out where the ships are loading and just sink them. It would take months to get them off the bottom, probably a piece-by-piece salvage operation.

I know that playing armchair warlord is stupid, but still, I find it puzzling why this took so long.

Posted by: Ghost of Zanon | Mar 22 2024 13:23 utc | [3](#)

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'Western' politicians will have to bite bitter pill. From my conversations with a few MIC adjacent folks, that idea is still foreign to them. Total denial. I told one I they were as cock sure of themselves as Robert Macnamara in 1963, and got a blank stare.

Posted by: horatio | Mar 22 2024 13:24 utc | [4](#)

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Gonzo@2....the Ukraine ain't defeated.....yet, and Trump's running down the road....steady as she goes....after what the chump did last time around in Occupied Palestine. Fuck that Guy .....great Mike Campbell tune btw.

Cheers M

Posted by: sean the leprechaun | Mar 22 2024 13:31 utc | [5](#)

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Too soon for Western leaders taking any bitter pills, but the reality check is necessary.

Whichever Western intel agency greenlighted Budanov's excursion into Belgorod, and the dozens of terror acts against civilians that