

SITREP 6/20/24: Putin Signs Defense Partnership in Historic Pyongyang Trip



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JUN 20, 2024



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In only the second time since the inaugural year 2000, Putin touched down in Pyongyang—to great adulation and fanfare:







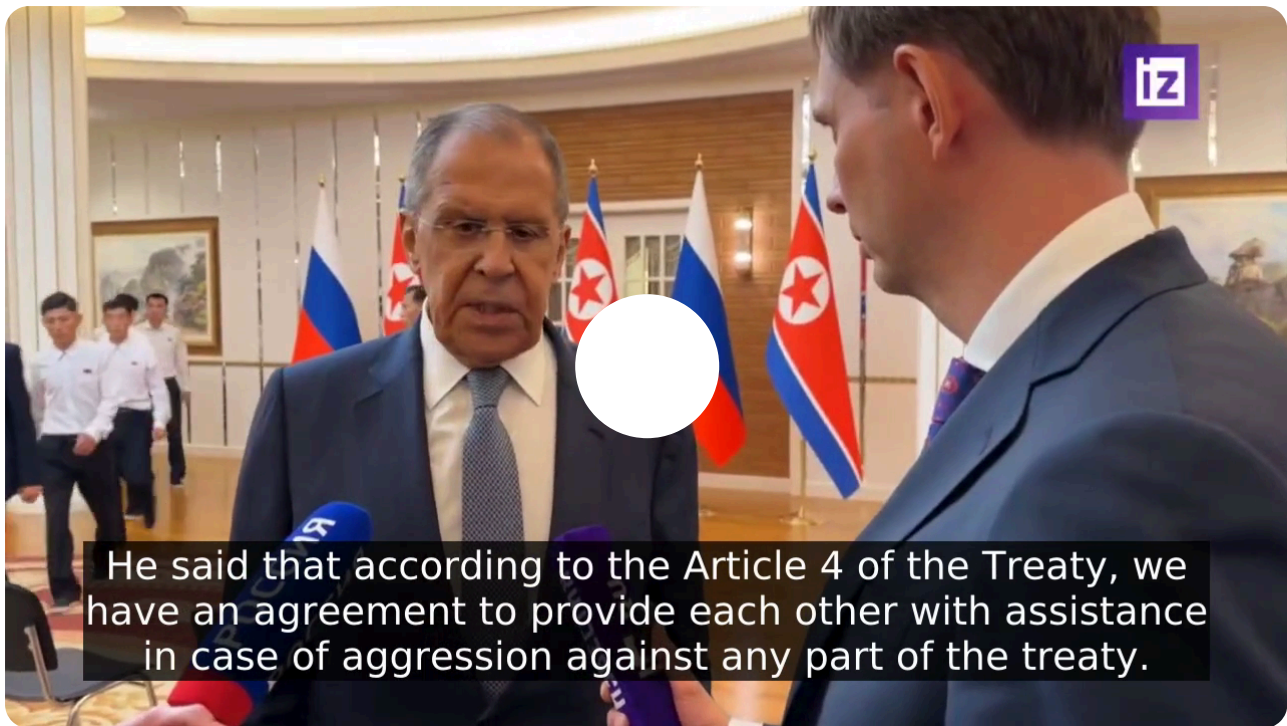
The visit comes directly after Russia intimated a mirror response to the West for its arming of Ukraine with advanced weaponry that can strike Russian territory. Not surprisingly, Putin's visit was highlighted by a signing of a weighty 'strategic document' which included the implied possibility of Russia arming North Korea with its own stable of advanced weaponry.



Article 4

In the event that either party is in a state of war as a result of armed aggression by individual or multiple states, the other side shall provide military and other assistance without delay by all means at its disposal in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and the laws of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Union.

Lavrov corroborated the fact:



⚡📄⚡ Documents signed by the leaders of the DPRK and the Russian Federation:

📄 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty between the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

📄 Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the construction of a border road bridge over the Tumannaya River;

📄 Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on cooperation in the field of health, medical education and science.

📄 Agreement on a comprehensive strategic partnership between the Russian Federation and the DPRK provides for assistance in the event of aggression against one of the participants, Putin ⚡📄⚡

The Russian leader said each country had agreed to help the other repel external aggression, but it's unclear exactly what that will mean.

Chad O'Carroll, a North Korean specialist from NK News, says on X, formerly Twitter, that the clause could open the door to conflict-related co-operation, including the possibility of North Korean soldiers assisting Russia in Ukraine.

Beyond the perfunctory pledges for cooperation in various civil fields, Russia and NK intend to construct a new road bridge at their border to better facilitate inter-state travel, as well as the big one: a 'comprehensive strategic partnership' for assistance in the event of aggression. This sounds one step shy of a full military alliance.

The most important takeaway is twofold:

There is the obvious fact that this represents an immediate signaling by Putin that he wasn't bluffing when he said there would be retaliation for crossing of the red lines. The most serious, and under-looked, aspect of this is the *implied* tit-for-tat potential for facilitating North Korea's ability to strike the U.S. in nuclear fashion. The reason is: much of the threats vis-a-vis Ukraine are of this category: for instance, the F-16s which the West brazenly pledges to Ukraine represent a *nuclear* threat, given their ability to drop B-61 tactical nuclear bombs on Russian territory.

The West escalates tensions by *shielding* themselves beneath a nuclear-capable proxy, which would allow the waging of nuclear war against Russia with a sort of built-in plausible deniability or legal defense. So now, Russia has requited in kind by implying they can give North Korea even more lethal missile technologies which can

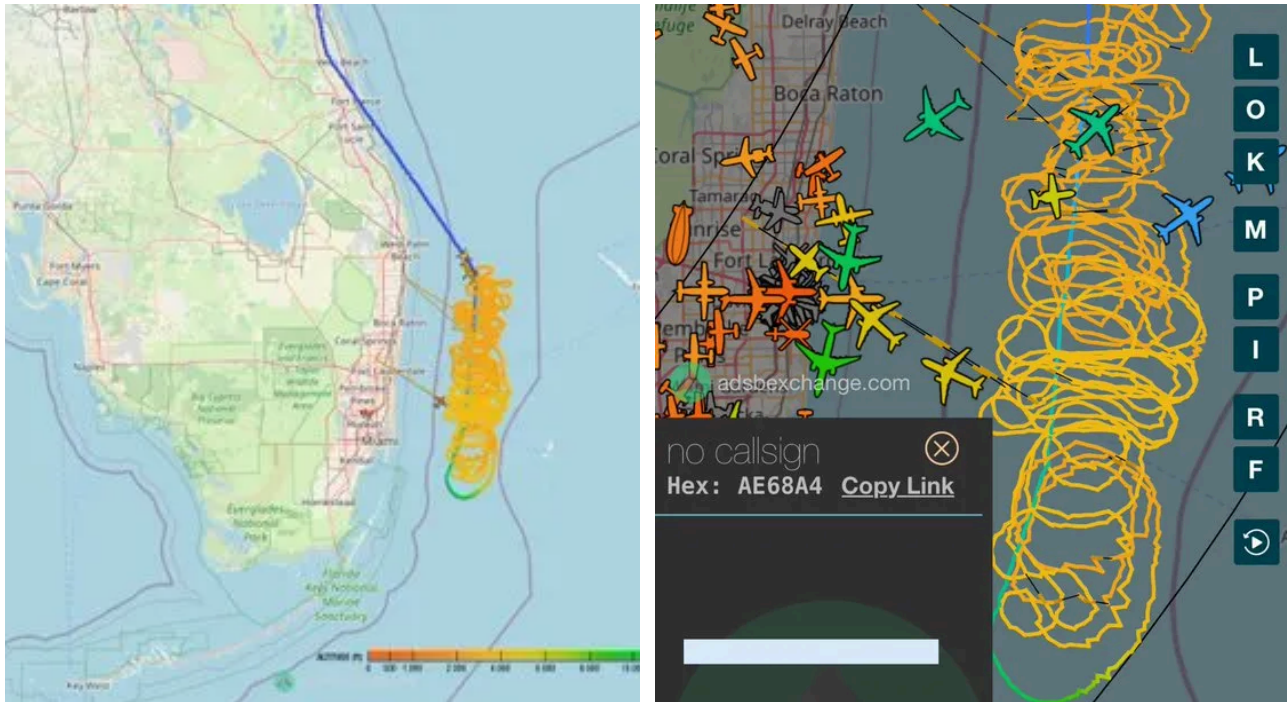
potentially be used in conjunction with nuclear warheads to put the U.S. under the nuclear sword.

But the most significant—to me—implication of these developments is actually that which applies much more directly and immediately to the ongoing Ukrainian on-the-ground hostilities. Not only does this tightening of relations represent the likely increase of conventional staple North Korean munitions to the Russian army, it also suggests the possibility of much more comprehensive supplies in the future; i.e. not just shells and small arms, but possibly entire weapons systems like MLRS, light and heavy armor, etc.

One suggestion making the rounds is the potential to supply the Russian Army with North Korea's devastating KN-25 600mm MLRS system, which is basically the NK version of an ATACMS:



That's all not to mention the fact that while this was ongoing, Russian hypersonic-armed warships reportedly performed maneuvers within visual sight of Miami, a clear message sent:



The routes of Navy ELINT planes circling above.

And lastly, this dovetails into something else. The Western commentariat continues to center their entire future victory hopes on the fact that the West is allegedly “increasing production”, which they desperately tie into the narrative that a year or so in the future the combined manufacturing powers of Europe and the U.S. will match or overtake Russia and it will be game over for Putin.

The problem this, as the below Korean excerpt shows, Russia is not only increasing production itself in line with the West, and arguably even faster, but Russia’s allies have massive manufacturing capacities for key munitions that dwarf anything the West will be capable of in the next decade or more.

Take a look:

National

Politics Social Affairs **North Korea** Diplomacy Defense People Environment K-campus

latter's invasion of Ukraine.

"Kim has to maintain his own military readiness posture against South Korea and the United States," said the expert interviewed by the JoongAng Ilbo, who said it was "now likely that North Korean weapons factories are likely to operate full-time in the future."

The expert also said that the North's annual production estimate of 2 million 152-millimeter artillery shells is premised on peacetime manufacturing rates.

"If the North Korean regime mobilizes all of its weapons production capabilities, it could theoretically produce two to three times more," he said.

In a report issued on Sept. 14, the Stimson Center's 38 North think tank noted that the North's "military-industrial complex" does not need to "turn to other sectors of the economy for raw materials and other inputs."

<https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/2023-11-06/national/northKorea/Expert-says-North-likely-to-ramp-up-production-of-shells-for-Russia/1907006>

Not only is North Korea's *current* peacetime production capable of a massive 2 million 152mm shells per year, the South Korean expert source believes they can ramp this by 2x or 3x to a whopping 4-6m. To put that in perspective, the entire combined West could not deliver even 1 million shells to Ukraine, and that's after trying to desperately source them all over the world. The U.S. has just 'proudly' announced their ramp up to 36k shell per month production, a measly ~430,000 a year, with the slated schedule to ramp to 80,000 a month—or 960k a year—by the year 2028.

Meanwhile, not only is Russia already said to be hitting 4-5M a year soon, but North Korea does 2M and can quickly ramp to 6M. In short, Russia's strategic defensive initiative with North Korea promises to keep Russia's artillery-thirsty army more than quenched indefinitely.

And for those who may balk at the numbers, South Korea just officially reported last week that they now calculate North Korea has *already* sent 10,000 train containers with 5 million shells to Russia:

NEWS • POLITICS

Seoul claims Pyongyang has sent almost 5 million artillery shells to Russia

08:15 AM, 14 June 2024, Novaya Gazeta Europe

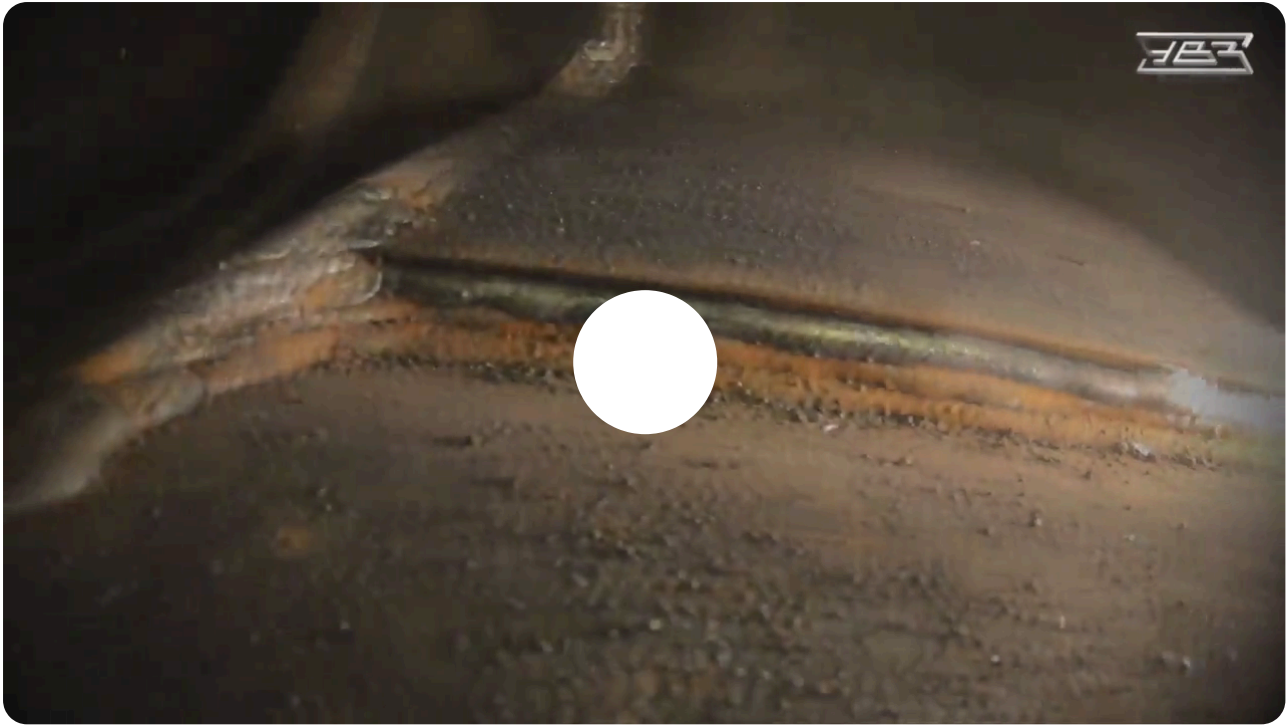
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-06-14/kim-sent-russia-millions-of-artillery-shells-south-korea-says>

*Seoul has detected at least 10,000 shipping containers being sent from North Korea to Russia, potentially holding up to 4.8 million artillery shells, South Korean Defence Minister Shin Won-sik **told** Bloomberg News in an interview published Friday.*

One can see the death of the narrative here. U.S. and allies are said to be “ramping up” to some point in the future where Ukraine can receive upwards of 2M+ shells per year, and this is meant to be a game changing turning point. Yet by that time, Russia could very likely source as many as 10M shells per year.

I wouldn't be surprised if North Korea and others could also help Russia fill in the gaps with actual artillery systems, barrels, tanks, etc., if need be. One of the other main elements of the pro-UA narrative is that Russia is running out of tanks. They are not manufacturing enough new hulls, and at least half or more of the yearly production consists of restored hulls from storage bases, which will run out in a year or two.

Part of this theory stemmed from the understanding that Russia only manufactures new T-72s, while T-90Ms and T-80s are all created from refurbished and finite hulls. However, Russia's UVZ released a new video last week which showed a fresh T-90 hull being manufactured from scratch, distinguished by clips of its uniquely reinforced sections—which differ from the T-72—being milled and machined. This appears to suggest that Russia is now manufacturing completely new T-90s.



And while it's true T-80 hulls are likely dwindling, Russia has slowly been resetting a T-80 production line, with turbine engine production having reached a milestone of being restarted months ago, with only hulls left to have a new line opened. Most likely, long before stored T-80 hulls are depleted, Russia will also have restarted native T-80 production at which point the bleed out will be staunched.

In short, Russia is going to be covered for the long term, and in fact its industrialists are already looking ahead to a post war future in line with Putin and Belousov's initiative to integrate the war economy into the development of the civilian one. Rostec head Sergey Chemezov stated this today:



⚡ *Sergey Chemezov: today we are forming the groundwork for the post-victory period.*

At a meeting of the Bureau of the Union of Mechanical Engineers of Russia and the League for Assistance to Defense Enterprises, the head of Rostec noted that the domestic defense industry, along with the implementation of the state defense order, creates groundwork in high-tech civilian areas for the post-victory period.

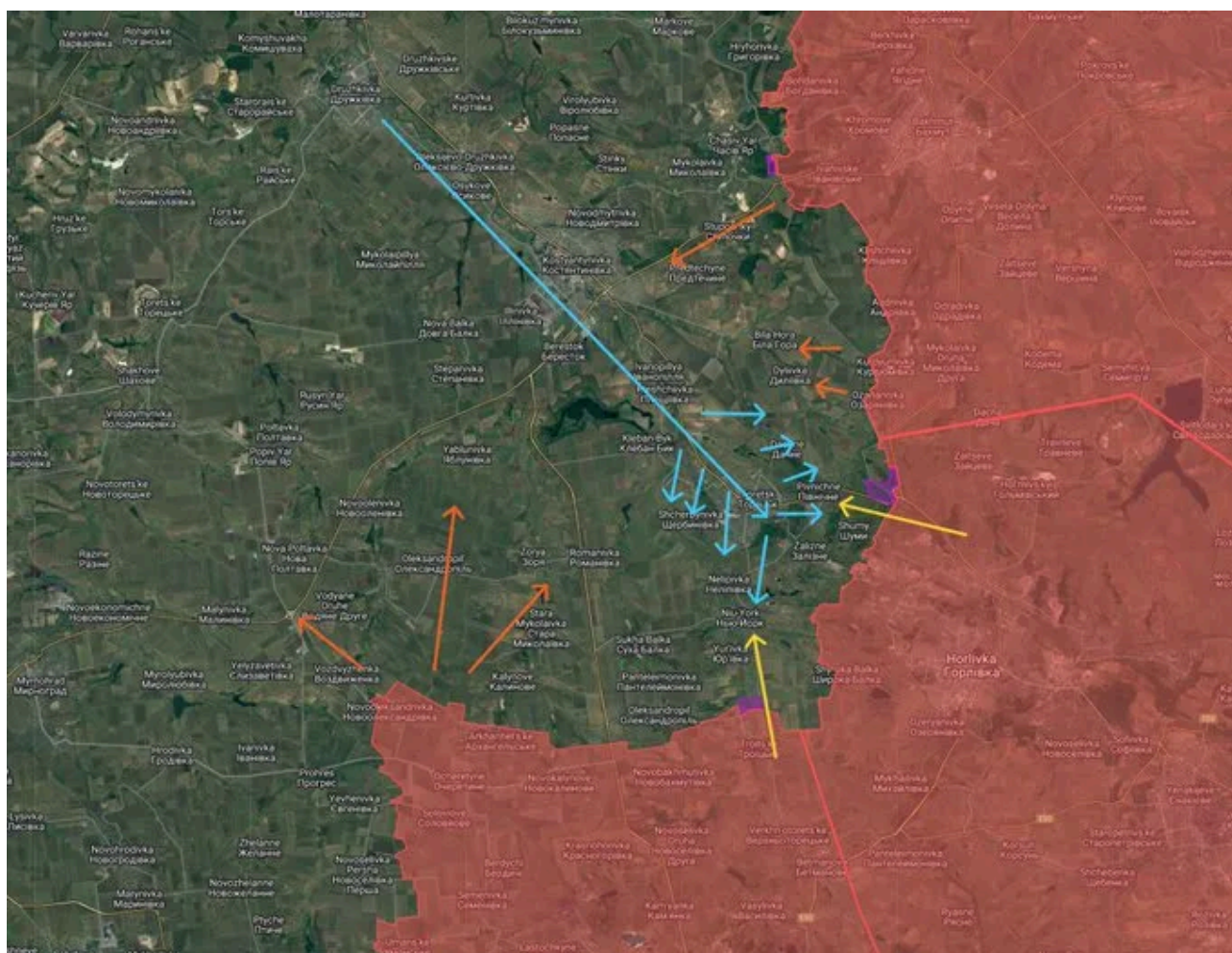
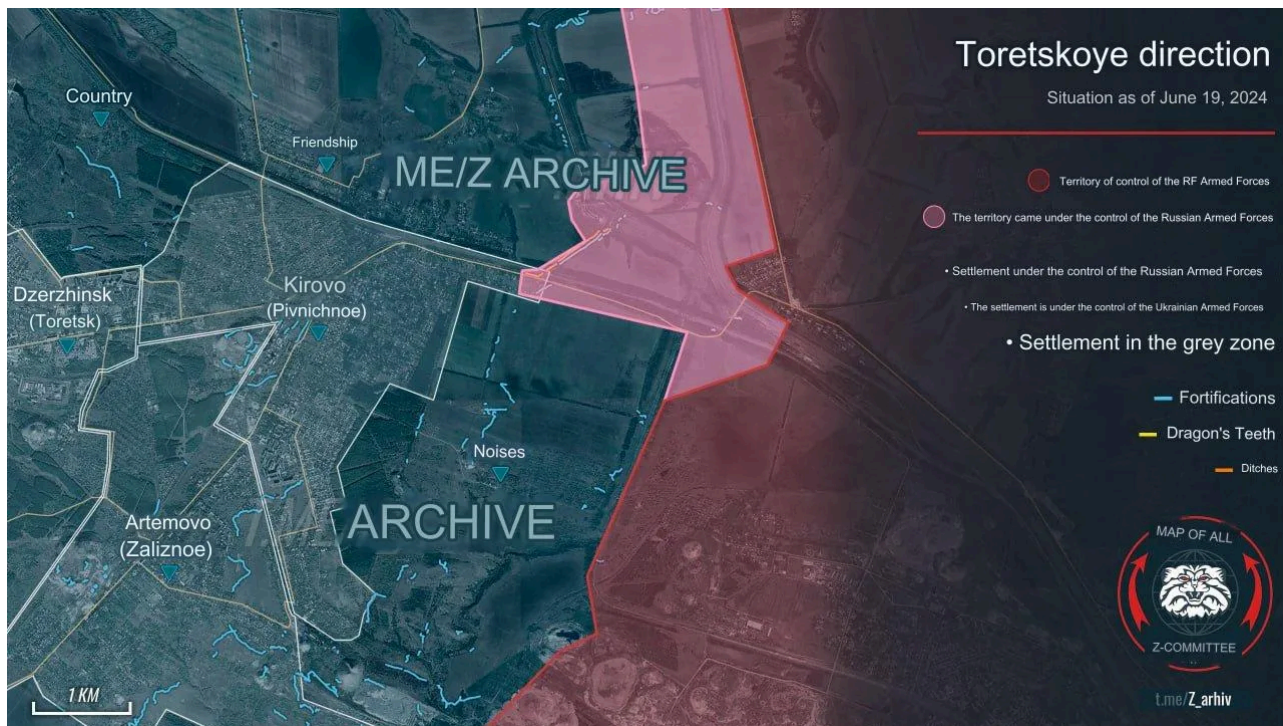
“The importance of the defense industry is growing rapidly. We not only equip our soldiers in the Northern Military District with everything they need, but also actively participate in the implementation of the most important civilian projects. We contribute to the achievement of large-scale goals of national development of our country,” said Sergei Chemezov.

Of course, the West continues efforts to reorient their entire strategy to one that can bear some success against Russia in the longer term future. But I intend to write an article soon devoted solely to that topic, so stay tuned.



On the war front, for now things continue to be relatively slow. In the ebb and flow natural ‘breathing’ cycles of war, Russian forces on the north Kharkov front have settled into positions and allowed the reinforced Ukrainian troops to take the initiative in assaulting so that they can exhaust and attrition them, before retaking the initiative with new offensive actions.

In the meantime, Russian forces continue making incremental gains in the other districts, particularly Donetsk region, where a breakthrough of nearly 1km was recorded toward Toresk, south of Bakhmut. It’s becoming more and more evident that the entire Konstantinovka region is being placed in a slow-constricting boiler:



Julian Ropcke at BILD is again worried about the southern edge of this forming boiler, and how close Russian forces are to the lifeline highway:

The Russian Army has only 7 kilometers left to cut the main supply route for the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the Donbass - writes German BILD

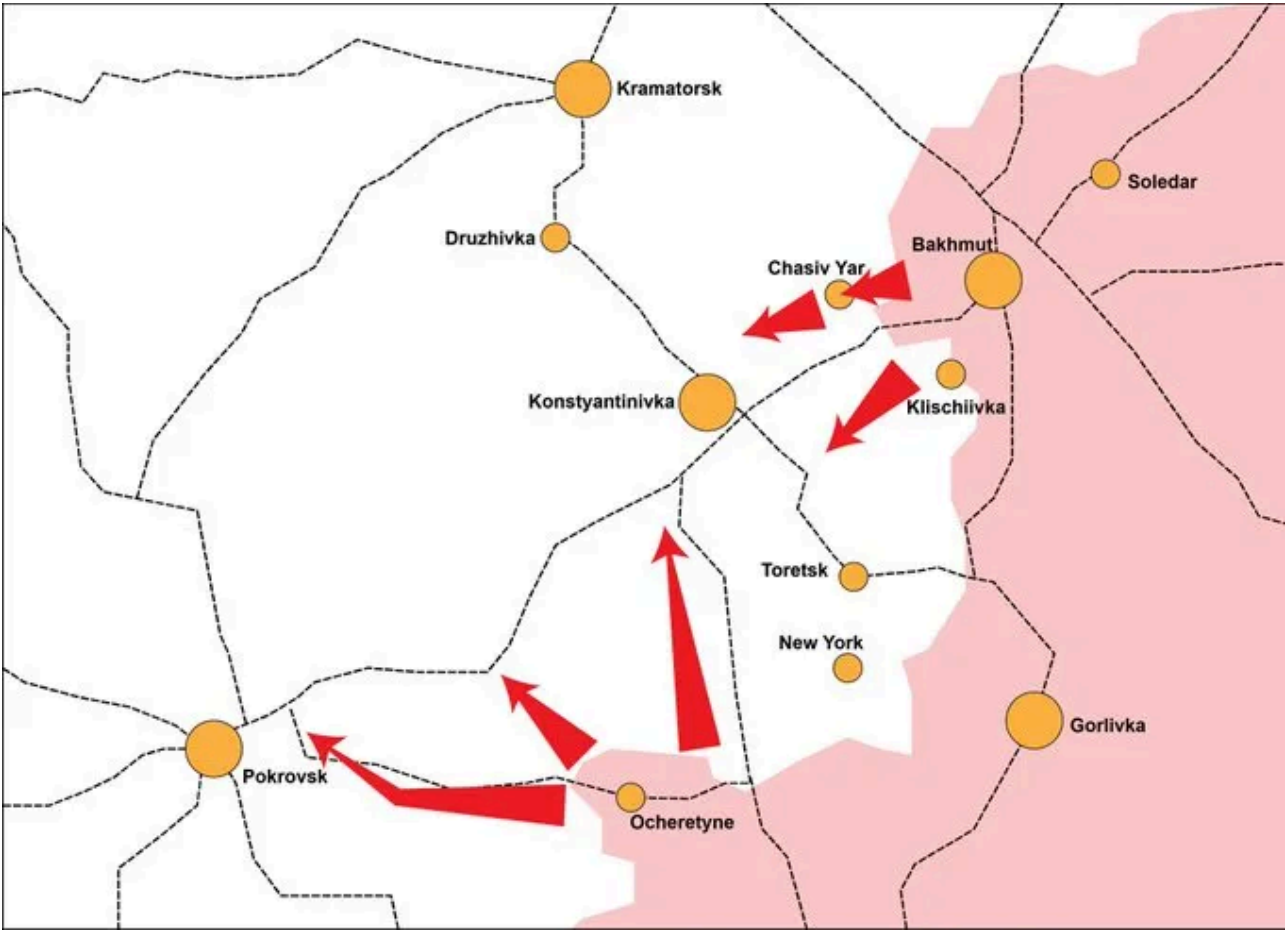
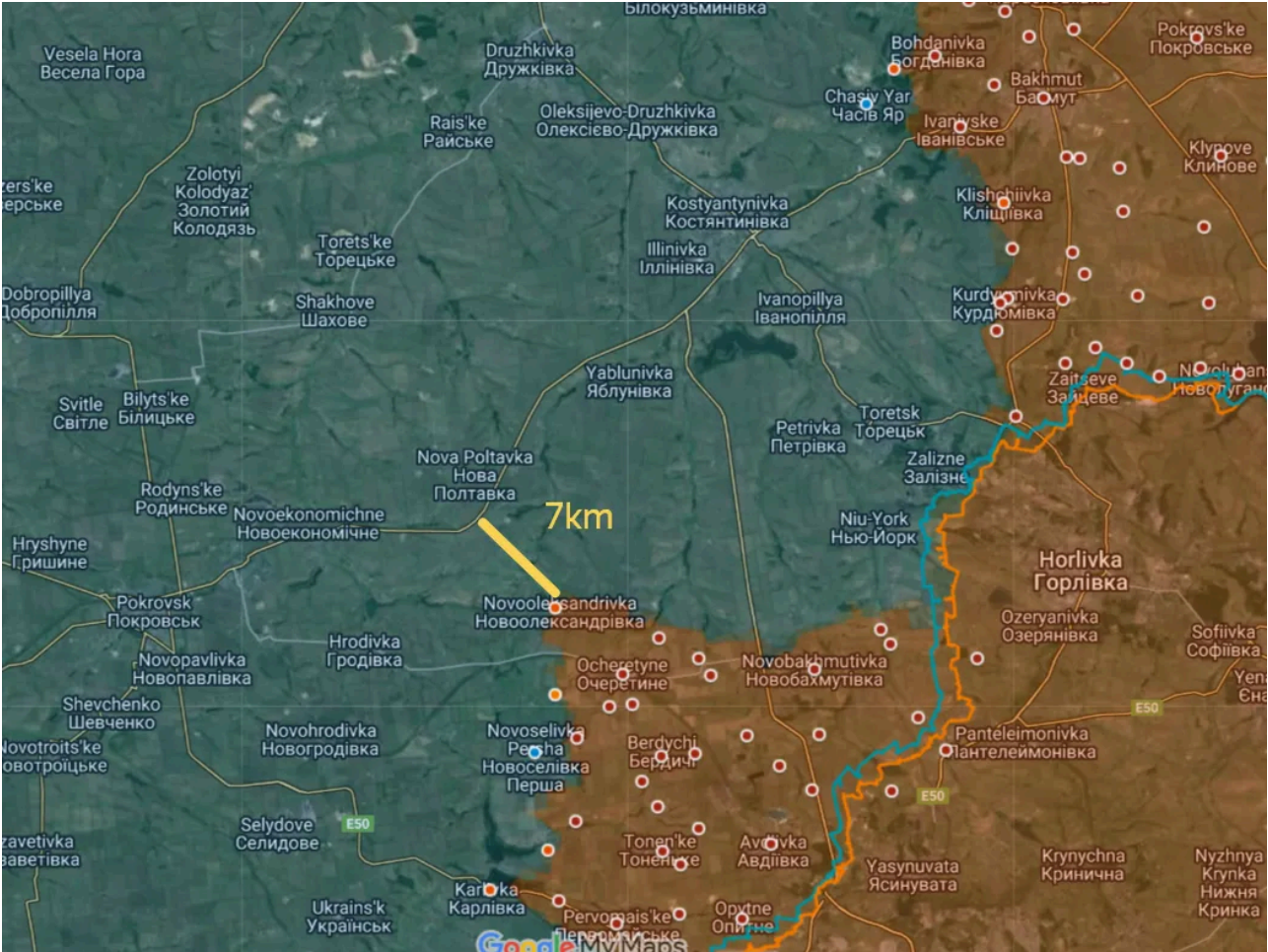
According to the publication, the target of the Russian armed forces is the T0504 highway, also known as the 'Road of Life', which runs from Konstantinovka to Pokrovsk, and from there the road to Dnepropetrovsk.

It is along this road that supplies the Ukrainian army at Chasov Yar.

Only one village blocks the path of the Russian army: Vozdvizhenka.

After taking the route, the Ukrainian armed forces will still have alternative routes, but they are not as convenient ⚡💣⚡





Other experts also rang the alarm:



Christopher Miller ✓

@ChristopherJM

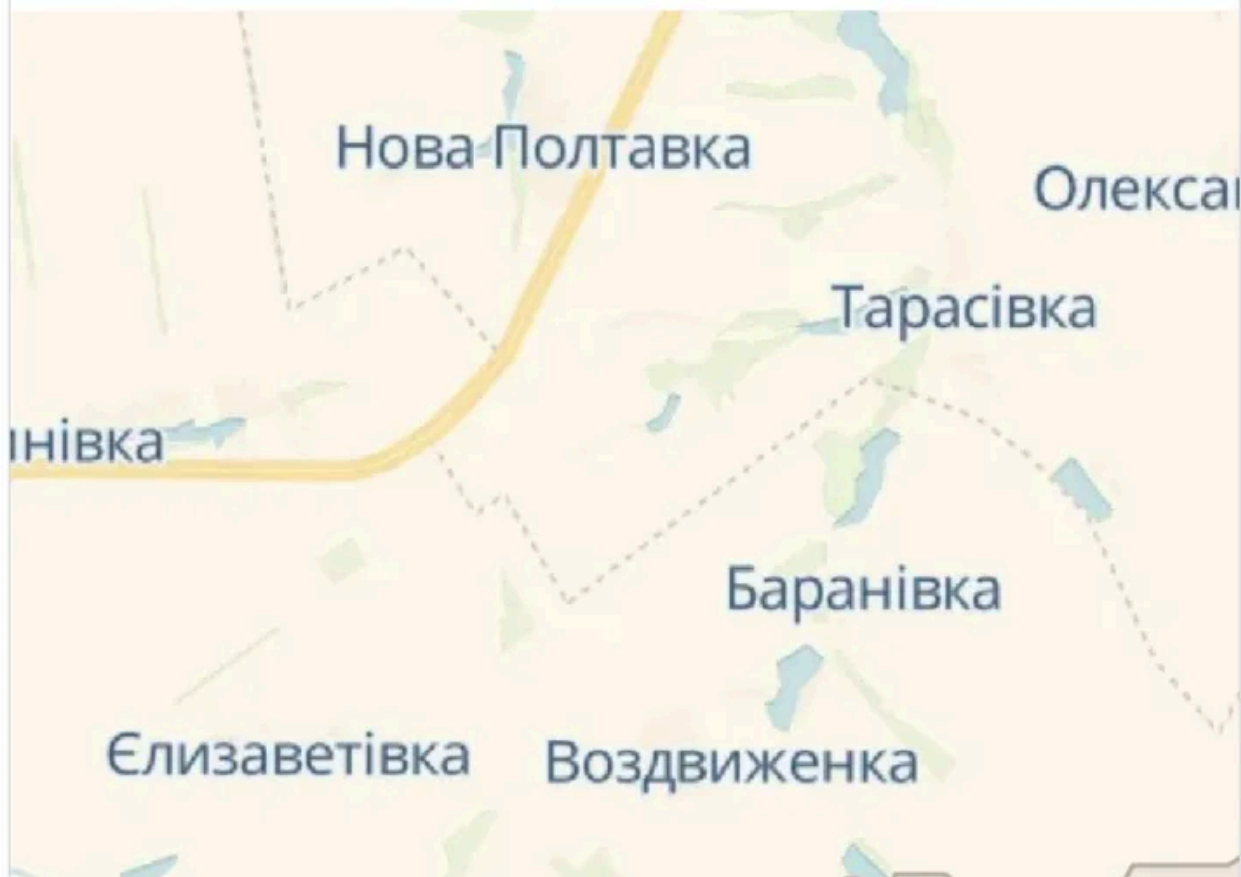
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Not good at all. This is the key highway connecting Ukraine's main cities in the Donbas still under Kyiv's control. There are other smaller roads to bypass it but they are awful. It would present huge logistical challenges for Ukraine if Russia gets fire control over the highway.



Franz-Stefan Gady @HoansSolo · Jun 12

Distance to H32, the main road linking Pokrovsk with Kostyantynivka, is now under ~7km. [x.com/hoanssolo/stat...](https://x.com/hoanssolo/status...)



A few last items:

Ukrainian Rada People's Deputy Nardep Lozinky states that the mobilization age reduction from 27 to 25 will not be the last one, and "being realistic", Ukraine must

think about lowering it further. Just another in a long line of expected sentiments—it likely won't stop until they reach 18:



—

Meanwhile, AFU commander Kukharchuk of the 3rd assault brigade stated outright in an interview that Ukraine is losing the war and that mobilization needs to be increased. Listen below, as he actually delves into the situation in interesting detail, describing how everyone believes things have settled and 'stabilized' now, when in reality the situation is at its most critical crossroads for Ukraine:



This is what happens when armchair pundits follow the war exclusively through online maps of daily gains, which don't tell the entire story. As most intelligent observers know by now, the war is not about primarily gaining territory: it's about attritioning the AFU and breaking its spirit until the point of collapse. The territory will come after that easily enough. There's no way of knowing for absolute definitive fact, but in the past few weeks, the Russian MOD's casualty figures for the AFU have been the highest of nearly the entire war—so high as to almost be unbelievable, averaging 1800-2000 casualties per day at times. If even a fraction of that is true, then the ostensibly “stabilized” situation is anything but; Ukrainian formations are being gutted out of their trenches by artillery and airstrikes.

This is why I prefer to rely on primary sources like the above AFU commander, rather than mere hearsay. Of course, to play the flipside: one Ukrainian source again recently declared that the mobilization is going so well, it's exceeding expectations such that the Rada could issue a 'demobilization' later this year, for soldiers on extended deployment on the front. You decide if that's mere propaganda to bolster morale or not.

Zelensky, for one, remains upbeat and appears to believe he has an inexhaustible supply of men:

not to attend. Mr. Zelensky has pledged to keep fighting, describing his peace plan as one in which Russia withdraws from all of Ukraine's territory, pays reparations and is punished for war crimes.

"If we don't make progress this year, then we will try again next year," Mr. Zelensky privately told a European counterpart recently, according to a European diplomat who was present. "And if we don't make progress next year, we will try again the following year, and the one after that."



But it is interesting to note the vast gulf that now exists between what Ukrainian officials say and what even Western yellow press is reporting at this point. Here's an eye-opening new BBC report on mobilization:



Ukrainian political scientist [Vadim Karasev](#) states in an [interview](#) that the document of “10 year cooperation” signed by the U.S. and Ukraine recently was in fact an American capitulation and backhanded transfer of the responsibility of Ukraine onto Europe:



The document that Ukraine signed with the United States and which is called security guarantees shows that in fact the United States is moving away from Kiev.

"Do you understand what's going on? This means that the US is leaving us. They want to give it all to Europe all the time. They don't want to get fully involved. If they wanted to get fully involved, if for them Ukraine represented a very important strategic resource in military and political terms as an outpost of the West against Russia, they would have agreed to a different agreement, to grant Ukraine [the status of] a key ally, military, outside of NATO.

Why does Israel have one? Because it is a key Western outpost in the Middle East against Iran and so on. Why are Japan and South Korea key non-NATO allies? Because they're just not in Europe. This is an analog of NATO, only outside of NATO and even more than NATO, " Karasev said.

Just two reports ago I had quipped about how war is not decided by WarThunder forum spergs but rather by the specific usage of a given combat vehicle to its best strengths. Now the pro-UA commentariat has proven they do in fact faultily judge the war based on—literally—WarThunder stats. Here's one of the pro-UA side's top influencers and social media propaganda peddlers criticizing a recent video of a new echelon of Russian T-62M tanks heading to the front by pointing out that their WarThunder stats are low compared to Western tanks:



Igor Sushko ✓
@igorsushko

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🎁 Russia is sending more T-62 tanks to the front.
For perspective, the T-62 has a battle rating of 8.7-9.0 depending on variant in War Thunder.

Tanks in use by Ukraine:

T-72 (9.3-11.3 battle rating depending on variant)

Leopard 2A4 (10.3)

Abrams M1A1 (11.3+)

Leopard 2A5 (11.7)



0:02 / 0:16



3:28 PM · Jun 15, 2024 · **10.7K** Views

Do you even have to wonder any more why NATO is losing so badly?

That \$80B lumpsum has swelled faster than Jerome Powell's ink supply at the Fed printing press—to what is now a requested 800 billion.



Ukraine: arms prices are soaring, we need £800 billion to beat Putin

The cost of some weapons has risen fivefold since Russia started the war — and in some ways Zelensky's allies are to blame

How long before \$8T to beat Putin?

Ukrainian energy grid woes continue, with blackouts already scheduled daily:



UKRAINSKA PRAVDA

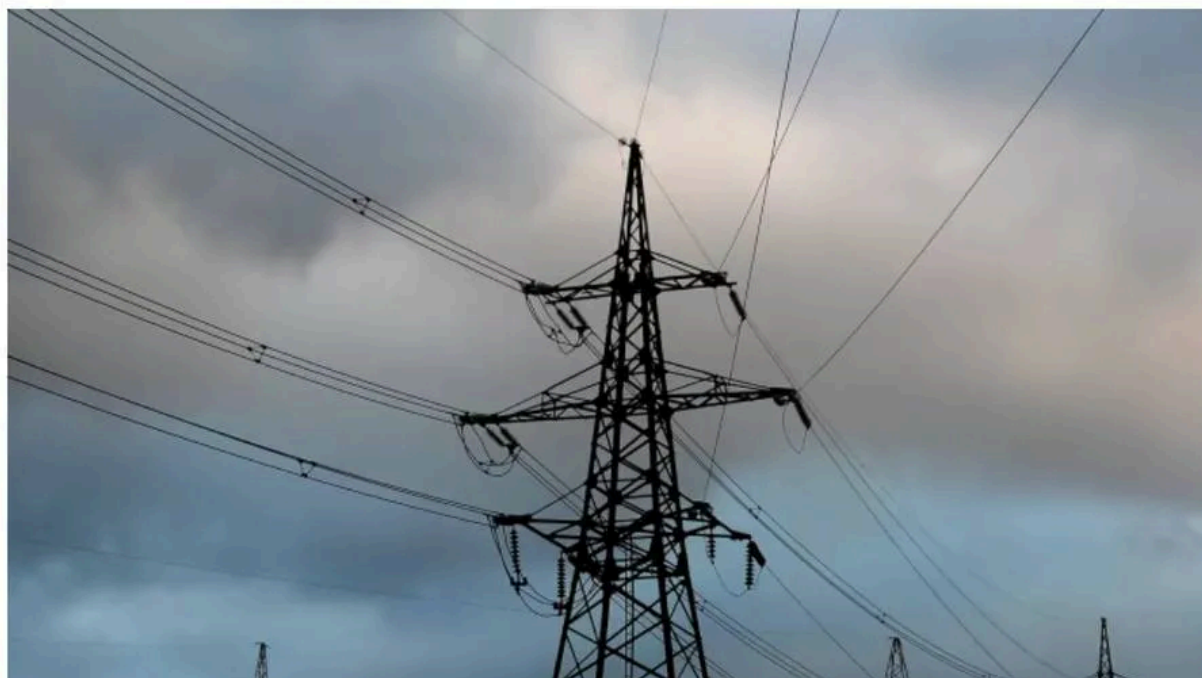
SUPPORT US

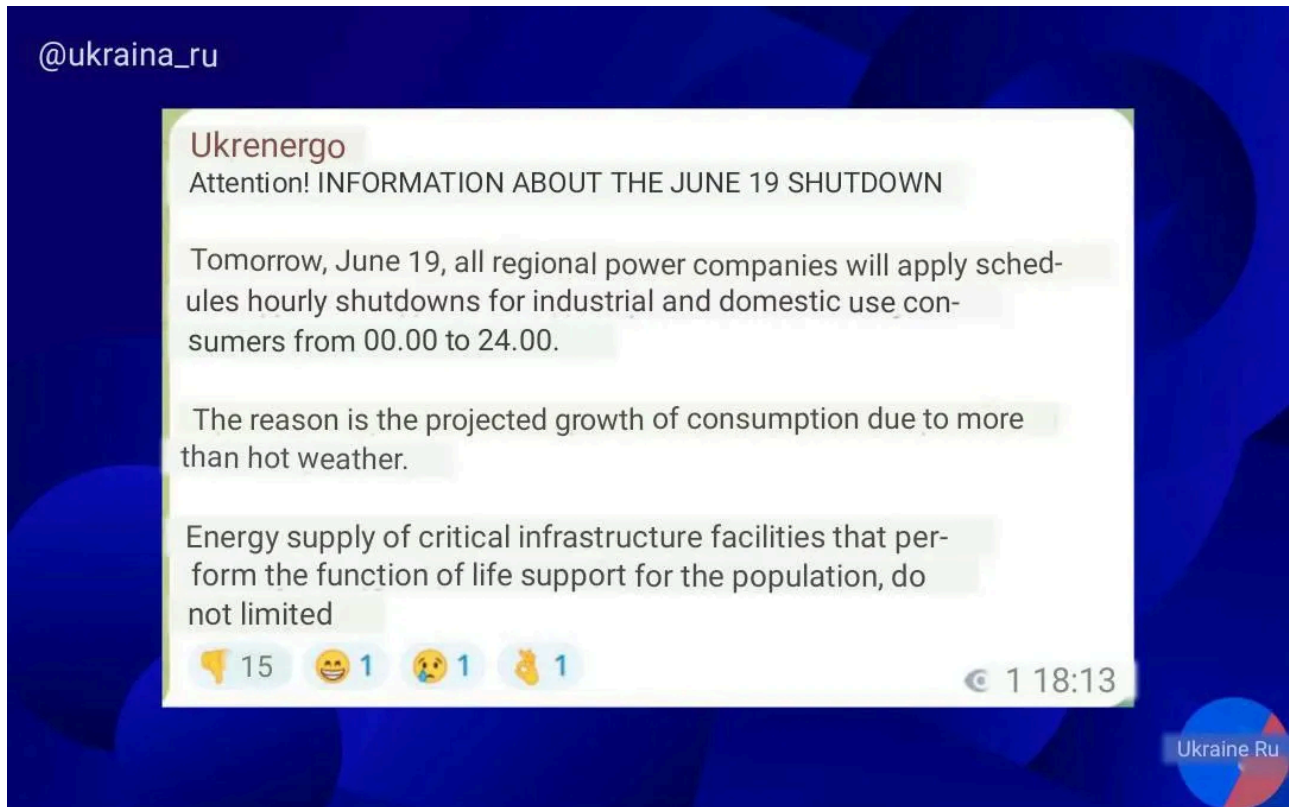
Ukrainians will be cut off from electricity for at least next two winters

TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 2024, 10:38



 474





And even as of this writing a new large-scale drone attack on Ukraine's energy grid has reportedly been carried out:

JUNE 20



UKRENERGO

06:10

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ATTACK ON JUNE 20

- Tonight, Russian UAVs inflicted a new massive attack on the objects of the civil energy infrastructure of Ukraine.
- Equipment was damaged at facilities in the Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and Kyiv regions. The consequences are clarified.

—

The West so valiantly boasted that F-16s would come into Ukraine and mop up the skies of pesky Russian Sukhois, establishing decisive 'air superiority'. Now the tune has changed and Western experts claim F-16s will have to slither and snipe like snakes in the grass just to survive:

Forbes

FORBES > BUSINESS > AEROSPACE & DEFENSE

Ukraine's F-16 Pilots Have A Problem: They'll Have To Fly Low To Survive—And That Impedes Their Missiles

Why would they have to fly low if they have nothing to fear from Russian Su-35s?

Fascinating how fast the narrative changes.

—

Western press now openly reports Ukraine's last-ditch plan to wage a literal war of terror against Russian children in the event Ukraine loses the war—and they report it with such a neutral tone as to imply blind support for this tactic:

EXPRESS

12°C

**NEWS****POLITICS****ROYAL****CELEBRITY NEWS**

News > World

Ukraine could launch 'terror campaign bombing schools' if Russia wins war

Ukraine is planning "terrorist activity" which would see Russian schools and other civilian infrastructure targeted, an expert has claimed to the Daily Express.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1908768/ukraine-terrorist-activity-russia-vladimir-putin>

Ukraine could launch 'terror campaign bombing schools' if Russia wins war

EXCLUSIVE: An expert claims Ukraine's plan is more terrifying for Vladimir Putin than a conventional war" because he could "lose power very quickly" in Russia.

By **CHARLIE BRADLEY**

An excerpt that must be read to be believed:

Mr Drummond said: "I think any strikes will be restricted to the border regions because strikes deep into **Russia** would be a big escalation.

"**Ukraine** will want to conduct terrorist activity in **Russia**... if **Russia** wins in **Ukraine** or is given any kind of victory, I think **Ukraine** will conduct a counterinsurgency campaign inside **Russia**, and that would be much more devastating than anything we have seen on the frontlines.

"It will be really unpleasant.

"The terrorist activity would include bombing schools, bombing infrastructure... that would begin in earnest if any peace deal was imposed on Zelensky.

*"They are absolutely planning these kinds of attacks now. No question. I think this is more terrifying for Putin than a conventional war, **because if Ukrainians unleash this terror campaign in Russia, he will lose power very quickly because people will say 'you are not doing enough to stop it.'**"*

It seems they're outlining the next strategy to oust Putin. It becomes harder and harder to pretend the country that's supposed to be "winning", according to Western propaganda, is the same that's planning to switch to a strategy of terror attacks on schools.

Lastly, from North Korea:

Kim offers Putin and Russia a toast:



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136 Comments



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abcdefg 6 hrs ago

It seems the march to war continues. The teams are lining up, and with DPRK on board the Eurasians are looking very strong. Once the war in Lebanon begins it will be much clearer who is positioned where. Troubled times indeed.

♡ LIKE (14) 💬 REPLY ↗ SHARE



10 replies



Bash 6 hrs ago

There seems to be some mismatches with the numbers.

The Russians appear to be using far less artillery than they are producing and sourcing
On the other hand, armored vehicles are so consumable now that you could produce 10,000 and it wouldn't be enough. The drone problem applies to both sides; just as Abrams and Leopards have fallen to them, so have T-90's and T-80's.

Air defense systems & anti-drone systems are the innovations that are sorely needed on both sides. I suspect the Chinese already have something on the drone side

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4 replies

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