

SITREP 5/14/24: Putin Cleans House as Volchansk Comes to the Brink



SIMPLICIUS
MAY 15, 2024



305



175

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Events continue to develop rapidly.

Putin has sealed his new government, with Belousov given his first marching orders.



DECREE

PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

About the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation

1. In accordance with paragraph "d" of Article 83 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, appoint Andrey Removich Belousov as Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation.

2. This Decree comes into force from the date of its signing.



President

Russian

Federation V. Putin

Moscow, Kremlin

May 14, 2024

No. 383



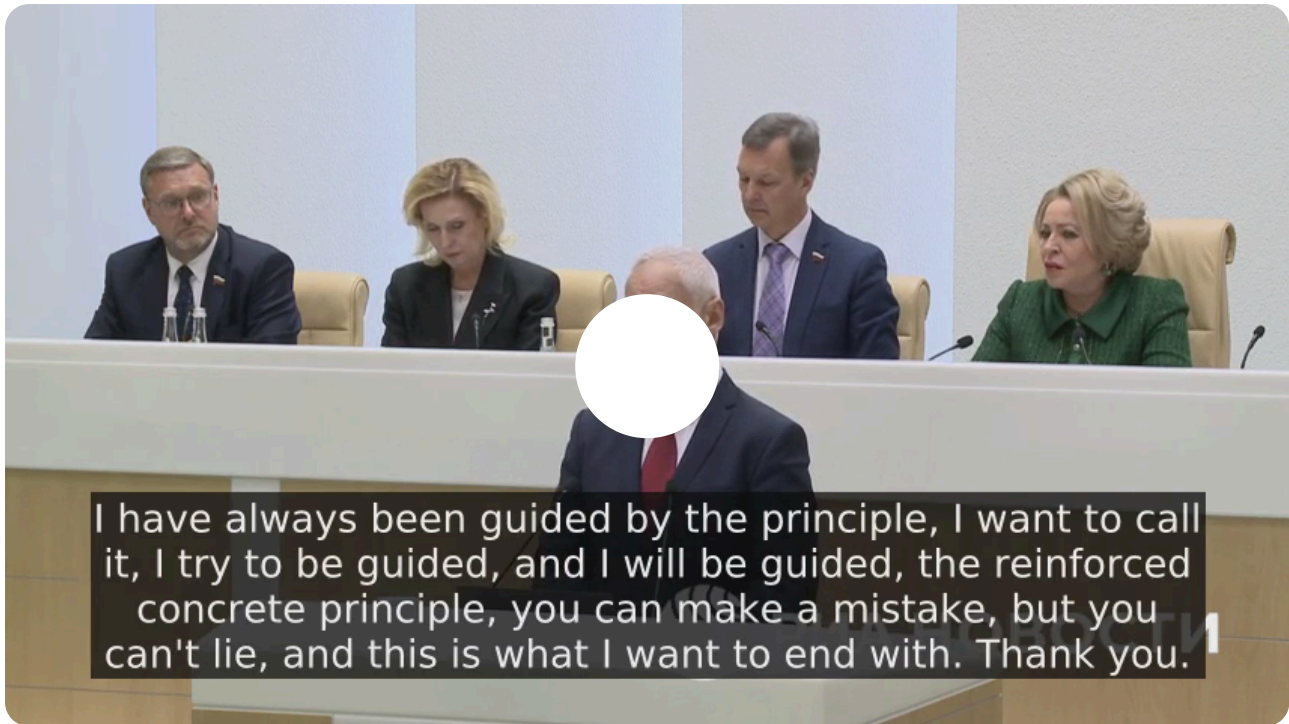


Before he could hardly step foot into the Duma hall, news broke of a further MOD official being cuffed for corruption: high ranking Yuri Kuznetsov, as well as some affiliated underlings swept up in his alleged corruption scheme. Meanwhile rumors fly that deputy of Shoigu's inner circle Tatyana “Chief Accountant” Shevtsova has resigned, first deputy minister of defense Tsalikov, and others—though they appear likely to be an uncorroborated information attack from hostile 5th/6th columnists. But just given the arrests of big wigs Kuznetsov and Ivanov alone, with attendant

underlings, makes it an unprecedented ongoing purge, with further rumors of other MOD-linked officials to potentially be taken down in the near future as part of the widening dragnet.



It's playing out like the end of Godfather 1. Under the hymnal anointing of the newly sworn-in savior, a host of the corrupt legacy cankers are hoisted by their own petards and dragged off to jail. Even as cell doors were still slamming shut, as if by design, Belousov quite symbolically proclaimed *"You can make mistakes, but you can't lie"* to rousing Duma cheers:



I have always been guided by the principle, I want to call it, I try to be guided, and I will be guided, the reinforced concrete principle, you can make a mistake, but you can't lie, and this is what I want to end with. Thank you.

It's feeling more and more like a Spring renewal, after all.

Here is how informed, albeit 6th columnist, channel ChK-OGPU filled in the blanks about the proceedings:

"The system could no longer withstand the prohibitive level of corruption in the Ministry of Defense, which led to the arrest of Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov, the removal of "builder Sergei Shoigu" and the promotion of economist Andrei Belousov. It is known that deputy ministers Ruslan Tsalikov and Alexey Krivoruchko, the former owner of the Kalashnikov concern and a big fan of Miami, have written reports on the resignation; there is talk about the resignation of Yuri Sadovenko. We expect in the near future a radical cleansing of Shoigu's "Augean stables" and possible new high-profile cases and arrests. Just yesterday, the head of the personnel department of the Ministry of Defense, Yuri Kuznetsov, was detained.

The "dark horses" in Shoigu's stable remain Deputy Minister of Defense Tatyana Shevtsova, who is responsible for finance, who, by definition, due to her job responsibilities, should know more than anyone about possible abuses and misappropriation of funds, Alexander Fomin, Viktor Goremykin.

Alexander Fomin was appointed "supervisor" by Igor Sechin, who knows Fomin from the time he served as a two-year student in Angola after graduating from Leningrad University, so there is a high probability that Fomin will retain his position.

Another Deputy Minister of Defense, Viktor Goremykin, who is responsible for political work and personnel, had close friendly relations with Timur Ivanov, played hockey with him in the Red Stars team. Searches and interrogation of Viktor Goremykin's subordinate - head of the Personnel Department Yuri Kuznetsov, who was taken in his immodest mansion right in his bed, can lead to serious problems for the boss."

This was all followed by news that Putin has elevated both Patrushev and rising star Aleksey Dyumin to be his personal 'presidential aides'.



At the end of December 2020, LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky named Dyumin one of the politicians who could become Vladimir Putin's successor as President of the Russian Federation

Again check the physiology and physiognomy: young and hale, alert and sharp-eyed —not slovenly, disheveled, and geriatric, like has become so sadly commonplace amongst too many of Russian elite's upper crust.

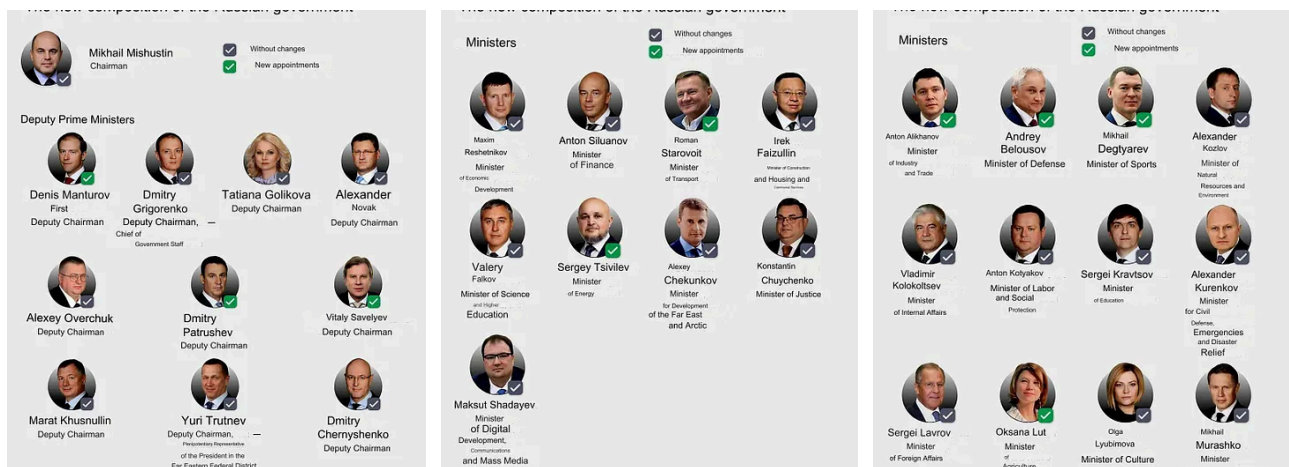


Russians With Attitude
@RWApodcast

...

Patrushev is an old school KGB type, head of FSB for a decade, total hawk and hardliner. Dyumin is the godfather of Russia's Special Forces as they currently exist, he was also largely responsible for the Crimean operation. He is also currently the very successful governor of Tula oblast, and I know few people in Russia who are as well-respected among the troops as Dyumin. "Assistants to the President" basically means in touch 24/7 and giving reports that are taken very seriously. I'm very whitepilled rn.

In short: Putin appears to have effected a coup in cleaning out a very diseased strain within the MOD, fortifying his executive station with a cadre of ultra hardline loyalists with proven track records. And right on time, there are now rumors that Surovikin has finally arrived in Moscow, for *real* this time—or so Rybar claims; a meeting in the Kremlin was allegedly being carried out. This could portend a big coming appointment for him, if true.



Scott Ritter published a new Twitter post that so succinctly and thoroughly summarizes developments, I post it here in lieu of my own breakdown:

Scott Ritter

A New Revolution in Military Affairs

The appointment by Russian President Vladimir Putin of Andrei Belousov goes beyond simply trying to bring economic structure and discipline to an expansive and expanding military industrial base.

True, the rapid growth of Russian defense industry over the course of the past two years has created concerns that a fragile yet expanding Russian civilian economic sector still recovering from the shock of stringent U.S. and European sanctions in the aftermath of Russia's initiation of the Special Military Operation (SMO) in Ukraine could find itself held hostage by unconstrained defense spending that artificially skewed supply chains and pricing in a manner which could see the Russian economy go the way of its defense industry-heavy Soviet predecessor.

Belousov, an accomplished economist in his own right, has been brought in to manage the intersection of defense and civil economies to make sure that civilian industry remains viably healthy even as the need for robust defense industry output remains high.

But perhaps the most important aspect of Belousov's appointment is his role as an industrial innovator.

Russia is heading toward a new Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) which will be defined by the nexus of a Technological Development brought on by the experiences of the SMO (drone warfare, electronic warfare, increased lethality of munitions), b) Doctrinal Innovation that has emerged as the lessons learned on the SMO battlefield are studied, and required changes incorporated into formal military education systems responsible for producing up-to-date doctrine; and c) Organizational Adaptation which involves major structural and intellectual changes that reflect the reality of new technologies and doctrine.

Under Sergei Shoigu, the Russian military made important progress in the first two legs of the RMA trio. But the kind of structural innovation needed in the Russian military to transform systemic changes into a true RMA are Belousov's forte. Russia is on the cusp of implementing a new RMA that will be every bit as transformative to the modern battlefield that the German Blitzkrieg was to the conduct of the Second World War.

This is good news if you're Russian. For the collective West, facing the prospect of undertaking an expensive expansion of NATO, a Russian-driven RMA would be tantamount to disaster.

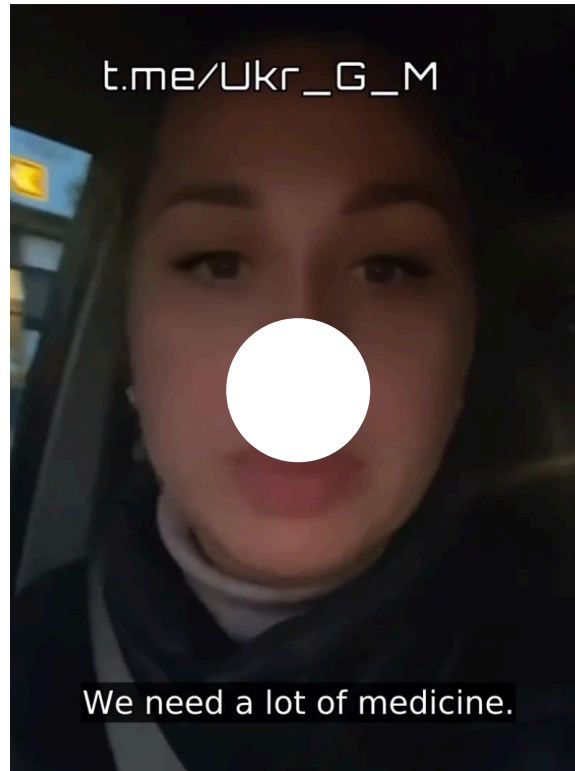


On the front, Ukraine is facing one of its most rapid collapses of the war thus far. There are no two ways of mincing things: Russian sources report catastrophic losses for AFU who are woefully understaffed and underarmed. The largest scale of POW captures in the past year is currently ongoing, with over a dozen new videos just from today alone showing dozens of Ukrainian prisoners, including many Kraken:





Even the Ukrainian female paramedics are pleading for help with the losses:



As of this writing, the Ukrainian General Staff has announced a withdrawal of Volchansk, the largest city and stronghold of northern Kharkov region, though it's unclear as of yet if it's a full or partial one, as the wording is ambiguous:



General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine / General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

13 min. · 🌐



Operational information as of 11:00 p.m. 14/05/2024 regarding the Russian invasion.

The situation in the areas of hostilities remains difficult, but controlled by the Defense Forces of Ukraine. Today, the enemy concentrated its efforts in the Kharkiv region, as well as in the Kramatorsk and Pokrovsky directions.

Since the beginning of the day, there have been 145 combat clashes, the enemy has launched 3 missile strikes, more than 320 kamikaze drone strikes and carried out more than 2,400 attacks on the positions of our troops. Actively using aviation, Russian terrorists dropped almost 70 guided air bombs on the territory of Ukraine.


In the north of Ukraine, in the Chernihiv and Sumy regions, there were no changes in the condition and position of the troops.

In the Kharkiv direction, units of our troops repelled 11 enemy attacks, in particular, in the directions of Hlyboke Liptsi, Lukyantsi Liptsi, Borysivka Neskuchne, Shebekino (Russian Federation) Vovchansk, 3 combat clashes are still ongoing. In some areas, in the areas of Lukyantsi and Vovchansk, due to the impact of fire and assault actions of the enemy, in order to save the lives of our servicemen and avoid losses, the units carried out a maneuver and moved to more advantageous positions. The fighting continues. Ukrainian units prevent the Russian invaders from gaining a foothold. Counterattack actions are being carried out, the enemy is under constant fire control of artillery and UAV units of the Defense Forces. In the course of hostilities in this direction, the loss of enemy personnel for today is 162 servicemen, 26 units of weapons and military equipment were destroyed and damaged.

Frontline troops are frothing with anger at command:

⚡ "Syrsky, go fuck yourself and fight"

This phrase can be heard everywhere. And why all? Yes, because this red-haired idiot knew about the attack on Kharkov. He knew everything in advance. Even his American colleagues hinted at the impending fuck-up. But no, he "does not attach strategic significance to this." Seriously?? That is, don't give a fuck about ordinary people who are now dying like flies, and I'm not talking about our fighters.

 Ukrainian troops are fleeing en masse from Volchansk, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is preparing the public for the acknowledgment of the loss of the city.

Right now, despite the reinforcements sent, Ukrainians are completing their retreat from Volchansk in the Kharkov region under the pressure of the Russian army.

Earlier, in the evening briefing, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine began preparing the population for the fact that the Armed Forces of Ukraine are leaving the city: *"In certain areas of Lukyantseve and Volchansk, due to the enemy's fire impact and assault actions, our units have maneuvered and moved to more advantageous positions to preserve the lives of our soldiers and avoid losses,"* the statement reads.

Meanwhile, Russian units are actively consolidating and conducting clearing operations.

Via: [@RVvoenkor](#)

More than 30,000 Russian Federation troops are currently advancing in the northern part of the Kharkiv region, states Oleksandr Lytvynenko, the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council.

According to him, initially, about 50 thousand Russian troops were concentrated at the border.

Russian forces have now even gotten within artillery range of Kharkov city itself, and there are reports they are hammering AFU positions on Kharkov outskirts from about 22-24km in Glyboke/Hlyboke.

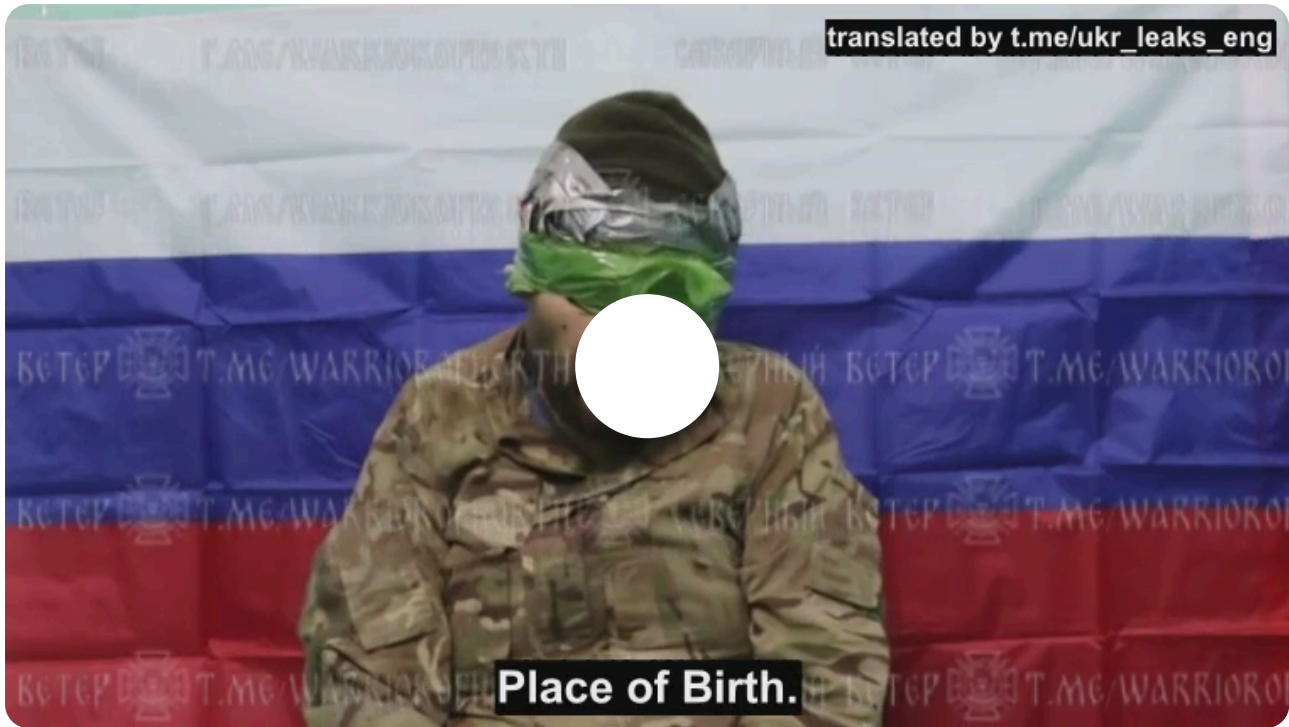
There are even reports of blocking detachments now waiting in the rear to intercept fleeing troops:

An interception plan was introduced in the Kharkov region due to the mass exodus of Ukrainian Armed Forces soldiers

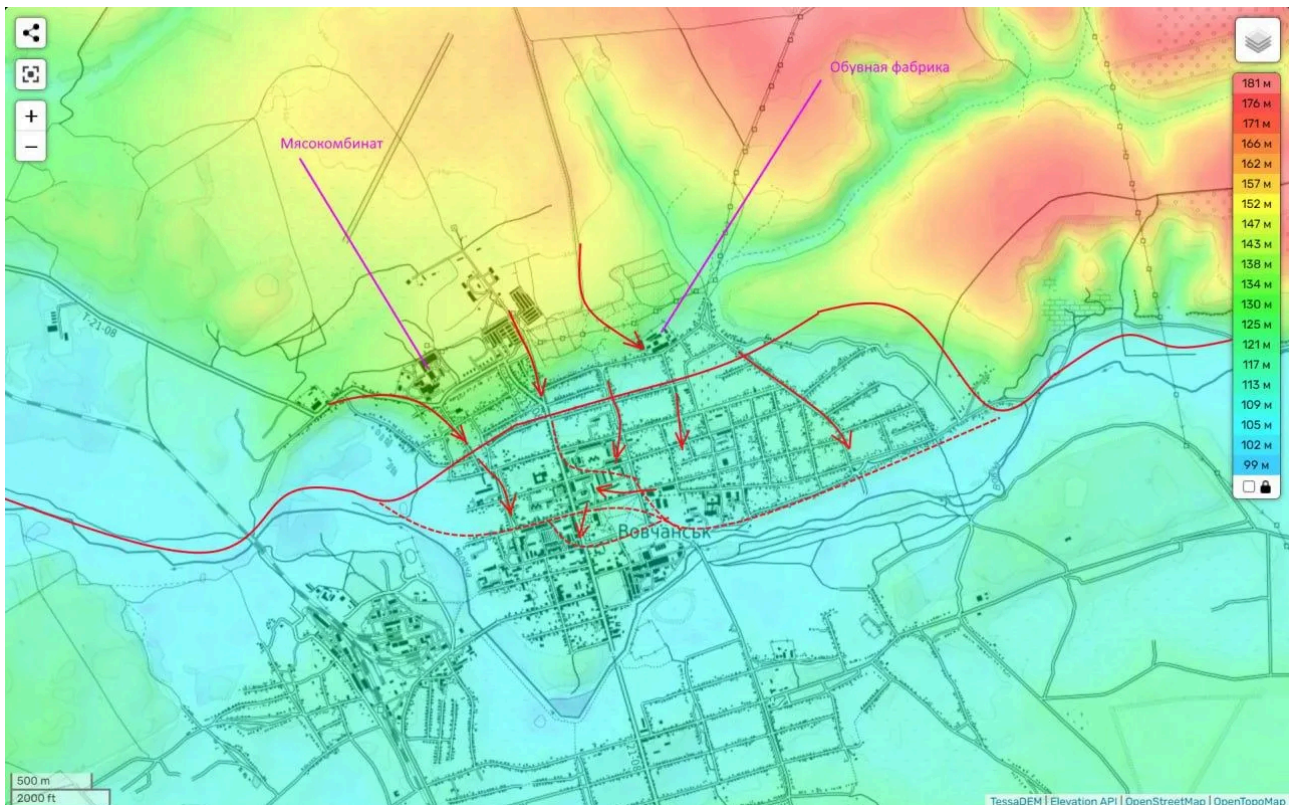
There are reinforced checkpoints on the main roads of the region with “armed men without identification marks” who are looking for Ukrainian soldiers fleeing en masse from the battlefield. This statement, citing his own sources, was made by a military expert, retired lieutenant colonel of the Lugansk People's Republic (LPR), Andrei Marochko.

According to him, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service of Ukraine “check everyone’s documents and inspect vehicles,” which is why there are “kilometer-long traffic jams” in many areas.

And if you thought that might be imaginative propaganda, Russian forces reportedly captured one of the troops tasked with carrying out blocking orders of the sort, who attests to the fact:



Either way, fighting was already being reported toward the center of Volchansk, whereas Russian forces had just reached the outskirts yesterday. Some reports stated Russian forces captured the administrative buildings near the center:



But that wasn't even the most important noise by a long shot. The most shocking revelations come by way of a NYT interview with Budanov, who briskly visited the

wartorn Kharkov frontline to make his assessment of things:

The New York Times

Russia-Ukraine
War >

Photos

Russia's New Offensive

Facing Russian Advance, a Top Ukrainian General Paints a Bleak Picture

Ukraine's forces are stretched thin and have minimal reserves to draw on, the chief of military intelligence said, in addition to shortages of weapons.

<https://www.nytimes.com/article/russia-ukraine-kharkiv.html>

First, he states frankly that Ukraine has *no reserves left* for Kharkov:

Ukraine 'has no reserves' to push back Kharkiv assault, top general admits

Ukraine is struggling with troop shortages as it tries to repel an advancing Russian offensive on Kharkiv, its top general has admitted.

Gen Kyrylo Budanov, the head of Ukraine's military intelligence agency told The New York Times: "All of our forces are either here or in Chasiv Yar," referring to a Ukrainian stronghold about 120 miles further south that Russian troops have assaulted in recent weeks. "I've used everything we have. Unfortunately, we don't have anyone else in the reserves."

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2024/05/14/russia-ukraine-zelensky-putin-war-latest-news-kharkiv/>

Note: I use the Telegraph version of the story above as the NYT link is acting wonky for some reason.

! "We have no reserves" UA

Ukraine's military intelligence chief Budanov admitted to the New York Times that the situation is bad:

"The situation is on the edge," Gen. Kyrylo Budanov, the head of Ukraine's military intelligence agency said in a video call from a bunker in Kharkiv. "Every hour this situation moves toward critical."

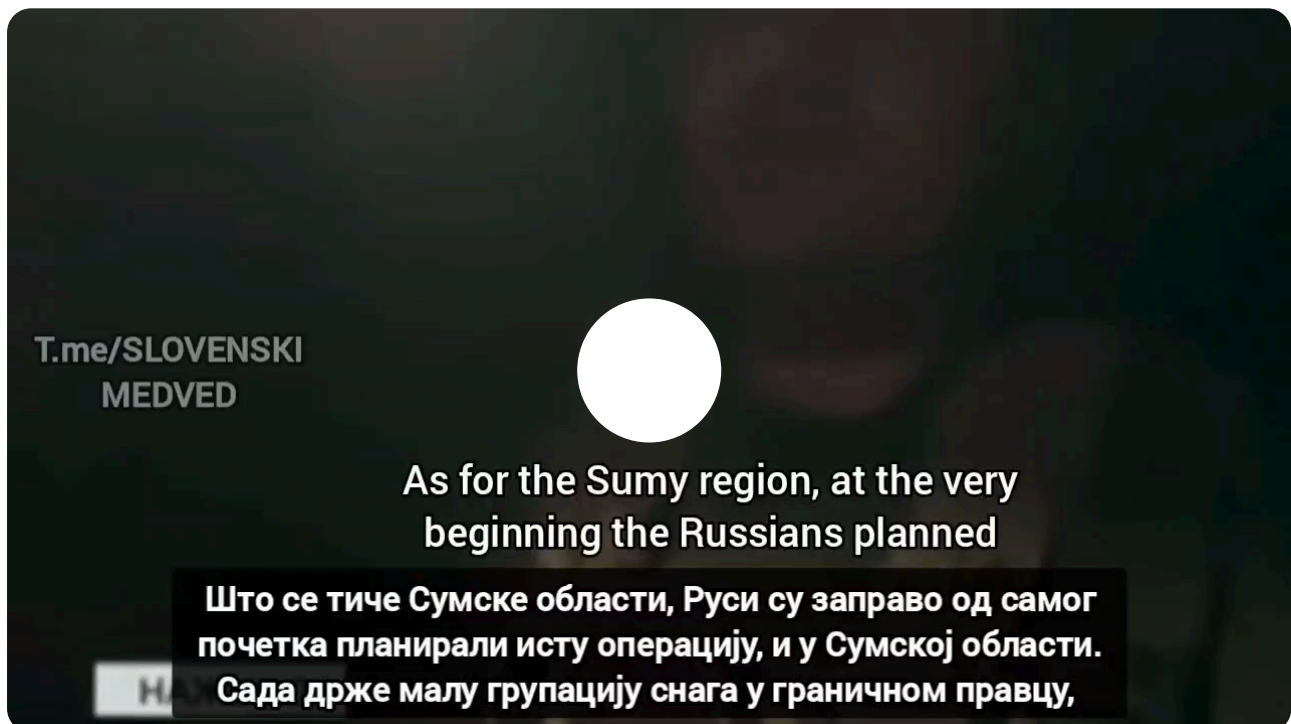
"All of our forces are either here or in Chasiv Yar. I've used everything we have. Unfortunately, we don't have anyone else in the reserves."

How's *that* for a frank admission?

But if that wasn't bad enough, Budanov further admits that Russia will start the long-awaited Sumy operation within *days*:

General Budanov said he expected the attacks in the Kharkiv region to last another three or four days, after which Russian forces are expected to make a hard push in the direction of Sumy, a city about 90 miles to the northwest of Kharkiv. Ukrainian officials have previously said that Russia had massed troops across the border from Sumy.

Gen Budanov earlier told the New York Times that he expects the assault on **Sumy** as soon as the situation in Kharkiv is stabilised, as Russia attempts to divert Ukrainian resources away from other parts of the frontline.



On the heels of that, whispers from the Sumy border have grown deafening.

Not only from Russian military channels posting teasers like the following:

In the near future there will be another direction - a well-forgotten old one.

@zvofront

But nonstop rumors of major upticks in Russian DRG action, drones, artillery strikes, and more, all along the Sumy region:

⚡💣⚡ After teams of Ukrainian border guards and soldiers began to disappear in the Sumy region, the work of our OMD and ROSN in the border areas and art. strikes, Ukrainian armed forces evacuate several settlements northwest of the city of Sumy. Mining and engineering barriers have already been removed and the concentration of enemy forces is minimal ⚡💣⚡

Another premonitory tease states that barricades are being dismantled on the Bryansk border, at the Seredina-Buda checkpoint, directly opposite Sumy:

⚠️ And the thunderstorm is already so close, it gives me goosebumps, there is a distinct smell of ozone in the air, black cumulus clouds have appeared on the horizon.

In the harsh **Bryansk** forests, not only terrorists lose their ears, powerful forest forces know where the enemy is subtly and are preparing for the upcoming thunderstorm; as part of this event, they disposed of mine-explosive barriers at the Seredina-Buda checkpoint.

In addition, ammunition depots and airborne assault forces of Ukrainian militants take off throughout the entire depth of the operational formation.

In the darkness of the Bryansk forest, epic warriors are preparing their instruments, others are unsheathing violins and double basses.

A sledgehammer has already been raised over the enemy's head; it will soon collapse.

✈️ NGP exploration 🦋



SUMMARY AND ANALYTICS

CBO

[T.ME/REZERVSV](https://t.me/REZERVSV)

- Russian military blew up a road mined on the Ukrainian side leading to the checkpoint in Seredina-Buda. !

!!! On May 14, explosions also damaged houses on the street leading to the border.

... There are no casualties reported at this time.

One analysis crunched some of the numbers:

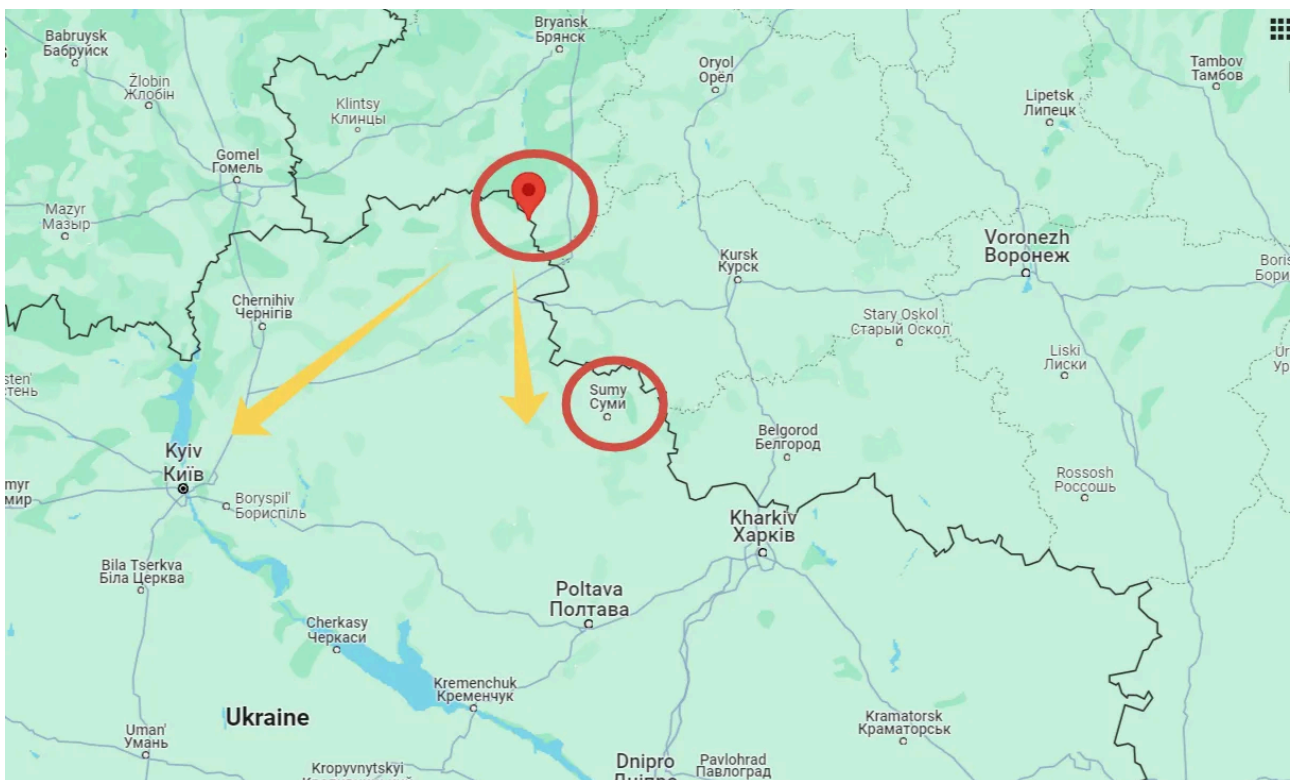
⚡️🔥⚡️ Kirill Budanov has left Kharkov with a scandal and is heading to Sumy.

There he will organize the contraction of Russian DRGs and deploy detachments for TRO and OMBR, which Syrsky is transferring from the reserves.

The Ukrainian armed forces have just under 54,000 in reserve, stretching from Kherson, which may end up back in the hands of the Russian armed forces, to Sumy and Chernigov.

12,000 of this reserve have already been withdrawn to Kharkov, then another 17,000 are planned to be transferred to Sumy ⚡💣⚡

The part about Seredina-Buda checkpoint is quite interesting. The question was always whether Russia would come in on the east or west side of Sumy. If the east—perhaps even on the Grayvoron region—it would entail a giant pincer of Kharkov city. But the above checkpoint is far to the western side of Sumy—in fact, nearly closer to Kiev:



If Russia really entered that deep, it would seem to necessitate a Kiev push. The truth is, sieging Kiev could be one of the most fatally unexpected coups de grace, as Russia has very little territory to cover on that side and Ukraine—as Budanov himself admitted—has few reserves. Russian forces pushing in on the outskirts of Kiev would cause panic to ripple through not only Ukraine but the entire West, potentially destabilizing the situation catastrophically.

Think about it this way: Russia doesn't have to *capture* Kiev, or even attempt to do so. Simply by bringing its forces to the outskirts, it could sow enough chaos and panic, civilian flight, etc., so as to finally unseat Zelensky in some kind of destabilizing coup, or force him to show his hand by fleeing with a government-in-exile, to Lvov or elsewhere—which itself would be politically fatal. There are many potential plays here.

But for the time being any such potential moves are likely very far off, as the *immediate* objectives revolve merely around splitting Ukrainian forces and thinning the lines in order to create breakthroughs aimed at generating catastrophic losses of materiel, personnel, and morale.



Amid the ongoing collapse, Blinken sped to Kiev to deliver another round of vapid “reassurances” to keep Ukrainian morale from catastrophically plunging. This ‘reassurance’ ended up consisting of nothing more than Blinken jamming out an uplifting rendition of Neil Young’s “Rockin’ In a Free World” in a Kiev dive bar:



“What, you wanted weapons and money? I’ve brought songs instead.”

Can the U.S. Empire get any more pathetic or embarrassing?

Kiev was a full house as the **scion of evil incarnate** himself couldn't let Blinken have all the fun alone and decided to join the conclave:



Headlines remain bleak as ever, even at times reaching new lows of hopelessness:



Blinken visits Ukraine to push U.S. support as Russia pummels Kharkiv



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SIGN



Russia's Bombardment of Ukraine Is More Lethal Than Ever

Ukraine has intercepted fewer missiles as Russia increases attacks, fires more harder-to-hit weapons

Russian attack on the port city of Odesa.

By [Alistair MacDonald](#) [Follow](#) , [Jemal R. Brinson](#) [Follow](#) , [Emma Brown](#) [Follow](#) and [Ievgeniia Sivorka](#)

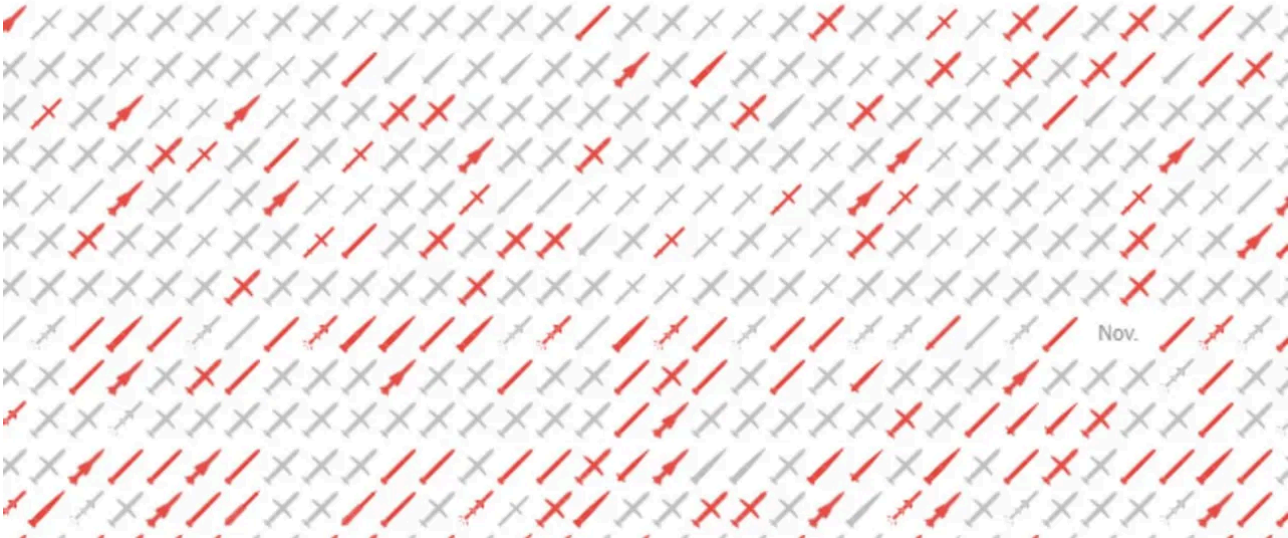
Updated May 13, 2024 12:04 am ET




Facing an Endless Barrage, Ukraine’s Air Defenses Are Withering

By Josh Holder and Constant Méheut May 13, 2024

This is what a year of Russian missile strikes on Ukraine looks like. Ukrainian air defenses used to intercept most missiles, but in recent months, more and more have made it through.



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How Putin's offensive on Kharkiv leaves Ukraine with few good options

As villages fall to Russian forces around Ukraine's second city, generals must decide whether the offensive is a feint to draw fire from the Donbas

Maxim Tucker, Kyiv

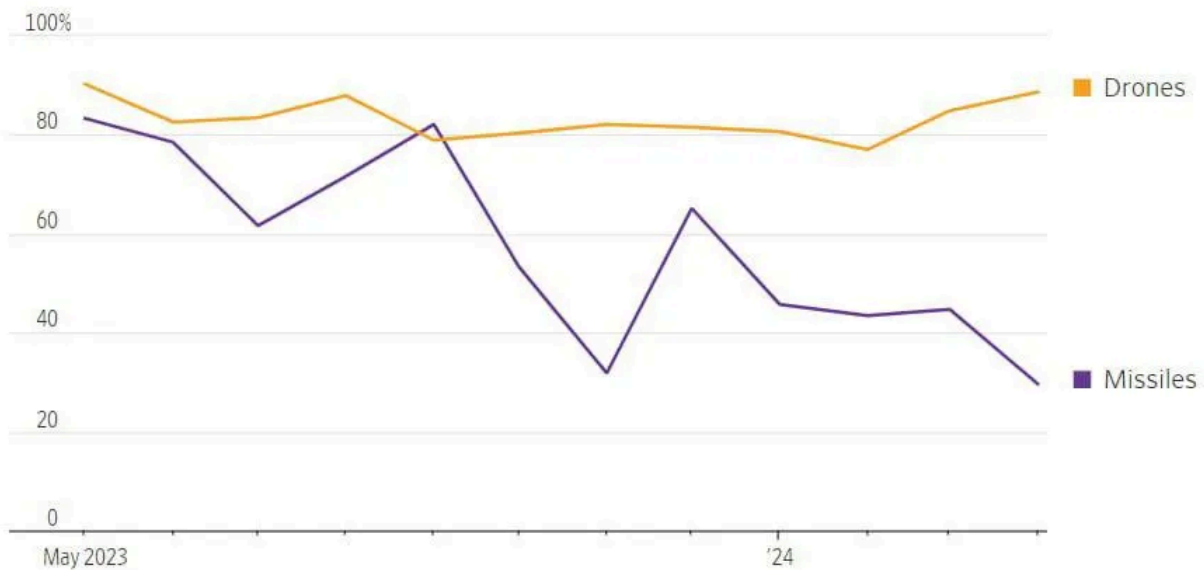
Monday May 13 2024, 12.15pm BST, The Times



One of them even includes this handy chart for the alleged drop in Ukrainian interception rates of Russian missiles:

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.


Ukraine's interception rate



As of April 30. Drones are Shahed-136.
Ukrainian Air Force Command

You may recall a few months back I had reported that Ukraine is only replenishing about 50% of its losses via its lackluster mobilization drive. The latest figures claim this has dropped to a disastrous 25%. However, the newly signed mobilization bill is said to take effect on May 18th, which could initiate a much more far-reaching and heavy-handed campaign to grab bodies off streets.

Interestingly, this almost exactly coincides with the May 21st deadline to Zelensky's legitimacy, after which there are fears things may become quite a free for all. In fact, rumors on this tack already abound, like the following—though take it with a massive grain of salt, as it's most likely fake but meant more as a demonstrative sample of the brewing troubles:

 **COUP Coming Soon to Kyiv?** Unconfirmed reports that Chief of the Defense Intelligence of Ukraine Budanov is mobilizing loyalists - with the backing of some of Ukraine's Western sponsors to arrest Ukrainian President Zelenskyy, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Syrskiy, and Minister of Defense Umerov for "corruption."

Vitalii Klychko is one of the names being considered to serve as acting president until elections can be held "after the war."

In the past Klychko is known to have had a warm relationship with Russian President Putin.

Some last items:

Amid backbiting over the Kharkov region collapse, it's now coming ever-clearer into focus what scale of corruption resulted in the gross treason:

**УКРАЇНЬСЬКА ПРАВДА**

**MARTYNA BOHUSLAVETS,**
head of the Mezha Anti-corruption Center

Where are the fortifications? Kharkiv OVA paid millions to fictitious firms
MONDAY, MAY 13, 2024, 4:55 P.M

Hundreds of millions of hryvnias could probably be stolen during the construction of fortifications in the Kharkiv region, where the RSNA is now actively advancing. Multi-million dollar contracts for the construction of fortifications, for which a total of 7 billion hryvnias were spent there, were transferred by Kharkiv OVA to front companies of avatars.

Here's another example of Ukraine's fortification miracle. A fed up Ukrainian soldier describes the totally inept trenchworks on one of the fronts—an endemic problem:



A Chechen Akhmat Zapad (West) unit was seen among the Kharkov forces around Ogurtsovo, northwest of Volchansk, and they gave a revealing shout to a few of the operating brigades in the northern offensive:



At 1:46 they name the 153rd Tank Regiment and 41st Motorized Rifle Regiment. The 153rd is reportedly part of the 47th Tank Division under the 1st Guards Tank Army, and is a newly formed regiment from 2023, when Shoigu reinforced the 1st Guards Tank Army with 5 new regiments. The 41st Rifle Regiment is uncertain as of yet, but is claimed to be from Karelia.

—

Lastly, some might have seen this posted, but here's a good subtitled version of a new mock Ukrainian recruitment ad, which is now ever-more accurate:



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Alternatively, you can tip here: buymeacoffee.com/Simplicius